LETTERS

ON

IRELAND:

To refute Mr. GEORGE BARNES's

STATISTICAL ACCOUNT,

&c. &c.

BY A CITIZEN OF WATERFORD.

WATERFORD:

PRINTED BY WILLIAM SMITH, GEORGE'S-STREET.

1813.

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PREFACE.

IT appears to be a common propensity of every nation, to fancy its Country a paradise, and itself the finest people on earth: it appears too, that among many other nations which have incomparably fewer pretensions, Ireland has been frequently made to set forth her claim to pre-eminence. As long as the assertion of such a claim assumed no deeper character than that of an endless contest for a fruitless title, it was one of those harmless things which some would praise and none would dicourage; but now, that it is become the vehicle of faction; public meetings and convivial assemblies re-echoing with speeches; and the Press teeming with productions of all sorts from the quarto, to the news-paper, all full of declamations, in which the excellencies of Ireland are exalted, and those of England are depressed, in order to shew the dependence of the latter on the former, the mischiefs of the connexion and the expediency of dissolving that tie by which it has pleased the supreme disposer of events to unite the two Islands under one legislature; when the harmless and natural propensity of nations is thus pressed into the service of discord, it is time for sober truth to interpose.

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It being my firm persuasion that Ireland owes its present state of improvement to English connexion, and that the union of the two legislatures was an event the most propitious to her prosperity of any that ever happened, I have, in the midst of mercantile concerns which leave me but little leisure, ventured to appear before my fellow-citizens for the purpose of exposing errors the statement of which becomes dangerous from the association of its avowed object.

If it be asked, why I expose those errors by the attack of a Pamphlet which is perhaps forgotten, I reply that the perusal of this Pamphlet first led me to commit my thoughts to paper. Extracts from it appeared in one of our news-papers; I addressed a letter thereon to the Editor, which he inserted; my letter called forth the animadversions of an opponent, which were also inserted; I wrote a second letter for which the Editor could not find room; and I was thus led to address myself to a friend and fellow-citizen with a view to publication if haply it might be deemed useful. The first letter was therefore written several months ago; others followed but with irregular course, for business and indecision often impeded their progress; but at length, it became necessary, either to abandon the plan altogether, or to publish what was written, as a first part, to be followed by a second if the public voice should be propitious: I have chosen the latter, and my Pamphlet appears.

The design of these letters is obvious: of the execution I have little to say. They profess to be no more than a compilation of facts from the most anthentic sour-

ces of information that I possess, and it will be seen that they are such as are, or may be, in every man's hands; I had no access to scarce documents or public records; for as much of these indeed as served my purpose, I have been indebted to the labours of those whom I oppose: trusting to them often for facts, I have trusted to myself for inferences: and as I wish every other man to do the same, I have not often obtruded inferences on my reader; they are sometimes simply suggested, sometimes tacitly offered in the arrangement of facts; they never, I trust, assume the form of dictation, for nothing is further from my intention. My aim is to correct erroneous statements and to furnish accurate information, on which the judgment of my readers may exercise itself. I have only to add that in the accomplishment of this object, I have not intentionally inserted any thing false or delusive, nor omitted any thing true that seemed to be influential: if I have erred in either of these respects, I shall be sincerely obliged to him who shall candidly correct my errors.

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LETTERS,

&c.

YOU will remember that some extracts from Barnes's statistical Survey of Ireland, which were published with great approbation in the *Waterford Mirror*, excited our curiosity to read the whole work. You procured it; read it; and sent it to me with your marginal notes. I have read it and intend to give you my opinion in a series of letters, which I shall submit to the public, for it is the duty of every friend to the Country, however arduous the task, to counteract the baneful influence of the errors in fact and in judgment with which the work abounds. To do this I must enter into much detail; but first of all, it may be well to take such a view of the Author as he affords of himself in his work; for it appears to me that a mere perusal thereof ought to convince Irishmen that he is ill qualified to inform them and still less to guide their judgments on the political interests of their Country.

Let us look at him then: a first impression of any subject is apt to influence every other, and often (tho' not always) it affords such a view as is fully confirmed by further inspection. Mr. Barnes, writing the panegyric of Ireland, and printing it at the *Hibernia Press*, presents

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himself to the public, with more typographical errors than pages; and some of these are so glaring in the quotations of foreign languages, as to make a School-boy laugh; of which a very appropriate specimen is afforded in the following way of printing a well-known expression: *ec uno disce onnes.*

Now, though Mr. Barnes in his *Advertisement* would lead his readers to expect much precision and a display of political wisdom, yet the air of slovenliness which he has put on, forbad us to expect it, and diminished our surprise on finding the interior so conformable with its garb. Accordingly, we have lamentable and obvious proof of his want of *accuracy*. He says, p. 68, that one Cwt of Merchandize can be carried from Dublin to Clonmel, 85 miles by the Barrow Navigation for Six pence!! whereas it is well known that the freight is in no case less than 1s. 10½d. per Cwt. It is true that he has copied this silly falsehood from Newenham; but it is a falsehood so palpable, that nothing but consummate indolence and indifference to truth, would suffer a man to propagate it without examination.

Again; he says of the Grand Canal, "that its revenue was in 1787—£6984, and twenty Years after that date £47,100." p. 67; now, if he had looked with the slightest attention to his copy-book, he would have found that Newenham p. 202 writes thus "Its revenue has risen in the following manner: 1787 to £6984" and he proceeds each year till 1802 when it was £47,100 and then adds that it rose "to £70,407 in the Year 1807" which is "twenty Years after 1787."

This fact involves consequences, not very agreeable to Mr. Barnes, as I may shew hereafter; but I state it here in order to prove that we can have no dependence on his accuracy in copying: can we then depend on it in searching, comparing, and presenting results?

It is perfectly ridiculous to hear such a man talk, as he does in his Introduction of his "intimate acquaintance with and minute inspection of Statute Books and Journals of Parliament," and of his "own practical Knowledge."!!

We may estimate his pretensions to *logical precision*, by the following examples. A Botanist has found exotic plants growing wild about or near every Monastery in Ireland; *therefore*, Botanical Gardens must have been as numerous as Monasteries: and therefore, society must have arrived at a high state of Civilization when *Botany* could have been so generally studied, and therefore, as Civilization means morality in his opinion, morality and the thing which *he* calls Botany must have been coextensive!! what profound moral philosophers might he not discover among the Dutch and Turkish *florists* by such a train of reasoning!!

Again; he tells us, "the Country which produced Usher, Boyle, Berkely, &c. &c. *must* have been rich in learning long antecedent to the birth of the first of this literary constellation," which amounts to some such syllogism as this;——

Usher, Boyle, &c. were Men of learning;—They were born in Ireland;—
Ergo; Ireland must have been rich in learning long *before* they were born.

By this ingenious syllogism, of which an ancient Sophist might have been proud, Mr. Barnes, may at his leisure,

demonstrate the vast literary wealth of one or all of the Seven Cities which boast of having produced Homer; the extent and antiquity of the Commercial spirit of the Sandwich Islands which produced the enterprising usurper Tamahama who is creating commerce there: and the early civilization and maritime prowess of Russia, because she produced Peter the great, who instilled into her the first rudiments of civilization and almost the first notions of a Ship.

Of his *skill* in *political œconomy* we may judge by his assumption, that "by civilization is understood superior moral conduct." It is true that civilization and morality are very desirable things; but they are not the same thing; nor are they necessarily connected: Rome declined in morals while she advanced in civilization, and therefore there was neither "English cant" nor "the treacherous concessions of degenerate Irishmen," in whatever might have been said of the necessity of civilizing Ireland, even if Mr. Barnes could have substantiated his assertion of the superior morality of Ireland.

On this subject I may enlarge hereafter, and shall now only say, that Englishmen are not the only people who do not think that Ireland has attained the summit of civilization; for the last French traveller in these Islands calls Ireland "*a half savage Country*:" and he visited it so late as the year 1801. see Pictet Voyage en Angleterre, &c. 8 vo. p. 108. By the bye the same Philosopher exhibits a test of civilization, very different from what Mr. Barnes might suspect: he says p. 41 "the invention of Mail Coaches is in my opinion one of those, which indicate civilization, carried to its highest pitch."

Another instance of Mr. Barnes's proficiency in the science of political œconomy, occurs in p. 49. of his Pamphlet, where he talks to us about the mischievous effects of the Union on Irish Manufactures; and pointing out the increase of Imports says, "from that statement it will appear that Ireland *has been injured* by an increased importation amounting to nearly £60,000 *per* annum."

To expose the absurdity of this notion, it may be sufficient to ask, what would Ireland be if exporting much, she imported nothing? which are the most prosperous Countries; those whose exports are paid in money or in imports? in fact, the very converse of his inference is true: Ireland has been benefited by increased importations; because she imports no more than she knows what to do with; and while the increase of her wants proves the increase of her means, the imports augment the means, by employing and enriching the Merchants, Tradesmen, and Journeymen, whose business it is to distribute them thro' the channels of consumption.

We see what sort of *candour* he possesses, by the following quotation from his Introduction, "It is the common vice of the powerful to calumniate the weak, and it has been the baneful practice of *English writers* to depreciate the high and honourable qualities of *my* Country; to restrain its progress and damp its spirit." And again p. 66 "nothing can more clearly demonstrate the ignorance of English writers about Ireland, than the unfounded assertions to be every where met with in their Works relative to that Country;" and again p. 72 "pharisaical pride alone can make the canters in the English Parlia-

ment talk of the necessity of civilizing Ireland." Thus has he spoken of English writers; and yet it is chiefly from them, that he quotes, what he has to say truly in favour of Ireland; and we need go no further than his work to be convinced that we owe to Englishmen, the far greater part of the efforts that have been made to bring the two Islands better acquainted with each other which is all that is wanted to establish a mutual sense of interest. He quotes Davis, Petty, Browne, Young, &c. with the applause which they deserve; but he has not shewn, as I hope I shall, how much Ireland is really indebted to the labours of such Englishmen, as well as to others more ancient and less known, for all that she is and has. His *object* seems to be pretty plainly expressed: he tells us in his first page that it is very important "to shew under appropriate heads, the superior natural advantages of Ireland over England; the greater advantage England derives from Ireland when she is *entirely left to self-government*, than when her independence is politically interfered with, whether by making regulations for her agriculture, &c. &c. in the British Parliament, as was done at different times previous and subsequent to the Revolution, or by annihilating her legislative power as has been lately done by *compelling her to agree to an Union*"—also the increased prosperity of this Kingdom since the Parliament's independence in 1782 and previously to the Union, compared with its situation prior to its independence...likewise a statement of the *decay* of Revenues and Manufactures *since the annihilation of her parliamentary institution.*" Whether he has made out his case, I intend to examine in future letters: it will suffice, at present to remember, that his object is to decry the legislative Union of the two Islands;

but I think I have shewn that whatever may be the merits or demerits of that measure, he has not exhibited accuracy, intelligence and candour enough to qualify him to direct us in the formation of our opinion thereon.

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LETTER II.

HAVING exhibited specimens of Mr. Barnes's disqualifications for the office which he has assumed, I proceed to an examination of his statements, by which you will find, that his assertions are generally as ill-founded as his inferences. But in doing this, I must of necessity seem to combat those more respectable authorities from which his pamphlet is compiled, and as the greater part thereof is taken from one work (Mr. Newenham); that work will often be mentioned in these letters; a very brief review of it therefore may be useful, in order to shew how the original contrasts with the copy, and how I can appreciate the former while I correct its errors which the latter has culled with ingenious perversity, and mangled and mixed up for the public with a heedless absurdity that surprises and disgusts.

This Work of Mr. Newenham's is entitled "*a view of the natural political and commercial circumstances of Ireland*" 4to London 1809.—It is written professedly for the use of the British public, under a persuasion, that there is a general defect of information concerning Ireland, even among "the highest the most intelligent and the most authoritative"; and that this defect is injurious to the "mutual interests of both islands", because it prevents the leading men in the British government from attaching due

importance to the many natural advantages of Ireland. He declares that the true motive of his work is an "*earnest solicitude for the joint interest of Great Britain and Ireland.*" In conformity with this design, the work displays the natural advantages of Ireland for the acquisition of commercial wealth, which are, as you may suppose, situation, harbours, rivers, soil, produce, &c. It then shews the causes which frustrated these natural advantages of Ireland, and they are stated to arise principally from the jealousies of the English people, the restrictions of the English legislature and the slavish compliance of the Irish legislature, framing acts sometimes favourable to Britain and sometimes illusive and inefficacious to Ireland. And lastly it informs us that, tho' these principal causes are removed, there are circumstances which tend to prevent, "a complete fruition of the natural advantages of Ireland," and that chief among these circumstances, are religious enmity and legislative union. In this work the author has collected a mass of historical and statistical information which is very useful but not always very accurate, as I shall shew in refuting Mr. Barnes; nor is it free from that high colouring, which men will give to a favourite object, and that artful distribution of light and shade which will often hide an inconvenient truth if it can; but Mr. Newenham's professed motive is conciliatory, and this may excuse, tho' it must not give currency to, a few aggravating sentiments and a few ex-parte statements, which seem to be the effusions of national partiality.

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Such is the work from which Mr. Barnes has drawn so copiously and so aukwardly that his pamphlet may be considered a Caricature in miniature of Mr. Newenham's quarto; a glaring and distorted botch without the harmonizing tint of conciliation.

Now, it is in conformity with Mr. Newenham's motive and in opposition to that of Mr. Barnes, that I examine the statements of both as presented by the latter, and refute them where they are wrong: and, as I write for the Irish public, I shall occasionally touch on the comparative advantages of England; on the gradual and increasing benefits which Ireland has derived from English connection; and on the true impediments to Ireland's perfect prosperity: in all this, I shall avail myself of Authorities already before the public, especially of such as have advocated the cause of Ireland; for their testimony will hardly be called in question.

Let us then follow Mr. Barnes in his statements; tho' not exactly in the same order as they occur. He says p. 7, "that Ireland is pre-eminently blessed in a favourable situation, her communication being open and direct with England, France, Spain, Africa, East Indies, America, &c. and that its advantage in this respect over England is most apparent, it being possible for Ships departing from a majority of the ports of Ireland to reach the western coasts of France, the coasts of Portugal and Spain, and even North America, before the Ships which sail from the greater part of England can enter the Atlantic Ocean." All this is extracted from Newenham and it is little less than nonsense; for what

comparison can there be between Vessels from Ireland to France and Vessels from England to the Atlantic? let us rather institute a fair comparison and see how the most frequented Ports of both Islands bear on the same points: and, first, it will be readily granted, that all the South and South-East coast of England from Land's End to Yarmouth has readier access than any Port in Ireland has, to the Baltic, to Holland, and to the North West of France. Secondly, the same line of Coast has a readier access to the South-West of France, to Spain, Portugal, the Mediterranean, Africa and the East Indies, than any part of Ireland except the line of coast that lies between Limerick and Waterford by the South: the harbours of the County of Cork are superiorly situated to most of the said line of coasts in England in this respect; but Plymouth and Falmouth are equal to them if not superior. Thirdly, the West and South coasts of Ireland have over all England the advantage of approximation to America and the West Indies, but no other; for the same wind that would prevent Vessels sailing down the English and Bristol channels would equally prevent Vessels from leaving the Ports of Limerick, Cork and Waterford. In this respect the mere situation of Dublin and Belfast is not superior to that of Liverpool and Glasgow. Fourthly, in respect to the distant parts of the World, England and Ireland together form a spot too inconsiderable to be divided in an estimate of situation.

Thus it appears that there is no great pre-eminence in the situation of either Island, and I shall dismiss the subject with observing, that all that has been said about the superior situation of Ireland, seems to have arisen from a

geographical error of Tacitus who says that Ireland is "*medio inter Britanniam atque Hispaniam sita*," he has been literally copied by succeeding writers down to a late period and the inference of this error has been implicitly incorporated into the system of mens' opinions; but it is dissipated by a single attentive glance of common sense. But even if it were proved that the situation of Ireland is eminently superior, the point is not worth contending: for Mr. Newenham has very properly admitted that "locality is of secondary importance compared with the various other requisites, for the speedy safe and general prosecution of Commerce." Among these requisites, he reckons Harbours, and asserts that there is no Country in the World of the same or even greater extent that can pretend to vie with Ireland in regard to Harbours: in this Mr. Barnes follows him and expatiates on the inferiority of England. Let us here however mark the different manner in which they handle this subject in order to convince ourselves that while we may read the one to some purpose the other is calculated only to mislead.

Newenham reckons 70 harbours in Ireland besides almost as many places of anchorage, and he says that Ireland being 887¼ miles in circumference the harbours are less than 13 miles distant from each other, *except*, in two places; 1st. from Scattery to Casleh-bay which is 68 miles; 2nd. from Wexford to Wicklow about 46 miles. From whence it is plain that one-eighth of the Irish Coast has no harbour at all, and as Mr. N— has enumerated his 70 harbours, I shall be able to shew how very unequally they are distributed through the other seven-eighths of the

Coast. Instead of this detail, Mr. Barnes contents himself with slurring over the whole account in a general average and says " on an average one with another the harbours and road-steads are not more than 6¼ miles from each other." How does such an average affect the question? what solid information can any one derive from such statements?

If we analize Mr. N—'s statement we shall find that his 70 harbours are distributed in the following proportion

Donegal	9	Cork	14	Down	3
Sligo	2	Waterford	3	Antrim	3
Mayo	6	Wexford	2	Derry	2
Galway	9	Wicklow	1		
Limerick	1	Dublin	4		8
Kerry	9	Louth	2		26
					36
	36		26		
					70

so that, the line of Coast from the County of Donegal to that of Kerry, which is the western Coast and embraces about 2-5ths of the Country, contains more than half the harbours besides a line of 68 miles without harbours. The County of Cork alone contains 14 harbours, and the rest of the Coast has but 20 and a line of 46 miles without any. Analyze more closely and we find that the Counties of Kerry and Cork which are contiguous and form the South and South-west of the Island have 1-3d of all its harbours; that the whole Coast of the Counties of Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow have Six harbours such as they are, and I leave you to judge of them when I tell you Tramore, Fethard and Dungarvan are three of the Six;

and that the two maritime Counties of Clare and Limerick have but one of these 70 harbours between them, though indeed his Map enumerates more. Does it not instantaneously occur to every one, that some Counties have more harbours than they know what to do with, and that others have so few as to leave them nothing to boast on that score?

Mr. Newenham has enlarged on the excellency of these harbours, and has described some of them, not concealing their faults; but Mr. Barnes has copied such parts of these descriptions as do not mention a fault!! and concludes with telling us that "perhaps with the single exception of Milford-haven there is not a harbour in England that can in almost any respect be compared with the best ten in Ireland." Adding that this same Milford-haven "is ill situated for foreign trade and practically useless, while the large harbours of Ireland are all in the best possible situations for carrying on trade with the whole World"!!! I would ask, how does it happen that a little colony of intelligent and independent men have chosen Milford-haven to establish themselves in the South-Sea fishery, by whose successful exertions the said haven possesses more of that trade than all Ireland? why is the said haven the general refuge of all Vessels that find themselves in or near the Irish Channel on the approach of stormy weather so that one sometimes sees some hundreds of Vessels lying safe at anchor there? I would ask this gentleman to look at a chart and tell in what respect the Irish harbours even Cork itself are superior for foreign trade to this "practically useless" haven? we know how practically useful it is to us and I

think it more than probable that for the combined excellencies of situation, size, safety and easy access, there is not a harbour in all Ireland superior, if equal, to that of Milford. Mr. Barnes brags in general terms of the vast superiority of the Irish harbours, but he does not tell us which he calls the "best ten." This defect is partly supplied by his original who would lead us to suppose that Loughswilly, Bantry bay, Cork and Shannon harbours are the finest in the World: on which it will suffice to remark that Bantry is directly open to what Mr. N— himself calls the Stormy South-West wind; that the intricacies of Shannon harbour render it perhaps the most unfavourable in Ireland, so that Vessels are often detained whole Months for want of suitable winds, and I have a friend who lost two Vessels in one week in this river; and that Cork harbour itself is not without rocks and shoals.

Mr. Barnes has copied from Newenham, that from the Saltees to Ballard point, 257 miles, the Coast is for the greater part so safe, that it may *generally* be approached without a Pilot; he forgets to add, what N— does, that the dangerous bay of Tramore should be excepted, which bay by the bye Mr. N— dignifies with a place among his 70 harbours. Harbour for what? no Vessels enter it but to be wrecked.

Mr. Barnes dwelling all along on the inferiority of England both as to coasts and harbours, has not stated a fault in those of Ireland: let me supply this trifling omission from his original and from other sources.

Mr. N— says that Birtirbrie harbour has several dangerous rocks in its way ; that the entrance to Strangford lough is dangerous ; and to Lough-Foyle narrow, and to Carlingford intricate : that Ventry harbour has a foul bottom, that from Dublin bay to the Saltees there are many Sand-banks and some rocks ; that from Ballard's point to Hag's-head there is a dangerous bay called Mull bay ; and from Goulin-head County of Galway to Buinaha-point County of Mayo there is a considerable number of rocks which render the Navigation in that space extemely hazardous in bad weather. Lord Sheffield says of the coasts of Sligo and Donegal " the North-West wind which *prevails* on this coast is terrible and produces a great sea that is no small interruption to the fishery. This part of the coast is very bold, the Creeks and harbours not so frequent as elsewhere, nor always to be approached. *It is difficult for the Vessels to run to shelter* when they can no longer keep the Sea. A huge swell dashes against the roots of the mountains which form this coast."—Observations on Ireland p. 117.

