

HISTORY
OF THE
WAR IN THE PENINSULA

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HISTORY
OF THE
WAR IN THE PENINSULA
AND IN THE
SOUTH OF FRANCE,
FROM THE YEAR 1807 TO THE YEAR 1814.

BY
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THE THIRD EDITION;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A REPLY TO LORD STRANGFORD'S OBSERVATIONS
ALSO,
A REPLY TO VARIOUS OPPONENTS;
TOGETHER WITH
OBSERVATIONS ILLUSTRATING SIR J. MOORE'S CAMPAIGNS.

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ETC. ETC.



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LORD STRANGFORD'S "OBSERVATIONS,"

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I HAVE been told that lord Strangford's "Observations" upon some passages in my History of the Peninsular War require an answer. I am free to confess that I entertain a contrary opinion; but, yielding to the advice of others, I offer the following brief remarks, as sufficient to support my claim to the character of an impartial historian; and as I am not willing to admit that the stigma which his lordship's first observation would seem to fix upon me (that of being instigated by party spirit) is deserved, I will begin by requesting lord Strangford to look at the Edinburgh Review for April 1808; he will there find, under the head of "Portuguese Emigration," a specimen of the manner in which party writers handle such a subject.

That article has, I believe, never been contradicted, and therefore I might justly use it as an historical record; yet I rather choose to rest my reply upon an analysis of lord Strangford's own observations, from which I am entitled to assert, that he has acknowledged the truth of most of the essential points advanced in my historical notice of the Portuguese emigration, and that his apparent contradictions are so unskilfully, or rather so skilfully, managed, as to avoid the objects which they seem to be levelled at.

In page 4, lord Strangford says, that his "*despatches* relating to the Portuguese emigration *were* originally written, as their date proclaims, on board the Hibernia," and

he adduces Mr. Elgar's letter as confirmatory of the fact ; but my "note" refers not to lord Strangford's *despatches*, but to that *single despatch*, which, being dated "29th November, 1808, H. M. S. Hibernia, off the Tagus," was nevertheless written in Mr. Canning's house, Bruton-street, on the 19th of December : hence neither Mr. Elgar's letter nor lord Strangford's assertion, although both are perfectly true, touch the question. In the next paragraph, however, lord Strangford appears to come more directly to the point.

He says, that "*no* despatch was written at Salt Hill, nor in the presence of sir James Yeo ;" he also says, that "it is absolutely untrue that, either there or at any other place, *from the day he left the Tagus* to that of *his arrival in London*, he ever wrote one line relating to public business," and he refers to Mr. Sylvester's letter as conclusive on that head. Now, of these two assertions the latter may be strictly true, yet not at all conclusive, any more than is Mr. Sylvester's letter, because lord Strangford arrived in London precisely the same day* that he arrived at Salt Hill, and yet he wrote on that day and in Mr. Canning's house, the despatch dated "29th November, H. M. S. Hibernia, off the Tagus."

With respect to "*Sir James*" Yeo's having been present during the writing at Salt Hill, the fact is explicitly denied by lord Strangford ; but my words were, that it was "*confidently asserted*," meaning thereby (as a reference to my note will prove) confidently asserted by others, not by me. Now, I repeat that the fact has been so asserted by many persons. I had a written assertion of it before me at the time of penning the expression. I knew that sir James Yeo himself was the original authority for the anecdote, and I have had farther information to the same purport since (see Appendix, A) : nevertheless I considered that sir James Yeo was dead, and that some misconstruction of his words might have arisen ; so that it would be more consonant to

* Lord Strangford says he arrived in Bruton-Street on Saturday night. Captain Yeo thought it was Sunday morning that Lord Strangford and himself were together at Salt Hill. Can his Lordship have made a mistake of a day in this instance, such as he has evidently made in his despatch relative to his arrival in Lisbon the 27th of November ?