

A  
LOYAL SUBJECT'S

THOUGHTS, &c.

Houses of the Oireachtas



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T H O U G H T S

ON AN

U N I O N,

BETWEEN

*GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND.*

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DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR J. MILLIKEN, No. 32, GRAFTON-STREET.

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1799.

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DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR J. MURPHY, No. 10, GRAFTON-STREET.

1799.



AN

A N S W E R

TO SOME OF THE MANY ARGUMENTS

MADE USE OF AGAINST

A PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

A R G U M E N T S

FOR AND AGAINST AN

U N I O N.

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BY AN ATTORNEY.

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A N S W E R, &c.

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THERE have been so many Pamphlets written in answer to an anonymous one, entitled, "*ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST AN UNION*", that I candidly confess, I sit down to write this by way of answer, to some of the many attacks made upon it. I will not pretend to say, that there are not some points in it which are objectionable ; but taking it all together, I think there are less reasons to treat it in the manner it has been, than there is to find fault with the greater number of those Pamphlets that endeavour to run it down. One great objection made to it, is, that it is supposed to be written by a Gentleman high in Office, who is an Englishman ; and great stress is laid upon the word *Eng-*  
B *lishman* ;



*lishman*; as if a native of England, who had been resident in this country for a number of years, and held a considerable employment was not a proper person to write upon the subject; because, truly, it could not be expected he would write impartially.

I should be glad to know why an Englishman is not very competent, with a good understanding, to write even more dispassionately than an Irishman upon the subject; and I really think the Pamphlet alluded to, is written with much more coolness than any of those that have appeared in answer to it; and in this particular it has decidedly the advantage over them: for if a man sits down with a heated mind to write upon such a Question of Importance, he is sure to fall into error, and give his adversary a most decided advantage. And this I conceive to be the case, with all, or the greater part of those who have taken up the pen against the Union.

Whether an Union with Great Britain will or will not benefit this Country, no man in my mind can tell, or pretend to decide upon, unless he can see both sides of the Question—that is, unless he has those advantages before him



him which Great Britain may be reasonably expected to give us; and then balance them against the disadvantages: this appears to me to be the reasonable way of judging of the question. And here again I must say, the writers upon the subject have fallen into error; for they complain loudly of the disadvantages, without almost ever taking notice of one single advantage: they declaim against giving up, what they call, "our National Independence" and say, if we did do so, what security have we, that the Minister would keep Faith with us? Can it be supposed for a moment, that when this country would be more closely united with Great Britain, that the Minister, be him who he may, would do all in his power to ruin it, by breaking the compact entered into with us? Is not Ireland, and will it not, if an Union was to take place, be part of the Empire? and is not every part of the Empire as much in the contemplation of the Ministers, and as much their duty and interest to support and protect as Great Britain? If the interests of Ireland were neglected by a Minister, would it not be cutting off the *right arm* of Great Britain? and does not he know it as well? Are not our manufactures,



trade, and commerce, as much his object, as the manufactures, trade and commerce of the Sister Country? I confess I cannot distinguish between them; and I hope no Minister will ever draw such a distinction, as can be detrimental.

I have heard it often said, that Government fomented differences between ourselves, in order to carry their measures the easier: but I will not hesitate to say, that this is a wicked, and must be an unfounded assertion. If this was the intention of Ministers, would they so speedily send assistance to the loyal and well disposed part of the people of this country; and at such an immense expence to Great Britain? Would they not rather let us cut each others throats a little longer, and then step in without opposition, and upon their own terms?

