

THE  
CASE OF IRELAND  
RECONSIDERED,  
In Answer to a Pamphlet, entitled  
ARGUMENTS  
FOR AND AGAINST  
AN UNION,  
CONSIDERED.

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Quis talia demens  
Abnuat aut tuum malit contendere bello:  
Si modo quod memoras factum fortuna sequatur?  
Sed fatis incerta feror si Jupiter unam  
Esse velit Tyriis urbem, Trojaque profectis  
Misericive probet populos aut fœdera jungi.

VIRG. Lib. IV.

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1799.



Houses of the Oireachtas



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## P R E F A C E.

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WHOEVER takes the trouble of perusing the following pages, is supposed to be acquainted with the Pamphlet in answer to which it was written. The references made in them are to the Edition of it, reprinted from the Dublin one in London for J. WRIGHT, December, 1798. Much more may certainly be said upon the subject of an Union with England and Ireland, but it is needless to advance any other arguments than those called forward by a person, supposed to have written in the confidence of Government, till the plans themselves, which  
shall



PREFACE.

shall be proposed, have shewn whether the weight of such arguments has not been already felt and admitted.

If it has been necessary to recal to mind those penal laws from which Ireland has been liberated, at different times, by the wisdom and humanity of its legislature, it has been done with the greatest reluctance, and only with a view of enforcing the contrast of her depressed and miserable state under the reign of religious persecution, and her unexampled progress in every species of improvement, under the influence of a more liberal system : a progress which it is scarcely possible for any Union to accelerate, and which has not been interrupted by the nature of her present connection with England, which an Union is to alter but by the remnant of those prejudices which it is to confirm...



## PREFACE.

I was unwilling to dwell upon so disagreeable a subject, by quoting the different Acts of Parliament by which those penal laws have been established. Every man, at all conversant in Irish History, will see that I have been accurate in describing them. For every other fact, relating to the state of Ireland and the nature of her leading parties, I acknowledge myself indebted to the Author of *Arguments for and against an Union considered*.

RECON-



Houses of the Oireachtas



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## RECONSIDERATIONS, &c.

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A PAMPHLET, entitled "*Arguments for and against an Union considered,*" which is generally ascribed to the pen of a person high in the confidence of the Irish Government, authorises us (I mean the public unconnected with any political party) to believe, that an Union of the Legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland is now under discussion by the leading characters of both kingdoms.

Yielding to the Author's invitation to a temperate agitation of this question, it struck me as a matter of no small consequence in the first step of the business, that there is an essential difference in the description of men who come under this denomination in the two kingdoms.

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The leading characters of England may enjoy not only the confidence of the Government, but also that of the People at large ; this happiness is at present theirs beyond dispute, and whatever may be the result of their negotiations in this most important business, the English public, conscious of the identity of their interests, and the purity of their motives, will probably rest satisfied that they have done all that could be done.

In Ireland it is quite otherwise.

On such dangerous ground I shall not venture one step beyond what the pamphlet I allude to will bear me through. Every consequence I draw shall be from the positions it affords ; I will use its words in the very sense it uses them ; with the exact meaning the context attaches to them. I do not presume to say, that I answer the arguments it brings forward ; and though my reflections upon the same subject may sometimes lead me to an opposite conclusion, I will keep it constantly before my eyes, and look up to it as a safe and steady light held out to guide us ; not as one of those malignant vapours which rise from the finks of corruption to lead the traveller astray.

If my observations should prove any way useful, I am confident the professed candour of its  
 Author



Author will pardon me for differing from him in opinion. I hope we have both the same end in view, though we travel to it by different roads.

Ireland is the weaker party; her welfare, if any disordant interests should arise, naturally runs the greater risk in the negociation; particularly so, as her leading characters to whom it is entrusted are *necessarily* men whose interests, passions, and prejudices, must be in opposition to those of at least three-fourths of the people they are called upon to treat for. I take this as the proportion of the Catholics to the Protestants of Ireland, because it is adopted by the pamphlet, that my reasoning may not be interrupted by any doubt of its premises; four or five to one I believe, from good authority, to be nearer the truth. In this Protestant fourth, which I assume for argument, are, no doubt, included the Presbyterians, who have no share in the Protestant church establishment. The other religious Sects in Ireland are inconsiderable in number. I take the Author's statement of property for the same reason, though I believe it is not a little exaggerated, and if at any time it should happen to me to use the word *prejudices*, for what would more properly be termed religious persuasion, it is not from any want of respect, but to shew that even that sense which is often unfairly applied to it, takes away no claim



to respect and consideration where it evidently has no bad tendency, and is unconquerably rooted in the minds of men.

Pages 19, *Nine-tenths of the property of Ireland are in the hands of the Protestants, scarcely a fourth part of the population, and all that is not in the hands of this minority is to be for ever disfranchised; the majority, whatever may be their property at present, or in future, are excluded by law from the legislature and the great offices of the state, and in reality, I may safely say that they are shut out from all the honors and emoluments of it. Thus, not only is property degraded, and stripped of the advantages which it is the essence of our constitution to attach to it, by coming into the hands of the majority of the people, but they are cut off from many of the most fertile sources of property itself. Though it is allowed, that the wider it is distributed among numbers, or the greater the proportion of the people participating of it in a state, the more secure is the government and property of that state. The very large sums which are levied yearly upon the whole of the people for the uses of government, but which are paid back to them in the persons of its servants, are, in Ireland, returned to a very limited description of its inhabitants; in some cases, this is the effect of exclusive laws; in others, because these emoluments, even*  
to



to the most trifling, are given to parliamentary influence, which three-fourths of them cannot have, *because the Irish House of Commons was framed with* Page 25. *the sole view of excluding Roman Catholics.* It is evident, that the whole mass of wealth in the country in some years undergoes this partial division.\* Thus is the disproportion of property to numbers continually increasing in a most rapid progression, a dangerous one to all Europe, perhaps, in its present state. In this manner are all honors and emoluments reserved to a very small portion of the country. The large majority of those who contribute their full proportion to the exigencies of the state, and more than their proportion of men, I dare say eight to one, to its defence, have indeed very lately been allowed a vote for a representative, with this *express proviso*, that they give it to one of those persons who enjoy this \* *monopoly* against them. Of this description are \*Page 57, these leading characters who are about making a line 12. definitive bargain for Ireland.—It requires not much political sagacity to perceive, that this radical vice in Government, with the passions and prejudices that begot it, and which it naturally begets, and the monstrous institutions it must have

\* This is not, as a *Memoire* upon the same subject expresses it, the right hand settling accounts with the left, but a forced and unnatural stagnation of the nourishing juices in one bloated member.



recourse to for its support, cannot but be essentially detrimental to any state in proportion as it is allowed to exist in it; and that laws which for a century cramped the industry of a people, debarred them from education, armed the brother against the brother, and rewarded the son for betraying the father; must, for some time, even after the better sense and humanity of government have repealed them, leave a people poor, ignorant, with little respect for law, and ferocious from a sense of injury. And if the higher classes in such a state have been supported by laws of this kind, in a monopoly of power and wealth, if they still speculate upon the exclusion of three-fourths of their countrymen upon religious grounds; though the charges of corruption and want of principle almost proverbially objected to these monopolists, may be false, (as I hope they are), yet we must acknowledge they would be very natural consequences of such a system.

What does this publication propose? Not to complete the work of wisdom and humanity, by removing for ever the remaining causes of these evils, but to entail them for ever upon the country; not to change the nature of a government confessedly bad, by the application of a principle confessedly good, but to change the name only by a political sophism. To unite this

Page 52. *unnatural government*, (I repeat the words of the pamphlet,



pamphlet, to deter us from acquiescing in its sentiments) *this Protestant monopoly, which a party of those* Page 57. *Protestants themselves term unjust and absurd, which great leaders of opposition, who possibly may be the future ministers of England, condemn; to which some of the actual members of the British cabinet are supposed to be adverse; to unite this system, whose* Page 53. *policy is much doubted by the people of England, whose existence is precarious, resting upon accident, upon a change of ministers, upon the temper of a Vice-Roy, the death of a single man; to unite such a system irrevocably with the wisdom, justice, and fair fame, of the British parliament, to make it a partner in the sentiments which such principles of government must excite through all Europe; not to cut the root from which conspiracy and revolt have shot up with* Page 52. *the prosperity of Ireland, but to transplant it to the heart of England, seems to be the scope of the Union which it advises the two countries to adopt.*

To prove that unless the known cause of all our misfortunes and disgrace be removed, no alteration of form, nor of name, will alter the nature of the country, or give lasting peace and security to it; that an Union upon such a principle will only unite the open and grounded discontent of Ireland to whatever causes of complaint remain in England; that it will lay both countries open to the machinations of foreign and domestic enemies, and



create in Ireland new sources of disturbance, whilst it drains her of the little strength she has left, is the object of the review I mean to make of the arguments contained in this extraordinary pamphlet.

I shall also endeavour to prove by the experience of other great countries, as well as by argument, that all religious distinctions may be abolished, the government reconciled to principle, at the same time that every human security may be given to the Protestants of Ireland for their church establishment, their properties, and even their preponderance in the state. This once done, the question of an Union, when the terms of it are known, may be fairly discussed.

Left I should be mistaken, or the drift of what I advance misinterpreted; (of what little consequence soever my opinion may be), I think it right to declare, that I am no enemy to this measure, provided it be a fair and broad Union, proved to be for the good of the whole country, and not a narrow and insidious Union, playing the fears of one set of men against those of another, and avowedly brought forward for purposes of party and oppression. But if any other mode can be devised to remedy the inconveniencies of two sovereign legislatures, in questions of public concern, without the manifest inconveniencies of an incorporating



porating union, I believe, upon examination, such a mode will be preferred. Till such time as the terms are proposed we must suspend our judgment upon its probable effects. The only question fairly before us, which now calls loudly for investigation, is whether more than three-fourths of the people of Ireland ought to be shut out from the full and equal benefit of whatever constitution she is to have, as the author of these Arguments does not merely insinuate, but advances with a candor which at least does him some honor; whether in the present state of men's minds all over the world, there is not some danger in excluding formally, three millions out of four, in a detached country, from the just and reasonable rights which they see their fellow-subjects enjoy. Would not such an act of a legislature, upon which all Europe has its eyes, corroborate those democratic principles which have loosened the foundations of all society, furnish new arguments to their emissaries, and give some colour to the aspersions they so profusely throw upon all established governments? It is worth inquiring, whether it would not be possible to act otherwise without danger.

