

A
LETTER
 TO THE
ROMAN CATHOLICS
 OF
DUBLIN.

BY
THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

ΑΚΕΑΕΥΣΤΟΣ
 ΑΜΙΣΘΟΣ.....

ÆSCHYL. AGAMEMNON.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY FORTUNE AND BLYTH,
 FOR GILBERT AND HODGES,
 27, DAME-STREET.

1810.

LETTER

TO THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS

OF

DUBLIN.

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

ATTORNEY AT LAW

AT THE

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PRINTED BY JOSEPH AND NEVIN,

FOR GILBERT AND HOOPER,

ST. DAMIAN STREET.

1810.

A LETTER,

&c.

THOUGH the late Resolutions of your Committee, in Dublin,* seem intended to be final upon the subject of the Veto, let us hope that a question, so vitally connected with the freedom, peace, and stability of the Empire, may not be dismissed with such hasty and absolute decision. The discussion has hitherto been carried on with a degree of warmth and passion, which, however creditable to the feelings of those engaged in it, has certainly tended but little to the improvement of their reasoning powers. Indeed it is but an abuse of language, to dignify with the name of discussion either the proceedings or the writings, to which the question has hitherto given rise. Those orators and authors, who live but by flattering your prejudices, having found that you look to but one point of the compass for argument, have set in from that quarter with a regular trade-wind of declamation, which neither your bishops, your friends, nor common-sense, have been able to withstand. In this state of the

* March 2d, 1810.

question, it requires no ordinary share of indifference, to the taunts and suspicions of the illiberal, the misinterpretations of the ignorant, and the cold-blooded rancour of the bigoted, to stand forth as the advocate of this required concession, and to urge it as the sole, the necessary sacrifice, by which you are to deserve the liberties which you demand. Inadequate as I am to this undertaking, and entering the lists, like David, in armour "which I have not proved," I am yet conscious of bringing an honesty of feeling to the task, a zeal for my country's honour, and an ardent wish for her liberties, which entitle me to attention, at least, though they should fail in producing conviction.

The first point, which naturally comes under consideration, in a subject where the interests of Religion are concerned, is the conduct of your Bishops; and here, at the outset, we meet with that insurmountable fact (which your lay-theologians would so willingly throw into the shade) that, in the year 1799, four metropolitans and six prelates professed themselves willing, as the price of Catholic emancipation, to concede to the government a controul upon the appointment of your bishops, and signed a formal document to that effect. This stipulated basis of negociation, so solemnly agreed to by ten of your spiritual magistrates, has been since retracted, and the defence resorted to by those who think it necessary, to apologise for the conduct of these prelates,

and explain away the awkwardness of the retraction, wears so strongly the features of jesuitical evasion, that I blush for its parents and adoptors. "It was a moment of panic," they tell us, "in which these venerable men were surprised; and no stipulation, extorted in such circumstances, could possibly be meant or considered as binding." Observe, however, the dilemma, in which this document of 1799 has involved the opposers of the Veto. If the bishops were right in making this concession—if, acquainted, as they must be intimately, with the essentials of your faith and the interests of your hierarchy, they yet saw nothing in the proposed pledge, which was likely to violate or endanger either,—then the principal argument against the Veto must, of course, fall pointless to the ground. But, if, on the contrary, they were false to their trust—if believing (as their lay-masters would have them believe) that the measure was deeply injurious to the church, so large a portion of your dignified clergy were driven by fear, or seduced by emolument, to sign what they considered the death-warrant of their faith—then, I ask, would not your rulers be justified in suspecting the integrity of these men, and in asking for some guard against the appointment of persons so ineligible in the event of your becoming co-partners in the constitution? Could they, who had failed in faith, be expected to prove steady in politics, or would not the same hands, which had surrendered your

church to the government, in like manner surrender that government to the enemy? Such is the alternative, to which we are forced, by those violent charges and insidious vindications, with which the members of your episcopacy have been assailed: the less upright and trust-worthy they make your bishops appear, the more fully do they justify the government, in demanding some security against the appointment of such persons in future.

But the characters of these venerable men are a sufficient answer to so gross an imputation. It is worse than insult to suspect, that, if they had perceived in the measure any one of those ruinous results, so boldly and fancifully predicted by your orators, they could have lapsed, for a moment, through motives of fear or ambition, into such an act of spiritual treason, such a recreant abandonment of their ministry. It is quite impossible; and we are therefore warranted in considering those anti-catholic terrors in which the Veto is arrayed, as the dreams of ignorant, though perhaps well-meaning alarmists, who, if they could be prevailed upon to adopt the philosophy of Panurge, and "fear nothing but danger," would be much more respectable in their panic, and might be somewhat more easily relieved from it.

The second occasion, which called forth the sentiments of your bishops, was the clamour excited in the year 1808, when your parliamentary

friends, upon the authority of this document and the corroborating information of Dr. Milner, declared that, in the event of your full emancipation, a negative controul upon the nomination of your bishops would be vested, as a pledge of security, in the crown. The effect which this proposal produced, upon the parliament and people of England, must be remembered with a mixture of pleasure and regret, for the brightness of its promise and the shortness of its duration. The hopes of your friends were kindled into confidence; the fears of the timid, and the doubts of the conscientious, were allayed and satisfied by this liberal compromise, and the champions of intolerance saw, with dismay, the last dark barrier of exclusion disappearing. But transient indeed was this lucid interval. In the very act of curing the folly of your adversaries, you were suddenly seized with the infection yourselves, and the senseless cry of "the church is in danger" was just dying away upon the lips of Protestants, when it was caught up by Catholics, and echoed with emulous vociferation.