We may add that Wexford harbour is choked with shifting Sand-banks, and fit only for small Vessels; that our own harbour of Waterford is not without danger to strangers, and that the King's Channel not two miles from our port is so unsafe that a year never passes without a wreck.

This could be remedied at a moderate expence ; but nothing has ever been done : and tho' I find that the Irish parliament did formerly grant £1500 towards deepening the North Channel, yet the aid was so small ; the

work so ineffectual that that Channel has been for many years as impassable as it is now, and both together present, and have for years presented, difficulties and dangers in Navigation, which completely invalidate the sophistical inference drawn by Mr. Newenham in favour of the natural fitness of Irish harbours, from the little money expended on them by the Irish legislature. We endeavoured to excite the attention of the Irish government to this subject, when our worthy representative was in office, and he assisted with all his influence, but nothing was done; we have again renewed our attempts, and I trust we shall succeed; but whether we do or not, I rejoice that we have made the exertion, for it is one which confers lasting honour on our Chamber of Commerce.

The harbour of Fethard admits its few fishing boats and once protected them with a pier. The harbour of Dungarvan has 1 to 3 fathom water, and a narrow Channel of ½ to 1 fathom winding through shoals, admits small Vessels to the town. Even in the harbour of Cork, Vessels drawing *no more* than 10 or 11 feet water can reach the *town only* in spring tides. I am informed that the bay of Galway is not free from sunken rocks, and the harbour of Dublin is neither capacious, nor deep, nor secure. These instances, familiarly occurring to us, will suffice to qualify those overweening opinions, which these Gentlemen express of the Irish harbours. We see that we are not so superlatively furnished with these requisites as to authorise us to despise our neighbours, and a better acquaintance with the English harbours, will induce us to acquit the English of arrogance, if they are not found to envy our alledged superiority in this respect.

It will be enough barely to mention Milford-haven of which I have already spoken: Falmouth, safe, capacious, and open to the World: Plymouth, three harbours in one, capable of containing 2000 sail of every size: Torbay, which can shelter the whole Navy of England against "the Stormy South-West wind:" Portsmouth, *one* of the fine harbours of the World; with water for the largest Vessels, with room for more than the whole Navy, perfectly land-locked yet free of access, and having land-locked communications with two other ports: the line of ports along the coast of Sussex; they are small, but they admit Merchant Ships as Ireland can tell to her profit: the Downs, a safe roadstead of constant use: the river Thames, which in spite of contrary assertions I pronounce to be the first River in the British Islands, with ports of which I need name only London, Chatham, and Gravesend, with a tide reaching 70 miles and an inland Navigation of 160 miles: the bay of Harwich and Ipswich, directly open to the German ocean and the North: the Wash similarly situated, and though full of Shoals, yet possessing two Channels deep and safe, the one leading to Boston, the other to Lynn: Lynn enjoys considerable foreign trade, and communicates with Eight Counties by Navigable Channels natural and artificial: the Tyne a safe and commodious haven when the bar is passed, with three ports in the space of 10 miles, to the inmost of which, Newcastle, Vessels of 400 Tons can go with safety. There are dangers in the entrances to Liverpool and Chester; but where is the port in Ireland that can compare with Liverpool, improved as it has been, so that a thousand Vessels of the largest size can ride secure from every

wind, and lay their broadsides to the Quays? Chester receives Vessels of 400 Tons, and a Ship of the line has been built at Bristol. This slight sketch proves that the superiority of Ireland in respect to harbours is dubious, and leaving the question to be decided by those who are more involved in nationality than I am, I shall add some few suggestions, which will allay the triumph of superiority especially if it should be adjudged to Ireland. 1st. that the harbours which are open to friends are not always impervious to foes, and therefore the alledged frequency and capacity of harbours, are among the vulnerable points of Ireland, which would keep her people in continual alarm, if she were not protected by a Navy which controls the World. 2d. that England has ports and harbonrs enough for the most extended Commerce that ever existed, and therefore Ireland must have more than enough, for as much Commerce as could possibly do her good. 3d. the example of England shews, that it is easy to have Commerce on the largest scale with an alledged inferiority of harbours, and the example of Holland shews, that a like scale of Commerce can exist and thrive without a single good harbour: therefore *the number and quality of harbours, is like locality, a very secondary consideration*, and this is a lesson which Messrs. Newenham and Barnes might have learnt, from Ireland itself; for her greatest trading Towns are not always, nor often, on her best harbours.

Mr. Barnes writes of the rivers of Ireland: they are very fine; but an Irish historian (Gordon) says "on account of the rocky Channels in which they flow, few of

them are navigable without interruption through any length of course," and in fact there are but three which admit Vessels of burthen for more than a few miles. The capability of Irish rivers as displayed by Mr. Newenham, I do not intend to dispute; but the rivers of England exhibit similar advantages in a greater degree; the Thames and the Trent approach so near to the Severn, that a junction of the three was easy; it has been effected, and renders the Country navigable throughout in two directions. I could add facts to shew that England can sustain a comparison with Ireland in this respect: but it is not worth my while, and I should not have touched on the subject, if it had not been so often and so needlessly forced on me: there is however, a subject connected with rivers which demands an ampler investigation for a different reason.

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LETTER III.

MR. BARNES triumphs in the hope that he has "indisputably proved the right Ireland has to claim precedence over England in that grand improvement of modern times in these Islands, Inland Navigation." And he has taken occasion to rail at the ignorance of English writers in general, because Mr. Pinkerton, the compiler of Geography, "did not examine the public records of Ireland, as he ought to have done, when he undertook to give an account of her public works." It appears to be true that Mr. P. did not enter very profoundly into the subject of inland Navigation; but one would hardly expect *him* to do it, or indeed to be more than brief and superficial on any of the branches which compose a general treatise on Geography; he might however have displayed more research and accuracy than he has done on this subject, and therefore he has fairly incurred censure. But if he deserves *any* blame, the man who has fallen into the same error, without the same excuse, is much more blameable; and the censure must surely fall with redoubled force on one who so virulently bestows it. You have a right to be surprized when you learn that Mr. Barnes's claim for the precedence of Ireland is unfounded, and that he is indebted for all that he has written of the comparative Navigation of the two Islands, to the very Pinkerton whose authority he has invalidated.

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Barnes has depended on Pinkerton; and Pinkerton on Phillips, whose work called "a general history of inland Navigation," is avowedly vague on all that precedes the labors of the Duke of Bridgewater. Indeed it agrees so little with my apprehension of its title, that there is room to suspect that Mr. B— also may not attach the same meaning to the term *inland Navigation*, as I do, especially as he has increased the obscurity of his meaning by annexing to it the title of "*the grand modern improvement*:" It may be very modern to him, if he knows no more of it than he has written; but a slender acquaintance with the subject would have shewn him, that inland Navigation is a very ancient human invention, tho' it has been, and still is, susceptible of *improvement*. This uncertainty of Mr. B—'s meaning compels me to enlarge more than would otherwise be necessary, in order to meet and refute him in every shape in which he could reasonably present his meaning.

If he means, the mere construction of a Canal, any School-boy could remind him of the new River begun 1608, and finished 1613, which is said to run a course of 60 miles, and to be in some places 30 feet deep; terminating at London and supplying great part of that City with water.

If he means water-carriage thro' the Channels which nature has formed and the art of man has improved, I refer him to the "public records" of England which by his own rule it is shameful for him to have neglected, and in which he will find several Acts of Parliament from Henry

VIII. to Queen Anne both included, under the sanction of which, Rivers were widened, deepened, embanked, cleansed &c. &c.

If he would drive me to the strictest tenor of the term, and require proof of an artificial canal, constructed for the express purpose of water-carriage, I refer him to a Book, which a Barrister who writes on politics, ought to have read, and in which he will find these words, "Lincoln was a rich and populous City, and though at a distance from the Sea, was not destitute of foreign Trade which was carried on by the *Navigable Canal* between the Rivers Trent and Witham, made A. D. 1121 by order of Henry 1st." Henry's History of Great Britain, Book III, Chap. 6. I can tell him that this same Canal with "*modern improvements*" is still in use, and for further particulars, ascertaining its existence, its purpose and its state, I can refer him to Leland's Itinerary, and Dugdale's History of Embanking.

From the latter of these two works, I will furnish him another instance of a navigable Canal, made by Moreton, bishop of Ely, in the reign of Henry VII. from Peterborough to Wisbeach, which Dugdale, who wrote about 150 years ago, calls "a work of great consequence, not only for the quicker evacuation of the overflowing of Neve, but for the *conveniency of carriage from Peterborough to Wisbeach.*"

Thus I have dissipated Mr. Barnes's dream of precedence, and have established England's claim to the merit thereof; but it is a merit (if any) of too subordinate a class

for exultation, and I should not have condescended to notice Mr. Barnes's vain and groundless boast, if it did not afford so clear a proof of his incompetency to inform the judgment of his countrymen. As, however, he has introduced the subject, I feel myself entitled to make it subserve a very good purpose, which has escaped his notice; for, I think I can shew cause for an opinion that the Irish act, 2d. Geo. I. cap. 12, had a precedent in the English statutes, which if established, adds one to the many proofs that English connection has been, directly and indirectly, the means of raising Ireland to its present state of improvement.

In the year 1601 an act passed in England (43d. Eliz. cap. 11.) which Gough the antiquary has aptly stiled, an act for recovering all the drowned lands in England. In the beginning of 1605, commissioners were appointed to carry this act into effect, on a vast extent of marsh called the Great Level, which lies in Cambridgeshire, and the adjacent counties. In the spring of that year one Mr. Hunt, who is called "the artist for the draining," presented to these commissioners, plans and surveys, which expressly included more than one navigable canal; and in the summer following the works were begun.

It is not necessary here to trace the history of these works, their progress, their impediments, and their decay, through a period pregnant with internal commotions, which were more than sufficient to check all improvement; it will suffice to say, that in the year 1649 they were resumed under sanction of the legislature, and completed in the

year 1653, comprising more than one navigable Canal, in one of which it is distinctly stated, that there were two great locks "for the passage of Boats and other great Vessels." See, for ample detail, Dugdale's History of Embanking.

But it is not only in this work, that the English nation displayed attention to the improvement of inland Navigation: so early as the days of Elizabeth, designs were formed to complete an inland Navigation from London to Bristol through Oxford, and this design was revived in the protectorate of Cromwell, and in the reign of Charles II, to whom one Mathews dedicated a Book on the subject, published in 1670 In the year 1641, a Book was published with this title, "a discourse concerning the great benefit of Draining and Embanking and of transportation by water within the County of Lincoln presented to Parliament by J. L. 4to." In the reign of Charles II, a plan was proposed for the junction of the Forth and Clyde, and early in the 18th Century, Dr. Congreve published a plan to unite the Severn and Trent, which he had been digesting for many years.

Thus we see that through the 17th Century inland Navigation occupied the attention of England: and though the draining Act of 43 Eliz. did not express, yet its "practical operation" did immediately include water-carriage; and I am therefore warranted to say, that if those old Canals which I have already mentioned, had not existed, or if the English legislature had never attended to the improvement of navigable Rivers, still England

was in "legislative" and actual possession of "the grand *modern* improvement," more than 60 years before the existence of that Act of the Irish Parliament by which Mr. B— says quaintly enough, Ireland "legislatively possessed this advantage." Let us now consider this said Irish Act, (2d. Geo. 1. chap 12.) it has, as Mr. Newenham rightly observes, a two-fold object; internal Navigation and the draining of bogs and waste land; of which the latter was evidently the most important, in the eyes of those who framed the Act, as may be seen in its preamble; and justly so; because as Newenham observes elsewhere, undertakings to facilitate water-carriage, ought not to precede, but follow the increase of Agriculture and Commerce. This, then may be considered the first general draining Act of Ireland and it had a precedent of more than 100 years standing in England: now, though I have not access to sources of information concerning the history of this Act, so as to shew by whom it was suggested, by whom supported, and on whose surveys it was formed; yet, let it be for a moment granted, that it owes its origin to no interference of Englishmen either public or private, and that it was the production of Irishmen only, can the wildest prejudice be so blind to its own cause, as to suppose that those men were totally ignorant of the Act 43 Eliz. and its "practical operations" and of all that had transpired on the subject throughout the preceding Century in the Sister Island? would even Mr. B— dive so deeply into the gulph of absurdity, as to assert the absolute originality of the Irish Act of Parliament, at the expence of one of the most essential qualities of the legislators? would he still say that though

England "legislatively" and actually possessed the advantage of inland Navigation, for many years before Ireland, yet Ireland would have reason to boast of the merit of originality, coupled as it must be, with the profoundest ignorance of her leading men? It is impossible—and therefore, whether this Act be the offspring of English or Irish Statesmen, I have sufficient respect for the character of Statesmen to believe, that *they knew of the English precedent and its operation, when they framed it:* between the precedent and the copy there are however two points of difference; one is that the former omits, and the latter specifies, inland Navigation; the other is that the former produced navigable Canals; and the latter produced *nothing*.

I say the Irish Act 2 Geo I. cap. 12. produced nothing: and Mr. B— betrays haste or ignorance, when he says, that it had any "practical operation" at all; for if he had consulted his copy-book more carefully, he would have found, that after mentioning the failure of the undertaking which began under sanction of the said Act, Mr. Newenham says p. 147, "Its inefficacy, which certainly must have been foreseen by the framers, was announced in an Act passed 3 Geo. II. chap. 3, 1730, purporting to be for the encouragement of Tillage, and also for the more effectual putting the Act just noticed into execution: this last Act proceeds with observing, that private persons were discouraged from engaging in the undertakings in contemplation, on account of the great expence necessarily attendant thereon; that the *encouragement of tillage and employing the poor* of the Kingdom, would

be of great benefit to the same, and that it is reasonable and fit that works of such public benefit and advantage, should be carried on at the charge of the nation, by some public fund appointed and set apart for that purpose."

This 2d. Act did appoint a public fund, and I apprehend Mr. B— will find that it preceded the beginning of the Newry Canal:——the public fund yielded little; that little was frittered away in various ways, and the 2d Act left the business of inland Navigation, says Mr. N. nearly in the same condition: so much for the "practical operations" of these Acts. Let me take a rapid sketch of some of the earliest and greatest labors of Ireland in Canals. Newry Canal was begun, as Mr. B—says, in 1730; it was not finished, as Mr. Arthur Young says, in 1777: 47 years had elapsed, without completing a line which cannot exceed 30 Miles; though its professed object be one of first-rate importance, and one which (if we yielded our judgments to the affrighted imagination of Mr. B—) ought to have kept us burning with impatience for its instant completion; since it would rescue the City of Dublin "from the savage barbarity and baronial pride" of an English Nobleman, whom he has nick-named Nero with singular accuracy of allusion; for Nero burnt Rome, and the English Nobleman is said by Mr. B— to have threatened that Dublin should have nothing to burn!!

The Grand Canal employed, as Mr. B— states, 44 years and £1,281,191!! this is three miles to a year and nearly £10,500 to a mile. Justly did Mr. Newenham ex-

claim on this occasion " infinitely more than it ought to have cost, much of that sum having been most injudiciously applied and *jobbingly squandered*"!

Of the Royal Canal, let me only say, that it would have been well for Ireland's character and the peace of many of her children if it had never existed. It is on occasion of this work that Mr. N. says " private interest has always been preferred to public good in Ireland."

Would it not seem invidious to contrast with these works, the similar undertakings in England? to shew how much intelligence in the designs, how much energy and integrity in the execution, how speedy and how cheap the work, and how infinitely more cheap and accommodating to the public are the rates of conveyanee? to enter into all this, would transgress the limits of this work, but it would not be invidious; for however Irishmen may differ among themselves as to the value of English connexion, all, except idiots, would agree, that it can never derogate from her dignity to know, acknowledge and profit by any superiority of the sister Island.

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LETTER IV.

MR. BARNES quotes Giraldus at second-hand, to prove the mildness of the Irish climate, and in confirmation thereof, adduces the fact, that there is not a Country in Europe north of the Alps, where places for the accommodation of Cattle are so rare, and none where Beef "the produce of unhoused fat Cattle" is to be fonnd so good; and if the Irish wheat is inferior to English, he ascribes this not to climate, but to inattention, slovenliness, and want of skill in the farmers, and to a blunder of the Irish legislature!! p. 27:—all this, he has taken from Newenham; to it he has tacked an episode of his own about an unsuccessful attempt to introduce Russia mess beef into the Navy, which he says the English Minister made "in the honeymoon of the Union, with a malignant disposition towards those respectable Merchants of Cork who petitioned against the Union." From whence he triumphantly infers that "Ireland has the victualling of the Navy *in contempt* of the opinion and wishes of the Minister of England"!! I shall dismiss this silly calumny with a very plain remark. Whatever may be the practice, it is unquestionably the duty, of an English Minister and all under him to see that the funds entrusted to him are œconomically applied, and to go to Russia for the victualling of the Navy, if Russia can supply him on better

terms than any other country. If the English Minister did try Russia for Beef, it was after one of those seasons when the Irish Grazier, or Merchant, or both, grasped at profits so palpably over great as to render it necessary. And perhaps we may ascribe to this and another fact that I shall presently reveal, that the Beef market has been reasonable ever since: here is a fair motive; more probable and more candid than that malignant one which could only be devised by a malignant spirit; and for which, the spirit that devised it deserves contempt, as much as the English Minister would, if it could be proved that he felt it. And whereas Mr. Barnes triumphs in the notion that Ireland does victual the Navy, in contempt of the wishes of the English government, I would advise him to take a ride to Deptford, the next time that he visits England, and there he may find Beef and Pork made up in large quantities for the Navy, and of a quality which will bear comparison with the best in Ireland: I would advise him to peruse with a little more care the "public documents" of Ireland, and there he will see, that while the British Navy and the English Shipping in general have greatly increased within the last thirty years, the export of Irish Beef has greatly decreased. As he says on this occasion of the spirit of the English Ministers "*ec uno disce onnes*," so say I, of his accuracy, candour, and veracity.

Let us now return to the climate. Mr. Barnes exults in the paucity of Cattle-houses through the Kingdom; but this proves the mildness of Irish climate, just as much as the abundance of Cattle-houses among the ancients

would prove the coldness of Italy and Spain. It proves a more important and less gratifying fact; it proves the ignorance of Irish farmers; an ignorance however, *not* peculiarly theirs; for there are many farmers in England and Wales who never dream of housing their Cattle; but, if the practice of the most enlightened agriculturists of both Islands is worth following, Cattle-houses will become more frequent, and then it will be discovered, that a fat Bullock and a milch Cow are not insensible of the comforts of a weather-proof shed, in an Irish winter; that they will thrive better with the option of shelter, and amply repay the interest of the capital expended in procuring it.

Mr. Barnes talks of the arbutus and myrtle as growing vigorously in the South, and of myrtle flourishing North of Dublin; and yet Mr. Tighe the able Surveyor of the County of Kilkenny, represents myrtle flourishing as an uncommon thing in that County, though he says its climate is comparatively favorable, and tells us that grapes scarcely ripen in the open air there! How constantly do they ripen in the open air in England!!

Mr. Barnes made a discovery of some "snow lying in a ditch on the road side so far South-west in England as Bath the 2d. May 1809." We are doubtless, indebted for the accuracy with which this discovery is stated, to the impressions of surprize which such a phenomenon must have excited; but this impression would have vanished if he had extended his travels to the Counties of Kilkenny and Waterford, where we could have shewn him snow by the acre so late as June in that same year.

All that he has urged is sheer and shallow declamation, from which we turn with disgust to matter of fact.

Gordon says in his History of Ireland, " nothing can be more uncertain than the weather, or irregular than the seasons——the quantity of rain which falls is greater in proportion than in the southern parts of Britain——as the air is more moist, so is the temperature more mild than in south Britain both in respect to cold and heat——yet though the winter is in general surprisingly mild and more tepid, the cold moderate as it is continues commonly seven or eight months——the seasons are later here than in south Britain; the Spring and Autumn more tardy, as also the winter——The humid and rainy atmosphere of Ireland is well adapted to its rocky soil which is naturally far more fertile than that of Britain——but its fertility is much more conspicuous *in the grass* than in the *corn;* the excessive moisture so beneficial to the former being pernicious to the latter. Thus the wheat is inferior in weight and colour to that of dryer Countries." This is a fair account; confirmed by A. Young and by the experience of every intelligent observer. In short the winters are milder, the springs are later, the summers are cooler, the autumns are longer, and the whole year's atmosphere is moister than in England. This is the fact, and every advantage or disadvantage which flows from it, is applicable to Ireland: accordingly, the meadows and the pastures are more abundant; but the corn never has been on an average so good as in England: but, while all hands agree as to the inferiority of

our corn, these gentlemen will differ from me as to its cause; now that the cause is partly in the climate, will appear from two facts. 1st. the wheat of the south of Europe and North of Africa is better than that of England though the agriculture is not so good. 2nd. the harvest weather was unusually good in Ireland last year, and not so good in England; and we have reason to know, that there never was till then so little difference in the quality and prices of the wheat and flour of the two Countries. It will not avail to urge in reply to these facts that 2 or 3 samples of Irish wheat have been found equal to any English: samples of a few crops cultivated with uncommon care, and under favourable circumstances prove nothing as to the general quality of a Country's produce; but they prove what it is essential to remember, that care and skill can in this as in many other cases help to counteract the disadvantages of climate. Mark here, the very different inferences which true patriotism and vain-glorious nationality can draw from the same fact; the one extracts a warning and encouragement for future improvement; the other extorts an unfounded assertion for present and momentary self-gratulation.

