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E N T I T L E D,  
A R G U M E N T S F O R A N D A G A I N S T  
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BY RICHARD JEBB, Esq.

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Second Edition.

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1798.

BY APPOINTMENT

TO HIS MAJESTY

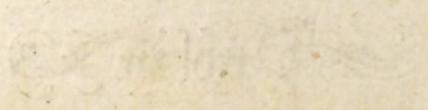
THE KING

OF GREAT BRITAIN

AND OF IRELAND

BY ROBERT BENTLEY

PRINTED



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1898

Houses of the Oireachtas

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE author of the following pages has, perhaps, an apology to make to the public for obtruding upon them observations on some subjects, which lie so much without the sphere of his pursuits and studies.—But the avidity with which every publication on the subject is received, and the silence of gentlemen best qualified to inform us on some of the most important topics, will excuse him for offering those remarks on commercial matters, which he is sufficiently convinced must be extremely imperfect. However, the sources of his information are well known—his facts he trusts will be found to be correctly stated—and his conclusions appear to himself fair and natural.

He has introduced, perhaps unadvisedly, one or two collateral opinions, of the propriety of which indeed doubts may be justly

justly entertained—particularly respecting the policy of our being *bound* to follow England in her support of a war, and of our contributing hereafter to the reduction of the debt of England.—But they so far conduce to the main arguments, by shewing, that, *if expedient*, the measures could be adapted with equal or greater convenience by our own Parliament.

In his observations on the Regency, it is unnecessary for him to say he means no allusion to certain venerated characters, who took that part on the question of Regency which the author censures.—Their views and motives have never been questioned—it is equally unnecessary for him to say, who they are, that he would thus distinguish from their corrupt associates.

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R E P L Y, &c.

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THE great question of an Union is at length formally announced; at least it has been declared by high authority that it is to be submitted to Parliament, and a publication has appeared upon the subject, generally understood to proceed from the pen of a person much in confidence.

That the feelings of the Country would be affected, that its pride, and perhaps its vengeance would be roused by the bare mention of the furrender of its legislature, the author of that publication seems to be apprized, and therefore wisely enough bespeaks a cool and calm discussion, to which he well knew the na-

ture of his subject little entitled him. The author of the following pages heartily concurs in deprecating both *passion* and *force*. It is with calm and dignified resolution that he trusts the nation will meet this injurious insult, and he hopes that it is not by *force* the minister will attempt to accomplish his project. But that some suspicion should be entertained on the latter ground, is no way surprising, from the extraordinary circumstances, under which the proposition is made—The nation panting and breathless after the horrors and agonies of a bloody rebellion, animosities, religious and civil, still distracting us—a most formidable army still and necessarily kept up—great discretionary powers as necessarily still exercised by the executive magistrate—under circumstances such as these, who will venture to express in the honest terms of virtuous indignation his opinion on the annihilation of our Parliament? Who will venture to speak the language with which a few years back the degrading project would have been received? The terror of the triangles and the gallows may perhaps operate as forcibly as the arguments of the Secretary.

The author of the publication alluded to, affects to consider *chiefly* the advantages to result to *Ireland* from the Union, and as the friend of *Ireland*, he uses his best arguments, such,

such as they are, in its favour. It would not be polite to question the veracity of a gentleman asserting his motives and objects, and therefore, without insinuating what might be the views of the *English* servant of an *English* cabinet, his work shall be treated as the *pure* and *disinterested* production of a true born Irishman, expressing the convictions of an unbiassed understanding.

The great and happy consequences of an Union, he expects, will be the calming and soothing the public mind—the removal of all religious and political animosities—the civilization of a barbarous and turbulent people—the introduction of industry and the arts, of a respect for the laws, of manufactures, commerce and wealth, and the consequent aggrandisement of the Empire in strength, power, and importance. If such indeed were to be the mighty consequences, if the magic of the Secretary's pen could extend the omnipotence of Parliament to the works of Nature, and annihilate the sea which separates the kingdoms, if English manners, English morals, English arts, and above all, *English Liberty*, the parent of whatever adorns and exalts England above the rest of the world, were to follow, who would not laugh at the silly declaimer that would talk of national pride and national independence? Nay, if these

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consequences were problematical, but the existence or safety of the *British Empire*, on whose safety and existence the happiness of *Ireland* unquestionably rests, were dependant on the adoption of this measure, on that ground alone the sacrifice should be made of national pride; and every good man should endeavour to soften down the warm feelings which characterise, and I think do not disgrace our country. But it is from a thorough conviction that none of those happy consequences are to be expected, on the contrary that the greatest dangers are to be dreaded, extending perhaps to the connection itself, that in my opinion this measure should be resisted.

The grand and primary consideration, paramount to every other, however important in itself, to trade, manufactures and civilization, is the effect on the Empire; on the safety and power of the Empire depend the safety and power of its members, of mighty Britain, as well as inferior Ireland, and if, as the Secretary seems to dread, any collision between the countries is to be apprehended from the present state of their connection, some argument would certainly arise for an alteration.

But let us see how the question stands—no circumstance that has hitherto caused any (I will not

not say disagreement) but any discussion, now exists between the two kingdoms—our constitution has been long since finally satisfactorily and it is hoped *irrevocably* settled. The King of England is ipso facto King of Ireland: the whole of the prerogative which he possesses in the former kingdom, and which is found so sufficient for its happy administration—the whole of the patronage which supplies the place of obsolete prerogative, he possesses as amply here, as in England—here, in a comparatively poor country, as in England rich proud and independent. From what stubborn symptoms then the well informed author has deduced his fears of differences between the Irish Parliament and the executive power, I am at a loss to conjecture; but I believe he himself could give the most satisfactory answer to the apprehensions he raises.

In one, and one only instance is he justified by experience—the memorable instance of the *regency*; but what does this solitary instance prove? A difference from the *existing* cabinet of England in compliance with the wishes of, what was supposed to be, the *succeeding one*—and whatever respect may be due to the names and, characters of the leaders of the prevailing party on that memorable occasion, it must be admitted, that their conduct was a sacrifice of principle, and of the spirit of our connection with Great Britain, to personal ambition and party interests,

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This certainly is an instance, but it is the only one, wherein the Irish Parliament ever differed from that of Great Britain on an imperial question, and it would perhaps set at defiance the ingenuity of the sagacious author of the "Arguments," to suggest another instance, wherein we should expect a similar collision. This however was a *casus omisus* in our constitution; upon every principle there is as much necessity that the regent of Britain should be regent of Ireland, with the same powers and under the same restrictions, as there should be one king, with the same prerogatives. Why the possibility of the recurrence of the evil has been permitted to continue for so many years, it is not for the author to explain. But certainly the minister, with great facility in Parliament, and to the entire

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Far different from this consideration are other questions alluded to—the Catholic question particularly, and the commercial propositions so far as they came under Parliamentary discussion here, they were national and not imperial concerns; and they afford the strongest  
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ted differently, to interfere or to legislate for it. The Catholic question therefore was unfortunately chosen as an instance : had this been left to the good sense of the nation, operating gradually and naturally, neither prematurely forced, nor rashly checked, we should not have witnessed the gross and unfortunate inconsistencies, which disgraced our Parliament and our country. Violent grand jury resolutions, supposed to be countenanced by government ; Catholic petitions, ignominiously kicked out of the House of Commons, next session passed. Full participation of rights promised, from the highest authority—and, in the same session, the stipulated measures refused ; all these inconsistencies flowed from *British* interference, in what was not *imperial* but *national* concern, and therefore all tend most strongly to shew the superior advantage of a domestic Parliament for the regulation of domestic concerns. But it may be said, this is an imperial matter, it concerns the religion of the state, which should be the same in both kingdoms—grant that it is, it only follows that it should be finally adjusted, and that, as in the case of the King, it should be enacted by both legislatures, that the religion of the Parliaments should be the same, and that neither should alter it without the assent of the other, but till this be done, it remains an individual concern of each kingdom, of which each, according to its local circumstances, is the best judge.

But it is said, the Irish Parliament is a theatre for British faction; from the application the ministerial author makes, I suspect he means British *opposition*, and that his object is, to diminish, circumscribe, or smother opposition to the existing cabinet, of which he is so faithful a servant. That much advantage would redound to his employers, in this respect, the example of Scotland leaves little room to doubt. The Scots Lords and Commoners give very little trouble on the score of opposition to the minister; but, whether the addition of 100 members, lords or gentlemen, to the ministerial phalanx, would be an imperial advantage, is a point, the most constitutional and loyal Englishman will perhaps be inclined to doubt, as much as the most factious Irishman.

