

SEASONABLE ADVICE
TO THE
ELECTORS
OF
MEMBERS OF PARLEMENT
AT THE ENSUING
GENERAL ELECTION.

ADDRESSED

To the FREE and INDEPENDENT ELECTORS of the
KINGDOM of IRELAND in general, to those of DUBLIN
in particular,

Upon the present CRITICAL CONJUNCTURE of Affairs.

PART II.

BY CHARLES LUCAS, M.D.

*The Subjects can no more part with their Liberties, than Kings
can Alienate their Crowns.* MOLESWORTH.

DUBLIN:

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M,DCC,LXVIII.

Houses of the Oireachtas

CHARLES LUCAS,

To the FREE and INDEPENDENT ELECTORS of
the Kingdom of IRELAND in general, to those
of the City of DUBLIN in particular ; FREEDOM,
HEALTH, and PEACE :

My most honored and beloved COUNTRYMEN, FELLOW-
CITIZENS, and FRIENDS.

THE long wished for period is arrived, when the
lapsed national Constitution is so far set to rights,
as to be brought back, nearly, to the primitive
Institution, if not to the original principles of our Polity.

It is the peculiar blessing of this Age, that We have
lived to obtain what our forefathers and We have long
wished and fighed for in vane, a Law for Limiting the
Duration of Parlements. It is our peculiar happiness,
that we have outlived that detestable hoary Tyrant, a
perpetual Parlement, by which the Rights and Liberties
of the subject were so often and so long set at naught,
and the Relation, Office and Duty of Constituents and
Representatives were actually abolished or buried in
oblivion.

The Original Sacred Compact between the Consti-
tuents and Representatives is now no longer to be forgot,
but must, by this law, be revived and inforced. The
Elector, before neglected and dispised, will now learn his
weight and importance in the Councils of the Nation.
He is no longer to be duped by the designing man, who,
after having obtained his Vote, domineered over his
Elector, knowing the office conferred, was for life. The

Representative now must remember, that he is the Creature and Servant of his Electors; that his reckoning is not to be put off, as formerly, to a long day; but that he is to account, at least once in eight years, with his Constituents, who will so often, have it in their power to distinguish and reward, or to censure his Conduct, and brand him with lasting Contempt and Infamy.

The Equality, if not the superiority, of the Electors to the Elected will now be known and confessed, universally. And Gentlemen will not disdain, as heretofore, to pay due Respect and Deference to those, from whom they derive all their Privilege, Power, Authority and Weight, and for whom, they must confess, they hold them but in Trust.

These make but a part of the many Blessings, present and future, which this great Law secures to this Kingdom, if the FREEMEN and FREEHOLDERS have but the wisdom and virtue to live up to the constitutional spirit of the Law.

To point out to the less informed of my COUNTRYMEN and FELLOW-CITIZENS, the means of reaping the present and future desired Benefits from this Law, is the purport and intent of the present Address. And therefore, rude and irregular as it must necessarily be found, amidst my numberless avocations and the shortness of the time allowed for such a work, the design, it is hoped, will apologise for Imperfections and make the attempt acceptable to the public.

As there has been no point of time, since the Laws of England were adopted in *Ireland**, in which an exertion of the Wisdom and Circumspection, of the Freedom and Virtue of the Electors, in their choice of Members to represent them in Parleмент, has been more essentially necessary than at present; I cannot, consistent with the Character of a good Citizen, suffer the present critical conjuncture of affairs to pass unnoticed, without calling upon every man, who tenders the Liberty and Happiness

*This was done by Act of Parleмент, the 10th of *Henry VII.*

of himself, his Country and Posterity, or the glory of his King, to exert himself agreeable to the duty of his sphere, in the Common Cause.

Agreeable to the desire of some of my worthy Fellow-Citizens, I lately sent a small Tract to the Press, which had been published in London, previous to the late general Elections, but not much read here.

In that, I have sketched out some general rules for the Duties of the Electors, as well as for judging of the capacities and qualifications of the persons to be Elected.

I also gave a sketch of the distempered State of the body politic, in order to point out the most speedy and effectual method of Cure, which appeared solely to depend upon the Wisdom and Virtue of your choice of Representatives in Parlemtent, and pointed out such Characters, as you ought to choose, and such as you might not, consistent with any Just principle, trust to represent you.

And, as a further incentive to a virtuous, free Election, I inserted his Majesty's most gracious Declaration in Council, upon his auspicious accession to the Throne, in which, he is pleased to call for *the support and assistance of every honest man, in his arduous situation; and promises to make it the business of his Life to promote the glory and happiness of these Kingdoms, to preserve and strengthen the national constitution, both in Church and state, &c.*

Upon this never to be forgotten royal assurance of the patriot Intentions of his Majesty, upon his first Speech in Parlemtent, and upon his first Proclamation against Immortality, Irreligion and Profaneness, I own I grounded the fullest hopes of Halcyon days in these Kingdoms, and confidently expressed my hopes, in almost prophetic strains.

Though I have had the mortification to see these loyal Expressions treated with some Levity and contempt; I have not changed my Sentiments.

It is true, I am not so insensible, as not to feel the outrageous effects of the jealousy and discontent which rage in England, or of the dissatisfactions and heartburnings, for the fate of themselves, their neighbours and fellow-subjects, which prevale all over this Kingdom, as well as in more remote parts of the Dominions of the Crown.

But, sure I am, that these afford no foundation for me or any thinking loyal man, to alter the highest sentiments, conceived of our Sovereigne: he is, not onely in polity, but in essence, incapable of doing any wrong. All that know him must with me confess, that every emotion of his royal Heart is just, benevolent, patriot, great and good.

If it be asked, why *these Complaints and Murmurrings in our streets?* Whence all those Jealousies, Discontents, Dissatisfactions and Heartburnings, which cover the face of the Nations? The causes will evidently be found among those, in both Kingdoms, who have been deaf to the gracious, to the patriot and pious Calls of the Sovereigne.

How few of the Counties, Cities or Boroughs of either Kingdoms can say, they elected upon Constitutional Principles, the most worthy, the best qualified and the most approved *honest men*, to counsil the King and to represent his faithful people in Parleмент!—Those who have not Elected and sent such men to serve them, have no right to complain of the misconduct of Ministers, or Parlements; they deserved no better treatment, who chose and trusted to knaves, or sent fools of their errands, and might suffer without pity, did they suffer alone. If the Electors were but sensible and virtuous, they would send wise and *honest men* alone, to represent them. If the Ministers were chosen out of men of this character, there could be no room to complain of their conduct. Or, if the Ministry were appointed out of any other class, such wise and faithful representatives could not fail of
restraining

restraining them within, or punishing them, when they exceeded, the due bounds of their offices.

Thus, in a government constituted, like ours, of the excellencies of all the best forms of government, of Monarchy, limited and directed by law, consequently without tyranny, in the King, of Aristocracy without Oligarchy, in the Lords, and of Democracy without Anarchy, in the Commons; nothing but the want of sense and integrity in the Electors of the Commons, or the perfidity, or degeneracy of the representative of the people can suffer an unjust administration to oppress the subjects, or give any handle for suspicion, jealousy or discontent. And sure, at all events, nothing can be more unjust, than to impute the errors or crimes of Substitutes to the principal, when he is so far from authorising, that he is generally kept an intire stranger to them; unless when they are properly remonstrated against by some of his faithful and upright Council.

If then, the people have not reaped all the expected fruits from the happy prospects from his Majesty's gracious declaration at his accession to the throne; if jealousy and discontent have raised an evil spirit in the next Kingdom, and all sense of liberty in the lower class seems perverted into licentiousness; if the loyal subjects of the Crown in the colonies, though intituled to all the rights and privileges of Englishmen, appear to be so oppressed, as to be driven from their loyalty and allegiance, for want of the due protection and benefit of the Laws; if the fundamental principles of polity and government be by many slighted, despised and vilified, and a despotic or military government be by numbers preferred to the happy system established; if the constitution of *Ireland*, by law equal to that of Britain, be in many points invaded and broken, and the whole Kingdom, with it's Cities and Boroughs, be still exposed to the Calamities, I have complained of in the first part of this tract, with the additional aggravation of the weakness and meanness

of the civil power, and the strength and insolence of the military ; where is the blame to be layed ?—Let men ask their own Hearts. Let, those who wish for a general reformation, and a thorough restoration of the suppressed spirit and vigor of the civil constitution, begin at home, and see how each has performed his duty in his sphere, as a Magistrate, an Elector or a member of society ; and it will, I dare say, be confessed, that the general want of judgment, integrity and freedom in the Elections of Members of Parleмент, in both Kingdoms, has been the source of all the evils complained of, of all the evils to be dreaded, that a reformation in these must effect a general reformation and prevent future backslidings.