The idea of its being decided by force is very properly given up as replete with mischief. No Page 1.  
C country



country can be safely or advantageously kept by force. The example of the whole world, all the late transactions of it, are in proof of this assertion. A post for military or commercial purposes, such as Gibraltar, may be worth keeping at a great unproductive expence; but to keep a nation so, and make one-fourth of the inhabitants a garrison against the remainder would be ruinous, and answer no end, if it were feasible. It is an error to think military governments may be in opposition to general opinion, of all others they take most pains to conciliate it, at least Lewis XIV. and the great Frederic did.

Page 2. The first maxim laid down is, that *every independent society or state has a right to propose the means which appear most probable for the attainment of the happiness of its people, consistent with its duties*

Page 3. *and obligations.* But what duties and obligations can be in opposition to the happiness of the people? *salus populi suprema lex.* — This is a large concession, and might lead speculative men to advance, if they thought it would contribute to the happiness of the people, *that separation and independency ought to be maintained at all hazards.*

Page 3, Line 2. When this is supported by quoting the *right* the Spanish Netherlands had to separate from the Spanish government, because they were oppressed, we fall insensibly into the maxim we certainly have

often



often enough heard reprobated; that maxim which brought its author to the dungeon of Olmutz.  
*L'insurrection est le plus saint des devoirs.*

The admission of this principle, however, puts the discussion on the fairest possible footing, and I believe firmly the application of it in its fullest extent would rather strengthen than endanger a fair connection with England.

The \* case of the Sabines can afford us very little instruction: what two inconsiderable towns did above two thousand years ago cannot serve as an example for two great nations in our times. But of this we may be pretty sure, that the Romans never made the renunciation of their worship a preliminary article of union with the Sabines. They were the people in the world, who incorporated most nation with their own; but in every case were not only the new subjects admitted into their government, but their gods found a place in their temples. Their incorporating members of distant countries with their state has always been

\* From the accounts which the papers give of the gallantry of the British Militia with the fair as well as in the field one would imagine they had read Mr. C's pamphlet, and were imitating the Romans, in settling the preliminaries of union with the Sabines.



reckoned among the principal causes of their downfall.—I think it is Montesquieu says, that, as the state extends, the number of its senators should be diminished. This would rather make against the policy of increasing the number of British senators, by admitting the Irish, and adding the discussion of the business of Ireland to that of the immense territories over which British power or British influence extend.

Page 4.

The Heptarchy of England affords no useful ground of comparison in the present case of Ireland; their situation, small, undivided by nature, with few complicated and no clashing interests, and the difference in the state of the world at that period, take away all points of similitude. Wales was united by contest, but its wise conqueror did not deem attention to their prejudices beneath his dignity, nor conciliation and due concession weakness of government. The case of Scotland will be treated more fully hereafter.

Page 5.

If an Union is to be compared to a partnership in trade, two houses in a separate situation, but closely connected, should consider well whether they could not carry on their business more to their mutual advantage under separate firms, than by going into partnership. If there was a want of credit and capital in one, it should reflect, whether it



It did not proceed from some family disagreements, and whether both credit and capital did not increase in proportion as those disputes were forgotten; but if the clerks and servants of the house were found to have fomented these domestic quarrels, it would be very wise to discharge them. Above all, it should take care not to be dazzled by the extensive concerns and splendid income of its future partner, the other side of his books should be carefully examined. If it found there immense debts contracted in speculations, of no one of which any thing now remained but the embarrassment, under the heads of *Balance of Europe, Dutch barriers, Succession to the crown of Spain, American colonies*, that the house was still deeply embarking itself in such speculative plans at an incalculable expence, that its habits were far from economical, its servants not very disinterested, its connections unable to share in the expence of their joint ventures: the comparison drawn from trade would not be in favour of an Union.

The American Union, which is justly praised Page 6. in the following sheets of the pamphlet, contradicts the assertion, that an Union pre-supposes that the contracting States shall be bound together by the same constitution, laws, and government. Each of the United States has reserved its constitution, laws, government, and religious regulations,



tions, and deputed to the Sovereign Assembly a power only in questions of general interest. Scotland has preserved her religious establishment in opposition to that of England, and an episcopal party at home.

Page 6.

The inferiority of Ireland in *civilization, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, morals, manners, establishments, constitution, and the superiority of England*—is less a reproach to Ireland than to the nation under whose influence, I might say under whose government she has been brought up. The people of Ireland, till within these few years, were not admitted into Protestant schools, were not allowed to have schools of their own, nor to be educated abroad. The merit of every government is to be appreciated by the state of its subjects. If Ireland has made any progress, it is since she has asserted some degree of independence of England since 1780. In the reputation of the armies and navies of Great Britain, Ireland cannot be denied a considerable share; she has furnished to both in this war upwards of 200,000 men.

Page 7.

*The conspiracies, insurrections, and rebellions, which have disgraced us, proclaim our defects in civilization and policy*—but do they not proclaim to every intelligent mind the shameful inattention, the political ignorance, or the oppression of the government under



under whose absolute control Ireland existed for many centuries. Our religious discontents and jealousies have been our bane, and to cure them an Union is proposed to us on the basis of perpetuating the exclusion of three-fourths of the nation on account of their religious principles.

*Would you advise a son uneducated, unimproved, Page 8. injured by bad habits, and bad company—to marry the person under whose influence he had fallen into so disgraceful a situation, and to make over to her the management of his person and estates; would you adopt for him the plan under which he contracted his vices, or that under which he begins to give better hopes. May not the recent misfortunes of Ireland, upon calm consideration, be ascribed to a relapse, into prejudices and habits contracted during its former state? or rather to the efforts of a party, to force on us again our childish tramels which we had outgrown? This accounts for the union of all descriptions of men in the late opposition to government.*

The remnant to religious distinction furnished that discontent upon which factious men are ever at work, and without which they have no prospect of success. Would Scotland be so inaccessible to their attempts, if the Presbyterians there were treated like the Catholics in Ireland? And what difference



difference is there between an Irishman and a Scotchman, that the religion of the one should be treated with respect, that of the other with contempt? But is the reason to be sought in the religion itself; that of Ireland is not less ancient, less noble, less extensive; the greatest men and the greatest nations of Europe have never been ashamed of professing it; it is not less safe; it has long existed in monarchies and in republics; the first duty it inculcates is obedience to the power of the state.

From Switzerland and Germany innumerable proofs can be drawn, that there is nothing in the religion of Roman Catholics incompatible with the freest forms of government. All Europe is a proof of their attachment and loyalty to their kings and the established governments of their country. In any other part of the world but England it would be ridiculous to speak of the fear of the Pope's jurisdiction; but of that fear and of his power and interference I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Our agriculture and our trade were making a most rapid progress, and began to improve from the moment that an intermission in this phrenzy of religious prejudice allowed us to follow our own interests, by taking off the restraints which clogged



clogged the industry and damped the spirit of the nation. It is a laughable thing to hear great statesmen, men whose profound political knowledge is the constant set off against their avowed immorality and want of principle, to hear such politicians talk of serving their country by taking from three-fourths of the inhabitants of it, their incitements to industry and exertion.

The next assertion we meet cannot be contradicted.

The state into which the exorbitant, convulsive Page 8, power of France has thrown all Europe, does certainly command every nation to come forward with all its energy ; no portion of the population of any country can now be withheld from an hearty co-operation in defence of all that is dear to society, out of compliment to any party, or to any prejudice. And is it fair to tell men, that they must spill the last drop of their blood, and spend their last shilling, for a cause in which they are not allowed an equal interest with those of the same rank of life by whose side they are fighting? Is it generous? Is it becoming a nation, the example as well as the protectress of Europe? Will the heart of an Englishman dictate, or his hand sign such a contract?

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I cannot



I cannot repeat it too often—the Union is a secondary question—Give the people of Ireland cause to be content. They may be satisfied by an Union, they may be satisfied without it, but until they are, no form of government will avail. Do not listen to those idle ill tempered exclamations, The people of Ireland never can be satisfied! Ask yourselves calmly, Has a fair trial ever been made? Ask yourselves—not what has been done, but what remains to be done? Do not take the trouble of removing any man from your state prisons to your council chamber, to ask him, whether the people feel their grievances, or would give the value of a *drop of ink* to have them removed. God has not made two separate sets of feelings for his creatures. Look into your own hearts, and ask, what would you feel, if to-morrow yourselves, your children, your friends were to be degraded to in the situation of Irish Roman Catholics: excluded from the legislature, from the honours, the confidence, the emoluments of their country, their only share in it, a vote for the men who exclude them. Go no farther.—Read there the answer of the Irish Roman Catholics to your question. Is it no injury to exclude them from the great offices of the state, because they have no chance of getting them? How many of those great men who  
were



were present when this question was asked, have risen from conditions in life as low as that of any Roman Catholic? How many of their family have they dragged forward with them? How many Roman Catholics can boast of as high descent and as good education, as the proudest amongst them? Are the great prizes to be taken out of the lottery because there are so many chances against drawing them; and are the tickets to be sold at the same price?

In page 8, I am sent to France, to Republican France, for lessons of political wisdom and justice; to seek in French fraternization a model for uniting Ireland. But disgust shall not hinder me from drawing information from every subject—Brabant, Holland, Sardinia, all the French conquests, do give important lessons. Contempt for the privileges and the religious prejudices of the country, military execution, an infatuated obstinacy in maintaining in their places, a governor, and ministers, persons the most obnoxious to the people gave Brabant to France. The name of Re-union nor all their 700,000 men in arms, cannot keep them from revolting against the tyranny of France; and will not (I am no prophet, and yet I fortel it) keep them to France, unless she adopt a better system. Partialiaty in the distribution of favours, national hatred between Savoy and Piedmont, opened Sa-



voy and let in ruin on the King of Sardinia.—Interior discontent prepared the way for them into Holland;—a monopoly of power, honour, and emoluments, into Berne;—a provincial government, distant from the seat of empire, into Milan and the states of Venice. These are the axioms of politics which French conquests are illustrating to the world. Perhaps we may also soon have to learn from them, that their annexing countries with the name of Union—is not uniting them. Great Britain would be this day as open as ever to the intrigues and attacks of France, though a roll of parchment, endorsed Articles of Union, had been interchanged between their commissioners, if the Church-of-England party in Scotland had by those articles pretended to exclude the Presbyterian religion, not only from any church establishment, but from any share in the civil government; while the people were forced to pay bishops whom they execrated, and priests whom they could not listen to. Any thing in the shape of meer toleration would not have united the two kingdoms.

Page 9.

