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THE

INDISSOLUBILITY

OF

UNION.

" ——— *in seipso totus teres atque rotundus,*
" *In quem manca ruit semper Fortuna.*"

HORAT. SAT. L. 2. S. 7.

BY EDMUND L. SWIFT, ESQ. BARRISTER AT LAW.

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Houses of the Oireachtas

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"HE that voluntarily continues ignorance, is "guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces; "as to him that should extinguish the tapers of a "lighthouse, might justly be imputed the calami-"ties of shipwrecks."—Thus argues our great Moralist; and it may well be added, that to him who practises on ignorance, and deludes the unwary into mischief, should be attributed every resulting evil; as the hanger-out of false lights stands accountable for all the consequences of his wrong.—Within a short time much clamour has been excited, fomented, encouraged, and indeed *created* against the Union of the British Empire; its dissolution has been suddenly demanded, and every nerve been strained to unhinge this great machine: the cry of Independence inflames the bold, the prophecy of Ruin alarms the timid, while the complaint of In-

justice

House of the Oireachtas

justice irritates the turbulent; another year of confusion is promised, and a year of confusion is always profitable to some.

But this grave question is not to be so lightly disposed of; the outcries of malignity echoed by folly must not rend asunder the bond of Imperial Unity; and now that the British Islands *are* united, the question is no longer a question of particular, but of general good. Not any of the three Nations now blended into one can suffer decomposition; the vital Essence common to all forbids what is now a political impossibility; the national faith is pledged, each to the other, for its continuance. When Ireland acceded to a Union with England and Scotland, they were bound never to cast her from them, for she can never be replaced in her former estate; and assuredly, she who by her accession changed the political nature of the other two countries, cannot now be admitted to retract her consent, unless *they* also can be restored to their prior situation.

The immediate questions to be considered are reducible to a very few propositions.

"Can any one Portion of the Empire secede "from the general Union, yet leave its other "Portions united?"

"Could

" Could those other Portions be replaced in their " former estate?"—

" If the Union *could* be broken asunder, what " would be the situation of the dirupted parts of " the Empire ?—And,

" *Would such Dissolution be beneficial to Ireland?*—

" *Can any one Portion of the Empire secede from " the general Union, yet leave its other portions " united?*"—

When the Union of England and Scotland was effected, the individual names of the two countries, though convenience required their geographical preservation, were for all political purposes abolished, and they formed one nation under the general name of GREAT BRITAIN. The succession to the monarchy of the united kingdom was by the treaty settled in that line, wherein the crown of England was settled by the Act 12th William 3d; not by virtue of that act, as an English act, but making the same provisions for the descent of the imperial crown, or, in the Scottish phrase, *conform thereto*; the respective parliaments of England and of Scotland were utterly extinguished, and the representation of the united kingdom was declared to be by one and the same parliament, which was stiled, " the Parliament of Great Britain." It were pursuing therefore a popular error, to say that Scotland was or

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is represented by sixteen peers sitting among the peers, and forty-five commoners sitting among the commoners of England :—the Parliament of Great Britain was constituted of sixteen peers of Scotland with all the peers of England, and forty-five commoners of Scotland with five hundred and thirteen commoners of England, thereby composing the two houses of the United Parliament of Great Britain.* And it is not irrelevant to notice, this further provision

* De Lolme, in his "Strictures on the Union of Scotland with "England, &c." seems to sanction this general misapprehension, when he states it to have been agreed by the treaty that "the English Parliament should be the sole Parliament for "Great Britain, and that the representatives of Scotland should "come and incorporate with it." Not one word in the treaty justifies such an interpretation ; in fact, it would have destroyed the equality of Union, its very existence, in the moment of its birth ; nor could it have been the case, even for the residue of the unexpired term which the then sitting Parliament of England was capable to hold ;—the articles of the treaty itself, as set forth in its exemplification are directly repugnant to it : by the first article the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, are declared to be on the first day of May 1707, and for ever after, "united into one kingdom by the name of Great "Britain ;" the third article provides, "that the united king-"dom of Great Britain shall be represented by *one and the same* "*Parliament*, to be stiled, the Parliament of Great Britain ;" "and the twenty-second article, which appears to have misled this generally accurate writer, stipulates that "if her Majesty, "on or before the first day of May next, on which day the "Union is to take place, shall declare under the great Seal of "England

vision of the treaty, that all laws or statutes of either kingdom, (thereby including the common and customary law of each, as well as it's *lex scripta*,) so far as they were inconsistent with or contrary to the terms of the Union should thenceforth cease and be void.—The respective contingent of each, and its proportions, were determined with a view to the extent and resources of the part contributing, while to each was given a mutual interest in the welfare of the other, and a benefit accordant to and consistent therewith.

Thus

" England, that it is expedient, that the Lords of Parliament " of England, and Commons of the present Parliament of " England, shall be the members of the respective houses of the " first Parliament of Great Britain, for and on the part of " England, *then the said Lords of Parliament of England, and " Commons of the present Parliament of England, shall be the " Members of the respective houses of the first Parliament of " Great Britain, for and on the part of England.*" The article proceeds to direct, that such Parliament shall be the first Parliament of Great Britain, and that it should " continue for such " time only as the present Parliament *might have continued*, if " the Union of the two kingdoms had not been made, unless " sooner dissolved by Her Majesty."

To set this point aright, and to correct a mis-statement coming from such an authority as De Lolme, may be of some importance; were it as he has unwarily represented, the Union of the two kingdoms could not have been complete; for its legislature must have originated, not in the new order of things, but in that old distinctness of England and of Scotland, which the Union was intended utterly to remove and abolish for ever.

