LETTERS

TO THE

FARMERS, TRADESMEN, SHOP-KEEPERS,

AND

LABOURERS

OF

IRELAND.

BY P. O'——

PARISH PRIEST OF ——.

"Your Biſhops and Clergy have enforced the doctrine of ſubordina-
"tion and loyalty from the ſacred altars, where the leaſt lie would be
"a ſacrilege and crime of the firſt magnitude.—Then join the banners
"of your King, fight in ſupport of the common cauſe, if you die, you
"die with honour and a pure conſcience. The death of a plunderer and
"rebel is infamy and reprobation."

The Rev. Arthur O'Leary.—Addreſs to the Common People of the Roman Catholic Religion, in the year 1779.

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Houses of the Oireachtas

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NOTE OF THE EDITOR.

THE following excellent Letters, which firſt appeared in a detached form, are now republiſhed, in this manner, for the further benefit of the public, and particularly that claſs of the people to which they are immediately addreſſed.

Notwithſtanding that the greatneſs of our common danger ſo ſtrongly enforces the neceſſity of a cordial and unanimous exertion to repel it; and that all ſects and conditions are equally intereſted in oppoſing a foe who is the common enemy of property, freedom, and religion, yet unfortunately there

are found ſome who would keep up the deſtructive ſpirit of bigotry, and under the pretext of religion, would paralyze the honeſt action of the country, and blaſpheme the ſacred name of CHRIST by making it the watchword of diviſion, animoſity, and revolt. The number of theſe, thank God! are however, comparatively few, and it muſt afford, in ſuch a criſis as the preſent, great conſolation and pleaſure to every true Chriſtian, and good Citizen, to witneſs the pious and patriotic labours of the Miniſters of the Goſpel. In this exerciſe of loyal and public duty, the Roman Catholic Clergy are eminently conſpicuous, and the Pulpit, the Altar, and the Preſs afford evidence, the moſt concluſive, againſt the calumies of ignorance, prejudice, and party ſpirit. To the ſeveral paſtoral addreſſes of the pious dignitaries of the Catholic Church, and the oral exhortations of the inferior clergy throughout the kingdom, are to be added the following Letters written by the Roman Catholic Prieſt of a country Pariſh. Compoſed in that familiar, but impreſſive

preſſive ſtyle which rendered the immortal *Swift* intelligible to the humbleſt claſſes of his countrymen, and facilitated the intended effects of his moſt patriotic writings; they alſo breathe the loyalty and enlightened policy of the good and ſainted O'Leary, whoſe powerful and virtuous eloquence, were he now alive, would be directed, in the ſame manner, to inſtruct and exhort his countrymen to the obſervance of the ſacred duty which, at ſuch a criſis as the preſent, they owe to their King, their Country, and their God.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

IT is a great fault in you, and a great misfortune, that you have made ſo many people think that it is of no uſe to try to give you any information or advice; for that you will believe nothing that is ſaid to you by thoſe whom you ought to look on as your beſt friends. If your landlord, or your rich neighbour, or the perſon for whom you work, although they do you all manner of kind things, and although it is their intereſt that no harm ſhould come to you, tell you any thing, you give them a deaf ear, and think that they have ſome deſign of their own in all they ſay to you. But let a ſtrolling hawker or pedlar, or a drunken ballad-ſinger, or a pragmatic deſigning ſchool-maſter, or ſome idle coſherer in your own neighbourhood, who minds nothing but going about to fairs and patterns, and whiſkey-houſes, or even ſome fellow, whoſe face you never ſaw, but who knows how to bamboozle and humbug you, bring you any news, or give you any advice about what is paſſing in the country, and what is beſt for you to do in ſuch wild and bad times as theſe, you open your mouths wide, and ſwallow every thing they ſay to you.

There was a time when you liſtened to your pariſh prieſt, and had a confidence in what he told you, or adviſed you to; but that time is now over, as I am ſorry to have to ſay of ſo many of my own pariſhioners. For, becauſe I will not join in deceiving and cajoling them, and will not tell them juſt what they like, they ſay God knows what of me, and that I am no longer their friend. But this will not hinder me from being their beſt friend, as I have always been, or from doing my duty for them, and all the faithful; and ſure I am that it is as much my duty to warn them againſt thoſe bad men, who are going about poiſoning their minds, and leading them aſtray to their own ruin, as it is to warn them againſt the Devil himſelf, who, as St. Peter ſays, *goes about ſeeking whom he may devour.*

I will then try to write to you for your good, take it how you will; and although I am almoſt ſure that the very firſt thing you will ſay, when you read this, or hear it read, is that it is all a ſham, and that it is no pariſh prieſt that writes it. Now, I would put my name at full length to this letter, to ſatisfy you, on that point, but for two reaſons. The one is, that, if I made myſelf publickly known, ſome of thoſe wicked men, who pretend to be Catholics, but who have no religion at all, no, no more than Bonaparte himſelf, and are going about and ſetting you mad, might knock me on the head; the other is, as I ſaid before, that other perſons, of the ſame kidney, ſhould perſuade you I had ſome intereſt different from yours, which God knows I have not, or that I was paid for all I ſhould ſay to you, although I ſhould be glad they would tell me how, and that you ought not to mind me. But as I ſaid, all this will not hinder me from doing every thing I can both for your bodies and ſouls, and to ſave both.

It is not ſo long ago, but that you can remember what paſſed during the laſt troubles. Many of my pariſhioners would not believe me then, becauſe I would not be a rebel, nor let them be rebels if I could help it. I told them, that, if they took the united oath, and joined the United Men, they would only ruin themſelves and their poor families, for

that

that the King and the army would be too ſtrong for them in the end. But, as the Devil always promiſes pleaſant things to them that he tempts, their barony and other committee men made them believe, firſt, that the United were able, themſelves, to pull down the government and the Proteſtant church, and to give every one back the property of the old times, and to bring in the holy Catholic religion again, and afterwards that the French would do all this for them. But what has happened? You muſt go to Vinegar-hill, and Tarah, and Ballinamuck, and the other battles, for the anſwer, or to the court-houſes, and court-martials, and the hangings, and the burnings. Many and many a poor aged father and mother died of a broken heart; many a poor widow, with her orphans, was left to hunger, and nakedneſs, and want, becauſe their ſons and their huſbands would take no warning or advice, till they were either killed at Vinegar-hill and the other battles, and left to rot like dogs, without any rites of the church or Chriſtian burial, or were betrayed and left in the church by the French at Ballinamuck, or were ſent to the gallows by the judges and the military, or were ſtripped of their little all, without ever getting a penny from the wicked men who ſet them on, and promiſed them ſuch great things; while the loyaliſts got compenſation from the King and the Parliament for every farthing they loſt.

They would not, I ſay, believe any thing of this before it happened, but they looked upon every one as their enemy who foretold it to them, and every one as their friend who clapped them on the back, and promiſed them ſucceſs. This was at that time a ſad thought to me and your other paſtors, who were really paſtors, and not wolves in ſheep's clothing, as ſome few were, with whom we had nothing to do. But even this was not half ſo bad, or ſo wonderful, as that they, who then eſcaped the ſad fate of their accomplices, ſhould now fall again into the ſame folly, and be again impoſed upon by deſigning men, who are ſtill ſilly and mad enough to think that they will become great folks, and leading men, through your credulity, and by making you join

again

again in the ſame deſparate cauſe. This makes me ſhed tears of blood; for what can cure you of your blindneſs, and put you on your guard againſt thoſe lying deceivers, if all that paſſed during thoſe troubles has not been able to do it.

But let me mention another buſineſs to you. It happened later ſtill; I mean on the 23d of July laſt. What was the end of that inſurrection that Emmet and theſe men who are always working upon the eaſineſs with which you ſwallow every thing they tell you, drove ſo many ignorant deluded people to join in? The ſelf-made generals on that bloody night, in all their fine laced hats, and rich uniforms, which they put on to dazzle and make a great ſhew in the eyes of the poor people, promiſed the tradeſmen of Dublin, and the farmers and labourers of the neighbouring counties, whom they had organized, as the ſaying now is, that in one hour they would have the Lord Lieutenant, and all the Council, and the Caſtle itſelf in their hands; that then the whole city would be theirs, Bank and all, and that they could murder, and plunder, and raviſh juſt as they liked; that on that very night, nineteen counties would be up for them, and that the whole kingdom would in a few days belong to the United. But a handful of the King's ſoldiers, with ſome conſtables, and a few Liberty yeomen, ſoon ſhewed what vain boaſters the generals, and what gulls and fools this army of theirs were. They did not ſtand the bullets and the bayonets of the loyaliſts, no, not for five minutes. The generals ran away, and their army followed their example; the ſtreets were filled with their dead and wounded. Proclamations were ſent out after thoſe who had eſcaped with their lives. Moſt of the leaders were taken and hanged upon the ſame gallows with the poor wretches they had deceived and miſled; and if others of them, ſuch as Quigley and Stafford, &c. have not met the ſame fate, it is becauſe they have betrayed and informed againſt the unfortunate people who liſtened to them and joined them;

ſhewing

ſhewing what little faith rebels and traitors can have in each other; and that whoever places truſt in them, and unites with them, ties, that very moment, a rope about his own neck, and puts it into the hands of theſe villains to give to the hangman, whenever they can ſave their own lives by giving up their accomplices, and getting them hanged.

I know that many are going about the country, telling you that this *ruction* was raiſed only by a ſmall party of the United, but that the reſt are waiting till the French come. When that happens, which they tell you it ſoon will, then the whole country will riſe. The army, militia, and yeomanry will be deſtroyed. There will be no more poor among the old Iriſh; they will get back the eſtates that once belonged to their names. The property of the Proteſtants will be divided amongſt them, and the Catholic biſhops and prieſts will be put in the place of their clergy. All theſe fine things Bonaparte and the French will do for you, and you will all be great folks, and rich, and happy.

I have already put you in mind how far ſuch fine promiſes were kept before, when they were made as ſtrongly and as confidently as they can be at preſent. I will now, if you will mind me, and only liſten to what I have to ſay, ſhew you that you will be juſt as much deceived, and, in the end, juſt as much diſappointed, but more cruelly and dreadfully puniſhed, if you again believe in ſuch promiſes, and ſuffer yourſelves to be drawn once more into this bloody buſineſs. But this will be the ſubject of another letter.

P. O'——, P. P.

LETTER

LETTER II.

THE great encouragement that is now held out to you, to make you join in a new rebellion, is the coming of the French, and the great things that Bonaparte deſires his friends to promiſe you in his name, and what he is to do for you when he comes over, and conquers your country for you.

It is ſome comfort to think, and I thank God for it, that they who make you all theſe fine promiſes do not find as many to liſten to them, as they did when they firſt ſet this poor iſland wild, and covered the land with that blood, which I fear, muſt one day riſe up to heaven againſt us. The far greater number of them think it enough to have been once deceived and impoſed upon, and to have been ſo near deſtruction and ruin, as that buſineſs brought them. Would to God, I could ſay the ſame of all; and it is moſt wonderful that I ſhould not have reaſon to ſay it.