*The avenue to disunion must be closed, but not with parchment deeds. We too often mistake the instrument of government for the strength of it. Well indeed does France know the adage, Dum singuli pugnant universi vincuntur; and great*  
must



must be her joy to see us governing by parties, spilling our blood, and wasting our treasure, in religious disputes, while we are offering our subsidies to a nation among the very first of Europe, yet in riches, number, and quality of inhabitants, scarcely equal to that we are so wantonly ruining. Prussia, that can arm four hundred thousand men, is not a country equal to Ireland; her subjects, when Frederic triumphed over Europe, were not rated at any thing near five millions;—her climate is inferior, her ports are not to be compared, her soil not so good, her towns not near so considerable. But France will sooner drag the Pope from his cloister at Sienna, and set him up again, with his treble crown upon his head, to scare us from our own interests, than suffer us to recover our senses and come forward in the plenitude of our power — What is our power to her, when that Medusa's head can paralyse so large a portion of our people, or turn their arms against each other?

*If an Union may be desirable between two independent kingdoms, it must be most desirable where such two kingdoms are united under the sovereign, and have separate legislatures.* Page 10.

The general position of this argument would apply as well to Hanover, or to Corsica, when it had George the Third for king, as to Ireland.

The



The particular deductions from it are rather against an Union. The inconveniences of a capital out of the country, of absentees, and rents carried away; of jealousy and faction; would be increased by it. This reasoning carried to its extent would be for a separation. I admit that there cannot exist a full state of security without some reasonable certainty that all parts of the empire will pursue the same system; though Hanover is at peace while we, subjects of the same sovereign, are at war. It were much to be wished that the American government, or the German union, or the wisdom of our legislators, could furnish us with some plan to ensure co-operation on general subjects, and leave each state independent in its own concerns, regulating them by treaty when they interfered.

Page 11. Scotland is next brought in proof. We are taught that, *in the situation which that country held previous to the Union, does Ireland stand at present.*

I must make these few exceptions:

The crown of Ireland is by express statutes annexed to, and dependent on, the crown of England; *the King of England is ipso facto King of Ireland.*—The crown of Scotland was by express statute sepa-



rate from, and independent of, the crown of England; and the King of England *ipso facto* not King of Scotland; unless certain condition were previously complied with.

This put the two nations in the necessity of choosing between an union and a total separation. No such necessity in the case of Ireland. The King of Ireland resides in England; but the Scots passed a law, that their next King should reside at home.

Ireland has a Vice-Roy.—Scotland had none.

Scotland had a martial people, long in habits of war with England, and of alliance with her greatest enemies, full of the glory and rivalry of her separate dominion.—Ireland scarcely remembers to have been a separate state, has no allies but those of England, never has been a rival power.

Scotland is not separated from England.—Ireland is separated by a barrier impassable frequently for weeks together, always uncertain and inconvenient.

Scotland was then very poor.—Ireland is growing fast into riches.

In



In Scotland, the religion of the people was permitted to be the religion of the country: it was not barely tolerated, but established and confirmed, by all that human wisdom could devise, before the articles of Union were discussed in Parliament.

In Ireland, the religion of the people is not permitted to be the religion of the country: it is scarcely tolerated; the religion of a small minority (a political phenomenon) is the established religion of the state.

The people of Ireland are excluded from a share in the government, on account of their religion—and this exclusion is made the basis of the Union which this pamphlet proposes.

A war between Scotland and England was, as it were, declared, if an Union did not take place.

A war with Ireland is not probable if the people are satisfied, though no Union should take place—and is to be feared, though an Union should take place, if the causes of discontent are not removed.

The influence of England, which is next taken notice of, is not less likely to be complained of  
after



after the Union than before. It certainly is necessary for the British Cabinet to *induce the Irish Parliament to agree to its measures*, or to explain for the benefit of country gentlemen, to have a certain majority in the Irish Parliament. The British ministers have seldom found any great difficulty in procuring such a majority; the patronage of the crown has not been found insufficient to ensure it in almost every case; in the Regency business it was not deficient, the only question was from what side it was to flow, and some people guessed wrong.

Immediately after we find that, *one million of* Page 12.  
*the rents of absentees are spent in England*—but will less be spent when all the business of Ireland is transacted there? *A Viceroy disposing of the patronage of the crown, one executive, one presiding cabinet*, all the other ties already existing between the two kingdoms, are rather arguments against the necessity of any other connection than the present. I do not believe the inefficacy to do good in the government of Ireland lies in the nature of its connection with England, but in the nature of the parties which England allows to preponderate in the Irish legislature; parties which she almost seems to have bargained with for the government. If better men are consulted, and better measures proposed, has not the British  
 E cabinet



cabinet power to support them in the Irish Houses of Parliament? If the present men and the present measures are adopted, will not the British cabinet have power to continue to support them in the English Houses of Parliament as it does in the Irish? By whatever means these men influence the English minister at present, by similar means may they influence him hereafter.

I have already admitted the inconvenience which might result from the independence of the Irish Parliament, in case it should declare against measures where the whole empire is concerned, and which the British Parliament had adopted.—

Page 13. *Not that it should exhort the King to make war, as we are told; which would be no more than any county petition for war. It might, indeed, offer subsidies for making war when England was at peace—a case not likely to happen. One more possible, is, that it might refuse subsidies for a war that England was engaged in; that it might declare against treaties, and refuse to ratify commercial articles. These certainly are inconveniences, but examples of this nature have not often occurred. They are, I think, the sole ones, for which at first sight an Union seems the only and necessary remedy. But we want a cure for the immediate evils under which Ireland labours. Which of them rings from a want of unity in*



the British empire? The councils of Ireland have been directed by a British cabinet, and as little opposed, much less even, than if they had been debated in an English Parliament. I am no enemy to a fair Union, but I am convinced that it is not the cure for our present calamities, which are of such a nature as may exist with it, or may be remedied without it. But as this measure is already admitted to carry with it some inconveniences, and will be proved to have more, it is worth considering, whether they may not be provided against at the same time that a remedy is found for those which result from the co-existence of two independent legislatures. If it could be done, all the necessary advantages, and such as an Union alone could give, would be procured; all the disadvantages, that would follow it, avoided; and the wisdom of the British Cabinet and Irish Parliament left free to remedy the evils, that are not necessarily dependent on the nature of the connection with England, which are those that Ireland feels most severely.

I am very far from thinking myself capable of proposing a system likely to be adopted; but I suppose, for experiment sake, a provision could be made for every possible case in which the interests of the two countries are so entangled, that a division of sentiments in the two parliaments would be detri-



mental to the common cause. That upon all those questions, the enumerating and stating of which would require great political knowledge, a proportionate influence should be given to the votes of Irish members deputed *ad hoc* to the British parliament. Or that these questions, which may be called imperial questions, being discussed in the Irish parliament the result may have the weight of ---- votes in the English House of Commons and of ---- votes in the English House of Peers. If the peers and commons of Ireland were proportioned in number with those of England, in a ratio of the size, riches, and population of Ireland, the end would be answered by simply adding up the votes in the two parliaments.

This sort of voice, in deliberative assemblies, is not without example in the *droit publique* of Germany, and the United Netherlands. It has been found often inefficient in the former, from the number of states concerned, but in the case of two states under the same sovereign it appears much more practicable.

It is an innovation in England, but not a greater one than an incorporating union, nor a more unbecoming one than to see English members voting upon an Irish turnpike-bill, or Irish members upon a bridge in Kent.

I am



I am aware of another difficulty, even in questions not *imperial*, it would be an embarrassing circumstance, if the majority of the Irish parliament opposed a minister whom the majority of the British parliament supported. This is a possible case, but in my opinion not a probable one, because the means which a minister is in possession of to *induce* the parliaments to pursue the same line of action are very well proportioned to that end.

It must be remembered that this idea is capable of infinite modification; it may perhaps lead to something useful.

Contributions, to the navy, army, and the common burthens of the state, might be here regulated, as well as such arrangements of trade, as might by degrees operate as an Union would, without any sudden change. Here may, perhaps, be the place to observe, that though Ireland is not specially pledged for the debt of England; yet, if it were possible a bankruptcy should take place in England, both individually and nationally, Ireland, through every class of her inhabitants, would feel, in a great degree, the effects of it.

As the property of the two countries is very much intermixed, without derogating from the  
dignity



dignity of Irish peerage, or the sovereignty of the nation in its own concerns, some mode might be struck out, on the same plan, for appeals, more agreeable to English subjects, whose property may frequently be the object of them, than one solely to the Irish House of Peers.

This plan, or a similar one, has also this inappreciable advantage, by its means, without any surrender of independence, a complete guarantee may be given to the Protestant interest in Ireland against their reasonable fears for their church-establishment, and their very groundless fears for their property on the score of old claims, by placing these questions among the general constitutional concerns of the empire. Many other advantages might be drawn, I think, from some plan of this nature. It would add to the dignity of Ireland, by giving her a proportional influence in the concerns of the British empire, without any sacrifice or surrender of her independence. It would be less derogatory to that of the British parliament, and less inconsistent than the admission of any number of Irish commoners and peers to vote upon questions which, nine times in ten, would be foreign to them.



*The parliament of Ireland could not then endanger Page 13.  
or dissolve the empire by its opposition, nor subject  
itself to the imputation of corruption, and subserv-  
iency to the British cabinet by its forbearance, as is  
objected.*

The Union of the parliaments would not hinder Ireland from being a constant theme for parties to discant upon, as long as glaring abuses did subsist. As the question could no longer be shifted from before it, if I do not mistake, this inconvenience would exist in a much greater degree. Addresses would continually be pouring in from every county in Ireland, and such complaints brought before parliament as their humanity could not dismiss, nor the multiplicity of their business allow them to discuss. How far the charges, upon members of the British Parliament, of *palliating treason, nourishing discontent, and almost vindicating rebellion*, which are made, (Page 14,) are well placed, or becoming the respect due at all times, but more especially in these, to members of the legislature, whatever their opinions may be, is foreign to my purpose. The opposition of yesterday may be the ministers of to-day; such a charge and such a sentence on one side necessarily implies the power of judging and pronouncing on the other in the same manner. It may serve party spleen, but does not serve the cause of governments.



ments. It was a wise maxim of Cicero, in his *Amicitia*, "to be enemies as if you were one day to be friends."

Page 14. We return to Scotland. It seems to me, that she was weaned from her partiality to France as early as the time of Queen Mary, much more by the efforts of that Queen, supported by the princes of Guise, her uncles, against the reformation, than by the subsequent Union. The respect paid to the religion of the people stopped the progress of French influence, which began to revive in favour of the House of Stuart. Notwithstanding which, two rebellions took place there since the Union.

It cannot be denied, that a connection did, as is advanced, exist between France and Ireland in the beginning of this century: about the middle of it the pretender was driven from France, who since that period, took very little concern in the affairs of a man, who, indolent and besotted, took little interest in them himself. I am ignorant whether he ever named the Roman Catholic bishops; but I am very sure he did not name them in concert with the French court, which cared very little about the nomination of those places which gave neither power nor revenue.