The laity were the first to give the alarm; the proposed concession was denounced as an act of apostacy, and your friends, not less than your enemies, were charged with a design to overturn the Catholic religion in Ireland; Dr. Milner was degraded from an apostle into a hireling, and your bishops were called upon, with the most indecorous menaces, to disavow the conciliatory

spirit which he had imputed to them. And here, let me ask, can any one suppose, for an instant, that Dr. Milner, the acknowledged agent of your hierarchy, (with whose sentiments, upon every bearing of the question, he must have made himself intimately conversant,) is it rational to think that he would have ventured even to hint at an arrangement, which he considered, in the least degree, unwelcome to the feelings and principles of his constituents? It is not to be imagined, and though I am but little inclined to argue from Dr. Milner's consistency, being of opinion that there is, in this right reverend scholar, a certain irresponsible unsteadiness of judgment, which not even his studies of Cabbasutius and Thomasinus* have been heavy enough to ballast sufficiently, it is impossible, I think, not to see, in his conduct upon this occasion, a conclusive proof that the great body of your prelates, was by no means averse from the concession of a negative to the Crown.

The alarm, however, was gone abroad—a rash,

* Two favourite authors of Dr. Milner—I confess I am ungrateful enough to wish, that, before Dr. Milner did us the honour of visiting Ireland, he had consulted his friend Cabbasutius for some of these canons, which so wisely forbid ecclesiastics *to travel*. He will find something to this purpose in page 591 of the *Notitia Ecclesiastica*, and also amongst the Canons of the Concilium Budense, the 64th of which complains that it was the practice of clergymen “*tam turpiter quam damnabiliter per terram sæpius evagari*”—Cabbasut. Not. Ecclesiast. page 476.

and unreasoning laity were taught to see perils and mischiefs in the measure, which had escaped the eyes of those, most interested and best informed upon the subject. The decisions of the ignorant are always violent, in proportion to their erroneousness; "*furiosa res est in tenebris impetus*;" not a whisper of argument was heard; not a single link of the drag-chain of reason was suffered to retard the down-hill precipitancy of passion, nor could the tried and active fidelity of years, protect your friends from the ungenerous charge, of having prevaricated with your interests and conspired against your faith. In the midst of this ferment, a general meeting of your prelates was assembled, and I question much if they did not perceive, in the insolent tone, with which your laity dictated to them, more danger to the peace and unity of your church, than centuries of government interference could threaten. Let us see, however, the result of this synod. Did they retract or condemn the *principle* of their former concession? Did they, in any way, authorize those alarms for the safety of your religion, which had been so industriously circulated among the laity? Did they intimate, even in the remotest manner, that this proposed price of your complete disenthralment, was incompatible with their doctrine, discipline or principles? By no means. They merely passed a resolution (in which they were perhaps justified, by the ferment of the public mind at the moment)

that it was inexpedient to alter the existing mode of nomination—not dangerous, observe, nor heterodox, nor anti-catholic, nor any of those *sambenito** epithets, in which your orators still clothe the measure, but simply *inexpedient*; and, as if not content with this virtual admission of the perfect compatibility of a Veto with the Catholic faith and discipline, they voted the thanks of the synod to Dr. Milner; to that very Dr. Milner, who had just answered for their friendliness to the measure, and whose representation of their sentiments respecting it, they had been so menacingly called upon by the laity to disavow. Such, after all, was the extent of the palinode, which your clamours extorted from the bishops in 1808. They acknowledged the representative services of Dr. Milner, thus sanctioning the principle of that concession which he had offered in their names, and, instead of entrenching themselves behind any of those pertinacious objections, by which some persons would willingly shut out conciliation for ever, they merely took shelter (and rather from their flocks than their rulers) behind the light and surmountable fence of inexpediency—an obstacle, which, as it was raised, in deference to the infatuation of the laity, awaits but the return of their good sense to shew its untenable futility.

* The name of the garment, worn by those who were condemned by the Inquisition; “more properly (says Townsend) *saco bendito*.”

I am not aware that I have assumed too much, in the dispositions which I here attribute to your prelates, throughout the entire discussion of the Veto ; and yet *this* is the measure, thus virtually approved by them, thus formally conceded at first, and at last rather reserved than retracted, which the wrong-headed politicians amongst you, in contempt of their spiritual guides, have branded as impious, deadly and apostatical ; *this* is the condition of your liberties, for his luminous enforcement of which, Lord Grenville is now grossly and ungratefully calumniated, as a sophisticator of your cause, and a conspirator against your religion ; and this is the pledge, to whose pretended inexpediency the bigoted and the factious would not hesitate to sacrifice the freedom of Ireland and the harmony of the whole Empire, more wicked in their folly than that people of antiquity,* who set a fly upon an altar and sacrificed an ox to it !

In addition to the implied acquiescence of your prelates (implied, I think, satisfactorily, from the foregoing review of their conduct) when we know that the vicars-apostolical of England have all, with the exception of the *consistent* Dr. Milner, expressed themselves favourable to the proposed arrangement, we cannot but feel indignant at the audacity of those lay pamphleteers,

* Mentioned by Ælian, and alluded to by Addison, in his Freeholder.

who still officiously interfere with the jurisdiction of your hierarchy, and persist in arraigning, as ruinous and impious, a measure which its spiritual judges have acquitted of all but inexpediency. At the same time, it must be confessed, that the disposition which the laity have shewn, in encroaching upon the province of their clergy in this question, and presuming to know their duties much better than themselves, is, in common life, but too frequently the characteristic of our countrymen, who would, most of them, much rather let their own affairs run to ruin, than incur the least suspicion of being ignorant of those of their neighbours. To this disinterested activity, this super-erogating spirit (so worthy of an "*insula sanctorum*" like ours) we are indebted, I doubt not, for much of that solicitude, which your laity insist upon feeling for the honour and safety of the hierarchy. There are many, however, whose opposition to the measure is founded upon deeper, and less innocent motives. Queen Elizabeth, as we are told by Secretary Walsingham, distinguished Papists in conscience from Papists in faction, and, however little she may deserve, in general, to be cited as precedent in such cases, I believe we shall but do justice to the opposers of the Veto, if we divide them into the same two classes. To the Anti-Vetoists *in conscience* therefore—to those, whose apprehensions, however groundless, are, at least

sincere, and many of whom, without examining the subject themselves, have merely taken up those ready-made terrors, of which your orators keep such a constant supply—I shall, with deference, submit a few considerations, which may soften, if they do not remove, those objections which have been considered so formidable, and, as arguments on this side of the question are strangers to your ears, I cannot doubt that your ears will receive them hospitably.