When in the beginning of our troubles, you were told that the French were the people that would ſet all the world free; when you were told that they were to put all men on the ſame footing, and make a fair diviſion of all lands and of all property; when you were told that wherever they came, there was to be neither rich man nor poor man, but that all would have equal lots, and that there would be no more taxes, or tithes, or rents, there might be ſome excuſe if ſo many of you were led aſtray, and ſeduced into a cauſe that made you ſuch tempting promiſes. The whole world, I may ſay, was at that time loſt in wonder at what they ſaw going on in France, and the wiſeſt man living could not take upon himſelf to ſay how it would end. But it is now that the whole world ſees how it all has ended—now that France itſelf, and every nation with whom the French have had any

thing

thing to do, either as pretended friends or open enemies, have found, by what they have ſeen and known of the French Revolution, that it has over-run the earth like a ſweeping flood, carrying every thing away with it; the loweſt buſh and bramble of the field, as well as the higheſt tree of the foreſt, the cottage as well as the palace, the fruits of the poor man's induſtry, as well as the eſtates and inheritance of the rich, and that the only way it has made all men equal is in the equal portion of ſufferings, and miſery, and wretchedneſs it has brought upon all, is it not a ſad thing to think that you alone remain ſtill to be deceived and impoſed on by their agents and emiſſaries, and thoſe they ſend amongſt you, and bribe to betray you to them, to your own ruin? Is it not ſad to think that you are fooliſh and weak enough to believe that they will keep faith with you, and that when they have ſhown themſelves to be the worſt of tyrants and taſk-maſters to every other people that either yielded to them, or truſted in them, they will become kind and good maſters to you? This is flying in the face of that God who has kindly ſuffered the trial to be made for you by ſo many others, even by the United themſelves; and ſurely they who fly this way in God's face and will not be taught either by their own experience or that of others, deſerve to ſuffer all the miſeries which, I once again foretel you, with an aching heart, your engaging in this buſineſs will bring upon you and yours. And now, my friends, I will tell you fairly and in truth how all this matter ſtands, and I will give you ſome ſamples of the manner in which theſe French, who are turning the world upſide down, and are the curſe of God, have behaved every where and to all people.

And firſt I will tell you how they behaved to the United themſelves.

You all know that five years ago, an army of them, after eſcaping by the greateſt good luck, the Engliſh fleet, landed at Killalla, in the county of Mayo, under one Humbert. This great man, as great, if you were to believe his own words, as Bonaparte, and who was to eat up all the loyaliſts and the

whole

whole army of Ireland, like ſo many frogs, at one mouthful. This great man, I ſay, made a brave flouriſh on his firſt landing; he hung out the green flag, with *Erin go bragh* in gold letters, and he ſent out a proclamation full of flummery and compliments, to his dear friends the people of this land. He and his brave Frenchmen, he ſaid, came all the way acroſs the ſea for nothing in the world but for pure love and kindneſs for the old Mileſians, whoſe faces he never ſaw before, or knew from Adam. They came to make them as free and as happy as the Great Nation itſelf, as it wanted nothing, ſo they deſired nothing for it but the honor and glory of giving liberty and happineſs to Ireland, and breaking her chains. What chains Ireland had on her, or where he was to find them to break, he was never aſked, and ſo he never troubled himſelf to tell them.

A very worthy gentleman who was on the ſpot at this time, and ſaw all that paſſed, tells us in a printed book which every one may read, that his heart was grieved within him, when he ſaw ſo many poor thoughtleſs creatures, many of them his neighbours and acquaintance, caught like ſo many ſilly birds, in the ſnares that were thus artfully laid for them; coming down from the mountains, and from the country around, to run headlong to their own deſtruction; putting on, with childiſh joy, the uniforms in which he foreſaw ſo many of them were to periſh, and ſhouldering the muſkets which he knew, would ſo ſoon bring down the vengeance of the army and of the government on themſelves and their wretched families, whom they had wickedly left to follow theſe vagabond ſtrangers. But alas! It was too late to give them advice, and this good man was but too true a prophet. Of the whole number that joined this French army, with which their bragging, ſwaggering general ſwore he would conquer Ireland in one month, it is now known that not more than fifty ever returned home alive; and of thoſe that remained at Killalla, to keep it for theſe their dear and great allies, almoſt all were either killed, on the King's troops coming into the town, or hanged in the meadow behind the Biſhop's caſtle.

And

And now, my friends, let us aſk, for whom did ſo many of theſe our poor deluded countrymen, who had lived honeſtly, and quietly, and happily with their families, till they were tricked and trepanned into this bloody buſineſs, for whom did they periſh in this melancholy way? Why, it was for a gang of beggarly adventurers, who were ſent here for no other purpoſe upon earth than to rob and plunder, with a fellow at their head, who had been a butcher, firſt of cattle, and afterwards of his own countrymen, ſlaughtered by him by thouſands, in a place called La Vendee, and who, with his banditti, treated theſe very Iriſh who joined him to their own ruin, with the greateſt ſcorn and contempt.

As a Chriſtian, I muſt pity all that are miſled to their own deſtruction, and as a man I muſt feel for the ſufferings of my fellow-creatures. But when I ſee men putting off all bowels of compaſſion—when I ſee them joining in a conſpiracy with a banditti of foreign ruffians, to dip their hands in the blood of their own countrymen; in the blood of neighbours, whoſe bread ſo many of them have been ſo long eating, by whoſe cuſtom ſo many of them have made an honeſt and comfortable livelihood, and with whom ſo many of them have lived in charity and friendſhip. When I ſee them filling their native land with maſſacre and rape and plunder, and all this for no other purpoſe than that they may raiſe themſelves above the ſituation in which God has placed them, and ſeize on the goods and poſſeſſions which God gave to others, my heart, I own, ſhudders within me at the thought of them. I turn my eyes from them, as from a ſet of devils incarnate, who are only fit to be driven, with their brother devils, the French, into the common hell, there to have the flames freſh kindled for them, and to ſuffer all the torments that God has prepared for ſuch fiends. If it was not that there cannot be a man, who thinks like a human creature, or who has a ſpark of true courage and ſpirit within him, but muſt feel all this, and think that nothing can be too bad for ſuch people, it would make one's blood boil over to know the inſolence, the ſcorn, and the contempt with which this ſcum of the earth, this Humbert,

and his beggarly crew of officers and ſoldiers behaved to all the Iriſh who joined them at that time. They never talked of them to the loyaliſts, or in the letters which they wrote home to France, but as of a pack of the greateſt cowards and ſcoundrels that were ever ſuffered to live in the world. Though there was not upon the face of the earth a ſet of robbers and murderers worſe than themſelves, yet they had not a word in their mouth for the Iriſh, but that they were wretches, who, inſtead of ſoldiers, could never be any thing but thieves and aſſaſſins, and that the whole time of the French officers was taken up in hindering them from all kinds of crimes and wickedneſs in their drunken fits. I could give you a hundred proofs of all this; but take two or three for a ſample.

One day when the United, who ſtayed at Killalla to keep poſſeſſion of it, as I ſaid before, for their great allies, came to the commandant, one Charoſt, to aſk for ſome proviſions, or for ſome money to buy them, Charoſt would give them neither the one or the other. The United, ſtarving with hunger, looked as if they were determined to get by force what they could not get by fair and peaceable means. Upon this a puppy of a French officer, whoſe name was Ponſon, the very image and model of a baboon, came up to the commandant, chattering and grinning, and cried out in the hearing of all the loyaliſts, and the French, "Don't throw away good pow-"der and ſhot on the raſcals: only pop ſuddenly out upon "them, and cry, 'Stop thief,' and from their old thiev-"ing habits they will think the conſtables are at their heels, "and you will ſee no more of them."

Another day, Mr. Toby Flannigan, who was a ſnug warm man in that country, and well to live, but was mad enough to join the French becauſe they made him a major, made a man a priſoner againſt whom he had ſomething to ſay. No ſooner did this Ponſon and the commandant hear of this, than they came up to him in a great rage, ballaragging him for daring to take any thing upon himſelf. They dragged him from his horſe in the open ſtreet, took away his piſtols and his ſword,

marched.

marched him away as priſoner, with this Ponſon ſtrutting after him, and making game of him, and never after let him appear as an officer. This unfortunate gentleman's fate is a good leſſon to you all; he loſt his life and his all, for thoſe raſcals that treated him in this manner. When he found how he was uſed, he reſolved to return to his own King and his own country; but when he tried to join the King's troops, a ſoldier who knew him to be a rebel officer, ſhot him on the ſpot, and ſo ended his three or four weeks' majority.

Charoſt and Ponſon, although of the meaneſt birth themſelves, played the part of fine gentlemen, and always dined with the Biſhop of Killalla, and his lady and family, at the caſtle. But to this honor they never ſuffered even Mr. Bellew, whom they made generaliſſimo of all their Iriſh allies in Connaught, or any of the United officers, to be admitted. One day an United colonel, who was of the Maguires of Croſſmolina, came to the caſtle at dinner hour, and walked into the dining room, Charoſt immediately ſtarted up from his chair, and turned him out, giving him the moſt abuſive language for daring to think of dining with him and his company. As for Generaliſſimo Bellew, who was brother to that worthy man, Dr. Bellew, the Catholic biſhop of Killalla, who was ſore hurt at his being a rebel, they gave him no better treatment; Charoſt loaded him with all manner of diſgrace in the ſight of the whole army, and, in a few days, turned him out of his command with every mark of ſcorn.

If this was the treatment the officers received, you may eaſily think how they behaved to the common men. They were every hour finding ſome pretext or other to quarrel with them, and abuſe them. It was always a word and a blow, or an oath and a kick with them. Not a day paſſed without their officers and ſerjeants caning them, becauſe, not underſtanding their French gibberiſh, they could not learn their drill as faſt as they wiſhed them. All this, and a great deal more Counſellor Scully, ſon of the great Scully of Tipperary, tells you, in a book of advice to his

brethren,

brethren, the Iriſh Catholics, printed the other day. Such was their impudence that they would not let the Iriſh mix with them in the ranks, but made them herd by themſelves, like a pack of naſty ſavages, which they ſaid they were, or carry burdens, or do all the drudgery for their own ſoldiers, who often kept them ſtarving, while they were themſelves, feaſting on every delicacy they could plunder for miles around them. The choiceſt beef and mutton from all the grazing grounds in the neighbourhood, —all the wine, ſpirits, and beer that could be got in the cellars of the gentlemen and farmers, all were ſeized, and carried to the French quarters. As for a market ſupply, they at firſt made a ſhew of paying the poorer farmers for what they brought in. But when the *great* money cheſt of their army, the whole contents of which turned out to be no more than forty guineas, was expended, they ſhewed a ſample of what we have all heard ſo much of, *a requiſition of money, in payment for French protection,* and I beg of you to mind what theſe requiſitions are, and what the protection is, for which it is paid. It was done in this way; Charoſt writes a letter *to his very dear friend, the citizen magiſtrate Devitt,* a ſubſtantial tradeſman, who was weak enough to be flattered with the pride of being the chief town magiſtrate under the French government. He firſt offers him moſt cordially *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* and *Union.* He then invites and begs of him to *entreat* the inhabitants of the town and diſtrict of Killalla, to ſhew their zeal for the glorious cauſe of the people, by filling the empty purſe of the commandant, and the French money cheſt. Some, he ſays, had already made him preſents of money, and he made no doubt but all would follow ſo good an example. His dear friends, the Iriſh, muſt not think, that he means to *take* their money from them as a *tax,* or as any thing forced from them. Oh! no, it was a *loan* to the French government; the names of the lenders, he ſays, ſhall all be regiſtered, and every one ſhall have a ticket for the ſum he lends, and the whole ſhall be moſt punctually repaid, on ſhewing theſe tickets, as ſoon as Ireland ſhall be conquered,

quered, the Engliſh driven out of it for ever, and the Iriſh republic ſettled. You have heard of a man's giving a bond to be paid at the day of judgment: it is an old joke, but what think you of Charoſt's tickets? A great many of his dear friends and allies among the United, did not ſeem much to like this kind of ſecurity; and the loyaliſts would rather keep their bank-notes. But a French bayonet and a cane are much better tax-gatherers than our conſtables, and do their buſineſs quicker. The ſum they wanted was ſoon raiſed, and brought in to the French commandant, but what do you think he did with it? Pay the United officers and ſoldiers? Give money for what was offered for ſale? Oh! no, this would not at all go down with *French Fraternity*. Charoſt and Ponſon lodged the whole ſum in the hands of a lady at Killalla, in whoſe hands it remained until they ſurrendered themſelves to General Trench, and then they carried it off with them to their own dear country. You cannot accuſe them, good honeſt ſouls as they are, of ſtealing this money for their own private uſe. Who could think ſo meanly of the officers of the *Great Nation?* You may be ſure they only meant to hand it over to the French government, to whom it was given as a loan, and who will give it all back to the lenders, *as ſoon as Ireland ſhall be conquered, the Engliſh expelled for ever, and the Iriſh republic ſettled.*

So much for a *French requiſition*, and *Monſieur Charoſt's tickets*. And here I ſhall leave our dear friends and allies until I have time to write to you again.