Page 14,  
Line 22.



We may now say there exists neither pretender nor no pope, whose influence in Ireland or England any serious man can affect to dread.

No doubt a *connexion with France has lately been* Page 14.  
*renewed*; but those who took the lead in it were of all descriptions, but persons chiefly Presbyterians and Protestants. Of five men who composed the Directory, four were Protestants, although See reports. of any other five men in the country, four were Catholics. There is no novelty in the principle of that connexion; every discontent is an invitation to an enemy, and the French and every enemy to Great Britain will ever have their ears open to such an invitation. I fear much they never will cease to intrigue in Ireland, as we are informed they do, whilst it remains in its present state. But will an Union, upon such a narrow principle as is proposed, alter that state for the better? Will the people of Ireland welcome exclusion and degradation from a British, more than from an Irish parliament? It is dangerous, it is almost treason, against the cause of all regular society, attacked as it is by powerful enemies, to trifle in this manner with the feelings of three millions of people by excluding them from those rights for which we call upon them to risk their lives.

We are now to suppose *an Union, upon fair and equitable principles*, not such an one as we have  
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been



been speaking about, framed, like the Irish parliament, (as I find by page 25, line 16,) to exclude three-fourths of the Irish people; and in this manner the advantages of it are summed up.

Page 15. *The monarch remains in England, the absentees increase, London (already swelled to an unnatural size,) is the general resort for business, for advancement, for pleasure. What becomes of Dublin, perhaps now the third city in Europe? So far I see but the disadvantages of our present situation augmented. Now, what is England to gain; a mixture of Irishmen in her cabinet! The influence, weight, and ability, of Irish members in her parliament, and a transfer to them of all our party contests! British faction would cease to speculate in Ireland; but would the spirit of it be extinguished in England?*

The most important question now comes to be considered; and I here supplicate the attention of every man who has any regard for the welfare of the British empire, I conjure him to tread with caution, where war and ruin follow close upon his steps, and no retreat is left.

Page 15. *France, it is asserted, could no longer speculate on the nature of our distinct government and parliament. To give us a false idea of the speculations of*



of France is to mislead us in our opposition to them. Was there any thing like speculating upon our *distinct government and parliament* in her designs upon Ireland? Was our Vice-Roy to be made an independent prince? Were our commons or peers to be preserved? no, the first step was to sweep off Vice-Roy, commons, and peers, as completely as an Union will. So far her speculations are rather helped by this Union.

French influence in Ireland is by all parties acknowledged to be the greatest misfortune which can happen.

The wildest spirit of revenge and resistance, the most cogent necessity, could not overcome this sentiment in the late rebellion. The assistance of France was bargained for with a degree of caution which shews some principle of patriotism; and offered with a readiness, and to an extent, which must convince us the object will not easily be relinquished.

Of late, the theory of insurrection has almost forced itself upon every speculative mind. A province, distant from the seat of empire, is much more liable to the intrigues of an enemy, than one that has it in its centre.



Not only the judgement and action of government is more prompt, but the influence of its members in their different districts; their consequence as a part of the state, keep them, their families, and their friends, awake to its dangers. What would the situation of Ireland have been, if more of its rich inhabitant having been drained off, (an admitted consequence of the Union,) the grand juries and county-meetings had been composed of fewer men of rank and property: the yeomanry with fewer gentlemen at its head, or in its ranks: not one member of the legislature in any county; in this instance, their parliamentary duty, in most others their inclination, would keep them away; the sheriffs and grand jury men administering estates not their own, who had more to hope than to fear from a change. In case of a separation, how much easier to dispose of 100 absent legislators, than of 500 on the spot, supported by their families, friends, adherents, and dependents, possessed of all the local advantages and resources of the country in which they resided.—What could the country gentlemen of France do for their monarch, when the short sighted policy, and jealous spirit of despotism, had drawn them from their castles to the court?—What could the most loyal provinces do without them; especially when the whole landed influence was thus put into the hands of men, whose first wish

was



was to possess those estates to which they had been stewards? Will the case be different in Ireland? Already, it is not the money the absentees draw from that country that is the real injury they do her, but the influence of their great possessions, dormant, or left in hands very unfit to exercise it; by which means, a species of men half educated, with all the obstinacy and prejudice of ignorance, are intrusted with power as magistrates, and recommend themselves to notice by making a violent use of it. What will be the case if such an Union takes place? Will the station of gentlemen growing upon the soil, with all their interests centered in it, be supplied by tradesmen, who, with one stroke of a pen, transport their property from Cork to Constantinople. The Spaniards say, no man should be praised till after his death; no political measure should be judged till time had shewn its full effect. Cardinal Richlieu is reckoned a great statesman, the favorite of kings, because he sapped the foundations of aristocracy. The author of an Union with Ireland may pass for a great statesman; but time must decide, whether the men and power he has drawn from Ireland were not better left in their proper posts; whether by removing the present inconveniences, like Richlieu, he does not eventually let in others of a much greater magnitude. What may not be apprehended, if three-fourths of the people are for ever excluded



Page 30.

cluded by it from the legislature; deprived of all hope in the present order of things? *for the opening, left so cautiously to be used by Protestants*, cannot find a hope in the most sanguine breast. Will they not be stimulated to wish for a change, by the heart-rending comparison with the manner in which the religion of Scotland was treated? — A religion certainly not more friendly to monarchy in its theory and discipline, than that, whose first principle is obedience to the *powers that are*. — Will there be no fore left that an artful foe might irritate? Will the remembrance of former independence be so easily wiped away from the minds of those who shared in it? Will all Irish pride, and Irish feeling, be shipped off to England with her legislature? — They are shallow politicians, unfounded in the rudiments of the very science they profess, who reason upon man in society as an abstract quantity, divested of the feelings, the passions, the weaknesses of man; ignorant artificers! who reckon upon the full force of their power, without considering the resistance which the universal principle of nature has put in its way. This species of chamber-statesmen, who think that nothing more is necessary to make a law, than to pass it through the usual forms, have been the cause of much mischief. From the material Russian, whose feelings extend little beyond the pressure of external objects on his fibres, to the sensitive Italian,

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whose



whose being is imagination—from the vain Frenchman, irritably alive to the opinion of mankind, to the proud Spaniard, isolated in his opinion of himself—from the cool, dispassionate, philosophic, Englishman, calmly adopting the changes which he is taught to believe are right, to the enthusiastic native of Ireland, invincibly attached to the opinions of his fore-fathers; how many nice shades of discrimination will not that legislator be ruled by, who has studied his science in the only book which contains its true principles,—the human heart—I do not pretend to ascribe it to climate, nor to any other particular cause, but every people, like every soil, has its peculiar genius, which will not be thwarted, and which must be consulted in the mode of cultivation which we apply to it. Lewis the fourteenth, and the Czar Peter, were both great men; a few yards of red and blue ribbon had as great an effect in Paris as the Knout in Petersburg.

How easily will that government be conducted, which is in unison with the feelings of its subjects; the slightest symbol of legal authority will ensure obedience and respect, without having recourse, on every petty occasion, to that parade of force, which, like the capital of a great banker, is only held out to view when his credit is failing.

Supposing



Supposing (what I have yet seen no reason to admit) an *encrease of wealth, consequence, ability, and*  
 Page 15. *power, from an Union; it will no more tend to encrease the security of the empire,* as long as any germ of discontent is left, than an increase of blood, animal spirits, and strength, will be safe in a constitution which contains a radical and mortal vice.

Ireland, in its present situation, might have  
 Page 15. some of the inconveniences of *imperium in imperio*, should the influence of the British cabinet be opposed in its parliament, in a question of general concern. But by referring the decision of all such questions to the British senate, with a due allowance of weight to Irish votes; this inconvenience is avoided; and with very little change, the constitution of Great Britain and Ireland would have every advantage of the American Union, with all those of an hereditary monarchy.

The tenderness of the Americans for every man's right to his own thoughts upon abstract subjects, their respect for the religious opinions of the majority in each state, well deserve all the encomiums the author of this pamphlet bestows upon them. In this way only can all religious struggle and animosity be prevented, and property secured, by replacing government upon its  
 proper



proper basis. Thus in the words of Washington, which are quoted, "*let the constitution, which you now present, be the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation renders indispensable.*"

Having followed the author of this most in- Page 192  
structive pamphlet (perhaps too diffusely) through the general topics, which the question of an Union naturally suggests, I return with him now to examine the arguments which result from the particular situation of Ireland, as to its *property*, its *establishments*, and *religious divisions*. In the application of the general principles to the particular cases, the same matter necessarily recurs, and some indulgence may be expected for unavoidable repetitions. The method and order of these Reconsiderations are not my choice, so much of their merit or defects I have no share in: Nor is it my fault that the religious dissensions of Ireland have taken so much place; I followed the line of argument laid down. No part of the business to me appears so important, yet none of the writings, upon a projected Union, which have fallen into my hands, seem to have considered them in the same light. I had rather the reasonable claims of the majority of the Irish people should be unably recommended to notice by me, than buried

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ried for ever silently and obscurely, in the grave which is digging for them.

I avoid enlarging upon the origin of property in the descendants of the English in Ireland, as tending to revive, for no good end, what is nearly forgotten. If any superfluous fears upon the subject remain after more than a century of undisturbed possession, and the different acts of security, I have already pointed out the best remedy I know of, a guarantee by England; though I confess it appears to me almost as ridiculous, as to guarantee the Spanish land-holders against the claims of the Moors. The proportion of Catholic to Protestant, and that of property has been admitted to save time. I have the best reasons for believing the number of Catholics to be under rated, that of property exaggerated, if mercantile and funded stock, on public and private security, be taken into account.

Let it, for argument, be nine-tenths. Now, where property is admitted to be the basis of political power, as in our constitution, but *numbers*, that of natural power and its last resort, as is advanced in France: this alone — nine-tenths of the property in a fourth of the population, separated from the rest by invidious distinctions of religion, joined with the inequalities naturally arising in  
that



that fourth, constitutes a precarious state of society, and accordingly we find that (page 20) *These proprietors have been obliged to rely upon British assistance for the preservation of their properties and existence at different periods. (And 27) That Great Britain is not pledged upon any specific principle to support one sect more than another.* But if added to the humiliation and other inconveniences which the deprivation of property brings with it, the remaining tenth of it is disfranchised, in what manner soever it may be distributed among the three remaining fourths of the people, if a Parliament be framed with the Page 25. sole view of excluding them, and other artificial motives of separation, envy, and even hatred, be maintained between this alarming proportion of non-proprietors to proprietors, the danger is increased to a very great degree, and might become desperate, were all hope of bettering their condition cut off. In every government, says a very deep political writer, *Quot sunt inopes in republica tot hostes habeat necesse est, præsertim sublatâ emergendi spe.*—*Mariana de regis institutione.* Here two great politicians are at issue, for the author of the arguments (p. 28) says, on the contrary, *when once the hope of changing is at an end, and the hope of forcing such a change destroyed, dissatisfaction would sink into acquiescence, and acquiescence into content.* Here the people of Ireland, of all denominations, for this is addressed to them all, may see through

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what



what a soft and natural progression their leading characters are preparing to conduct them to happiness.