Again—It is said, and has been asserted at a late meeting of the ATTORNIES, that Government is keeping alive the dying embers of Rebellion, in order to induce us to submit to an Union. This it must be allowed was a strong assertion, and deserves reprehension. Is it to be supposed that Govern-  
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ment foster traitors, or that they intend to carry the Union by such means? I say no person can form such a supposition. But what were the grounds for this assertion? why, a proclamation, published by General Dundas, calling upon the inhabitants of his district to give up their arms; and threatening them in case they did not do so, that they should at all times be subject to domiciliary visits: and this proclamation required some other compliances; and that then an order was sent down from his Excellency, desiring *that* proclamation to be taken down, for that it tended to inflame the minds of the people. Upon these documents was the assertion made that I have before mentioned; the gentleman who made it, at the same time highly approving of the proclamation. Whether this proclamation was a prudential measure or not, I will not attempt to determine; but I think the Government ought to have better information than either the gentleman who made the assertion or I have, to know how far that proclamation affected the minds of the people. The same gentleman highly reprobated a paragraph in the pamphlet alluded to, which he said compared the



the Volunteers of 1782, to the United Irishmen of this day; however I cannot think it was the writer's intention to make any such comparison, in the literal sense, as stated by the gentleman, nor do I think such an inference can be at all drawn from the words made use of by the writer. The gentleman went on and said, that the pulpit was become a place for broaching political opinions, or at least, for enlarging on them; and upon this he animadverted in my mind, with becoming severity. The pulpit is surely not the place for mentioning or taking notice of the politics of the day.

I have read some numbers of a periodical paper called the *Anti-Union*, which affects to discuss the subject impartially; but I think with as great heat as any other publication. It takes notice of a part of the anonymous pamphlet, where it speaks of the interest we shall have in the English Cabinet upon the event of a Union taking place. The writer of the pamphlet says, "That we shall then  
 " have our affairs discussed by our own mem-  
 " bers in a wise and free assembly, where our  
 " interest is their interest, our prosperity their  
 " prosperity,



“prosperity, and where of course our welfare  
 “must be as much considered as theirs.”  
 This is exactly the point that I have endeavoured to maintain, and I think that the oligarchy, democracy, or aristocracy of Great Britain must consider our interests as theirs, and theirs as ours, and therefore I entirely agree with the writer upon this part of the Pamphlet; but the *Anti-Union* attempts to ridicule this by saying, that there is too much kindness in the meditated arrangement; and that the Irish members never can carry any legislative measure: but the writers for the *Anti-Union* seem entirely to forget, that an English member must then consider himself as much an Irish as an English one: he has a power of of legislating for both Countries, and he cannot hold an opinion that they are not one and the same Country. The *Anti-Union* puts a curious case—it is this, would a legislative or an incorporate Union between France and Ireland so identify their interests, that equal culture and protection would certainly follow? This is to be sure putting a case, but I believe every one will admit not in point; for in the first place, if such an Union was to take place, the balance of power  
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in Europe would be destroyed, and France would then swallow up England, because France being a large kingdom or republic, would only conceive they were adding an island to their territory. But it is a different case where two islands join together for their mutual protection and convenience; they are on an equal footing, and the only difference is which of the islands shall be the seat of government; but as this can never be one of the objections to our Union between Great Britain and this Country, it is unnecessary to say any thing upon it—The first number of this periodical paper concludes, with stating what it calls the *lies of the week*, but it does not pretend to say who fabricated those lies, or endeavour to trace the motives for circulating them, which I think would not have been beneath the writer's notice, and might have given the public some useful information. The second number concludes with a Quere, put upon three Pamphlets; one says, that an Union is necessary to protect the Catholics from the Orangemen; another says, that an Union is necessary to protect the Orangemen from the Catholics; and the third (which is the pamphlet ascribed to the *Secretary*) that an Union



Union is necessary for both those purposes ; and the quere is, which of the three arguments is true ? Why if such a large portion of his Majesty's subjects, the Catholics of this kingdom agree with the writer of the pamphlet, that an Union is necessary to protect them ; and if another large portion of his Majesty's subjects, the Orangemen of this kingdom, agree that an Union is necessary for their protection, I think the argument that maintains that an Union is necessary for both, is true ; because it appears to me that if it is necessary for the protection of two such large bodies, it will be productive of most happy consequences, by setting both of them at rest as to what one may fear from the other : and can there be any thing more essential to good order and good government, than that every person should feel himself protected in an equal manner with his neighbour ? then, no jealousies or animosities can arise, no party is stronger than the other, because the state holds an even hand, and grants protection without discrimination of parties. Mr. Rudd (a gentleman who has written upon the subject) argues in my mind very erroneously as to the case put with respect to