Thus stood the united kingdom of England and Scotland, from 1707 to 1801, during which period, notwithstanding the visions of Lord Belhaven, the prosperity of Scotland encreased as did the prosperity of England, at once communicating and receiving advantage; when, at the opening of the present century, IRELAND became incorporated with the British Empire. From that moment she participated in its benefits, and was bound by its obligations: She can at no time have an individuality of interest, distinct and separate from the common interest of the Empire, any more than England or Scotland can individualize themselves, the one from the other, or either, or both, from her. By her creation of a new Union, she has entirely changed the former Union of England and Scotland; she has altered it's name, it's nature, it's very essence. The three countries are now amalgamated into one; not as three liquids of different species, which the art of the chymist can decompound and reduce into their former separation, but as three vessels, each containing a liquid of the same kind, are poured together, and to any one of which no skill can return its own original part.—When the Mediterranean *effunds* her tides into the Atlantic, can their reflux roll back those identical waters into her bosom?—In 1707, England and Scotland *permuted* their respective characters; so did they again in 1801, when "Great Britain" changed the *integrality* of her monarchy, and received Ireland into a

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new Union; a like mutation did Ireland undergo, when she quitted her federal connection and became a consolidated part of the British Empire; an Empire from which she cannot secede, without rending its bond asunder and leaving its other parts, not as they were before her incorporation, but broken, disunited, divided from themselves.—These considerations, however, would anticipate our second proposition:

"*Could those other Portions be replaced in their*
"*former estate?*"—

It will be admitted by every reasonable man, that unless this point of justice can be attained, no one component part of the Empire is privileged to create a general decomposition, and for her own partial purposes to detract her unity of interest from the common stock.—In 1707, the treaty between England and Scotland, which was ratified by their respective Parliaments, abolished the distinct characters of the two nations and united them into one kingdom.—This monarchy having been formed of two nations only, while it existed, the treaty might perhaps have been annulled by the consent of it's United Parliament.—Each nation might then have returned to her former estate of severalty, and, however hazardous the measure, no essential principle of their respective constitutions might have been materially infracted.—But when in 1801

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another and a new Union was formed, into which Ireland entered, the kingdom of Great Britain became an Empire, composite though single, and compacted no longer of two, but of *three* nations.—By this Ireland was not adopted into the old Union, the original principle whereof was a unity of two kingdoms, a species of unity which the accession of a third would have utterly subverted.—After the Union of 1707, the sovereignty of Great Britain continued distinct from the sovereignty of Ireland, and it was not until 1801 that the formation of a new Union between Great Britain and Ireland virtually repealed the act of the old Union and rescinded it's treaty.—It may be argued, that the repeal of a repealing act revives the original law, and that consequently the repeal of the act of 1801 would revive the act of 1707:—but let it be considered, that the Union of 1707 was effectuated by something more than a statute; it was created by a treaty, and received from the statute nothing more than it's ratification.—The powers that signed that treaty, and enacted that statute, each in their respective Parliament, are no longer in being; for England and Scotland were politically annihilated by the operation of that treaty and that statute which created and confirmed the Union of 1707; the power that was formed by that Union abolished itself when it enacted the annihilation of that Union, and it would have reduced its component parts to seperation, had it not in the same breath, without

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the interval of a moment, enacted the formation of a new Union, to be composed of Great Britain and Ireland, and to take place on a certain day, by a statute which passed *before* that day; consequently before Ireland became incorporated into the imperial legislature, and before Great Britain by the operation of such her abolishing statute of 1800 could fall asunder. The repeal therefore of that abolishing statute cannot revive the old Union of 1707, because a statute cannot be revived except by the power that enacted it, and the united Parliament of England and Scotland now no longer exists. Could that Union receive any revival, it would be from another power; from the Imperial Parliament in which Ireland holds her share, and must hold her share until that Union be revived:—thus would the Union of England and Scotland as Great Britain, which in 1800 was prospectively repealed by the United Parliament *of them alone*, be revived by a power which was neither consenting to it's treaty nor privy to it's enactment.—I repeat therefore, that although the seperation of *two* united kingdoms might probably be construed into the restoration of their original distinctness, yet the secession of *one* from *three* can never leave the other two in a state of unity.

If the union of 1707 was not entirely annulled by the union of 1801, (or rather by the statute of 1800, passed in the United Parliament of Great Britain at Westminster, the prospective operation whereof

whereof determined the union of 1707 and enacted its expiration on the 1st day of January 1801, the day on which by that statute and by a concurrent statute of the Irish Legislature the imperial incorporation was to take effect,) if, I say, it was not thereby entirely annulled, Ireland possesses not her due equality in the Empire.—The abolition of that Union was a debt of justice to Ireland, who could never be united on equal terms unless by a *new* Union, wholly independent of all prior obligations to which she had been a stranger; and assuredly, until the old Union was utterly annulled, no Union wherein she was to be made a party could be formed consistent with her interests or her honor; she would remain in perpetual hazard, from provisions which she could never have controuled, from stipulations which she could never have disputed, and from consequences which she could never have prevented.—The Union of 1707 is therefore to be considered as abolished; but what was the purpose of it's abolition?—After it's benefits had been experienced by the lapse of a century, after the mischievous rivalry of two neighbour nations had been extinguished, after an identity of interests had been confirmed, and the tree of amity had spread its roots through the whole island, did the United Parliament of Great Britain abolish such an union for the purpose of separation? did they gravely intend the renovation of antient feuds, the revival of the border-laws, the second birth of jealousy, of hatred,

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and of violence? Or did they abolish such a Union, for the purpose of creating a new Union, yet more strong than the old, extending to Ireland the advantages of their long-tried identity, giving to her a share in their state, a voice in their deliberations, and a seat in their councils; including, incorporating, and equalizing her with themselves, elevating the sovereign of each to be the sovereign of all, confirming the Union of the British Isles in one Indissoluble Empire?

If this was their object, and which of us will say it was not?—hath Ireland, for whose sake this new Union has superseded their old, hath Ireland, I say, any shadow of pretence to withdraw herself from its bond? Hath Ireland, I say, any privilege to unhinge the Empire whose constitution was thus changed for *Her*?—If at the moment of secession she cannot replace the monarchy of Great Britain, as it stood from 1707 to 1800, what right hath she now to secede, by what principle of justice can she vindicate her claim? She might then have rejected the proffered terms, she might then have maintained the individual distinctness of her federal connection, and Great Britain would then have preserved the Union of 1707 undisturbed and unaltered.