To brand with the name of factious the minority in Parliament, has ever been the trick of the majority, and epithets have varied with the circumstances of the times. In the reigns of William and Anne—*Jacobite* and Pretender were bandied about by both Whig and Tory, according as they were in power, and perhaps with equal justice. For the scandalous anecdotes of those reigns shew, that ministers, no more than opposition, were exempt from the contagion of foreign influence, and foreign bribes.\* Whether, when

\* Vide Dalrymple's Memoirs, and Macpherson's History and State Papers.

when the lapse of time shall have made it safe to unfold to mankind the secrets of the present day, similar motives shall be found to have operated, it may not be prudent or delicate to conjecture, but as to the branding with the epithets of Jacobine and Republican every man who differs from the minister, the trick is stale, and has nearly lost its effect. Supposing, however, for a moment the fact to be, that the English opposition are a desperate republican faction, bribed by French gold, or, what would be equally criminal, bent on the accomplishment of their ambitious views, at the hazard of separating the two kingdoms, how are we to conclude from experience, the only safe guide in matter of such import, that our separate existence would facilitate their machinations? Not surely from the experience of the present day; never was any Parliament so zealous, so vigilant, so anxious, so scrutinizing as the Irish Parliament, on the occasion of the late rebellion: not a breath of murmur or opposition was uttered against the strongest measures, that administration wished to adopt; every additional weapon that the executive magistrate demanded, every guinea that he could require, voted, not merely with cheerfulness, but with anticipating alacrity, and without a single dissenting voice. Here was the pre-eminent advantage of a separate Parliament; had such been the conduct of a British Parliament, though with the concurrence of

every Irish member in it ; faction on this side of the water might still have said—you are misinformed, you are misguided, the Irish members are the creatures of a minister, they abuse your credulity, it is not a rebellion, it is only the ebullition of the wretched ignorant peasantry, goaded on to acts of violence by military tyranny. Such *was* the language of persons, even of the best intentions, (for such in spite of faction, are the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Fitzwilliam, &c.) of persons, whose connections here procured them as good information, as any men can have in *another kingdom*, and therefore as good as our members could have sitting in the British Parliament. It was only a Parliament sitting upon the spot, seeing with its own eyes, and hearing with its own ears, that was adequate to stop the utterance of such dangerous and unfounded sentiments : no man could be hardy enough, when rebellion surrounded the very walls of our city, lurked in our dwellings, and met us in the face of our most trusted servants, no man could be found hardy enough to deny the real fact, to palliate the crimes, or to refuse the necessary aid to the executive power.

But at the very same moment, when the *facts* had reached the ears of the Parliament of England, was there a great body of the  
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prime Nobility of England, as deeply interested in the integrity of the Empire, and in the individual safety of Ireland, as any Irish Members could be, so ignorant of circumstances, notwithstanding all their means of information, as to divide a considerable number in favour of a most unwise and dangerous interference. Suppose then, that at that awful moment, an imperial Parliament had been sitting upon our concerns, the same misrepresentations and misconceptions, which led astray so many persons deeply concerned in the welfare of Ireland, might have also misled the majority of the Irish Members. Facts, imperfectly known, without any of their minute and nice circumstances, and stated by apparently the best authorities, might have a powerful effect on the Parliament. The executive magistrate, whether military or civil, acting here according to the best of his judgment, would be thwarted or intimidated by the dread of censure or punishment, from a power inadequate to judge soundly of the merits of his conduct; and thus he would be paralysed instead of encouraged in those bold and decided measures, which on the late occasion could alone have saved us. To the investigation of an Irish Parliament are we indebted for the development of the deep laid conspiracy, in vain could we have expected, in another kingdom, such

such compleat and undeniable proofs of the whole origin, progress and circumstances of the rebellion; and therefore there was as much sound wisdom as true patriotism in the expressions of a great judicial character, when he hoped, “*that the opposition of England would be now convinced, that the Parliament of Ireland were alone competent to the affairs of Ireland.*”\*

When the mutiny of the seamen menaced the existence of the Empire, Mr. Sheridan stepped forward, with his advice, and received the applause of the ministry themselves, for his able and patriotic assistance. What was his remedy? That if the mutiny continued, *the Parliament of Great Britain* should travel from *Westminster to Portsmouth*, and never cease its deliberations even in the very face of the mutineers and exposed to their fury, till it had quelled the rebellion, or perished in the attempt. The subsiding of the storm happily made it unnecessary to resort to this last extremity. May no similar emergency ever arise again! may the rash project of ministry, if it shall be obstinately persevered in, raise no flames of discord in this kingdom! but should, unhappily, the disgusts and dissentions of an angry people invite the enemy to our shores—should the ardour and enthusiasm of our gentry feel any abatement from the sense of national degradation—the minister, as well as  
Ireland

\* The Chancellor.

Ireland, may lament, when it is too late, the destruction of our native Parliament.

The ministerial Author states the circumstances of our present connection—the inconveniencies arising from the jealousies and bickerings it occasions—and their probable removal by an Union:—But indeed to a superficial reader, every argument that he employs on this head seems to apply most strongly against himself. The residence of the Sovereign in England—the predominating weight of the British Cabinet—the number of absentees. No Irishman was ever yet so absurd as to complain of the King's residence in London, or so weak as to expect that any circumstance could ever produce any alteration in this respect—but whatever visionaries might dream, under the present state of things, of the King coming to Ireland, is it possible that a Union could realize his fancies? As little does any reasonable man complain of the superintending and directing powers of a British Cabinet. The necessity of this has never been combated, but by those, who would wish to dissolve the connection, and who would, in case of a Union, argue more forcibly, and it is feared more effectually. It is the *degree* of the interference, it is the quantum of weight, that should be given to powerful leaders at home, which has ever been the subject of dispute. Not whether my  
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—Lord Lieutenant should take the grand outline of his measures from the British minister, or an Irish junto, but whether, in the detail of measures, in those matters, which must necessarily be devolved upon the discretion of the Viceroy, Lord A. or Lord B. or Mr. C. should be consulted and followed. Such are the jealousies, such are the petty contests for *confidence*, for distinction, for emolument, which produce the jealousies, the squabbles, that no doubt teize and perplex a Lord Lieutenant, but with which the nation has nothing to do, and in which it takes no part. Sometimes indeed these disputes are carried across the water, and break in upon the more important labours of the minister—they removed one Lord Lieutenant, and perhaps, they endeavoured to remove a second. But the existing circumstances shew how little trouble they will give, by a moderate firmness in an honourable and virtuous course. Let a Lord Lieutenant of *good sense*, and, what is better, of *good intentions*, previously apprized of the cause of public discontents, use *his own eyes* and *his own ears*—let him steadily pursue his course, unaffected by the turbulent clamours, or the undermining calumny, of disappointed factions; let him find a determined support in the Cabinet of England; let him bestow preferment on the pious, the learned, and the industrious—regardless of the jobbing and the venal, and he will find his labours soon become easy, and the gratitude and blessings of a tranquilized

quilized and satisfied country follow his name and the Cabinet under which he acts. *Such is the situation of Ireland.* But suppose the situation changed—Irishmen placed in the English Cabinet, and no impartial and disinterested medium between that Cabinet and the Irish Nation; all measures must then be transacted by a *Great Contractor*; that is all measures that would be entrusted to Irishmen, the filling up of bishopricks, of judges places, of seats at the revenue board.

But “*the British Cabinet would receive a mixture of Irishmen!*” “*The counsels of the British Parliament would be much influenced by the WEIGHT AND ABILITY of the IRISH MEMBERS.*”!

Is the under Secretary, an *Englishman*, is he serious, when he speaks of the British Parliament being *much influenced* by the *weight and ability* of the *Irish* members? or does he fondly suppose, that we have never heard of the *irresistible weight and influence* of the British minister in the British Parliament, or that we are strangers to the name and the character of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt suffer the British Parliament to be much influenced by the weight and ability of the Irish members! Mr. Pitt, who could whirl out of the cabinet the gigantic Thurlow,—Mr. Pitt, who, at  
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the very outset of his administration, could brave and conquer the House of Commons of *Britain!* Mr. Pitt, *who carried A UNION!* Mr. Pitt, in the plenitude of his power and his glory, much influence by the weight and ability of the Irish Members! No my worthy credulous countrymen, future Lords and Commoners of the Union Parliament, however you may estimate your consequence and your talents, it is impossible your self-love, exorbitant as it may be, can so grossly deceive you. Your vanity or your avarice may indeed be gratified, some one of you may obtain the patronage of Ireland, or distinct boards may be erected, at which Irishmen shall preside for the Church, the Law, and the Revenue. But influence the counsels of the British Parliament! you cannot be so ignorant or so vain as to expect it. Let the Button-Makers of Birmingham, or the Fustian-Weavers of Manchester raise an outcry of Irish rivalry, and let our Mr. Foster, with all his weight and all his ability, demonstrate the ruin of our manufacture from a compliance with their demands, and, I believe the *influence of all the Irish Members* must yield to the *mechanics* of a single town.