I shall now endeavour to lay before my reader (still following the Pamphlet) the state of society in Ireland, where we have just remarked this leading feature.

The religion of three men out of four, which is the religion of the country, is Catholic, and is allowed no support from government. The religion of one man out of four is Protestant, which is the *religion* of the state, and is endowed with the tithe of the whole kingdom, besides great property in land. One man in seven is Presbyterian, and his religion is also supported by the government. Many other sects exist in small numbers and unnoticed by government. Such are the barriers which prejudice reinforced by ignorance, and incited by every little passion, has placed between man and man in that Island.

Among the peasantry, the proportion of Roman Catholics is much greater. They are the poorest peasantry in the world, get least for their work, and pay most for their land; have the most numerous families, and have no help from their parishes to support them. After paying a tithe, exacted generally with very great rigour, to support



port the established religion, of which they never hear but by the tithe-proctor, they must out of their poverty pay something to their own priest, who, nearly as poor as themselves, lives with them and renders them many services. Here I cannot help remarking, that long before America was supposed to have set the example, or China had become an object of inquiry, Ireland had solved the problem so much disputed by politicians, and had shewn a country with a religion answering all the purposes of morality and good order, without revenue, and certainly without encouragement from the state, or support from the civil law. No one can say that the immense church-establishment is necessary or useful in general to the people of the country. But that revenue, fairly belongs to the state no one has any claim upon it. After the people have provided for themselves in their homely way, and at their own expence, if our legislators choose to indulge in the luxury of a splendid establishment, they are perfectly free, as they are the best and only competent judges of the application of the public money.

If, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, any person of this description should acquire property, it is not the same thing as that property acquired by a Protestant or a Presbyterian. Of late years, indeed, it gives him a vote, but he cannot give that vote to any person of the same way of thinking, or in the same



same interests as himself: that is all the consequence his property can give him. He may hear of others, by their industry or their success in speculations or inventions, becoming very great men, Members of Parliament, nay, even Peers of the Realm. He meets, every day, men born in the lowest classes of his persuasion, who have acquired these advantages by taking up another religion; but his priest has told him, it is sinful to do it from any other motive but conviction; and the world says, it is dishonourable to do it for interest. He has besides the mortification every day to hear those men, whom he remembers as low as himself, telling him that it is no disadvantage to him to be excluded, because he has so small a chance of rising, as if it were no disadvantage not to be able to place his vote where he has placed his confidence, and to indulge a hope for himself which he sees realized in his neighbour. And these are the men who make him feel his situation most bitterly, by treating him with contempt and ridicule, and leaning very hard upon him with the power they have acquired. The feelings of the gentlemen are still more hurt, because they hear that language from men, born and educated in a line much beneath them. They cannot sit in Parliament, and are excluded from the great civil and military offices, the lower ones they have very little chance of, being generally given to men with Parliamentary influence. Many of them have acquired very great military know-  
ledge



ledge in foreign services, but they can never hope to be placed in situations to display it. They feel hurt again, that they should appear to be mistrusted, and not allowed to sit in Parliament, when their peasantry were allowed a vote for any person not of their persuasion.

This inferiority must make society unpleasant, or at least very little interesting to them. And it is to be considered, that these religious opinions were not wantonly or inconsiderately taken up, but have been in the country time out of mind; that they are spread through three millions of people, and have resisted nearly two centuries of bitter persecution: so that no reasonable hope can be entertained of eradicating them by force. One of the tenets of this religion is to be faithful to your king, or whatever government you live under; and they suffered very much for acting up to it, before they understood that the state had called in a new king: the family of their old sovereign is now extinct, and consequently no scruple can remain in the breast of the least informed man, but that his allegiance, as a religious duty, is transferred to the family now on the throne. Indeed this sentiment has long prevailed. Late events furnish one of the strongest proofs that can exist, of the tendency of Roman Catholic principles to loyalty. Every means that human sagacity could devise, argument, wit, ridicule, seduction



seduction of every kind, were used to overthrow this religion, before any attempt could be made to overturn the throne in France. I say *this* religion, because whoever is conversant with the works of these precursors of revolution, must know that their wit and ridicule was aimed more at the Catholic religion than at any other. The leaders of the French Calvinists were leaders of the Revolution; *Barnave, Rabaud de St. Etienne, &c. &c.* Scarcely any of the Roman Catholic dignified Clergy appeared but to oppose its atrocities; many of them fell martyrs to their principles.

The same thing was doing in Ireland, (I hope not with the same design). And the common people began to yield to the contempt and contumely which ignorant men of confined education, or men of better information and worse principles, were constantly throwing out against their religion, without taking care to put another in its place. Their respect for their priests was weakened, as in the late rebellion it appeared; the common people were led away, but very few Roman Catholic gentlemen, no superior Roman Catholic clergymen, and out of some thousands a very small number of priests were concerned; while the Directory and leading members were Protestants and Presbyterians. I do not say this from party spirit,

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either



either in politics or religion; I hate it, for the mischief it has done and is still doing in both; but to prove, that the religion which the people of Ireland are attached to is inimical to revolution, and does not in the least interfere with any legal form of government which society may assume. Those who have meditated on that epocha of modern history, when the reformation and some other great events constituted a new æra among mankind, must have perceived the spirit of free thinking in religion and in government, arising together, walking hand in hand, and appearing in the same monstrous shapes — the Anabaptists at Munster—the round-heads, independents, levellers, and many as extravagant, all over Germany, where it was most widely diffused.

The Roman Catholics, till very lately, besides these inconveniences of exclusion and supporting two religions, were subject to many other penal laws; or to speak more properly, many laws were passed, during two centuries, to render property insecure, to prevent the cultivation of land, the interior confidence of families, the extension of trade, or the employment of the talents or genius of three-fourths of the people in civil or military affairs. For, let men think themselves ever so free, they are as much slaves to the aggregate body of the state, and work for it as really, as the

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slaves



slaves on a plantation in Jamaica do for their master, who cannot hurt one of their little fingers without hurting himself. No more can the state put the smallest impediment in the way of any man's welfare, or take away any motive for his exertions, without diminishing its own prosperity

Page 20. in the very same proportion. But *the Catholics having shewn great power at the revolution (or rather, great zeal in their attachment to a king whose title was then at least doubtful) were long subject to a severe code of laws.* Within these few years, *the greater part of the laws have been repealed;* but it is true, as we read, page 20, *they do not conceive that they enjoy a complete toleration,* while the profession of their religion subjects them to privations and humiliations which would be deemed a very severe punishment for one who had, in a high degree, incurred the animadversion of the laws; to be declared unworthy of confidence, excluded from a share in the legislature, from places of honour and of trust.

Though many make light of this sentence, who are not under it, they should recollect that it is not the thing itself only, but the idea also which men attach to it, that is grievous to the feeling. Do these men think that the Catholic Gentry forfeited, with their property and their rights, the genius and talents which they may derive from

nature



nature or from education? Do the attainders of an Irish Parliament extend to every sentiment of generous emulation and honest ambition in their minds? Have the springs of noble exertion lost all their elasticity under the weight of oppression? Deprived of the fair opportunities of indulging them, it would have been merciful indeed to have deprived them of those sentiments. But they have still souls left to envy the feelings of a Howe or a Nelson, of every man whose happiness it has been to have served his country. When they join in the exultation of the parents, the children, the friends, the common acquaintances, of these great men, an involuntary tear will sometimes start into the eye, a bitter thought intrude itself into the breast, of the poor secluded Catholic. Sometimes he will be ready to exclaim, I or mine might have aspired to some little share in these triumphs! How unsatisfactory are the little honours he has been allowed to glean in foreign fields, while he is excluded from the rich harvests of his country's glory. These feelings reason cannot subdue, though she may enforce submission and patient resignation. But so deeply implanted in the meanest reptile that crawls upon the confines of life is the hatred of oppression, so conscious of it are mankind, so very difficult it is to forgive those whom we have wronged, that even in the hour of danger the services of the Catho-



lic appear to be accepted with diffidence, and he has the mortification of hearing continually the most illiberal insinuations and suspicions thrown out against the body of men to which he belongs.

Is it consistent with the candour this writer professes, to assert, that they *demand an alteration in the parliamentary constitution to give their numbers proportionate power?* Those are the men who expose regular governments to such alterations; who, by putting property in opposition to numbers, favour the system which is spreading fast through Europe. The Catholics of Ireland supplicate only that they may be admitted to political equality with the Protestants, not in proportion to their numbers, which is not the constitutional basis of representation with us; but in proportion to their property, which is. They supplicate the government of Ireland not to sap the foundation of the British constitution, which they presume they have a right to enjoy, in common with all his majesty's subjects, by depriving property of its rights in the state, not to contribute to the ruin of society, by adding to the weight of numbers against property, by breakings the graduated links of the chain which unites these two classes, and by furnishing arguments to evil minded persons to seduce the weak. The reigns of Elizabeth, Charles, and James, are long past. It is needless to revive old

Page 22,  
Line 20.

Page 21.



old quarrels and mutual accusation; but they in-  
 treat that they may not be injured, nor the state  
 exposed to danger, by weakening the ties of so-  
 ciety, because the Protestants *fancy* they discover  
 similar views in the present unhappy contest. But  
 that contest appears of a nature entirely its own,  
 with not one feature of similarity to the times  
 alluded to. No Catholic power, no Pope, no Pre-  
 tender, can be alledged to have incited it. Do all  
 you can, it will ever appear more a war upon the  
 system of numbers against property, of no religion  
 against all religion, than of Catholic against Pro-  
 testant.

Page 21,  
 Line 3.

Is it not to be feared that maintaining religious  
 distinctions and exclusions will abet that system  
 and disparage the general cause of religion and  
 regular government? There can be little danger  
 in allowing them to obtain power in proportion  
 to their property, when nine-tenths of it is not  
 theirs, with a Protestant King, and Protestant  
 House of Peers where he only can admit them.  
 To restore their parliamentary establishment to  
 its fair and natural basis, is at all times, but now  
 more than ever, the best guarantee of its safety  
 and importance. The Catholics set up no claim  
 to their ecclesiastical establishment; if they have  
 any fears for it, it may easily be secured to them  
 by a guarantee from England, as has been prac-  
 tised in many similar instances in Germany.