The equality of right existing in every portion of the Empire gives to each, if it gives to any one, the privilege of seceding from the Union.—England or

Scotland

Scotland possesses this privilege as fully as can Ireland:—and now let us pause to enquire, with what pretence of justice could England assume to withdraw, and leave Ireland and Scotland to themselves; or how could Scotland justify her demand of secession from them?—Wer the common-council of London, or the town-council of Edinburgh to call meetings, and make speeches, and pass resolutions for such a purpose, what would even the addressers of Dublin term the attempt? would they not say, and justly say, "you invited us to dissolve our federal "state and commit ourselves with you; at your "instance we have abolished our Parliament, we "have altered our constitution; at your desire we "have exchanged independence for Union, we "have begun to form our habits and assimilate "ourselves to you: and do you now seek to throw "us back on ourselves, to a constitution which is "annihilated?"—Thus should we mutually complain, each at such aggression of either: let us therefore deal forth equal measure, nor offer to another that injustice, which if offered to ourselves we would not endure.

But there is yet another check to secession: if it be not entirely consonant to the general interests of the Empire, if the retractation of one be not an advantage to the other two, the sovereign is bound to withhold his sanction; in a word, should a secession, which must dissolve the imperial bond, and leave

leave each or any portion of the Empire alone and dis-united, the King as guardian to that part, (if the attempt at dissolution can revive his distinctive title) is bound to interpose his prerogative, and forbid the innovation.—Would such however be the consequences of a secession?—To answer this, we must discuss the third proposition, and enquire,

"*If the Union could be broken asunder, what* "*would be the situation of the dirupted parts of* "*the Empire?*"

In 1604, when the Commissioners of England and of Scotland met to propose articles of Union between the two kingdoms, the first subject of debate was, whether they should be united under the name of Great Britain: against this it was with much apparent reason alledged, that two kingdoms equally supreme ought not to lay aside their former names for a third new one; and that the assumption of this would prejudice the precedency of the Kings of England among Princes.—The discussion was stayed by King James, who conceived that in these and other points the Commissioners touched too closely on his prerogative, of which no sovereign was more vigilant; it therefore proceeded no further:—but it supplies no weak argument that the then proposed Union of England and Scotland in one monarchy under the name of Great Britain would entirely abolish their distinctive characters, and

effect

efface all tokens of their individual existence; for it infers, if it infer aught, that the King of England and of Scotland would then cease to be the King of either nation, that he would cease to be an antient sovereign, that he would become the monarch of a newly-created kingdom, that his assumption of a new title would be a dereliction of his former one; and therefore, that he must, as the youngest, be the last in the rank of Princes.—It proves also this, which is highly important to our question, that his assumption would have been irreversible, and his dereliction irrevocable, that the seperate capacities of England and of Scotland would have been for ever annihilated, that they could never again have been disjoined, and that they must for ever have remained one nation and one monarchy.—Thus at least did the Commissioners think; and among them was to be found perhaps almost as much wisdom and as much foresight as in any modern addressers. But such Union *has* taken place; England and Scotland have been united into one kingdom, they have given up their antient names, and their King did at length assume the stile and title of King of Great Britain. That Union was in time abolished, not for division, but for stronger Union; a new Union is now formed, and Ireland is now a part of the British Empire.—Here let it be borne in mind, that Ireland is not a portion subsequently attached to the original Union of England and Scotland; a new Union was created for her, and for *her* alone was it

requisite:

requisite: the original name of "Great Britain" is properly continued, though in strict precision, on the first day of January, 1801, the state ceased to be what it before was; on that day a new Empire was formed by the junction of Great Britain and Ireland, each meeting at the same moment of time, without precedence of accession or priority of incorporation.

A few years only have passed, and Ireland wishes to secede.—I will not stop to say whether this wish be the expression of the public sentiment, or whether it be forced upon us by faction, by interest, and by clamour; but for a moment let us suppose the act of Union repealed, and then let us examine the consequences resulting, not to Ireland alone, but to the other parts of the Empire.—The imperial Bond would be rent asunder, Ireland would remain alone, and *Great Britain* no longer exist; for the act and treaty of 1707 which united England and Scotland under that name, became on the 1st of January 1801 suspended, nay, abolished, by the British act of 1800. This singular circumstance, hitherto unknown in politics as in law, would then occur; that an act which repealed other acts would be itself repealed, yet the repealed acts would not be thereby revived. The countries formerly called England and Scotland would then be disunited; and as the Union could not be dissolved as to one part, yet remain entire as to the other two, George the

Third would become King of England, King of *Scotland, King of Ireland.—Almost would I venture to enquire, (and I could wish to hear the question seriously answered), since the ancient constitutions of England and of Scotland were changed by the Union of 1707, and that again superseded, and the Constitution of Ireland altered, by the Union of 1801, how far the *Regalities* of the respective countries could on the dissolution of the now existing Union be revived. Dissolve the Union, and each is left without any constitution:—the Parliament of England is abolished; her 513 Commoners and all her Peers are but a compound part of another legislature: the Parliament of Scotland is dissipated; her 48 Commoners and her 16 Peers are but the assessors

* I know not if I am perfectly accurate in this point, as the Treaty and Union of 1707 were until 1800 the *only* settlement of the Scottish Crown. Of this England was well aware; for in 1704 her Parliament passed a very severe act against Scotland, to take effect at Christmas in the following year, unless the Scottish Crown should before that time be settled on the House of Hanover; and empowering the Queen to name commissioners for a treaty of Union. It is therefore another mischief of dissolution, that the Scots would lose the benefits of the Revolution, which the Union alone extended to them; that their throne would be entirely vacant, that the house of Hanover could lay to it no claim; that the heir at law of James the second would be their legitimate sovereign; and that their unsettled crown, unless a war which then could scarcely be termed a *civil war* should arise, would very probably fall under the *Arbitration* of Napoleon.

