

A  
H I N T

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF IRELAND:

BY

A NATIVE.

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“What is the City, but a great tame beast that eats and carries  
and cares not who rides it?”

KILLING NO MURDER.

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DUBLIN;

—  
1800.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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## A HINT, &c.

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AT a crisis when every thing most dear to Irishmen is at stake, when their country trembles on the brink of an unfathomable abyss, and the monster of despotism stands ready to devour them; it becomes the duty of an individual to declare his opinions, and to throw his mite of disapprobation into the national fund. At a time when *unanimity of exertion* is the only requisite, and *energy of action* the only salvation, no person can be too insignificant to publish his sentiments; for, however ignoble the organ by which it is expressed, the "still small voice" of truth *will* be heard, and the incontrovertible arguments of self-interest *must* be remembered. It is scarcely necessary to suggest, that, at this moment, the future existence of Ireland depends upon the steadiness of a part of the inhabitants, and the prosperity of millions, on the resolution of a few: with the determination

of those few, rests every thing we have to hope, or dread. I have not leisure to weigh my words, or examine my expressions; but, surely, truth requires no adventitious aid, nor integrity any studied apology. The time for speculation is past; the moment of decision is present. The men of Ireland can no longer sit calmly contemplating the advantages and disadvantages of the various forms of government, the probable improvements of mankind, or the infinite perfectibility of the human race: their sympathies are now contracted within the boundaries of their own island; their energies must now be turned to the preservation of their own rights; and their exertions immediately directed to the defence of their own interests. There is no time for deliberation—Resolution must be prompt—The enemy is at our gates; and in a few weeks, the independence of our country will be destroyed, and the eternal disgrace of her inhabitants engraven on the fallen pillars of the Constitution. This is not a moment to consider, or to analyze the various component parts of the destructive project; we are not now to debate about the competence of Parliament, or the final settlement of 1782; arguments avail not  
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on the present occasion. The success of this important question, is no longer doubtful; the intrigues of designing men have divided the nation; the advantages formerly inseparable from discussion, have vanished; the power of sincerity is annihilated, and the demon of corruption triumphs. A wicked Minister, and a depraved Government, are resolved to put the finishing stroke to Irish degradation; and all that should now engross our thoughts is a consideration of the *means* by which we may shun the impending danger. *Irishmen!* ask your *hearts*—ask your *memories*—WHAT ARE THOSE MEANS?

No indecision of opinion can now exist on the subject of an Union with Great Britain; no doubt respecting the merits of this measure, can now linger in the minds of either party; and, I sincerely hope, that no distrust or jealousy of each other, can now remain amongst those who still cling to the cherished idea of Irish independence. The corrupt minister, who, by his nefarious artifices and desolating exertions, succeeded in separating the inhabitants of this country, has in some measure atoned for his crime, by presenting them with  
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this Union target, as an object for the exercise of those weapons which his wicked policy had provided for their mutual destruction; and by his audacious endeavour to trample on the rights and liberties of Ireland, he has re-united the divided people, and contracted all the rays of their displeasure into a focus, which may ere long consume the edifice that he has laboured to erect. It appears, at length, to be determined that a Legislative Union shall be forced upon the nation; and nothing now remains for parliamentary declaimers, but to act the useless and absurd farce of arranging the terms of our disgrace: *useless* and *absurd* indeed—for, of what importance is any covenant, or what security any agreement, with a Government which, with the most glaring effrontery, breaks through a settlement that (so recently as eighteen years since) was universally acknowledged to be final? Let the Irish patriot recur to those days of dignity and splendor; let him recollect the situation of his country before the year 1782, and *let him not forget the means* by which it became the affluent and prosperous object of British jealousy, and British avarice. It has been customary with the advocates

vocates for the projected union, to assert, that the late disturbances in Ireland were produced by the adjustment of 1782; this I do not deny, for it is beyond a doubt that the various and rapid improvements of this nation have all originated in that glorious period, and certainly had Ireland remained in the degraded state of a conquered country, Great Britain would never have dreamt of the necessity of reducing her to the abject condition of a dependant province. The tender plant of Irish prosperity had grown too luxuriant beneath the genial sun of independence, and amidst the western breezes of salubrious liberty; but the state gardener having pruned it, and lopped off its most beautiful branches, at last resolves to replace it under the shade of the poison-dropping ash of British despotism.