That the climate of Ireland is not unhealthy is true: that it is more healthy than that of England may be asserted but has not been proved. It is certain that the greater moisture of the atmosphere is injurious to some constitutions, and it is also certain that Baron Haller, an evidence equally impartial and authoritative, asserts, that "England seems to exceed all other nations in the number of those who live to an advanced age."

The little which Mr. Barnes says of the soil of Ireland, he has taken without acknowledgement from Arthur Young through Mr. Newenham; but he could not do even this, without converting sense into nonsense, for whereas his original says, "if I were to name the characteristics of an excellent soil, I shall say that, on which you may fat an ox and feed off a crop of turnips." Mr. B— tells us the character of an excellent soil is "that upon which you may *fatten on and feed off* a crop of turnips" whether indeed this nonsense be his or his printer's, I must leave them to settle, and proceed to remark, that I never doubted the superiority of the Irish soil, till an English farmer, who paid me a visit, called it in question, and alledged the superior product of his own Country in support of his doubts. I see that the inferiority of Irish product is admitted by Mr. Newenham after Young; though he ascribes it, not to the soil, but to the poverty, neglect, and ignorance of the Irish farmers: thus these gentlemen exculpate soil and climate by a severe reproach of the inhabitants: but I would ask Mr. Barnes if he is not thus shewing himself to be a very unwise champion of the cause which he has undertaken to blazon forth; for as agriculture is one of the surest tests to distinguish civilized from savage life, it may be reasonably concluded that progress in agriculture is in some degree indicative of progress in civilization; but if this last be applied to the two Islands, what becomes of Mr. Barnes's consistency in asserting the superior civilization of Ireland? for my part, I would rather ascribe something to soil and climate though I am ready to acknowledge that the farmers are more to be blamed than either. It may not be amiss to state

here the comparative products of England and Ireland, for if any one will still persist in fancying that the climate and soil of the latter are superior, they are peculiarly bound to enquire why is the product so inferior : and if others possessed of common sense will admit that though the climate and soil may have some share the farmers must have the greatest share of blame ; they also ought to do all in their power to encourage the investigation of natural deficiencies and their remedies, if any, as well as to assist in dissipating inveterate prejudices or any other obstacle that may be now impeding the spread of improvement among our farmers. Mr. Dutton says that the usual product per acre, was formerly estimated to be six barrels of Wheat, ten barrels of Oats and nine barrels of Barley : (observations on the statistical survey of the County of Dublin p. 26.) Mr. Tighe reckons the product of the County of Kilkenny to be the same in Wheat and Oats, and 10 barrels in Barley ; but Mr. Dutton adds that he is convinced from the late improvements in agriculture, that the average product of Ireland (so I understand him) should be rated eight Barrels of Wheat, twelve Barrels of Barley, fourteen Barrels of Oats ; that is to say 2240lbs. Wheat, 2688lbs. Barley and 2744lbs. Oats *per* Irish acre. This rate is higher than that of Mr. Young and also higher by 20 *per* Cent than we are accustomed to rate the County of Kilkenny, which is by no means a district unpropitious to the growth of corn ; but let it pass as the average of Ireland, and I heartily wish there were more ; we shall see by the Irish authority itself how superior is the product of England : the same Mr. Dutton quotes many works of Arthur Young to prove that

English product amounts to the rate of 20 Barrels of Wheat, 27 2-3d. Barrels of Barley, 29 2-3d. Barrels of Oats *per* Irish acre, which is more than double the average of Ireland: that these rates are the actual average of all England, my author does not warrant me to assert; but there is oral and written information on this subject, sufficiently known and ascertained, to enable me to assert, that the said average is considerably higher than Mr. Young stated it to be in his Irish tour, and therefore much higher than that of Ireland in its improved state. This being the fact, it behoves all those who interest themselves in the character and welfare of Ireland, to enquire how it happens; what are the real defects at home and what are the remedies of those defects. This is a subject that deserves the incessant attention of every well-wisher to Ireland; and I hope I shall be able to advert to it frequently in the course of these Letters: in the mean time let us return to Mr. Barnes.

He has given us a "Rhapsody" as absurd as it is blasphemous about the "plants" of the "holy Island" which he calls the "best witness of the will of God because most pure." On all this I have already commented, and shall again in an appropriate place; let me here remind him of a few "plants" the produce of the soil and climate of England which are very convenient to Ireland. I find in Mr. Newenham, p. 50, that there is actually more timber cut down in Montgomeryshire than in all Ireland. What would Ireland do without English bark to tan her hides? and English hoops to cooper her provision-casks? and how would she export her bulky articles without the as-

sistance of English shipping? for the same Mr. Newenham tells us, p. 157; that the number of Vessels belonging to Ireland 30th September 1806 was only 1074 measuring 55,545 Tons or under 51¾ Tons each Vessel, which is less than the Tonnage of the Shipping belonging to the English port of Whitehaven alone. I could tell of a few more "plants" which England has hitherto furnished to the trade and manufactures of Ireland, as woad for the Dyers, teazles for the Clothiers, and hops for the Brewers; but I am happy to add that the cultivation of the former of these at home has lately increased.

Mr. Barnes gives a swelling list of the mineral riches of Ireland. Iron in 19 Counties; Lead in 18 Counties; Copper in 17 Counties; Coal in 16 Counties; Marble in 19 Counties, and I know not how many precious Stones Mr. Newenham talks of. Gems and Marbles I omit as too insignificant to enter into an estimate of the political œconomy of these Islands; but of minerals I can say that though they be dispersed through so many Counties as above stated, Copper, Lead and Iron are largely imported from England; that the little County of Cornwall at one end of England, works more mines than all Ireland together. In the year 1800 there were in Cornwall 99 mines at work, viz. 45 of Copper; 28 of Tin; 18 of Copper and Tin; 2 of Lead; 1 of Lead and Silver; 1 of Copper and Silver; 1 of Silver; 1 of Copper and Cobalt; 1 of Tin and Cobalt; 1 of Antimony. See Geological transactions vol. 1. p. 167; and since then, some mines of Manganese have been opened.

Coal may be in 16 Counties of Ireland; but it is imported in vast quantities from England where it is still more abundant, and we know that English Coal with all the disadvantages of freight and inland carriage is used and preferred within 10 miles of one of the largest collieries of Ireland.

Mr. Barnes follows Mr. Newenham in extolling the varieties and richness of Irish clays, earths and flints: and yet, Ireland imports from England, not only the finer articles of porcelain, but the coarsest earthenwares, bricks, tiles and unwrought clay itself, as may be seen by reference to the import lists of different ports.

We see then, that whatever may be the mineral wealth of Ireland, we owe most of the comforts derivable from minerals to the industry of England thus far: and if ever we should be enterprising, industrious and skilful enough to raise at home, as much of all the sorts we have, as will supply ourselves, we shall still be indebted to England for some articles of which Ireland is and must eternally be destitute.

Taking the list of Messrs. Newenham and Barnes as the sum of all that has been hitherto discovered in the mineral Kingdom, I can pronounce from their silence, as well as from better authorities, that we have not yet found tin, black lead, calamine, salt, chalk and fire-clay in Ireland: and I am sufficiently acquainted with mineralogy to be persuaded, that some of these articles do not exist within its strata. Now, England has supplied the world with tin for more than 2000 years. England has

inexhaustible mines of Salt with which she largely supplies Ireland, and without which Ireland's best trade would be cramped if not annihilated. England has whole districts of chalk, an article of great use in agriculture, architecture and many purposes of trade; and the surface of its Chalk-hills affords appropriate food to numerous flocks of the finest Sheep in the World. And however theorists may overlook such little things as black lead, calamine, and fire clay, your practical men could tell you that the loss of them in their respective applications would be little less than irreparable.

Thus then it appears that, after all this parade about the vast natural advantages of Ireland; after being told that Ireland excels England, and all Europe, and almost all the World, in situation, harbours, climate, soil, &c. &c. We depend on England itself for many of those things which are become indispensible to the comforts and perhaps to the very necessaries of life, and that there is no possible state of improvement which can ever render us independent of that or some other Country, since some of our deficiencies are those of nature. While therefore we boast of supplying England with Corn and her Navy with Beef, let us reflect that she supplies us with articles still more essential to us, and that want on both sides has established a mutual dependence, which is however so far from being equal, that if any unhappy event should dissolve suddenly the ties which bind the two nations, England would indeed suffer great temporary distress, but Ireland would lie prostrate in ruin, from whence no human foresight can trace the time and

mode of her resurrection: this is a strong assertion; but I expect to establish it by proof before this work is finished.

To what purpose then is it that men tantalize us with pompous reports of advantages from which we reap no profit; of riches which are hitherto as unattainable as the philosopher's stone? Mr. Barnes will reply, that "Irishmen are unaccountably indifferent to the natural advantages of their soil." p 42. Mr. Newenham has written his book to shew that the erroneous policy of England has prevented Ireland from availing herself of all her natural advantages: he has executed his task elaborately and plausibly enough, but here his copyist follows him not only with the lameness of insufficiency but with the rancour of faction; and trying to scramble farther than his leader, would assure us that Irish prosperity has been dependent on and commensurate with what he calls Irish independence;—with what powers of conviction will appear by the following extract p. 52. "Tonnage of British Shipping employed in the trade of Ireland:

In 1750	only	173,522 Tons
1781		339,470
1792		534,413

being an increase in ten years from independence of 194,943 Tons, or at the rate of 19,494 Tons *per* annum whilst in thirty two years previous to Independence the increase was only 165,948 Tons or at the rate of only 5185 *per* annum. The gross difference between 1750 and 1792 is 360,891 *occasioned* by the Independence of the Irish Parliament."

The most charitable construction which can be put on this precious statement, is, that the Author deals in the sophism which logicians call *post hoc ; ergo propter hoc.* Now, it will be my task to prove, in my next Letter, by a very brief but clear deduction of facts, that Ireland has been in a state of gradual improvement for the last hundred and fifty years, independently of her legislature or the relation thereof to Great Britain.

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER V.

It has been Mr. Barnes's aim throughout his Pamphlet, to ascribe great mischief to the jealous interference of the English legislature in the commerce of Ireland; great benefit to the first gleam of national spirit in the Irish legislature about the year 1753; and great wonders to the "independence of Parliament in 1782, when all the strings of the Irish harp were in tune". I think I can adduce proofs in favour of a different opinion, from Authors whose authority Mr. Barnes cannot call in question, without invalidating the greater part of his own testimonies: I think I can perform the task which I undertook at the close of my last Letter; but if they who are well versed in Irish history should glance over these pages they will be apt to deem this part of my labour very superfluous, since it has been so often and so clearly executed already, as will appear from my quotations: let them glance over Mr. Barnes's pages and the more elaborate work of Mr. Newenham; and they will see, how facts can be perverted; how motives can be invented and then assumed as indisputably operating, and how events simply collateral or successive, can be transformed into cause and effect by the magic wand of party spirit: they will see that, as men in general chuse to read the works of the present day, and take thence the bias of their opinions, a faithful transcript of standard writers is not only necessary, but the best antidote against the poison which faction extracts from history.

It is one hundred and sixty years, since a ferocious civil war was succeeded by two curses from Heaven, the horrors of which will be better conceived through the following extract from the writings of an eye witness, than through any description of mine. Laurence's Interest of Ireland printed at Dublin 1682 p. 87. "about the year 1652, 1653, the *plague and famine* had swept away whole Countries, that a man might travel twenty or thirty miles and not see a living creature, either man, beast or bird, they being either all dead or had quit those desolate places; that our Soldiers would tell stories of the place where they saw a smoak by day, or fire or candle by night; and when we did meet with two or three poor cabbins, none but very aged men with women and children——— *I have seen* those miserable creatures, plucking stinking carrion out of a ditch, black and rotten, and have been credibly informed they have digged corps out of the grave to eat". I forbear to pursue this quotation, for it tells a tale that harrows up the soul, and enough has been produced, to give a strong colour of truth, to all that Sir Wm. Petty calculates of the state to which Ireland was reduced in the year 1652. He supposes that the population had declined to 850,000 souls; the cattle and stock to less than £500,000 in value, and the houses to a similar amount.

The same writer computes, that by the year 1672 the population had risen to 1,100,000 souls, the live stock to an amount equal to 6,000,000 head of black cattle, the houses to 250,000 in number, of which 90,000 were worth £2,600,000: that the rental of lands and houses was about £1,000,000 and that the Irish exports had been about

2,000,000lb. of wool, about 60,000 head of cattle alive and about half that number dead in Barrels. *Here is no small progress made in twenty years;* but he adds "The manufacture bestowed on a year's manufacture out of Ireland is not worth £8000." And "the clothing trade has not arrived to what it was before the late Rebellion." Petty's Survey of Ireland p. 90 and 109.

Sir Wm. Temple who also wrote in the year 1672, says Vol. I. p. 115. "Until the transportation of cattle into England was forbidden by the late Act of Parliament, the quickest trade of ready money here (Ireland) was driven by the sale of young Bullocks——and this made all the breeders of the Kingdom turn their lands and stocks chiefly to that sort of cattle: few cows were bred up for the dairy more than served for consumption within; few oxen were bred to draft——so as the cattle generally sold either for slaughter within or exportation abroad, were of 2, 3, or at best 4 years old, and bred wholly upon the mountains in summer and upon the withered long grass of the low lands in winter. *The effect hereof was very pernicious*——The hides were small, thin and lank: little butter was exported, the trade of beef for exportation was prejudiced and almost sunk——The unskilfulness or carelessness or knavery of the traders added much to the discredit of these commodities abroad: the hides were often made up dirty which increased the weight: the butter would be better on top and bottom than in the middle, which would be sometimes filled up with tallow and sometimes with stones: the beef would be so ill-chosen or ill-cured as to stink before it came to Holland——

"After the Act in England had wholly stopt the transportation of cattle, the trade of the Kingdom was forced to find out a new Channel; a great deal of land was turned to sheep because wool was ready money to the English markets and by stealth for those abroad. The breeders of *English cattle* turned much to dairy, or else, by keeping their cattle to 6 or 7 years old and *wintering them dry*, made them fit for the beef trade abroad, and some of the Merchants fell into care and exactness in barrelling them up, and hereby the improvements of this trade were grown so sensible in course of a few years that in 1669 some Merchants in Holland assured me that *they had received parcels of beef out of Ireland which sold current, and very near the English, and butter which sold beyond it.* It is most evident if the Dutch war had not broken out so soon after the improvements of all these trades, a few years would have very much advanced the trade and riches of this Kingdom, *and made it a great gainer instead of losing by the Act against the transportation of their cattle.*" So says Sir William Temple.

Here we collect from the testimony of two contemporaries, men of business, talents, rank and character, who wrote, not from hearsay but from actual inspection of their subject, that in twenty years from her desolation, Ireland rose rapidly in almost every symptom of prosperity, notwithstanding two celebrated restrictions on her trade: that which forbad all intercourse with the plantations and that which forbad the transportation of Cattle into England: of the first, I shall only say that it embraced Scotland as well as Ireland and was in strict conformity

with the commercial tenets of those times, without a tincture of national animosity; and that if by chance it had not taken place, certain gentlemen would have speedily discovered that the permission was "illusive," since it would not have been very easy to find Merchants, money, and Ships in Ireland, to carry on a West-India trade of any importance; neither would it have been very politic, for there were better employments at home for all the hands and capital that Ireland contained. Of the second restriction, Sir Wm. Temple already quoted, affords ample proof, which I could confirm from other writers if necessary, that it produced speedy and vast advantages to Ireland: precisely those advantages which the export of manufactured articles has over that of raw materials.

But as it has been very fashionable to rail against the whole English nation for the act which prohibited the importation of Irish Cattle, I shall present you a brief history of that act (18 Car. II. cap. 2) in order to shew, that the envenomed spleen which is vented against it, proceeds from ignorance, or malice, or any thing but truth. It appears from Cobbet's parliamentary history Vol. IV p. 337 &c. that this act was not designed against Ireland, but to protect England from an evil falsely apprehended; that its first intention was to exclude imports from Scotland also; that it met the most vehement opposition in both houses of parliament; that arguments on the great scale of national justice, and on the lesser scale of provincial expediency, were urged against it; that very many members went so far as to pro-

test that their districts could not well do without Irish Cattle, (to which they might have added if they knew it, that the import in question was too insignificant to do any harm, being little more than £132,000 per annum: Sheffield's Obs. p. 149) and that it entirely owed its success to the intrigues of a profligate Nobleman, who opposed the court, and envied the Duke of Ormonde: we may therefore reasonably conclude that it had not the support of the English government; we know that it excited the Kings indignation; though he yielded and persuaded many to yield, who would otherwise have held out against it. So then, the King, the Ministers, and the Country at large, were baffled by the clamours of a party, as has often happened since, and were driven to a measure which was obviously injurious to England, and from which Ireland expected ruin, but found prosperity.

Before and after that Act was passed, the Duke of Ormonde was a leading member of the English government, and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He laboured zealously for the improvement of the commercial circumstances of his Country, and bestowed a marked attention on the Linen manufacture; for the promotion of which, he brought over many artists from the Netherlands: he created a board of trade, for which he drew up in council, specific instructions: this board presented a report which, among other things, deprecated the restriction on their cattle, and yet, with a very common inconsistency, recommended restrictions on the import and use of sundry foreign manufactures. The spirit excited by the Duke and his board of trade seemed soon to subside, and if

Ireland improved less in trade and wealth than the ardent imaginations of her legislators expected, the fault is ascribed by a contemporary who was himself a member of the board, and an ingenious enterprising projector of improvements, to the drunkenness, lewdness, gambling, pride and profusion, which he describes as very prevalent, and to some other causes of more questionable influence. See Laurence Interest of Ireland, part 1st. throughout.

But, though no immediate effect followed the labours of the government, a steady progress was made in the agriculture and manufactures and consequently in the trade of Ireland, for fifteen years from 1672 to 1687. We find that Artizans came from England, France and the Netherlands, by whom the Woollen manufacture in its different branches was either restored or established; at any rate extended. Some English settled at Dublin, Cork, Kinsale and Clonmel; some French at Waterford; some Flemings at Carrick-on-Suir. All these settlements took place after the year 1660, but their efforts were not important if we may believe Sir Wm. Petty, till after 1672 and this is confirmed by an extract from the English board of trade dated 1697 which I find in Sheffield's Observations, p 150. the state of the Woollen manufacture was

	New Drapery.	Old Drapery.	Frize.
1665	224 Ps.	32 Ps	444,381 Yds.
1687	11,360	103	1,129,716
1696	4,413	34¾	104,167

From the same Author it appears that the total value of Woollen manufactures exported in the year 1687 was

£70,521 14 0 of which more than £56,000 consisted of frize, which I beg you to remember. This Author informs us that this was the year of the greatest export of woollens and we shall see presently that in succeeding years the export was scarcely more than one-third of this amount: how then does Mr. Barnes take upon him to assure us in p. 45 that previous to the Revolution, Ireland exported woollens to the amount of £110,207? when he is so completely at variance with a writer of established character, he should at least give us his authorities. We find that in the same year 1687 Ireland exported to England 4,684,680lb. wool and woollen yarn, which Lord Sheffield says, is more than was sent in any of the preceding years, and it is more than double the annual export reported by Sir Wm. Petty in 1672. We have here an indisputable proof of great progress both in agriculture and in manufactures during these fifteen years.

The civil war which arose from the English revolution of 1688, checked the rapid growth of Irish prosperity: during this war, many Protestants emigrated; and after it, many Catholics; many of the people perished by the Sword; the land was laid waste as a seat of war will always be; manufactures were neglected; trade was interrupted. The population fell below what it had been in 1672, as Mr. Newenham shews in his essay on population; and we find in Sheffield's Observations p. 154. that "from the *Custom-house accounts*, Ireland had not recovered above one-third of the woollen trade she had before the Revolution" by the year 1697. The destructive influence of the civil war appears more fully from statements of the

same Author which I have put into the form of a table:

	Exports.	Imports.	Total.	Balance.
1681	£582,814	£434,040	£1,015,854	£149,774 for
1695	295,592	391,524	687,116	95,932 against
1698	996,305	576,863	1,573,168	419,442 for

This table will also serve to shew, how rapidly Ireland improved after her troubles had ceased, though under the reign of a King whom Mr. Barnes and his fellows labour to stigmatize: their labour is as futile as the attempt of the Titans to scale Heaven.

If you ask why I have added exports and imports together in the above table; I reply, that it is for the same reason that you and I would annually add together the amount of all we had imported and exported in the course of the year, to see how much we had turned and how much per Cent our profits and losses were, and how much the total of our business had paid towards our permanent and contingent charges. As we do, so does every one, and the combined amount of exports and imports is the sum total of that on which the industry of the Merchants and their dependants has been employed. We see that this sum encreased very considerably after the effects of the civil war had ceased; but I must enlarge a little on the Woollen trade for a reason that will soon be obvious.