assessors of another Senate: the Parliament of Ireland is annihilated; her 100 Commoners and her 32 Peers are but the associates of Imperial Government. Where are now the Parliaments of these three countries?—Blended, I shall be told, into one; and some flippant orator will declaim on the facility of re-dividing that one into its three parts, and remitting each to its own country.—Indeed!—and is it so easy!---Shall the contingent of England be deposited at St. Stephen's, the contribution of Scotland consigned to Holyrood-house, and the proportion of Ireland franked over to College-green? For England and Scotland, I leave them to manage as they may; when their tailors, and their cooks, and their stocking-men begin to harangue, and to discuss, and to petition, I presume they will devise some proper arrangement:—my concern is for Ireland, whose speech-makers, having no business of their own, are so patriotically attentive to the business of their representatives.

Urge the supposition further; and consider the possible, aye, the probable consequences of this so desired dissolution.—For this, we must enquire into the first origin and the gradual erection of the British Empire. In the early part of the ninth century, the seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy, like the seven mouths of the Nile communicating into one stream, were united under one monarch in the person of Egbert: thus did it long continue, while

Ireland

Ireland was a stranger, and Scotland an hostile power, while Wales had her native Sovereigns, and the Palatine Counties, as they were afterwards termed, possessed their independent Princes. Even at that remote period, the consolidation of the Heptarchy formed the Nucleus of the present Union; its conjoined power effected what all it's former Kinglings could never have accomplished; conquest extended territory, while the vanquished were rendered the sharers in and the instruments of each progressive victory: in the reign of the first Edward, Wales was incorporated with England: Chester and Durham, which possessed independent Parliaments of their own, acceded to the growing Union and entered into the common Legislature: at length Scotland, who had previously formed a Union within herself by the Incorporation of her two kingdoms, followed the example; and after many successless † endeavours on each side, became united

† Perhaps so many attempts at the completion of one object of mutual advantage were never before made by any two nations, as the annals of England and of Scotland record.—In 1286, it was sought by Edward the First, who wished to marry his eldest son, the unfortunate Edward of Caernarvon, to Margaret the Maid of Norway, daughter of Alexander the Third of Scotland, and Heiress of his Crown. Two centuries passed, when Henry the Eighth proposed his daughter Mary, then his apparent successor, to his brother in law James the Fifth of Scotland. On the birth of his son, Henry again endeavoured to effect the Union by a marriage between that Prince and Mary, the daughter of

united with England: lastly, Ireland joined the system of unity, which required only *Her* to complete it's imperial strength, thus risen out of nothing and rounded into perfection.

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of James, and then Queen of Scotland: (a proposal which was revived by the Regent Somerset in the nonage of the Sixth Edward;) but this wise measure was defeated by a party, of which it is not now my purpose to speak. At the accession of James the Sixth of Scotland to the Throne of England, a Union of the two Crowns rather than of the two Kingdoms took place; and this was fraught with much prejudice to Scotland, as the weaker of the two; like all federal connexions, it produced no mutual advantage; and the discontent, the impoverishment and the oppression which thence resulted, may warn *us* how we prefer Federation to Union. Of this, James was well aware; and accordingly in 1604 he projected that Union of the two Kingdoms to which I have above alluded: but James soon entertained other designs, and sought for absolute power, *which, if the Kingdoms were once united, he could never effect.* After 1648, Scotland became subjected to the English common-wealth, the Union however was reserved unto happier times. In 1660 it was again proposed; and in 1667, the English and the Scottish Commissioners met to arrange the terms, yet nothing decisive was done. In 1670 the measure was revived, but was broken off by Charles the Second, who felt, like his grand-father James, *that such Union was incompatible with his arbitrary views, as in their state of federation, either might be made in his hands an Engine of the subjugation of both.* In the time of William the Third, certain irritating circumstances indisposed either nation; these however were soon happily removed, and the Reign of Anne was signalized by the completion of this long desired Union, which continued until 1801, when it's existence was commuted for the present Union between England and Ireland; a Union that for the sake of the Empire and all it's parts will, I trust, endure even to the end of time.

And now let us fancy a picture, which all the industry of our addressers will never, I trust, be able to realize:---the good ship UNION is split asunder; she strikes on the rocks of petition, or runs aground on the *shallows* of ignorance; her three masts *go by the Board*, and the wreck is scattered over the British Ocean.—All is divided; the several parts fly off; the Empire, that composite power, that creature of social harmony and political wisdom, that invisible existence formed of so many visible parts, depending on each for the preservation of all, receiving a name and a being from their Unity, while it absorbs their names and their beings in its own centre, now relapses into several weakness, and loses at once its strength, its adhesion, and its capacity.—When one portion secedes, the example of secession is held out to all; the right is presumed by its exercise; the common privilege is claimed: and this with sufficient reason, for when from the general Union one part retracts, the general Union ceases to exist, and all parts are at once in a state of *severalty*; not as they before were, possessing a certain constitution and regulated thereby; but reduced to first principles, remitted to themselves, and left to form their solitary Government even as they can.—Ireland withdraws, not to her federal connection, *for that was with a Great Britain which by the Act of* 1800 *is no longer existent*; not to her constitution of 1782, *for that was prospectively annihilated by her act of Union which took effect in* 1801; not

not to her subordination as under Henry the Second or George the First, *for that was abolished by her constitution* of 1782; but she withdraws to her primary state of divided helplessness, to her Brehon Laws and her provincial Toparchs. Scotland retires, and finds at Edinburgh no trace of her former estate, save only her *Church*, which by the treaty of 1707 she reserved from the influence of that Union; (and the reservation of this sufficiently proves her intent of departing with every thing else:) She too returns to division, her two Kingdoms retract *their* Union also, and fly off into severalty. Wales elevates her voice, and reclaims the independence that She yielded to Edward and to Henry. Chester and Durham, now that Great Britain is no more, demand their antient legislature: the Palatinates re-assume their privileges: the King of Man and the King of Wight re-erect their petty thrones, and the old Heptarchy re-appears!—

"Si paulum a summo discessit, vergit ad imum."