Page 21. When the Catholics were restrained, by a code of laws, which, though so lately abrogated, the world will scarce believe ever to have existed, — Does the author mean to assert, that the Irish nation, poor, spiritless, and contemptible, did not feel its sufferings, because it had not force to complain? What was the boasted tranquillity it enjoyed? *Solitudinem faciunt, — pacem appellant.* The improvement of the country, as soon as those restrictions were taken off, was rapid beyond imagination. As the Catholic rose along with it from abject poverty, is it wonderful that he should petition, that ten or a thousand acres of land should have the same rights in his hands as in his neighbours?

It is desirable, says the author of the pamphlet, to cast a veil over recent circumstances. I join with him; but, if that veil is artfully contrived to admit insinuations, injurious to a large body of men, painful as it may be, it must be removed.

*It cannot be hoped, it is said, page 22, that the Protestants, under the present temper and feelings, will surrender their political power, much less be persuaded they can do it with safety.* It is acknowledged, through every page of this candid publication, that they cannot keep it with safety without the interference of Great Britain; and, page



27, it is alledged, and all through the work it is insinuated, that Great Britain is not pledged to support them in it. It is declared to be an unnatural system. Many other epithets are directly or indirectly applied to it, through the course of the work which it is needless to repeat. This language is very plain; it is easy to see that, to get rid of a troublesome question at any rate, is the main object of the Union as it is here proposed. To what shifts are men driven, when fair principle is abandoned; to think to get rid of a difficulty by a change of form, while the grounds of it are not only allowed to remain but confirmed, is deceiving ourselves and struggling against conviction.

The wisest and fairest way for the Protestants of Ireland to secure political power, is to put it on the safe and broad basis of the British constitution; to give up a dangerous, troublesome monopoly; and trust to their capital in the state (ten times greater than what can set up against them) and to the immense advantages in the constitutional legislature of which they are fairly in possession. But the Catholics, they say, being so much superior in number, will soon acquire a dangerous superiority in property. If, without ruining the state, you cannot hinder them from acquiring property, is it not safer to let that property,



perty, by slow degrees, into a fair share of influence, than to let it grow up under a system of discontent, till it forces itself at once into power by its accumulated weight?

One cannot help pitying a government which seems to be in constant terror of the prosperity of its own subjects. Their number, their riches, their spirit, their civil or military talents, are so many objects of fear. Such a government can subsist only by taking as much pains to keep its subjects poor, weak, ignorant, and mean, as other princes take to make theirs wealthy, powerful, enlightened, war-like, and high-spirited.

In the next sentence, the supporters of these claims of the Roman Catholics to political equality, in proportion to their property, are set down as open opposers or secret ill-wishers to the government. For my part, I think the most treacherous enemy to the government is he who wishes to leave it exposed in these times to the operation of such dangerous principles, as exclusion of the majority of a people, and religious disqualification. This exclusion of the *tiers état* from some places of honour and trust, though nothing like the exclusion of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, was a great cause of envy and discontent, and gave many supporters to the revolution

in



in its first stages. Next to him, I think, he is an enemy to his country who destroys the confidence between man and man, by insinuating that every person, who happens to be obnoxious to his spleen or his prejudice, or his favourite system, is a traitor, or at least a suspicious and dangerous character. In the name of God, how are we to unite against our enemy, if this principle of mutual distrust for differences of opinion gains ground as it does among us.

How sincerely do I join in the wish, that it were possible to bury all that has passed in *benevolent oblivion*. But when the foundations of society are broken up, and torn asunder, when no other human means can save us from the ruin which is nodding over our heads but unanimity, I have another wish, still nearer to my heart, it is, that nothing be taken, to satisfy party and prejudice, from the strength of the last tie that remains—our common interest; — that it be truly a common cause, equal in its advantages and its dangers, where every heart and every hand may unite without reserve.

I am now come to that important truth which modern political writers upon religious establishments, as I am informed, lay down as a principle: That every state ought to establish the religious sect which is most numerous. If the necessity or even the bare utility



utility of religion in a state be admitted, this truth forces itself upon the mind most adverse to conviction, as imperiously as those axioms which no arguments can render clearer. If a religion be not established for the people of a country, for whom is it established? But if another modern political principle be adopted, that a state should not have any religious establishment, then, as we can scarcely deny that religion is a great help to morality, good order, and government, no obstacle at least should be put in the way of that which, professed and obstinately adhered to by the majority of a country, without having any establishment, has answered all the true purposes of religion. If a different persuasion be preferred by the leading people of the state, I believe the wisest way to bring over the multitude to it, would be to leave it to its own merits, supported by the zeal and virtue of its pastors, without any interference of temporal power. The revenue enjoyed by the church is part of the common stock, left to the direction of the state to employ to the best advantage of the community; the Irish legislature is the only competent judge, whether in Ireland it be right or wrong to apply it to the establishment of the Protestant church. The Roman Catholics cannot have, and do not pretend to, any claim upon it; and I admit, with the author of the pamphlet, that if the government, out of its wisdom or generosity, offers a portion of it as a stipend to their

pastors,



pastors, as there exists neither right nor obligation Page 25.  
on either side, conditions may be attached to what  
is freely given. But these pastors remain free to  
follow the dictates of their conscience, and of  
their prudence, in accepting or refusing this pro-  
vision.

It is asserted, that, by the repeal of the test-  
oaths, the Protestant establishment *would become a*  
*public wrong*. As we are arguing upon things, Page 25.  
not words, I cannot conceive how the repeal of  
oaths, if it is not one before, made to exclude  
three-fourths of the people from the legislature,  
can make it one. Among these oaths, I suppose is  
included that of abjuration, which is as violent an  
insult to the religion of our allies, the first nations  
on the continent of Europe, as the abominable  
oath of hatred to royalty, set up as a test in  
France, is to their form of government.

The next is a very old objection, which I ne-  
ver could understand how any well-informed man  
could make twice.

*The most numerous religious sect does not acknow-  
ledge the supremacy of the state, but professes to be  
subject to a foreign jurisdiction—Their religion could Page 23.  
not be established, without destroying the constitution,  
which is founded on the principles of civil and ec-*



*ecclesiastical liberty and the exclusion of foreign interference and jurisdiction.*

This may be an objection to their having a religious establishment, but is no argument against their being admitted to a share in the legislature, where a Protestant King, a Protestant House of Peers, nine-tenths of the Property of the country, which is the basis of representation, are in Protestant hands; and, if necessary, a guarantee by England is a sufficient security against any attempt they might make in that way, though I do not believe that even with an ecclesiastical establishment any foreign jurisdiction could pretend to interfere.

But the supremacy of the State, of the Lords, Commons, and King; their sole right to manage the concerns, establishment, faith, and discipline, of the church of England, with all the authority which their Bishops may possess over the members of that church, was, I believe, never denied by any Catholic in any part of the world. They certainly do not admit the King of England to be the spiritual head of the Roman Catholic church. Nor do the Presbyterians admit him to be the head of theirs. But this was not a reason for excluding the Scotch from a share in the legislature of the country they were united to. Why, then, should it exclude the Irish?

As



As to the foreign jurisdiction, to which it is said the Roman Catholics are subject (which has been the constant answer to all their claims, and is now the only plausible one) it is necessary, before we enter upon it, to explain what a jurisdiction is: this requires some attention, and is deserving of it. It is the plea of men living under the same sovereign, and the same laws, supporting them with their fortunes, and ready to support them with their lives, asking for nothing from their fellow-subjects but an equal share in the benefits, as in the burdens, of the state.

The definition of jurisdiction is, *potestas dicendi jus*; for which I cannot find a better translation than the power of *pronouncing law*, or rather of *pronouncing sentence*; which necessarily implies a tribunal, with the means of enforcing it. Now in no country in the world, Roman Catholic or otherwise, can any tribunal exist, deriving from the Roman Catholic religion, or any sentence be enforced affecting a man in any way whatsoever, in his liberty, life, property, or any part of his civil or natural existence, without the permission of the sovereign of that country. Such is the doctrine of Spain, Portugal, and all the Roman Catholic countries in the world, who all, as well as England, disclaim the interference of a foreign jurisdiction, and punish those who pretend to maintain it in  
oppo-



opposition to the laws of the sovereign. Magna Charta, the foundation of civil liberty, as well as the Statutes of Præmunire which secured ecclesiastical liberty, were acts of Roman Catholic Parliaments.

If an ecclesiastical court, or foreign jurisdiction, exist, it can only be by the consent of the prince; to that consent, and not to the Roman Catholic religion, of which it is no inherent part, are the inconveniences of it to be ascribed. This is the decision of the ablest lawyers and divines all over the world. It is that of *Cujas*, the oracle of the law in Europe in the sixteenth century. His answer to all religious disputes was, *Nil hoc ad edictum pretoris* — They have nothing to do with the law of the land. *Fleury*, the great historian of the church, is of the same opinion; he declares orthodox, and perfectly conformable to the true doctrine, the decision pronounced in the empire, *That the Pope, nor the whole church together, cannot inflict any coercive punishment on any man, whatsoever his crimes may be, unless the Emperor gives him power to do it.*

The spiritual authority which the church possesses has no sanction, no coercive power, in this life; its object does not come under the senses, is not in this world, and can in no way come in contact with civil existence.



I cannot see, in this, any right the Pope can be said to have to *a real and essential jurisdiction* in Ireland. Philosophy enters as much into the common concerns of life as divinity. It would be a strange objection to the system of Aristotle or Copernicus, that it was a foreign interference.

It remains with the legislature of Ireland to give or to withhold a church establishment to the Roman Catholics. But, existing as they do without one, and without pretending to any right to one, I do not see why admitting them into the legislature would be destroying *a constitution founded on the principles of civil and ecclesiastical liberty, and the exclusion of foreign interference and jurisdiction.*

I admit, that to put the Roman Catholics in possession of the church establishment of Ireland, with its wealth, influence, and jurisdiction, to allow their Bishops to sit in Parliament (which no power on earth but King, Lords, and Commons, can do) would be inconvenient and dangerous to all sides. But I never can admit, that there is any thing in the Roman Catholic religion hostile to the principles of civil and ecclesiastical liberty, or to the exclusion of foreign interference.

The



The nomination of a bishop unacknowledged by the state, whether by the Pope, his cardinals, or any body else, without revenue, without a tribunal, without a particle of power, or the means of enforcing any act, cannot be fairly called a dangerous *interference of real and essential jurisdiction*. The Pope and all the Roman Catholic church have not in the Irish state, nor pretend to have, the power of the meanest vestry.