We learn from Lord Sheffield that in 1697 the total value of Woollens exported did not exceed £24,000, of which the new and old drapery "which alone interfered with the English manufactures" was under £9000. In the following year 1698 the total export of Woollens was something short of 668,000 yards of frize, of which near-

ly one-fourth went to England; about 23,300 pieces of new drapery and 281 pieces of old drapery, besides a few hats and stockings. In the same year the wool and woollen yarn exported to England, was 4,160,844lb. and the total export of linen was 23,727 pieces and 8916 cwt. of yarn. The official value of the new and old drapery exported in the three years, as well as I can collect from Lord Sheffield's estimates, is in 1696 £4465. in 1697 £8988. in 1698 £24607. Perhaps the excess of this last year arose from the anxiety of Merchants to export while it was still in their power, as they were aware that a restriction would shortly take place: be that as it may the average export of new and old drapery in these three years was £12,686.

When the Woollen manufacture of Ireland was in a state to furnish less than £13000 per annum of goods for export, besides frizes which did not interfere with the manufactures of England, and which in the said three years did not exceed £15000 per annum; when the woollens exported from England exceeded £2,370,000 that is nearly ninety times as much as the whole export of the Irish woollens:—A thing called a compact, was entered into by the legislatures of the two Countries, which has, perhaps, few parallels in the annals of legislative folly. It has been usual to ascribe this compact to the jealousy of English manufacturers and their influence over Parliament; but the amazing disproportion between the exports of the two Countries forbids us to assent to this, unless we couple with jealousy the most consummate ignorance, and we may perhaps find a more satisfactory motive in the

following quotation from Hardy's life of Lord Charlemont. Vol. II. p. 153. "Mr Hutchinson says he has more than once heard Lord Chancellor Bowes mention a conversation that he had with Sir Robert Walpole on the subject of the Woollen manufactory in Ireland; *who assured* him that the restraints imposed on it by the English parliament had *at first* taken their rise from the *vauntings of several Irish gentlemen* of the great success of that manufacture in this Kingdom." We see here that the jealousy arose, not from Irish prosperity, but from the vain-glorious garrulity of some Irish gentlemen: and that it was first kindled not in the manufacturing interest, but among legislators or landholders: accordingly I find that when the King had in April 1697 commanded the board of trade to report to him on the commercial relations and mutual interests of the two Countries, that board presented a report which was afterwards laid before parliament; wherein they represented that the increase of the Woollen trade in Ireland might be injurious to that which was the staple manufacture of England; and therefore proposed plans to check it and to encourage and extend the linen manufacture instead of it: that Parliament took up this subject in 1698, that it was in the hands of a committee to prepare a Bill, receive Petitions, examine evidence &c. that several Petitions for the proposed Bill and one at least against it were presented; that it finally passed the legislature in 1699, whereby, as Mr Newenham tells us, "the exportation of wool, yarns, new drapery or old drapery from Ireland to any place but England was forbidden under heavy Penalties. In the mean time, the Lords and Commons had in the summer of

1698, presented addresses to the King, praying him to discourage the Woollen manufacture in Ireland, which he promised to do; and the Irish Parliament fulfilled his promise by imposing prohibitory duties on all woollens except frize. This is called a compact, because it was understood that the linen manufacture was to be promoted, while that of Woollens was depressed.

The effect of this compact was as might have been expected. 1st a panic seized the Artizans in Ireland, and many of them emigrated to England; and many to Germany, France, and Spain, where they effectually promoted, if they did not create, a trade which afterwards interfered with that of England. 2nd those Artizans who remained, applied themselves to new branches of the Woollen manufacture; whereby the imports from England were diminished till the population began to outgrow the manufactures. 3rd the contraband trade in Wool and Woollens was extended, and as it were consolidated into a system. Thus, this restriction act like the other tended to the immediate and remote injury of England, and to the good of Ireland, so far as to increase her means of supplying herself. That it did no injury to Ireland beyond the temporary suffering of the Artizans, (which however I abhor as much as any one can) would appear from the extreme insignificancy of the export trade compared with the home trade in Woollens; for the Irish imports of these articles were still more trifling than the exports, so that the nation might be said to supply itself in quantity though not in quality: now, there were about 1,100,000 inhabitants in Ireland of which per-

haps, 800,000 were the lower order; and they were universally clad, as they are still, with Woollens; if we reckon them on an average to consume 20s. worth per annum, and the higher orders from the tradesmen upwards 40s. each per annum, both which averages will perhaps be short of the truth, when we consider that hats and stockings, frizes and stuffs, old drapery and new drapery are included, these two sums would be £1,400,000 to which the export bears too trifling a proportion to deserve notice: but it may be said, that as the English jealousy must have been prospective, so the injury which Ireland sustained, was not so much in the loss of her exports as they then were, but as they might have been, if the restriction had not taken place; for some folks have dreamt that Irish Woollens would have eclipsed the English: this I am disposed to deny, till better reasons are suggested, because Ireland has continually imported for her own use; for it appears to me that until a Country can supply itself with a commodity it is absurd to talk of what it would do for the supply of others. But while I deny the wide and baneful influence which some men attribute to this contract, I am far from attempting its defence; it was as unjust as it was unnecessary, and it was foolish because it defeated its own object; it was however the combined act of *both* legislatures, perhaps contrary to the King's wishes; for the spirit of the English parliament was opposed to him, and certainly against the sense of part of one nation and all or almost all the other.

After this digression, it remains to shew the state of trade in the year 1700 and two following years in order to

complete the period of fifty years from the desolation of Ireland :

	Exports.	Imports.	Total.	Balance.
1700	£814,745	792,473	1,607,218	22,272 for
1701	670,412	692,314	1,362,726	21,902 against

Sheffields observations p. 298, where he suggests that the alteration of trade in 1701 might be in part imputed to the war which began about that time. The quantities of the chief articles exported in 1702 I give from Mr. Newenham, he shews that from 1700 to 1704 the annual average of Beef was 70833 barrels ; of Pork 13727 barrels ; of Butter 92,219 Cwt. of Corn and Meal 19,817 barrels : that the annual average of three years ending 25th March 1702, was 349,410 stone of Wool and Woollen-yarn which is at 18lbs. per stone, 6,289,380lbs. hides tanned and untanned 88,449 ; Kelp 118 Tons ; and that the quantity linen exported in 1702 was 16,488 yards and 8573 Cwt. linen yarn.

Here ends the half century from the memorable 1652. It embraces all the material commercial restrictions that England laid on Ireland, and I have briefly treated of the causes and consequences of two of the most important and most reprobated of those restrictions, shewing that they resulted in good. It began from the deplorable effects of one civil War, and it embraces another, which was the only serious obstacle to the growing prosperity of the Country but this soon ceased, and its effects with it ; the innate energies of Ireland soon recovered their wonted spring, and in spite of restrictions, jealousies, tyrannies, iron yokes and all the bugbears with which the eloquence of faction delights to appal our imaginations, the trade was more than doubled in a few years.

LETTER VI.

As one effect of the English restrictions was the extension of Irish trade to foreign Countries, it would follow that this and its advantages would be influenced by our relations with those Countries. The war which began in 1689 had doubtless some share in the great depression of trade which attended the civil war; and we have seen, that Lord Sheffield suggests the same cause for the decline in 1701. The war which began in that year, ended in 1713: its influence cannot be doubted; but whether it was the *sole* cause of the very considerable reduction of the trade of Ireland, which the following Table will exhibit, is a question on which my means of information do not enable me to speak:—

Date of verages.	*Annual Exports.*	*Annual Imports.*	*Annual Total.*	*Annual Balance.*	*War and Peace.*
	£	£	£	£	
1700 to 1710	553,023	513,657	1,066,680	39,366	War 1701.
1710 to 1720	1,126,670	852,905	1,979,575	273,765	Peace March 1713. War December 1718.
1720 to 1730	1,019,809	856,936	1,876,745	162,873	Peace June 1721.
1730 to 1740	1,190,253	885,044	2,075,297	305,209	War October 1739.
1740 to 1750	1,485,110	1,123,373	2,608,483	351,737	Peace October 1748.
1750 to 1760	2,002,354	1,594,164	3,596,518	408,190	War May 1756.

I have formed this table from one in Sheffield's observations p. 275; omitting the fraction of a pound; inserting the totals or combined amounts of exports and imports; the balance; and the periods of war and peace: You may therefore see at one view the progress of trade, so far as it may be estimated from official returns, and the contemporary vicissitudes of our external relations.

But, as these official returns can convey no accurate idea of a Country's progress, without a specification of the quantities of its principal commodities, I shall collect them from various parts of Newenham's appendix.

The excess of export of grain and flour above imports, was annually on an average, from

1704 to 1708	48,248	Barrels
1708 to 1712	87,111	Ditto
1712 to 1716	157,650	Ditto
1716 to 1720	60,572	Ditto

The export of Beef, Pork, and Butter, in the same period, was

1704 to 1708	66105	Barls. Beef	2848	Barls. Pork	111498	Cwt. Butter
1708 to 1712	85532	Ditto	3986	Ditto	140265	Ditto
1712 to 1716	110288	Ditto	8202	Ditto	186978	Ditto
1716 to 1720	117966	Ditto	7794	Ditto	186499	Ditto

The export of hides was annually on an average of three years ending 1712, 121,306; and on a similar average ending 1722, 126,977. The Kelp exported was 197 Tons per annum in the first of these periods and 625 Tons in the second.

The export of Wool and Woollen yarn was annually on an average of three years ending 1712, 332,160st. or

5978,880lbs. and on a similar average ending 1722, 188,450st. or 3392100lbs. and in the first of these periods the quantity of linen annually exported was 1,439,833 yards, and 7737cwt. yarn, which rose, by the second period, to 2,859,556 yards, and 14,817cwt. yarn. The annual import of new and old drapery was only 26520 yards, during the first of these periods, and 103357 during the second; while the export during the latter, was 5858 yards.

You perceive that the trade which had declined in war, revived and nearly doubled during peace; that the export of provisions & butter increased progressively after the first four years, at the rate of seventy per Cent on the whole period; that the linen trade constantly increasing, doubled itself in the last ten years; that the lawful export of wool declined; but it is known, that a contraband trade in this article was carried on to a great extent, and it is equally certain, that the internal demand for wool was gradually greater through this period; for the very slight increase of imported woollens bears no proportion to the unquestionable increase of population.

Here then, are proofs of the great improvement of the circumstances of Ireland in the early part of the 18th century; we learn further from Swift's works, that the population had arrived by the year 1724 to 1,500,000, which is probably under-rated as a contemporary computes it at 1,670,000 in 1725, and that the rental of land alone was £2,000,000. We see in the above statement that the surplus of agricultural produce and the staple manufacture of the Country were prodigiously augmented, and we col-

lect from Swift's works, that there were also manufactures of all kinds of cloths, of stuffs, of crapes, of hats, and of silks, some of which were in imitation of India silks. If the surplus of corn declined, it may be ascribed to a species of restriction (more fatal than those of the legislatures) which had, recently perhaps, risen out of the profligate rapacity of tenants, and the ignorant tyranny of Landlords.—" The Landlords *are every where by penal clauses absolutely prohibiting their* tenants from ploughing, not satisfied to confine them within certain limitations as is the practice of the English, one effect of which is already seen in the prodigious dearness of corn and the importation of it from London as the cheaper market." Swift's proposal &c. and again, in his answer to a memorial, he says " It was indeed the shameful practice of too many farmers to wear out the land by ploughing.—This *gave birth to the abominable race of Graziers*, who upon expiration of the farmers' leases were ready to engross great quantities of land———It must be confessed the farmers were justly punished for their knavery, brutality and folly. But neither are the Squires and Landlords to be excused, for *to them* is owing the depopulating of the Country, the vast number of beggars and the ruin of those few sorry improvements we had."

We now come to a period which Swift has converted into an epoch, by the precedent which his example affords to succeeding demagogues: he had been all his life a partizan, aspiring to more than he obtained; his promotion in Ireland was a banishment hardly honourable, from favourite connections and pursuits to a Country which he ab-

horred: may we not suppose it at least possible, that disappointed ambition stimulated his exertions and aggravated, if it did not create, his view of the state of Ireland?.

That his view, as expressed in his writings, was a false one; and that if he wrote sincerely he did not understand the subjects on which he presumed to direct the public opinions, are points which I shall not waste time to prove; for they will be readily admitted by all who read his works impartially. He has made some assertions which are confirmed, and others which are contradicted, by collateral authorities: he has jumbled all these together to form inferences, always agreeable to the populace, of the actual misery and approaching ruin of the Country; while it must have been self-evident, as documents now prove beyond all doubt, that the Country was progressing as rapidly as any other in Europe, and was impeded only by the character of her children and the pernicious influence of meddling Patriots, who desire to be teachers, "understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm."

I am aware that any thing which derogates from the high reputation of their idol Patriot, must appear a blasphemy to many; but I appeal from their prejudice to their native good sense, with a display of some of his sentences: and if any of them can so explain these sentences, as to convince me, that my censure is not founded in truth, I will cheerfully yield, and shall be as ready to admit the genuine and enlightened patriotism of Swift, as I do his genius, wit, and perspicuity; happy if I could say so much of all his successors in the patriotic career; for they usually come short of him even in these qualifications, as much as they exceed him in animosity and invective.

Here are my extracts drawn with little selection: let them be attentively considered. "The rents of land in Ireland since they have been *of late* so enormously raised and screwed up may be computed to about Two Millions——£80,000 sent yearly to England for coals——£100,000 paid *several years past* for corn sent over *hither* from England, the effect of our *own great wisdom* in discouraging agriculture——the kind liberty granted us of wearing India Stuffs and Calicoes to gratify the vanity and folly of our women——our own wool returned upon us in English manufactures to our infinite shame and damage——*the manufacture exceeds above ten times the prime cost*——*The full profit of all our mines* accruing to England; an effect of great negligence and stupidity." Drapier's letter VII. written 1724. again "There is not an argument used to prove the riches of Ireland which is not a *logical demonstration* of its poverty. The rise of our rents squeezed out of the very blood, vitals, clothes, and dwellings of the tenants who live worse than English beggars. The lowness of interest in all other Countries a sign of wealth, is *in us* a *proof of misery*, there being no trade to employ any borrower. Hence alone comes the dearness of land, since the savers have no other way to lay out their money: Hence the dearness of necessaries of life——Hence are *increase of buildings in this City (Dublin)* because workmen have nothing to do but to *employ one another* and one half of them are infallibly undone. Hence the daily increase of *Bankers* who *may be a necessary evil* in a trading Country but so ruinous in ours. I have often wished that a law were enacted *to hang up half a dozen Bankers* every year (the

Bankers are obliged for so charitable a wish from this minister of the Prince of peace) and thereby interpose at least some short delay to the further ruin of Ireland." Short view &c. writ 1727 "Let a firm resolution be taken by male and female *never* to appear with *one single* shred that *comes from England*. And let all the people say Amen." Proposal &c. written 1720.

Now with all due deference to the "logical demonstrations" of the very reverend Drapier, I must take the liberty to believe that causes generate effects in Ireland much in the same way as they do in other Countries: Rents can no where be raised except tenants can increase their produce or enhance its price; prices can no where be raised except consumers can afford to pay them, and consumers cannot do this except their respective circumstances improve: interest will no where be low, nor lands high, except money be plenty, and imports will not arrive except there be a fair prospect of demand, and ability to pay for them:—in short, population, culture, trade, and income, will be symptoms of prosperity as much in Ireland as elsewhere. But besides error in judgment he has been guilty of error in statements. He says that £100,000 per annum was paid several years before and then for corn from England; now Mr. Newenham's appendix shews that this is a *falsehood:* Ireland indeed imported Corn but it also exported, and the balance of quantity was in her favour. It is not true that Irish wool was exported and returned in manufacture to the extent which he would insinuate: or that the manufacture exceeds ten times the material; I have shewn how

little Woollen cloth was imported. Equally false is his assertion that the *full* profit of *all* the Irish mines accrued to England: if he means that English companies wrought these mines, (and I believe they did not work all) they derived just as much profit as their capital and exertions deserved, and Ireland derived the rest, for the Landlord had his usual share or at least a rent; the labourers, probably Irish and English mixt, had their wages with which they consumed Irish produce and perhaps some imports, whereby they helped to enrich the Farmer, the Shop-keeper, and the Merchant.

It is however difficult to read this part of Swift's works without the pleasure that arises from the contemplation of genius, and without a suspicion that he knew better than he wrote, nor ought we to be surprized if this suspicion should amount to a certainty; for it is an essential character of party-spirit, to embellish and establish its own object, even if truth and candour should suffer a little in the attempt: the energies of such a man as Swift, exciting such a people as the Irish, on subjects so dear to national prejudice, could not fail of success. We learn that he ruled with despotic sway in his little sphere; but it is more especially in the line of this letter to remark, that he had peculiar power over the manufacturers; who came to consult him on every occasion. English goods we may readily conceive to be unpopular, and Irish substitutes for them must be had; capital and labor must have been wrested from their usual and natural channels to new ones, where obstacles would never fail to impede them; disappointment would infallibly ensue:

proportionate stagnation and distress would supervene. May we not ascribe to this and to the bad harvests of 1728 and 1729 a decline of trade which, as you see, reduced the decennial average?

But we shall discern the fallacy of Swift's statements as to the misery and approaching ruin of Ireland, more forcibly, by a view of her political circumstances in a year which, if he had been right, would have been near the predicted catastrophe: We find that in 1731 the population was 2,010,221, nearly doubling itself in the space of 36 years, and certainly progressive through *the whole period during which Swift wrote.* The Woollen manufacture, about which such outcries were then and since raised, was also nearly doubled since the days of the compact, for the imports of that year on an average of three years was only 34,796 yards of new and old drapery, while the exports of the same articles were nearly 4000 yards. The wool, yarn, and worsted 96,953st. of which only 21,254st. was wool. On the same triennial average, the exports that year were 3,901,528 yards linen and 13,059cwt. yarn, 145,208 barrels Beef, 12,206 barrels Pork, and 153,727cwt. Butter. And in spite of recent bad harvests the balance of Corn was still 26,407 barrels in favour of Ireland. Let the advocates of Swift and his doctrine produce parallel prosperity elsewhere in those days, if they can. The balance of corn was now to experience a reverse; from the year 1732 to 1772 it was continually unfavourable except in one period from 1736 to 1740. If we recollect the Landlords' penal restrictions on ploughing, which

Swift has reprobated, and the infamous resolution of Parliament in the year 1735, that the tythe on dry and barren Cattle was "grievous, burdensome, and injurious to the Protestant interest," we shall be at no loss for the true cause of the decline of tillage, without resorting to the sophistical machinery of "illusive Acts," &c. &c. which Mr. Newenham has employed to account for it. That Gentleman would have deserved our confidence if he had stigmatized those injurious restrictions and resolutions at home, instead of fixing on the British Government, his own dreams of machiavelian policy so obviously detrimental to British interests, that even writers did not fail to insist on the prosperity of Ireland as essential to the welfare of England. It rarely happens that Statesmen are less enlightened than writers: if they are not often so deeply versed in theory, they are generally better acquainted with facts, and on these their decisions are founded. We ought to reckon that statesmen act in their concerns, with as much common sense as we do in ours; that such of them as are in power cannot be insensible of the responsibility which they sustain, or indifferent to the means with which they uphold themselves; their power is commensurate with the power of the state, and the state is aggrandized in proportion as all its parts improve; it is therefore a truth obvious enough to have been felt, when political theories were less understood than they are now, that the welfare of a part so contiguous and so essential as Ireland, was an object of importance to the rulers of Britain, and we ought to believe that its general abasement, as a motive of legislation, existed only in the distempered imaginations of the factious, till documents prove the reverse.

After this digression on the characters and motives of statesmen you will not conceive that I prostitute that title to the hundred and ten members who carried the resolution on the tythes of Cattle in the Irish House of Commons; for it is difficult to conceive a measure more indicative of ignorance or contempt of the interests of their Country than this. I have not the means of searching out the true motive of this measure; nor can I conceive any other, than a paltry desire to screen their own demesnes from the claims of the clergy, or to render their restriction on ploughing (if it still existed) more palatable to their tenants. Whatever were the motives, the effects are plain: Mr. N. has confessed that it was a premium on what Swift calls "the abominable race of Graziers;" it was consequently a tax on tillage, and a bar to the progress of population, in proportion as the system of Grazing requires less labour, and produces less food, on a given space, than that of tillage.

We need not therefore be surprized, that the export of grain declined, and that this branch of the balance of trade became unfavourable: it was also to be expected that population would feel the check; and accordingly we learn that while it nearly doubled itself in 36 years preceding 1731, it increased only one sixth in 23 years from that to 1754, when the total of the inhabitants of Ireland was 2,372,634. ——But though the true system of agriculture which blends tillage with cattle-feeding, and makes the latter a secondary object, was still less understood in Ireland then than it is now; and though tillage itself was thus obstructed by those whose peculiar duty was to promote it; yet

its superiority was duly appreciated by some *real* patriots who encouraged it, and its practice gradually gained ground; so that after the year 1748 the balance of imported corn was much diminished; became at length very inconsiderable; and by the favourable operation of circumstances to be stated hereafter, it ceased with the year 1772. In the mean time, trade flourished; the decennial average ending in 1740 exhibits a balance of £300,000 per annum in favour of Ireland; the quadrennial average ending the same year, shews an annual export of 150,499 barrels Beef, 11,646 barrels Pork, 161,212cwt. Butter; and the triennial average ending 25th March 1742, shews that the annual export of linen was 6,969,893 yards, and 18,842cwt. yarn; and of wool, yarn and worsted 114,289 stones. The export linen trade was nearly doubled within these 10 years; the other articles were greatly increased, and the import of Woollens was only 62,184 yards per annum. The next decennial average, ending 1750, was mostly a period of war, in the latter years of which the provision trade necessarily declined, yet the total amount of trade was increased by more than £500,000 per annum with a favourable balance of £350,000 per annum; much, perhaps all, of this increase arose from the linen trade, the exports of which was 11,580,493 yards, 1493 yards of cambrick and 23,141cwt. yarn per annum, on a triennial average ending 25th March 1752. The woollens imported in the same period were 215,404 yards annually, and the wool, yarn and worsted exported had risen to 203,377 stones per annum, an average which it has never attained since.