But “there would be no clashing of distinct interests, the cultivation, the improvement of Ireland, like that of Scotland, would be peculiarly

"liarly attended to, as the increase of our  
 "wealth, consequence, ability, and power must  
 "tend to increase the security of the Empire,  
 "not to endanger it; *and in proportion that*  
 "*as we felt the benefit of the Union, our at-*  
 "*tachment to it would be strengthened."* This  
 may be in some measure true, as soon as  
 there was "*no fear of Ireland being too pow-*  
*erful to govern."* But so long as this fear  
 operates, so long as "*it is manifest that a*  
*connection with France has been renewed,"*  
 so long "*as it is obvious the French will*  
 "*not cease to intrigue in this kingdom:"* so  
 long it must be the plainest policy of Eng-  
 land, *to keep down Ireland, "lest she should*  
 "*be TOO POWERFUL TO GOVERN."*

For myself I aver, that however warm my  
 feelings of national pride, feelings which in  
*me* are as much *English* as *Irish*, I should ra-  
 ther submit to the uncontroled dominion of  
 England, and to the destruction of our Parlia-  
 ment, without any equivalent real or pretend-  
 ed, than accept aid of France; so rooted is  
 my detestation of her horrid principles, and  
 so firm is my conviction, that the day which  
 should make us her ally, would confirm us  
 her slave; and that I would myself co-operate  
 in keeping down the prosperity of my Coun-  
 try, if her becoming "*too powerful,*" were to  
 end in such a catastrophe.

But it is the sincere conviction of my mind, that the proposed Union, the inflicting so deep a wound in our national pride, the death of our parliament, the reducing a powerful, growing kingdom, to a small and petty member of the Empire, will multiply and invigorate the friends of the French connection, and dishearten, disgust, alienate, and diminish the friends to the British interest. Who are they whose pride and consequence will be most humbled? the loyal and spirited yeomen and gentry, who have fought and bled in support of our constitution as it now stands. Who will leave the country, or swell the list of absentees? (a consequence which the advocate for Union admits,) the wretched, corrupted rabble, with the profligate conspirators? or the loyal and powerful nobility and gentry? Five and twenty of the principal nobility, eighty or ninety of the first gentlemen, necessarily withdrawn to attend Parliament; add to these, all who will be attracted by interest, or seduced by pleasure, or sickened at the deserted streets of Dublin; every one, in short, who could command, reclaim, or soothe a wretched peasantry, will be lost to Ireland, and the kingdom must become one vast barrack, for military force will be the only one left to keep down our corrupted and licentious people. In this situation, will British Capital, British merchants, British manufactures desert, their secure, warm, comfortable, establish-

establishments, to settle among a humiliated, degraded and discontented people?

But the Catholics will be gratified, and their satisfaction will restore peace and order! Perhaps the Secretary may have some secret "opening,"—but it was certainly prudent not to give a more open hint, lest he should alarm the zealous Protestants, who have at present so much of the power in their hands. It is indeed unfortunate for him, that he could not have addressed a separate Pamphlet to each party, without the danger of its being betrayed to the other. He might then have explained to the Catholics, what this secret opening is, which "*may admit them to additional privileges,*" without alarming the apprehensions of the zealous Protestant; and he might have left the latter secure under the conviction, "*that the test laws cannot be partially repealed; and that the Catholics could not force their claims with hostility against the whole power of Great Britain and Ireland.*" As it is, the Catholics can have as little hope from this unexplained opening, as I believe they derive consolation from the Secretary's *arithmetical* comfort. "You are now as three to one, and therefore you have reason to expect equal rights; you will then be, but as three to fourteen, and it would be very unfair in you, and against every principle in Cocker's Arithmetic, to ask to be on an equal footing." The Protestants indeed have

have some security in Mr. Pitt's immoveable resolution against repealing the test laws, which could be attended with *no danger*; while perhaps the interference of the English Cabinet a few years back on the Catholic subject, may raise some troublesome suspicions.

The fact is, Mr. Pitt will be governed by what he conceives his interest; and according as that great leading object, that "*Ireland may not grow too powerful to govern,*" shall be affected, so will the claims or the prejudices of Catholics and Protestants be yielded to or indulged.

But which ever follows, whether the Catholics are gratified, or not—the effect will be the same—bitter and lasting animosity. Are they refused because "*the test acts cannot be partially repealed,*" or on the principle of *arithmetical justice*? To the intolerance of Irish Protestants will they attribute it. Are all disabilities removed? to the policy of the British minister, and the generosity of a British Parliament, will they consider themselves indebted, while the Irish Protestants will feel themselves made the sport of ministerial convenience, and will complain of the breach of that *grand condition*, on which they surrendered their independence. In either case, the Machivaelian policy will be pursued, of preventing Ireland "*becoming too powerful to govern,*"

vern,"—but “*religious discontents, jealousies, and disturbances, conspiracies, insurrections, and perhaps REBELLIONS,*” will still disgrace us.

But let our constitution remain as it is. Let a Protestant Irish Parliament make one great effort of patriotism—let it bury in oblivion the errors and vices of our poor misguided countrymen, wisely and humanely considering, that many of those errors and vices are the weeds that must spring from an impoverished soil—or if this be too great a sacrifice to expect on the sudden from human prejudices, let the Catholics patiently await the operations of time, and the workings of generosity in *Irish* bosoms—let them publicly declare, that to an *Irish Parliament only* will they be indebted for their full and complete advancement to the privileges and honours of the constitution; and then indeed, in either event, whether of peaceable and patient acquiescence, or of liberal and voluntary concession, we shall become “*too powerful,*” not “*to be governed.*” but to be *seduced, to be corrupted, to be enslaved.*—Then indeed, will all ranks and all sects give the same hearty and zealous support to the British Empire, which it has ever received from the Irish Parliament; and then will our increased wealth, the sure consequence of genuine *unforced* tranquillity, enable *Irish generosity* to contribute largely and freely to the relief of the Empire from its heavy burthens.

The

The wretched politicians, who have inculcated in the minister and Parliament of Great Britain, that prosperity may make "*Ireland too powerful to govern,*" are totally unsupported in their slavish and timid doctrine by all experience, and by every principle of common sense. Can a single instance be adduced, where in the Parliament of this country, or any great body of men of any *power*, or any single individual of *power*, betrayed the slightest symptom of dissatisfaction at that imperial connection with England, from whence springs the governing power — except the regency, an instance, it is hoped, sufficiently explained, no such thing ever occurred, and it would be most easy and most satisfactory to this kingdom, to adopt such regulations, as would set at rest every imperial question, that can suggest itself as likely to occur, to the most jealous or the most speculative politician. Peace and war, an imperial concern, the choice of which theory gives to the crown, but practice to the Parliament, by their power of granting or withholding the supplies; let all *theoretical possibility* of Irish interference on this important general question, affecting the whole Empire, be for ever removed; let it be enacted, that when the king shall have declared war, and the British Parliament shall have given its sanction, the Irish Parliament shall be bound to follow. Let *all questions of trade* be finally and irrevocably settled, upon fair and reciprocal terms,

terms, such indeed as most of them already stand upon. Let the religion of the state, if that shall also be deemed expedient, be placed upon a sure foundation, not to be altered or affected, but by the concurrence of the two Parliaments---and to go a step farther, and to accomplish what, perhaps, is the minister's grand object in the Union, let Ireland, in proportion as her rapidly encreasing prosperity shall afford the means, contribute to the lessening that enormous load of debt, which England has contracted chiefly in her miraculous struggles for the support of that proud pre-eminence, which secures to every part of the Empire its constitution, its laws, and liberties. Indeed it has long since occurred to the author, that from the moment Ireland experienced fair and liberal treatment from Great Britain, was restored to a free constitution, and was admitted to a full participation of her commerce, she should contribute her full proportion to the general expences of the Empire; hitherto she has been unable to do more than maintain her own establishment, which has alone produced a large debt; nor could an infancy of fifteen or sixteen years be expected to do more. But Ireland is advancing with rapid strides to a vigorous manhood; a few years of peace would, in all probability, enable her to make great contributions; and it would, in fact, be as sound policy in her, as fair and generous dealing, to assist in lessening the debt of England. Suppose that a *moderate*

*general land tax*, accompanied with a modification of tythes, and of the excise and customs, were established over the whole Empire, and the surplus, after the payment of the present charges, were applied to the discharge of the public debt of England and Ireland, which might be consolidated for the purpose. Mr. Adam Smith, in recommending this measure, including in it the West India islands, and also including America, which must now be omitted, calculates that a revenue of six millions two hundred and fifty thousand pounds might be raised, and since the date of his book, 1775, a prodigious increase of wealth and ability has taken place in the two kingdoms; however, making allowance for the deduction of America, and for the heavy taxes of other kinds, laid on since, such a revenue might be raised, as would, in a few years greatly diminish the public debt, and soon admit of a reduction of some of the most oppressive taxes, those that chiefly affect the poor, and the materials of manufactures.