With those who have not ere now determined which opinion to adopt, the persuasions of Heaven, the voice of inspiration, would not avail; for either dazzled by the brilliancy of *golden* ideas, they wait in anxious expectation of more powerful motives, or stupified by the apathy of selfishness, they perceive not (in their temporary

ary and tranſient exemption from the general curſe) the unavoidable vortex in which every thing Iriſh is doomed to be engulfed. To every rank of ſociety, to every corner of this envied, perfecuted, and devoted iſland will this ruinous and deſolating meaſure extend its malignant influence; from the peer who dwells in the decorated palace, to the peaſant who exiſts in the mouldering hovel, will every claſs, deplore the miſerable effects of a Legislative Union, and lament, *when too late for remedy*, their torpid acquieſcence. Emigration from every city, from every houſe, from every family, will be amongſt the inevitable conſequences; *affluence* will look for *amusement*, *ambition* will purſue *diſtinction*, and *talents* will ſeek *applauſe*, in the metropolis of the empire; but *Iriſh* affluence will ſhrink into nothing before the enormous wealth of monopolizing Britain, *diſtinction* will fly from *Iriſh* ambition, *Engliſh* minds will beſtow neither admiration nor reward on *Iriſh* ſuperiority; and the hour will come when almoſt every individual of thoſe who deſert their country, will curſe the day in which they ſuffered themſelves to be enticed from their homes. When the nominal nobility of this degraded kingdom

Kingdom shall find themselves despised and neglected in the capital of Great Britain; when they shall behold themselves the subjects of clumsy raillery, and the objects of chilling contempt; when their properties diminish, and their expences encrease; when they are unable to support their accustomed magnificence, and perceive that even the price of their own honour and their country's welfare, is insufficient to enable them to vie with the meanest merchant in London; they will then, perhaps, look back on the days of their prosperity, and sigh for the possession of those virtues they despised. Who will compassionate the unfeeling votary of narrow-minded aristocracy? Who will lament the voluntary victim of self-degradation? Noblemen of Ireland! ye whose bosoms *ought* to glow with rage at the insult offered to your country and yourselves; beware of the consequences of surrendering your rights to the ambition of a British minister, and entrusting your estates to the protection of a mercenary soldiery.—The untitled men, who, in their native country, frequent and form a part in the society of the higher class, who emulate the prodigal trappings of rank, and imitate the extravagant absurdities

furdities of fashion, will not without a pang, contract their expences and restrain their profusion, either in the wealthy metropolis of the imperial dominions, in the minor resorts of English gaiety, or even in the vulgar habitations of the barbarous province of Ireland\*. Those who, from necessity or from principle, continue in their native land, will dwell as it were in an enemy's country, furrounded with barracks, harassed by armies, and overwhelmed with taxes. The industrious tradesmen and shop-keepers who are able to remove with their families, will abandon a country where they can no longer find the means of subsistence; and the indigent who do not possess the power of emigration, will sink into an early grave, the unpitied victims of British despotism and British rapacity. A Legislative Union must be severely felt by the great majority of every class in Ireland; we must all resign many comforts; habit ascertains and strengthens our necessities, and the man of wealth will suffer as much mortification in being obliged to relinquish his brilliant equipages

\* The *philosophic mind*, in any rank, will ever adapt itself to the existing circumstances; but *philosophic minds* are *comparatively few*.

and ostentatious repasts, as the man of poverty will in being deprived of the luxury of salt with his potatoes. Those who *still* intend to consider and to acknowledge themselves *Irishmen*, should endeavour to prove that they are *worthy* of the appellation—The great body of the people are firm in their disapprobation of this project, and every man should now consider in what way he ought to oppose this tyrannical and ruinous measure—The longer we remain without resorting to an antidote, the more difficult will it be to eradicate the poison—Arguments, remonstrances, petitions, have been tried in vain—Have we any other resource? Have we any other means of warding off the impending blow? If we have not . . . . . then let us rest peaceably and endeavour to forget that we ever had a country, a constitution, or a name—Let us humbly crouch before the British lion; and sleep, till we are awakened by *the crowing of the cock, or the sound of the last trumpet.*

February, 1800.

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