In the year 1752 Lord Orrery wrote the following

passage :—"The next tract is a short view of the state of Ireland written 1727; of this I need take little notice, since the *present state of Ireland is as flourishing as possible;* agriculture is cultivated; arts and sciences are encouraged, and in the space of eighteen years which is almost the full time I have known it, no kingdom can be more improved." Orrery's remarks on the life and writings of Swift p. 149. His Lordship may not be, perhaps, the most profound investigator of political œconomy, or the best judge of the utmost possible progress in improvement, but he was a contemporary eye-witness, disinterested, and as far as I know, of unimpeached veracity; though Mr. Dean Swift has attempted to throw against this passage doubts that would equally apply to the present state of Ireland. We may safely conclude that an improvement had taken place, and I think the detail of this letter shews that it was both gradual and great; Ireland did not wait therefore for Mr. Barnes's favourite epoch of 1753 to exhibit her *capabilities* and her *progress*. On this epoch let us enlarge a little; it was in 1753 that a squabble arose in Parliament about the etiquette of the disposal of some surplus revenue; the popular party may have been right; but it is not my purpose to enter into any political disquisitions, or notice them, except so far as they had any real or alledged influence on the trade and culture of Ireland. That this squabble had no direct influence is too evident, and in fact all that Mr. Barnes or any other one can pretend is, that it was the first ebullition of a spirit which has gone on increasing; the first prominent departure from that criminal servility with which it is alledged

that the Irish legislature concurred in all the measures of the English cabinet; but it yet remains for him to *prove* that this spirit operated favourably on the internal state of Ireland. Something did indeed result; let us see what it was, in the report of two persons well qualified to appreciate it. Lord Clare in his speech on the union after noticing the aforesaid squabble, says "The Commons took effectual care that the question should not occur a second time, by appropriating every future surplus *to their private use under the specious pretence of local public improvements*. Wind-mills and water-mills, and canals, bridges, and spinning jennies were provided at the public expence, and the *parliamentary patrons of these great national objects were entrusted with full discretionary power over the money granted to complete them*" p. 28. Arthur Young had said three and twenty years before "and yet to *yourselves* you are indebted for bounties on the carriage of corn, for premiums on corn stands, for ideal navigations through bogs to convey turf to Whitehaven, for colliers where there is no coal, for bridges where there are no rivers, navigable cuts where there is no water, harbours where there are no Ships, and churches where there are no congregations" Vol. 11, p. 373, 2nd edition. Let me not be told that this is declamation; it contains with damnatory precision, the opinion of these two men on the improvements which flowed from the boasted substitution of a national for a provincial spirit:" and if further proof is wanted, I refer to Mr. Newenham's work, which would furnish a very edifying history of the Parliamentary jobs of Ireland. I give the gentleman full credit for all the colla-

teral facilities which these Parliamentary jobs might have afforded to the people, while they filled the pockets of the legislators and their dependants; but I shall take the liberty to ascribe the progress of Ireland to other causes, till these Gentlemen *prove* their assertions by some arguments more powerful than *post hoc ergo propter hoc.*

Two of these procuring causes of Irish prosperity, I shall now specify as arising in the period between 1750 & 1760.

The first is the general use of the Potatoe——Oh with what wrath shall I be assailed, when I attribute less beneficial influence to the lofty spirit of independence, fuming in the brain of our renowned Legislators, than to the humble Potatoe! Yet let me be heard with patience, and let the good sense of my readers decide. Many writers have asserted the importance of the Potatoe on this self-evident proposition, that *cheapness of food promotes trade and population;* for if by choice or necessity, people are induced to renounce wheat and meat for butter-milk and potatoes, it will follow, that one acre will feed those for whom the produce of four or five acres were hardly sufficient. Suppose then a poor family, cultivating five acres of their own property, and finding themselves hardly able to subsist on the produce, suddenly take to Potatoes as their chief food; they would not only be plentifully supplied, but would have the produce of nearly four acres to take to market; and whereas such a poor family was often obliged to send off a child to town or foreign climes to seek subsistence, and often its members were deterred from marriage by dread of starvation, the new food would afford abnndance for all; want would no

longer stifle the instincts of nature, and the poor man would find that his children were no longer a burden but his most valuable property. Suppose 400,000 families to adopt this change in their mode of living; the produce of nearly 150,000 acres come into markets to insure plenty to the towns, to increase exports, and to enlarge every branch of trade from the Merchant to the Huxter; for as it is the nature of man to seek luxuries when he has found necessaries, the families in my supposition would infallibly devote part of their savings to the purchase of comforts which were before unattainable. The general use of the Potatoe has done this in Ireland with the concurrence of other events: Lands have risen in value, exports and imports have considerably increased, population has advanced with rapidity unusual in Europe, and every rank from the Peer to the Peasant has improved its circumstances. It remains for me to shew why I assign so late a date to this important innovation. Swift talked of Potatoes and Butter-milk; but with a contempt which would prove that the food though known was not general: Smith in his history of the County Down, insinuates that this food was not used there in 1744. See also his County Waterford 229 and 230 where Potatoes are recommended as if not yet well known in other parts of Ireland and stated to be a good *substitute for corn in times of scarcity*: I have conversed with some old people of the County of Waterford, who remember when the lower orders subsisted chiefly on grain and pulse, with more animal food, especially Pork, than is now usual. These data lead me to suppose that Potatoes did not become a general article of food till after the year 1750; and there is

a passage in Smith on the wealth of nations Book 1st. cap 11th which would shew that they were so, for several years before 1775, when that work was first published. Add to this, that the first remarkable increase in the export of Pork took place about the year 1756, and you will probably agree with me that this invaluable root began to be the principal food of the lower order about the year 1756, or perhaps a little later; it's use rapidly increased. The second cause is the opening of the English ports to Irish agricultural produce which began as a temporary measure in the year 1758, was gradually extended as to time and articles, and at length became perpetual and unlimited; the last shackle that I am aware of, being taken off by our able and worthy Representative when he was in office. It has been the fashion to represent this measure of the English Government as purely the effect of want, even in the first instance, and Gentlemen have not scrupled to assert, that Ireland owes all concessions to the "wants and fears" of England, as if they were sorely afraid lest Ireland and England should love each other too well: Let us enquire how far want entered into the motives of the English Government, when the imports were permitted in 1758 and 1759. It is true that a mortality among Cattle which begun in Germany 1739, extended to England by degrees, and produced comparatively high prices: it is also true that there was a bad harvest all through Europe in 1757, so that the British Government prohibited export of grain from England, and from the American Colonies except to England and Ireland; but it is *not* true that England was then in *want*, or in dread of want; for

the highest prices of the best wheat, as stated by Smith in his wealth of nations Book 1st. cap 11th at the end, were, excluding fractions:—

1756	5s	0d	per Bushel of 8 Gallons.
1757	6	8	
1758	5	6	
1759	4	5	
1760	4	0	

And the average of fourteen years from 1751 to 1764 was 4s 7½d per Bushel; moreover, it appears from the same work, and in the same chapter, that the price of Beef in England, during the war which ended 1763, was to the Merchant for export 24s. to 25s. per cwt.; to the people by retail in London 1½d. to 3½d. and 4d. according to the qualities of the pieces; which retail prices rose ½d. per lb. in 1764. The same writer asserts, that these prices were considerably less than Beef was sold for in the reign of James Ist; for the Beef bought for the Prince's household then, cost 31s. 8d. per cwt. and the price of Corn about the same time was 4s. 7½d. per Bushel; so then, at this very period of supposed want in England, Corn was, on an average of 14 years, as cheap, and Beef more than 25 per cent. cheaper, than it was near 150 years before! but I remark further that the dread of want, if it existed at all, must have already evaporated before the ports were opened to Irish provisions. Corn was at its highest in 1757; salted Beef and Pork and Butter were not importable till 1758; nor live Cattle and Tallow till 1759. Neither is it very easy to conceive, in what degree these articles conld be expected to alleviate the supposed wants of England; for it is well known, that the salted Beef

and Pork of Ireland are scarcely ever consumed there, but almost all re-exported in shipping public or private; but here Gentlemen may interrupt me and say, that, at any rate, the Irish provisions being taken for Ships use, prevented so much from being taken out of the English market: Granted: but how much could this be? The total export of Beef and Pork from Ireland was less than 200,000 Barrels per annum, on an average of four years ending 25th March 1760; I have not the means of ascertaining how much of this went to England in the two last years; but I should say that it could not exceed one-fourth, if I am to judge by the quantities exported before and after the war of seven years. Our Navy contained 70,000 men, and our Merchants Ships 36,000 men at that time, according to Chalmers's estimate p 130. edition 1794. Ireland therefore might have afforded something less than half-a-Barrel of provisions to every Sailor. The annual average of live Cattle exported from Ireland between March 25th 1760 and March 25th 1764 was only 2,344 head, and those of course, lean Cattle as they always have been: this is no great relief to the *wants* of seven or eight millions of people. Now, if these Gentlemen had exerted as much ingenuity to palliate as to aggravate, they might have imagined it to be very possible, that the decline of the Irish provision-trade through the war, concurring with the increase of English shipping, rendered a temporary opening of the English ports mutually convenient after a bad harvest, and that the success of the first experiment, led by degrees, to the present unrestrained admission of all our produce. I have now stated, what appear to me the two leading causes of the great in-

crease of the Irish trade: it remains for me to sketch very briefly how they operated———The general use of the Potatoe did not only increase the disposable produce of Ireland in proportion as it prevailed, but necessarily extended the system of tillage; it also enforced the feeding of Hogs, on a much larger scale than before; and by a happy concurrence of circumstances, which I may notice in my next letter, this was the foundation of a most valuable accession to the Irish exports. The free export of Irish Cattle, Butter, Tallow and Provisions to England, added to the usual channels of consumption, one which next to the home trade was, and is, and ever will be the best, because the most certain and the most expeditious in its returns: it compelled an improvement of quality and manufacture; because the Cattle, Provisions and Butter of England, were better than those of Ireland, and it became, as it has continued ever since, an object with the Irish Merchants who valued their character and connections, to furnish England with articles as much like its own as possible. And it is thus to the opening of the English ports, that we may trace the great amelioration of Irish produce. It gradually promoted a larger and better scale of pasturage: this created some temporary commotions in the South; but thanks to the Potatoe, it did not diminish the general produce of tillage. These two causes operated differently on the agricultural system, yet both favorably for Ireland: a third intervened which gave the preponderance to tillage in process of time; this was the system of Corn Laws which begun in 1758; Mr. Young indeed says that those Laws have tended to convert "some of the finest pasturage in

the World into the most execrable tillage on the face of the Globe" as he adduces facts to prove his assertion, we must believe him, and we may admit that the Corn-Laws might have been more judicious; yet Mr. Young has lived to witness not only a prodigious increase in our tillage, but a very great one in our pasturage, our population, and our trade.

My subject has led me to encroach on the order of time: let me return, and conclude this letter with some details of trade and manufactures between 1750 and 1764. The decennial average ending 1760 shews an annual increase of nearly a million, and a favourable balance of more than £400,000 The proportion of the trade in this decennial average will appear as follows:—

Exports to Britain	£1,274,569	7s.	0d.
Foreign	727,784	18	10
Total	£2,002,354	5	10
Imports from Britain	1,015,306	2	10
Foreign	578,858	4	3
Total	£1,594,164	7	1

The annual export of linen on a triennial average ending 25th March 1762, was 13,661,337 yards, cambrick 9,183 yards, and 23,141cwt. of yarn;———The woollens imported were 369,809 yards annually on the same average, and the wool, worsted and yarn exported, was 111,183 stones. The Beef and Pork exported on a quadrennial average ending 25th March 1760, 161,235 barrels of the former, 37,138 barrels of the latter; and in the next

four years, the annual average rose to 195,869 barrels of Beef, 49,101 barrels of Pork: The Butter exported was 207,246 Cwt. per annum on the first of these averages, and 237,564 Cwt. on the second. I may remark the first great increase in the import of foreign spirits took place between 1748 and 1752, during which period the annual average thereof was 778,308 gallons; it rose in the next four years to 1,198,898 gallons per annum, then fell to 904,320 gallons per annum till 1760; from which to 25th March 1764 it was 1,340,685 gallons per annum; it is remarkable that while the import of spirits declined in the period between 1756 and 1760, the quantity of home made spirits paying duty was reduced to nearly half of what it was in the preceding four years, and to less than half of what it became in the four years, ending 25th March 1764. In that same period the beer which paid duty was less by 10 per Cent than in the preceding period: this corresponds with a very considerable diminution of the import of Barley and Malt from Britain, and would lead to the inference, that Ireland depended in a great degree on England, at that time, for that sort of grain which was converted into liquors; while the very considerable increase in the import of Flour shews that Ireland felt the effects of the bad harvest of 1757 in common with the rest of Europe. But notwithstanding the calamity, the balance of quantity of corn imported was on the decline; for it had been more than 183,000 barrels per annum on an average of twelve years preceding 25th March 1756, and it was only 106,912 barrels per annum in the four following years. This fact gives strength to my conjectures as to the time when

a cause to which I have been assigning so much importance, *began* to operate. The operation of this and the other alledged causes, with the proofs thereof, will appear in my next letter.

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER VII.

I HAVE stated my views of some of the real causes of Irish prosperity. It may be well now to premise, that they owed much of their efficacy to their co-existence; for though the increase of produce was valuable, inasmuch as it rendered Ireland independent of other Countries for the necessaries of life, yet a surplus of produce is of little importance except there be a ready and steady vent for it. It may be well also to suggest, that they were necessarily *gradual* in their operation; old habits of food, farming and trade, are like all other habits, difficult to overcome; therefore, though these causes began before 1760, their influence would not be generally felt for several years, nor have we yet perhaps, derived the benefit of their effects in all its plenitude. And as I remarked that while these two causes respectively stimulated the two main branches of agriculture, a third cause, originating about the same time, gave a gradual preponderance to tillage; I shall enter into a slight detail on this, in order to shew *how* it contributed its share to the general good, and then proceed to documents in proof of my opinions.

It was in 1757 and probably in consequence of the bad harvest, that an act passed to grant a bounty on grain and flour brought to Dublin by land carriage: it was to commence June 1758; but I cannot learn that any bounty was paid before 1762. Subsequent acts gave various

modifications to this, and granted other bounties on the same articles brought by canal and coastways. After an experience of frauds and collusions for about twenty years, it was enacted that the bounty should not extend to flour, unless it was merchantable, and bona fide sold for six shillings per Cwt. at least. That no check of this sort was devised in the first instance, is a proof of incapacity in the legislators, as glaring as the exclusive bounty on land carriage, which, of all other modes of conveyance ought to have been least encouraged, because most consumptive of time, stock and money. But, however objectionable in principle; however preposterous in detail; still this act was not so useless in fact, as Mr. Young has supposed: it certainly had the effect of encouraging farmers to carry their corn to Dublin; for the day had not been very far distant when some of them (you and I know one) had taken corn there and sold it for little more than the expence of carriage. The chief effect however, was the erection of mills in different parts of the country, which, according to Newenham, p. 137, amounted to 248 by the year 1790, and some of them may rank with the finest in the world. Young has asserted, vol. 2, p. 244, that it was found by experience, that the bounty amounted to near 20 per cent. more than the real expence of carriage: this was a very decided prospect of premium to those who could embark on a large scale, and gentlemen of fortune were induced by it to erect mills: these mills became so many markets where the farmers were always sure of a current price for their wheat, and whence the towns were always sure of a supply; and as they gradually increased,

the preponderance which I have stated, increased in favour of tillage. It is thus indirectly, perhaps unexpectedly, that the system of corn laws operated favourably for the country: those instantaneous and vast effects which gentlemen have ascribed to it are not to be found; for we see in Newenham's Appendix, No. 2, that the annual import of flour into Ireland was less than 45,000 cwt. the four years ending 25th March 1760, which includes the bad harvest; that it rose to near 69,000 cwt. in the four years ending 25th March 1772, and that it was more than 62,500 cwt. in the twelve years from 1760 to 1772.

I proceed now to my proofs. The opening of the English ports to Irish cattle and their produce, immediately extended the pasturage of Ireland: this is stated to be the ground of the outrages of the White-boys who began about 1761, and though it cannot be doubted, that many fine pastures were ploughed up a few years after; yet it is manifest as well from the home consumption of woollens and meat and butter by an increasing population, as from the increased exports which I am about to exhibit, that the quantity of ground under pasture was considerably greater in 1772 than in 1758:—

Annual	Average.	Barls. Beef.	Cwts. Butter.	Cattle.
1752	1756	163,525	206,307	29
1756	1760	161,235	207,246	1029
1760	1772	197,724	265,842	1568

The necessary effect of the culture of the Potatoe was an increasing produce of tillage: let us see how this produce shews itself in trade. And first in imports:—

Annual Average.		Qrs. Barley and Malt.	Qrs. Oats.	Qrs. Wheat.	Barrels Oatmeal.	Cwts. Flour.
1752	1756	87,228	412	34,234	5606	17,835
1756	1760	34,556	1528	29,560	2181	44,923
1760	1772	32,283	784	20,788	3228	62,668
1768	1772	29,566	1165	27,835	7082	68,786

The exports in the same period were

Annual Average.		Qrs. Barley and Malt.	Qrs. Oats.	Qrs. Wheat.	Barrels Oatmeal.	Cwts. Flour.
1752	1756	2475	4835	2	13,125	....
1756	1760	5365	7224	938	9763	....
1760	1772	5954	11,058	876	17,598	....
1768	1772	6084	18,633	2036	25,953	....

Considering Grain as a mere article of commerce, we find, that the quantities which passed through the Merchants' hands, as imported and exported, were annually as under—

1752	1756	129,186 Qrs. Corn.	18,731 Bls. Meal.	17,835 Cwt. Flour.
1756	1760	69,171	11,944	44,923
1762	1772	71,743	20,826	61,885
1768	1772	66,318	33,034	68,786

Thus it appears that the corn trade had experienced no small diminution, and that it had been all along inconsiderable; being as A. Young observes of it when he wrote, a simple import of a necessary of life, and consequently declining in proportion as the produce increased at home.

Considering these tables of the corn trade as tests of the progress of tillage, we find that the grain in which Ireland abounded was Oats, of which it furnished an increasing quantity throughout this period of twenty years, but the remarkable increase began from the year 1760: we find that the grain next abundant was Barley, of which the import gradually decreased, though the home-made Spirits paying duty, had increased from 540,682 Gallons in 1756 to 781,332 in 1772, both averages of four years; we find, that though the import of wheat was reduced, that of flour was increased in a greater proportion; so that we may reckon, that the wheat and flour imported in four

years ending 25th March 1772, exceeded that of the four years ending 25th March 1752, by a quantity equal to 18000 barrels of wheat per annum. Finally we learn from Newenham's appendix No. 4, that the annual average of excess of imports was 190,184 barrels from 25th March 1752, to 25th March 1756, and that it was reduced to 77,311 barrels from 25th March 1768 to 25th March 1772.

At the same time, it is unquestionable that the population had risen in the eighteen years from 1754 to 3,100,000 at least; for population is progressive; and if it was 2,372,000 in 1754, and 4,206,000 in 1791, the year 1773, which is the middle year of the interval, ought to exhibit a population of 3,150,000; therefore Ireland fed one third more of people in 1772 than in 1754; the produce of her tillage was increased one third in these eighteen years, and as there is no reason to suppose that the quantity of acres under tillage had increased *in the same degree*, we may ascribe the difference to the gradually prevailing use of the Potatoe.

It appears from these Tables, the growth of wheat did not keep pace with its consumption; whence I infer, 1st. that the bounty had not yet produced its peculiar effect. 2d. that the present course of crops, in which wheat succeeds Potatoes, was not then general: and if we reflect that the culture of this root, as a chief article of food, was likely to originate among the lowest of the farmers, and in the poorest grounds; we may conclude that Barley or Oats would be the succeeding crop as it is to this day in many of the mountain farms: and this conclusion is justified by the preceding statement of the corn trade. That

the present course, did not prevail earlier ought not to surprize us; for I think I have heard say, that it was not unusual to leave the Potatoes in the ground all through the winter, digging them as wanted, and we know from Young that it was common to take two successive crops of this root, leaving the smallest in the ground when those fit to use were dug out; in both these cases, and in all poor or ill-manured land, people could not succeed with wheat; but a precedent for this practice had existed for thirty or forty years in Lancashire, the knowledge of which might have travelled to Ireland; or if not, the obvious advantage might have suggested itself as soon as wheat became the most marketable grain, which was when mills on a large scale were generally erected: then the Gentlemen first, and after them the farmers would adopt the present course. This improvement therefore began to prevail soon after 1772; when A. Young visited Ireland, it was gaining ground and was pretty well established round Waterford and in other places: accordingly we find the import of wheat and flour rapidly diminishing from that year, and the balance of Corn in favour of Ireland.