This generous contribution, in the mode proposed, would have another good consequence—it would operate as a tax on absentees, a just subject of popular complaint, without raising any jealousy in England; and this mode of diminishing the ill effects of absentees, upon the *temper*, if not upon the *interests* of Ireland, may, to an ordinary understanding appear, as efficacious,

ous, as the ministerial writers propofal of *doubling their number*.

The advocates for a Union may cry out, all this will be done by a Union, it will be a necessary consequence of it, and therefore in admitting the expediency of such a measure, you in fact argue for a Union, one of whose chief objects it is, to make Ireland pay a *full proportion* of our public debts. But the *proportion* (admitting we should pay any thing,) is the great object, and to submit this to a British Parliament, where Irish members would be at most but as one to five, would argue great confidence in British generosity, but very little of sound political wisdom.

Neither, would it be more prudent to entrust the final settlement of so important a matter to commissioners, in which we might be on an equal footing, as to numbers, with England, for reasons sufficiently obvious from the preponderating influence of the English Minister.

The analogies employed to justify this measure, and the recurrence to the cases of America, of Scotland, and above all the obscure and misty period of the Heptarchy, would scarcely deserve an answer, but that the *authority* from which the publication in question proceeds, and the *weight* given to every thing stamped with

that authority, requires that no argument, however flimsy in itself, should pass unnoticed. However as to the Heptarchy, it is only necessary to state the constitution of that Union, to shew how totally inapplicable it is to ours. SEVEN *separate and distinct kingdoms*, where, “ though  
 “ one Prince seems still to have been allowed,  
 “ or to have assumed an ascendant over the  
 “ whole, his authority if it ought ever to be  
 “ deemed regular or legal, was extremely li-  
 “ mitted; and each state *acted as if it had been*  
 “ *independent and wholly separate from the*  
 “ *rest.*”\* What was the condition of America, before its present confederation? *Thirteen inde-  
 pendent Provinces*, bound by *no one common tie*, but an alliance or treaty offensive and defensive, the regulations of which were submitted to a congress, whose members, vested with most of the powers possessed by our sovereign, and having no controuling or influencing authority over them, might naturally be expected, (as they actually did) frequently to differ on the most essential points. Can this constitution or this connection be compared with ours, wherein our common sovereign possesses that sole undivided power, which was here distributed among thirteen independent States? Can the mischiefs resulting from that form, not indeed of connection, but of *alliance*, justify any apprehensions of  
 similar

similar mischiefs from our *close connection*, so different in theory, and in practice affording no instance (or one not to be argued upon,) of disagreement, during the lapse of many centuries.

But Scotland is so invariably and so confidently resorted to as a case of strong analogy, that it is necessary at greater length to shew from its situation, natural and political, at the time of the Union, and from its history since, that no argument whatsoever arises from it, applicable to Ireland, at least none favourable to Union.

Nature had already made England and Scotland one country, and their political circumstances rendered it necessary to the repose and safety, to the laws and the liberties of England, to accomplish her fiat. Their *laws* were different—their *religions*, as well of the state, as of the people, were different—their *crowns*, accidentally placed on the head of the same monarch, were, upon her demise to be again separated. If different views of policy should be entertained by these two *independent* nations, in their domestic concerns, and in their foreign alliances, future wars must again, as they had formerly for so many centuries, deluge them both with blood. Now the most opposite views of policy were in fact entertained by them, not merely by the mob, (as is supposed to be the case) here, but by the gentry, the men of property, the *Parliaments* of the

the two kingdoms. The House of Stewart, so odious to Great Britain, had still retained the warmest affection of the Scots—and the Parliament of Scotland had lately passed the act of security, by the extraordinary majority of seventy, in spite of all the influence of the crown: and the royal assent was even extorted to a law, which on the death of the Queen, then without hope of issue, went to separate the two crowns, and of course the two kingdoms for ever.\* What must have been the temper of the Scots, when a British ministry were compelled to assent to an act of separation! Nor were they mere motives of natural dislike to England which affected the Scots—they had always been attached to the French, with whom their monarchs had been allied, and who gave them ready assistance upon every breach with England—and personal motives of ambition likewise operated upon individuals, particularly the Duke of Hamilton, nearly allied to the House of Stewart, and having himself, as is justly suspected, designs upon the throne.†

To the safety of England then it became indispensably necessary, to put an end to the Scottish Parliament, as the only possible means of averting

\* Such were not indeed the express limitations, but the consequences were so considered. Macpherson's Hist. of Great Britain, 2 vol. 306.

† Macpherson's Hist.

averting the evil of separation. Now will any experience, will any suspicions, will any theory however wild justify us in saying there is a danger of our separation from England?—at least from any circumstances which an Union would remove—it is not at least from any dispositions manifested by the gentry, by the property, by the Parliament of Ireland—if any such tendency prevail, it is among the lower classes of the people, corrupted by the empirics of the French School, whose poison can be best and perhaps only counteracted by a resident gentry and a *resident Parliament*, who are unalterably, and without an exception, from the most unequivocal motives of self interest, if there were nothing else to operate, bound to maintain the connection to the last extremity.

Nor was the Union less advantageous to Scotland, than necessary to England, if their passions had permitted the Scotch to advert to the most obvious principles. Their country was in that wretched state as to agriculture, manufactures and commerce, to which the harsh decrees of nature seem to have doomed it. The severe, but perhaps necessary policy of England had just closed the barriers against the only article of export afforded by her cold ungrateful soil,\* and had

\* Live cattle! no other proof of her poverty, than the nature of her only commodity capable of exclusion from England, would perhaps be necessary.

had even gone so far as to deny to the Scots the privileges of English subjects.

The work of a very intelligent Scotch writer affords us a curious and accurate view of the relative wealth of England and Scotland at the period of the Union, from whence we may judge of the poverty of the latter, and of the analogy between it at that period, and Ireland now.\*

English Customs	-	-	£1,341,559
Scotch do.	-	-	34,000

English Post-office	-	-	101,000
Scotch do.	-	-	1,194

Coinage	-	-	8,400,000
Scotch do.	-	-	411,118

Excise	-	-	947,602
Scotch do.	-	-	33,500

So that considering, with Mr. Chalmers—customs to be the criterion of trade—excise of consumption—and according to general opinion—the Post-office to be the standard of internal communication, the result of peace and civilization, and coin of internal trade. Their relative

\* Chalmers's Comparative Estimate. Lond. Ed. 1794, page 225.

lative situations in these four particulars will be nearly thus :

*English* to Scotch

Trade - Trade, nearly as 36 to 1

Consumption - - - 28 to 1

Communication - - - 100 to 1

Internal trade - - - 20 to 1

The last item seems to be the least unfavourable to Scotland, but coin was then a fallacious standard. Bank paper diminished the quantity of coin circulated in England—but Scotland had no bank—however, let a balance be struck upon three of those items, as they stand, in order to form an estimate of the general ability of Scotland at the time of the Union; namely upon external, and internal trade, and consumption—and it will be England to Scotland as, *twenty-eight to one*. Mr. Pitt, in his speech on finance this session, calculates the present ratio of ability to be as eight to one. Most convincing and unanswerable proof of the then deplorable poverty of Scotland.

Now she could not hope in centuries to rise to any degree of opulence, or even of comfort, unassisted and alone—her climate harsh and nipping—her soil stubborn and ungrateful—the face of the country chiefly mountain or morass;

no foreign treaties which could enable her to supply her deficiencies; excluded from the English colonies; her ships captured by the English;\* even the English market denied to her only superfluity, her lean half starved cattle;— what possible resource had she but in English Union? for having no other equivalent to offer, on no other terms would she be admitted to a participation of English trade.

To enter into a minute detail of the condition of Ireland, in order to shew how totally different it is from that of Scotland at the time of the Union, would be a vain parade of information or industry; but it may not be wholly uninteresting to detail a few particulars.

Not having leisure to resort to official authority, the author cannot give the present condition of our trade, and is obliged to resort to a period very unfavourable to him—the period of 1783, the close of the American war, and before the commencement of our prosperity, consequent upon the opening our trade. The facts are taken from Lord Sheffield's "Observations on the Trade and present State of Ireland." Our exports to *England alone*, upon a five years average, ending with 1783, amounted in value to 2,301,444. † Our imports from England on the

\* Macpherfon's History. † Lord Sheffield's Observations, &c. Lond. Ed. 785, p. 284.

the same average were £.2,050,445. leaving a balance of £.250,999 in favour of Ireland.

