

Sir,

A Pamphlet has been put into my hands (published, I believe, but this week) entitled "Expostulations on the Iniquity of the present spy system" <sup>by Jacob B. Jones</sup> <sup>30, 25, Longman & Co.</sup> which seems to me to be of dangerous tendency. Altho' it has no great <sup>power of</sup> attraction as far as style & manner of composition go, yet by the artful working up of religious sentiments in it & by a certain vehemence of manner, joined with apparent candour, which what I call a smothering of the conclusions, which the Author would wish to have drawn, I conceiv'd will lay hold of the minds of many persons who are safe enough from the rebaldry of our weekly vendors of sedition, & have an injurious effect upon them. I conceiv'd it worthy of counter-action. And with that view have drawn up a short critique upon it, which I have the honor of here sending You. If you should deem it "fit stuff" for your excellent Review, 'tis entirely at your service. If you should not judge it advisable to make use of it, have the good night leave it with the Waiter of Hatchett's Hotel, Piccadilly; ~~to be kept till ordered for~~ directed to Charles Fenton Esq. <sup>to be kept till called for.</sup>

I remain, Sir  
Yr Obedt<sup>t</sup> Humble Servant  
D. L.

## Critique &amp;c.

With the exception of a few errors, a few pettulanccies, a few absurdities, <sup>a few unjustices</sup> a few deprecabilities & a few impieties, this Pamphlet is a Faciculus <sup>of</sup> wisdom and ingenuity — a Poem of sweet composition. What depths, what Bathos! What heights, what Bombast! What roomy flats between! The subtle underminer may here get lost; the adventurous climber pant among the clouds; and the idle speculator, wide his hobby unmolested & exphiate about — nothing.

What various classes of readers will be delighted! The Frontis will be delighted: for their great Luminary is here pronounced, in addition to the other grand qualities, which all allow him, & have been also a pattern of moral excellence.

The Bonapartists will be delighted: for the murder of Palm the Bookseller is here recorded as an act of justice.

The Artists will be delighted: for they are told that that part of religion, which is called Belief in God, does not in fact require any such belief at all — that belief in universal order, without a personal Deity, is, in Metaphysics, just as good, if not the same thing.

The Heupites and Breadamites will be delighted: for they are promised a new Revelation, & a millenium.

The Reformers will be delighted: for they will find it declared that the worst among them, those who, if their hands were at liberty, wd inflict the rudest & bloodiest gashes on Society "are infinitely better men than the ministry & their supporters.

The Revolutionists will be delighted: for they are assur'd that no blame attaches to a man for wishing in his heart that the government

of his country was utterly upset, root and branch.  
The Anarchists will be delighted; for they will learn that the nations of Europe are in a situation so void of stability, that they may be likened unto water in a still pail; the horizontal, and seemingly tranquil, yet ready to spill if scooped or pushed too hard. They will also find them represented under the type of an ocean, which may probably overflow its boundaries ~~at long~~ & which, if it does, will never find its label again, till all the ancient landmarks are washed away. They are further told that the blasts and hurricanes of anarchy are to be devoutly prayed for by those who think corruption likely to encrease & settle upon us.

The Exulters in popular acquittals will be delighted: for they will find the Prosecutors or Prosecutrix treated as miscreants, and the Pleas phemery entitled truly religious men.  
The Snugglers will be delighted: for they are assured that Custom House perjuries are innocent.

The Cussers & Swearers, & Drunkards, & Fornicators will be delighted; for they will find those moralists reprov'd, who inveigh against the vice of swearing drinking & lewdness, when they themselves may perhaps have faults of a deeper stain — such as over-quietness, & undue acquiescence in the actions or tenets of their Superiors by birth or education.

The Admirers of the Balms, if they read only the title page & the Appendix, will be delighted: for besides a motto from those Sacred Poems, they will find 6 pages of Extracts from them, tabbed to the end of the Pamphlet, and at the said motto and extracts cannot, by any torturing whatsoever, be made to bear upon the Politics of the day, & are printed on fair paper in a fair type, they may be read with lenient pleasure.