It is a maxim of the soundest politicians, that the constitutions of these Kingdoms can never be overthrown but by Parlements. This has been exemplified in all the neighbouring Nations, ancient and modern. *Rome* preserved her freedom and greatness, no longer than the Senate and people retained their Virtue and Integrity. *Spain, France, and Denmark*, were as free as *Britain or Ireland* can boast, till their Parlements ceased to be appointed upon the constitutional principles of Virtue and Liberty, and till the Guardians and Representatives became as ignorant, as dependent, as venal and corrupt, as their Constituents afterwards proved. And thus the perversion of those very Senates and Parlements, which were appointed to preserve, to improve and strengthen the system of Government, established by the common consent of the people, before the institution of delegate Councils, was ever wrought by the ignorance or corruption of the Electors, and necessarily ended in the dissolution of the establishment, the introduction of military force, the prostration of the civil power, the total extinction of Liberty, and the erection of fell despotism in it's place.

Though this sad recital must make us mourn the fate, if not of those who were enslaved by their own corruption, yet

yet of their innocent progeny, who are now galled with the painful and ignominious bonds of tyranny, and trampled upon at the will of the tyrant, by military mercenaries; in common justice, we must confess, they deserved their bondage, who thus wrought and rivetted on their fetters. And can any nation hope long to escape the like fate, whose subjects have lost all sense of virtue and honor in the discharge of the several duties of their respective spheres, particularly in the Election of their Representatives in Parlement?

Such as the Electors are found, such will be the elected. Those alone who have regard enough to the freedom and happiness of their Country, and sense, integrity and fidelity enough, disinterestedly and freely to choose fit and proper representatives, bid fair for preserving the Constitution in purity and vigor; while those, who appoint, for they cannot elect, delegates upon other principles or motives, those who have not Judgement to distinguish the requisite qualifications, and those, who are influenced by any selfish, private or sordid Considerations in their appointment of Representatives, as much as in themselves, expose their Country to all the Calamities, that have attended the fallen Nations, I have now mentioned.

What can be more hateful, more dreadful to a man indued with the slightest sense of Liberty and Love of his Country, then the numberless wicked and destructive Arts, daily practised with impunity, yea, with great encouragement, at Elections in these Kingdoms? What cringing, what bowing, what soothing, what fawning, what flattering, what promises, what deceits, what bribery, what corruption, to say nothing of infamous compulsion, have we not seen, upon all, but especially the general Elections? Can these foul means be used by honest and undesigning men? Is it not to be presumed, that he, who can stoop so low as to play these like base pranks, to spoil the Elector of his Sense, virtue and freedom in his choice, will be as ready to yield up his
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own neck, with those of his Electors, to the yoke, whenever the proper lure is thrown out to the Hawk? It cannot be doubted, that those who purchase or otherwise illicitly influence the voices of Electors, to obtain seats in Parliament, mean but to deal in barter and exchange, and bring their own voices to the highest market.

The slave trade is carried to a greater extent in these kingdoms, than between *Africa* and *America*. And though it must be every where confessed, a detestable commerce, and such as must sooner or later bring on certain temporal, if not eternal damnation; it is not in any sense so culpable, as our domestic traffic in slaves: the poor inoffensive *African* is doomed but to bodily servitude, which hurts not his country, and his mind remains uncorrupt and free. The *British* and *Irish* slave, is left the outward appearance of bodily freedom only; while his nobler part, his mind is corrupted and vilified, his sense and judgement taken away, his voice, which should be freely devoted to the service of his country, is prostituted to it's bane; his portion of the inestimable rights and privileges of a free man, is sold, probably to such another slave as himself, who waits but for a fit price and chapman to sell himself, his Electors and his country to the first infamous bidder, and is therefore the worst kind of slave himself, as he is the shameful seducer, and differs but in name and magnitude from the first enslaved and seduced.

If Elections have been thus made in these kingdoms, it is easy to determine, who are answerable for the sad circumstances, in which the public is at present to be viewed.

Among the component parts of every human state, there ever was and ever must be a contest for power, proportioned to the thirst for dominion. The Sovereign must act by Ministers. And however exalted his station, however sacred his character, and however incapable of doing any political wrong he may be; fatal experience
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has evinced the constant endeavors of ministers to wrest all power from the people, to vest it in the Crown alone, to be dispensed or exercised at the discretion of it's creatures.

In a government like ours, such Ministers can never succede in their worst projects, but through the ignorance, supineness or corruption of the people or their representatives in Parlement.

A parliamentary government well administered, is the best that human wisdom is capable of; as it consists of an happy counterpoise of power, between the three estates, of King, Lords and Commons, it bids fairest for the security of the prerogatives, rights and liberties of each constituent part of the commonwealth.

But, if ever the balance of power between the estates be broke or lost, this best becomes, of all others, the worst form of government; it becomes a tyranny of the worst and most permanent kind; for, one tyrant is more tolerable and generally more easily subdued than a multitude; besides it may be less burdensome to the people. Thus the French King or any other absolute Monarch may have all his desires gratified at a less expence to the suffering subjects, than the limited Monarch, who shares his power and the spoils of the people with a nominal Parlement, corrupted with the public treasure, and made subservient to all the basest purposes of a wicked Minister. Add to this, that the tyranny of a Parlement has the sanction of law, while the tyranny of either of the estates can no longer be borne, than it is supported by lawless force.

As the Commons are a proper and sufficient balance to the first and second estates, were it possible both should conspire against the liberties of the people; the Electors and the Elected are principally to blame, when any incroachment is made upon the rights or liberties of the subject, whenever any Minister of the Crown exercises any illicit or injurious power or influence, or even when
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the people losing the true sense and spirit of liberty, degenerate into lawless confusion and licentiousness.

— If then, our happy systems of government are to be injured or overthrown, onely by the ignorance, supineness or corruption of the third estate; or, if destructive favorites, ignorant profligate or cruel judges and magistrates, or infamous abandoned Ministers, the most destructive enemies of our states, are to be expelled, restrained or punished, and the invasions of the rights and liberties of the subject obviated or repelled, and other breaches of the national constitution repaired, onely by the wisdom and virtue of the people in their choice of Representatives, can there be a more detestable wretch conceived than he, who prostitutes his voice at the election, and thereby conspires to overturn the best of civil constitutions, and to intail slavery on his country to generations yet unborn?

Whatever shallow politicians may think, these two kingdoms must stand or fall together. While the true spirit of liberty is cherished and exerted in *England*, not onely this kingdom, but the remotest parts of the dominion of the crown must share in the general happiness. Those who are sensibly touched with the numberless inestimable benefits of freedom, can never think of making it a monopoly, they will liberally and equally dispense it to the most distant of their fellow subjects. They cannot therefore, suffer, much less authorise, the slightest invasion of the rights or liberties of their neighbours; well knowing, there is no contagion more dangerous, than that of slavery, and that if the kingdom of *Ireland*, or even the distant colonies, be enslaved, it is hard to point out the quarantine that can keep the infection from their own coasts. Tyranny has generally commenced in the borders, but when it got footing there, it never was known to fail to reach the head and heart of the state.

There can be no doubt, that, when the causes of the internal, as well as external jealousies and discontents, that now unhappily rage in *England* are properly considered;

dered; they will be removed by the wisdom and virtue of the Legislature. There can be neither wisdom or justice in suffering those evil spirits to rise higher, and much less in dealing such hard measures to the Colonies, as to alienate their affections and drive them from their allegiance, which must ever be done, when the people are denied the protection of the laws. Continued oppression ever makes wise men mad. And sure, nothing but oppression could make the poor people of *America* one moment forget their true interest, in their connexion with, dependance upon, and affection to, their mother country.

Though I must be solicitous for the freedom and happiness of all the sons of men, who undoubtedly have an equal clame to it, with us; I should not here mention this brave unfortunate people, did I not apprehend this kingdom as well as that of *England*, involved in the fate of the free and loyal subjects of *America*.

But, solicitous as I may be for the security of the liberties of that people, I must be still more immediately anxious for those of my native country. And this anxiety, I find increases in proportion, as I apprehend a decay or declension of the genuine constitutional spirit of liberty in a neighbouring country.

I am not however, without hope, that this almost suppressed spirit will rise and be diffused throughout the whole dominions, so as to vindicate the honor of the Crown, to secure the rights of the subject, and to restore the whole constitution to pristine purity, perfection and vigor.

In this great work, the subjects of all parts of the dominions should co-operate. Let each begin at home; let each discharge the duties of his respective sphere, and the great and noble work must be speedily and happily effected.