Another proof of the beneficial effect of the general culture of Potatoes, is furnished in the exports of Pork. It appears, that the number of barrels exported rose from about 20,000 to near 43,000 per annum in 20 years ending 25th, March 1772. It would have been soon found that the pig would thrive on Potatoes. The pig therefore, would in the first instance be fed on the offall of the cotters' table; gradually, as the Potatoe crop was enlarg-

ed, the stock of pigs would be increased, in order to consume the surplus; and if at any time, Pork became a very marketable article, the growth of Potatoes would be increased in order to sustain the stock of pigs; thus the mutual reaction of these two articles would create such a redundancy of produce in the Country, as would give ample security against the disastrous scarcities which had been hitherto so frequent; for though Mr. Newenham's assertion is not generally, if at all, true, that the farmer will not feed pigs when he can sell his Potatoes at 6d. per stone; yet it is to be expected, that he will sell a great portion of them, when he thinks they will pay him better by sale than by feeding; but when Potatoes were at 21d. per stone in 1801, we know that the feeding of pigs was not discontinued. Now, that this accidental combination might be consolidated into a system of permanent efficacy, something was wanted by which a steady and extending demand for pigs should be created, and this was soon found in the circumstances of England. An article that had neither the figure, nor the flavour, nor any thing of Bacon but its name, had long been exported in small quantities from Ireland; (for instance 7881 flitches per annum, Young Vol. 2, p. 265,) which was generally sold for less than half the price of the English Bacon. But in the latter end of the year 1773, an Englishman came to Waterford for the purpose of making up Bacon, in imitation of the fine Wiltshire flitches which supplied the London market. He could afford to give a better price than the Pork Merchant, and he had the preference; the Merchants were alarmed, and the Coopers' Journeymen in the true

spirit of lawless monopoly, waylaid the Englishman and his people; but could neither injure nor intimidate them: the farmer soon shewed that he could supply both parties, and the Englishman speedily found a successful competitor in his own line among the citizens of Waterford. This is the origin of a trade which began on a small scale, was scarcely noticed for some years; but at length extended beyond the most sanguine prospects of its Author: he lived to see it fully established, in spite of prejudices which are not yet extinguished, and he died at Waterford in 1800 less known than he deserved to be; less remembered than he ought to be; for it is to his enterprize and perseverance that Ireland owes a branch of trade which adds directly and indirectly almost a million to her annual exports. You will be surprized at this assertion; but recollect that Waterford alone has exported more than 200,000 flitches per annum; and their proportion of lard for some years past; this is about £400,000 per annum besides what Cork and Limerick do in the same way; recollect also, that the export of barreled Pork has increased *with* that of Bacon, and that the corn crops succeeding the Potatoes which fed these pigs, are a necessary consequence of this trade; now if an acre of Potatoes fattens four pigs, the number of acres cultivated to supply Waterford alone with bacon pigs exceeds 25,000, and if we reckon the two crops of corn taken from these afterwards at 16 barrels per acre, there are 400,000 barrels of corn brought into the export market in two years; so that I have perhaps rather under-rated the effect of the bacon trade when I state that it adds a million to our annual exports.

You are now in possession of my proofs, drawn chiefly from Mr. Newenham's Appendix; whether they will impress on you, my conviction of the real causes of our prosperity, remains to be ascertained; in the mean time you will perhaps grant to me that they present at the very first glance, a more satisfactory solution than the pages of Mr. Barnes or his original.

I am now to present you, from the same authority, the general trade of Ireland and her staple manufacture during the period under consideration. The general trade was on triennial averages ending 25th March, annually as follows:—

	Export.	Import.	Total.	Balance.
1762	£2,285,746	£1,696,764	£3,982,410	£588,982
1772	3,302,576	2,415,785	5,818,361	886,791
And in one year ending 25th March 1773	2,971,345	2,417,613	5,388,958	553,732
Trade with Britain this Year	2,447,028	1,850,613	4,297,641	596,415

I have two remarks to offer on this Table; first the exports diminished after 1772; this arises, as I understand, from an excessive export of Linen in 1771: the markets being glutted, took less in the succeeding years, till the glut had ceased. Secondly, four-fifths of the trade of Ireland was with Great Britain, and the balance was largely in her favour. Thirdly, the balance with the rest of the World was against her. Mr. Newenham's Appendix No. 11, shews that this was the state of the balances continually from 1773 to 1782.

The Linen exported on an average of three years ending 25th March 1772, was 22,178,913 yards, 1163 yards

Cambric, 35,563 cwt. Yarn. The Wool, Worsted, and Yarn exported was on the same average 129,191 stones per annum, of which more than 122,000 was Worsted: the new and old drapery imported was 586,641 yards.

Let us here pause, and take a review of the progress of Ireland, through the 18th Century.———At the beginning, the population was about 1,100,000; by 1731 it rose to something more than 2,000,000; by 1754 it was something less than 2,400,000; by 1773 we have reason to estimate it at 3,150,000. The rent *perhaps* 1,500,000 at the beginning, was 2,000,000 by 1725; rose to near 7,500,000 (Young Vol. II. p. 87,) by 1773, if we reckon no rise between that year and 1776 when Young visited Ireland. He states that in some parts of the country, rents had doubled since 1756 and quadrupled since 1736.—The total of the export & import trade was little more than a million in the beginning of the century; it rose to near two millions by 1730, to more than £2,600,000, by 1750, to nearly £3,600,000 by 1760, to more than £5,800,000 by 1772 and it was near £5,400,000 in 1773. The agriculture of the country produced every essential article of food in more than sufficiency for its population at the beginning of this century; it did the same in the period between March 1772 and 1776; therefore it had nearly trebled its produce: the surplus for exportation was treble in quantity on an average, excepting Wool, which declined because it was wanted at home. The manufactures for home consumption encreased nearly as the population; for we have seen that the greatest import of

Woollens was less than 600,000 yards of all sorts, but the export of Linen was raised from less than 1,500,000 yards in 1712 to an average of more than 22,000,000 in 1772. In short; an increase of population about three-fold; of rental about five-fold; of trade about five-fold; of agriculture for home supply and for export about three-fold; of manufactures for home demand about three-fold; of the staple manufacture for export nearly twenty fold: Such is the progress of Ireland from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the time when the revolt of the American colonies crippled her trade, and paved the way for her legislative independence.

From 1775 to 1782 is a period which almost all have combined to describe as one of great commercial and general distress: it is true that the lessened demand for Linen must have caused some sufferings in the North; an Embargo was laid on provisions and this embarrassed the South, but I have always read the impassioned descriptions of the politicians and writers of this period with scruples about their truth, because they seem incompatible with the readiness with which more than forty thousand men started up self-armed, clad and supported, in the midst of all this alleged misery, and because documents exhibit nothing to support them; no decay of general trade, no depression of prices: in short, nothing but temporary embarrassment, such as War will always create among those who are engaged in foreign trade, and temporary diminution of trade such as will always result from such wise and temperate schemes as non-importation agreements. Here is an extract from Newenham's Appen-

dix No. II.

Annual	Exports.	Imports.	Total.	Balance.
25th March 1775	£3,143,036	£2,508,414	£5,651,450	£634,662
1779	2,727,113	2,195,934	4,923,047	531,179
1782	3,398,596	2,994,264	6,382,860	404,332

His Appendix No. 6, shews that during the whole of the American war, the export of Beef was near 30,000 barrels per ann. less than before, but it was full 35,000 barrels per ann. more than in the ten years of peace which succeeded it: the export of Pork during that war encreased about as much as that of Beef declined, and it must be remembered that these returns do not include either Beef or Pork taken for Government use at the different ports of Ireland which annually amounted to more than 60,000 barrels of both sorts. See Young Vol. II. p. 362. as well as near 9,000 cwt. Butter, so that in fact, the export of provisions encreased, and that of Butter decreased only 11,000 cwt. per annum instead of 20,000cwt. as would appear by the Appendix No. 6. Of the eight years between 25th March 1776 and 25th March 1784, the annual average export of provisions was, Beef little more than 171,000 barrels; Pork 84,000 barrels; and Butter 250,000 cwt.

If we may rely on Young Vol. II. p. 364 the decrease in the export of Linen was inconsiderable; and I see by Mr. Newenham that before the end of the war the export was greater than ever, for he states it to be 25,044,725 yards plain and coloured in the year ending 25th March 1782. In the same year the export of Woollens was, on an average of three years, 213,661 yards and the import 631,240 yards.

But in this period of war the long lamented restrictions on the trade of Ireland were removed, and at its close her legislative independence was established. It has been the fashion to assert, that these concessions proceeded from the fears of the British ministry. I have in a former letter analyzed the assertion of English *want*; let us now see how that of its *fear* will stand the test of investigation.

Some restrictions were removed in 1765; some in 1775; but they have been called trifling; be it so: such as they were, they were removed when no suspicion of fear could exist. In April 1778 a member of the English House of Commons, who was of the ministerial party, moved that all, or almost all, the remaining restrictions should be taken off: this was (if I recollect aright) opposed by some of the opposition, and by petitions from various commercial and manufacturing interests: it ended in a partial permission to trade with the British settlements in America and Africa, woollens cottons and iron wares being the chief articles forbidden; and in a declaration that Irish built Vessels were to be considered as British built. These concessions have been also called trifling; be it so; the English ministers wished to grant more, but the mercantile interest interposed, and prevailed: there was no fear in this.

I ought not to omit to notice, that in consequence of this discussion in Parliament, a bill was brought in for the relief of the English Catholics, with the hearty concurrence of the ministers: it passed *unanimously*. With the approbation of ministers a bill of like tendency was

brought into the Irish House of Commons; it passed after *violent opposition.*

Ireland was disappointed that no more was conceded, and non-importation agreements began; they spread rapidly in 1779. Ireland was alarmed at the prospect of invasion, and the volunteers commenced: they too increased rapidly in 1779: by the close of 1778, I believe, the scattered companies were already united and organized; but soon after, they exceeded 40,000 men in arms. These are the two powerful instruments to which Gentlemen have been fond of ascribing their total emancipation; but much had been done before they existed; and what after? In the spring of 1779, another attempt was made in the English House to remove all restrictions, *except* that on the woollen trade; the minister interposed his veto, and nothing was done. There was no fear in this.

In the autumn of 1779 the Irish Parliament passed a resolve that nothing but a free trade could save Ireland: the English manufacturers had become very indifferent to the question; the English opposition moved a vote of censure on ministers for "endangering the loss of Ireland"; and in the close of the year, the minister himself moved, that all the remaining restrictions should cease, in a speech which demonstrated, not his fear but his conviction: at his word the obnoxious acts were repealed, and the trade of Ireland was free. But this concession led to another demand: it was said that a free trade could be insured only by an independent legislature which the English minister did not think proper to grant. From 1780 to March 1782 he persisted. There was no fear in

this. Then he resigned; and the Rockingham party, the friends of Ireland, came into power. One of their very first measures was to procure a repeal of those acts which professed to secure the dependence of Ireland on the English legislature; *was there any fear in this?* I leave it to the patriots of this day to settle with the surviving patriots of that day, whether those rapturous expressions of gratitude and eternal affection were not the genuine and merited feelings of the heart; whether the British friends of Ireland were impelled by *fear* to do that in the honey moon of their power, which Lord North had so long refused to do in the face of all that Ireland could oppose to him. If there was no fear, it is base ingratitude, now to say, that there was; if there was, it was vile dissimulation then, to talk of "union harmony and cordial affection", for as the Scripture says "there is no fear in love", we may say there is no love in fear.

But enough was not yet done; a simple repeal of the acts was deemed by some of the patriotic party insufficient, and they demanded a full renunciation of all right, on the part of England, over the legislature of Ireland; this also was granted by a new administration early in 1783 when preliminaries of peace had been signed with America. *Was there any fear in this?*—It was done however; the two legislatures were independent; the empire was at peace; and Mr. Barnes tells us "all the strings of the Irish harp were in tune". And what were it's notes? So early as 1784, disappointment, distresses and loud outcries for protecting duties and non-importation!

I have already shewn from Mr. N—s tables, that in the last year of Ireland's dependence, she had a greater trade than ever; but this arose not from the removal of her restrictions, but from the extension of her commercial connexion with Britain. In ten years, her exports to Britain and colonies had increased £600,000 per annum from £2,447,028 to £3,044,104 while they had decreased with the rest of the World from £524,317 to £331,587. So the imports from Britain &c. had risen from £1,850,613 to £2,425,076, and those from the rest of the World had risen from £567,000 to 569,188. Thus it seems that the exports to Britain increased £600,000 per annum; and the trade with the rest of the World, which export and import together, was less than £900,000 per annum: left a balance of £200,000 against Ireland. But peace had not yet given scope to all her energies; let us see the effects of peace.

"Several of the Irish Merchants, in their eagerness to enjoy the newly acquired advantages of foreign trade, seem almost to have forgot, that foreign trade can only be supplied from the *redundance* of capitals, commodities and manufactures, over the demand for home consumption; and sacrificing the greater object to the lesser, precipitately pushed all kinds of goods to America and other Countries, and were much *disappointed* to find their remittances slow and precarious."——"Many of the Irish goods exported were of *such defective quality*, owing to the infant state of most of the manufactures, that the character and consequently the interest of Irish manufactures and commerce was very much inju-

red by their premature appearance in foreign markets." Macpherson's annals commerce vol. 4, p. 58 and note on year 1784. There seems one error in this quotation; the principal manufactures were not in a state of infancy; and it is therefore wrong to ascribe the defect of quality of the goods to the inexperience of the makers. Stagnation would naturally follow such disappointments, and it would be aggravated by the momentary stimulus which the eagerness of exporters had created; to this must be added, the decline of the linen export to Britain; for it seems that it was 9,000,000 yards less by March 1783 than in the preceding year, and that it rose only 3,000,000 in the year ending 25th March 1784; when it was 21,128,150 yards.

I know not what degree of distress prevailed in the North; but it was probably considerable in Dublin, for the mob was outrageous; outcries for protecting duties, though not entirely successful, had some effect in Parliament; the agreement for non-importation was sanctioned by the example of the Grand Jury of Dublin; and sedition ever active thought this a fit occasion to rear its head: but it was checked, and the tools of its machinations were admonished by the Attorney General.

These troubles produced an attempt to form a system of commercial arrangements with Great Britain, for which purpose a set of propositions was transmitted with the sanction of the Irish Parliament to the British Government: they were returned with considerable alterations, such as practice would superadd to theory: remaining however, substantially the same; but faction in both Par-

liaments professed to think otherwise, and faction prevailed in Ireland. The pretence was, that these improved propositions infringed on the independence of Ireland: It is not worth while to demonstrate the absurdity of this pretence; but I cannot forbear from quoting (once more) the speech of Lord Clare; speaking on this part of Irish politics he says (p. 49)—" I have been informed from authority which I cannot doubt, that this curiosity (infringement of independence) was struck out by a gentleman of distinguished ability, a native of this country, who has long been a member of the British house of commons; and that when he first stated it to the party with whom he acted, they reprobated the deception as too gross even for Irish dupery. He told them *I know my countrymen, and be assured they will swallow the bait.*" The event has fully established his sagacity and intimate knowledge of his countrymen; the Irish gudgeon did swallow the bait, plain and palpable as it was. Perish the Empire! Live the Constitution!! was the theme of Irish dignity of that day; a species of survivorship not altogether intelligible to a man of plain understanding; but the jargon was received with general and enthusiastic admiration, as a sublime effusion of Irish eloquence, and unanswerable proof of British duplicity. Will any man at this day be found to believe, that the forward characters in this Irish farce were duped by their British connections? No—*The solid interest of Great Britain and Ireland, and the fair foundation of their permanent connection, were sacrificed on the altar of faction; and in less than three years from the period of boasted final adjustment, did imperial Ireland come to a breach with the British nation on the important*

question of trade and navigation." Thus says my Lord Clare.—The amended propositions had been supported by him, then Attorney General, and by Mr. Foster; they were opposed by the splendid eloquence of Mr. Grattan; and though they were carried by a majority of nineteen, the Secretary abandoned the measure because he deemed that majority too small. Great demonstrations of joy testified the opinion and the ignorance of the people. An able Irish writer says "Thus failed the most useful and important measure that had ever been devised for cementing the interests of Great Britain and Ireland. Two consequences resulted from this failure: the first was *the signal retardation of Irish prosperity; the second was the creation of an imperative necessity for a legislative Union between the two Countries.*" Sketches of Irish History, London 1811, p. 31.

The propositions failed and the two Countries were left to go on separately as well as they could. Nothing external impeded Ireland. It had been loudly asserted by the one party, and vainly dreaded by the mercantile interest of the other, that her internal circumstances were more propitious than any country in Europe. What prevented their due developement? nothing that I see. Her prosperity progressed; not as much as vanity promised, and jealousy foreboded; but quite as much as sober judgment could expect, she had indeed some internal impediments;——she had an overweening faction; a pestiferous Parliament whose "tender mercies were cruel," like the destructive fondness of a foolish mother; and a numerous class of her children, speculative, indolent,

and unsteady, whose ardent imaginations grasped at magnificent results, without glancing at the combinations which produce them; who stumbled therefore at the first obstacles. These impediments would have some effect; but they could not countervail the energies of Ireland and her relation with England; England was still found to be her best customer, the gradual changes of whose circumstances, became the source and the security of new channels of prosperity.

I have already related the origin of the Bacon trade: it was becoming respectable in extent; for I find the export was nearly 30,000 flitches in the year ending 25th March 1788. And it increased progressively, being in the years ending 25th March as under—

1792	62,490 Flitches.
1796	125,085
1800	123,183

The export of Corn rose rapidly in quantity; but as this has been ascribed to the "effective bounties" enacted in 1784, these bounties demand some notice; they were chiefly as follows:—3s. 4d. per barrel on Wheat exported when its price did not exceed 27s. per barrel, and 1s. 11d. per cwt. on Flour: 1s. 7d. per barrel on Barley, when its price did not exceed 13s. 6d. per barrel: 1s. 5d per barrel on Oats, and the same per cwt. on Oatmeal, when Oats were at or under ten shillings per barrel. Export was forbidden when Wheat was 30s, Barley 14s 6d, Oats 11s. per barrel, and prohibitory duties on import of grain were imposed when the prices were under the rates at which export is forbidden; such is the outline of this

piece of legislative wisdom; the first obvious remark on it is, that it gave more encouragement to the export of grain than that of flour and meal, which is directly contrary to what ought to have been the case, if bounties were at all allowable. Second that it opposed the corn Merchant to the Farmers; for it was the interest of the former to buy and export, it was therefore their interest to keep grain down at export prices, and if possible at bounty prices, in order to strengthen the inducements of foreigners to give orders. Thirdly it put about £50,000 per annum into the pockets of the foreign consumers of Irish corn, which Mr. Newenham says was about 14 per cent on the value exported: this is the true effect of all bounties; for though the Irish Merchant received it in the first instance, yet he would reckon it in diminution of the price he paid for the corn, and would sell accordingly; and as all Merchants will sell for five per cent profit, or if they cannot get so much, for less, (which the Irish exporter would have got equally if no bounty existed,) the whole benefit of the said bounty was transferred from the Irish to the foreign dealer, and by a similar process from the latter to the consumer. Now, as I believe that England and some of her colonies were the chief customers of the corn trade, the fact is, that Ireland paid England 14 per cent. for consuming her corn; then the question is whether England would have eaten it without such an inducement; and on this question hangs the only excuse for this system of "effective bounties" but I apprehend that the question must be answered in the affirmative, and the bounties altogether condemned, if we reflect, that England had gradually, though with some intermis-

sions, passed from being an exporter, to be an importer of grain : and there is therefore every reason to believe, that the fair price between farmer and consumer, through the intermediate channels of dealers, would have found its level, without the officious indulgences of Parliament : even as it has done with a great increase of trade for some years past, though no bounties have been paid.

The "effective bounties" may indeed have given a stimulus to the Country, though they had no effect of importance even in this sense, till the year ending 25th March 1787 ; but that stimulus would have been as transient and as injurious as some that I have lately noticed, unless there were steady channels of consumption, and these are the true causes of the great export of Corn. The gradual operations of these causes which I have stated, prepared Ireland to meet and prevent the growing wants of England with an adequate supply ; and as wealth and population have increased those wants, the encouragement to produce aad export has increased on our side, till we are in a fair way of demonstrating, that the two Islands can support themselves and their colonies, independently of the World.