P. O'——, P. P.

LETTER

LETTER III.

IN my laſt Letter I gave you a ſample of what you are to expect at the hands of the French from the way in which their army, that landed at Killalla, treated the United Iriſh, who ſtaid to keep that town and diſtrict for them. I will now give you a true and faithful account of their treatment of the Iriſh, that followed them in their march to Ballinamuck, and of the whole of their behaviour, during that plundering ramble, which, in their old braggard way, they called the opening of their glorious campaign in Connaught. I have now, lying open before me, Humbert's own letter to his maſters in France, giving them an account of this whole buſineſs, from his landing at Killalla to the day that he got his firſt drubbing at Colooney, from a handful of the Limerick militia; and ſuch a boaſting, puffing, lying piece of French impudence and vanity never was ſeen, which is ſaying a great deal.

It has ever been the plan of theſe diſturbers of the world, in their wars with England, to pretend a great friendſhip for the old Iriſh. They always talk as if none were Iriſh but thoſe who are of their own party, while all who, from knowing their arts and their treachery, and what tyrants their great men, and what ſlaves all the reſt of the people are at home, will have nothing to do with them, are bulked together under the name of Engliſh. As ſoon as it is their intereſt to make peace, all this is changed. Then they, whom they abuſed as Engliſh, become their good friends, while their dear Iriſh are left in the lurch, to ſhift for themſelves the beſt they can.

This has happened ſo often, and ſo many have ſuffered from the folly of their forefathers, in being the dupes of this

this artifice, and forfeiting their lives and eſtates for theſe deceivers, that one would think that the Iriſh of this day would have their eyes opened, and inſtantly ſee through this ſtate trick, and that they would treat thoſe friends of the French, who now gull and humbug them with a promiſe of reſtoring theſe eſtates, as it would have been happy for them if their fathers had treated the friends of that wily treacherous nation in their day, and ſent them about their buſineſs, as a gang of lying, cheating, cozening raſcals, whom it is ruin to liſten to.

Humbert, encouraged by what paſſed in thoſe old times, to think that there is nothing the poor old Iriſh will not ſwallow down, and that nothing can cure them of this folly and madneſs, which ſeems to go down from father to ſon, followed this ſame plan. He always talked, and always ſpoke, of his own friends and ſupporters, as if they alone were the Iriſh. The King's army, the Yeomen, the Loyaliſts of all conditions and deſcriptions, all, in ſhort, who would not turn out for him he called the Engliſh. With *his fee, faw, fum,* like the giant in the ſtory-book, *he ſmelt the blood* of theſe Engliſh; and, with his French and Iriſh army, he ſet out to eat them all up, dead or alive, as the ſtory ſays the giant did all that came in his way.

You would think, if you were to read his own account, that the whole army of England was drawn out againſt him, at Ballina and Caſtlebar. He makes them more than ſix times his own number, while the fact is, that it was but a ſmall advanced corps of Militia and Yeomen, with one hundred of the 6th regiment, the Frazer Fencibles, and a part of the regiment of Carabineers, that was puſhed on to Caſtlebar, while the reſt of the royal army was gathering together. In the ſame way, he gives a moſt impudent, lying account of the fate of the battle. The whole return of the killed, wounded, and miſſing, on the ſide of the Loyaliſts, as ſent to the Government by the proper officers, and which I have this moment read, did not

make

make more than three hundred and eleven men; yet this ſwaggering vapouring braggadocio tells his maſters, the Executive Directory in France, that he had killed and wounded ſix hundred Engliſh, and took twelve hundred priſoners. He writes of this ſkirmiſh, in which, it is true, he had ſome ſucceſs, from the cowardice of one regiment, and the treachery of two others, as of a general, bloody, fiercely fought battle, and of the victory he gained, as of a moſt glorious one, that was to open the way to Dublin for him, without having to ſtrike another blow.

You would think, to be ſure, that part of this glorious victory was given by him to the *Brave Iriſh*, as he called them in his firſt proclamation.—To thoſe fine fellows, *whoſe courage*, he ſaid, *his army was come to* ſupport, and *with whoſe blood they came to mix their own, in the ſacred cauſe of liberty.* To be ſure, he muſt ſay many fine things of them, in the firſt letter he wrote to thoſe who had ſent him *to unite and march with them to glory*, as he ſays in another Proclamation. Liſten to him them. Hear his own words, as I will write them down for you, from the letter he ſent juſt after the battle, to the Miniſter of the Marine at Paris. "*About ſix hundred United Iriſh*, ſays he, *joined me. They were immediately armed and clothed.—On the* 10*th, they came forward to the heights of Caſtlebar. The firſt cannon ſhot that was fired drove them away.—I expected as much.*—Liſten to him, ye *brave* friends of the French.—*I expected as much, and their panic no way deranged my operations.*

You ſee here, whether I ſtrove to deceive you by all I ſaid in my laſt Letter, of the contempt in which theſe impudent Frenchmen hold the unfortunate people, whom they cajole into rebellion againſt their lawful King. Here you have Humbert himſelf, and, in his own letter, a witneſs that I told you nothing but the truth. At the very moment that he was wheedling them from their homes and their families, with fine names and fine words, he tells the Directory, that he knew the Iriſh to be cowards, and fellows, who, inſtead of ſoldiers, would never make any

thing

thing but thieves and pilferers, robbers and murderers. He expected that they would run away on the firſt ſhot being fired, and ſo ſure was he of this beforehand, that although he clothed and armed them, to make a ſhew, and to have them as ſcare-crows, to draw off ſome of the enemy's fire from his own heroes, yet, in his plan of battle, he never took ſuch blackguard cowards, as he held them to be, into account. He and his French heroes were to do all—with his French heroes alone he was to drive the Engliſh out of Connaught, croſs the Shannon, get to the North, march to Dublin, and fight a battle, that was to ſettle the whole buſineſs. To be ſure he will have to guard, he ſays, againſt the noiſe of the cannon having the ſame effect as at Caſtlebar, on his *brave* Iriſh, and their running away at every cannon they hear fire; but if the Directory will ſend him only two thouſand men, he does not care a ſtraw, he ſays, about the cowardice of the United Iriſh—he will go on with his invincible Frenchmen, who are never to be beaten, no never, and *Ireland will be free.*

After this fine letter, and all this vapouring, he marches off from Caſtlebar, being joined by eight thouſand United Iriſhmen, who he knew would run away at the firſt ſhot. Having no money to pay or feed either his own troops, or the hungry *thieves and barbarians* of the country, who roſe up under him, (for that was another kind name they gave the United,) you may eaſily gueſs the ruin and miſery he ſpread wherever he bent his march. From the loyaliſts he plundered, and from thoſe who either were his friends, or pretended to be ſo, he *borrowed* every thing he found in his way. Horſes, cars, cattle, ſheep, pigs, corn, money, clothes, bedding, whatever the houſe and lands of the gentlemen and the farmers, whatever the cottages and gardens of the tradeſmen and the labourers produced, he looked upon as his own property, and took in payment for the *protection* he gave to the country, juſt as you remember Monſieur Charoſt took the money from the people of Killalla.

In this way this army moved on like a conſuming fire, deſtroying every thing before them, till they got to Colooney, where they halted. The great Humbert wrote no account to his maſters in France, of what paſſed there. We hear nothing from that place of the prodigies and miracles of valour of his officers and ſoldiers, that he writes of in his firſt letter. You may eaſily gueſs the reaſon; the gallant Colonel Vereker, with only 270 of the Limerick militia, 30 dragoons, and two ſmall pieces of cannon, ſoon ſhewed him what the loyal Iriſh were, and how impudent a lie it was in him to ſay, that none but the Engliſh would fight againſt thoſe dear friends of old *Hibernia*; the name by which, in one of his proclamations, he calls this iſland of ours, to compliment us, as it were, by not giving it an Engliſh name.

Colonel Vereker, thought, when he marched to this attack, that it was only a ſmall part of the French army that had come to Colooney; and that the great Humbert, and the bulk of his heroes, were ſtill at Caſtlebar. But, although he found this conqueror of Ireland, at the head of his whole army, French and Iriſh, ready to receive him, he never ſhrunk back, but, with his handful of brave Iriſhmen, all, except the horſe, the real Garryowen boys, he ruſhed on the French with fixed bayonets, and gave them ſuch a drubbing, before their numbers forced him to draw off, as cooled their hot ſpirits; and from that hour they never gathered courage enough to face the Royal army, that was now gathering together from all ſides, till it overtook them, and forced them to ſurrender themſelves priſoners of war. From Colooney to Ballinamuck they were hotly purſued by Colonel Crawford, with a ſmall detachment, made up chiefly of Lord Roden's fencibles, and the Monaghan light infantry company, every man of them Iriſh; theſe brave fellows fell on their rear, almoſt every hour in the day, driving them on before them, until Lord Cornwallis met them with the whole of his gallant forces at Ballinamuck; and at Ballinamuck ended the conqueſt of Ireland, the victories of the French, who were

never

never to be beaten, and of their allies, the Iriſh, who ran away at every ſhot, and the *march of both to honour and glory*.

At Ballinamuck alſo ended, or at Ballinamuck ought to have ended, for ever, the folly of our poor deluded countrymen, and their truſt in the lying, deceitful cant and palaber of theſe double-minded, double-tongued, treacherous, bloody wretches, who never flattered us but to deceive us, and never courted but to deſtroy us. At Ballinamuck paſſed a ſcene, that ſhould for ever ſteel and harden the heart of every Iriſhman, whatever may be his ſect or his religion, his order or his ſtation, againſt all that bears the name of Frenchmen, or the friends of Frenchmen.——*Union—Liberty—the Iriſh Republic. Such is our ſhout*—ſo cried out the treacherous Humbert at Killalla. So will whatever other fellow, with his outlandiſh name, who may chance to land on our coaſt in this war, cry out. But if there be found an Iriſhman, who reads this faithful and true account, weak, dull, ſtupid and mean-ſpirited enough, to march with ſuch a fellow and his ruffian bands, as our poor credulous, beſotted countrymen marched from Killalla with Humbert's crew, then ſhall I be aſhamed of what has been hitherto my greateſt pride—then ſhall I hang down my head, and bluſh to own that I am an Iriſhman, or that the blood of Mileſius flows through my veins; nor with all the charity, which, as a Chriſtian prieſt, and all the compaſſion which, as a man, I feel for all who ſuffer, ſhall I drop a tear over the unburied bones of thoſe, whom the French ſhall treacherouſly, cowardly and baſely deſert, and give up to the bayonets of their conquerors, as Humbert did at Ballinamuck, the unhappy victims of his arts, whom he ſeduced and trepanned from their homes, their families, and their wives.

Yes, my friends, this baſe-born French butcher did cowardly and treacherouſly deſert the Iriſh, that roſe up for him in that battle. The two armies, the whole country around, the account of every man, who tells the ſtory of that day, agree in the truth of the fact, and may you never forget it.

