

most doting delirium of paternal vanity could hardly palliate. It would be a case unparalleled in the annals of literature. The world has had numerous instances of men of most splendid talents—of laborious research—with abundant materials and documents—enjoying full leisure to do justice to their subjects—and employing years for the purpose—yet falling into egregious errors. It could not then be expected that a work embracing such a variety of objects, and written under the very disadvantageous circumstances I have stated, should be free from them. But the reader may rest assured that whatever they may be, they have not resulted from design. They are the offspring of slenderness of talents—deficiency of materials—advertence—or that bias to which all men are subject, in a greater or less degree, when treating on subjects wherein they feel deeply interested. Of the latter, however, I have laboured to divest myself.

Had I written with any view to literary reputation, the work would have made a totally different appearance. Instead of presenting the reader with so many documents verbatim, I should, as is usual have given abstracts of them in my own words—and thus formed a regular, connected narrative of events, far more agreeable to read, than the work in its present form, and rather easier to write. The reader may rest assured, that I have written three pages in less time than I employed in search for a single document, which does not occupy one, and whereof I knew enough to give an analysis of it. And long, laborious searches for document or newspaper paragraphs, or essays, have not unfrequently been wholly in vain.

But though a thirst for literary reputation is far from commendable—and though it inspires to great exertions, and has been the honoured parent of some of the most stupendous efforts of the human mind—it has not had the slightest influence on me in this case. It would be utterly unavailing to counteract the loathing, the abhorrence I felt for entering into political discussion, or for making myself once more an object of newspaper assault, of which few men in private life have been honoured with a greater share.

No. I appeal to heaven for the truth of what I now declare. I soared to higher objects, far beyond such narrow views. I believed—I still believe—that a dissolution of the union is contemplated by a few ambitious and wicked men;