Such has been the conduct of our Rulers and Parliaments, that we have more to do in the work of reformation,

mation, than the subjects of any other part of these dominions: upon us, though by law intituled to every right and privilege of Englishmen, upon us, the dregs of all evil Governors and Governments have been cast. Instead of *strengthening and improving* our constitution, it has been continually invaded, weakened, injured or trampled under foot. The very calling of Parlements, which should be the comfort and delight of the nation, has often proved a scourge, a curse, and a bane to us. The arrival of a chief Governor, which should bring with it health and vigor to the constitution and joy to every heart, is often attended with terror and destruction, equal if not superior to the visits of the Captain Bassa to the unfortunate islands of the Archipelago, under the Ottoman yoke.

In short, while we have every titule, that law, justice and good policy can give, to the freedom and rights of British subjects, to peace and happiness; we have seldom been permitted to know any medium between being artfully lulled into a political lethargy, or kept in a continual state of warfare, wherein, though we acted but upon the defensive, we have, for the most part, been forced to confess the prowess of the lordly conqueror.

Though all your Records carry evidence of these melancholy truths, your own memories may serve to give you further conviction of the evil treatment continually given this well-deserving, but ill fated kingdom.—How few of the King's Vicegerents have you known, that fairly represented the Sovereign to his people? How few kept their words or fulfilled their private or their public promises or engagements?

To look no further back, have you had one Governor in this regne, that has not declared from the throne, that he had nothing to ask but the usual supplies? And has there been one of them, that has not, besides creating or multiplying useless and expensive places for their dependent sycophants and favorites, or granting pensions to the worst followers and tools of the worst of Ministers,
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did not demand and obtain a further provision for profusion, in Parleмент?

What benefits have you received in return?—If at any time, any slight favor was conceded or the pitiful indulgence of taxing yourselves, for the necessary encouragement of arts and agriculture; has it ever been done without such a sting, as made the gift so dangerous and destructive, that it generally became necessary to reject the pretended boon?

I never remember an administration, that opened with a fairer prospect of freedom, peace and happiness to this kingdom, than the present. We were offered from the throne a long wished-for, a long sought law, for making the judges independent here, as in *England*. Nothing was desired more than the usual supplies. And assurance was given of the passing all such laws, as should be judged necessary for the good of the kingdom.

This could not fail of disposing every heart to love, gratitude and peace, and moving every member to prepare bills for all the necessary purposes of the state.

Accordingly public bills were moved for to the following number and effect.

1. For limiting the duration of Parlements.
2. For securing the freedom of the judges.
3. For ascertaining and regulating Intrusion and Quarterage.
4. For securing the Liberty of the Subject.
5. For securing the Freedom of Parleмент by ascertaining the Qualifications of Members.
6. For granting the additional Duties to his Majesty for the Support of the Establishment.
7. For granting the Loan Duties.
8. For explaining and amending the Laws for the better Supplying the City of *Dublin* with Corn and Flower.
9. For

9. For giving further time to Persons in Offices to qualify.

10. For repairing and regulating the Public Roads.

11. For empowering the chief Governor and Council to prohibit the Exportation and Distillation of Corn, &c.

12. For licensing Hawkers and Pedlars and encouragement of English Protestant Schools.

13. For the better collecting the Revenue.

14. For the encouragement of Tillage by the Carriage of Corn coast ways.

15. For continuing and amending temporary Statutes.

16. For the better preservation of Corn.

17. For the *Kilaloe* Navigation.

18. For directing the use of £7000 granted to the *Dublin* society.

19. For amending the Act of the thirty first of the late King, for making wide and convenient passages to the Castle, &c.

20. For Tithes.

21. For preventing Frauds and Abuses in the Preparation, Sale and Administration of Drugs and Medicines, and for the better Regulation of the Practices of Physic and Chirurgery in this Kingdom.

22. For the Amendment of the Law.

23. For Amending the Act of the sixth of his Majesty for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors.

24. For Amending the Act for County Infirmaries.

25. For the Relief of Debtors with respect to the Imprisonment of their persons.

26. For the real Union and Division of Parishes.

27. For encouraging the Importation of Timber, Lumber, Iron, &c. from the Colonies in *America*.

28. For regulating the Elections of Members of Parliament and for preventing bribery and corruption in Elections.

29. For inabling Grand Juries by presentment to discharge the Rents of Court Houses, Goals, &c.

30. For inabling the Merchants to build an Exchange in *Dublin*.

31. For

31. For regulating the Market of *Smith-field*, and preventing frauds and abuses therein.
32. For preventing the inconveniences that may arise from the privilege of parlement.
33. For explaining and amending an act for preventing the disorders which may attend the marching of Soldiers and for the better providing carriages for the baggage of the army.
34. For continuing and amending the acts of the fourth of King *George* the first and of the twenty first of *George* the second, for vesting the lands on which barracks are built, &c. in the crown, &c.
35. For the preservation of woods, and timber Trees.
36. For granting a bounty on the land carriage of corn to *Cork*.
37. For establishing a militia for the defence of the kingdom.
38. For vacating the seats of such Members of the House of Commons as shall accept places or pensions.
39. For the preservation of oak trees.
40. For ascertaining the size of glass bottles.
41. For paving, inlightening and cleansing the streets of *Dublin*.
42. For repeling the act of *Henry VII*, by which all Judges are to hold their commissions and appointments during pleasure.
43. For regulating buildings within the City of *Dublin*.
44. For preventing tumultuous risings.
45. For the incouragement of the carriage of corn coastways, to *Cork*, *Limerick* and *Galway*.
46. For the relief of Insolvent Debtors.

Besides several turnpike and private bills.

The 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, were passed into laws. The 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32, 36, were prepared and presented to the house, passed and sent to government; but the house was prevented proceeding upon the 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, which were presented, and upon the 43, 44, 45, 46, though leave was given to bring them in, by the several prerogative adjournments mentioned.

Thus, you see the number of public bills sent to government to be transmitted to the king, but never returned to the house, and the number obstructed in their passage. But we are well informed, that the qualification bill, No. 5, rejecting the exception in favor of the members of Dublin, for obvious causes, was assiduously transmitted, but rejected on the other side of the water.

You will ask, what became of the judges' bill? — Let me first inform you, that this was, by the dictates of the ministry, framed in the express words of the English law, which enacts that the judges shall hold their places and appointments during good behaviour; but provides, that they may be removed upon the address of both houses of parliament. And thus modelled by the ministry, we were positively assured of its success. What was the event? — It was returned with such alterations, as no Irishman could accept. And, to the honor of Ireland, be it spoken, there was not one Irishman, that did not vote for rejecting it.

The alterations, falsely called amendments, were these; 1. The address of both houses was to be certified, as bills are, at the discretion of the chief governor and council. So that the most severe, or corrupt prerogative judge might be securely protected in his ill-gotten place, and worse practices, by the council, regardless of the address of both houses of parliament. And, 2. the most just and righteous judge might be removed, by the address of the lords and commons of England, who could hardly be supposed
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to have proper evidence of the character or conduct of any judge in this kingdom.

This altered bill, you see, would have left the judges and the nation in a worse state, than they were in before; and therefore it was rejected by the unanimous voice of all the Irish members in the house, there being but one negative, which was not that of a native, in the house. — Thus are ministerial offers and promises fulfilled, in our days?

The bill for authorising government to forbid the exportation and destillation of corn, and to indemnify those who took upon them to lay an embargo upon such exportation, without the authority of law, or even the consent of parliament, while it was sitting, to shew that that illicit power of laying on embargoes, was still to be exerted at discretion, met the like fate. The clause of indemnity was dropped, and the executive power of the crown, which by law is vested in the chief governor and council here, was shared with, or in effect, transferred to the king and council of England; who, though absolute strangers to the state and condition of this kingdom, under that bill, had it passed into a law, upon the instigation of any artful, designing minister, might stop all exportations from this kingdom, in times of the utmost plenty, and so stop the operation of a law for encouraging tillage, by giving a bounty upon the exportation of corn, when it falls to a certain price. Though a law to this injurious effect was passed in the preceding session, with little more than my feeble opposition, there was virtue enough to reject it in this.

The militia bill was forced to give way to the project of an augmentation of the military, it was therefore, with many other important bills purposely precluded by the prerogative adjournments, before mentioned. And it is

now evident, the commons of Ireland were not of weight enough to get the bills for securing the freedom of the subject, by enforcing the granting the writ of Habeas Corpus; for regulating and repairing the high roads; for regulating the elections of members of parlement, and preventing frauds, bribery and corruption in elections; for securing the freedom of parlement, by ascertaining the qualifications of members; for the preventing frauds and abuses in the preparing, vending and administering drugs and medicines, and for regulating the practice of physic and chirurgery; for limittin and ascertaining the contributions in cities and towns corporate, called intrusion and quarterage, so that papists and foregners should not be oppressed, on the one hand, or be suffered to stand upon better footing than the freemen, on the other, or a bill for preventing impositions and abuses, with respect to the seller and the buyer, in Smithfield-market, &c.