The whole exports of Scotland, to *all the world*, were at the same period, upon a four years average, but £.802,345\* So that the *exports of Ireland to Great Britain alone, were nearly THREE TIMES AS GREAT as those of Scotland to all the world*, “ at a period when the cultivation, the improvement of Scotland had been particularly attended to for eighty years,” while Ireland, on the contrary, had laboured during all that time, under the most harsh and injurious restrictions. The progress of Ireland since would clearly appear from tables of our exports and imports for the last years, which, it is hoped, some person with more leisure and better means of information will give to the public. But the ostensible improvements of the country are so immense, as to leave no doubt of the prodigious increase of public wealth. Within that period the *Bank of Ireland* has been established, while private banking houses, so far from being injured, have increased in number; the internal trade of the country (the most important to every nation) has been wonderfully facilitated by the extension of canals, and the improvement of the roads, while the accommodation of shipping has

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\* Chalmers's Comparative Estimate, 229, a four years average is taken instead of five years, as in the case of Ireland, because Mr. Chalmer's does not give the exports of 1779.

been advanced by those most stupendous works, the Docks, and the great south pier. The linen manufacture has been nearly doubled. The corn laws have been further improved, and agriculture greatly extended. Breweries have been erected all over the kingdom, and the importation of English porter and ale almost superseded by the excellence of the home manufacture; while new manufactures have sprung up, particularly cotton, paper, and glass—of the last of which great quantities are exported. In short, Ireland is not merely now in that state of advanced prosperity, to which the Union has been supposed to raise Scotland, but she has already that advantage over her, to which her superior extent, her soil and climate entitle her.

As little argument then can be drawn from the Scotch Union, in a commercial point of view, as in a political one: and it will surely require something more than bare assertion—something besides *hypothetical* advantage, before we shall relinquish that *domestic government*, under whose fostering care, in the course of fifteen years, our agriculture, our commerce, and our manufactures have swelled to an amount, that the most sanguine friends of Ireland would not have dared to prognosticate.

But see what were the effects of this incorporating Union upon Scotland, for nearly half a century

century. So incensed and inflamed were the Scots at the surrender of their independence, that, although they were immediately admitted to a full participation of British trade, their animosities continued too violent, for upwards of forty years, to allow them to avail themselves of its advantages. In 1715, and 1745, they were roused to open rebellion, not more by their attachment to the family of Stewart, than by their detestation of the Union: and all the writers agree, that it was not till after the year 1746, Scotland began to feel its beneficial effects.

If such a country then, so little favoured by nature, so little cultivated and improved, in a state of almost hopeless poverty, felt so keen a sense of degradation, though immense advantages were opened to her; if the lapse of forty years was scarcely sufficient to restore her to temper: what would be the effect upon this island, rich in the choicest gifts of nature, highly improved and rapidly improving, possessing all that was to Scotland the price of her independence, and to whom no compensation *can be made*, if indeed any thing can compensate an independent constitution?

We are already in possession of every thing that England could grant—our trade to the whole world is as open as that of England, excepting

cepting to the East Indies, which no Union could give us.† The navigation act has been explained, so that colonial produce may be exported from Ireland as freely as from England; in short in no single instance is there the slightest restriction upon our manufactures or our commerce, to which England herself is not subject—unless it be in the East Indian monopoly, which affects every port in England except London, as much as it affects Ireland; or in the case of our woollen manufacture. As to this latter, the only manufacture which is under any restriction greater than the English one—we may export our woollens to all the world, except to England, whose market is closed against us by high duties. The Secretary does not hint at, much less promise, the removal of this restriction, but if he did, the boon would be scarcely worth the acceptance—So great and unconquerable are the advantages of *old establishment*, and the superior skill arising therefrom, aided by enormous capital, that England is able to beat us, not only abroad, but in *our own market*. What hope then that we should meet her in her market, when she undersells us in our own?—The woollen is the great staple of England; established, protected, and successively improved, by the most anxious care of the legislature for many centuries. Of its prodigious importance to England some estimate may be formed from two circumstances—that it is supposed to

† At least during the monopoly of the East India Company.—As to this, see Page 42. Note.

to employ *a million and a half of people*—and that its exports, from Yorkshire alone, amounted in one year to £2,371,942,\* an enormous sum—greater it appears than *all* the exports of *all* Ireland to Great Britain. Is it possible then to imagine, even if the British ports were opened to us, and even if we could rival them in their own markets, that some means would not be devised by a British Parliament, to secure the exclusive possession of a manufacture upon which depend in so eminent a degree—the wealth, the grandeur, and the strength of England? One important fact is notorious, and in such matters, one fact will outweigh a thousand speculations—that, although Scotland has had the English market open to her for near a century—and although she had none of the disadvantages to encounter, that Ireland would have, of freight, insurance, &c. and although she has made great advances in the linen, cambrick, cotton and various other manufactures—in *woollen alone she has never made any progress* †—at least none that enables her to send woollens into England.

Not a single advantage then is held out to us in commerce or manufactures, nor perhaps would it be easy to devise any that could be given. But this great and awful evil to our commerce and our manufactures is the certain and inevitable consequence of an Union. That both will be

\* Chalmer's Comp. est. 203.

† The author is not positive of this, but he believes it to be true, with the qualification, which is all that is necessary for him.

be at the mercy *for ever*, of a foreign Parliament, where our relative strength will be not more than one to five. Let it not be admitted as an answer, that *equal laws*, affecting all parts of the Empire, will be the consequence—this itself may be an evil of the greatest magnitude;—ask the cotton manufacturer, who is now protected by a small duty on imported cottons—ask the paper maker, who has a similar protection—what would be the effect of throwing open the ports? and they will say, and truly, *the ruin of their manufactures*—*this would be the inevitable effect of EQUAL LAW.*

I am no advocate for protecting duties—they are, in general, founded on the most erroneous principles—but in our particular situation, contending with a small capital and an infant establishment—against an old establishment and enormous capital, it is by protecting duty only, that is, by *unequal laws* only, that we can ever hope to gain that strength, which may at length enable us to place our manufactures on equal terms.—How far we could expect such *partiality* from a British Parliament, let us judge from experience.—A few years after the Union, a duty was imposed on malt, equally affecting the Scotch and English: the Scotch members—lords and commoners—convinced that it would be ruinous to their country, deprecated the law, and voted *unanimously* against it—but the British Parliament were inexorable, and passed the law.

Let

Let us advert to another instance nearer home. When the colonial trade was opened to us, England proposed to grant a bounty on all Irish linens, to be exported from England; nothing could, at first view, appear more generous. She would not only pay the bounty on such linens, as in the natural course of trade would go to England, and be exported from thence; but she proposed, that we should pay *no* bounty, but that she should charge herself with the burthen of the *whole* bounty on Irish linens, merely on condition that they should pass through an English port; and she said that her only motive was a regard to our poverty, which could not afford so heavy a charge. But our sagacious and patriotic Chancellor of the Exchequer, the present Speaker of the House of Commons, was neither to be entrapped nor seduced; he saw that under the pretence of generous assistance, we were to be cheated out of the carrying trade of our own linens, which would thus inevitably be transferred to England; he resolutely insisted against the measure, and he preserved to us our direct trade. Now when the British Cabinet at such a moment as that, when it was making concession from motives of policy, and when any suspicion of treachery might be so dangerous, ventured to pass upon the *Irish Parliament*, so gross an imposition; what could we expect in a British Parliament? Could we hope that *equal* laws, which might have *unequal* effects, should be modelled,

so as to give our manufactures a chance of surviving—much less could we hope, that a *protection* should be given to them, which for, a time at least, *is necessary to their existence.* †

Throughout the whole of this ministerial production arguments are addressed to different classes of the people, and to different bodies of the community, as if their interests were distinct, and sometimes as if they were opposite. We have already adverted to this mode of speaking to the Catholic and the Protestant, and we trust sufficiently exposed the flimsy, though insidious policy.

† Previous to the 33d. Geo. 3. the trade of China was open to us. Let America speak its importance, who, beginning with a small sloop, has now 130 ships in the trade. By the 33d. Geo. 3. c. 31. we surrendered this trade to the East India Company, for the wretched equivalent of sending out annually, 800 tons of goods from Cork.

Ask the merchants do they avail themselves of this pittance of export?—no—previous notice on the 1st of August to the Commissioners of Revenue; on the 1st of September to the Company in London; then to the Secretary in India; must be given, of the nature, amount, &c. of the goods;—*the market is forestalled*—the goods must go in a Company's ship,—*the carrying trade is taken away*,—they must go to the Company's Agent,—*he will prefer the Company's goods.*

Sir John Hippeley was candid in admitting this manœuvre to be one strong ground for Lord Hobart's pension. But I am not uncandid in doubting of fair play hereafter.

policy. In the same manner, Dublin, Cork, and Limerick,—the South, the North, and the West, are treated as if they were insulated bodies, whereas it is impossible to propose any scheme of policy, affecting the welfare of one, which would not affect them all, though perhaps in an unequal degree.