With respect to the supremacy of the Pope, it has not, I believe, been asserted, even by those who possess most facility of assertion, that his interference in the nomination of bishops, any farther than the form of recognition, or his exercise of an appellatory jurisdiction upon matters relating to discipline, are, in any degree, necessary to the existence or purity of a Catholic hierarchy. Indeed, the example of the Gallican church, so long free and so long illustrious, sufficiently proves the full compatibility of liberty with reverence, of independence with orthodoxy. From the conflict, which her enlightened divines maintained against the pretensions of Rome, your religion rose purer and firmer than it had stood for many ages before, and those slavish notions of papal authority, which had been taken up in times of darkness, and clung to during the storm of the Reformation,* were cast off as insulting

* The advances, which the Church and Court of Rome were making towards purity of doctrine and practice, when they

alike to piety and common sense. The deposing power of the Pope, his personal infallibility, and all those absurd attributes,† which degraded the

were checked by the turbulent burst of the Reformation, are strongly acknowledged by Hume, in the following curious passage, which (according to Towers) is to be found only in the first edition of his History, printed at Edinburgh, in 1754. "It has been observed that, upon the revival of letters, very generous and enlarged sentiments of religion prevailed throughout all Italy, and that, during the reign of Leo, the Court of Rome itself, in imitation of their illustrious Prince, had not been wanting in a just sense of freedom. But, when the enraged and fanatical reformers took arms against the papal hierarchy, and threatened to rend from the church at once all her riches and authority, no wonder she was animated with equal zeal and ardour in defence of such antient and valuable possessions."

It is remarkable, that a similar spirit of political improvement had been manifested by some of the governments of Europe, when the French Revolution frightened them back into all their ruinous old errors.

In corroboration of the foregoing passage from Hume, I beg to refer the reader to Whitaker's Vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots, (vol. iii. pp. 2, 50,) where he will find the same effects imputed to the intemperance of the Reformers, and an honourable tribute to the Catholics of that period, upon the subject of *Forgery*, "which (says he) I blush for the honour of Protestantism while I write it, seems to have been peculiar to the reformed," page 2.

† It was an assertion of Innocent III. "that the Pope is as much greater than the Emperor as the Sun is greater than the Moon;" which modest pretension became, afterwards, a part of the common law, and set a wise Glossator upon the following interesting calculation—"Cum terra sit septies major lunâ, sol autem octies major terra, restat ergo ut Pontificalis dignitas quadragesies septies sit major regali."

Church much more than they elevated the Pontiff, were then indignantly rejected from your belief, and consigned to that contemptuous oblivion, from which even the malicious industry of your enemies has been unable to call them up in judgment against you. To Launoi, one of the ablest advocates of the Gallican church, your religion owes her release from much of that legendary superstition*, which sat, like a night-mare, upon her bosom and filled her dreams with monsters: and in the works of the able Chancellor Gerson, we find, mingled with his vindication of the rights of the church,† some of those pure principles of political freedom,‡ which his country afterwards so grandly, though intemperately asserted, and which, however their animation may be suspended, at present, by the strong grasp of military power, have too much vitality, I think, to expire alto-

* See, among many others, his Treatise "*De Commentitio Lazari et Maximini et Marthæ in Provinciam appulsu*," in reading which and similar works of this author, we regret to think that it should ever have been necessary, to exert courage and ingenuity in the refutation of such puerile absurdities.

† In some of his ideas about the right of resistance to Popes, he was thought, indeed, at that time, to have ventured too far; as in the passage "*Casus multi esse possunt, in quibus aliquis gerens pro Papâ, et pro tali habitus ab Ecclesiâ, poterit a subdito licitè vel occidi, vel incarcerari, &c. &c.*" Tom. secund. in *regulis moralibus tit. de præceptis Decalogi*.

‡ In the famous passage (*adversus adulatorem, considerat. 7.*) which King James quotes, with such horror, in his "*Defence of the Rights of Kings, against Cardinal Perron.*"

gether beneath the pressure: like those tables of science, which Shem is said to have taken with him into the ark, they are preserved, I trust, to enlighten mankind, when the present deluge of despotism shall have "abated from off the earth."

While the religion of England was Catholic, the same guards against papal encroachment, were adopted under her wisest sovereigns, and it was in the reign of Edward III., that patriotic monarch, who first spiritedly filled up the rude outline of the British Constitution, that the statutes of Premunire and Provisors were enacted, for the utter exclusion of the Pope from all matters of ecclesiastical discipline.—Can Catholics then wonder that Protestants should be unwilling, to endanger their establishments by the least infusion of an influence, which Catholics themselves have so invariably pronounced to be mischievous? Nay, though Protestants should be inclined to try the experiment, would not Catholics blush to re-enter the temple of the Constitution, which their own hands first built, and from which they have been so long excluded, with that badge of ecclesiastical servitude about their necks, which, in laying the foundations of the fane, they declared to be unworthy of its precincts? Could they bear to resemble those children of the Jews,*

* "And their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." *Nehemiah*, 13. 23, 24.

who took back into Israel the language they had learned in bondage, and thus mix the Ashdod, the jargon of slavery with their own, old, native dialect of liberty? The Catholics of England seem to feel upon the subject, as they ought, and by the readiness which they have shewn, to exchange the rescripts and bulls of Rome, for the blessings of a free Constitution, they prove themselves worthy descendants of those founders of British liberty, who, with all their reverence for the spiritual authority of the Pope, thought freedom too delicate a treasure, to be exposed unnecessarily to his influence, and, accordingly, sheltered it round with Provisors and Præmunire, like that fenced-in pillar at Delphi,* which not even priests might touch.