Would it not be just, then, to hear the Roman Catholics of Ireland, by their counsel, at the bar of the Irish and English Parliament, before the subjection of so large a body of men to so severe a sentence is formally confirmed, and before the English Parliament calmly (with no circumstances of palliation) in the eyes of the whole world, make the English nation a partner in such an act? If what I say be true, if they are ready to take every oath of allegiance which their fellow subjects take, they submit to the justice of their legislators and the feeling of the English people, whether it be not hard that so large a portion of the state should be deprived of their rights in a way which could not happen to the meanest trading company or corporation?

May I here, without running into obsolete religious dispute, say a few words upon a part of history



tory which has been much confounded and misunderstood. The power which Popes have been accused of arrogating over the princes of Europe, has been loudly complained of; but that power was entirely foreign to their spiritual authority, and to the Roman Catholic religion, which has been most unjustly involved in all the hatred which their conduct has so naturally created. If a king of England *could do wrong*, it would be as unfair to lay that wrong upon the church of England, because he is the head of it.

In the times of feodality, the duty to the feudal lord was a sacred tie. There was a sort of magnanimity, very congenial to the spirit of chivalry, in paying it with all its circumstances of humiliation, where it might have been refused without danger. It was in those days the triumph of right over force. The Kings of England did homage, on their knees, with all its humbling ceremonies, to the Kings of France, for Guienne, &c. Many states, and England among the rest, with more zeal perhaps than wisdom, acknowledged the feudal suzerainty of the Bishop of Rome. The King of Naples does homage for his crown, by sending a white palfrey to the Pope. But all this has nothing to do with religion, though in times too passionate to discriminate, it drew upon it a great share of obloquy.

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The



The next argument is full of ingenuity, and deserves particular attention, because I have observed that it has had some weight at first sight. We  
 age 26. are told gravely, that, by the Union, *Ireland would be in a natural situation; for all the Protestants of the empire being united, she would have the proportion of \* fourteen to three, in favour of her establishment; whereas, at present, there is a proportion of three to one against it.*

To answer this in its own way. In the first place, admitting that the government is in an *unnatural situation*, because it is in a minority of  
 Page 26. the people, *a fortiori*, must that act, by which it gives away the rights of the majority, be an unnatural one, and in logic invalid—*ab initio*. To sell the estate is a strange way of mending a bad  
 Page 26. title. But even supposing, for argument sake, that, the legislature which commits this act has not (as this writer asserts it has) this natural flaw. Supposing it, for a moment, in *a natural situation, not disagreeing with its theory*. What a principle to admit, that the majority can deprive the minority at once of its political liberty. If so, one majority is all a wicked minister need look for, to be

\* This supposes 17 millions of inhabitants in Great Britain and Ireland, exclusive of Presbyterians and all other Sects, not Catholics, or of the Church of England.



legally and *naturally* for ever master of the country. He may shut the door of the parliament-house at once against a troublesome minority and their constituents. — To vote all the Catholics of Ireland and England a minority, then to deprive, of their political rights, this immense body of men, almost a nation, when the numbers of the Catholics of Ireland are united to the rank and wealth of those of England, is an application of the principle, upon such a scale, as will take in, when necessary, any set of men — West Indians — East Indians — Scotchmen — Welshmen, or one half *less one*, of all England. Is it an idle fear, that what is done may possibly be done again? Is there no danger in sanctioning this principle? Men will not be tricked in this manner out of their feelings, especially Irishmen, whose hearts are said to be more susceptible than their heads. Not one of them will believe you when you tell him, upon the word and honour of an Englishman, that he went to bed in a great majority, but that, without having even dreamed of it, he awoke in a minority of fourteen to three, without having one single word to say against this *natural* privation of his rights for ever.

But are bounds to be set to the omnipotence of parliament? yes, the bounds which the Almighty has set to his own infinite power — Justice.



Page 31. How tortuous is the application of this argument to the Presbyterian. In the same breath he is told *his importance and power is to rise* by joining the dissenting interest of England; while, by the same operation, the Roman Catholic is to lose all his for ever.

*It is difficult, we are told, to comprehend the wisdom of their junction with the Roman Catholics.* It is indeed difficult to comprehend the wisdom of that system which drove Protestant, Presbyterian, and Catholic, into a desperate Union against it.

What a paltry bribe is held out to them in the probable modus for tithes? What an ill-placed indecent insinuation, that their predilection for their church discipline is obsolete! That, though some people *conceive* the contrary, they will rather fall in with the episcopal church of England than with *the excellent discipline* of their brethren of Scotland. That it is nothing but early prejudice and custom which makes them prefer the simple exhortation of their elder, in their humble meeting-house, to the *pride, pomp, and circumstance of worship* in the cathedral of Derry.

To comfort this numerous class of the inhabitants of Ireland, under the hardships they are doomed to bear, (it would be insulting the



the British constitution to say, that it is no hardship to be excluded from it), they are told, that *they would do well to rest satisfied with a much greater degree of toleration than the Protestants have ever enjoyed under a Catholic state.* Page 31.

There is more of passion in this argument than of justice or of generosity, and less of sound reasoning than of either. Admitting the position; what an inference! We must regulate our conduct by the misconduct of others. Proving the assertion to be false, as I shall do, it will appear founded in prejudice, and supported by not the best information. If a prejudice of this sort affected the unhappy objects of it alone, it would only be ungenerous; but, affecting the strength and happiness of the state, to maintain and enforce it by ungrounded insinuation is at least unwise. It is a dangerous assertion, tending to deprive us of the example of other great and wise states in a similar predicament, and to shut our eyes to the good effects of the regulations they have so long ago adopted.

No precedent of religious disqualification can be found to apply fairly to Ireland, a Catholic country, with a Protestant state. In no country that I know of, where the Protestants are even one-third of the inhabitants, are they subjected to  
any



any sort of disqualification. In Catholic countries where they are not one-tenth part of the population they enjoy the same rights and the same share in the government as the Catholics. In Spain, Portugal, and Italy, there is scarcely a perceptible number of Protestant subjects. At the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantz they were a very small proportion of the population of France. If I mention this event, it is with every mark of disapprobation. It is one of the proofs, that no nation can ever indulge its feelings in religious persecution without suffering from its effects. The Protestants in those parts of France where they were in any proportion to the Catholics, were exactly in the same situation as they. Such was the case of Alsatia, ceded to France by the treaty of Munster; the rights of the Protestants in that province were respected. An order of military merit was instituted for such as scrupled to accept that of St. Lewis. Mr. Necker, who was prime minister; Marechal Saxe, many years commander in chief of the armies of France; Marechal Lovendal; Marechal Luckner; General Wurmser, and innumerable other Protestants were high in civil and military rank in France. The chapter of St. Thomas, in the city of Strasbourg, where the Marschal de Saxe is buried, belongs to the Protestants. It is well worth our while to consider in what manner Germany calmed the



the spirit of the religious dissention, that dreadful scourge of nations, which, at intervals during more than a century, and for thirty years together, without interruption, deluged that immense country with the blood of its inhabitants. After that long period of hatred and mutual distrust, of war and devastation, to which the rival pretensions of Catholic and Protestant had given rise, but in which as it never fails to happen, no human passion was without its share, there was an interval of reason. The claims of the two parties were calmly taken into consideration; and the facility with which they were definitively settled by negotiation, proved the folly of their bloody and ineffectual contests. The emoluments of the church (that continual motive of contention) were divided to the satisfaction of both parties. The bounds of civil power were traced out without partiality, where particular circumstances rendered it necessary, but oftener left open indiscriminately to both. Every incitement to religious animosity was carefully removed; and so little of it remained, that some ecclesiastical establishments were possessed alternately by Protestants and Catholics, and the same church serves frequently for their worship. The Catholic Bishopric of Osnabourg is one, and I have never heard that his Royal Highness the Duke of York has any mistrust



mistrust or fear of his Roman Catholic flock. A Catholic power, under the administration of a Cardinal, was most instrumental in procuring these settlements for the Protestants of Germany.

I am almost afraid of being accused of impoliteness, by adducing notorious facts, which may look like too gross and blunt contradictions of the assertions of a gentleman who ought to have such good information upon the subject he treats, as the author of this publication. But one or two facts more I must beg leave to mention.

There exists, in the middle of Europe, a state too considerable to have escaped the notice of a professional statesman, which is the very reverse of Ireland, a Roman Catholic government in a Protestant country; but there, to make the contrast complete, Protestant and Catholic enjoy every privilege, without distinction. The small but adequate revenue of the church, is given to those who do the service of it, in either way. I never heard there of religious jealousy or animosity. The peasantry are, without any exception, the happiest, most comfortable, and most contented, in the world. The higher ranks remarkable for their martial and honourable spirit; their consequence is not in opposition to their consciences;

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their



their minds are not contracted by prejudice, nor demeaned by mutual distrust. The sovereign is the father of all his subjects.

But a stronger and more extraordinary fact remains, to confound the friends and abettors of religious jealousy and animosity. The Protestants of Germany, certainly not indifferent to the interests of their religion, could not find a properer person to entrust them to, than this very Roman Catholic Prince, the Elector of Saxony, who is selected by themselves to be the chief of the Protestant Union, and to watch over the execution of the treaties made in their favour.

So intermingled and united are the two religions in many parts of Germany, that it is hard to say to which they belong. The religion of the Sovereign of the Palatinate, has been sometimes one, sometimes the other, without occasioning the slightest disturbance.

In the capital of the Palatinate of the Rhine, Heidelberg, the Prince's council is composed of the three free religions, Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists. The principal church, which was for some time an object of contention, is now divided between the Lutherans and Catholics, by erecting a slight partition wall across the building.

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The



The Catholics have the choir, the Lutherans the nave. The tithes of the Palatinate are vested in the sovereign, of whatever religion, and farmed or collected by the council. The clergy are paid from the fund, according to the duties they perform, in wood, corn, &c. as well as money.

In 1656, the Catholics and Protestants of Switzerland came to a similar agreement; and the pains which these upright and simple republicans took to restore concord, *pax aeterna et fraterna amicitia*, are very worthy of notice.

Treaty  
entered  
into at  
Basle,  
7th Mar.  
1656.

*\* Ac propterea omnibus acerbis explorationibus forte exprobatibus, convitiis mordacibus religionis negotium cum-primis concernentibus quibus haëtenus odia aborta sunt, omnibus cujuscunque status et conditionis sint severe interdictum sit.†*

\* It is enacted, that all persons, whatever their rank be, abstain, under the severest penalties, from all religious bickerings and invectives.