After all the different ſkirmiſhes fought with the King's troops, after all their hardſhips and ſufferings in their long

march, or rather the mad race, which thoſe villains made them run, and during which they were forced to do all the drudgery for the French officers and ſoldiers, after all the deſertions, which the cruel and treacherous treatment they got cauſed among them, fifteen hundred Iriſh got with this Humbert to Ballinamuck. This body of men was placed in the very front of the battle, but always kept ſeparate and by themſelves, for a reaſon which ſoon appeared. They received the greateſt part of the fire, in the ſhort attack, which was made on the French and rebel army, by the advanced column of the royal one, under General Lake. The very moment the reſt of theſe forces came up, and at the very firſt cannon that was fired by them, the great Humbert, and his invincible comrades, threw down their arms. They did not draw a trigger, nor ſtrike a blow, until they cried out that they ſurrendered, and aſked for quarter. But for whom was it that they aſked for quarter? Did they aſk it for their dear allies, the Iriſh, as well as for themſelves? Did they aſk it for thoſe *brave* friends, to whom they had ſo often ſaid, that their *hearts* warmed and *were devoted*, and whoſe *happineſs they ſo often* ſaid *was their glory?* No: they aſked quarter, and terms of pardon for themſelves alone.—The unhappy Iriſh ſtill remaining under arms, and in a ſeparate body, and ſeeing themſelves baſely betrayed, and given up, looked at each other with horror and deſpair on their faces. Not knowing what to do, or where to turn themſelves, they ſeemed to the Royal Army as if they were ſtill determined to ſtand it out. Under this notion they were fired on, and then attacked with the bayonet—inſtead of throwing down their arms, and aſking quarter, as the French had done, they, in their fright, ran away and diſperſed, and in this attack and fight they were, almoſt to a man, killed, wounded, or taken priſoners. Where was French *fraternity* and brotherhood all this while? Where was French *Union* and *Equality?* What name, baſe and contemptible enough, can I give to thoſe villains, who ſaw all this, not only without any ſigns of

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pity or compaſſion, not only without putting in a word for them, or trying to make any terms for them, ſuch as they had got for themſelves, but with a ſhow of horrid pleaſure; while they ſtrove to curry favour with their conquerors, by abuſing them as a gang of cowards, robbers and ſcoundrels, who deſerved nothing elſe but to be ſhot and hanged. Counſellor Scully, in his Advice to his Catholic Friends, which I mentioned to you in another Letter, ſays, that he has ſince been on the field of battle, and was ſhown the large pits into which heaps of Iriſh carcaſſes were thrown, without the ordinary rites of Chriſtian burial. This muſt always be the caſe, after a battle. The firſt care that muſt be had then, is not to let the dead bodies poiſon the air, and cauſe a plague by their rotting and ſtench, or lie naked on the earth, to be torn and eaten by pigs, dogs, and crows; and I mention this, for the ſake of thoſe who little think what it is likely they may come to, when they take up their pikes and become rebels.

I would here end this Letter, and leave you to think, quietly and ſeriouſly, on the facts I have laid before you, but that there is one thing more, in the behaviour of the French who landed at Killalla, that will give you a ſample of what you are to look to from them, in a matter from which their friends labour very much to ſtir you up in their cauſe. I mean, the good of the Catholic religion, and of us your prieſts. I have now, lying open before me, a proclamation of Humbert's, in which are theſe words: "*We ſwear the moſt inviolable reſpect for your properties, your laws, and* ALL *your religious opinions.* Putting this into plain Engliſh, you will ſee that it means that Humbert ſwears that he and the reſt of the French will never, on any account whatever, do any thing againſt the religion of any that join them, whether they be Catholics, Proteſtants, or Preſbyterians; and this you muſt ſee is his meaning, when he ſays that he will inviolably reſpect *all* religious opinions, and he does not ſay one word to make you believe he will put up the Catholic religion, and pull down the reſt. But, perhaps you will think that they ſhewed themſelves good Catholics, and

friends

friends of our holy mother, the Church, and every thing belonging to it.—No ſuch thing, believe me. It is a well-known fact, that *not one of them* ever went to maſs; and that neither officers or ſoldiers of them ever ſhewed the leaſt reſpect for the religious opinions of the Catholics, or for their clergy. On the contrary, the Proteſtants themſelves were ſurpriſed and aſtoniſhed at all they ſaw and heard of the contempt, which all the French, without exception, ſhewed for both. No ſet of men in Killalla were treated by them with more ſcorn, than the Catholic clergy; and this went ſo far, that whenever the French Generals wanted to have any one to make them and the Iriſh underſtand each other, or to have any thing interpreted for them, they would never believe the Prieſts, who ſpoke French, but always waited till they could ſee the Proteſtant biſhop. An unhappy man, who was renounced by all his brethren, and afterwards ſuffered death, of the name of Sweeney, ſo far forgot all that his holy profeſſion taught him, and was ſo fooliſh and ſilly, that he went to General Charoſt, and ſaid to him, that whereas every thing lately belonging to the Proteſtants muſt be French property, he would be extremely obliged to him, if he would make him a preſent of the Biſhop of Killalla's library. Charoſt inſtantly flew at him in a rage, called him by every bad name he could think of, and turning him out of the room, ſaid to him, with a look of the greateſt contempt, the Biſhop's library is juſt as much his own now as ever it was.—Another day, one Captain O'Donnel took the key of the cathedral church, and got the bell rung, to call the people to maſs. On the Proteſtant biſhop's complaining of this to the French commandant, he took the cathedral under his protection, and ſwore he would not ſuffer a prieſt to go into it, as the laws gave it to the Proteſtants. But what will ſhew you more clearly what you are to look to in this matter from theſe wretches is, that an eye witneſs has declared they could not hide their ſcornful ſmiles, when they heard the Iriſh that came to offer them their ſervice ſay, that they came to take arms

for

for France and the Bleſſed Virgin; and they ſaid to every one, that they had juſt driven Mr. Pope, meaning the Holy Father, out of Italy, and little thought of finding him ſo ſhortly after in Ireland.

But perhaps you will think that Bonaparte and his French may be different. This we ſhall ſee in another letter.

P. O'——, P. P.

LETTER

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER IV.

I ENDED my laſt Letter with a promiſe, that I would ſhew you how far you can have any reaſon to think Bonaparte, or his army, would be more friendly to the Catholic Religion, and the Catholic clergy than the robber Humbert and his crew. In doing this I will look to Bonaparte's own words and deeds, as that will be the way to prove to you that in this matter, as well as in every other, I tell you nothing but plain fact and plain truth.

Bonaparte, as moſt of you know, is not a Frenchman.—The French rebelled againſt their own lawful King, who was the beſt and mildeſt of men, a real Father to his people, and whoſe family had reigned over them for one thouſand years, and cruelly murdered him; and now, God has puniſhed them for this wicked deed, and for all the crimes they committed in bringing it about, by giving them a foreign Tyrant, a mongrel Italian, to rule them with a rod of iron, and grind them like the worſt of ſlaves.

A little time after the beginning of theſe troubles, this Tyrant gained the favour of the wicked monſters who had filled France with the blood of its inhabitants, and made it what may be called one great ſlaughter-houſe, from one end of it to the other, and he ſoon ſhewed himſelf to be the moſt cruel and blood-thirſty murderer amongſt them. With this great recommendation in his favour he brought another, that made them like him ſtill more, and that was, a hatred for the name of our Bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and for his Church and his Croſs, which they were ſoon to pull down, and trample on, and root from the face of the earth.

They

They began this hopeful ſcheme by deſtroying the Catholic Religion, and murdering or baniſhing all the Catholic Biſhops and Prieſts in their own country, and then they ſent this ſame Bonaparte to do the ſame in Italy. On this impious miſſion his great exploit was to make war in the moſt cruel and bloody manner on our Holy Father the Pope. For a ſhort time, a regiment of dragoons, ſent over by the King of England, formed a guard to this pious Saint and Martyr, and with theſe and his own faithful ſubjects, he was able to make ſome ſtand againſt his and the Church's enemies; but it pleaſed God that the ungodly Tyrant ſhould in the end have the upper hand; and the impious and cruel manner in which he treated his Holineſs fills me with rage and horror. He robbed him of all the dominions which the pious Emperors had given the Pope, of old, as Chriſt's Vicars upon earth. He ſtripped him of every thing he had; made him a priſoner in his own city, the capital of the Catholic world, and, at laſt, by his ill uſage of him, and the ruin he brought on the Church, he broke the venerable old man's heart, and brought down his grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave.

Having found nothing in Italy but cowards, who, after a battle or two fled before him, as traitors who ſold and betrayed their country to him, for which they are now paying a bitter price in the tyranny they ſuffer, he ſoon brought that once happy country into ſlavery to France; and then, with the plunder he had gathered from the Church, and with his army red with the blood of the Catholic Clergy, and of thouſands of Virgins conſecrated to God, whom they deflowered and butchered in their convents, he went to Egypt.

The people of Egypt are almoſt all Mahometans, or Muſſulmen, as they are ſometimes called. They are the greateſt enemies of the Chriſtians, to whom they give no other name than that of dogs. Inſtead of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour, they hold the impoſtor Mahomet to be the great Prophet of God, and inſtead of the Goſpel they believe in what they call the Koran.—Now mark what part this Bonaparte acted when he landed with his army among this people. His very firſt

act was to cajole them about their teligion, as his friends are now cajoling the Catholics of this kingdom about their's. I will lay before you the Proclamation which he ſent out amongſt them, thouſands of which have been printed both there and in every country in Europe; and if you can read it without feeling your hair ſtand an end at the horrible blaſphemies it is filled with, it is more than I, or any true Chriſtian can do.

" *There is no God but one God; he has no Son, or aſſociate* " *in his kingdom. People of Egypt! the French are true Muſ-* " *ſulmen. You will be told that I am come to deſtroy your* " *religion. I reply, that I am come to reſtore your rights,* " *and puniſh uſurpation; that I reverence God, his holy Pro-* " *phet Mahomet, and the Koran. It is not long ſince we* " *marched to Rome and overthrew the Pope, who invited the* " *Chriſtians to make war againſt the Mahometan religion, and* " *afterwards directed our courſe to Malta, and drove out the* " *unbelievers, who imagined they were appointed by God to* " *make war upon Muſſulmen.*"——

Here again, my friends, you will ſee whether I mean to deceive you, or if I tell you any thing but the plain truth. Here is the very writing, and here are the very words of the man who you are told is either to come himſelf, or ſend his Generals with a Catholic army to ſet up the Catholic religion, and the Catholic church in Ireland. This blaſphemous wretch who denies the bleſſed Son of God, to pleaſe Turks and Mahometans, becauſe they hold that God has no Son, is to ſet up the Catholic religion in Ireland. This blaſphemous wretch, who ſays that God has no aſſociate or partner in his kingdom, thereby denying that our bleſſed Lord has any part or ſhare in any thing that belongs to the kingdom of Heaven or our ſalvation, or that it was by him that God made all things, or that it was he that redeemed us, or that he is to judge us at the laſt day, is to ſet up the Catholic religion in Ireland. He tells theſe infidels, that he and his army are infidels like themſelves, and that they reverence and pay worſhip to Mahomet inſtead of Chriſt, and that they believe

lieve in the Koran inſtead of the Goſpel, and yet he is to ſet up the Catholic religion in Ireland!!—This vileſt of all renegadoes, and the moſt baſe of all apoſtates, in order to make the Mahometans believe that he is of their religion, boaſts to them that he marched to Rome, and overthrew the Pope, with all his ſpiritual and temporal power, only becauſe the Pope ſtirred up the Chriſtians to make war againſt the Mahometan religion, and yet he is the man that is to ſet up the Catholic Church, and the Pope's authority, in Ireland. He is to raiſe up that throne in Ireland, which he makes a boaſt of having pulled down in Rome, and to bring this whole kingdom into the boſom of that Church, which he has deſtroyed every where elſe!!!—What gulls, what fools, what aſſes muſt thoſe men take you to be, who think they can play upon your underſtanding in ſo barefaced a way, and ſtir you up to riſk your lives, and your property, and the well being of your families, and to ſet your native country ſwimming in its own blood by theſe cock and bull ſtories, which they forge and invent to cajole you? Do they think that you are to be tickled into your ruin, and their own profit, as the fiſherman tickles the trout that he means to ſell at market, or to roaſt in the fire?