But, I shall be answered by some, have we not obtained the long wished-for and long sought law for limiting the duration of parlements? Does not this compensate for the loss of all others? Are we not highly obliged to government for so happy and effectual a strength and security to our constitution in church and state? And was it not a great condescension in his majesty to grant us this great law?

No man can be more sensible of the blessings of that constitutional law than I am, as you may judge by the indefatigable pains and labor, I have been at, in introducing it every session, since I was honored with a seat in parlement, agreeable to my proposal and promise before my election, and using every means to support and to promote it, since.

I once thought my self, with the public, obliged to government for promoting and passing this most salutary law. I omitted no opportunity, public or private, of expressing my gratitude to the king and to his councils and
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vicegerent for it, till I was better informed. But, I never did nor ever can look upon it as any condescension in his majesty to give the royal assent to such a law : For, the condescension was certainly on the side of the people, or their representatives, who in that law, gave up their unquestionable title to *annual*, for *octennial* parlements ; the laws of Edward III, for annual parlements having never been repealed or altered.

However, I sincerely bless God's Providence, and congratulate you, that we have obtained the law, as it is, in any manner, or almost upon any terms ; though I am now perfectly persuaded, that the ministry would never have returned it, had they but suspected, it might possibly pass, with the extraordinary alterations, which they made in it.

This, doubtless, sounds paradoxical in the ears of some, and therefore requires explanation : You all know the numberless difficulties, which this bill encountered in it's passage through the several branches of the legislature.

The greatest obstacles were raised, where the bill took it's rise, in the house of commons : For, it is well known, that after it waded, with difficulties almost insuperable, through that house ; it was openly, or secretly opposed in every other part of it's progress, even by some of those, who would be thought to have given it their utmost countenance and sanction before.

It is not then to be wondered, that this bill miscarried in three successive sessions. The wonder is, how it came to pass in the form in which it now appears, or indeed in any other.

You have probably some where heard of a Cardinal of Rome, who had so far incensed a certain malicious priest, as to make him resolve to seize the first opportunity of raking his vengeance upon that object of his resentment.

The first time, he found easy access to the cardinal was when a number of ecclesiastics and others crowded into his palace, upon a report of his being in imminent danger of death, though perhaps unknown to this sanctified ruffian.

The assassin, in the unsuspected garb of holiness, mixing with the crowd, entered the room, where the cardinal given over, and seemingly expiring, sat in a great chair, almost suffocated with an abscess in his chest.

The bloody priest approached, under the mask of sanctity and friendship; and, when he found all other eyes diverted from the object of his implacable wrath, he aimed the *stiletto*, concealed in his sleeve, at the cardinal's heart, glutting his revenge with malicious hopes, that his enemy should get the death wound by his hand.

But, mark the marvellous, unexpected effect! The bloody-minded priest had hardly time to mix unobserved with the throng, when the stabbed cardinal began to breath and speak, and at length to recover: For the intended assassin did more for his eminency's recovery, than could then be done by all the sons of *Æsculapius* in the city; he opened the abscess, discharged the matter, and the cardinal, instead of instant, intended death, recovered his life by the wound.—How far his eminency was obliged to this unintended and unexpected author of his health, I leave you to judge, and how far this tale may be applicable to the present case.

The popular voice alone, which must ever have due weight in parlement, procured the passing the limitation bill here and the transmission of it to England, according to that most infamous, unjust and anticonstitutional law, called after it's detestable inventor, *Poyning's*.

No man could be found hardy enough to oppose every scheme of limitation of the duration of parlements; but the plan proposed, which was pretty much that of the limitation bill in England, was opposed by many, in all the vari-

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ous ways, that craft and subtilty could devise. At one time, it was endeavored to clog it with a qualification bill and a place bill. That failing, I took care afterwards to bring in those bills separately. Then the term of seven years was objected to. Some pretended, it was too long, who secretly lamented, they could not make it the length of their lives. These would be thought to contend for biennial or annual parlements, knowing such demands were popular, though not to be obtained. Others proposed an equal number of years, with a longer term, and an immediate dissolution to the present parlement, rather than their continuance for seven years longer.

No man could be suspected sincere in this attempt. Few, very few could bear the thoughts of a sudden dissolution, and any term beyond seven years, which is the ordinary calculation for the length of a man's life, one man taken with another, was deemed nugatory.

However, the few true friends of the bill so far fell in with those who threw out those amendments, as obstacles, that they declared, if the bill should be returned, even with those alterations, they would accept of it.

After some small altercations, the bill passed, was sent to government and transmitted, in nearly the same words of the English limitation bill. The preamble is in the words following:

“ WHEREAS by the ancient laws and statutes of this kingdom new parlements ought to be frequently called and held; And whereas long parlements may create doubts, mistrusts and jealousies in the minds of the subjects, and may indanger the constitution. After which it was enacted, that the parlement should be septennial, that the then parlement should be dissolved the twenty-fourth of June, 1764.”

In these words, it was transmitted to England. But there it lay unattended and almost unobserved through

undry changes and revolutions of the late lunar or rather femilunar ministries of that kingdom.

At one time, we were assured, it would be returned in the identical form and words, in which it was transmitted; at another, it was to yield to the secret machinations and applications made against it, from this, and we were to hear no more of it.

The people grew impatient and urged their representatives to exert all their power and influence to promote the return of the bill. Many of those applied to, though they had secretly and earnestly solicited the rejection of the bill, threw the odium of all the obstacles, delays and dreaded denial, upon the British ministry.

These very honorable men, who found they were no favorites of the people at home, did not choose to lye under more obloquy; they indeed, dreaded a bill for limiting the duration of parlements; but they did not choose to bear the sole blame of rejecting it, even in a country, which rarely ever shared any mark of their favor or regard.

It was judged fit then, to throw back the odium upon those who clandestinely opposed the bill, while they pretended to the people to be anxious for obtaining and passing it. To return it in a form, that might be judged constitutional and likely to pass here, was reckoned a dangerous experiment. A subtil expedient was therefore devised, to make the very house that passed, reject the bill.

How was this to be effected? — As altering bills passed by either house of parliament, is in general as hateful, as it is confessedly anticonstitutional; it was confidently assured, that if the bill were essentially altered, it would afford the commons the very handle, which many desired, to reject the altered bill, upon its return.

To secure this assured rejection, not a paragraph of the preamble or inacting clauses was left unchanged: The assertion of the right, necessity and advantage of frequent new parlements, so essentially necessary, was rejected with
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equal contempt and artifice, and the following recital, which is hardly sense or *English* foisted in it's place :
 “ Whereas, a limitation of the duration of parlements may tend to strengthen the harmony and good agreement subsisting between his Majesty and his People of *Ireland*, and may be productive of other good effects to his Majesty's Subjects there.”

But this was not all. The several inacting clauses were also changed, the limitation was made *octennial*, instead of *septennial*, and the dissolution of the then parlement was fixed for the twenty fourth of *June*, Instant.

Thus, in full assurance of it's being rejected here, was the Bill returned, with not a single paragraph of the original standing, but the titule. Such was the grace and condescension of the *British* ministry !

The alterations of bills, out of parlement, must ever be looked upon as a stab, a fatal wound to the constitution, a badge of slavery, hardly to be borne, by men of the smallest sense of liberty and right.

As such, no doubt, it was expected, the alteration of this bill would be taken. What was to be done under the dreadful alternative ? the Constitution given up to perpetual parlements, or fatally wounded in a long waged conflict, to obtain a limitation ?

The few real friends to the limitation judged this, the less, of the two evils, and therefore chose it. But, how to get the rest of the house to agree with them, when so good an handle was given for rejecting the Bill, was not readily conceived.

The first expedient determined upon, was to overlook all alterations, and to propose addresses of thanks, first to the King, and then to the Chief Governor, for the return of the long wished for, though now metamorphosed bill.

Addresses of thanks are generally so cheap, that they are never refused, especially to power, and by those who have any thing to ask or any thing to fear. Such addresses were therefore moved and unanimously agreed to and presented in form. Soon

Soon after, the bill fell under consideration. And as it would be very inconsistent with parliamentary dignity to present an address of thanks for a favor from the throne and afterwards reject the boon; and as the people dreading nothing more than another long parlement, became importunate for a limitation, and would submit to any limitation and upon any terms, rather than have none; it was judged proper to accept the bill, with all its imperfections about it, and to pass it into a law. And now, that we have got such a law, though it is not easy to point out the power, on earth, to be thanked for it; I hope you will keep and preserve it, as the apple of your eye, the Palladium of your liberties!