But neither by France nor by Catholic England, was the interference of Rome more effectually excluded, than by Ireland herself, during the times of her native monarchy. However far the learned Usher may have carried his hypothesis, with respect to the religion of the early Irish, the testimonies, which he cites, abundantly prove, that to as late a period as the 12th century, the Pope had not exercised a legatine authority in Ireland, nor taken any share in the election of her bishops or archbishops; and how little inclined your ancestors of those days were, to abide

* Erected on the spot, which they called the *ομφαλος γαιας*. Pausan. Phocic. c. 16. See Musgrave upon the Ion of Euripides.

by a papal decision, even in matters of canonical regulation, appears by their obstinate dissent from the Romish observance of Easter—a schism, in which they were encouraged by some of your most celebrated Saints, whose anti-canonical boldness is, however, sufficiently justified by their canonization.

When declaimers, therefore, appeal to your passions upon the danger of disturbing a hierarchy, which is “the only undestroyed monument of your ancient grandeur,” you should remember, that, at the period, to which alone they can refer, in this illusive retrospect to former greatness, your hierarchy was quite as independent of Rome, as the advocates of your liberties would wish to make it now;* and that this papal interference, which some persons consider so essential, and to which you are the only people in the world subjected at present, far from being a relic of

* At one period, they seem to have elected their bishops, according to the mode which was practised at Alexandria, as early as the time of St. Mark, the Evangelist—a model, which, I think, would satisfy any one but Cabbasutius. “*Alexandriæ à Marco Evangelista usque ad Heraclium et Dionysium Episcopos, Presbyteri semper unum ex se electum in excelsiori gradu collocatum Episcopum nominabant.*” Hieronym. Epist. ad Evagr.

In the tenth century, as Campion informs us, the Monarch of Ireland was allowed the exercise of a Veto. “To the Monarch, besides his allowance of ground and titles of honours, and other privileges in jurisdiction, was granted a negative on the nomination of bishops at every vacation.” Book 1, c. 15.

grandeur or glory, is but the base remnant of that anomalous proscription, which so long made you aliens in your own land, and which drove you to seek, in a spiritual alliance abroad, some shelter from the storm of a temporal tyranny at home.

It was not till the Reformation had added religious schism, to the differences already existing between these countries, that Ireland was effectually thrown into the arms of Rome; and from that period down to the accession of his present majesty, the events of every succeeding reign, have served but to draw the tie more closely. Indeed, nothing could be more natural than that the members of a persecuted religion, should turn for support, for counsel and consolation, to the visible head of that faith, for which they were suffering—that they should find some relief to their wounded pride, in the patronage of a prince, who had long been formidable, and whose throne seemed to stand upon the line, which separates this world from the next, illuminated strongly by the glories of both—that, possessing no political rights, which foreign interference could injure, they should unreservedly abandon their church to his guidance, and find a charm in this voluntary obedience to him, which consoled them for their extorted submission to others. All these feelings were as natural and just, as the causes, that produced them, were monstrous and iniquitous. But, those causes exist no longer; a

tyranny, which disgraced alike the inflictors and the sufferers, has gradually given way before the light of liberality and conviction, and its last, slow, lingering vestige is about, I trust, to vanish for ever ; but, surely, it is worse than absurdity to expect, that the precautions and prejudices, adopted upon both sides, during that dark season of mutual ill-will, should now be surrendered by *one* of the parties, while they are cautiously kept in full force by the *other*, and that Protestants should throw away the last fragment of the penal sword, while the Papal stiletto is still in the hands of Catholics, —it is folly to expect, and insult to ask it!— The subjection of your church to the Pope was the consequence of your political misfortunes, and, even granting that the continuance of this yoke is consistent with the freedom, which you ask for, (a position, which you yourselves have, in all times and countries denied) yet, by unnecessarily preserving such a memorial of your former alienation, you perpetuate the remembrance of times, which it is the interest of all parties to forget—you withhold that reciprocity of sacrifice, which alone makes reconciliation satisfactory, and you take all its grace from the gift of liberty, by ungenerously declaring that you distrust the giver. In short, it shews an ignorance of the commonest feelings of human nature, to suppose that the present possessors of the state would willingly admit you to a share, upon such very unequal terms, or that, as long as you cling close to the Court of Rome,

you can be cordially embraced by the British Constitution.

Again, therefore, I appeal to that love of liberty, which is native to you, as Irishmen, and avowed by you, as Catholics,* and I ask whether you can think, without shame and indignation, that, for a long period, you have been the only people in Europe (with the exception of a few petty States, in the neighbourhood of the Pope) who have sunk so low in ecclesiastical vassalage, as to place their whole hierarchy at the disposal of the Roman Court? Can you patiently reflect, that the humiliating doctrine of Caietanus, “*servam esse ecclesiam*,” which the divines of France so boldly and successfully combated,† has been admitted and acted upon in Ireland alone? and that the title, under which Pope Adrian affected to transfer this kingdom to Henry II.‡ though

* Among many examples which might be adduced to prove, that a warm zeal for the Roman Catholic Religion, is consistent with the best feelings and principles of political liberty, we may mention the very interesting instance of the Dalecarlians, who, though they chiefly assisted Gustavus to shake off the tyranny of the Danes, were among the first to oppose his Reformation of their ancient religion.—See Sheridan’s Revolution of Sweden, page 110, where we may trace a strong similarity to the Irish character, through the description, which he gives, of the turbulent, but generous nature of these hardy mountaineers.

† See particularly Launoi’s Letters.