But theſe men will ſay, has not Bonaparte brought back the Catholic religion, and the Catholic Clergy into France? To this I will directly anſwer *No;*—he has done no ſuch thing: and I will now tell you why I ſay ſo, and will leave yourſelves to judge.

The fact is, that this mongrel Italian is as real a hypocrite as he is a wicked Infidel. He is of no religion, or of any religion, juſt as he thinks it may ſerve the preſent turn. I have ſhewn you that, on his landing in Egypt, he pretended to be a Muſſulman, and to believe in Mahomet and the Koran; but the Muſſulmen were wiſe enough to ſee through his cant about their religion, and would have nothing to do with him. With the aſſiſtance of the gallant Sir Sydney Smith, the brave Abercombie, Hutchinſon, and Coote, and Craddock, and Doyle, our own glorious countrymen, they drove

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him and his French, the worſt of all the plagues that Egypt had ever been viſited with, and more deſtructive than the whole ſeven mentioned in the Scripture, back to their own ſlaughter-houſe, France. The great Bonaparte was the firſt of them to fly, leaving his army to ſhift in the beſt way they could for themſelves, and to make the beſt terms with the victorious Engliſh and Iriſh. Having eſcaped the Engliſh cruizers, as by a miracle, he found, on his getting to Paris, how greatly things had been changed there, from the time that he had ſet out on his antichriſtian expedition, to pull down the Pope, to trample on the Croſs of Chriſt, and to be the champion of Mahomet, the lying prophet of the Turks.

The incarnate devils, we may well call them, who had brought back idolatry and the Pagan religion to Paris; who had torn down the image of the immaculate Virgin from the high altar of the church of our Lady in that city, and made a common ſtrumpet, whom they took off the ſtreets, ſtand naked in its place, while they ſung hymns, and burned incenſe before her, theſe children of Hell had, in the many ſudden changes that took place in the revolution, been moſtly cut off, either by the famous guillotine, or by each others daggers, or by being ſhut up by hundreds in the hulls of ſhips, and ſunk in the ſea, or tranſported to a climate that ſoon deſtroyed them. —A ſample, by the way, of the fine laws the French have to give you.

The wretches, who had thus periſhed, were called Jacobins, a ſort of people pretty much like what we of this country once called the old Cromwellians; and it was by them, as I told you before, that Bonaparte was made the great man he was become. But as a few of theſe were now left, he found it neceſſary to look out for ſome other help, in the plan he had formed of pulling down the new republic, and making himſelf maſter of France. The blood of thoſe, who had kept faithful to the religion of their fathers, had flown in torrents. Multitudes of them, with their venerable paſtors, had eſcaped into other countries, but moſtly into England, where the good George the third, and the Parliament, ſup-

ported

ported and fed them at the public expence; but ſtill the great body of the people that ſtaid in France were true Catholics, and fond of their old religion; and although many were fain to keep this to themſelves, for fear of perſecution, yet Bonaparte's ſpies, whom he had in every part of the kingdom, gave him ſuch accounts, that he ſaw it would be his intereſt to turn round, and ſeem as if he would ſet up the church again. This coſt him no more trouble than it did to pretend that he was a Muſſulman in Egypt, and that he would defend the Koran. Ir was only to ſend out proclamations, and flatter and cajole the Catholics as he did the Turks, who were all one to him.—But aſk all your own venerable prelates, aſk all your own paſtors, we who know all this beſt, and who are the perſons you are bound in conſcience to believe in ſuch matters, and can have no intereſt to deceive you on this point, even if we could be wicked enough to deceive you at all, and all will tell you what kind of thing this church is, that the hypocritical tyrant has ſet up in France, in the place of the Catholic Church, which he and the other Jacobin infidels had plundered and deſtroyed.

The Holy Father was, in fact, his priſoner, as he is his priſoner to this day. He had him ſhut up in Rome, as he ſtill has him ſhut up there, as in a jail, ſurrounded with a great army, ready to lay hold of him, and treat him as they did that venerable martyr, Pius, the laſt Pope. In this ſituation his Holineſs did, what every good, loving and prudent father would do, who, ſeeing his dear children in the hands of a cruel, unmerciful and cunning enemy, and not having the power to deliver them from him in the way his heart could wiſh, does the beſt he can, and takes what the tyrant offers, in the hope of ſaving ſomething for better times.

This is, exactly, the way that Bonaparte has brought back the Catholic religion to France. It is all pretence and ſhew, to anſwer the preſent turn. The churches, to be ſure, are open again, and the Maſs is ſometimes celebrated in them. But, as all the venerable prelates and paſtors of the old time refuſed to go back, or to have any thing to do with Bonaparte's

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new-fangled religion or his churches, there is no one to offer up the holy ſacrifice in public, but Bonaparte's biſhops and prieſts, that is, the vile apoſtates, who, when he was an infidel, was an infidel with him, and now that he pretends to be a Catholic, pretend to be Catholics with him.—The faithful can put no truſt in ſuch wicked hypocrites—they ſhudder at the very thoughts of ſeeing them at the holy altar, putting on the holy veſtments, and handling the holy veſſels—ſo that unleſs where they find ſome pious paſtor, who, at the riſk of his life, lies hid and concealed among them from the firſt, and ſtill continues ſo, to give them Maſs in private, they, for the moſt part, rather go without it altogether; and the churches are as empty of the true faithful as when they were turned into ſtorehouſes, barracks and hoſpitals, by Bonaparte and his Jacobins.

In the meantime, ſuch a medley and hodge podge as religion is made in France, has never yet been ſeen in all Chriſtendom. Jews and Mahometans, Infidels and Socinians, Proteſtants and Preſbyterians, heretics and ſchiſmatics of all kinds, are all there, as you may ſay, hail fellow well met. They are all as much befriended by Bonaparte as the Catholics.—They have all their own places of worſhip, and their own miniſters, in the ſame way that the Catholics have their churches and their paſtors; that is, all pay their own clergy, and keep up their own places of worſhip, at their own expence, as you pay your paſtors, and keep up your chapels out of your own pockets. The eſtates that ſupported the biſhops, the tythes that ſupported the clergy, and the funds that kept the cathedrals and churches, have been all ſold, or given as bribes to the friends and ſupporters of the new government; and the only difference is, that inſtead of going to the clergy they go to Bonaparte and his creatures, in the ſame way that the old monaſtery lands and tithes are held by ſo many lay folks in this kingdom, without any care to the people, who pay for them, as you well know, even higher than to the clergy.

And

And now, let me aſk you what are you to look for from Bonaparte or his generals, for the bettering of the Catholic religion or of its clergy in Ireland. Let his wicked agents, that are going about privately and underhand, promiſe you what they will for him or for thoſe generals, I know and foretel, from all that they and he have done that way to this time, what they will do, if ever they ſhould get a footing amongſt us. They will, at firſt, promiſe to favour all religions alike, as Humbert and Charoſt did at Killalla, or if they pretend to be Catholics, and to favor the Iriſh Catholics, it will be as Bonaparte pretended to be a Mahometan, in order to flatter and cajole them to their cauſe; and, although they will plunder the Proteſtant church, and rob it of its eſtates, its tithes, and its dues, they will do with them as they have done with the eſtates, and tithes, and dues of the Catholic church in France. They will take them for themſelves, their officers and their ſoldiers, under grants and patents from Bonaparte and his new government; and the people of Ireland will find themſelves duped and cheated, and that they will ſtill have high rents to pay for biſhop's lands, ſtill have tithes and ceſſes raiſed on them, and ſtill have their own clergy to pay, and their chapels to keep up, out of their own pockets, or be content to have no religion at all, and to have neither chapels nor paſtors.

I have now, in the plaineſt and fulleſt manner ſhewn you, from the conduct of the French to the United Iriſhmen at Killalla and Ballinamuck, what you are to think of all the great things that are promiſed you, when they are to come, and conquer your own country for you. I have alſo ſhewn you, from the conduct of the ſame French at that time, and of Bonaparte himſelf at all times, how far they are likely to ſet up the Catholic church, or to ſupport them out of the preſent poſſeſſions of the Proteſtant church, or eaſe you of the burthen of tithes and church dues.

As ſoon as the duties of this bleſſed ſeaſon will let me, I will go on to ſhew you how Bonaparte has treated all the other

other nations, that have received him and his French as their friends, or that have been conquered by them. When I have done that, I ſhall finiſh theſe Letters, by laying ſuch other matter before you, as I hope will cure you of that madneſs and folly, that have ſo often made your forefathers the tools of French flattery and French cunning, to their own ruin, and brought ſuch miſery upon thouſands in the laſt rebellion.

P. O'——, P. P.

LETTER

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER V.

THE duties which I had to perform for my flock on the late feſtivals would not let me attend to the promiſe I made you in my fourth Letter, until within theſe few days. It is not that I think that I could do that flock or any of the faithful, a greater piece of ſervice than by doing every thing in my power to keep them innocent from all the crimes and all the horrors that the arts of the wicked men would plunge them into, who adviſe them to join with thoſe rebels to their God and their King, who have taken the United oaths, and liſted themſelves for Bonaparte and the French. The murders, the raviſhings, the ſacrilege, the burnings, the plunder, the ſeas of human blood, the ruination of property of every kind, and the general miſery that a French invaſion would bring with it, if our infatuated people would join them in as great a number as took ſhare in the laſt rebellion, muſt fill up the heart of every true paſtor with grief, affliction, and miſery; and what can he do for his dear children in Chriſt that could more ſtrongly ſhew his love for them, than to put them on their guard againſt the pains that are taken to keep them from thinking of thoſe horrible things, or of the crimes and the blood they are to wade through, if once another rebellion takes place, and caution them againſt thoſe perſons who talk to them of nothing but of what the French are to do for them, and how wonderfully they are to be bettered, if once thoſe Infidels and Robbers get the upper hand in this country? If then, I ſtuck to my Chriſtmas duties inſtead of writing theſe letters, it was only that I had not time for both.

It has been told me that many of you think and ſay that Bonaparte's proclamation in Egypt, in which he denies Jeſus Chriſt and the Pope, and pretends that he believes in the Koran and Mahomet, and which I got printed in my laſt letter, is a forgery, and a lie. O *fooliſh* Iriſhmen, that I may ſay to you what St. Paul ſaid to the Galatians, *Who has bewitched you? O inſenſati Galati, quis vos faſcinavit?* Is it the devil himſelf? Or what hope can any one have of ever ſnatching you from his clutches, or doing you any good? You will believe no one but him or his agents. You ſay that this Proclamation is a lie. Do you think I forged it? I muſt be as great a devil as Bonaparte himſelf to let ſuch wicked thoughts come into my brain, or to make out ſuch blaſphemies, as my very pen trembles in my fingers even to write out for you. I told you what was the truth. Thouſands and thouſands of copies of that Proclamation were ſent through Egypt by Bonaparte; they were ſeen by every one there, French, Iriſh, Engliſh, and Egyptians, as every one ſees the Proclamation from the caſtle; and you may as well ſay that the Proclamation againſt diſtilling oats, that came out the other day is a forgery and a lie, becauſe ſo many of you wiſh that it was a lie. The whole world knows that there is no forgery in that Proclamation. It is juſt what every one that ever knew Bonaparte, is ſure he would write and ſay to ſerve his turn; and yet ſtanding in your ſhops, or over your ploughs and your loys, or in your cups, at a ſheebeen houſe, you alone will ſay, that it is all a lie, and that I and all who wiſh that you ſhould know the real truth of all matters, and that you ſhould not be impoſed on, and led aſtray to your ruin, tell you ſuch things only to impoſe upon you, and to ſerve ſome deſign of our own. *O inſenſati Galati!* How bewitched, or ignorant, or wicked muſt thoſe of you be, who ſay and make others believe this of us? But I hope that there are not many amongſt you ſo ignorant or ſo wicked; and, therefore, I will not be diſheartened from laying before

before you a faithful account of what you are to expect from Bonaparte, if we are to judge of him by what he has done to all other nations.