You must now see the incessant and unwearied attempts of designing men to invade the sacred liberties and rights of the subjects of these kingdoms, at home and abroad. You see the public virtues appear to bear no proportion to the power, craft and assiduity exercised against the people, universally. You see *England*, where the laws may yet be presumed to retain their greatest vigor, is not happy. You see some of her best sons discontented and wretched. You see *America* drove to desperation and distraction—No sensible man can think the liberties of this kingdom or those of *Britain* secure, while any colony or even a single subject labors under the oppressor's wrongs, the law's delay, or even the insolence of office, unless the offender is brought to condign punishment and full reparation is made to the injured.

No time or circumstance should give sanction to any degree of oppression—tyranny must be hateful from every quarter; but it is the most destructive and dangerous, when it comes sanctified under the form of Law.

As yet, I have confidence enough in the parlement and people of *England*, to hope, that they will use all just and constitutional means to wipe away the tears of their suffering fellow subjects, and remove the causes of their present universal murmurings.

But

But, if it were possible, that such a degree of degeneracy should so far prevail there, as to exclude all grounds of such confidence and hope; it will be our turn to stretch forth a saving hand to them, as they, upon former occasions did to us, and by example and precept endeavor to turn them from their evil ways, that iniquity and slavery may not bring on their ruin.

Let us not be intimidated in opposing the base attacks of such daring invaders, as presume to prostitute the sacred name of Majesty to give sanction to the foulest and basest measures of a corrupt and perfidious ministry.

But, let not our spirit of liberty degenerate into licentiousness! Let our eyes be ever intent upon the laws, and our hearts fixed upon the constitution! And let the world see, we dare preserve the freedom and rights, purchased for us by the precious blood of our ancestors, and determine to hand them down intire to latest posterity.

There is a way to effect this invaluable good, which is simple and easy, as efficacious: It is but exerting your wisdom and virtue in the choice of members to represent you in the next parlement.

When you remember what you have lost by the ignorance, supineness or corruption of former parlements; when you recollect the numberless incroachments made and daily attempted to be made upon your national constitution; when you look upon the treatment offered you by the present administration; when you consider what you have yet to lose, and consider there is not any other means under Heaven left of recovering what you have lost, of healing the breaches made in the constitution or obviating further incroachments and abuses to be made or attempted, but the wisdom and integrity of your representatives in parlement; it can not be one moment doubted that you will exert your utmost means to return such, as a patriot king and loyal people may rely on, for good sense, probity and fortitude, to preserve the just prerogatives, the honor and dignity of the Crown, with the rights and privileges of the subject, inviolable, in
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spight to the most subtil wiles and artifices of false, flattering, insinuating favorites and wicked, crafty ministers.

I am sorry to find myself under the necessity of charging some deep and dangerous designs upon some late administrations in *England*, by which those of *Ireland* never fail of being infected.

To say nothing of their depriving us, by force, of almost every branch of trade, have they not made all parts of our establishment as expensive and burthensome as possible? What enormous pensions have they imposed upon us for strangers, aliens and prostitutes, drawn out of sacred funds, appropriated to national purposes? What care and solicitude has there been shewn for many years passed, to make our Military establishment as expensive and burdensome, as ineffectual to the defence of this kingdom? Has not the proportion of officers, to private men, been kept more than double here, what it has been in *England*? At the revolution, had they not care enough of the public liberties to oblige the King never to keep an army of more than twelve thousand in this kingdom? And did they not lately repele this sacred law, absolve the King from this solemn engagement, with an intent to increase the military expence, but not it's strength in this kingdom, while they judged it expedient to reduce the armies of *England*? And has not our Chief Governor been induced to send a requisition, by way of message to the late House of Commons to this effect, and that in the very words of the *English* act of parlement; while the Commons were laying the grievous misconduct of the army before the throne and begging for the necessary reformation and reduction of expence?

Thanks to the sense and virtue of that House of Commons, and to the impending dissolution and hopes of re-election! this ministerial project met it's deserved fate, in spight to the numberless artful means used to carry it into execution. These have by sundry hands been sufficiently exposed, and by none, with common sense and truth,

truth, attempted to be defended. Indeed, they are sufficiently exposed by the ministry themselves, in the rewards held out, promised or actually granted to it's abettors, and by the threats and punishments, uttered or given to such dependents, as had the sense and virtue to oppose the destructive measure. How audacious, how destructive, how wicked, how abominable it is, to hold out rewards and punishments to influence the conduct of members of parlement, the simplest honest man may judge: Yet such are avowedly the measures of the days we live in. It is yours, my worthy friends, to guard against the horrid abuse, by prudence and proper cautions in your choice.

There never was a time, in which you were more loudly called upon to exert your utmost judgment, freedom and fortitude in your elections, than this. Every base and wicked attempt has been made upon the rights and liberties of the subject, universally; every insult and contempt thrown upon the national constitution, every vile deceit and sordid craft practised to subvert that virtue, freedom and independence of members of parlement, which are our onely security from tyranny and slavery.

Who shall save the nations from impending ruin? This now, solely depends upon the Electors of Members of parlement.--Therefore as you tender the wisest, the freest, the happiest of civil constitutions, purchased at the expence of deluges of the best blood of your patriot ancestors, as you prize the security of the lives, liberties and properties of your neighbours and fellow subjects, of yourselves and posterity; as you regard the glorious revolution and it's happy consequences, of which the *Hanover* succession is not the least; as you tender the honor and dignity of the crown and the general freedom and happiness of the people; in a word, as you love your King and country, shake off the received or offered shackles upon your judgment, come they gilded from what quarter they may. Rouse your manly virtues. Call them forth

forth into life and action. Let the world see, your wise and patriot determinations, to assert the rights and liberties of the subject, to vindicate and support the constitution, to revive the glory of your ancestors, to rescue the authority and power, the honor and dignity of the crown from such treacherous favorites and wicked ministers, as dare to abuse them, or to prostitute them to purposes, the reverse of those of the institution, and to support and uphold them, where alone the constitution has wisely placed them.

Are these things just and necessary? Are they praiseworthy? Are they desirable?—Who can deny it?—The very existence of your frame of government, depends upon effecting these good things. And these now depend upon the wisdom, judgment, integrity and freedom of the Electors of Members of parliament, at the impending general election.

When you reflect upon the injuries, you have received, those offered and those daily threatened; you can not think your circumstances will admit of a moment's delay of the necessary exertion of your patriot virtues. The Evils you have felt give ample room to dread more. What are the means of remedying the inflicted, or obviating impending evils?—The wisdom, independence, freedom and fortitude of the House of Commons, and these can onely be hoped from sources of the same qualities and virtues in the Electors.

But were it possible, you should be insensible of the manifold wounds and bruises actually given the political constitution, or regardless of the restoration of your rights, which are not to be suspected, a desire of preserving the remnant of liberty left you, must inspire and animate the most insensible breast.

Suppose then, that after you had, since the revolution, constantly payed and provided for an army of twelve thousand effective men, for the defence of your country, you should appear to have been generally robbed of above one half of your defence; and that, when the old militia laws

laws had expired and a reinstitution of the militia, the natural strength and true internal defence of every free state, was universally desired and moved in parlement; suppose that, when a revival of militia laws were denied, by precluding them the consideration of parlement, by prerogative adjournments, those who, for years passed, avowedly robbed you of the military defence provided and paid by you, should after confessing the fact, refusing the desired necessary reformation of the military, and after denying you militia laws, and that in the worst, the most contemptuous and anticonstitutional manner; suppose, I say, that under these aggravating circumstances, and when the powerful restraint of an *English* act of parlement, wisely laid upon the crown, from raising or keeping a greater military force than twelve thousand, so near *England*, as in this kingdom, was taken off, and the *English* thought it necessary to reduce their army at home, a requisition, in the terms of a foregne law, should be made, to augment the number and expence, but not the real strength of the military establishment in this kingdom, without an act of parlement for the well governing and regulating this great army, or the slightest assurance of keeping the stipulated and promised twelve thousand men within the kingdom; suppose such an injurious and dangerous measure proposed and supported by ministerial craft, subtilty, influence and power; how may the fatal stroke be parried or evaded?—By you and by you onely, and that onely by wisdom, circumspection and freedom in your choice of your Members in parlement.

Would it not therefore become you to make this one of your tests in the election of your Representatives? should a man who did or would again propose, vote for, or countenance such a measure, be again trusted with a seat in parlement; unless he appeared free from all sinister influence, convinced of his error, truly penitent for his transgressing, and ready to give all possible assurance of his future more prudent and faithful conduct?

But

But there is a matter of still greater moment, which you obtained with pain and difficulty, by the favor of providence upon your long persevering virtues, and the fidelity and zeale of a few of your late representatives. — I must suppose you all perfectly sensible of the inestimable benefits and importance of the law for limiting the duration of parlements. You know how hardly, perhaps accidentally, it was obtained. But perhaps, you know not how easily it may be lost.

