A

REPORT

OF THE

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF

IRELAND,

ON *TUESDAY* AND *WEDNESDAY* THE 22ND AND 23D OF *JANUARY*, 1799,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

AN UNION.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED FOR JAMES MOORE, NO. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.
1799.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

THE

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1799.

THE Speaker and Members having returned after attending his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, in the Houſe of Peers, a copy of the Speech was read from the Chair as follows:

" *My Lords and Gentlemen,*

" I have received his Majeſty's commands to meet you in Parliament.

" I congratulate you on the happy effects which have followed the unparallelled atchievement of the detachment of his Majeſty's fleet under the command of Rear Admiral Lord Nelſon —on the total defeat of the French ſquadron off the coaſts of this kingdom, by that under the command of Sir J. B. Warren— and on the brilliant and important conqueſt of Minorca. Thoſe events, while they afford to us in common with every other deſcription of his Majeſty's ſubjects, matter of juſt pride and ſatisfaction, muſt at the ſame time give confidence to other powers, and ſhew to all Europe the beneficial effects of a ſyſtem of vigour and exertion, directed with manly perſeverance againſt the deſtructive projects of the common enemy.

" I feel much concern in being obliged to acquaint you that a ſpirit of diſaffection ſtill prevails in ſeveral parts of this kingdom, and that the ſecret agents of the enemy are active in raiſing an expectation of freſh aſſiſtance from France.

" In this ſituation and under the evident neceſſity of continuing the war with vigour, his Majeſty firmly relies upon that ſpirit and magnanimity which have hitherto marked all your exertions

in ſupport of the honour of his Crown, of the intereſt of this kingdom, and of the general cauſe of the Empire.

" *Gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons,*

" I have ordered the public accounts and eſtimates to be laid before you—and as I am confident your wiſdom will raiſe the ſupplies which may be neceſſary in the manner leaſt burthenſome to the ſubject, ſo you may depend upon my attention to their prudent and economical application.

" It is with great ſatisfaction I obſerve, that notwithſtanding our internal calamities, this kingdom blended as its intereſts are in the general proſperity of the Empire, has participated in the effects of the encreaſing wealth and commerce of Great Britain, and that our revenues and trade have encreaſed.

" *My Lords and Gentlemen,*

" It is my duty to recommend to your attention the various objects of internal regulation which have ſo long enjoyed the benefit of your protection and ſupport. Your agriculture, your manufactures, and particularly the linen manufacture, the Proteſtant charter ſchools, and other charitable inſtitutions will require, and will, I am ſure, continue to receive that aid and encouragement which they have uniformly experienced from the liberality of Parliament. I am confident you will feel particular anxiety to give further attention to the juſt and honourable claims of thoſe who have ſuffered from their loyalty during the rebellion.

" His Majeſty depends upon your perſevering energy to repreſs, by every wiſe effort, the ſpirit of diſaffection, which ſtill requires the exerciſe of extraordinary powers to check its malignant effects. In recurring, where occaſion has required it, to acts of indiſpenſable ſeverity, I have not been inattentive to the ſuggeſtions of Mercy, and have endeavoured to mitigate the effects of penal juſtice, and the neceſſary exertions of the powers of the State, with as much forbearance and lenity as could be conſiſtent with the public ſafety.

" In the general cauſe which engages the Empire, our proſpect is highly encouraging, but in proportion as a ſucceſsful termination of the war becomes probable, our efforts ſhould be redoubled in order to ſecure it.

" The zeal of his Majeſty's Regular and Militia Forces, the gallantry of the Yeomanry, the honourable co-operation of the Britiſh Fencibles and Militia, and the activity, ſkill and valour of his Majeſty's Fleets, will, I doubt not, defeat every future effort of the enemy. But the more I have reflected on the ſituation and circumſtances of this kingdom, conſidering on the one hand the ſtrength and ſtability of Great Britain, and on the other thoſe diviſions which have ſhaken Ireland to its foundation, the

more anxious I am for ſome permanent adjuſtment which may extend the advantages enjoyed by our ſiſter kingdom to every part of this iſland.