‡ This title might be sent after the famous deed of gift from

treated by your ancestors with the contempt which it deserved,* has been almost justified by the voluntary submission, with which you have since surrendered the only rights, that were left you, to his successors?—If you felt, upon these reflections, as lovers of liberty ought, you would rejoice in the opportunity, which now so brightly presents itself, of regaining, at the same moment, your political and ecclesiastical freedom, of proving to your fellow-countrymen that the yoke, which you assumed, as Catholics, was but a kind of counter-balance to the fetter which hung upon you, as citizens, and that the same emancipating touch, which bursts the links of the latter, will for ever release you from the degradation of the former.

Let me add too, that, as revenge was naturally among the motives, which sweetened your alliance

Constantine to Pope Silvester, which Ariosto tells us, is to be found in the Moon.

Questo era il dono (se pero dir lice)

Che Constantino al buon Silvestre fece.

I am aware that, to certain lay controvertialists, I shall not appear quite orthodox in quoting Ariosto, whom their great annalist, Baronius, has styled “vulgaris poeta ille,” in his indignation against the bard, for having borrowed, from the Legends, his curious story of Isabella and the Moor.—See La Cerda, upon the 7th Book of the *Æneid*.—“Ita scilicet patet secta plagiarorum, &c.”

* In the same manner, Paul IV. in the time of Mary, took upon him to elect Ireland into a Kingdom, with pompous references, for his authority, to the Saints, &c. upon which Archbishop Usher says, “Paul need not make all that noise, and trouble the whole Court of Heaven with the matter.”

with a Prince, whom your persecutors feared and detested, it becomes you to beware, lest those, whom you now ask to confide in you, should suspect that a wilful perseverance in this connection, is actuated by some remains of that vindictive spirit, under whose embittering influence it first was formed. The Greeks had the feeling and good taste to exclude from the architecture of their temples, those figures of female slaves, called Caryatides, because (as it is well expressed by a writer upon the art) they would be “monuments of vengeance in an asylum of mercy”^{*}—how much more importantly then are *you* called upon, to imitate this tasteful generosity of the Greeks, and to shrink from profaning, with the least trace of revengeful feeling, that free sanctuary of reconciliation, to which you are invited!

I shall be told, of course, that, in the instances, which I have adduced, of France,[†] and of the early times of England[‡] and Ireland, the religion

^{*} “Vindictæ monumenta in asylo miserecordiæ”—Aldrich’s *Architecture*.

[†] The famous declaration of the liberties of the Gallican church, contained in the four propositions of the Bishops, in 1682, which the learned Bossuet was the most active in promoting, and which (as a Roman Catholic divine of these countries tells us) went so far as “to pronounce the Sovereign Pastor fallible even in his dogmatic decisions of faith” (Reeve’s *Christian Church*) has been lately revived, in its full extent, by that greatest of all statesmen and warriors, Bonaparte.

[‡] Doctor Bramhall thus states the liberties of the Roman Catholic Church of England. “When the Kings of England

of the State was Catholic, and that, therefore, the interests of your Church, might be safely entrusted to the consciences of those who governed, without the protective interference of the Pope. Before we examine into the soundness of this objection, I must urge somewhat farther a point, to which I have already adverted, and entreat of you to consider, whether a Protestant government is not abundantly warranted, in its suspicion of papal influence, by the jealous apprehension, with which Roman Catholic sovereigns have, at all times, endeavoured to controul and resist its inroads; and whether you are not guilty of something worse than charlatanry, in recommending to others, as harmless and even salutary, what you have constantly rejected, as unnerving and poisonous, yourselves. If this influence be baneful, under monarchs of your own religion, it must work, with ten-fold virulence, where the government is of an opposite faith; and where, to the restless spirit of intrigue, the strong ascendancy over conscience, and the alienating claims of a spiritual allegiance,* which

owned the Pope's spiritual authority, his decrees had no force of laws, without the confirmation of the King. The Kings of England suffered no appeals to Rome out of their kingdoms, nor Roman Legates, to enter their dominions without their license, and declared the Pope's Bulls to be otherwise void."—*Just Vindication of the Church of England*, vol. i.

* The dangers of such an allegiance are thus forcibly enumerated by a writer, who however irreverently blind to the beauties of religion, had the quickest of all eyes in detecting and smiling at its abuses. "La difficulté de savoir à quel

render it so formidable, in the former case, are added the diversity of interests, the warmth of anti-heretical zeal and the ambition of proselytism, which must, invariably actuate it in the latter.

With respect to the distinction between spiritual and temporal power, by which you endeavour to reconcile your submission to the Pope, with the free discharge of your duties, as subjects and citizens, it is a security, which the history of all the religions of the world too fully justifies a legislature, in refusing to trust to implicitly. It would be happy, indeed, for mankind, if this line between the spiritual and the temporal had always been definitively and inviolably drawn;* for the experience both of past and present times proves, that the mixture of religion with this world's politics is as dangerous as electrical experiments upon lightning—though the flame comes from Heaven,

*p*oint on doit obéir à ce souverain étranger, la facilité de se laisser séduire, le plaisir de secouer un joug naturel pour en prendre un qu'on se donne soi-même, l'esprit de trouble, le malheur des tems, n'ont que trop souvent porté des ordres entiers de Religieux à servir Rome contre leur patrie." *Siecle de Louis 14.*

* The taint, which Religion always takes from the least contact of temporal power, is observable even in that part of the progress of Mahometanism, which we trace through the gradual compilation of the Koran. In the second chapter of this book, it is said that "all those who believe in God and the last day, shall have their reward with the Lord;" but as the sect became dominant, it also grew intolerant and monopolizing, and this liberal tenet is revoked in succeeding parts of the Koran, chap. 64, &c.

it can do much mischief upon earth. Entangled however, as the interests of Churches and States have become, from the frailty, ambition and worldliness of mankind, it is hardly possible to detach them fairly or satisfactorily, and, therefore, refine away, as you will, the spiritual authority of the Pope, there will still remain combined with it, in its purest state, many gross particles of temporal power, which it is the duty of a wise and free government, to counteract by every effort, consistent with the consciences of its subjects.