Need the progress of disunion be pursued through it's consecutive mischiefs; or will it be argued, that a Union, compounded of so many equal parts, equal in claim if not in power, can suffer the loss of one without the loss of all? The question must be answered, not by asserting that these consequences *may not*, but by proving that they *cannot* result; they must be proved repugnant to the principles of political and of natural justice.

Where

Where then will be Great Britain? Where will be her proud Empire, the enemy of the oppressor, the friend of the oppressed? Where will be her several parts, when the strength of her unity is fallen asunder? The Mistress of the Ocean, the Mother of Heroes, the Nurse of Science, is to be weakened and impaired; divested of her strength and despoiled of her glory, She is to be effaced from among the nations; the people, whom She has received and bound unto herself, struggle to break the tye; her children would cast her down a prey to the Universal Despot, her children would burst the strings of her heart asunder.—

All this would Ireland do—let me ask my country's pardon for the thoughtless crimination; all this would certain agitators in Ireland do, while they term the partial clamour of a faction, the general voice of the nation.—And if they could dissolve the Union,

"*Would such dissolution be beneficial to Ireland?*"

Whether the mischief would fall elsewhere or not, whether it were consistent with the enlightened genius of the nineteenth century to overturn that edifice, which the unlettered wisdom of our ancestors so many ages since began to raise, is now no longer our enquiry:—in this part of the argument I will therefore suppose, that if Ireland can derive

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aught of advantage to herself from the dissolution of her Union with Great Britain, she is not obliged to regret or to prevent the resulting injury to any other Country: and for the present I am satisfied to place England and France in the same scale of her estimation, and to account them each alike a foreigner and an alien. This concession is beyond what our addressers will desire, and equal to all that our separatists can demand; but they must each have some consequent object:—a proposition so important can hardly be made without a definite purpose; and this must be either seperation or federal connexion. Many, who would have regarded a separation from Great Britain as the worst evil that could befal Ireland, neverthesess opposed the principle of a Union; and while that was only propounded as a speculative suggestion, their opposition, whether wise or imprudent, might fairly be ascribed to honest and patriotic feelings: it's benefit was then merely contingent, it rested on argument and inference alone; and as it tended to annul an established constitution for a something in prospect only, they, perhaps not unreasonably, preferred to remain as they were. Now, however, that the Union has ceased to be a subject of speculation, now that it has become vested instead of contingent, positive instead of possible, effected instead of propounded, the same motives should induce these well-meaning persons not to throw us back on that uncertainty which they before had deprecated. I will not believe

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that our addressers have any less worthy motive: with those who are capable of working a separation, who employ *them* in this unconscious agency, no argument applied to the real advantage of Ireland can have any weight, nor am I bound to dispute with them; such men, and loudly as our Corporation *talk*, none such I believe to be among them, have designs which I will not stop to expose; they expose themselves. Well then—federation of some kind is the object, and, as our addressers want nothing further, should federation be proved to them in the first instance impossible of acquisition, if acquired difficult of retention, and if retained incapable of advantage, they will readily cease to disturb themselves or to agitate the Empire.

The impediments against acquiring a federal connection, to me, appear insuperable; let me be told by what means extinction can be converted into suspension, abolition into revival; let me be told how our former federation can be redintegrated, what power is to restore to us the old, or to confer on us a new connection; let me be told who would be the king of federated Ireland, what now existing law, (exclusively of the Union,) obliges her to be a *Royalty*; let me be told what authority is to declare the title to her crown. All these questions must be determined *before* the dissolution of the Union, else will the federation be uncertain, dependent on first principles, and on the majority of the people of

Ireland

Ireland to be assembled in congress. If, I say, these questions are postponed until *after* the dissolution, there will be a *punctum temporis*, of we know not what duration, in which Ireland will be utterly sole, seperate, and singular, in which the federal connection will be non-existent, and to have any being at all must be created, as it cannot be revived. But if these questions are determined *before* the dissolution, then must their regulation be formed by the Imperial Parliament, and thus will the other two parts of the Empire legislate *in futurum* for prospectively-independent Ireland, while Ireland will have a voice in the future arrangement of those countries from which she is about to separate. Besides, this federal connection will require the concurrence of —what appellation shall we assign? of Great Britain as she stood in 1800, as she now is, or as she will be when all or any of her respective portions shall be thus dirupted? How, when, shall this concurrence be given? Not, surely, by the Imperial Parliament, wherein Ireland would be a party in the consent of another state to a prospective federation with herself. Federation may be formed between countries which are in a state of severalty, as Union may be formed between countries which are in a state of federation; but how federation is to be accomplished between countries which are already in a state of Union, let Œdipus or the addressers resolve.—Good God! In what a maze of absurdity do they involve us! we are fastened between the alternatives of their dilemma,

ma, we are pinned by the horns of this national Sorites, this speculative *Bull*, from which I hope the good sense of my countrymen will extricate us by fairly giving up the question.

But let us suppose for a moment these strange perplexities disentangled, and that some skilful politician has devised an unobjectionable mode of acquiring a federation:—we are now to learn how federation can be retained, and what are the benefits of it's retention.