"The unremitting induſtry with which our enemies perſevere in their avowed deſign of endeavouring to effect a Separation of this kingdom from Great Britain, muſt have engaged your particular attention; and his Majeſty commands me to expreſs his anxious hope that this conſideration, joined to the ſentiment of mutual affection and common intereſt, may diſpoſe the Parliaments in both kingdoms to provide the moſt effectual means of maintaining and improving a connexion, eſſential to their common ſecurity, and of conſolidating, as far as poſſible, into one firm and laſting fabrick, the ſtrength, the power, and the reſources of the Britiſh Empire."

New Writs were ordered to iſſue for Ardee, Mullingar, and Callan, in the room of Mr. Ruxton, Colonel Doyle, and Charles Kendal Buſhe, Eſqrs. who have vacated their ſeats.

Mr. G. Ponsonby roſe, and ſtated that perſons, aliens and ſtrangers to the Legiſlature, were, according to his information, at that moment uſurping ſeats in that Houſe: and he held it to be the duty of the Houſe to make ſolemn enquiry into the fact.—The Noble Lord who held an high official ſituation as oſtenſible Miniſter, and had formerly repreſented the County of Down in Parliament, fell in his opinion under this deſcription. In order to enable the Houſe to form a judgment on the fact, he deſired that the two *Place Acts* and a report of laſt Seſſion ſhould be read.

[The Acts of the 33d and 38th of the King were then read.]

By the firſt of theſe Acts it is provided "that every Member of the Houſe of Commons accepting from the Crown a place of profit during pleaſure, ſhall vacate his ſeat."

By the ſecond, it is enacted "that Members accepting places of profit from the Lord Lieutenant or other Chief Governor ſhall vacate their ſeats."

The Report of the Committee of the laſt Seſſion, as to the queſtion whether Lord Caſtlereagh had vacated his ſeat by accepting the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was alſo read. It ſtated "that the office was one of conſiderable profit, and conferred by the verbal nomination of the Lord Lieutenant.—It farther ſtated, "that the Office, when given to any Engliſh Member, had never been conſidered as a vacation of his ſeat, and that no information on the ſubject was to be found in the Iriſh Journals."

[On this Report, it was declared by a Reſolution of the Houſe, that Lord Caſtlereagh, having accepted the place of Chief Secretary to Lord Camden, had not vacated.—This was before the

paſſing of the ſecond Place Bill Act, which was brought in to remedy this omiſſion.]

Mr. G. Ponsonby then ſtated to the Houſe, that Lord Caſtlereagh was now Secretary to Lord Cornwallis, who did not arrive in this country until the 20th of June; that the laſt Place Act had been paſſed the 4th of that month, and clearly operated on the re-acceptance of the ſituation under Lord Cornwallis, which he (Mr. Ponſonby) contended muſt have taken place, as the tenure of the Office expired with the departure of Lord Camden.—He therefore moved, "That Robert Viſcount Caſtlereagh, having accepted the Office of Chief Secretary to his Excellency Lord Cornwallis, his ſeat in that Houſe was therefore vacated."

He was ſeconded by Mr. Barrington.

Mr. O'Donnel ſupported the motion.

The Attorney General argued, that Lord Caſtlereagh had not at any time ſince his acceptance of the Office of Chief Secretary reſigned that ſituation, or been appointed anew; the Lord Lieuteuant was indeed changed, but as the ſucceſſor had not made any change in the ſecondary offices, the perſons holding them ſtill continued in poſſeſſion, and would ſo continue until he ſhould determine to diſmiſs them; it was impoſſible therefore that Lord Caſtlereagh could come within the operation of an Act made ſubſequent to his acceptance of the Office, and after a ſolemn reſolution of the Legiſlature paſſed confirming him in his ſeat under the terms of the firſt law on the ſubject.

Several members ſpoke on each ſide of this queſtion, which occupied the Houſe ſome hours. At length Mr. Ponſonby, rather than delay any longer the main buſineſs of the night, withdrew his motion, on leave obtained.