It is, no doubt, the design of the author to cast the odium of selfish interest on those great bodies, who, it is dreaded, will condemn the Union. Dublin, in particular, will be libelled and, because most obvious and glaring injury would be done to it, the citizens and merchants of Dublin will be said, to advert only to partial evils, and to overlook the general effects on the kingdom. But the Secretary is ignorant indeed of the character and the interests of Dublin merchants, if he so represent them. They are not, those petty shop-keepers, dependant solely on the custom of a large city. They transact the chief business of the linen trade, the great staple manufacture of the kingdom; they direct and govern all the great operations of banking, of insurance, and of stock. Dublin is the key to the greater part of Ireland, and from the extension of the canals, must ever continue so. Are great advantages derived from foreign commerce? Dublin must reap them chiefly, because through Dublin must the principal part of the kingdom be supplied with foreign produce;

are our manufactures, our agriculture, our inland trade extended? Dublin will most feel it, because Dublin is best situated for the reception of the overplus, which will be poured from her into foreign kingdoms. Let not then the Limerick, the Cork, the Waterford, or the Belfast merchant be told, that the Dublin merchant is actuated by selfish jealousy of their reaping superior commercial benefits. Such will not be the fact. Let West India trade encrease as it may, Dublin must have her due proportion, because through Dublin must the chief part of the kingdom receive the produce of that trade.

Neither is it possible that Dublin should suffer an injury, which must not be sensibly felt in every corner of the kingdom.

The increase of absentees is lightly passed over by this author, and it is mentioned as only affecting the Capital; no doubt, it will affect the Capital most grievously, but it will also affect the country, as a very brief consideration must convince every man. It is not in the Capital only that our nobility and men of fortune spend their incomes, it is in the country, on their estates, that they make the principal and the most useful expenditures—now, that they will visit those estates seldom, and in a short time perhaps not at all, must be very obvious to any one, that considers the various temptations and inducements, that will

will operate to a perpetual residence in England. To be near the court and the minister, at all times, to watch all opportunities—the allurements of pleasure—the inconveniencies and expence of long journies twice a year, and of separate establishments in different kingdoms,—on all these accounts they must become perpetual absentees. Experience, that never-failing guide, shews us how few of those, once settled in England, ever visit Ireland. The loss to Dublin indeed must be immense, and perhaps the following statement may appear not an exaggerated one.

It must be allowed, that all the peers returned into Parliament, as well as all the commoners would reside in London during the winter, and of course forsake Dublin—the number of peers, it is supposed, would be about 25, and as they will probably be men of the first fortune, they may fairly be averaged at 5000*l.* per annum: that the rest of the nobility will follow their example, there is not a doubt. It is so in Edinburgh, scarcely a single lord has a house there. The resident peers of Ireland are about ninety, leaving twenty at home, (perhaps too large an allowance,) and deducting 25, there would be 45 more absentees, who cannot be calculated at less than an average of 3000*l.* per annum. Eighty members of the House of Commons may surely be averaged at 2,500*l.* per annum, and to these may be fairly added 100 gentlemen of fashion or fortune

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tune, who would desert Dublin, when it no longer attracted by interest or pleasure ; and they may be averaged at 1,500l. per annum.

25 Representative Peers at 5000l.	125,000l.
45 Other Peers, - - - 3000l.	135,000l.
80 Members of the House of Commons, - - - 2,500l.	200,000l.
100 Other Gentlemen, 1,500l.	150,000l.
	<hr/>
	610,000l.

Should this calculation be esteemed too high, the overplus may be set against the large sums to be expended in appeals, soliciting acts of Parliament, and various other matters of business, which must then be transacted in London. See the effect of this on Dublin alone : *two hundred and fifty* at least, of the best houses thrown on hands would alone so overstock the market, as to annihilate the *building-trade*. But not these houses alone would be on hands, but the great majority too of those of the working classes—coach-makers, cabinet-makers, woollen-drapers, haberdashers, in short, all mechanics and shopkeepers who live by the consumption of people of fortune, must be ruined, and Dublin must be a desert.

This 600,000l. is an annual Capital, which constantly puts in motion innumerable other  
Capitals,

Capitals, the sum total of which it is impossible to calculate: the coach-maker, for instance, employed by the nobleman, himself employs the baker, the brewer, the grocer, the taylor, and they in return employ each other and thousands of others, so that the expenditure of a single income constitutes a part of the capital of thousands of individuals.

Here then, merely in this single view of the commercial part of the subject, shall we surrender an *annual* productive capital of 600,000*l.* equal to *twelve millions* sterling,† which sets in motion other capitals without end, for distant obscure, theoretical, and probably illusive gain?

But we are to exchange our idle gentry, for industrious manufacturers and merchants! It is a most curious ground indeed, upon which we are taught to expect this—hear the gentlemen's own words, “from the circumstance of the canals, which are making in every part of England, and communicating with London, its i.e. Dublin's, demand for all *English goods*, with Liverpool will greatly increase; and in proportion, as canals from Dublin are carried to different parts of the kingdom, it will be the depôt for their consumption in all articles of *British* manufacture and import.”

Surely

† 600,000*l.* annual income—equal to twelve millions permanent capital.

Surely it argues a most contemptuous opinion of our understandings, to put this forward as a serious argument. The manufacturers reimbursed for their losses by absentees, by the commerce for *English goods encreasing!* But supposing it to be an advantage, which I own I am not quick sighted enough to discover, is it the *Union* which is to complete those canals in England, or to extend our canals in Ireland? this promised benefit (be it one or not) appears to me the result of circumstances totally independant of the *Union*.

Dublin however is not to be injured, because Edinburgh is now a much greater town, than at the time of the Scottish Union. What Scotland was, and how she has encreased since, have already sufficiently appeared, and no doubt the capital of a flourishing country must be superior to that of a country in a state of the most abject misery.—What Edinburgh was then, we are not told, but it must have been a poor and wretched town. The old town is of but small dimensions, little more than a single street with blind alleys issuing from it—and I myself have seen the house which thirty or forty years ago, when the *Union was half a century old*, was the best inn in Scotland—a mean and wretched hovel, that would disgrace the remotest corner of Ireland. To compare Edinburgh then at the time of the *Union* with  
Dublin

Dublin, now is monstrous and absurd—at this moment, with all the boasted effects of the Union, it is not comparable to Dublin, in extent, population, public buildings, trade, or wealth—indeed in every thing but architecture it is inferior to Cork our second city.—Besides, experience shews us a remarkable difference in national character, operating much against Ireland in calculations upon the Union—scarcely an instance occurs, of the wealth or influence, obtained by Irishmen in England, producing advantage to Ireland; they seem ashamed of the name, and eager to divest themselves of all pretensions to it—The Scotch nationality is notorious—a Scotchman will promote none, will employ none, will buy from none but a Scotchman—his influence promotes his countrymen, and his money, acquired where it may be, and after absence ever so long, finally centers in his own country—so that, a Scotch absentee is only a political or commercial speculator, who will in the end enrich and adorn his native country.—Can there be adduced five instances of men of rank in Scotland, however powerful and extended their English connexions, whose chief residence, or least temporary residence and most useful expenditure is not in Scotland? Even Mr. Dundas himself, a great English minister, who can never expect to reside out of England, has expended immense sums on a house

in Scotland, without hopes of inhabiting it. This is no reflection on the Scotch, it is highly honourable to them—Is it the case in Ireland? let the estates of the absentees give an answer.

To the southern cities the author promises great advantages. What they are no man can conjecture—their admirable situation for commerce is the gift of providence, not of an Union—and all opportunities of availing them of it they have already in as ample a degree as England—*no restriction whatever exists with regard to them, severer than with respect to England.* And superior advantages over England they cannot expect—if England or the Empire *want* an additional Dock Yard, and if Cork be the fittest place, general policy should adopt it, if it be not wanting, policy should refuse it—it is to be hoped the carrying, or the failing in, the measure of a Union, will not affect the principles of general and imperial policy.