The Union of crowns instead of kingdoms would be the first consequence, or rather the primary principle of federal connection; the interests of each would be different, for on *that* difference alone could dissolution be justified: and the sovereign possessing two kingdoms would ex necessitate prefer the advantage of the stronger; nay, the greater the disparity between them, the greater the influence which the strongerand the richer would possess with the sovereign, and this must ever be exercised to the prejudice of the weaker and the poorer. Where this opposition of interests shall occur, the sovereign wearing the distinct crown of each, is equally bound to the protection of either, nor can he constitutionally suffer the interests of another and a separate people to have with him any weight. How then is he to act? The obligation by which he is bound to promote the advantage of the one, is contravened

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by his obligation not to diminish the welfare of the other. The influence of one can alone prevail; and if one does not turn the balance, and thereby partial favor be done, the agency of the sovereign and the exercise of his function must be mediately suspended by the action and the counteraction of equal but incompatible claims. Federated Ireland, captivating and dignified as the phrase may sound in her ear, must ever be inferior and subservient to federated England; but, could the other parts of the Empire then remain united, or should they form a new Union between themselves, how much lower must be the inferiority, the subservience of Ireland to them both!—and if Union would render *Them* still more powerfnl, why should it not give potency to *Her* also, and continue her in the only state which can ensure to her perfect equality, her present state of imperial independence? Let no man start at the expression: by the act of Union Ireland abandoned neither her independence nor her sovereignty: these could only be lost by conquest or by surrender; if she was ever deprived of them by the first, Great Britain by her act of Union, so far from confirming, renounced and abolished the ungracious claim, and restored the rights of Ireland; and as to surrender, that is neither implied nor expressed by Union, nor can it be the consequence: and this position I rest on the authority of Grotius, no mean authority in such a case, who says, lib. 2. cap. 9. that the rights and privileges of two distinct nations, when united,

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are by a mutual communication consolidated into one. May it not be added, that among those rights is not the least a prohibitory power in each against the retractation of the other?

But federation is always helpless:—whensoever the wisdom of federated nations has failed to induce them into Union, the weak has sunk beneath the strong, or each has fallen a divided prey to external aggression. Of this, let example, the only useful purpose of history, be our monitor.

Not seldom has it occurred, that where two distinct and independent nations, federally allied, have each been the subject of one crown, the weaker of the twain has endeavoured to preserve it's own interest by seperation. Thus did Sweden seperate from Denmark, and elect Gustavus Vasa for her King: thus did Portugal, when federated with Spain, cast off the sovereignty of Philip the 4th and transfer her crown to the house of Braganza. I will not revert to more distant times, or to the annals of nations less approximated to ourselves; but I would ask what is become of the federated states of Germany, of Helvetia, or of Holland?—what is become of the Hanseatic League?—what resistance have these been able to make against the *single-handed* Enemy? What continues to the British Isles the security of their empire; what but their strength of Union, their consolidated power, defiant of all his

his fury, and impervious to all his force? No distinctive purposes, no federative jealousies yet divide our hearts or impair our energies; we have yet one common interest with England; we do not yet hope to exalt ourselves by taking from *her*; she has no galling eminence which we can wish to depress, we have no mortifying inferiority which she can desire to encrease. Neither needs to exclaim with the poet,

" Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
" Impatiens consortis"—

But if, despite of example, the addressers can prove Federation to be not difficult of retention, it will then be their duty to ascertain it's benefits: the proposers of innovation, who call on us to commute establishment for uncertainty, are bound to demonstrate the indisputable advantages of their proposition: it remains therefore with these gentlemen to prove, that within these ten years the prosperity of Ireland has decreased, and that it's decrement is wholly imputable to the Union; or, if they admit it's encrease, that it results from some other cause, and that the Union has retarded a more rapid growth. They must prove yet more; they must prove that the dissolution of the Union, whatever be it's other consequences, will enlarge the external strength and the internal happiness of Ireland; that it will ameliorate her people into order and sobriety, by giving them new habits of industry, new lessons

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of morality, new inducements to virtue; they must prove that it will elevate her to an higher rank among the nations, that it will preserve her from the domination of France, that it will add security to eminence, and dignity to power. Yet more than this must they prove; that in her present state of unity she possesses not any of these advantages, that she never can possess them; that in a federated state these must be her's, without the intervention of delay or the possibility of privation; they must prove, that a longer continuance of the Union must be the certain cause of her disgrace, her degradation, her ruin. When they deplore the sudden disappointments to which a commercial people are ever liable, they must prove the misfortune thrown on us exclusively by the Union, and that in a state of federation with or of separation from England it would not occur; that our bankruptcies never result from too adventurous speculation, from idleness, from neglect or from extravagance; that no domestic causes can be assigned, but that all is the fault of England, that all is to be imputed to our Union with Her. This must the addressers prove, and until they can prove all this, the danger into which they would betray us and themselves is too awful, the innovation too perilous to be incurred:—we have the proof of decennial prosperity, ten years have risen on the growing benefits of the Union; and therefore must our federalists and our seperatists be content to be

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told that "we desire no change, and least of all such change as they can bring us."—

But though it leads me to travel beyond the obligation which requires only that I should answer *their* proofs, let me prove somewhat for them; let me examine the commercial state of Ireland as it was before the Union, and as it now is. For this purpose I cannot adduce more convincing Authority than the calculations of Sir Francis D'Ivernois in a work, * which, though not professedly written on the present subject, deserves the perusal of every Irishman who would reflect before he decides. Our encreased and encreasing prosperity, therein so satisfactorily proved, is fairly to be ascribed to the Union; and an accession of wealth, so far beyond the proportion which Ireland enjoyed in the precedent years, can never be attributed to the progressive advancement of her federal state. The addressers may calculate, if they please, the encrease which Ireland may be said to owe to *herself*, but the overplus must be carried to the account of the Union: I therefore presume to extract from the statement of D'Ivernois, and to follow his judicious division of the several articles

* "Effects of the continental Blockade, upon the Commerce, Finances, Credit and Prosperity of the British Islands," by Sir Francis D'Ivernois. 1810.

articles as applied to agriculture and manufactures, as to the extension of luxuries in the higher ranks of life, and the encrease of comforts in the lower.