Lord Tyrone.—I riſe to move an Addreſs of Thanks to his Majeſty for the moſt gracious ſpeech we have this day heard delivered from the throne. I confeſs, Sir, there never was a period in the annals of this or any other country, where firmneſs, deliberation and dignity were more requiſite than upon the preſent awful occaſion—Parliament muſt not be intimidated by menaces, or deterred by clamour, although it ought to liſten with attention and deference to the wiſhes of the people whoſe legitimate organ it is. The Addreſs which I ſhall have the honour to propoſe, will, I hope, meet your approbation and paſs unanimouſly. It does not pledge the Houſe in its deciſion upon that great and important quſtion which now ſo much occupies and intereſts the public mind. As to the meaſure of a Legiſlative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, I at preſent can give no opinion, it would be to prejudge and anticipate that which is of ſo much

weight, nor can I fairly decide upon it until it ſhall come regularly in detail and diſcuſſion before the Houſe; but to reſiſt the full and free conſideration of a queſtion which comes recommended to your attention by our gracious and auguſt Sovereign, and upon which the ſentiments of commercial parts of the kingdom are ſo divided, would be diſreſpectful, impolitic and raſh. I truſt this Houſe and the Nation at large are unanimous in an abhorrence and deteſtation of any connexion with France; I truſt this Houſe and the Nation at large are agreed to ſtand or fall with Great Britain—ſhe in the hour of our diſtreſs generouſly aſſiſted us; and let it never be forgotten, that when an unprovoked and formidable Rebellion raged in this country, her Army, her Militia, the conſtitutional guardians of the Engliſh Nation, volunteered its ſervices in the defence of Ireland, and that her Fleet, under the command of the brave and gallant Warren, reſcued this country from the inſult of invaſion, by a deciſive victory over that implacable and perſevering enemy, who only looks to our deſtruction, in our ſeparation from Great Britain. I again repeat I do not conſider myſelf as pledged to the ſupport of the meaſure of an Union by moving the Addreſs; let that queſtion of policy ſtand upon its own merits; let it be adopted or rejected as the intereſts of Ireland and the proſperity of the Empire ſhall dictate. If upon inveſtigation it be found conducive to the advantage and ſtrengthening of both, no clamour, no violence, ſhall ſwerve me from the honourable line of my duty. I beg leave to ſay, I mean to move to-night a Call of the Houſe previouſly to entering into the conſideration of a ſubject of ſuch magnitude, that there may be due time for deliberation, that no Member may be taken by ſurpriſe, and that the deciſion of each may be the reſult of conviction.

Col. Fitzgerald.—Member for co. Cork, ſeconded the addreſs, expreſſing a zealous deſire that any ſtep likely to cement and ſtrengthen the connexion, between the two countries ſhould be adopted.

Sir J. Parnell.—As the ſpeech does not avow the meaſure of Legiſlative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, nor recommend it directly to the conſideration of the Houſe, it would be unneceſſary in this ſtage of the buſineſs to diſcuſs that queſtion, but the meaſure having been publicly avowed and introduced by a ſide-wind into the ſpeech, I ſhall oppoſe it in limine as being a queſtion ſimple in its nature and on which no further information is neceſſary, than to ſhew that we are called on to put an end to the exiſtence of an Iriſh Parliament.

By this meaſure we are to determine on the permanent and eſſential intereſts of this country for ever.

It is material to conſider whether theſe intereſts are, as I ſtate them to be, permanent and eſſential; if they are ſo, no temporary

inconvenience under which the ſtate labours, much leſs ſhould any momentary perſonal conſideration be put in competition with our moſt valuable and deareſt rights.

How are theſe intereſts affected, and on what are we called on to decide? On our conſtitution, our trade, our property, and on what is of ſtill more conſequence, the feelings of the public connected with a ſurrender of the Conſtitution; an affrighted commerce, and a diminiſhed property. This will lay a ground for growing diſcontent, not promoted by declamation or irritation, not to be treated as the momentary convulſion of popular feelings, but proved by facts and which if aggravated by experience muſt acquire force the longer it is ſuppreſſed, and produce conſequences greater than I wiſh to venture to ſtate.

Will any one deny that the Conſtitution is changed when the repreſentation of the people of Ireland, founded on the firſt forms of its Conſtitution, ratified by the deliberate conſideration of the Parliament of Great Britain, is altered not only by an eſſential diminution of the numbers of the repreſentative body, but by ſubjecting them to the control of a greater number of repreſentatives choſen in Great Britain, whoſe local intereſts differ from theirs, and who are engaged on objects of more general concern, they can neither know what we may ſuffer, nor if they did could they apply immediate remedies, nor inveſtigate the cauſes of inſurrections which require inſtant ſuppreſſion; or of diſaffection, to be counteracted in that caſe by thoſe who act on the ſuggeſtion of dilatory correſpondence and not from knowledge of the habits, the exertion, or the combination of the conſpiracy.