The same insidious artifice, which considers as separate, the interests of Catholic and Protestant, of the capital and of the rest of the kingdom, affects to represent the bar as an interested “Phalanx” of political “adventurers,” who look to Parliament as the “market for their abilities.” The author of these pages, himself a member of that honourable profession, feels no *individual* resentment at calumnies which apply not to himself.

self. But as a member of the profession, and as an Irishman, he spurns at the insinuation, and denies the base and selfish motives. That there are profligate characters at the Irish bar, who make Parliament the ladder of their ambition : that there are corrupt men (he will not say Secretaries) who encourage, promote, and pandar for the prostitution, is the scandal of the profession. But that the motive of the loss of *Parliamentary market* actuates the profession, in their opposition to the surrender of our legislature, is a calumny, which the public will not believe, and to which the actions of the bar, *as a body*, and their history for many years, give the most direct contradiction. Are Judges selected, not from the rank majority of Parliament, but from the most able, the most learned, the most virtuous lawyers in the hall? Is the office of Solicitor General offered as a tribute to professional merit, and on its refusal the honourable distinction of precedence voluntarily conferred? Are the stations of Masters in Chancery, Chairmen of counties, &c. filled with a total disregard to Parliamentary interest? Who so loud, so unanimous, and so grateful in their praise, as this calumniated profession?

The "Parliamentary traffic," the profession deplore as a disgrace to themselves and to the parliament,

liament; but they will not sacrifice the life of the patient to a partial disease, nor will they admit the advantage to the community, of excluding all *Irish lawyers* from seats in the legislature. The names and the services of Burgh and of Yelverton are still fresh in the memories of Irishmen, and the Parliament shall still be kept open for the exercise of the most distinguished talents in that profession, which concentrates the abilities and the knowledge of Ireland.

But who is this person that insinuates, that “the laws are not accurately or deeply studied?”—or who has authorised him to say, that we require “abler judges?” has he appreciated, or is he capable of appreciating, the professional merit of a Saurin, a Duquery, a Plunket, or a Fox? Or does he know, or has he never heard of, the manner in which our benches are now filled? He might perhaps have been told of the swift dispatch, the accurate investigation, and the just decrees of an Irish chancellor, taken from that very House of Commons which he reprobates—and if he enquired, he might find that our benches, not only in extraordinary talent, and masculine sense, but in profound knowledge of the law, would challenge a comparison with England at its proudest day.

The ministerial author, in truth, too well knew the good sense of that learned body, to  
doubt

doubt the sentence they would pass on this revolutionary measure—and he dreaded the effect of their authority upon the nation at large; he therefore wished to destroy that effect, by vilifying their character, and more than insinuating the basest motives. But the nation knows too well its obligations to them, on the most trying occasions, to join in the vulgar abuse of mercenary men. It has not yet been forgotten the services of the Lawyers, in 1782, neither has it forgotten, and it is too soon for the CASTLE to forget, the *authors of the Yeomanry Institution*. Lord Camden, and Mr. Pelham, can bear witness that it was the *Bar of Ireland*, which suggested, matured, and by its example confirmed, and sanctioned to the country the plan of the armed yeomanry—and those distinguished men (for the business was not transacted in the office of an under Secretary) will also bear witness to the genuine patriotism, equally untainted by corrupt or factious motives, which governed the conduct of the bar, in that momentous negotiation.

But the bar have spoken; and the public know the characters of the leaders of the bar on this most important subject. They know that Mr. Saurin is above all suspicion of mercenary or ambitious views—already at the head of his profession, in emolument, in character and general esteem—what has he to look for, or what

has

has he to fear? Parliament he has repeatedly and unequivocally refused to enter—the highest offices of the law he has declined, though earnestly pressed upon him, by a Lord Lieutenant whom he respected, and though called to them by the unanimous suffrages of his brethren. Nor is this conduct dictated by any fastidious humility, but by the justest estimate of human life, by a due appreciation of the blessings of social and domestic comfort, and an abhorrence of the turbulence, the factions, and the corruptions of politics. The accomplished, virtuous, and independent seconder is equally above suspicion—possessed of an ample fortune, and without any demands that could render the sacrifice imprudent, the door of parliament has stood open to him; but on grounds equally honourable he has declined to enter. Such were the mover and the seconder—and indeed it well became a Saurin and a Spencer, who, in the same place, had roused the patriotism of the bar, to arm in defence of their country—to take the lead on a question, affecting the constitution of the kingdom, its peace, and perhaps its connexion with Great Britain. They were followed and supported by an immense majority,\* not merely of numbers, but of the talents, the learning, and the professional eminence of the bar.

In

\* 164 to 32.

In truth the bar know very well, that their individual interest is as little likely to be injured, as that of any class in the community.—The same offices which they already fill, as the Secretary observes, will still be open to them—and they have little doubt that, in any plan of Union to be proposed, those offices will be exclusively reserved to the Irish bar, after the manner observed on the Scotch Union—and there are even additional places held out to their avarice and ambition.\*

But let the conduct of the bar speak for itself, and let the measure they have adopted say, whether it has been dictated by angry disappointed ambition, or by cool deliberate and patriotic wisdom. It condemns not the principle of incorporating the Parliaments, it presumes not, without due discussion, to sanction or to condemn the important revolution. It merely affirms it to be, what surely no sophistry can deny, an *innovation*, and demands a calm and tranquil moment for its fair and dispassionate discussion. Is this the conduct of a corrupt faction? or, is it not the advice that would be expected from a grave and sober profession?

May

\* Particularly the place of Master of the Rolls, which the Chancellor's attendance on the British Parliament will render necessary.

May their interference save their country for the *third time*.† And may posterity be allowed to say of the *bar of Ireland*,

“*Cunctando restituit rem.*”

Such are the observations that have suggested themselves to my mind on a Union, and on its effects upon *Ireland*, supposing it to be quietly carried. Some most respectable men think it premature to pass any opinion on the subject, or indeed to discuss it, until its *terms* shall be known—while others, equally respectable, profess their inability to judge of it, *in the abstract*, separate from its plan, conditions, and limitations. To each class of objections it is an answer, that these observations are made upon a plan, not indeed much detailed, but presenting a sufficiently distinct outline—and that besides, in the author’s humble opinion, *any incorporated* Union with Britain, which must substitute for a domestic Parliament, the Parliament of another country, in which Ireland could have but a small proportionate influence, appears to him pregnant with all the difficulties, dangers, and disadvantages already mentioned.

Differences of opinion also exist among very learned and able men, whether an incorporated Union should be termed a *revolution*, a change of

† Is it necessary to refer to the time of the Volunteers, to make the author’s meaning explicit?

of constitution or according to a new coined phrase, a “*new mode of administering the constitution*”—to the plain understanding of the author, these nice distinctions appear to partake more of metaphysical subtlety than of good sense; and, in his humble judgment it can have little effect upon the merits of the proposed innovation, by what name it is termed—but under the sanction of the great men who placed King William on the throne, and who found themselves under no necessity of recurring to scholastic refinement, but plainly and honestly called the substitution of a new family in the room of the reigning one, *a revolution*, I have called and shall still take the liberty of calling the substitution of another Parliament in the room of the existing one, a *revolution*.

This word indeed may not be without its use; it may suggest to us, the expediency of imitating the cautious prudence of our ancestors, who did not in a hurry, and before they had duly weighed their condition, and fully ascertained the *sources of their* grievances, and received the unequivocal, and nearly unanimous, sanction of the people, venture to apply a remedy. For many years had the people submitted to the severest tyranny, and the fact was settled beyond dispute, that it was from the principles of the reigning monarch, principles *inveterate* and *unchangeable*, that all their grievances arose.

In this opinion the people concurred with the Parliament, or rather the convention, who deposed King James, and substituted our great deliverer in his stead.

Now is the Parliament of Ireland prepared to seal its own condemnation? is it ready to say, that the grievances of the nation are so heavy, as to be irremediable but by *revolution*? above all, is it willing to admit that from the *Parliament itself* are all the misfortunes of the country to be deduced? and will it venture to sign its own death warrant, without such a respite, as may enable the people to appreciate its crimes and its virtues?

But the Parliament itself, (and its opinion is sanctioned by the King) has declared what is the cause of our dangers and our troubles. A conspiracy of republicans, working upon the errors, the vices, and the prejudices of a poor and uninstructed people. They have not said, as some mistaken men do, that it is the animosity between Catholic and Protestant, which produced that cursed conspiracy and rebellion. Their volume is before the public—the evidence of the conspirators themselves is detailed at length—and the conclusion of the Parliament is logical and just—it was a conspiracy, formed by men  
 “ who would as soon have seen Mahometanism  
 established

established in Ireland, as the Catholic religion,"\* and who knew, that the bulk of "the Catholics were totally indifferent about Reform and Catholic Emancipation."†

No doubt the religious prejudices of the People, chiefly Catholic, were operated upon—but had they been Protestant or Presbyterian, they would have been equally an object with the conspirators, and an equal though a different instrument in their hands.