Let me be your remembrancer! and do you grow wise by the dear bought experience of your neighbours. — By the primitive institution, parlements were to meet ordinarily three times in the year, at the great Feasts of *Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide*. This was religiously observed in all the constitutional regnes. But was sometimes interrupted by tyrannical kings and wicked ministers.

In the earlier ages however, parlements were generally called at least once in every year. In the regne of the wise and just king, *Edward I*, it appears, they were held twice a year, and we find, that that righteous prince, rather than prorogue his parlement, agreeable to modern custom, or protract it's duration or sitting, beyond due bounds, chose rather to dissolve it, though it had not finished the necessary business, and though he was under the necessity of calling another, in a short time, after.

So tenacious were the people of this essential principle of their polity, that the protracting the duration, or the sessions of parlements, beyond the accustomed limitation, absenting himself from them, corrupting and otherwise abusing them, were among the principal causes of bringing that cruel, wicked tyrant *Richard II*, to his tragical end.

From the earliest records of parlements, down to the tyrannical regne of *Henry VIII*, not onely from the written records, but from the printed statutes, and even the writs of summons, the frequency of elections or the calling of new parlements, most evidently demonstrate the

the attention to this fundamental point, all by a long and almost uninterrupted usage.

It must however be confessed, that several weak and wicked princes, aspiring at arbitrary power, attempted to rule without parlements. But the perfidious attempts generally ended in the ruin of the tyrants and their minions.

To obviate these evils, by the just laws of the fourth, fifth and thirty sixth of that wise and patriot king, *Edward III*, it was enacted, that *for redress of divers mischiefs and grievances, which daily happen, a parlement shall be holden every year, or oftener if need be.*— These laws remaned in full force in *England*, until parlements were made triennial, in the regnes of *Charles I* and *William III*, and septennial in that of *George I*,

The reasons and necessity of securing to the people their fundamental right to frequent and free elections, appear very obvious upon the slightest consideration: for, as the body of the people, now no more meet in the aggregate state, as originally, before they committed the public concerns to the care of parlements, and can onely act by representation; as they are liable to errors and mistakes in their choice of representatives; and as the chosen representatives, as men, must be subject to various infirmities, that may utterly incapacitate them, or, which is still worse, as they are liable to be allured into a servile dependence on the crown or on the lords, utterly incompatible with the office, duty and necessary freedom and independence of representatives; nothing could be more just, or more necessary to the freedom and security of the people, than the giving them frequent opportunities of correcting and amending their choice, and thereby obviating the many dangers, to which they must be exposed, by the want of judgement, integrity, freedom or independence in their representatives.

Of all the weak and wicked princes, with which *England* has been cursed, none shewed a greater aversion to
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parlements, or more solicitously labored to rule without them, than the whole race of the *Stuarts*.

The unfortunate *Charles I.* set parlements aside for twelve years, regardless of the laws and statutes, by which he reduced himself to those straits, from which he never was able to extricate himself, before he brought on his own untimely fate, and the subversion of the political constitution. In some of those difficulties, in the sixteenth year of his regne, he was forced to pass an act for preventing the inconveniences happening by long intermissions of parliament.—By this, the parliament was made triennial. And if the King failed of calling, the Chancellor might issue writs to summon, a new parliament, and such parliament was not to be dissolved for fifty days, without their own consent.

This invasion of the regal prerogative was soon attended with another, which was an act that the parliament should not be dissolved, prorogued or adjourned, without their own consent or act. It is well known, that the parliament, who thus protracted or perpetuated their own duration, regardless of the fundamental laws and statutes of the realm and of the rights of the people, never stopped till they brought the wretched King to a tragical end, and overturned the whole national constitution in church and state.

In the sixteenth year of the regne of *Charles II.* the statute of the sixteenth of his father was repealed, as derogatory to the regal prerogative and tending to many dangerous consequences. But, pliant as this parliament was, it judged it necessary at the same time to declare and enact, that *because, by the ancient laws and statutes, parlements are to be held very often, the sitting and holding of parlements shall not be intermitted above three years at the most.*

Yet notwithstanding, this additional statute, to enforce the frequent calling and holding of parlements, was but little observed. The King being himself bribed and corrupted against the interest of his country, by a pension from it's natural enemy, set himself upon bribing and
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corrupting his parlement, in the same shameful, secret manner, not being hardy enough openly to corrupt the Servants of the Public, the Representatives of the People in parlement, by places and pensions, as has since been too frequently practised, in the most open and shameless manner.

But, for the better effecting the pernicious purpose of poisoning the vital spring of the constitution, by corrupting the Members ; it was found necessary to prolong the duration of the parlement, contrary to public and royal faith, to justice and the laws. In this base scheme, the perjured Commons readily conspired, for their own secret, sinister, temporary emolument, regardless of their duty to their country and Constituents. This parlement was continued for eighteen years, perpetrated much mischief in their day, layed the foundation of much more in ours, and acquired to themselves the infamous epithet of the *pensioned parlement*. Happy for us, if none other had since merited the obprobrious title.

Complaints of the manifold evils attending long parlements, at the revolution, brought forth the declaration, in the convention, that *parlements ought to be frequently held*. Yet, though this, with the other articles of the declaration were ratified by the Prince, and a parlement afterwards was annually called ; it was not judged a sufficient security for this fundamental right. And therefore a bill passed both Houses *for the frequent meeting and calling of parlements*, but to the indelible reproach of the administration, was rejected by the throne. Several attempts to obtain such a law were made in succeeding sessions, but they miscarried, by the wicked contrivances of ministers in the Commons. But by the perseverance of some faithful Members, a bill for the purpose at length passed both houses and received the royal assent, the sixth of *William and Mary*.

The words of the preamble of this memorable statute are very remarkable ; to wit, *Whereas by the antient laws and statutes of the kingdom, parlements ought to be*
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frequently called and held. And whereas frequent new parlements tend very much to the happy union and good agreement of the King and his People. Therefore it was enacted, that parlements should be triennial, &c.

Thus, you see a contest continually maintained between the people, for preserving their undeniable share in the government, by a frequent and free election of their Representatives and the crown, for abolishing parlements, protracting their duration, alienating them from their affection and duty, from their connexion with and just dependence upon their Constituents, and so perverting them from being the delegated Ministers of the People and the Guardians of their rights and liberties, for a limited time, to be the abject, lawless Creatures of Ministers and the worst and most dangerous tools of arbitrary power and tyranny, for an unlimited time. Dreadful perversion! yet such was the case before the statute for the limitation was obtained, not without reluctance and restraint, even from our great Deliverer.

By this law, which was undoubtedly to be considered in the number of the fundamental and unalterable, the rights of the People to change their Representatives, instead of once a year or oftener, to once in three years, was established. The People were not capable of giving their Members a longer term, they could invest their Representatives with their privileges, authorities and powers for three years and no longer. And the Persons, elected for this term, ceased to be the Ministers and Representatives of the People, the day in which the limited term expired. Neither the first or second estate, jointly or severally could, by law, or agreeable to any rule of justice, public faith or sound policy, protract the duration of parliament a single day, or an hour beyond the limited time. And much less could the Commons concur in such an illicit prolongation, without betraying their country, and the most sacred rights of their Constituents and ward, without the blackest perfidy and Traison.

If the Commons, even with the concurrence of the other estates of the legislature, could protract the parlement beyond the limited time, for which the People chose, appointed and intrusted them, a year, a day or an hour, they had an equal right to make themselves perpetual or to abolish the institution. The Commons, when once they exceeded the limited duration, ceased to be the chosen Representatives and Trustees of the People; they became the Creatures and Tools of illicit power, whose Representatives alone they were to be considered.

Yet, unanswerable as these and many other arguments, which might be adduced, must appear, a parlement was found in a late regne, who, while there was above a year of the time of their lawful duration unexpired, thought fit to dissolve their compact with their Constituents, to prolong their own existence for four years beyond the time, for which they were elected, to make and extend the duration of that and all succeeding parlements, from three to seven years.

Hateful and flagrant as those breaches of public faith and of the laws and statutes, and those invasions of the rights of the people may appear in *England*, there were still worse committed in *Ireland*: For, while we have always had an equal title with our neighbours to free and frequent elections, parlements were called or not called, intermitted or prolonged, at the discretion of the ministry. And while the laws of the great *Edward III*, were in full force, our parlements knew no limits to their duration, but the demise of the King, till now.

No wonder then, that in such parlements, the sacred rights of the people and even the very essence of the constitution were prostituted and prostrated to the will of every corrupt tool sent to rule us.

The best of parlements have some time presumed to lay some clame to omnipotence. And precedents are generally so powerful in parliamentary proceedings, that one parlement often avowedly follows the example of another, even in a different kingdom.