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the Union between the Romans and Sabines ; he says, “ Have the Sabines (*i. e.* Irish) found “ that they cannot maintain themselves any “ longer against the Romans ?” Pray is this putting the question in a fair point of view, or is it stating the fact ? Has England lifted up her arm against Ireland ? On the contrary, is not Ireland under the protection of Great Britain ? Again, he says, “ Do the “ Irish see that by Uniting with them they “ have an opportunity of encreasing their “ Liberty, their Happiness, and (oh monstrous !) their Power.” To this, I say, that an Union cannot possibly lessen the Liberty of Ireland ; she will have a proportionate number of Members to legislate for her ; and, as I have said before, she will then have every English Member to consider her interests in the same manner that they would the interests of Great Britain, if no Union took place. As to our happiness, it will add to it in this way, that an Union will encourage Englishmen to come and live amongst us, and by their example and conduct, teach the lower orders of the people to lay aside that horrid spirit of murder and massacre that has seized upon their minds ; and for our power, what other



other power will then dare to disunite us from Great Britain, when they see that one legislative assembly enacts laws for both countries, when they can no longer see a difference in the parliament of one kingdom and the other, when the supplies (the sinews of war) can be then raised or arranged rather with so much more ease, when the distinction of Irishman and Englishman, which has unhappily too long prevailed, will be done away, when it is more than probable we shall constantly have a great part of the Royal navy in our ports? I say this will and must considerably add to our power. But he goes on, and says, "How  
 " will the conclusion be supported, to wit,  
 " and by that union laid the foundation of  
 " their greatness." Now if two such petty states as the Romans and Sabines were, by incorporating themselves together, laid such a foundation as to be able to defend themselves, and overcome their powerful neighbours, what may not reasonably be expected from two such famous islands as Great Britain and Ireland, if they incorporate themselves with each other? will not such strength and solidity be added to the empire, as will leave the enemies of it little hope ever to be able



to shake? But does Ireland at present exist as an independent state, or is it able to exist as such? it is not. What would have become of us upon several recent occasions if Great Britain had not stretched out her protecting hand to us? Should we not have been a province of France, robbed and plundered by them, as every other power was with whom they fraternized? And this appears to me to be a very strong reason why Ireland should not hesitate upon fair and liberal principles to unite more closely with Great Britain. But let us see does the Irish parliament by their conduct so compleatly satisfy the minds of the people that we should be most unhappy? indeed if we gave it up, or changed it in the smallest degree; for I will only call it a degree to incorporate it with Great Britain; no person can answer in the affirmative. Are we not as discontented with the proceedings of our own parliament, as if it was a foreign one, legislated for us, where we had no representatives? and do we not loudly complain of British influence? Take that influence from them if you can, it can only be done (odd as it may appear to some) by incorporating the two parliaments, then England will cease

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to buy or bribe our representatives, because the temptation ceases, and those representatives that we may have in the united parliament must be honest, there will be no inducement held out to them to be otherwise; Ireland will have no separate interest from that of Great Britain, the distinction will be lost by the interest of the empire in general being the question that will always come under the consideration of parliament: some local laws may to be sure be necessary, but the great consideration will always be that of the empire. And can such a parliament be called a partial one, or can it be said that our interests will be neglected? it is impossible; because we can have none that will jar with those of Great Britain. Do we not very well know, that before every meeting of our parliament the measures to be brought forward, are discussed in the English Cabinet, and there I may say settled; and what reasonable objection can we have that a parliament composed of Englishmen and Irishmen sitting in Great Britain, may not as well be allowed to take our interests into their consideration as a parliament sitting in this country, under the direction and guidance of the British Minister? surely none  
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in the world. I must say it is only a mistaken pride that has taken possession of us, and a false notion of independence. Mr. Rudd says, "If England in case of an Union is to become like Overgrown France, Ireland must be Geneva, which we know is enslaved." I should be glad to know how England, by an Union with Ireland can become like Overgrown France? Is England part of a vast continent, separated from other countries only by fortresses or rivers? surely the comparison cannot hold, nor can it hold with respect to Ireland being compared to Geneva in case of an Union. Has Geneva any person to advocate her interests in the Directory of France; or can it be said that France considers her at all, except as a check upon other powers? But he goes on, and says, "That, or she (meaning Ireland) must be Savoy, or Austrian Flanders, or Spain, or she must be Holland, Switzerland, Sardinia, or the new Republic of Italy." Certainly this cannot be called a cool or a reasonable way to argue the question; when he makes all those comparisons, it must be supposed that he takes England to hold the same principles of France; but thank God, her conduct has proved the reverse.