That there is good reason for what I have now suggested, will appear from a brief review of the Corn trade of both Countries. During the American war, the price of Corn fell very considerably in England ; she had a very plentiful harvest in 1780, and in that and the two next years, she exported more than she imported. During the same time the exports of Ireland were less than they had been ; as will appear by the fol-

lowing table of the excess of corn exported above imports, taken from Newenham's (years ending 25th March, the annual average excesses were)—

1772	to	1776	....	112,282 Barrels.
1776		1780	....	56,797
1780		1784	....	41,912
1784		1788	....	449,375
1788		1792	....	836,001
1792		1796	....	535,102
1796		1800	....	565,585

It appears that after the enactment of the bounties, a very great increase of export took place; but I am in possession of a document, which our worthy representative permitted me to copy a few years ago, shewing the exports of Ireland from 1787 to 1809, and by this it appears, that in the two years ending 25th March 1788, the quantity of Corn and Meal exported was nearly 1,300,000, Blls. of which nearly three-fourths was oats and oatmeal; these two years then furnished the great part of the first quadrennial average *after* the bounty; now it happens that in the two years ending 25th December 1787 the import of Oats into England and Scotland exceeded 900,000 quarters. In the two years ending the 25th March 1792, Ireland exported nearly 1,300,000 barrels of Oats alone, which with about 270,000cwt. of Oatmeal was nearly equal to the average excess of export, and in the two years ending 25th December 1791 England and Scotland imported more than 1,350,000 quarters of Oats. The surplus of Wheat and Flour was very inconsiderable till after March 1788, when it rose suddenly and continued till March 1792, at a rate which it did not reach for more than ten

years afterwards; the surplus of Wheat and Flour exported in that quadrennial period was equal to about 850,000 barrels; the import of the same articles into England and Scotland exceeded 750,000 quarters in the four years ending 25th December 1791; but I have not the means of proving that Irish Wheat had yet found its way largely and acceptably into England. It is well to note the coincidence, because until *this* period, the balance of Wheat and Flour had generally been in favour of England: her great deficiency had been in Oats.

After 1792, the excess of exports fell off: principally in Wheat, then in Oats, and somewhat in Barley: the deficient export of the two former I can account for only on the principle of demand at home, for the increasing population in Towns, and Country: that of the latter is accounted for by the Breweries on a large scale, which were then beginning to work; for the import of Beer declined from the year 1792 and very rapidly after 1796. This is one of those events that I reckon genuine sources of Irish prosperity; instead of sending out the raw material and getting it back manufactured, we have it manufactured at home to the manifest advantage of all parties; the Breweries are as steady a market for Barley, as the Mills are for Wheat; and both are better than the Merchant or the bounty system: they give employment to many hands on an article which does not depend on politics or fashion for its consumption, they are therefore a safe stimulus to population; they fix capitals which otherwise might have been dis-

sipated in schemes or pleasures; for it is vain to attempt at being a Brewer, without a solid capital continually applied: thus the Brewers have been eminently useful to their Country, and they have been useful also to themselves; for they now stand distinguished among the mercantile classes for all that, from which those classes derive their respectability. In the three years ending 5th January 1799 Britain took almost the whole export of Irish Corn and Meal.

Having dwelt on what might be called new branches of the Irish trade, let me proceed to the others—

Annual Average.	Beef.	Pork.	Butter.	Cattle.
1784 to 1788	144,886	86,530	299,569	18,857
1788 to 1792	125,729	92,723	308,823	23,288
1792 to 1796	121,105	136,588	293,661	5334
1796 to 1800	130,480	141,188	291,041	19,709

Here we see Beef declining: Pork rapidly increasing: Butter nearly stationary in these sixteen years but much greater than in the sixteen years preceding; we see live Cattle at length becoming an article of export worth notice, and on the whole the surplus of pasturage was increasing. In an average of three years ending 25th March 1782, the annual export of linen was 19,619,168 yards and 35,919cwts. Yarn: in a similar average ten years afterwards, it had risen to 37,663,748 yards of linen, 25,253cwt. yarn: and by 5th January 1802 the annual export was 39,678,469 yards and 17,958cwt. Yarn. In the first of these three periods Great Britain took almost all the linen exported by Ireland: I have not at present the means of ascertaining what proportion she took in the other periods; but I can say, from Macpherson's

Annals Vol. 4, p. 507, that her annual imports of Irish Linens, for three years ending 25th January 1799, was advanced to £2,363,824, the total export thereof from Ireland being in the same years £2,637,716.

Such is the progress of the great branches of Irish trade between 1784 and 1800 : but it would be wrong to pass by in silence the efforts made to profit by the privileges of free trade, which (it was said) could alone save the country; the chief results of the free trade were the export of woollens, and the direct communication with the colonies.— I shall exhibit a brief table of the exports and imports of woollens formed from Newenham, being the annual averages of three years ending 25th March 1782, 1792 and 1802 :—

	1782	1792	1802
Imports	631,240	1,251,795	2,551,471
Exports	213,661	362,997	20,035

I find by my manuscript document, that the export of those articles revived in 1788, and began to decline after 25th March 1792. In the mean time the imports of the same articles continually increased, and I find in Newenham, that this increase occurred most in Old Drapery, which rose from about 250,000 yards in 1780, to nearly 1,500,000 in 1800.

The trade to America and the West-Indies was not very considerable. The annual averages of the exports in five years, 1780 to 1784, were about 80,000 barrels of Beef and Pork, about 22,000 barrels Herrings, about 100,000 yards Woollens, and about 290,000 yards Linen, besides

smaller articles, the chief of which was Candles about 4000 cwt. The chief imports in those years were—Rum about 148,000 gallons—Tobacco near 900,000 lbs.—Sugar about 17,000 cwt.—Staves, Indigo and Cotton. In the year 1787 the number of vessels from the West-Indies to Ireland were 48, of which 16 were from Antigua, with about 330,000 gallons of Rum, about 47,600 cwt. Sugar, 142,000lb. cotton. In the years ending 25th March 1790, 1791, 1792, the state of the trade of Ireland with the West-India islands was as follows :

	1790	1791	1792
Exports	250,045	306,220	326,795
Imports	169,563	218,589	225,775
Total	£419,608	£524,809	£552,570

The chief exports in these years were about 1,500,000 yards linen ; beef and pork about 55,000 barrels ; butter about 27,000 cwt. ; candles about 3000 cwt. per annum. Flour, herrings, drapery and shoes inconsiderable. The chief importations were Rum near 275,000 gallons ; Sugar about 52,000 cwt. ; Cotton 3,091 cwt. Thus it appears that in twelve years the exports had declined ; the imports had increased, especially Sugar and Cotton. My authority for all this is M'Pherson's Annals, Vol. 4, and I regret he does not enable me to bring the account down to a later period ; but I find in Sir Wm. Young's Common-place-book of the West-India Trade, that the exports of Ireland to the Islands in 1804, were estimated at £371,560.

The general trade, by Newenham's Appendix, was in an annual average of three years ending 25th March 1792

Exports	5,061,913
Imports	4,079,906
Total	9,141,819
Balance in favour	£982,007

But the official value was much further from the truth now, than in former periods; the same Appendix gives the current value of exports and imports in the following years, each ending 25th March :—

	Exports	Imports	Total	Balance
1796	6,894,167	6,418,375	13,312,542	475,792 fav
1797	6,285,748	6,219,767	12,505,515	65,981 fav
1798	6,133,177	4,761,796	10,894,973	1,371,381 fav
1799	6,380,456	6,162,391	12,542,847	218,065 fav
1800	5,881,329	8,182,500	14,063,829	2,271,171 agt

This table speaks for itself: the preparations for rebellion in 1797, their explosion in 1798, diminished the mass of productive labour: the exports were fewer, the imports very sensibly declined; commerce and confidence and mutual wants seemed to sink under the gloomy apprehension of the impending storm; the storm burst with all its horrors; but it passed away speedily: wants and confidence revived; the imports of 1799 and 1800 exceeded all former bounds, and the balance of trade was very considerably against Ireland.

The union of the two legislatures at length took place, and according to the reasonings of the gentlemen whose opinions I combat, trade, manufactures and agriculture ought from that time to retrograde towards their primitive

limits; but facts are against them, and they are reduced to this dilemma; either the former great legislative epochs which they extol had not the alleged influence on Irish prosperity; or the Union, having as much influence as they had, is to be as much extolled; for the prosperity of the country has not retrograded but advanced with accelerated rapidity.

The devastations of the Rebellion in 1798 were followed by a defective harvest in 1799, and by a very bad one in 1800; so that the Union was ushered in with a prospect of trade by no means so prosperous, as that of preceding years, and this prospect was realized. Ireland scarcely exported 4,000 barrels of Grain between 25th March 1800 and 5th January 1802: but she imported considerably of Wheat and Flour and Meal, which was estimated at £260,000 in 1801 alone. All agricultural produce was more or less deficient in the same interval: beef, pork and bacon declined more than a third; butter about a ninth; Mr. Newenham states that the current value of the trade from 25th March 1800 to 5th January 1801 was £5,281,881 exported, £7,774,779 imported, the balance of which is £2,492,898 against Ireland. This is evidently not chargeable to the Union but to the disastrous harvests following so closely on the disorganization of the whole Island: the sum of the unfavourable balance of trade arising from these events in 2¾ years ending 5th January 1802 must exceed seven millions. But most of this sum has been lugged into a general average to form the pretext of an accusation against the Union; with what truth and candour

I now leave you to judge. Let us however, consider for a moment, whether this unfavorable balance was so injurious, under the peculiar circumstances of Ireland as has been pretended. Without entering into any disquisitions concerning what is called balance of trade, or into an attempt to distinguish in the aforesaid balance what was real loss, and what was not, I content myself with shewing that much of the real loss fell on those who do not excite a very tender interest in Ireland. Our trade with England is in British currency both exports and imports; we draw and remit therefore the same amount of British money, be the exchange what it may, for the sum total of trade: but we have large remittances to send to absentees, the amount of which being due in Irish currency, and remitted in British, are affected by the exchange. Now as one obvious, (though disputed) effect of the unfavourable balance was a gradual rise in exchange to about ten per cent above par, it follows, that the absentees suffered by so much, and as the importer had to pay an additional tax of ten per cent to his own Country in the shape of exchange, he would be compelled to buy cheaper, or to buy less, of the English Merchants and Manufacturers, because an addition of 10 per cent to the retail price would, and in fact did check consumption: so far the English suffered, and this more prominently when they consigned their goods instead of shipping them on order. In the mean time the very high exchange enabled the export Merchant to pay so much the more for all Irish produce, and in this way it became a premium given by the absentees to their occupying tenants;

and by the consumers of foreign commodities to the manufacturers at home.

From 1802 however produce increased, trade revived, and wealth flowed in. I shall draw my proofs from Mr. Newenham down to 1808, beyond which he does not go; he gives this view of the general trade in current value: the exports and imports of the year ending 5th January 1803 was £16,225,525, with a favourable balance of £917,299, the exports of that year being £8,571,412. In the year following he states—

The export of product of Land		£4,252,284	
Product of labour, of which Linen £3,734,226		3,949,088	
		£8,201,372	
Small Articles		40,115	
Foreign Goods imported		141,301	
Total export of Ireland in one year ending 5th Jan. 1804			£8,382,788
Year ending 5th Jan. 1806.	Home produce	8,436,933	
	Foreign	142,418	
			£8,579,351
Ditto Ditto 1807.	Home produce	9,314,854	
	Foreign	157,443	
			£9,472,297
Ditto Ditto 1808.	Home produce	10,116,385	
	Foreign	150,370	
			£10,266,755

Let us compare: the highest current value of exports before the Union was in the year ending March 1796 not quite 6,900,000: the current value of the exports of 1807 was, as here stated, above 10,250,000.

The Gentlemen on the other side must explain with more perspicuity than they have hitherto displayed, how

this increase demonstrates the impolicy of the Union, or I must continue to assert that it was either an innocuous; or a very beneficial measure: my reasons for presuming that it is the latter will probably appear in a future letter.

Let us now consider from Mr. Newenham the *quantities* exported. He states the Corn exported in 3¾ years ending 5th January 1804 to be about 1,370,000 barrels and 130,000 cwt. Flour: almost all this was in the two last years of that period: he states the annual average excess of Corn and Flour exported in the four years ending 5th January 1808, 616,151 barrels, being greater in the last year than in any of the three preceding. The other chief exports were as follows in annual average—

		Beef.	Pork.	Butter.	Fl. Bacon.	Cattle.	Hogs.
1800	1804	75,797	79,689	303,441	....	26,644	....
1805	1806	95,602	96,309	307,285	149,669	18,972	....
1807	1808	115,403	141,332	336,253	262,446	27,057	14,401

The export of Linen was on an annual average—

1800	1802	39,678,469	Yards.
1804	1806	41,456,366	----
1807	1808	40,012,443	----

These are the quantities of the great articles of Irish export; let my readers compare them with past periods and judge for themselves, whether, with an increasing population, Ireland has not also exhibited an increasing cultivation of the main sources of her wealth, up to the very close of Mr. N—s investigation, and let them then judge whether those investigations justify the inferences and the insinuations against what Mr. Barnes calls "that questionable measure" the Union.

But my manuscript document goes one year later than Mr. Newenham; by it I find that these were the chief exports of Ireland in the year ending 5th January 1809—

Corn	1,076,150	Barrels
Flour	5,737	Cwt.
Oatmeal	72,088	Ditto
Beef	122,064	Barrels
Pork	163,603	Ditto
Bacon	264,844	Flitches
Cattle	14,122	.....
Butter	348,856	Cwt.
Linen	43,986,396	Yards
Linen Yarn	25,392	Cwt.

The new drapery exported in that year was reduced to 14,447 yards, old drapery 657 yards, Beer 5685 barrels, Whiskey 512,098 gallons, produce of fishery almost nothing.——Let us compare the quantities of this year with two periods between independence and union; and since the union. The annual average of exports were these:—

		1784 to 1788	1792 to 1796	1802 to 1806	 1809
Corn and Meal,	Barls.	449,375	535,102	559,570	1,151,760
Beef	Ditto	144,886	121,105	111,673	122,064
Pork	Ditto	86,530	136,588	110,425	163,603
Bacon Flitches		29,583*	125,085*	184,956	264,844
Butter Cwt.		299,569	293,661	294,415	348,856
Linen Yards		35,487,691*	46,705,319*	43,534,971	43,986,396
Linen Yarn Cwt.		27,275	20,601	7075	25,392
New Drapery Yards		315,111	174,036	20,069	14,447
Old Ditto	Ditto	7747	128,630	668	657
Cattle Head		18,857	5334	21,941	14,122
Beer Gallons		125[illegible]*	766*	5718	5685
Whiskey Ditto		579*	1216*	1,044,548	512,098

Note, the articles marked* in the first and second columns, are not taken from Newenham, but from my manuscript document and they are not the averages of four years, *but the actual export of the years ending March* 1788 *and* 1796. Note also, that in drawing this comparison, I have not selected years of contrast; for that ending 25th March 1796 was a year of remarkable export: for the Linen exported in the year preceding it, was four millions of yards less; ten millions less in the year succeeding it; and thirteen millions less in the year after. So likewise in the Drapery, the export of the year preceding this was about 175,000 yards less, and about 225,000 yards less in the year succeeding.

It may be proper to remind you that Sir John Newport's admirable act on the Corn trade passed in 1806; that soon after, the Americans began to be out of temper about orders in Council, &c. and to indulge us with Embargoes, non-importations and so forth; and that in 1808 the glorious insurrection of the Spaniards against a foreign usurper, introduced our armies into the Peninsula where they excite the admiration of the World. All these events have powerfully contributed to the commercial prosperity of Ireland: the Corn trade with our best customer therein, is no longer shackled by bounties and restrictions; the Irish farmer has the certainty of a second market; his produce and our export thereof continually increase. Our only rivals in this trade have excluded themselves from the competition by embargoes, and now by war. The Peninsula occupied

in self-deliverance, and overrun by contending armies, cannot furnish even its former scanty proportion of subsistence; it looks to the British Empire, and we are that part of the British Empire which chiefly supplies its wants: this last is a temporary source of wealth; but the other two are permanent, and America will find, that these Islands will be shortly more independent of her for agricultural produce, than she will be of us for manufactures.

I have not the means of shewing the progress of the general trade further; but I can exhibit a document for the authenticity of which every export Merchant in Waterford can vouch: and as it is one which adds to the fair fame of our City, while it illustrates my position of the gradual progress of Ireland for 160 years accelerated rather than retarded since the Union, I have double pleasure in inserting it here; let the Gentlemen whom I confute, make what they can of it for their side of the question. Exports from the Port of Waterford, from April to April in the following years—

	1809.	1810.	1811.	1812.
Wheat Barrels	49,199	56,410	118,486	125,553
Barley Ditto	2,957	12,957	61,666	69,023
Oats Ditto	289,237	143,826	121,329	133,017
Flour Cwt.	8,795	37,089	51,102	54,849
Oatmeal Ditto	14,946	4,879	10,801	5,578
Butter Ditto	89,534	95,266	98,247	93,359
Bacon Flitches	224,810	203,376	222,349	234,601
Lard Cwt.	10,289	8,994	12,175	13,727
Beef Barrels	7,850	5,780	8,927	9,301
Pork Ditto	18,865	16,195	17,719	21,719
Rape-seed Barrels	551	2,235	359	136
Total Value	£1,451,482	£1,367,261	£1,133,804	£2,021,143

Thus Waterford exports in agricultural produce alone, more than two-sevenths of all that Ireland exported in the best year between independence and union.

I think I have stated enough to prove that the produce of Ireland has considerably increased since the Union; but there is another proof which I cannot omit, though my letter has already exceeded all usual limits; and that is the fact mistated by Mr. Barnes of the revenue of the grand canal: it appears by Mr. Newenham p. 202, that this revenue rose from £36,944 in 1800, to £70,407 in 1807; nearly double in seven years: I know not whether this indicates a double quantity of goods conveyed; but the quantity must be considerably increased and this proves the increase of trade.

But the imports—Mr. Barnes has discovered that, because the imports of English manufacture amounted to only £99,943 per annum in seven years ending 1796, and to £157,007 per annum in seven years ending 1803, Ireland has *been injured* by an increased importation amounting to near £60,000 per annum since the Union, p. 49. I have already adduced this sentence as a specimen of his skill in political œconomy, and have now to add that, as the Union begun in 1801 there are but three years of this formidable argument to go against its account; the other four years he may add to the average of the preceding seven, as he is fond of averages, and so diminish the difference, if it will be any satisfaction to him; but to any plain apprehension, it appears very natural that if population and wealth increase, imports will do the same; and as it is a very

favourite dogma of Mr. N—that population has increased continually, and a very incontrovertible fact from the statements of this letter, that wealth has increased also, it will not alarm but chear the friends of Ireland, to find that she can import more than she could, and that her children enjoy more of the convenencies and comforts of life than they did.

But while I refute Mr Barnes's inference, my argument of the wealth of Ireland would derive no great strength from his statement; neither would it be very gratifying to the alleged "jealousy of English monopolizers", to find that while they were taking Irish manufactures to the amount of 2 or 3 millions a year, we took back scarcely a twentieth part of that sum in English manufactures: let the English folks be quieted, and my argument strengthened, by the assurance that Mr. Barnes's statement is entirely groundless: I find in M'Pherson's Annals Vol. IV. p 505, that the annual value of woollen goods alone, imported into Ireland from Great Britain in three years ending 25th March 1799, exceeded £550,000, and cottons more than £140,000, and wrought-iron, cutlery, and wire more than £110,000, being together £800,000 per annum, besides other articles which may be seen at large in my reference. Indeed this statement of Mr. B— is so palpably erroneous, that I almost doubt whether he and I are not at a loss to understand each other in the term "English manufactures", as much as in that of "Inland Navigation" either his figures are wrong, or he means to insinuate that cloth and calicoes and cutlery, are not, all of them, "English manufactures".

Mr. Barnes has, as I before hinted, laid some stress on the balance of trade, in which he has abridged and enfeebled the remarks of Mr. Newenham: but as this latter Gentleman has been chastized by an able writer, I shall simply refer you to him, and content myself with quoting from him a fact concerning exports and imports, which shall close my report. This writer gives the following statement of the trade of Ireland in 1808, which demonstrates its rapid increase since the Union—

	Official Value.	Real Value.	Total.
Exports	£5,696,807	£12,577,517	£21,437,842!!
Imports	7,129,507	8,860,325	

(Sketches of Irish history, p. 40.) Here the official value exhibits a balance against Ireland of £1,432,610; while the real balance was £3,717,192 in her favor!! now, Mr. Newenham's ravings and Mr. Barnes's re-echoes on this subject were drawn from official value, the fallacy whereof is too plain to need demonstration; but if any one should find leisure and inclination to peruse this subject, I refer him to another work of Mr. Newenham entitled a statistical and historical enquiry on the population of Ireland 8vo. 1805, p 140, &c. where he will find the difference between official and current value duly appreciated, and the post-union prosperity of Ireland fairly inferred.

I am glad to arrive at the close of this subject: I don't pretend to knowledge and abilities sufficient to do it justice; but I think I have been able to prove, that they are wrong, who ascribe such powers of good and evil to the legislative epochs of Ireland as Mr. Barnes has done: I think I have been able to exhibit some reasons

for my opinion that her prosperity has been progressive from the days of her desolation to the present time; that the chief sources thereof are found in her own peculiar circumstances and in those of the sister Island; that some obstacles thereof have been Rebellions, Demagogues, non-importations and such like, and that there is irresistible truth in the following assertion of the Author of sketches of Irish history p 82 " whatever representations ignorant and illiberal individuals may endeavour to diffuse, there is no position more incontrovertible, than that, *no Country, taking every circumstance into consideration, has advanced more rapidly in prosperity than Ireland has done since the year* 1800". The facts are before you : the legitimate inferences from them are sometimes omitted, and seldom brought out with the force of which they are susceptible, but they are at all times obvious to an attentive perusal. And that is sufficient for a work like this, which professes not to guide but to assist the judgment of the reader.