Nor indeed have <sup>the</sup> Tricks of Religion, or of good government, much reason to complain of this pamphlet itself: for the Author, by the absurdity & inconsistency of his concessions (a mark, we suspect, of tottering age) generally contrives to extract the sting from his invectives, by to take off the lash from his whip.

By the wearisome display of Mechanical Imagery in the first pages we are led to think that the Author is some old worn-out Mechanician, whose crany hands have become inert, but in whose inventive faculties performance of his regular employment, has turned his most potent ideas towards tinkering the state. One thing we gather — that he has had the confidence of the South, Sidmouth, Bathurst &c. for how else should he have been able to give so clear an exposition of the plans & secret motives of ministry, relative to the late suspension of the Habeas Corpus act? One is amazed at this familiarity between Grubstreet & Persons of rank & power; but it always has been so. Swift notices it in his memoirs of a parish clerk, which are now universally allowed to be authentic.

Our author is peculiarly happy in resisting the influence of his own observations, and drawing conclusions of approbation & disapprobation in direct opposition to the spirit of his own remarks.

He assures us that General Pitt was a radically good man, but justly executed. He is a friend to the established Church, but a disbeliever of her creeds & doctrines — perhaps he has an eye to some Vergesship, as a means of supporting his feeble old age.

As his justification of the murder of Palm, & of other atrocities of that nature is inconsistent with certain moral maxims, we expected to find him a staunch advocate for strict adherence to rules, & obedience to the written precepts of religion. But no such thing. He assures us that our moral & religious maxims have no other warranty than our experience of their utility & may be got aside at pleasure. However the contradiction that he loses by this in one point of view he fully gains in another: inasmuch as the tender concern he shows in some places for religion is admirably contrasted with this denial of our

being in possession of a written rule of life.

His long experience has happily enabled him to light upon a new  
sobriety: he has discovered that to say any thing good of any spy is "a  
gross moral obscenity" - of course, agreeably to the turn of mind we have just  
noticed, he approves & justifies the employment of spies. He is angry with Mr  
Wilberforce & others for hesitating to declare the employing them to be morally  
justifiable. He calls such hesitation "a fearful canting" and assures us that  
Mr Wilberforce or any body else, would belie his words tomorrow, if in place, &  
keep as many spies at his beck as over his predecessors have done. And this he  
naturally couples with a declaration of his belief in Mr Wilberforce's honesty.

I suspect that some of the Author's observations have  
been bottled too long, & lost part of their flavour. Their color is faded - they  
are rather lawney. It seems he was a traveller in France during the last  
century, at some time previous to the revolution in 89. He appears to have  
taken judicious notices in that country, & among other things to have lighted  
on a very curious discovery. He had actually <sup>obtained</sup> occasion to know "Rea-  
son" that spies were at that time employed in France, largely employed by the  
great & honorable. Why did he not publish this before? Profound observa-  
tions of this kind are the fruit of long experience and acquaintance with the world,  
we have no doubt but that Mr Bray was of ripe years at that period, 35 at  
least. So that he must now be verging to fourscore. This circumstance would  
have disarmed our criticism of all severity, had we not observed that the slaver  
of his dotage is not altogether free from ravenous qualities. He was probably  
bitten in his youth by some ravenous Whig of George the 2<sup>d</sup>'s time, & who like the  
old toothless Mastiff bitch of his divine Coleridge. He may no longer be  
able to bite, yet he may still gripe with his quams, & infect with his venom, when  
he presses against a sore place.

Indeed, indeed, Mister Jacob Bray, under your noisy Official  
folly you conceal too much of the cunning of your namesake, without  
hoping any marks of his integrity. If you would deprive your  
elder Brethren of their birthright I have not the command of God  
to plead for it. But we recollect the old proverb - Bray a fool  
in a mortar &c, so we withhold our hand from further castigation.

\* Or it may have been alternately absorbed & thrown off, & have occasionally ir-  
ritated him to former effusions like this, which stambled in their day, but  
are now forgotten.

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Critiques on the Spy Pamphlet  
Postpaid.

Mr Murray  
Bookseller  
Abbeville Street

For the Editor of the Quarterly Review.

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