In doing this, I will, as it is my duty to thoſe by whom I chiefly live, and whom I moſt wiſh to inſtruct and to ſave, ſtick to what he has done to the middling and lower part of the people. No one will doubt but that he and his crew, have every where plundered, and will plunder the rich and the great; but many aſk what have the poor to fear from him? Of what can he rob them? and what have they to loſe by him? To ſee the more clearly how this is, it will be of great ſervice to begin by ſeeing how the Farmers, the Shop-keepers, the Tradeſmen, and Artificers, and the Labourers of France have fared in, and after the French Revolution. For ſurely it is natural to aſk, if theſe claſſes of the people in other countries can expect or hope for better treatment than the ſame claſſes in their own country have met with?

Liberty and equality, amongſt men; the humbling the rich, and raiſing up the poor; the taking away all titles; deſtroying all grants and patents for land; pulling down all caſtles and great houſes, and a fair diviſion of all the property of the kingdom; all this, and having no more taxes and tithes, was what the firſt movers and leaders of the French Revolution promiſed to the common people of France; if they would riſe with them againſt the king, the clergy, the nobles, and the gentry, and put them, and all that would ſide with them, to death.

The French have been always a giddy, fickle, hair-brained people, as well as a wicked and cruel people; one of themſelves, whom they made a God when they became pagans; a man called Voltaire ſays, that they have half a monkey in them, and half a tiger, but they ſhewed in this buſineſs that the tiger is the bigger half; it is frightful to think how many of them ran headlong into this hopeful plan; and the horrid

things

things they did in going through with it, could only be believed of tigers thirſting after blood, as if it was the food they were to live on, and ſuch as was never heard or thought of amongſt the moſt ſavage Indians.

There were, to be ſure, numbers amongſt them who had ſtill the fear of God, and the dread of eternal damnation, before their eyes, when they thought of the murders, and the maſſacres, and all the abominations and devilments they were called to join in. But theſe were all looked upon as enemies to the cauſe of the people, without ever thinking to what claſs they belonged, or whether they were poor or rich. In the black liſts that were made, through every pariſh in the kingdom, of thoſe that were to be piked or guillotined, there were as many of the middling and poor, as of the great and the wealthy, put down. All that was aſked was, whether a man would deny his God and his King? whether he put off all bowels of compaſſion, and was ready to ſpill the blood of his landlord, his paſtor, his old friends and neighbours, and even of his father and mother, his ſon or his daughter, his brother or ſiſter, when called upon to do ſo, in the ſervice of the cauſe? And if he was not ready and willing to come forward and do all this, poor or not poor, gentleman or no gentleman, was all one; he was ſet down for death and deſtruction. If one man had a better houſe than another; if he had a ſnugger farm, and more ſtock: if he had more cuſtom in his ſhop, or was more employed in his trade: or even if he had a handſome wife that ſome villain wanted to have for himſelf; this was enough to have him repreſented as an enemy to the great cauſe, and he was put down upon the black liſt. I could give you examples of all this to fill a thouſand books; and at ſuch a rate of deſtruction was this bloody buſineſs carried on, that, not long after the beginning of the revolution, twenty hundred thouſand perſons were found to have been maſſacred in France. Two hundred and fifty thouſand of theſe were women, and two hundred thouſand were children. Was the

like

like ever heard of? And yet even this did not take in the numberleſs crowds who periſhed of want, and hunger and thirſt in the holes and caves and woods, where they fled to hide themſelves from the pikes and daggers, and muſkets of their murderers. This account I take for your information, from a public meſſage that was ſent from the Directory, who were Bonaparte's own friends, to the Council of Five Hundred at Paris, and was what all France knew and believed at that day, and knows and believes at this day, although you will be told by Bonaparte's emiſſaries and agents, that it is all a lie, as you were told his proclamation in Egypt was.

Well, my friends, all theſe maſſacres of the rich, and of all who did not join their murderers and plunderers, brought on the golden days that the leaders of the revolution had promiſed to the common people of France. Now, to be ſure, was the time for liberty and equality, and a fair diviſion of property, and eſtates, and power, among all who had joined in the glorious cauſe; and neither rents, or tithes, or taxes, or ceſſes, were ever more to be heard of in that happy country. No doubt you think all this was done: if you do, it is that you are kept in a ſtate of ignorance that makes one's heart bleed to think of, and beyond that of any other people now living. A tribe of crafty cunning lawyers, pettifogging attornies and their clerks, writers in the public offices, printers of newſpapers, low officers in corporations, renegado prieſts, who, given up to Satan, wanted to change their holy vows and their breviaries for wives and miſtreſſes, and gluttonous debauched friars, who wiſhed to break out of their convents, and marry, or keep whores; fellows of this kind were the only perſons that got any thing by this horrid murdering, and pillage, and ſacrilege. It was they that took the place of the king, the nobles, the clergy, the gentry, the wealthy bankers, merchants, and traders. It is a well known fact, that, except ſome butchers, and ſome bankrupt ſhopkeepers and tradeſmen

from

from the cities and towns, there was not a man, of that kind of people that I write theſe letters to, that got any thing by this bloody revolution, or was a bit the better after it than before it, but rather, as you may well gueſs, after ſuch waſting, and burning, and deſtroying, a great deal the worſe.

At any rate, however, theſe perſons that I mentioned muſt have been the better for the revolution. They had gained their point; they had put all that oppoſed and ſtood againſt them out of the way, and, to be ſure, they kept quiet and peaceable poſſeſſion of their great eſtates, and their fine palaces, and their heaps of gold, and their great places, and their directorſhips, and commiſſions, and offices, and all that. Again, I tell you if you think ſo, it is that you will know nothing of what paſſes in France, but what your deceivers chuſe to tell you. Such bloody choppings and changes, ſuch cutting of throats, ſuch guillotining, ſuch ſinking to the bottom of the ſea, or tranſporting to the burning and deadly climate of South America; ſuch maſſacring of the people, by driving them together in crowds, men, women, and children, in the ſtreets, to be fired at by files of muſqueteers; in ſhort, ſuch horrors took place from day to day, while one ſet of ruffians and villains turned out another, and made a new government, and ſet up freſh plundering, and robbing, and ſeizing of property, as it is no wonder if they, who never heard of ſuch a people as the French, or who lived in a country too far off to know what paſſed among them, could never think it poſſible that human creatures could do to one another—and as to the lower orders of the people who firſt took part in this promiſing buſineſs, that was to raiſe them all to rule and power, it is a well-known fact that, almoſt to a man they have periſhed by the hands of the common hangman, under the many changes of maſters that their wretched country was enſlaved by, when each of them put the friends of the other to death,

or

or in the armies of Germany, Italy, Holland, Spain, Egypt, or wherever theſe maſters choſe to ſend them to fight their battles for them.

Thus things went on in France, until Bonaparte came back from Egypt, as I told you in a former letter. In that letter I told you one of the arts which he made use of to bring all things under himſelf, and raiſe himſelf to the place of the good king, whom the Jacobins, Bonaparte's beſt friends, had pulled from his throne and put to death; there were many other things, at that time, to make it more eaſy for him to bring about that revolution. But nothing helped him more than that the unfortunate people were ſo ground down, ſo oppreſſed, and vexed, and haraſſed and ruined by ſo many new tyrants riſing up every day, one after another, and each of them more cruel and bloody than the other, that they thought it better to have one maſter, than one, two, or three hundred, or even more, as, to their bitter coſt, they had, from the time that they loſt their lawful ſovereign. And ſo, after all the bloodſhed, havoc, and plunder, after turning their country into a hell upon earth, and after all the arts that were practiſed on the unhappy, deluded people, and all the temptations and baits that were thrown out to them, they of them who eſcaped, and lived to ſee all theſe things paſſed and gone, thought themſelves happy in ſome ſort if they were left juſt where they were, as to their condition, and their means of living, before the revolution. They thought themſelves, in ſome ſort, well off to have an upſtart, foreign tyrant, in the place of their own lawful king, to raiſe taxes and impoſts on them, and to fill his armies with themſelves and their ſons; to have new maſters, and new landlords, out of the very ſcum and dregs of their country, to make them pay exorbitant rents, and heavy and oppreſſive duties, to maintain them in luxury in the place of their old lords, under whom they and their fathers had, for ages, been quiet and content, and gay as the French people naturally

naturally are; to have tithes and all church dues to pay under different names, to the creatures and favourites of Bonaparte, in the place of their biſhops and paſtors, who formerly adminiſtered to them the rites of the church, and the comforts of religion in thoſe bleſſed ſacraments, that ſtrengthen them in life, and conſole them in death.

In ſhort, at this very moment that I write to you, this unhappy people, provided they are let live, aſk for no more; they are obliged to give an account to Bonaparte's officers of all they have left in the world, in order that theſe bloodſuckers may know where they can ſeize whatever is wanted for the uſe of his ſoldiers, to whom every thing is ſacrificed, as a reward for ſupporting his tyranny; they are torn away from their families, or ſee their ſons torn from them by what they call *conſcriptions*, for recruiting thoſe armies that you hear of, ſwarming every where like devouring Locuſts and Caterpillars; they are every moment in dread of ſeeing their wives or their daughters carried off from them, to ſatisfy the brutal paſſions of their new landlords, or of ſome ſavage officer or ſoldier, marching through or quartered among them; all theſe miſeries they ſuffer at this moment under Bonaparte, yet they are ſo cowed and diſheartened and terrified at what the rage and madneſs of that furious tyrant may do to famiſh them, that all they have to do is to hang down their heads like oxen in a yoke, in grief and affliction, and curſe the day when they helped to deſtroy and baniſh the old Nobles and Gentry of the country, who if they were alive and near them, would ſave and reſcue them from theſe cruel taſkmaſters, in the ſame manner as, with God's help, your nobles, and gentry, and yeomen will protect you againſt all the attempts and attacks of theſe ſavages, if they dare to come amongſt us.

Now and then, indeed, and in ſome places, their miſeries are ſo much beyond all bearing of ſuffering, and their tyrants ride them ſo cruelly, that in deſpair, they riſe up and try to break their chains. It is not more than a

week

week ſince we had an account of the unhappy people, in a place they call La Vendee, having been driven to do ſomething of this kind. The commander in chief in that place is one Dutertre; he was once a galley ſlave, that is, a ruffian condemned for ſome crime, to be chained to the oar for life, on board the King's galleys. What treatment the poor people were likely to ſuffer from this ruffian, you may eaſily gueſs. However they bore every thing quietly and patiently until a decree or law about the conſcription or enrolling people for the army came out. Then indeed, ſuch grief and confuſion as this law cauſed in every family, rich and poor, for it makes no difference, beat every thing that has been ſeen ſince the beginning of the revolution. The huſband torn from his wife, the father from his children, the ſon from his helpleſs parents. There is no exemption, no excuſe, no protection for any one; on the leaſt murmur or complaint, or attempt to eſcape, the wretched conſcripts as they are called, are thrown into ſome of the priſons that are opened for the purpoſe in every town and village. From theſe they are ſent off in bands of twenties, chained together, and driven like beaſts to places fixed on for the purpoſe, where under Bonaparte's decree, they are puniſhed in different ways, ſome are condemned to what they call the boulet or the bullet. They are to drag after them a bullet of eight pound weight, faſtened to a long chain. They are to wear the dreſs of a galley ſlave. They are to be at hard work ten hours a day in ſummer, and eight in winter; their heads are to be ſhaved bald, and they are never to cut or ſhave their beards; when they are done work they are to be chained in their priſons; others are condemned to all theſe ſame puniſhments, except that they do not drag the bullet: others are condemned to pay fines that muſt ruin them, and ſome put to death.