Some of these articles, I shall be told, we may purchase at home; but it is tolerably apparent, that we are, notwithstanding all our absentees, not unequal to the purchase; the seperatists, and indeed the addressers, before they open their lips on the subject, should be certain that *they* never travel out of their own Island even for their luxuries:—these tables, however, utterly refute their charge against the Union as impoverishing Ireland, for, encreased as the number of her absentees can possibly be, her remaining residents have since the Union become rich enough to consume the articles of luxury, as *carpets*, *silks*, *glasses*, *cabinet-work*, &c. in a triple proportion, while the demand for *jewellery and musical instruments*, those gratifications of refined and idle affluence, has received a tenfold encrease. "We may therefore," as D'Ivernois sensibly observes, "without much danger of being "mistaken, conclude that for every wealthy family "which has quitted Ireland, three or four of those "which remain have ascended from the middling "to the higher ranks, and at least nine or ten from "the lower to the middling. The enrichment of "a nation always acts in this way: what is peculi-"arly striking in the case of Ireland is, that this "great change has been effected in so short a time,

"and

" and to so great an extent within the two " last years." *Effects, &c. p.* 87. The importation of *clover seed* has been tripled, therefore the cultivation of artificial grasses must have been proportionately extended; that of the *raw materials* for almost every species of manufacture has received a nearly equal increment; the imports of *woollen and of cotton cloths* has been doubled, and " the contem- " poraneous encrease in the import of woollen and " cotton yarn, and of cotton wool, has been greater " than that of the manufactured articles. All this " wool and cotton is manufactured" (*by Irish hands*) " into ordinary and coarse goods, used by " the lower Irish people; as is proved by the ex- " ports of Ireland, which include no woollen goods, " and cotton only to the amount of £18,918, " notwithstanding the prodigious import of that " material. Thus we see, that the improvements " in manufactures and in agriculture keep pace " with each other." *Effects, &c. p.* 86. The importation of *blankets*, an article so essential to the lower classes, has encreased as ten to one since the Union; while the exportation of *flax*, in the cultivation of which the poorest description of labourers are employed, has during the same period multiplied in the prodigious proportion of *upwards of seven hundred and eighteen to one*!—The exportation of *live cattle* has diminished, yet that of *tallow and hides* has encreased; the consumption of meat therefore must be encreased also, and, considering the

the number of our absentees, beyond the former proportion; this encrease, which must be accordant with the cultivation of the artificial grasses, be it remembered, is consumed among ourselves; and this consumption, as the meat has not fallen in it's price, must be more widely * extended. The exportation of every species of *corn* has encreased, save only *wheat;* and we thence may reasonably infer with D'Ivernois, that "the consumption of "white bread and of superior articles of every de-"scription has been every year encreasing in Ireland." *Effects, &c. p.* 92.

The article of *wine* particularly deserves to be considered; since the Union, it's consumption has encreased *one half*, though £25 6*s.* 0*d.* per ton have been added to the duties on Portugal wines; (I speak of the duties as in 1809) and though the price of wine is raised threefold. But if the sale of French wines has decreased, and if port being stronger than claret cannot be so freely drank, if the consumption of port be doubled and it's price tripled, surely it is plain arithmetic, that for every *one* family that could

* When Mrs. Winifred Jenkins was sojourning in Scotland, she was told that the servants there got nothing for dinner but sheeps-heads; howsomdever, says she, I dined yesterday on a delicate leg of mutton, and if I had not been a fool I might have known there could be no heads without carcasses.—Had our addressers half the reflection of aunt Tabitha's chambermaid, we should hear less of their common halls, their speeches, and their resolutions.

Houses of the Oireachtas

A TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF

IRISH IMPORTATIONS

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1796 AND 1809.

SHEWING

1st. The *Average* of the Three Years, ending 25th March, 1799.
2d. The *Average* of the Three Years, ending 5th January, 1807.
3d. The *Amount* for the Year ending 5th January, 1809.
4th. The Total Increase since the Union.

This Table, extracted from the Original Custom-House Registers, mentions the *Quantity*, *Weight*, or *Measure* of such Articles in which they are specified, and the *real value*, where the Quantities, &c. are not mentioned.

Principal Articles.		*Average* of the three years, ending 25 Mar. 1799.	*Average* of the three years, ending 5 Jan. 1807.	*Importations* of the year 1808.	*Increase* since the Union.
Hemp seed	*Hogsheads.*	114	124	465	351
Clover seed	*Cwt.*	3,289	6,768	9,432	6,142
Garden seeds	*Lbs.*	38,174	138,962	141,282	103,108
Coals	*Tons.*	371,922	442,461	583,516	211,593
Iron, unwrought	*Cwts.*	205,730	242,854	328,012	122,281
Iron and hardware	*Value £*	60,534	176,199	249,373	188,839
Indigo	*Lbs.*	85,486	114,392	119,640	34,154
Painting stuffs	*Value £*	4,006	12,568	17,497	13,490
Iron liquor	*Galls.*	16,544	41,998	51,605	35,061
Cotton wool	*Cwts.*	10,983	17,782	22,620	11,636
Cotton yarn	*Lbs.*	460,013	1,223,081	1,486,880	1,026,867
Worsted yarn	*Lbs.*	1,547	38,404	259,431	257,884
Salt, foreign and white	*Bushels.*	596,149	529,323	866,441	270,291
Ditto, rock	*Tons.*	16,774	27,414	26,602	9,828
Hops	*Cwts.*	16,451	23,471	28,841	12,389
Molasses	*Cwts.*	597	1,072	13,089	12,491
Wines—Port, Spanish, Madeira, French and Rhenish	*Tons.*	4,436	5,939	6,960	2,523
Coaches and coachmaker's work	*Value £*	5,771	18,051	30,517	24,746
Carpet and carpeting	*Yards.*	51,450	133,255	187,923	136,472
Muslin—India and British, white and coloured	*Yards.*	49,599	63,982	75,913	26,313
Silk ribbands	*Lbs.*	1,090	1,754	2,676	1,586
Silk manufacture	*Lbs.*	5,147	9,364	12,736	7,589
Ornamented drapery	*Value £*	18,790	55,073	58,414	39,623
Jewellery	*Ditto*	1,400	5,428	10,084	5,656
Musical instruments	*Ditto*	1,911	9,911	16,782	14,870
Upholstery	*Ditto*	2,943	7,029	14,739	11,796
Glass plates	*Ditto*	1,637	3,895	6,530	4,892
Saddlery	*Ditto*	4,209	8,841	10,543	6,334
Sugar—candy, loaf, Muscovado, white	*Cwts.*	211,209	245,388	447,404	236,194
Teas	*Lbs.*	2,260,600	3,914,381	3,706,771	1,446,171
Spirits—brandy, geneva and rum	*Galls.*	121,248	263,843	1,052,968	931,719
Pepper	*Lbs.*	103,659	117,324	196,544	92,885
Mustard	*Lbs.*	89,326	145,663	173,087	83,761
Haberdashery—small parcels	*Value £*	14,619	84,780	109,210	94,591
Drapery, old and new	*Yards.*	1,562,203	2,233,947	3,078,100	1,515,997
Cotton, plain, &c.	*Value £*	124,662	141,655	228,579	103,917
Hosiery—stockings—cotton, silk and cotton, silk and worsted, thread, woollen, worsted	*Pairs.*	318,685	523,496	730,775	412,090
Cases of Glass	*No.*	6,003	12,974	15,833	9,830
Cutlery	*Value £*	12,144	31,554	45,422	33,277
Earthen ware	*Value £*	26,612	56,441	90,423	63,810
Hats	*No.*	10,827	73,899	110,488	99,661
Apparel	*Value £*	5,749	19,607	33,150	27,400
Blankets	*No.*	11,615	46,374	100,704	89,089