It is ſaid that a perſon in Yorkſhire might equally complain of the participation of repreſentation by the member for Middleſex. There is an extreme where every individual wiſhes to be immediately repreſented, that would lead to an impracticable exceſs of numbers, but there is a due practical medium, where every part of the ſtate may enjoy a repreſentation proportionate to its extent, its wealth and population.

If the argument was true it would apply equally to Great Britain and Ireland, in that caſe it would be expedient not to encreaſe the numbers of the Britiſh Commons, but rather to deduct one hundred members from the Britiſh Parliament; they according to the reaſoning to which I object, would be as well repreſented by one hundred members from Ireland, as by the repreſentation of counties in England, all being common ſubjects of the Empire. The confuſion of dialect, the claſhing of intereſts would not derange the political machine, whilſt a wiſe and able Miniſter controuls ſuch diſcordant principles; but if hereafter, the ſeparate intereſts ſhould be oppoſed to each other, the promiſed liberties of Ireland would vaniſh jointly with thoſe of the country to which it had ſent the means of the change of its conſtitution.

Theſe are momentous conſiderations this day, where the claims of the people to their ſhare of the government, have cauſed the convulſion of Europe. Will they now have an oppoſite effect? will the power of Parliament make the principles of diſcord the ſources of ſubmiſſion, of tranquillity and of affection, the only pretext of the meaſure is to tranquillize. The government are too wiſe not to know its firſt authority, *volentem per populum dare jura*, if they act contrary to that principle it is from having been miſinformed, that they have been ſo will be proved this night as to the opinion of this Houſe and hereafter as to the opinion of the people.

We ſuffer in relinquiſhing a conſtitution ratified by Great Britain.

The next conſideration is our trade—trade is of a delicate nature; if diverted from its channels, it may wander into other countries or ceaſe. The trade loſt to Dublin does not neceſſarily ſeek the ports of Waterford and Cork, it may find an aſylum in Liverpool, or probably find no home. The importing merchants of Dublin are the factors for the exports of our linens, they ſupply the trade with capital and diſcount, they extend it by their eſtabliſhed credits and by their extenſive foreign connexions. The diminution of the population which attends the local ſituation of political power, the conſtitutional baniſhment of its Lords and Commons to be renewed every eight years (who if prudent, will become Engliſh ſettlers, if diſſipated, bankrupts) will leſſen the imports of all the articles of Luxury, and the conſumption of all the manufacture of artizans and of the articles ſold by retail. The malady of the head will affect all the component parts of the ſyſtem.

The counties in the vicinity of the metropolis will experience a decline of price commenſurate with a decreaſed conſumption. As the price of land has doubled in 20 years it may return to its firſt value, is this a ſource of content and gratitude? I ſhall be gratified if I am a falſe prophet, I would wiſh that my judgment might be impeached if my country benefits, but I dare not venture to riſque experiment which if it is not ſucceſsful muſt be ruinous.

I have ſtated the moſt obvious diſadvantages; great as they ſeem, they muſt be ſubmitted to, if compenſated by proved and beneficial conſequences to the Empire.

The firſt, and obvious argument is that a meaſure which has been beneficial to Scotland will equally benefit Ireland.—Ireland does not ſtand in the ſame relative poſition this day, as England did in reſpect to that country at the time of the Union. The meaſure was then juſtified by neceſſity. This was ſo well underſtood, that according to the teſtimony of the writer of the beſt authority Deſoe, it was not unpopular in Scotland when firſt pro-

posed, it became so by publications calculated to inflame the minds of the people. Scotland had by an Act of its Parliament, divested the family of the succession of the Crown on whom it had been entailed by the Parliament of Great Britain.