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER VIII.

THE national debt of Ireland has been made a subject of complaint against the Union, and Mr. B— after a very vague statement, proceeds to some intelligible hints of the inexpediency of that "questionable measure"; with some encouraging assurances to Irishmen, that if they unite to disunite, they need not apprehend disappointment: which assurances he backs with a piece of senseless rant, borrowed without acknowledgment, from one of the addresses of the old Volunteers. "Be persuaded Irishmen that whatever is morally just, can and must be finally accomplished: *to doubt the fact is to deny the existence of an over-ruling providence*, which ever favours the cause of justice and truth, and has sworn by himself the oppressed shall go free" p. 17. It would appear then, that what men think just, God must accomplish, or he ceases to reign in their estimation!! does it become such beings of a day as we are to measure the infinite and eternal One by our puny standard? surely, this Gentleman has forgotten the word of Jehovah to his people, "My ways are not as your ways; nor my thoughts as your thoughts": and the confession of a holy man of old "Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out." Surely, when we see how limited our faculties are, how much our judgments are warped by our passions, and how oppositely men estimate right and wrong in the daily concerns of private life; we may readily conceive how fallible such judg-

ments must be in the great concerns of nations, and how utterly incapable of comprehending the plan of Providence, by which the Almighty directs the energies, the interests, the whole existence of his countless creatures to one end, perfect, vast, and incomprehensible as himself. Surely it becomes such beings of a day as we are, to subject our judgments to his will, pronouncing with the poet "whatever is is best"; and to spurn with contempt those insolent and familiar appeals to divine Providence, which are too frequent every where: they too often defile Mr. B—'s pamphlet; but I content myself with the reprobation of this single instance, in testimony of my abhorrence of them all, wherever found. He who takes such liberties with divine Providence for rhetorical embellishment, is as foolish as he is blasphemous: and he who really believes such rant, stands on a level in the scale of rationality with those sailors of the South of Europe who worship the image of Santo Antonio and flog it if their prayers are not answered agreeably.

But though it is forbidden to scan the Almighty and his decrees, it is permitted us, in these lands of liberty, to sift and approve or blame the motives and measures of our fellow-creatures in our national affairs: and as Mr. B— has used this privilege to reprobate the Union through the financial circumstances of Ireland, let us enquire whether he has been so accurate and candid in his exposition of these financial circumstances that his inferences may be depended on. He says that the national debt was £2,464,590 in 1791 having increased £912,886 in ten years; but he has not found time or

convenience to explain to us how it happened, that in nine years of boasted independence and of peace, the revenue of Ireland was not adequate to the expences. He goes on to shew that in 8 years from 1791 the debt was increased about 15 millions, and that it rose by 1810 to 81½ millions: "a difference by increase of national debt since the *proposal* of Union in 1799, £64,044,316" p. 14—vastly minute; but vastly sophistical; and very well divided into periods that would catch the suffrage of a superficial reader in favor of the insinuation against the Union; but let us analyze a little more closely than he has done, and we may perhaps find that the insinuation recoils somewhere else.

The Nett revenue of Ireland on an average of ten years ending 25th March 1771, was £711,127 (Sheffield obs. 345) her present national debt commenced in 1773 (Parliamentary papers 1804). In the year ending 25th March 1784, the Nett revenue was £1,043,544 (Sheffield's obs. 351) and the funded debt was £1,527,600. Now we know that in the American war England had just been expending more than £100,000,000, and that the various wars since the revolution had cost England all her surplus revenue and a debt of nearly 250,000,000 not capital but sterling money, compared with which the debt of Ireland is nothing. This enormous expence was for what? for the integrity of the British empire; for all those political and commercial privileges which British subjects enjoy. Will the Gentlemen whom I oppose, explain to me why Great Britain alone should have paid for the

wars which it pleased the King of Great Britain and Ireland to wage, and Ireland should claim as a right the full participation of all those privileges which are contended for in wars? I dont know that this question excited much attention during the contest about free trade and independence; but I know that a great master in political œconomy had already noticed it. (Smith's wealth of nations Book V. chap. III.)

However, the free trade and independence were obtained, without any condition as to a participation in the expences that might be necessary in maintaining them. The privileges were to be in common, and Great Britain was to enjoy the monopoly of paying for them. All this was very pleasant as long as Great Britain chose to be so generous: accordingly we find that while she was increasing her debt at the rate of about 20,000,000 per annum during the French war, Ireland was taking it very easily as usual. "In 1793 at the beginning of the French war, the debt of Ireland was £2,440,390, and so long as we had none but a foreign enemy to contend with, *our war expences were scarcely a million in the year*" Lord Clare's speech 76. How then it may be asked, was the debt of Ireland so enormously swollen after 1793? let Lord Clare reply—"The military organization of the province of Ulster was complete on 1st. May 1795, and had got into a state of forwardness in the other provinces, before the end of that year; *it was therefore found necessary to increase the military force of the Country for our internal defence against a confederacy of foreign and domestic foes.* And accord-

ingly in the year ending Lady-day 1796, our war expences were double what they had been in either of the preceding years, and at every subsequent period, they have *progressively increased with the growth of faction and rebellion*, until we were obliged in defence of our own existence, to increase the public debt in the last year nearly six millions and a half, *and in this year above eight millions*—p. 78. By the first of January 1801 when the Union commenced this debt had risen to £30,190,056 and some very heavy expences incurred *before* that day were added to the debt *after* it. (See Parliamentary papers 1804.)

We see then, that the debt increased more than 26 millions in six years, and if we reckon that the ordinary war expences would have gone on at a million per annum, we must say that the Rebellion cost Ireland 20 millions in money; it cost her also much in blood, much in animosity, much every way to be regretted. Thus a vast portion of the debt was created before the Union and by the Rebellion.

The Union is blamed for many things which may be traced to other causes and for none more unjustly than for the increase of debt. We have just seen that at its commencement this debt exceeded 30 millions: we find that the sum raised by loan in its first three years, was only £8,708,652 by which a debt was created of £12,879,968 (Parliamentary papers 1804.) And here let me observe that pains have been taken to mislead our judgments by stating the subject in its most deceptive form without a palpable falsehood: we are told by these

Gentlemen that the debt is increased so much ; we are not told that before the Union, the debt created generally paid 5 per cent. interest ; and that since, it is generally funded at 3 per Cent so that the apparent increase is greater than the real one ; and this is evident even from Mr. B—'s own statement ; if he is correct which I doubt: he tells us the debt in 1810 is 81½ millions and the interest £3,942,150 which is about £4 13 4 per Ct. per annum : but on 25th March 1800 the debt was little more than 25½ millions and the interest was nearly 1,400.000 (Lord Clare's speech p. 77) which is about £5 7 6 per Cent per annum.

I have not at present, the means to ascertain whether Mr. B—'s statement of the increase of the national debt be correct ; but even if it be, the rate of increase since the Union is less by a million per annum at least than in the 3 years and 3 quarters before it ; supposing however that this were not the case, still the proportion which Ireland pays of the general expences of the empire has not varied, nor have her burdens increased proportionably with those of England ; for her prosperity has been less interrupted ; it has indeed been progressive, as I have shewn in my last Letter on our trade : but a question often occurs in the minds of many, why should we pay any thing ? why should not the days before the Union return when we provided only for ourselves ? to these questions I reply that if Ireland enjoys equal privileges with England either under separate legislatures, or under one united as at present, there appears no reason why Ireland should not furnish an equal proportion of contributions to the ge-

neral fund for the support of the Empire; but does she contribute an equal proportion? she pays less than one-eighth: her share in legislative representation exceeds one-fifth: her population greatly exceeds one-fourth, and if we were to credit the calculations of Mr. Newenham to the full extent it would now be nearly one-third; the annual revenue collected in Great Britain is nearly six pounds per head on the whole population, while that of Ireland is about one pound: when we know that the great part of both nations are labouring poor whose ability is nearly equal every where, and that the bulk of the revenue is raised on the other classes, will any man tell me that the nations are burdened in equal proportion? no—it is here that Ireland enjoys a privilege over England the extent of which can be duly appreciated only by those who lived in both Countries. Let us be content.

But Mr. B— has conceded this point when he ingeniously tells us "that if there were *equal* taxation, this fatal consequence would flow from the act of Union, that the Irish would be *more* burdened than the English, because they would enjoy no share of the *bonus* granted to the latter by the circulation of the interest of their debt among themselves" p. 16. What hindered the Irish from enjoying this delectable *bonus*? attempts have often been made to raise loans in Ireland; but they have rarely succeeded, because money is worth more than in England; and unless Mr. B— will contend that the English minister must buy his loans as well as his Beef dearer among us than elsewhere, he must be satisfied to see things go on as they do: but is there any regu-

lation which forbids an Irishman to purchase in British funds, and so "enjoy the *bonus*" if he pleases? certainly not: there *are* Irish proprietors in British funds and if they are few, it is because they know how to employ their money to more advantage at home, and thus enjoy a greater *bonus* than if they were stock-holders; but what if this imaginary grievance had no existence? if law or distrust compelled the Irish Government to raise its quota by loans at home; should we have ever heard the end of the reproaches and outcries against such oppression, such jealousy, and want of confidence, &c.? should we not have found in the extortions of Irish "monopolizers" the most fertile topics of argument against this "questionable measure the Union"? In fact would not such an absorption of Irish capital, whether voluntary or compulsory, have been a real grievance, an insurmountable obstacle to our prosperity, by diverting from its natural channels a capital which is not yet fully adequate to their supply? instead of Bankers, Merchants, Manufacturers, and spirited improvers of Land, all actively engaged in pursuits which identify the country's prosperity with their own, we should have been a race of idle and dissipated annuitants; if such a thing had been possible. Is it not therefore ungracious at least and captious, to urge that as a grievance, which is in fact a source of our prosperity? yet it is on such false and captious ground, that Mr. B— justifies what he writes about "Union almighty Union" against the present system of legislation!! There may be some Irishmen weak enough to listen to such nonsense; but I persuade myself that they are few indeed, and that their number di-

minishes daily, as the native good sense of the people emerges from the clouds of prejudice and pride which the factious have conjured up.

Mr. Barnes tells us that the revenue fell in 1810 so low as not to be able to pay the interest of the national debt; the revenue decreasing while the taxes increased: and adds triumphantly "for this great blessing we are indebted to a ten years Union." It is a pity he did not shew us how the Union procured this great blessing, and it would have been well if he had condescended to explain how a Country increasing in population, trade, and wealth, as he agrees we have, falls off in revenue. I dont profess myself at all competent to the solution of this problem, which has probably puzzled more than one Irish Chancellor of Exchequer, and would certainly puzzle Mr. Barnes; but I can help him to some hints towards a solution which he may pursue at leisure; if perhaps the finance committee do not anticipate him: there are such things as arrears, defaulters, collusions, peculations; there are such things as injudicious taxes, inefficient checks and regulations; there is such a thing as oligarchic influence, by which the financial departments are too often conferred on relatives or dependants of an oligarch who have no other qualification than their connection. If all these things are insufficient to account for the defalcations of the revenue, the remaining causes must be found some where else than in the poverty of the people, and if so, the Union has no share of the blame.

There is one point however, connected with revenue, in which it appears from Mr. N— that the Union is entitled to some praise, which these Gentlemen have not emblazoned with their eloquence, as far as I recollect, which therefore it may be well to notice. Newenham's Appendix notes—

That the rate of collecting customs and excise on an average of 7 years ending 1787, was - - -	£14	15	per Ct.
The rate of the same in 1808 was reduced to	8	18	..
The rate of collecting the Post-office in 1808	48	8	..
But the rate of collecting customs, excise, stamps and Post-office in Great Britain, is not quite - -	8	4	..

Though we have something yet to learn in this important branch of political œconomy, we have greatly improved *since* the Union: shall I say that "for this great blessing we are indebted to the Union"?

I pass from the revenue to some miscellaneous articles in most of which Mr. B— vents his spleen against the Union with the usual degree of candour and justice.

He talks of the roads—"They have acquired their superiority by abandoning the English system of statute labor, and pursuing an Irish system of road making" p 87) and this happy innovation, originating in the national feeling of 1753, saw the light in six years after, and in seventeen years after that produced roads which called forth the very flattering encomium of Mr. A Young. This sagacious reasoner proceeds to tell us that we may

with certainty conclude, that if the Union had taken place before 1759 the Irish system of road-making would not have existed, because the English would have objected to the passing of a law which questioned the excellence of their own system; and then he adds "in this law we see the absurdity of a legislature assuming the power of governing a Country, who are ignorant of the local circumstances, the feelings and habits of those they govern" p 38. Without dwelling on the confusion which pervades this sentence, let me just point out to you the spirit in which he writes: he assumes as certain the untried supposition that the English would not *pass this law;* and *from this law* most perspicuously and candidly infers the absurdity &c. &c. ! ! Has the twelve years Union given him instances that the English would be at once ignorant and obstinately adhesive to their own systems? I presume not, for if it had, he would not have amused us with assumptions: indeed we well know that in all local objects, the local information of the Irish members receives the marked attention which it deserves.

Let us however refer to the testimony of Mr. Young in his own work. "From this commendation, the turn-pike roads in general must be excluded; they are as bad as the bye-roads are admirable"——"it follows necessarily, that every person is desirous of making the roads leading to his own house, and that private interest alone is considered in it, which I have heard objected to the measure; but this I must own appears the great merit of it"——"The expence amounts of late years through

the whole kingdom to £140,000 per annum" (equal to one-fifth of the nett revenue in those days)—" But it is *not to this system singly* that Ireland is indebted for the goodness of her roads"——He then gives a description of " the wretched Irish cars" as he calls them, " by which " carriage is five hundred per Cent. dearer than in England," and ascribes to *them* the preservation of the roads; he therefore recommends one-horse vehicles and concludes with asserting that an English waggon would demolish an Irish road as soon as made, though it is perfectly durable under cars and coaches" Vol. II. p. 150.

It appears from this testimony that the advantage of the Irish system of road-making consists in the privilege which Gentlemen acquire of making bye-roads at the expence of the county, and in the privilege which the people enjoy of using their own single horse-cars at an expence of five hundred per Cent more than their English neighbours; and that the said roads would be demolished by a vehicle which the English roads are made to endure. I must confess that if there were no better arguments than these for the " Irish system", I should be in no way a convert to it; but besides other arguments, which I shall leave others to suggest, there is one which Mr. B— may extract out of a document entitled " The Absentee"— written by M. Edgeworth, on the admirable use to which this system may be applied, for proofs and illustrations of which he may search, if he pleases, the " public records" of every County in Ireland, whereby it may be found that this system has not only given the Gentlemen good roads to their houses, but can help many

a lazy tenant to pay his rent, who would be better employed on his farm. This is a contrivance to which England can furnish no parallel: there, he who uses the road most, pays most: the revenue is collected by surly fellows who have been known to shut their gates against Majesty itself, and is managed by commissioners who cannot oppress and will not favour. But the "Irish roads are excellent"——certainly—I say nothing against them in general; though we need not travel very far for some exceptions, and those glaring ones, till of late; but indeed they led to no great man's house and were much frequented by the peasantry. It is however undoubted that the roads are improved since Mr. Young's visit; for I know some turnpike roads that are admirable, and it requires less sagacity than candour to discern, that the improvement has not fallen away since the Union.

Mr. Barnes tells us that "the Cotton manufacture commenced with the independence of Ireland" page 48—He mistakes; a Cotton manufactory was established 1780 by Capt. Burke, which received considerable augmentation in 1782 by grants from Parliament and emigrations from Manchester. Mr. N—'s Appendix No IX shews the great increase of the import of raw Cotton and Yarn since the Union; it wants not much of being doubled, and the import of cotton goods from Britain is diminished. But Mr. B— tells us that there *was* a *great* export of cotton goods before the Union; now the total amount of such export on an average of 3 years ending 25th March 1792 was worth £12,135 per annum (Macpherson's An-

nals of Commerce Vol IV page 507) but the diminution of import is more than double that sum: therefore this manufacture has been considerably extended since the Union, even if it should appear that no exports now take place, which is not likely; but I am not prepared with documents to speak decidedly on this point.

Mr. Barnes insinuates that the Union has prevented the exportation of Irish printed Books to America: this is not true. The Union secured literary property in each Island from the piracy of the other; and as this is a species of property more abundant in England than in Ireland, the latter seemed to lose; but in fact lost no more than was strictly just; for there is no species of property which deserves more, and has obtained less protection from the legislature and the great ones of the earth than this. Genuine authorship is a commodity rarely and laboriously produced; it comes to a precarious market; its price is affected by a thousand paltry tricks, of which pirated editions are among the most injurious: it seldom repays the ill starred genius who produces it with the honor and profits he deserves: too often he is neglected, plundered, misunderstood, and insulted; he totters unsupported through the world, and sinks with sorrow to the grave: by and bye perhaps, a monument, the expence of which would have made him comfortable for life, protects his ashes, and attests his merit: but what avails it to him if he is idolized by the posterity of the cotemporaries who starved him;——is it from such an one that he would snatch his hard earned reward by pirated editions? no—would we propagate for gain the trash

of ephemeral Book-makers? no—there are n mberless works of standard worth and reputation, the property of which is open to the world, and on which our Printers may laudably and profitably exercise their speculations. But I can tell you that the decline of the export of Books to America arises from the great improvement of printing in that Country. I have seen specimens of printing, and paper, and engraving, superior to the productions of the Irish press, more correct, and much cheaper: indeed I question if America could not supply both Islands with Books as well executed and at lower rates than our Booksellers publish them, notwithstanding the high duties and the heavy expences of importation.

Mr. Barnes tells us of the Fisheries: how that of herrings was once very great and has now declined since 1785. Did the union frighten away the herrings? however, it may be some consolation to reflect, that as the export was never very great, our increasing population will help to account for any diminution; perhaps we may find also, that we are less dependent on foreign Countries in this respect than we used to be; (see Macpherson's Annals Vol IV 530;) in addition to this, it must be confessed that our coasts are not so regularly visited by the herring shoals as formerly. The Nymph bank is talked of as superior to the Dogger bank!! does Mr. B— not know that a company was formed at Waterford, since the Union, to try this bank; that Government advanced some money, and the company did the same; that two Vessels well adapted for the purpose were fitted out, and kept on various trials, under various directors, till the greater part of the stock was lost?

This ignorance was more to be expected from Mr. B— than from Mr. Newenham whom he has blindly copied.

But of all the absurdities that I have read in Mr. B—'s pamphlet, there is not a greater mass heaped together in a small compass, than that which is to be found in his 21st. page: one reason why Irishmen forsooth should "never lose sight of this great object" (repeal of the Union I presume) is "attachment sincere and unpurchased" to the Prince of Wales "his right, his honor, his glory are concerned"!! for (oh most dire and dolorous supposition) if this questionable measure had been carried 400 years earlier, the King of England would have lost his precedence at the council of Constance!!! since it was as Lord of Ireland, not as King of England that precedence was granted; whereof he adduces Ussher and Gibbon as testimonies, without citing in what part of their works. Do look at Gibbon Vol. VI p. 560 Dublin Edit: and you'll see how he treats this mighty matter: as to Ussher, I do not possess all his works, but I have a volume in which he notices these puerile arguments about precedence at the council of Constance, merely for the purpose of proving the opinion of some people, that Joseph of Arimathea visited *England* and that the Empress Helena and her Son were born there!! these arguments and others of like weight, among which was the assertion of a driveller that there were but four christian kingdoms, Rome, Constantinople, Ireland, and Spain, were used for the purpose of establishing the British Monarch's right to his place in the council; but whether they, or the prowess of the reigning Prince prevailed is of little consequence to us to decide; nor can we conceive that a Protestant Prince

like the Prince of Wales, would attach any other idea than that of perfect insignificance to the privelege of a seat and a certain rank in a Roman Catholic Council. This is therefore an argument in favor of disunion the force of which Mr. Barnes ought to have illustrated more clearly, if he could : in the mean time, we may be permitted to believe that a cause which is reduced to such miserable shifts of argument as this, has no rational ground for a claim on our approbation and support. The question is not whether the Union might or might not have taken place expediently 400 or 40 years ago; but whether under late and present circumstances, it is, or not, a beneficial event to Ireland.

For the present I have done with Mr. Barnes: my concerns demand my attention and these letters must be suspended till a more convenient Season; but I purpose to resume them as speedily as I can, in order to complete the plan which I sketched out in my second letter.

Enough has been already written to substantiate my charge, that this gentleman's Pamphlet is not fitted to guide our judgments on the political interests of Ireland. And as these Letters will shortly appear before our fellow-citizens, I hope that their perusal of them will excite their closer attention to the subject, the result of which will be, I trust, a conviction on the minds of those who would disturb the peace of their Country ; that we despise those over-strained allegations of supereminence which would feed our pride at the expence of our understanding ; that partial statements, illusive averages, sophistical reasonings, and appeals to prejudice, have lost their power

to delude us from the sober paths of investigation; and I feel confident that investigation will conduct us to the Truth, before whose radiant beams, the glare of nationality and the gloom of faction ought always to disappear; but it sometimes happens that men love darkness rather than light. I will not suffer myself to apprehend that this is the case of my fellow-citizens.

FINIS.

Houses of the Oireachtas