If then, a bill moved and dictated by the lords, for no commoner, however he might concur in such a motion, could be found hardy enough to propose such a breach of public faith, such a subversion of the constitution; to extend the duration of the then present and future parlements, from three to seven years was with so little opposition or dislike received and agreed to by the commons of *England*; what may be expected in this kingdom, where the present limitation bill has met with such powerful opponents and so few real friends in it's passage? what is more likely than that, in some short time, it's open and secret opponents will conspire and repele it or protract the duration beyond the bounds of law, reason, justice, good policy and common sense?

What has been may be. Look to your rights, my Friends, in time: it is you alone that can obviate the dreaded evil, by wisdom, and virtue, freedom and fortitude in your choice. If you do not manfully, seasonably exert your prudence and judgement in your elections, you have no right to expect the like good qualities or common sense or integrity in your representatives, consequently, you cannot be assured of the continuance of the octennial law, for a single session?

Would it not then be prudent, after you exert the utmost judgement and virtue in your choice, to instruct and conjure your representatives, to oppose every motion and tendency to repele this law, and never to consent to any such repele, unless immediately to obtain a shorter limitation? or rather, would it not be a proper and necessary test, not to vote for the election of any man, who openly or secretly opposed this law, or who did not, if then a member of the legislature, use his utmost means to promote the passing of the law? or, who does not promise if elected, to use his constant and utmost endeavors to continue the present limitation or to obtain a shorter? this I submit to your prudent determination.

If then, from former invasions of your constitution, from various later attempts, successful or unsuccessful, to invade

invade your rights and liberties, to treat your parlements with contempt, to influence or set at nought your elections, to corrupt and prostitute them elected; if all endeavors have been made to transfer the executive power of this kingdom, to another, to offer the dictates of power to be passed into laws by the legislature, as the remnant of the gallic parlements are forced to register and enforce the dictates of their tyrant or his ministers; if you be held in perpetual danger of losing your liberties, your sacred rights to frequent parlements, and now to free elections, at least, once in eight years; if even a proclamation for calling a new parlement is not to be issued, without wounding you in a tender point; I conjure you to consider your circumstances, with due care and attention, before it be too late, and exert the utmost judgment, circumspection, prudence and freedom in your choice of members, and so promote and support the true interest, the glory and honor of the crown, by sending fit and worthy representatives to counsel the sovereign, to rescue the crown out of the hands of designing, faithless or ignorant ministers and to preserve inviolate your freedom and rights from generation to generation.

There never was a time, when the electors of *Ireland* had less excuse for sloth or supineness or for pleading ignorance of their duty and circumstances, than the present. You are all well instructed in the state of the nation, you know your rights, you know the relation and connexion of the electors to the elected. You know the requisite characters and qualifications, the institution, office and duty of representatives. You know the honor and dignity of the crown, the safety and liberty of the people, your all depends upon the sense and virtue of your delegates and on yours primarily in the choice of them.

Most of you have been generally so attentive to public transactions, that you cannot be strangers to the conduct and characters of your late representatives and other candidates; you must know whom it is incumbent

bent upon you to choose and whom you cannot choose or trust.

You cannot wisely or justly withhold your suffrages from those who have given the proper proofs of their loyalty, justice, judgment, integrity, independence, freedom and fortitude, and of their unwearied attention and care in the discharge of your trust. Such and such alone demand the free suffrages of all that are or wish to be free; it is perfidy and perjury to deny them, or to give them to the opposite characters, knowing them to be such.

Look then on the other side. Ask your own honest, unbiassed and uninfluenced hearts, if you may trust men, who bask and can live onely, in the sunshine of a court; who cringe and fawn upon the worst and most infamous Tools of power, to procure the gratification of their pride, vanity, avarice or necessity, with rank, precedence, titles, colored sittings or feathers, or with useless and expensive places or more wasteful and destructive pensions? Can these be fit to be trusted with the arduous affairs of state, with the defence and support of the constitution, or with consoling the crown, or asserting the rights of the People? None but a Fool can think so. No wise man can trust a Knave or send a Fool of his errand.

Other classes may be found, as little intituled to your regard and confidence, as those who professedly fall in with, and as it were officially and promiscuously, promote the best or the worst measures of the best or the worst ministers, without distinction. You will readily judge, I mean those who expend their fortunes to obtain seats by bribery, corruption and other sinister influence, without any other view, than

Growing great by their revenues spent,
And flying from Bailiffs into parlement.

The views of these Men are as obvious as those of such Men as assume the characters of patriots, and promiscuously oppose all measures, right and wrong, without distinction, and that onely to make their weight and consequence

quence known and to intitle them to the higher wages of prostitution, from an abandoned ministry.

You must ever remember to avoid such men as attempt to lay the electors under any degree of undue influence, from the weight of power, to the paltry pernicious bribe or insinuating entertainment. Who lays an elector under any unjust bias or restraint, or procures or suffers it to be done by others, is certainly a tyrant in his nature, and probably has subjected and enslaved himself for the purpose of enslaving others.

The lover and true friend to his country, so far from accepting an election upon such unjust, slavish and anti-constitutional terms, must disdain the offer. Can he be hoped to assert your rights and liberties in parlement, who gets there under the influence of power or evil ministers, by enslaving and corrupting the electors, by poisoning the great source of political health, and sapping the very foundation of the constitution, the free election of the commons?

Let those candidates, who have not hitherto served in parlement, give the necessary and proper proofs of their qualification and suffer their capacities and character, to be brought to the justest and nicest tests, before you can think of voting for them. And let those who have served, give a just account of their stewardship or service. It is your indispensable duty to examine and to consider their attendance, their assiduity and care in the discharge of their duty. If you find that, in general, not above half the members of the kingdom give their attendance, and for the greatest part of the last session, not one third and sometimes, not one sixth attended; you have an undoubted right to inquire who were the delinquents, and the causes of the delinquency, and treat them as they deserve.

You are next to examine the conduct and the motives of the conduct of those, who did attend, see what bills they introduced what motion they made or supported. See what good measures or bad, they promoted or countenanced, rejected or opposed. See what favors they obtained
or

or fought from the ministry, and for what causes and considerations. Learn these interesting truths, and then judge like free men, worthy of the sacred trust reposed in you, that of reinstituting and preserving the constitution of your country.

As there is no trust so important, so sacred, as this, the laws are in no instance more explicit than in declaring that ALL ELECTIONS SHALL BE FREE. Freedom is the necessary criterion of election: The very word implies freedom; for who can make a choice, that is not free. Others may nominate or appoint; but none, that is not free can make a choice.

But this freedom does not imply, that the elector may arbitrarily dispose of his vote. It is a public trust, reposed in him, for the good of society, and he is to dispose of it, not by compulsion or unjust influence, not even at will; but according to the best of his information and judgment, to the man best qualified and disposed to promote the good of society, by which alone, the ends of the institution can be answered.

The elector being free in his choice is the best security for the freedom of the elected: As it is next to having no house of commons, to have one dependent upon the lords or the king; it is necessary the elector should be under the influence of neither. An election made under the influence or direction of a lord of parliament, is against the repeated resolutions of the house of commons of each kingdom, and therefore, always declared void.

If then the lords, who are guardians and trustees, though not representatives of the people, may not interfere in the elections of the commons; how much more dangerous and hateful is it, that members of parliament should be elected under the influence or direction of the crown or it's ministers? This is another method of abolishing the power, authority and weight of the people, in the commons, and can be equaled in vice and illegality of proceeding, by nothing but the bribing and corrupting the chosen members, with places, pensions or promises. The minister

nister, who is capable of this perversion of order, freedom and independence, must be an enemy to the king and constitution of his country, and he who submits to the abuse is a perjured slave.

Yet, detestable and destructive as this crime is, the time was, even in England, when the public treasure was there shamefully squandered, in bribing and corrupting the electors at every election, until an easier expedient was discovered, by bribing the elected soon after their return, by putting them into some of the multiplied useless and burdensome offices and places, many of them created for the purpose, or inlisting them in those worst and most infamous of all ministerial hirelings, the band of pensioners.

The care our ministers have generally taken to prevent any redundancy in our treasury, has rendered the former scheme more difficult than the later, which has been most generally practised and with the best success.

At present, indeed, the former project cannot so well be carried into execution, as neither cash nor credit abounds in the treasury. How far the later may be practised time alone can evince. It is yours, My friends! to return such members as disdain every degree of corruption, such as are incapable of admitting any influence but that of their constituents. And this is only to be done by exerting your best judgement with freedom in your choice: For, though by the wisdom and spirit of the laws, by which parlements themselves were instituted, each estate of the legislature is to be absolutely free and independent of each other, and though this be more expressly provided, as most essentially necessary for the commons; yet from the depravity of human nature, no written law has yet been obtained in this kingdom, to prevent the lords or the ministers of the crown from interfering in elections, or from influencing or corrupting the electors or the elected. So that the commons alone can assert and vindicate their own freedom and honour, and preserve themselves unconnected with

with and independent upon the peerage or the power of of evil governors or ministers. But, unless the electors be judicious, disinterested and free in their choice, they must look for an house of commons made up of the creatures and dependents of the peers or the tools and slaves of the ministers of power, which must at once overturn the civil constitution, and in time, inflave the whole nation.