The English Parliament had in return declared the people of that country aliens and had interdicted their trade, there was no choice but submission or Union. The measure did not equally affect the public feeling as it now does. The succession to the Crown and not the share of the power claimed by the people interested the public mind. Is the example of Scotland, brought to prove that the Union was an instant remedy to quell rebellion and discountenance invasion? When the French attempted a landing at an interval of time, when passions might have subsided, the writer whom I have quoted asserts that if the landing had succeeded, the English army would not have been sufficient to have controuled the spirit of insurrection in that country. But though a similar necessity does not exist in Ireland as did at that time in Scotland, it is asserted that there exists a necessity equally cogent at this day, to make the adoption of the measure unavoidable in this country, viz. the contest between Catholic and Protestant, and foreign invasion. Can an act of Parliament modifying the constitution, alter the minds of those who propose to overturn it? can it stop the progress of invading fleets, or the rash enterprize of a desperate army? Has rebellion, or invasion, or disputed claims ever been made a fair argument for altering the British Constitution? would any one in extreme illness take a remedy before it was proved it agreed with his constitution? I never heard it attempted to be proved that those who wish to throw off British Connexion, would adopt a system to place them under its unlimited controul. I caution the House that we shall not hazard all that is dear to us for ever, until the necessity of the measure and its beneficial consequences are attempted to be proved. Will the Catholic and Protestant mind be satisfied by each party ceasing to have a Parliament within the reach of its approbation? We had better know our interest by relinquishing jealousies whereby we have been sufferers in the extreme, and avoid by the continuance of them injuring the interests of our country.—But the great object which must supersede every other consideration, is connecting the interests and adding to the strength of the empire. If I knew how to obtain those objects, it is my first consideration, but I would not in seeking them risk an innovation, which if carried too far must be its destruction, I will yield in loyalty to no one, I know that the interests of England and Ireland depend on the closest and most intimate connexion. But instead of binding our affection by law, or providing for our strength, by depriving us of the guardians of our own interests, I would adopt the means of supporting Great Britain, which were obvious and practica-

ble and not ſpeculative and liable to ſuſpicion. In order to underſtand how the ſtrength of Great Britain may be effectually promoted, let us conſider what creates the ſtrength of a ſtate; 1ſt, the affection of the people, 2d, the increaſe of military ſtrength connected with the increaſe of wealth the means of ſupplying it. Are the people in the metropolis and the people in the country ſo enraptured with this meaſure, that they are ready to ſhed tears of gratitude for its being offered to them?

If we are ſtated to be too rich and too powerful to be governed, and when to remedy the inconvenience, we ſhall be reduced to a ſtate of leſs power, and ſhall enjoy leſs wealth, ſhall our ability to add to the military ſtrength of Great Britain be increaſed? If money ſhould be the criterion of ſtrength, and neceſſary to be contributed to aſſiſt Great Britain, it could be obtained in a greater proportion from a people confiding in an independent Iriſh Parliament, than when raiſed by another Legiſlature.—I never propoſed any taxes (it has been my misfortune to be obliged to propoſe extenſive ones) that met with a negative in this aſſembly, the unanimity of Parliament ſecured the acquieſcence of the people.

I have ſtated the advantages and the diſadvantages connected with the propoſed meaſure, the propoſed advantages are likely to produce the oppoſite effects to thoſe which they affect to have in view; inſtead of leſſening, they add to the exiſting diſcontents—they do not convince me of the neceſſity of ſurrendering a Parliament under whoſe ſuperintendance trade, revenue, and property are acknowledged to have regularly encreaſed in a moſt rapid progreſs—a Parliament who have uniformly ſupported the Britiſh connexion—who have adopted uniformly its treaties, enacted ſimilar navigation laws, and confirmed its excluſive charters, and proved in every inſtance, that there exiſted a ſyſtem compatible with the exiſtence of an Independent Iriſh and Britiſh Legiſlature exerciſing a beneficial ſuperintendance on the local intereſt of each country, but connected in a common intereſt to perpetuate the Britiſh Empire, and enjoying in common the ineſtimable advantages of being under a common parent and ſovereign: The Parliament of this Country poſſeſſing ſimilar privileges with thoſe of the Britiſh Conſtitution, confirmed to them by the juſtice of the Engliſh Legiſlature, has proved itſelf competent to detect and ſuppreſs a moſt dangerous and extenſive rebellion.

But it is alledged, that this Parliament is liable to influence, and not fit to be entruſted by the crown or the people; what a ſilly charge! your conduct this night, at the ſame time that it defeats an injurious meaſure, will confute the reaſoning offered in ſupport of it; by proving your independance, you prove the falſehood of the calumny which impeaches it.