reverse. His comparisons would be most excellent if he was arguing against an Union with France; there it would be but justice to endeavour to turn our thoughts to those unhappy countries that have connected themselves with her; and here let me again say, that the question of an Union is not considered with coolness or propriety, when gentlemen make such comparisons, and draw such improper conclusions. The same Gentleman says, "What reason have we to suppose that  
 " England would persevere in cramming a  
 " favourable Union down our throats, and  
 " insist on loading Ireland, her dear sister,  
 " with privileges, rights, exemptions, immunities, and advantages of all kinds,  
 " which if not taken from her proper self  
 " must drop from the moon." I am sure the gentleman found no such kind of argument in support of an Union in the anonymous pamphlet, and I don't know why he makes use of such a one against it, it can be only for the purpose of leading the mind astray by a kind of ridicule, which is by no means praiseworthy. This is not a subject to be treated with ridicule or buffoonery; on the contrary, it ought to be treated with that seriousness  
 which



which the magnitude of the the question deserves. It cannot to be sure be supposed that England will give us every thing without asking any return, but in my mind the principal return they desire us to make, is, let one legislative assembly act for both countries, and for the empire at large, and we will give you considerable commercial advantages, and no longer look upon you as a country wishing to separate from us, nor will we consider your interests separate from ours, one king, lords, and commons, shall make laws for us, we will be one people and one kingdom, there shall be no humiliating distinctions between us. Again Mr. Rudd says, "If three hundred of the first men in  
 " this kingdom, sitting in College-Green in  
 " Dublin, must be supposed under British influence, what must we conclude would be  
 " the case with sixty of those very persons,  
 " when transplanted to *St. Stephen's Chapel*,  
 " in London?" To this I answer, that our interests would be then so blended and consolidated with the interests of Great Britain, that the minister would never think of tampering with an Irish member, no more than he would with an English one, if he did, it must be



be to carry some question that related to the empire at large, and not to Ireland in particular; but gentlemen in their different productions upon this question agree as if the whole of the minister's power would be exerted to crush Ireland. For my part I should think ministers have something else to do, than to think of ruining a component part of the empire. One of our complaints is, that Englishmen sitting in Great Britain should legislate for us: may not Englishmen answer, is it not as hard upon us that Irishmen sitting in Great Britain should assist in making laws to bind us? and I do think there is as much grounds for the one as the other.

But I fear if I proceed further I may exceed the limits of a pamphlet; and under this idea I shall for the present have done, reserving to myself a power however to continue giving my thoughts on the question, and of answering the arguments against the anonymous pamphlet: and I cannot help saying, that if it is the production of Mr. Cooke, (which I know not) in my mind he need not be ashamed of it, for there is much excellent reasoning in it, and I would recommend it to

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the attention of all those who can keep their minds free from passion and prejudice. I will conclude this with a few words which I seen in a public News-paper the other day, and which very forcibly struck me. They are these,

“ If when the articles are promulged, and due  
 “ consideration afforded to them, they shall  
 “ be found hostile to the interests of Ireland,  
 “ in the name of God, Virtue, and our  
 “ Country, let the measure be rejected, but  
 “ if the contrary shall be proved—if it shall  
 “ appear the grave of our divisions, our  
 “ bigotry, and our political crimes, and  
 “ the vital principle of our unanimity, our  
 “ charity, our morals, and our prosperity—  
 “ why then let every voice be raised to ad-  
 “ vocate, and every arm stretched forth to  
 “ support it.”

AN ATTORNEY.

January 1st, }  
 1799. }