Thus, you see, the preservation of your own rights and liberties and the upholding the best known system of government, primarily and chiefly, if not solely depends upon the wisdom and virtue of the people in their choice of representatives. If then you let slip the happy opportunity, how deserved must be your bondage, how great your condemnation!

But, there is one instance, which is too little attended to, in which your freedom in elections is secured by a written law, I mean the statute of the second of George I. chapter xix. — This wisely guards against the ordinary and often the most successful means used to bribe and corrupt some of the electors, by taking them off their guard, by viliating their morals or intoxicating their senses.

It is too well known, that many candidates who hardly designed to speak to, or even to know, an elector, except while an election was depending, and to whose princely presence, or perhaps hall the honest freemen or freeholder, of the lower class of fortune, though equal to the most opulent, could hardly hope for access, unless when their votes were a wanting to fill up a vacancy; it is well known that upon these occasions and these only, certain haughty candidates for a while unbend their pride and vanity, pay court to the electors, whom they before treated with contempt, and still do secretly despise and disdain, salute and greet them with blandishments, invite them to their houses or to taverns, and there load them with presents, or promises, or with meat or drink, till the honest voter, thus is deprived of his senses, is ensnared and trepanned, and like the brute beast, led to the shambles for slaughter

slaughter, not seeing the foul disgrace put upon him, or discerning how he sells his inheritance for a mess of pottage and sacrifices to his belly, or to Satan, freedom and happiness of his country, of himself and posterity.

Against this shameful debauchery and perversion the legislatures of both kingdoms, wisely seconding the laws of God and nature, have expressly provided by the statutes of the seventh of William III. in England, and by that of George I. before mentioned, in this kingdom. — By this, it is enacted, that “no person to be elected to serve
“in parliament for any county, city or borough, after the
“test of the writ or summons to parliament, upon the
“calling or summoning of any parliament hereafter,
“shall by himself, his friends or agents, or any employed on his behalf and at his cost and charge before his
“election to serve in parliament for any county, city or
“borough, directly or indirectly, give, present or allow,
“to any person, having vote or a voice in such elections,
“any money, meat, drink, entertainment or provision, or
“make any present, gift, reward or entertainment, or
“shall make any promise, agreement, obligation or engagement, to give or allow any money, meat, drink,
“provision, present, entertainment or reward to any such
“persons in particular, or to any such county, city or
“borough in general, or for the use, benefit, employment, profit or preferment, of any such persons or
“places in order to be elected or for being elected to
“serve in parliament, for such county, city or borough.”

Thus divine and human laws conspire to secure the virtue and freedom, the morals, and honor of both of the candidate and of the electors. He must pay but little regard to either, who allures, influences, tempts or prostitutes, or who suffers himself to be fraudulently, viciously and illegally allured, influenced, tempted, prostituted or betrayed; either must be an enemy to his country, a disgrace and shame to the constitution,

And

And now, my beloved and honored countrymen and fellow citizens, brethren and friends! if you have, which is not to be doubted, the natural desire to get the breaches made upon the civil constitution repaired, the wounds given the kingdom and it's cities and towns corporate, healed; your lost or withheld rights and liberties restored, the incroachments upon the civil power and the insults too frequently offered both to the legislative and executive powers of the nation, resented, opposed and guarded against for the future; if you wish, as sure you must, to preserve the remnant of liberties left you, and particularly the sacred privilege so long withheld and so hardly obtained, that by which you are now called together, the act for limiting the duration of parlements; as you wish well to the constitution, under which alone your lives and properties, your religious and civil rights and liberties are to be freely and securely enjoyed; as you prize the great revolution and it's happy consequences; as you would promote and secure the freedom and welfare of your neighbours; as you tender the glory and honor of the crown, and the true interest, the freedom and happiness of your country of yourselves and posterity; I conjure you to provide the onely means of obtaining or insuring these great blessings, A WISE, A DISINTERESTED, AN INDEPENDENT, A LOYAL, A FREE HOUSE OF COMMONS, that onely impregnable bulwark of your liberties, that onely sure means of securing, improving and strengthening the established constitution in church and state, which is onely to be effected or hoped from the wisdom and virtue of the Electors. This is the most favourable and happy opportunity, which gracious providence has put into your hands. If you let this slip, who can say, you may ever have another? you cannot hope it, as you will not have deserved the blessing

I should not conclude, without offering to the rest of my Countrymen and Fellow-Subjects, the example of my most beloved and honoured Brethren and Fellow
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Citizens of this capital, were I not myself one of the Objects of their choice; but modesty must yield to justice and gratitude, to an honest pride, and permit me, for my country, as well as myself, most sincerely and heartily to thank if not to applaud, them, for the great example of that constitutional virtue, of that disinterestedness, independence and freedom, of that regard to the great law, which, under God, is owing to their persevering virtues, under which the Electors of the kingdom are now so unexpectedly called together, in first, in calling their humble and faithful servant from obscurity to an exalted station, and from persecution and banishment, suffered for their service, to the most exalted honor in the most important trust.

Nor did they lose sight of their Servant in the high office, in which they placed him. They attended to his public conduct, they strengthened him with their councils and instructions, they supported him with their weight, they honored him with generous acknowledgments and the most distinguished marks of confidence and affection.

But their generosity did not stop here. The limitation bill was no sooner passed, than they called upon their Servant again, with repeated marks of their regard and confidence, desired he should again stand a Candidate for one of the city's seats, and assured him of their supporting his election upon the same disinterested motives as before, free from all expence.

It was impossible for a man indued with a slihter sense of gratitude and freedom, to resist the generous call. And therefore, I have declared myself intirely devoted to their service.—Were I conscious of merit, equal to the freedom and greatness of soul thus manifested by my late, ever to be honored and admired Constituents; I should say to the rest of my Countrymen and Fellow-Subjects, *go you and do likewise*; since such a conduct, tho' to an inferior object, while it bids fair to save the constitution and secure it's blessings to latest posterity, can alone
do

do real honor to the Representatives and Constituents.

It would be unpardonable in this place, to omit the grateful acknowledgments due to numbers of my worthy fellow Subjects, in other parts of the kingdom, who have expressed their attention and regards to me, with the most extraordinary public marks of their approbation and favor. Among these, I must name with equal gratitude and pride, the great city of *Cork*, the town of *Ennis* and the Gentlemen of the counties of *Galway* and *Mayo*.

The applause of the free and virtuous, and the aversion of Slaves and Knaves, though in the most exalted stations, are alike desirable, alike estimable in my sight. And therefore, with equal pride, I mention the one and the other.

However industrious, however artful, however secret the machination of your Enemies, which must be mine of course, have been carried on, as such should have been, in the dark; they are not unknown to me.—I am perfectly sensible, that the same power, which has attempted many other invasions of your rights, which were by my vigilance and care foiled and frustrated, that very power, who audaciously and impiously stopped the progress of many excellent bills, and particularly procured the rejection of the exception in favor of *Dublin*, in the qualification bill, has had recourse to every low and base means to subvert the freedom of the city in her choice of Members.

I well know the influence, the subscription, the bribes held out, the powerful support promised to any Man that could be procured to stand a Candidate, for one of the city's seats in parliament, in opposition to me.

I have been well informed of the abuse and misrepresentation of my conduct and character so liberally dealt about, under the rose, to prejudice me in the eyes of my Fellow-Citizens. I am industriously branded with disaffection and disrespect to government, and as a Person
run-

running retrograde to the most wise and just measures of administration.

I shall say no more, till I see, whether it be possible or not, that any Lurcher should be produced out of the dark and secret recesses of ministerial mystery, to surprise the free and independent Electors of the metropolis, when many of them are likely to be engaged in other elections in the country.

When this is done, I shall produce such proofs of my duty, allegiance, affection and fidelity to my Sovereign, of such profound respect to his Vicegerent and worthy Ministers, and such attestations, even under the hands of mine Enemies, which in such instances may be believed, of the integrity of my conduct and character, as may make tyrants and slaves blush and tremble and vindicate my Fellow-Citizens in their disinterested, free and honest choice.

I here have proposed no test, that I am not ready myself to take. And every honest Man has a right to put me to any further tests that justice and liberty can authorise or demand.

I have the honor of being,

With the utmost sincerity and truth,

MY MOST DEAR and HONOURED COUNTRYMEN
and FELLOW-SUBJECTS, BRETHREN and
FRIENDS!

Your most faithful,

And most devoted,

Humble Servant,

Henry-Street,

Dublin,

June 23, 1768.

C. L U C A S.