But, to return to the objection of those, who maintain, that, though the supremacy of the Pope may be reduced to a mere titular existence, where the monarch is of the Roman Catholic faith and, therefore, equally interested with his subjects in the preservation of its strength and purity,* yet, this interposing shield of papal protection becomes necessary, where the government wields an opposite creed, recommended and enforced by every art of seduction and power. In the first place, experience is decidedly against this assumption; and we need but refer to the examples of Prussia and Russia, where your Church has, with

* "The Calvinistic States of the United Provinces regulated their conduct, with respect to their subjects of the Roman Communion, on similar principles. The nomination even of a Curé (or Parish Priest) was certified by the Arch-Priest to the Provincial Magistrate, and, if objected to, another was appointed." Sir John Cox Hippisley on the Catholic Question.

safety, entrusted the appointment of her bishops to a Lutheran Prince and a schismatic autocrat,* to prove that, even in arbitrary states,† where the rights of the subject lie more within the reach of the sovereign, than they can ever be placed by the British Constitution, your religion may defy alike the pressure of power and of opinion, and flow on, like Arethusa, untinged by the mass of heterodoxy around it.‡

* The Pontifical oath was altered, by the Empress of Russia's desire, in the year 1783, when Mohilow was erected into an Arch-bishopric, and a prelate, of Catherine's nomination, received the pall from Pius VI. In this new form of oath (which, since 1791 has been wisely adopted by the bishops and arch-bishops of Ireland) the words "Hereticos persequar et impugnabo," which excited such alarm in Doctor Duigenan and others, are omitted. See the pontifical Rescript in Dr. Troy's Pastoral Address, 1793.—The reader will find, in the 4th Chapter of "Historical and Philosophical Memoirs of Pius VI.," an unfair, perhaps, but certainly amusing account, of the disputes between Catherine and his Holiness, relative to this archbishopric of Mohilow. The circumstances, which led to the alteration of the antient oath, are thus detailed. "Archetti (the Pope's Nuncio) being questioned, relative to the kind of oath, which the prelate would be expected to take, answered, that he must swear not to tolerate heretics and schismatics. . . . He was bluntly told that his instructions betrayed a want of sense and reflection, and that it was ridiculous to impose upon a subject the obligation of persecuting those, who lived under the same sovereign as himself, &c. &c. page 32, 33.

† See the note in the preceding page, which has been misplaced by mistake.

‡ *Belle Arethuse ainsi, ton onde fortunée
Roule au sein furieux d'Amphitrite étonnée,
Un crystal toujours pur, et des flots toujours clairs,
Que jamais ne corrompt l'amertume des mers.*

E LE HENRIADE.

It requires, indeed, but little range of history to teach us, that, however a difference of religion may have exasperated the feuds of mankind, it has seldom been, of itself, the sole originating motive of hostility. The power, connected with creeds, is always much more obnoxious than their errors, and Faith may wear her mantle of any hue she likes, as long as she is not suspected of hiding a sceptre under it. So little, in general, have States and Sovereigns been guided, in their movements, by mere spiritual considerations, that we find them, as worldly policy dictates, combining in such motley alliances of creeds, as seem almost to realize the rambling dreams of scepticism. We see the Cross, united with the Crescent, against Christians; we find Catholics assisting Protestants to cast off a Catholic yoke,* and, still more extraordinary, perhaps, within a very few years, we have seen Papal badges about the necks of British Dragoons,† as a reward for having defended the Pope, in his own capital, against Papists. Indeed, through all the difficulties, with which the Court of Rome had to struggle, during

* Thus Innocent XI. assisted the great champion of Protestantism, William, with the money of the Church against the Papist prince, his father-in-law. Indeed, so little were the interests of the Church considered, in this instance, that when James sent the Earl of Castlemaine, Ambassador Extraordinary to Rome, to make submission of the Crown of England to the Pope, the Court of Rome received him with repulsive coldness, and refused a Cardinal's hat, which the King solicited for Father Petre.

† The 12th, or Prince of Wales's Light Dragoons.

the warning events, which preceded the French Revolution, her chief consolations and aids were administered by heretics and schismatics, and while the Emperor Joseph, the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Naples, were weakening and degrading the Pontiff by every species of encroachment and insult, while France, the eldest child of the Church, was already preparing "images of revolt and flying-off," the King of Sweden was on a visit of friendship at Rome, the great Frederic maintained a cordial intercourse with the Holy See, and protected its best supporters, the Jesuits, in his dominions; while Catherine, beside the interest which she evinced towards her Roman-Catholic subjects in White Russia, proposed, and, I doubt not, with much sincerity, to establish a Concordat between the Greek and Latin Churches.*

* There is nothing which excites more regret, than the failure of every effort like this, towards reconciling the great schisms of the Christian world. The forbearance of Melancthon and others, at the Reformation, in admitting several points as *adiaphora*, ought to have led to a more cordial adjustment of differences, instead of adding to the many absurd quarrels of mankind, the preposterous instance of a *bellum adiaphoristicum*. The speculations of the Eirenists too, for reconciling the Protestant and Catholic Churches, were all put an end to by the Bull Unigenitus. The plan, which Fabricius proposed for this desirable object, may be found in Heidegger's Life of that able Professor, at the end of his Works. It is impossible, however, to read the sarcasms against Popery, in the "Euclides Catholicus" of Fabricius (published under the assumed name of Ferrarius) without suspecting, that he was but indifferently qualified for the dispassionate duties of an arbitrator.