It would be unjuſt if demerit had attached to thoſe who compoſe the Parliament to deſtroy what ought to be a perpetual fabrick, becauſe individuals at any particular time had failed in their duty: I would riſk every thing of my own before I would deſtroy what does not belong to me, the rights of poſterity.

It is ſaid, it is not certain that the Iriſh Parliament will always act in concert with that of Great Britain in imperial queſtions —Is it certain, that the Engliſh Parliament will always vote the ſupplies neceſſary for its Government, in neither caſe is there any certainty, but there is a preſumption which approaches to certainty, that public bodies will always act in conformity to their intereſts, when thoſe intereſts are ſelf-evident; in ſhort, the evils complained of may be beſt remedied in the caſe of the religious diſtinctions, by recollecting that we have a common intereſt with them; the affections are to be acquired by good treatment, and all to be preſerved by the efforts of a ſteady and wiſe Government.—I have voted againſt Catholic claims, not from diſlike to any individual for his religion, but on a principle that it was unwiſe to change the exiſting Government; notwithſtanding I have lived happily among them, and I am ſatisfied that if their paſſions had not been worked on, the ſpirit of affection had prevailed from the juſtice and moderation of the Proteſtant reſident landlords, which would have proved, that the diſcontents founded on religious prejudice, ought to have ſubſided in Ireland as it has done in other countries.

The efforts of the enemy are better to be oppoſed by military force than by ſpeculation on our Conſtitution, by relying on thoſe whoſe loyalty you have experienced, than by riſquing the effects of alarming their feelings by innovating on the principles of the exiſting Conſtitution. It is better to meet the evils which we know, than riſque others the extent of which we cannot meaſure, viz. the entire ſurrender of the whole of our intereſts, for they are included in our conſtitutional privileges.

Sir, I muſt be anſwerable for my opinions hereafter, it is a conſolation to me, that I have acted under no influence but that of my judgment. If we are fortunate enough to preſerve the radical principles of our Conſtitution, and to eſcape the dangerous ſituation in which we ſtand, let us accompany our exertion with the moſt cordial expreſſion of affection, followed up by ſubſtantial aſſiſtance to the Engliſh nation; let us conciliate their affection by imitating their virtues; let us act as they would do if they were in our ſituation; let us adopt a ſimilarity of ſentiment with that which the barons uſed when it was propoſed to alter the law of England; and let us reply to the adviſers of the meaſure which is propoſed, *nolamus leges Hiberniæ mutari.*

Mr. TIGHE.—I cannot, Sir, help expreſſing the pleaſure with which I concur this day in ſentiment with the Right Hon. Gentleman who has juſt ſat down. And give me leave to ſay, that this queſtion will come before the public with a bad and ill-omened aſpect, when men, who by their arguments evince themſelves ſo truly conversant with the real intereſts of Ireland; men, who by their conduct have evinced themſelves ſo ſincerely the friends to its rights and independence, have now ſuddenly and for the firſt time loſt the confidence of government. I am happy that I have this early opportunity of ſhewing my ſentiment of the important queſtion which is likely to be brought forward; I will enter into no diſcuſſion of it, until it is brought directly before the Houſe; until I have heard by what arguments it can be ſupported; that, upon whatever ground the Miniſters may chooſe to place it, upon that ground they may be met and combated.—The noble Lord who moved the Addreſs has ſaid, that the Houſe by concurring with him will not be pledged to adopt a Legiſlative Union, it ſeems to me, that if they ſhall vote that Addreſs, they will ſtand pledged, as far as they can, to favour a Legiſlative Union. The Addreſs ſays, "we will conſider of the beſt means of conſolidating into one fabric, the power of the two kingdoms." What power are we to conſolidate? the executive? No, that is conſolidated for ever. If the words mean any thing then, they mean that we are favourable to the conſolidation of the Legiſlative powers by an incorporating Union; are we favourable to this idea? have we adopted it? do we not know, that as the leſſer quantity is loſt in the greater, the Legiſlative Faculty of Ireland would by an Union merge eternally in the Legiſlative power of Britain? before ſuch a queſtion comes to be debated, it is incumbent on the Miniſter previouſly to ſhew, by what crime the Iriſh Parliament have deſerved to forfeit their conſtitutional right; by what crime the Nation deſerve to forfeit independence. I ſee but two ways in which the Miniſter can alledge ſuch miſconduct to the Iriſh Parliament; either they have made ſo bad an uſe of their power by their general conduct, as to deſerve this act of attainder; or elſe they have not given a ſufficient or a zealous ſupport to the Empire, during the preſent unfortunate war. Adminiſtration, who have uſually ſuggeſted the meaſures adopted by Parliament, will ſcarcely impeach it for general miſconduct; and as to the ſupport which two Iriſh Parliaments have given to Britain during the preſent conteſt, that ſupport was not zealous only, but unanimous; we have repeatedly declared our determination to ſtand or fall with Great Britain; we have been liberal of our reſources; we have voted taxes and loans to the utmoſt of our power, and voted them unanimouſly. Great Britain owes gratitude to our exertions; ſhe owes reſpect to our independence; ſhe ought to know that that independence enabled us to make thoſe exertions.