Houses of the Oireachtas

A TABLE

OF THE

PRINCIPAL ARTICLES

OF

IRISH EXPORTATIONS

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1796 AND 1809;

SHEWING,

1st. The *Average* of the Three Years, ending 25th March, 1799.
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This Table, extracted from the Original Custom-house Registers, mentions the *Quantity*, *Weight*, or *Measure* of such Articles in which they are specified, and the *real value*, where the Quantities, &c. are not mentioned.

Principal Articles.		*Average* of the three years, ending 25 Mar. 1799.	*Average* of the three years, ending 5 Jan. 1807.	*Exportations* of the year 1808.	*Increase* since the Union.
Linen, plain and coloured	*Yards.*	36,174,402	41,857,773	43,904,382	7,729,980
Linen and cotton manufactures	*Value £*	10,833	9,125	18,919	8,075
Flax undressed	*Cwts.*	68	328	48,882	48,813
Linen yarn	*Cwts.*	16,682	8,249	35,392	8,609
Wool	*Stones.*	134	24,272	2,634	2,499
Bacon flitches	*No.*	71,226	170,113	264,844	193,618
Bacon hams	*Cwts.*	1,552	2,186	11,611	10,058
Salt Beef	*Barrels.*	124,021	103,930	122,064	
Butter	*Cwts.*	300,292	317,693	346,856	46,563
Barley	*Barrels.*	32,444	22,036	59,891	27,447
Oats	*Barrels.*	600,434	393,544	935,850	335,416
Feathers	*Cwts.*	1,159	2,190	4,198	3,039
Kelp	*Tons.*	1,797	2,826	5,410	3,613
Pork	*Barrels.*	149,999	101,998	168,603	18,604
Rape seed	*Quarters.*	4,560	7,116	7,089	2,528
Soap	*Cwts.*	5,315	9,932	19,095	13,779
Tallow	*Cwts.*	12,806	6,364	13,762	955
Wheat	*Barrels.*	37,955	146,971	79,189	41,234
Bullocks and cows	*No.*	25,487	20,236	14,122	

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could afford to drink wine before the Union, *three* can afford to drink it now. I should be justified in saying that our ability has encreased in a *sexuple* proportion. Yet has this unlucky Union drained us of all our opulence!—

* How will the addressers account for this cheering advancement? How will the seperatists explain away this mortifying prosperity? Where are the fatal prognostications of solitary cities and dispeopled villages; of idle ploughs and deserted looms; of fields producing only nettles, and grass growing no where but in the streets? Where are the retrenched expenditure and the exhausted capital; where are the defrauded creditor and the imprisoned debtor; where are the public impoverishment and the national degradation?—Where to be found, but in the fears of the addressers, and in the hopes of the seperatists?—

I now conclude the commercial part of the question; and here am I largely indebted to Sir Francis D'Invernois,

* Much of this prosperous commerce will be ascribed perhaps to the Berlin decree, which reciprocally threw back the trade of England and of Ireland from the Continent on each other: but when the enmity of Napoleon was thus profitable to Great Britain and thus beneficially extended to Ireland as a part of her Empire, Ireland is surely indebted to the Union for the advantage,

Houses of the Oireachtas

D'Ivernois, from whose luminous arrangement it is almost injustice to detach any portion: but the extracts that I have ventured to borrow may perhaps induce the perusal of his entire essay; a work which, I hesitate not to say, will convince all who are not determined against conviction.

Our addressers will forgive my inculcating the wisdom of not exchanging a probable or even possible advantage for that which is wholly uncertain and unknown; they will forgive my suggestion of the difference between rejecting a proposition and overturning an establishment. The resulting good of the Union attaches no blame to those who foresaw in it only evil, but it should induce them to retract their opposition; the wisest men have not been ashamed to change an opinion which experience has proved to be ill-founded, nor is any inconsistency so much to be shunned as consistency in error. The experience of ten years may surely justify the retractation of honest but mistaken patriotism, which should at least remember the axiom of Fox; "quod fieri non debet, "factum valet;" *that which should not have been done, yet when done, should not be undone.*—Of the original expediency of the Union I will therefore leave our addressers still to think as they please; but the measure is now effected; it has bound Ireland with Great Britain in one unseverable Empire; it has consolidated their destinies, it's consequences-

quences have been most happy; it's preservation will ensure strength and honor, security and wealth; it's dissolution will occasion weakness and disgrace, confusion and distress.

FINIS.

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