Having satisfied ourselves, therefore, that a mere difference in creeds is, of itself, insufficient to provoke hostility, without an adequate mixture of political considerations, let us consider whether it would be the interest of the British Government, after admitting you to a full participation of the Constitution, to follow up the boon by attacking or undermining your religion, and thus cancelling the only security which they can have, for the morals of the people with whom they have shared so valuable a deposit. The very statement of such a supposition is, I think, a sufficient exposure of its absurdity. "Religion, (says Montesquieu,) though false, is the only guarantee we can have for the probity of men;" and can you seriously think that the power, which you are asked to vest in the Crown, will be premeditatedly employed towards the extinction of this guarantee? or that the religion, which alone has made you trust-worthy, will be conspired against, as soon as the trust has been confided to you?

That there are some persons, even in these reasoning times, who are ignorant and weak enough to dread and hate your church—who would, for ever, exclude you from all political rights, and who, as long as your interests are separate from their own, would feel a pleasure in loosening your moorings of rectitude, and casting you adrift into those vices and irregularities, which might give them some pretext for wronging and tormenting you—that there are a few such malicious bigots,

I acknowledge with shame and astonishment: but to suppose that even those very persons, in the event of your becoming incorporated with them in the State, and embarked in a complete identity of interests, should be so blind to their own safety as to weaken the restraints of that religion, to which alone they have to trust for the integrity and good-faith of their co-partners, or so wanton as to vitiate this fountain of your morals, at the risk of tainting the whole atmosphere of the Constitution—to suppose such a perversion of the commonest dictates of policy, is to imagine a mixture of profligacy and bigotry, which I should hesitate in attributing even to Mr. Perceval.

The great King of Prussia, whose hatred to all possible creeds* will not be questioned by the believers in Barruel and Robinson, far from indulging this malignity at the expence of his subjects and himself, thus speaks, in justifying the cordial protection, which he afforded to the Jesuits in Polish Prussia and Silesia.—“ I have a million and a-half of Catholics, among my subjects, and it is of consequence to me that they should be brought up strictly and uniformly in the religion of their fore-fathers.”—But it is superfluous to refer to such philosophical authority, for a policy obvious to the least reasoning capacities; the very instinct of self-preservation

* A truly *Protestant* Prince, according to Bayle's definition of the term; “ je suis Protestant (says this sceptic) car je proteste contre toutes les religions.”

would suggest it to the most brainless politician, and I doubt whether even my Lord Castlereagh would not lose all the pleasure, which he takes in the practice of corruption, if he had the slightest suspicion that he endangered himself by it.

When alarmists, therefore, try to persuade you, that this concession will be fatal to your faith, that it is but a barter of spiritual treasures for a few temporal advantages, and that, as the eagle took the tortoise into the sky in order to break it, so your sect is to be elevated only for the purpose of destroying it—tell them that you have too high a value for liberty, and too strong a reliance upon the stability of your Church, to be scared from the proffered enjoyment of the one, by vague or visionary alarms about the other; that you are inspired with a manly and well-grounded confidence, that the character which you have earned, while aliens from the State, will insure a respect for your consciences, when allied with it; and that the religion which has *made* you worthy of the Constitution, will be cherished and supported, as the best means of *keeping* you so. Tell them that, even should these liberal views be fallacious, you can yet rely for the safety of your faith, upon those ordinary principles of self-interest, which prevent the merchant, who trusts half his stock to another, from making a knave of his partner, or teaching him to betray and plunder him. Tell them, in fine, as your best and ultimate security, that you depend upon the strength of the religion itself,

which has for ages taken root in the hearts of Irishmen, which, like our beautiful arbutus, is native to the soil, and having lived so green through the long winter of persecution, will neither be checked in its growth nor weakened in its stem, by those blossoms, which the warm sun of Freedom will bring out on it!

Among the lesser and more lightly urged objections to the Veto, there is one, which it is really refreshing to meet, after the anile prejudices and terrors which I have been combating; because it shews some of that wakeful jealousy of Power, which is so becoming in suitors for the fair hand of Liberty, and which your other arguments against the measure would by no means encourage us in attributing to you. "The concession of the negative," we are told, "would encrease the power of the Crown, and that therefore it is the interest of the whole country that it should not be granted." It does not seem, however, to have been taken into consideration by the proposers of this objection, that the complete enfranchisement of so large a portion of the Empire would so considerably widen the basis of the Legislature, as to form more than a counter-balance to this additional weight of the Executive, and that if the Constitution were now in its perfect equilibrium, (which "*ne aniculæ quidem existimant**") such an accession of force to one part of the system, would require some proportional controul to be

* Cicero, de Divinat. Lib. 2. § 15.

vested in the other. But it is not the power, which comes boldly in the shape of prerogative, that the people of these countries have chiefly to dread at present, and the exercise of a Veto would be so personally the act of the King, so invidiously exposed, and of such undivided responsibility, that few monarchs would risk an unpopular or arbitrary use of it.

I may be told, indeed, that the constitutional negative of the Crown has been got rid of by the insidious mediation of influence, and that the same pioneer may smooth the way to the appointment of your Hierarchy, by procuring the recommendation of such persons only, as are likely to coincide with the politics of the Court,* and thus preventing the ungracious ultimatum of a negative. Against this kind of danger, under the present system, I must candidly own that I see but little security. Until a thorough Reform shall have purified the Constitution from that all-pervading corruption, which threatens to change its very nature, nothing, that comes within its sphere, can hope to escape the contagion. That jealousy, perhaps, with which you must always regard the too

* This apprehension of a political abuse of the Royal interference, was felt by the framers of the 12th Canon of the 8th Council of Constantinople, (in the year 869,) which condemns such elections of Bishops, as have been procured "*per versutiam et tyrannidem Principum.*" See an able Treatise "*De Libertat. Eccles. Gallican.*" by M. C. S. Lib. iii. c. 7. p. 123. where a misconception of Dominus de Marca upon this subject is corrected.

close approaches of your clergy to the court, may, for some time, avert their political seduction, but I dare not answer for the best or wisest of them, if too long exposed to those bewildering temptations, so meretriciously and shamelessly employed by the Government. It is impossible, however, that this state of things can last; the people of England demand a Reform, and what they steadily demand cannot long be refused to them. Think, then, what incentives there are, at this moment, for a generous neglect of all minor obstacles, in your grand pursuit of that rank in the State, which alone can empower you to serve the Constitution; which alone can enable you to appear among the regenerators of that system, which statesmen of your own faith first gloriously founded, and to repay those friends, who are now struggling for your liberty, by nobly assisting them to perfect their own. The very infusion of such a new, untainted spirit cannot fail to produce reanimation and vigour, and your courage will rival the gallantry of that youth, who courted his mistress, at the moment when she was dying of the plague, and “clasping the bright infection in his arms,”* restored her to health and beauty by his caresses.