This horrible decree that makes one's blood run cold, and that is to reach to every part of France, was forced upon the poor people of La Vendee, in ſo cruel and bar-

barous a meaſure by the galley ſlave general, that at laſt all the young men flew to arms. But alas! their courage and their deſpair were of no uſe to them; they were beaten in a battle they fought ſome weeks ago with Bonaparte's army; numbers of them were killed, many more taken priſoners, and either ſhot, or ſent to be tranſported to the colonies. Fifteen hundred perſons of every condition and every age; landlords and tenants, farmers and laborers, ſhopkeepers with their cuſtomers, and tradeſmen with their employers, all were dragged from their houſes in one night, and ſent God knows where.—Whole pariſhes ran away the next day from their homes, to hide themſelves in the woods, and among the rocks, and the country looks like a deſart.

The armies which Bonaparte raiſes by ſuch barbarous and cruel ways as theſe, he raiſes wantonly, and only to keep up his authority and his conſequence, and to make war upon other nations, to carry their plunder into France, as a robber and highwayman carries his plunder to his den. With theſe armies he is now threatening to attack and plunder thoſe iſlands of ours. Yet when our good King called on his brave and faithful people, to take arms in defence of all that is moſt dear to them, and when the neceſſity of getting ready to meet theſe bloody robbers without delay, made the Parliament order an army of reſerve to be raiſed by ballot, you can, yourſelves, from what paſſed on that occaſion, compare the ſituation of the people of this country with that of the French, who you are told are coming to make you as happy as themſelves. God deliver us from ſuch happineſs!

By the law that was paſſed to raiſe this army of reſerve, public notice was to be given of the day for holding the ballots. Liſts of the names of the perſons of the age to be ballotted for in every pariſh, were to be poſted up, where they might be ſeen by every body; and that all might have it in their power to appeal, if they had any thing to ſhew againſt their being put to a ballot, or could

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offer any exemption or excuſe for it. In theſe exemptions and excuſes, as they were granted by the act, no poor man, having more than one child born in marriage, could be ballotted for. Any perſon ballotted for, that could ſwear that he was not worth a hundred pounds, and that he was not healthy or ſtrong enough to ſerve, was to be immediately ſtruck off, and another man ballotted for in his place.——No man, after he was ballotted, could be dragged from his houſe or his family by force, or by the ſoldiers. It was neceſſary that the conſtable ſhould give him legal and timely notice of the way he was to go to the rendezvous. If it would injure his buſineſs, or if he did not wiſh to ſerve himſelf, inſtead of going to the rendezvous, he might ſend a perſon in his place; and in order that all perſons, who could afford the expence for getting ſuch a perſon, might have this indulgence, money was to be given to them from the public purſe, without any coſt whatever to themſelves. Perſons, raiſed for this army, were never to be forced to ſerve out of England, Ireland, or Scotland, and their families were to be taken care of by the county during their abſence from them. All this happened ſo lately, and is ſo well known to you all, that it is a thing in which no one can deceive you. Judge then for yourſelves, and ſee what a difference there is in this one point, of filling the army, in theſe unhappy times of war, under your own laws and government, and under thoſe of Bonaparte. See how the cruel tyrant treats his own ſubjects, and judge ye how you ſhould be treated by him, if ever he ſhould be maſter of this country, which God in his mercy forbid.

Bonaparte can live only by wars.—Nothing but his great armies can keep him from being dragged from the place he has raiſed himſelf to, from the dirt, and through ſo many crimes, and from being ſacrificed to the hatred and revenge of the world that he rides over. In all the

countries that he has conquered, or that have invited him to come amongſt them, he forces the inhabitants to recruit thoſe armies, by his conſcriptions: he quarters them on the inhabitants, he forces them to clothe them, to feed them, to pay them. All this I will shew you in another Letter. Why then ſhould you be *ſo bewitched*, as to think that you alone, of all the people of the earth, are ſo beloved and favoured by this monſter, that while he preys upon them and devours them, he is to lick and fawn upon you; and that inſtead of fleecing and ſkinning you, he is to do you ſervice, and better your condition. *Quis vos faſcinavit?*

P. O'——, P. P.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

WHAT I am to ſhew you in this Letter is the way in which the French have dealt with all the nations, into which they have made their way, either as profeſſed and open enemies, or as ſeeming and pretended friends.—What they did to one nation, was what they did to all; it would, therefore, be only telling you the ſame thing over and over again, if I was to lay before you a full account of what Brabant, Holland, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, and Egypt have each in their turn, endured from their tyranny. One or two examples will be enough for our purpoſe.

Their regular way of going on was this. They took up the cauſe of the diſaffected and diſcontented parties which they found in the country; they promiſed to remove all their complaints, and deliver them from the government they diſliked; they ſent agents amongſt them with thoſe promiſes, and to prepare the way for their arms by preaching up their principles. Theſe agents addreſſed themſelves chiefly to the lower orders of the people, who, from their condition, were the moſt likely to be caught and led away by thoſe principles, as they pretended to be thoſe of liberty and equality, and the levelling of every thing that raiſed one man above another, either in fortune, or power, or place, or by any other diſtinction. When things were thoroughly ripe for their appearance, they broke into the country with their mighty armies, raiſed and kept together by the hope of plunder. They hoiſted the French flag—they gave the people the French cockade—they ſet up the tree of liberty—

ty—they gave the brotherly embrace or hug—the people were their dear friends and allies; free and independent as the French themſelves, they ſhould make a new government, and new laws of their own, as ſoon as there ſhould be time and leiſure for it: in the mean time they might reſt happy and ſafe under the protection of the French army, who had the moſt ſtrict orders to commit neither outrage or violence, nor any act of plunder or riot, or diſorder.

It was in this way, and with all theſe fine words and fine ſhews, that they broke into that part of Flanders called Brabant, which was under the government of the Emperor of Germany. The Brabanters had been unfortunately quarrelling among themſelves about ſome petty ſquabbles. The Emperor wiſhed to make ſome changes, which he thought would be uſeful to the people; a party was made againſt thoſe changes. Perſons who wanted to get into power, and who had their own private intereſts to ſerve in the buſineſs, went through the country firing up the people, as is always the way with ſuch men, by pretending that they had nothing in view but the intereſts of the people. They brought religion alſo into the quarrel, which is another old trick with ſuch men; and, by this means, nothing was ſeen through all the towns and villages, but factions, and diſputings, and volunteerings, and wearing different coloured badges and cockades.

This was exactly what the French wanted. They ſent agents to the diſcontented and rebellious Brabanters; they ſaid the cauſe of the Brabanters was the ſame as their own, and they promiſed to come to fight their battles, and to break the Auſtrian yoke from off their necks.—They were, in an evil hour, liſtened to, and the country was undone.

There was not, in all Europe, a more rich, flouriſhing, and happy people than the Brabanters. I remember, when I was coming from abroad, travelling through their country, after I had paſſed French Flanders, and I

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have not forgot to this day the difference I ſaw between the Auſtrian and French peaſantry. I remember, as if it was but yeſterday, the wretched, ſtarved, withered, ragged, ſneaking figures of the French, and the ruddy, healthy, robuſt, well clothed, open faced, honeſt looking Brabanter. I remember the neat, comfortable houſes of the one, and the filthy, miſerable habitations of the other.—Among the French I ſaw nothing but idleneſs, drunkenneſs, vice of every kind, and a contempt of religion; among the Brabanters, ſobriety, induſtry, and proofs of their piety and devotion, in the number of oratories and chapels that were raiſed at every mile or two along the high road. But the evil ſpirit of faction, and party, and civil and religious diſputes, got amongſt them, and, with the French, it called in ſeven other ſpirits more wicked than itſelf, and Brabant never knew happineſs more. Its rich corn fields, its fine paſture and meadow grounds, were trampled under foot, and overflowed with blood, by the numberleſs armies that were fighting for the poſſeſſion of it. At length it pleaſed God, in his anger, that the French ſhould be victorious. No ſooner did this happen, and they found themſelves firmly ſettled, than they threw off the maſk, and ſhewed the unhappy Brabanters what friends and protectors they had called in.—Day after day, claim came after claim for money, for proviſions, for clothing, and other neceſſaries, to maintain that gallant army that had ſo generouſly left its own country to make their dear allies and brothers free, and happy, and proſperous. This, you know, was but juſt.—When you receive a ſervice, it is but fair that you ſhould make ſome return for it, and this return ought to be in what your friends and benefactors chiefly want. Men, and money, and clothing, and proviſions, was all the French wanted, and all they aſked. If any perſons were ſo ungrateful as to think theſe demands and calls went too far, and either refuſed or murmured, they deſerved puniſhment, and they had only themſelves to blame if they

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brought on themſelves military executions, and free quarterings, and commiſſaries, and tax-gatherers, followed by an armed ſoldiery. Unfortunately theſe murmurs and complaints were in a ſhort time heard from every mouth.—The tyranny got to be ſo general, and not to be borne or endured, that the Brabanters, haraſſed, and plundered, and worn down to the bone, began to repent of their folly, and they invited their old maſter, the Emperor, to come to their aſſiſtance, and to deliver them. But it was too late; they had been themſelves the cauſe of the great loſſes the Emperor had ſuffered, by calling in and aſſiſting his enemies againſt him. He was then fighting with theſe enemies for the countries he had ſtill left; and ſo, this people, who, I hope will be a warning to you for ever, inſtead of that freedom and independence with the promiſe of which the French had cajoled them, are now ſome of the moſt cruelly ſqueezed and oppreſſed ſlaves of France. In their towns are chiefly quartered thoſe ſwarms of banditti who are threatening invaſion. They ſow their rich corn fields only to have them reaped for their blood-hounds. Their ports and their harbours, inſtead of ſeeing their ſhipping ſailing in and out, as in the time of their old government, to carry their corn and other commodities to other countries, and to return loaded with riches, are turned into places of rendezvous for the French gun-boats: their young men are forced to recruit the army, and their ſeamen driven to man the boats and other veſſels by the dreadful conſcription of which I told you in my laſt letter. New taxes and impoſitions are raiſed every day on the unhappy inhabitants to pay the expences of all this, and ſupply the money which is not to be had in France; and the inſide of every houſe is taken up by ſome ruffian ſoldier, who looks upon every thing in it, maſter, miſtreſs, ſons and daughters, furniture, cattle, proviſions, as his own, and to be uſed for his ſervice or pleaſure. If the poor inhabitants grumble or reſiſt, they are put in requiſition, or they are knocked in the head.

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As the French came into Brabant, ſo they came into Holland. There was in that country an old party againſt their lawful prince, the Stadtholder; theſe called in the French to their aſſiſtance, and to join them in their attempt to drive the Stadtholder and his family out of the country; they ſucceeded, came, and had the upper hand, and the Dutch became ſlaves.

The way in which they firſt ſhewed the cloven hoof to their dear friends, the Dutch, was by publiſhing a proclamation that every *merchant*, *ſhopkeeper*, *farmer*, *tradeſman* and *labourer*, ſhould take French aſſignats, that is, French paper money in payment, for all the neceſſaries of life ſold at market, and for the articles of their ſeveral trades, and for their labour; at the ſame time a requiſition was made for a loan of money from the people, like that I told you of at Killalla by Charoſt. French agents were ſent on this errand from houſe to houſe, and from the richeſt burghers and boors to the pooreſt peaſant and fiſherman, all were in this way *forced* to give *voluntarily and with a hearty good will!* the hard dollars they had been hoarding up for themſelves and their families. If they offered French aſſignats, the borrowers thanked them, but the French had enough of them without aſking them of the Dutch. But what matter? It was all for their good friends and allies, and to pay them for their protection and for the liberty and equality they came to give the Dutch.