† The few public monuments that adorn our country, are not erected in the mild, charitable, and politic spirit, of this treaty. Nor is the inscription over the town of Bandon, nor the very elegant one under a bust of King William (near to the College in Dublin) very honourable testimonies of our taste in that sort of literature.



All reasoning upon the Peerage must be suspended, until it be known in what manner it is to be disposed of. I acknowledge, in the mean time, that I am not convinced by the arguments, or rather the assertion, of the Pamphlet, that the Page 33. estates of the spiritual or temporal Peers will be permanently secured by an arrangement which leaves every cause of discontent, to which their insecurity has been constantly ascribed.

The gentlemen of the bar have already expressed their sentiments so ably, that it would be presumption in me to open my lips upon what concerns them.

Those of landed property, whose existence is in the very soil of Ireland, are the persons most deeply interested in this measure: to them, principally, are all my arguments addressed. Twenty years purchase is a good price for the most improveable farms in Ireland, a country with every advantage of soil and situation; while thirty or forty are paid for estates at their full value, in England, and still more in many parts of the Continent. So deep is the curse of internal dissension, that the lands of Flanders (the constant seat of war) are sold generally three times higher than those of Ireland, which naturally ought to be forever exempted from its calamities. The inse-



cure, uncomfortable, possession of estates, at this degraded value, is the price we have so long consented to pay for a miserable superiority over a wretched population, and the barren indulgence of a prejudice, discarded for near two centuries from the civilized parts of Europe.

To this disgraceful, troublesome, unnatural, preeminence, in opposition to every principle, we are now going to sacrifice the independence of our country. But if it be in the nature of the effect to remain as long as the cause exists, we shall find ourselves terribly deceived in our calculations of security and improvement. What influx of property can we expect from England or elsewhere, while we harbour in our country the enemy of all property and of every social establishment.

The metropolis and its adjacent countries must, I think, suffer very considerably. The magnificent ruins, the melancholy remains of past grandeur in those towns on the Continent, which had once their own little independent sovereignties, Mantua, Verona, Bologna, are sad examples of United States. There is a manliness in political wisdom which will consent to great sacrifices for great ends. But that Dublin, perhaps the third city of Europe whose progress in wealth and elegance



gance for the last twenty years, mocks the comparison of Edinburgh since the Union, that Dublin should exist only to be the assylum of wretched fugitives, driven from their country mansions by civil dissention! Why will it not be so? What cause of internal disturbance will this Union remove, which is to exclude three-fourths of the people of Ireland?

Let us be no longer blind to our own interests. We know the cause of our misfortunes. It is religious prejudice. If we are to make a bargain with England, which perhaps it may be wise to do, let it be a fair one. Why should she hold out to us, among her terms, as a *douceur*, a fallacious offer of security for our lives and properties against each other, when, without her help, we can procure it effectually for ourselves. Let us make our bargain as fair men, and not outbid each other in the price we are to pay in common. *If some sacrifices must be made, as it is admitted, of* Page 35. *power, emolument, and importance, it becomes the duty of those who have the generosity to make those sacrifices, to take care that they be not made in vain.*

I have now passed in review the leading arguments which have been brought forward in the pamphlet in favour of an Union: If I have dwelt more



more upon the Roman Catholic question than upon any other, I did it because the exclusion of the Roman Catholics is the only one of the terms of it about which we are not left in doubt, and so far the only one fairly before us. What remains to be noticed will require but a few words, which might perhaps have been better placed in the preceding pages. I have already said, but not so fully as it now strikes me, that Toleration and Exclusion seem to me incompatible. Exclusion is a disgraceful punishment in our government. Men are excluded and declared unworthy to sit in parliament for dishonourable practices, immorality, &c : Lately, when the case of what was termed a libel upon the constitution was before the House of Commons in England, when that mode of punishment was proposed, I have heard that it was reprobated as too severe.

I cannot help here remarking also, another instance of the contradiction and weakness which are ever inseparable from the most subtle arguments when opposed to truth and principle.—In page 30, I am told that an opening may be left for the future admission of Catholics to additional privileges; but I cannot forget that, in page 27 and 28, I am told, *that Protestant property has nothing to fear, because the hope of change being at an end,*  
*disaffection*



*disaffection would sink into acquiescence, and acquiescence into content.*

There is in page 30 also as strange an assertion to an English ear; *that government was likely to be administered with more attention, because it will be less disturbed by party and parliament.*

It does not at all appear, that *the frame of the House of Commons must of necessity be reformed on account of the admission of the Roman Catholics to political equality.* Although many boroughs were created with the *sole view* of outweighing the political power which the property of the Catholics, previous to the rebellion of 1641, might have given them in the state, yet under the repeal of religious disqualification, it is obvious that they might sit in parliament for those very boroughs; or if the person at whose disposal they are chuses to keep them out of them, it will be but an addition security to Protestant preponderance, of which they will have no right to complain; therefore the repeal does not necessarily involve any question of reform.

*The reproduction of confidence, friendship, and so-* Page 50.  
*cial intercourse, by taking away the grounds of political jealousy and contention,—instead of making a fair division of the advantages which were ob-*  
jects



jects of them, is very like the mode in which the lawyer in the fable settled the dispute of the travellers about the oyster.

The improvement of the South and West of Ireland by an Union must remain doubtful, until the commercial regulations are known. I do not see why an Union should be deemed a necessary preliminary to any such arrangements. If they are advantageous to Ireland, without being disadvantageous to England, why not adopt them before an union? If they are disadvantageous to England, why adopt them after one?

I will here venture to say what, I think, would contribute much to make Ireland the most happy and flourishing country in the world:—A total repeal and oblivion, if possible, of all religious distinctions, presupposing the most ample security for the Protestant church establishment and property; and a distribution of some of the inferior places of profit among the middling classes of the Roman Catholics.

A modus for tithes, the easiest possible one for the peasantry. This tax, and the severity with which it is collected, is one of the greatest grievances the people labour under. The support to be afforded by government to the Roman Catholic clergy



clergy (hinted at page 55), may have excellent Page 55 effects, if it does not occasion such an interference of the state as may lessen the confidence of the people in their priests; which is extremely necessary to maintain, unless another religion can be substituted to that which they teach. A decent house and chapel, with a few acres of glebe, would be the properest provision, would improve the face of the country, and tend to civilize it.

A vigilant and strong police, as little arbitrary as possible, conducted by temperate and impartial magistrates, and responsible under-agents, in every barony, or even, if found necessary, in every parish.

A most severe, impartial, and dignified administration of justice to every rank of life. I have been told that it has sometimes happened in Ireland, that very heinous criminals have found means, by what defect in the laws I know not, to escape the punishment due to their crimes. I speak of times precedent to the late disastrous events. Such open evasions of justice cannot take place in England; were it even possible, there, the severity of public opinion would amply supply the inefficacy of law. In Ireland, it were to be wished that opinion were as inexorable in such cases as it is in some others, or at least that

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such



such offenders should not be allowed to go at large, they destroy all confidence, all respect for government, and innure the mind to guilt, by the habit of seeing criminals unnoticed by law. The higher the rank the more dangerous the example. Perhaps too the spirit of volunteering the executive and even the mechanical parts of justice, is a species of zeal better repressed than encouraged in men of rank. There are necessary services which should be paid for very highly in money, in extraordinary cases, but it is most essential to the community, that the rank and character of a gentleman should be held up to the lower ranks in all its lustre, unfulled by any act which, though useful, public opinion has stamped as mean.

A greater degree of dignity, solemnity, and etiquette, in the courts of justice, and better halls to assemble in would tend to civilization.

The complaints of middle men, rack-rents, and poverty, of farmers are not, I think, within the reach of law or public regulation; as capital increases in the country, and more of it comes into the market of land, these inconveniences will insensibly disappear.



They were complained of (if I have been well informed) in the same manner in the reign of Queen Mary in England. Perhaps the sudden extension of commerce by drawing of capital from agriculture may be one cause of them, until its profits are again returned to the soil.

The partiality of Colbert for trade during the reign of Lewis XIV. is said to have injured cultivation. Great profits upon small capitals, as is the case in the infancy of trade, may have such an effect; but small profits upon great capitals, as happens in its maturity, will have a quite contrary one. If the commerce of France had reached the comparative pitch of that of England, no complaint of that kind would have been heard.

The question of parliamentary reform is quite foreign to the object I have had in view; though it has often been found joined with it, it has no necessary connection with that of the political rights of Catholics. I believe nothing but despair of obtaining them in any other way ever connected them in any man's mind. I shall not here presume to say one word about it, I shall only observe that no regulation or form of government will give security to a country, if there be not



upright and vigilant legislators and magistrates to watch over them.

My business as an Irish Roman Catholic has been with the greatest respect for the government of my country, and the sincerest wish for its welfare, to meet the arguments affecting that body of men, which with no small degree of ingenuity have been used by Mr. C. and to shew that in the arrangements he has suggested as terms of union, those which relate to the Roman Catholics of Ireland are unfounded in sound policy.

Though every page of the arguments I have attempted to answer, it must be obvious to the most superficial reader that, the essential vice of Ireland, the cause of all her misfortunes, is not so immediately in the nature of her connections with England as in her unhappy divisions of religion. The most shallow reasoner must be convinced, that a measure which does not remove that cause will not essentially better her situation. The Union, as it is there proposed, not only leaves this vice in its full vigour, but confirms it by the sanction of the British Parliament. Whatever other ends therefore it may answer, it will not give security and peace to Ireland. It has in this view of it nothing beneficial but what may exist without



without it, and has certainly many inconveniences for both countries. If I have proved to the satisfaction of any reasonable mind, that these religious distinctions may be abolished, and the Protestant establishment and preponderance in the state secured, I have obtained every end I proposed to myself. I feel a confidence that the leading men of Ireland will not, for the sake of prejudices which take away all respect for their country in the eyes of the world, and render their lives uncomfortable, their property insecure, which engross their minds and their feelings in mean objects viewed with contempt for more than a century by the rest of Europe, that they will not for the satisfaction of such little passions leave the British Empire exposed to the dangers such an internal source of disunion must create.

A proper discussion of the different objects which naturally present themselves in considering these arguments, would fill many volumes, and embrace the whole system of politics. The question of parliamentary reform, the vast resources which may be drawn from Ireland, her wealth and population, the wants of her poor, the influence of popular opinion, above all, the awful crisis in which the world now stands must have occupied the thoughts of every reflecting mind.

But



But these are subjects dangerous to enter upon, they are like the Arc of God, whose judgement did not spare the profane who touched it, even though his hand was lifted to save it when it tottered.

FINIS.