But if Great Britain is incapable of gratitude or respect to this country, never may I be counted among those, who shall be capable of throwing the liberties of Ireland, at the feet of a British Minister; a Minister, whose object is now to sacrifice this country to new schemes of desperate finance: he has taxed Great Britain to the uttermost; last year the expenditure; this year the income of every British individual is at his mercy; he can go no farther; next year therefore he wishes to find his resources in Ireland; and because he thinks the Irish Parliament are too sparing of the money of the people, he wishes to destroy our Legislature, that this country may be hereafter for ever taxed, by a majority of British representatives, who in taxing us, will not tax themselves, but will be ready to violate, with regard to us every constitutional principle, according to the suggestions of a British Minister.

Lord CASTLEREAGH felt himself called upon to say, that although there was not in the address any specific pledge to a measure of *Union*, although it was clearly implied in the wish to strengthen the resources of the Empire, he had no difficulty in saying that he thought the only means of settling this unhappy country in permanent tranquillity and connexion with Britain incorporate, were to be found in a Legislative Union; and on this subject he did intend at an early day to submit a specific motion to the House.

Mr. G. PONSONBY entered now on a very able and eloquent attack and exposure of the general principle of an Union. He said the open avowal of the noble Lord saved him the trouble of proving that the words of the Address could mean nothing less than that the House would entertain and discuss the idea of annihilating the Irish Parliament and the Constitution of the country. He boldly avowed the principle, that neither the Legislature, nor any power on earth had a right or authority to do this —The Crown or the Peers evidently had no such power, and the Representatives of the People were appointed to make laws only —they were not vested with permanent and unlimited authority, and therefore could not pronounce definitively on the rights of the people. The deposition of James 2d, the bill of rights, which declared the deposition or abdication of that Monarch was for violating the original compact with the people, proved this doctrine. Parliament might indeed go great lengths with the consent of the people—but even with that, he would hesitate to say, whether they could deprive their posterity for ever of their right to the benefits of the Constitution, to civil liberty. Having painted in glowing colours the infamy of surrendering liberty and independence for any consideration, he proceeded to consider how the measure would affect the wealth of the country. 'You are to

grow rich ſaid he'—why?—Becauſe you are to have 100 Repreſentatives among 558 Britiſh, by whom you are to be governed —and theſe will conſtantly tend, not to encreaſe the trade and wealth of Britain, but to make *you* the wealthieſt kingdom in the world! There was a time when Great Britain had the management of your concerns; previous to 1779, for inſtance, what was your ſituation? What was the effect of their care then? Before the reign of James 1ſt, ſo far from being their peculiar favourites, you had not the common benefits of Engliſh law—you were aliens and out-laws. After the calamities you ſuffered under Charles I. and at the reſtoration, the property of the country fell principally into Engliſh hands—yet, even then, when you were of the fleſh and blood of Engliſhmen, your trade, which was, from a variety of circumſtances, naturally limited, was ſtill further reſtricted by the monopoly of Great Britain, and the import of your cattle, the only article of your export, was prohibited by the Britiſh Parliament, and though the King and Duke of Ormond both endeavoured to prevent that vote as ruinous, though Charles himſelf perſonally applied to the Peers to diſſuade them from it, they paſſed their favourite predicting meaſure of Iriſh Commerce. Mr. Ponſonby went on to ſhew the malevolence of Great Britain againſt Iriſh proſperity, by their application to King William to ſuppreſs the woollen manufacture, and by the ſubſequent reſtrictive meaſures with which they ſhackled Iriſh manufacture and commerce down to 1778, when by the virtuous and bold efforts of this country they extorted ſome commercial benefits which then were ſuppoſed to be of ſome importance, but which afterwards turned out to be ſuch as the country could not avail itſelf of, and even if it could, would not have added 50,00l. per annum to its wealth. Theſe continued oppreſſions and irritations made the gentlemen of Ireland at laſt declare, that Ireland muſt be righted; and to enforce the demand, they withheld the ſupplies, until juſtice was done. Was it wiſe or juſt, then, in a Parliament to ſurrender that power into the hands of a country which for ſeven centuries had kept this kingdom ſtarving, and deprived the country of all that advantage which God had given it? That the Legiſlature with all its defects, was equal to the government of the country, he proved by the fact ſtated in the Speech. That the proſperity of the country had greatly encreaſed, and that the country would not gain ſtrength by the diſfranchiſement of the Lgiſlature, he ſhewed by referring to its former ſituation when the Iriſh Parliament was ſubordinate to that of England.—To any meaſure which could tend to add legiſlative ſtrength to the Britiſh empire he would agree willingly—but to that meaſure which degraded this country, and by doing ſo weakened inſtead of adding ſtrength to the imperial force, ſo long as he remained a rational creature he would never give his concurrence. The Mi-