But money, although a very good thing, is not all that is wanted for an army, nor have all perſons money to give.—Theſe generous troops that were left in Holland to watch over the freedom and happineſs of the Dutch, wanted proviſion, clothing, and many other neceſſaries, and it was juſt that the Dutch ſhould give them all theſe things. Take one of thoſe requiſitions made by the French General, immediately after gathering in the laſt loan, as a ſample of all the reſt. In the courſe of a month was to be brought into the French ſtores one

hundred thouſand barrels of wheat, fifty thouſand loads of hay, two hundred thouſand loads of ſtraw, one hundred and fifty thouſand pair of ſhoes, twenty thouſand pair of boots, twenty thouſand coats, twenty thouſand waiſtcoats, forty thouſand pair of breeches, one hundred and fifty thouſand pair of pantaloons, one hundred thouſand ſhirts, fifty thouſand hats, and twelve thouſand oxen. From the nature of the articles ſet down in this friendly requiſition, you will ſee from what kind of perſons it was that they were to be taken, and on what part of the people this load, that muſt ſink them at once, was to fall. Even to complain of the hardſhip of ſuch a requiſition in the ſtate the country was then in, was a crime; and all perſons who had in their poſſeſſion any of the articles that were wanted, were forced at the point of the bayonet, to give them to commiſſaries hired for that purpoſe, who were ſent into every houſe to ſearch for, and carry them away. Were they paid for them? no not even in French aſſignats.

This you will ſay was pretty well for friends and allies, and protectors. But have patience; the unfortunate Dutch have had need for enough of it. In the following ſpring this army, gorged and bloated like leeches and gad-flies, dropped off, as I may ſay, as theſe blood-ſuckers do when they are full, and returned to their own country, after having plundered their dear friends of no leſs a ſum than *four million* pounds ſterling. Immediately a new ſwarm of leeches and gad-flies took their place, to gorge and fill themſelves, as they that went before them had done. The army that marched in was equal in numbers to that which marched out, and the ſame calls and requiſitions for pay, for clothing and neceſſaries, for proviſions and cattle, were made for one as for the other, by theſe deliverers of Europe, and raiſed in the ſame way. So things have gone on ever ſince, from year to year. It was no later than the tenth of laſt November, that the French general, Victor, ſent an order to the Dutch Directory, at eleven o'clock in the morning, to pay in five hundred

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thouſand florins, on account of the pay due to the French army; he fixed the ſame hour the next day for receiving the money, and gave theſe trembling wretches, the baſe betrayers of their country, who knew not where to look for ſuch a ſum, to underſtand, that if the payment was put off a moment longer, he would order the French troops to march to Amſterdam, to pay themſelves out of the bank, or wherever they could find money.

Thus the chains of this unfortunate people are faſt rivetted upon them. They may rattle them, but they cannot ſhake them off. Forced loans, requiſitions for proviſions and clothing, voluntary contributions, and free gifts, ſubſidies, proclamations for taking aſſignats and French paper in payment, inſtead of their own coin, tax upon tax, impoſition upon impoſition, came round upon them as certain as the light of every new day. But you cannot know half of their miſery, until you are told that theſe tyrants have robbed them of every means they could poſſeſs or have to anſwer theſe endleſs calls. Thus trade is entirely deſtroyed. Their colonies, which were the great ſource and fountains of their riches, are either taken from them, or the way to them ſo blocked and ſhut up by the Engliſh fleets, that they can get nothing from them. Beſides the great French army in their country, which they are forced to pay, and to clothe, and to feed, they have on foot a much greater army of their own than they ever had under their old government; and that not for their own uſe, or at their own orders, but at the orders of the French, to make war on whom they pleaſe, and to march wherever they command them. Their navy, that was once able to face that of England, is almoſt entirely ruined. The little of it that is left, inſtead of protecting their own trade, or being in any way of ſervice to them, is at this moment held in requiſition by the French, for the invaſion of England; and what I wiſh above every thing elſe to point out to you, as falling altogether on the poor, who in that country are moſtly fiſhermen, all the ſmacks, and herring-buſſes, and ſmall craft, are in the ſame ſtate of requiſition, and not

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let put out to ſea, while their wretched owners, and the great numbers of people they once employed, who have no other means of ſupporting their families but by the herring and other fiſheries, are forcibly kept on board of them, in order to work them againſt England, whenever the tyrant Bonaparte will feel courage enough to attempt his threatened invaſion. What think you, my friends, when their old landlords, and maſters, and employers, wiſhed to put theſe poor fiſhermen on their guard againſt the French, and, inſtead of joining with them, adviſed them to join with thoſe that took arms to keep them out of the country, don't you think they anſwered—*Why, what have we to fear from them? what have the poor to loſe?*

The head turns, and the heart ſickens at hearing of all theſe horrible doings. I would therefore ſpare you the pains of reading any further account of the miſeries and ſufferings the French have brought on every nation they have had to do with, and would here finiſh theſe Letters, but that in an account which I have before me of what the wretched peaſantry of Egypt ſuffered, while the French army was marching through their country, I find what I may well wiſh to be the laſt ſound of that warning voice which I have raiſed for thoſe of my countrymen, who are moſt in my thoughts. It will, I hope, ſo ſtrongly fix upon your minds as never to be forgotten by you, what the middling and lower claſſes have to look to, from French officers and a French army.

The account is taken from a Book written by one *Denon*. He printed it ſoon after he came back to France from Egypt, and dedicated it to Bonaparte himſelf; that is, he ſent it out into the world, under the name and the authority of Bonaparte, to be read by every one, as what they might be ſure was true; and from this you may ſee that the French, as ſoon as their turn is anſwered, have no wiſh to hide, what their friends in this country take ſuch pains to deny for them. This Denon writes of all the Egyptian people ſuffered, as if it was a good joke he was telling, and as if it was a ſport and a make-game to the French Officers and Soldiers, to haraſs,

and

and to murder, and to plunder them. I will give you his own words:

"*We, who boaſted to this good people, that we were more juſt than the Mamelukes, their old Rulers and great men, did every day, and I may ſay from neceſſity, a thouſand unjuſt and iniquitous things. It was not eaſy for us to know our enemies by their looks or their colour, and this made us kill every day the harmleſs and innocent natives. Our Soldiers miſtook travelling companies of Merchants for enemies, and before juſtice could be done them, which we did when we had time, two or three of them were ſhot, their goods were pillaged or deſtroyed, and we took away their camels from them, and in their place gave them thoſe of our own, that were worn out or wounded.*"——Camels are the beaſts of burden in Egypt, inſtead of horſes or oxen. —"*The fate of the poor people,* ſays he, FOR WHOSE HAPPINESS, NO DOUBT, WE CAME INTO EGYPT, (ſee how the villain ſneers and laughs at the folly and ſillineſs of thoſe, who could think that the French had any ſuch thing in their thoughts,)—*the fate of the poor people, for whoſe happineſs, no doubt, we came into Egypt, was no better. If, as our army was coming near their villages, fear made them leave their houſes, and fly with their wives and children, they found, when they came back, nothing but the mud of which their houſes were made. Kitchen furniture, ploughs, gates, roofs, all was made fire of to boil our ſoup. Their pots were broken, their grain eaten, their fowls and pigeons, of which myriads are bred in Egypt, roaſted for our dinner, and nothing was left but the dead bodies of their dogs, killed while guarding and defending the property of their maſters.*" ——You ſee, my dear friends, what devils they are; the very dogs, becauſe they were true and faithful to their poor maſters, were hacked and butchered by them.——"*But,* he goes on,—*If we ſtaid any time in a village, the wretches were ordered to come back under pain of being treated as rebels, and as rebels being taxed to pay double the ſum that had been raiſed on all the inhabitants. When theſe threats brought them within our lines, and they came in to pay the tax, it ſometimes happened that our ſoldiers, not knowing their language, or how to diſtinguiſh them, took them*

for

for a body of revolters, and the ſticks which they carry in their hands for arms, and they got ſome diſcharges of muſketry, before there was time for them to clear the miſtake; the dead were then buried, and we remained good friends, till they had a ſafe opportunity of revenge. Now this was all their own fault; for when they ſtayed at home, payed the tax, and brought in all the army wanted, they were ſaved the trouble of a journey to the Deſert."—Still you ſee how the ruffian jeſts at their ſufferings, for that is as we ſhould ſay they were ſaved a voyage to Botany Bay—"*they were ſaved the trouble of a journey to the Deſert, ſaw their proviſions conſumed and eaten up by the troops with great good order and regularity, and had leave to have ſome part of them for themſelves and their families; ſome of their gates were left ſtanding, now and then ſomething was thrown to them for their eggs, and they had but a few of their wives and daughters raviſhed and deflowered.*"

Again, and again, my dear friends, I beſeech you to ſee how this companion, this friend, this favourite of Bonaparte ſports, and tries to divert his readers with his ſneering way of telling the ſavage and barbarous treatment the poor deluded people of Egypt, the merchants, the traders, the farmers, the cottagers and the labourers received from theſe hypocritical ruffians who, by their agents before they landed, and their proclamations after they had landed, pretended they came into their country only to deliver them from their tyrants, and to make them free and happy.

Aſk now, then, what you, to whom I write theſe letters, have to fear from Bonaparte and his deſtroying armies? What have you to loſe by them? I aſk you what had thoſe of your own claſs in Egypt to fear from them? What had they to loſe by them? What had the traders and farmers and cottagers of Brabant and the fiſhermen of Holland to fear from them, or to loſe by them?—But you have more to loſe than any of theſe, you have better and more equal laws, more liberty, greater ſecurity and protection of perſon and property, a freer profeſſion and exerciſe of your religion, a milder government and a more fatherly King,

acting

acting among you this day by a moſt worthy repreſentative in your Lord Lieutenant, than any other people on the face of the earth. All theſe you have to loſe, and for the very pooreſt of you, if you have no property to be plundered of, except what your cabins have in them, you have your *bodies* to be put into requiſition, you have ſtrength, and your ſons have ſtrength to drag a cannon, to be yoked to a tumbril, to carry baggage, to be driven into the French army, and ſhipped off wherever they chuſe, by the dreadful conſcriptions; you have wives, daughters and ſiſters to be raviſhed, to glut the paſſions of a ſavage banditti, ranging through the country, and ranſacking every houſe and every cottage. All this you have to fear, and all this you have to loſe; away then with this ſilly queſtion; you have every thing to loſe that is dear to the honeſt, the induſtrious, and the religious, or that even the wicked and the profligate, and the idle find comfort in.

But be ye true to yourſelves, to your country, to your king, and to your religion and your God, and you will not, you cannot loſe them. Open your eyes to the only danger you have to fear, that of being deceived and miſled, and you will not, you cannot loſe them; catch the ſpirit of loyalty that ſo ſtrongly blazes around you, and which the folly and infatuation of the diſaffected and the rebellious, or the wickedneſs of thoſe who make common cauſe with the enemies of Jeſus Chriſt and his church, can no more damp or check, than the vapors of the night can darken the rays of the ſun or leſſen its heat. Play the men as it is your nature to do; and if Bonaparte or his generals attempt to invade us, and eſcape the Britiſh Lion at ſea, let them find you joined with the Britiſh Lion on land. So, inſtead of the guilt and ſhame of being found with them in the day of their defeat, you will have the glory of being ranked with their conquerors, and the pride of aſſiſting in ridding the world of the moſt cruel and blood-thirſty monſters that ever, in human form, ſcourged the human race.

P. O'——, P. P.

FINIS.

Houses of the Oireachtas