I had intended to have adverted, somewhat more

* Somewhere in Darwin, who took this interesting story (as, I believe, he acknowledges) from a very curious poem, by Vincentius Fabricius, which may be found in the Miscel-

particularly, to the manner in which many of your writers have treated this subject; but having proved, (to my own conviction, at least) that their arguments and alarms are equally groundless, it is unnecessary to call upon their manes any further, or disturb that oblivion, into which I must very soon follow them.

To your conduct between this and the discussion of the question in Parliament, your friends all look with considerable anxiety. Having pleaded your cause, with unexampled perseverance, and succeeded in clearing away those gross calumnies,* which had so long intercepted the genuine light of your character, they saw, with pleasure, the moment approaching, when your merits and rights were to be recognized, and their toils and sacrifices repaid. They observed that even the

lanea Curiosa, An. 2. The following lines will amuse some readers:

——— *necemque evincit amando*
Grataturque sibi, cupidisque incincta lacertis
Thyrsidis, infandos sentit cessare calores,
Et sic sanari jactat debere puellas.

* The reader will find some of the most ridiculous of these accusations, in the character of a Papist's belief, by the Archbishop of York, in 1762, "written for a Lady to preserve her from the dangers of Popery." Among other articles of the creed, which he imputes to them, is the following: "That Christ is the Saviour of men only, but of no women; for that women are saved by St. Clare and Mother Jane."—Surely, surely, such old women as the Archbishop (and I could point out many a one of the sisterhood at present) are scarcely worthy of more respectable mediators.

most timid and scrupulous, looking back to the long and dreary quarantine, which you had so patiently performed off the harbour of the Constitution, were beginning to lay aside their fears and prejudices, and preparing to admit you with confidence and cordiality. To see, suddenly, a blight thrown over such prospects, was painful enough from any quarter, but to see that blight proceed from yourselves, was, of all disappointments, the most unexpected and mortifying. With a precipitancy, which might have afforded some apology for your error, if a perseverance in folly did not rob you even of that excuse, you disavowed every favourable disposition attributed to you, and by falsifying your best friends almost justified your worst adversaries. I have, already, however, sufficiently dwelt upon the rash inconsistency of this conduct, and shall now only implore, that, while there is yet time, you may regain the ground which you have lost, and win back the confidence which you have forfeited. The Protestants fear to entrust their Constitution to you, as long as you continue under the influence of the Pope; and your reason for continuing under the influence of the Pope, is that you fear to entrust your Church to the Protestants. Now, I have shewn, I trust, in the preceding pages, that *their* alarm is natural, just and well-founded, while *yours* is unmeaning, groundless and ungenerous. It cannot, therefore, be doubted by which of you

the point should be conceded. The bigots of both sects are equally detestable, but if I were compelled to chuse between them, I should certainly prefer those, who have the Constitution on their side.

THOMAS MOORE.

Dublin, April 21, 1810.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

PAGE 11. *The example of the Gallican Church.*]—"Why a man may not be a Romanist without being a Papist, in Ireland as well as in France, I can see no reason. We know that the Gallican Church has long been emancipated from the thralldom of the Roman Pontiff." Campbell's Survey of the South of Ireland in 1775.

PAGE 15. *Their readiness to exchange the rescripts and bulls of Rome.*]—I do not, of course, mean that these instruments should be altogether excluded, as there may occur some questions of internal discipline, upon which a reference to the See of Rome would be necessary. But even this degree of intercourse should be subjected to some such regulations, as Sir John Cox Hippisley has proposed in his Pamphlet.

PAGE 22. *Whether a Protestant Government is not abundantly warranted in its suspicion of Papal influence.*]—I have purposely refrained from urging the very obvious argument, with which the present state of the Continent has supplied my predecessors on this side of the question; partly, because the Prelates have given up this point themselves, and admitted the necessity, in the existing state of Europe, of a temporary interruption of their dependance upon the Holy See; and chiefly, because my arguments are meant to go the much greater length, of proving, that, in all possible times and circumstances, this subjection to Rome is degrading and mischievous.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

PAGE 14. The example of the Gallican Church. — Why a man may not be a Romanist without being a Papist, in Ireland as well as in France, I cannot see. We know that the Gallican Church has long been emancipated from the domination of the Roman Pontiff. Campbell's Survey of the South of Ireland in 1772.

PAGE 15. Their intention to exchange the treaty and bulls of Rome. — I do not, of course, mean that these instruments should be altogether excluded, as there may occur some questions of internal discipline upon which a reference to the See of Rome would be necessary. But even this degree of interference should be subjected to some such regulations, as Sir John Cox Hildesley has proposed in his pamphlet.

PAGE 22. Whether a Protestant Government is not absolutely warranted in its suspension of the bull of excommunication. — I have purposely retained from writing the previous argument with which the present state of the Continent has supplied me, particularly on this side of the question; partly, because the Protestants have given up this point themselves, and admitted the necessity, in the existing state of Europe, of a temporary suspension of their dependence upon the Holy See; and chiefly, because my arguments are meant to go to the root of the question of Papal power, and in all possible times and circumstances, to subject it to some such regulations and restrictions.