However, be the rebellion what it might, or let it have sprung from whatever causes—the Parliament of Ireland have shewn themselves fully adequate to its suppression; and surely if the investigation of its latent causes, and of the public dissensions, in which they have used such laudable diligence, shall have satisfied them of the real nature of the disease, they will not want the resolution and virtue necessary to apply a remedy—if it be indeed the withholding from, or the granting to, the Catholic full or further privileges—they will have *power* enough to resist, or *patriotism* enough to *concede*, and they will not, by referring the option to another legislature, condemn themselves of weakness or of vice.

\* Report of the Secret Committee. † Ibid.

But should they be thus regardless of their own character, let them pause a moment, and consider the sacred trust with which they are invested; that they are going to transfer, not their own inheritance only, but that of their children and of their posterity *for ever*; and let them ask themselves, whether when they were appointed *legislators* by the people or by the king, they were indowed with a power of creating *other legislators* in substitution of themselves. Good and learned men may well be justified in affirming, that they have no such right, without the previous assent of the people, and it will be prudent indeed, if not necessary, to ascertain that assent by the most unequivocal and unsuspecting criterion.

And at what a moment would the people be called on to appreciate the merit of the revolution? Terrified loyalists, rebels, some repentant, some malignant, some astounded, reformists, constitutionalists, arguing upon facts, so capable of various constructions, and perhaps incapable *now*, of being soundly understood. Many of the most valuable members of large districts, \* emigrants, and those who remain, too anxious in the preservation of their still threatened lives, and the remnant of their still precarious property, to listen to, much less to discuss, a question of deep

\* Counties of Wexford, Wicklow Carlow, Kildare, &c.

deep speculation. The monstrous and inhuman doctrine has been broached, that advantage should be taken of the passions, that agitate and distract the minds of men, that necessarily agitate and distract them at the close of a widely extended rebellion—that the intolerance of the orange man, the resentment of the excluded catholic, the humiliation of the rebel seduced or repentant, the terror of the loyalist, and the despairing apathy of the reformist, afford an opportunity not to be lost, of effecting a revolution, whose merits they cannot weigh, to whose consequences they are indifferent, or whose mischiefs they may anticipate with malignant triumph.—Nay, the catholic has been libelled, as expressing the barbarous satisfaction, of reducing the protestant to his own state of political nullity.

Let the minister, or at least, let the Parliament beware of adopting a policy so cruel and so unnatural. Should they succeed, a few years of reflection must awaken all ranks from their dreams of revenge, of terror, or of apathy—and when they shall awake, how bitter must be the mutual recriminations, and how insatiable must be the thirst of vengeance!

The passions of Hell will tear their bosoms. Or should they turn from each other on their common tempter, the consequence is too dreadful to be contemplated, without shuddering for the  
the

the safety of the *connection*, and *the existence of Britain herself*.

Before the author takes leave of the public, he thinks it necessary to address a word to Great Britain. Let no suspicion light upon the motives of that generous assistance afforded to us—let not the enemies of the connection avail themselves of the plausible argument, that something else than protection was intended in filling Ireland with British troops—let the motives of our Lord Lieutenant, in adopting that line of conduct, which, however it has been applauded by moderate men, and by none more sincerely than the writer of these pages, yet has certainly, and perhaps unavoidably, produced partial discontent—let his motives, I say, be clear, as his character has ever been, from the taint of artifice. But above all, let Britain be assured, that the death of our liberty would but shortly precede the extinction of her own.

This is an important consideration, which must arrest the notice of every Englishman.

It must appear certain, almost as mathematical induction, that the incorporation of the Parliaments, will inevitably add an *enormous weight of Influence* to the crown, sufficient indeed to **OVER-TURN** the balance of the three Estates.

What

What has the Scotch Union done? are not the sixteen peers generally considered to be nominated by the minister? and are the forty five commoners ever found in a minority? Nor is it intended to cast any vulgar abuse upon them; perhaps they may be actuated by the purest patriotism, for, considering the small proportion they bear to English members, and of course the small relative weight of Scotland, perhaps it is only by supporting the minister, they could hope to obtain any benefit for their country.

Now the patronage of Ireland has a sufficient influence over *four hundred men* to procure constant and large majorities for the minister. The same patronage would not only still continue, but perhaps the patronage of England would afford some addition to it if necessary. The numbers to be operated upon would be reduced from about four hundred to about one hundred, lords and commoners, the same motives of patriotism would operate as on the Scotch members; and it is fair to infer, this *four-fold influence* would produce UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF ANY MINISTRY.

Has the British nation forgotten the India Bill? What a ferment was then raised (it is not now to be said, whether well or ill founded,) on the proposal of a measure, whose *doubtful* operation was to limit the power of one estate? what an outcry against the daring innovation, which was  
to

to wrest the sceptre from the hands of the sovereign, and to give it to the house of commons! But that was an effect *problematical* and *temporary*, this is one little less than *certain*,—and *eternal*, if indeed the constitution could survive it.

Ingenious men have been devising ingenious plans to obviate this tremendous consequence—among others, a destruction of a number of the most corrupt boroughs, equivalent to the number of Irish members to be sent to England,—this however is a speculation too visionary, and a project too daring to be combated, if indeed, after the serious proposal of a Union, any thing can be termed daring or visionary.

But, two answers may be given to this plan—first, a sufficient number of such boroughs could not be found, belonging to the minister; for the venal boroughs are chiefly under the influence of individuals, who sometimes support and sometimes oppose ministry. Secondly, the diminishing the number of venal men would facilitate the corruption of the remainder.

With perfect justice therefore has the author of the “arguments,” called in the aid of French principles. The projected Union is indeed indefensible

defensible on any other than modern revolutionary ground.

But still it was not without astonishment, that at a first and hasty view of the "arguments," the author perceived the example of France, in "not only uniting to herself, and incorporating a great addition of territory, but in rendering *absolutely dependent on her will, almost all the smaller states which surrounded her,*" employed as an argument by a person, acting under the administration of Mr. Pitt. What! that minister, whose grand and boasted object it is, *to restore the liberties of Europe, and to wrest from France the iron sceptre of universal domination!* That minister, whose exuberant vocabulary is exhausted of epithets of indignation and horror at her tyrannical consolidation!—is it by that minister that we are called upon to adopt the "*French principles and force of incorporations, and to RENDER ABSOLUTELY DEPENDANT ON THE WILL,*" of Britain, the inferior weaker kingdom of Ireland.

Surely the understanding of this gentleman must have been stupified by the Bæotian air of Ireland,—or else, he must have made a sacrifice of policy to the vain parade of argument and analogy,—if the latter were his intention, he has fully succeeded, for failing on every other ground, he certainly triumphs upon this; the

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example

example, the arguments, and the analogy are most satisfactory, compleat and unanswerable.

But Englishmen will pause a while and consider the nature and effect of this incorporation, and this consolidation, and most assuredly they will find it to be a consolidation of the pre-eminent and controuling authority of all the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the interposing and correcting power of the Lords, in the hands of the King. Whether this will meet their approbation, let themselves determine; perhaps they may think public affairs may be so best conducted, and the Crown be enabled to carry us through this arduous contest with the greater energy; perhaps they may adopt, and be satisfied with the “new mode of administering the constitution,” † or perhaps they may think with our Irish Secretary—“that the government would not be the less vigilantly administered, that it would probably be administered with more attention, *because it would be less distracted by the business of party and of PARLIAMENT.*” But the consequence appears to my mind inevitable—the subversion of the constitution of Britain.

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† Letter of an Irish Barrister to Joshua Spencer, Esq. Here at length we find the meaning and value of the learned gentleman's definition of an Union. It will indeed be a “*a new mode of administering the constitution,*” by the Crown alone, free from the controul or interposition of the House of Commons or House of Lords.

Is Britain then so intoxicated with the glories of triumph, or so corrupted by the influx of commercial wealth, as to disregard the blow aimed at her liberty?—and has she ungratefully forgotten, that it is to that liberty alone, to that constitution alone, unrivalled and inimitable, that she owes all her triumphs and all her wealth.

Even here I would call on the generosity and compassion of my countrymen, and if they think their own independence unworthy preservation—let them at least regard the ancient and venerable fabrick of the British constitution, and let them not with the stupid malignity, falsely and wickedly attributed to the catholics, destroy the temple because they cannot hope to enter it.

In no respect does the bounty of providence to this island appear so conspicuous as in this, and it is worthy the serious attention of every member of the Empire, that her independence cannot be destroyed without the necessary destruction of British liberty.

67

It is a matter of course that the House of Commons is not to be compared with the House of Lords, or to be considered by any other name, or to be treated as if it were the same. It is a matter of course that the House of Commons is not to be compared with the House of Lords, or to be considered by any other name, or to be treated as if it were the same. It is a matter of course that the House of Commons is not to be compared with the House of Lords, or to be considered by any other name, or to be treated as if it were the same.