niſter had told them they ought to diſcuſs this meaſure with coolneſs, but when the Miniſter himſelf would not leave men to the free exerciſe of their underſtanding, but turned out of office the beſt and oldeſt ſervants of the Crown, becauſe they would not proſtitute their conſcience; when the terrors of diſmiſſal were thus held out to deter men, holding office, from a fair exerciſe of their private judgment. how could he talk of cool diſcuſſion? He concluded by moving an amendment, which would give every gentleman who did not wiſh to pledge himſelf to a ſurrender of the rights of the country, an opportunity of ſpeaking his ſenſe. The amendment was, that after the paſſage which declares the willingneſs of the Houſe to enter on a conſideration of what meaſures may beſt tend to confirm the common ſtrength of the empire, ſhould be inſerted, "maintaining, however, the undoubted birth-right of the people of Ireland to have a reſident and independent Legiſlature, ſuch as it was recognized by the Britiſh Legiſlature in 1782, and was finally ſettled at the adjuſtment of all differences between the two countries."

Sir L. Parsons ſeconded the amendment.

Rt. Hon. T. Conolly oppoſed it for the ſame reaſon which he urged againſt the Conſtitution of 1782, namely, that that Conſtitution could not work—two independent Legiſlatures in one empire being as abſurd and monſtrous as two heads on one pair of ſhoulders. He gave a ſhort hiſtory of the country from 1782 to the preſent time, and ſhewed, that many of the evils we have experienced ſince aroſe from the independence of the Legiſlature—and particularly the fact that there were 116 placemen and penſioners at one time in the Houſe of Commons ſince that period. What was ſuch independence worth?

Mr. Frederick Falkiner.—After the able ſpeech I have heard from my hon. and learned friend upon the floor (Mr. G. Ponſonby) it muſt appear as preſumption in me to intrude myſelf long upon the attention of this Houſe; but as on this importaut ſubject I think every Gentleman ought to deliver his ſentiments, I muſt entreat your attention for a few moments. I hope every gentleman who knows me will do me the juſtice to think I am ſincerely attached to my King and Conſtitution. But really I do not think his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's conduct ſince he has had the Adminiſtration of this Country deſerves my praiſe. To my Lord Camden we are indebted for our preſervation, in the glorious Yeomanry inſtitution. The horrid and unnatural rebellion was put down before that Nobleman left this Country; and had he remained here a little longer, it had been completely extinguiſhed, and the Yeomanry upheld in that degree their ſervices ſo highly merited. As to the attempt to invade this country by

a desperate banditti from France, every one who hears me knows the length of time they were suffered to wander through this country; and I may assert it, if it was not for the unparalleled gallantry of one regiment who stopped their career, that the French banditti would have reached this capital, while his Excellency's immense army had never seen them.—Our utmost praise is due to the English Militia, who so nobly volunteered their services when they did suppose we stood in need of their assistance; but suspicion is created that the force you have received from England was to carry the Minister's detested measure—a Legislative Union; a measure at once sacrificing into his hands our Independence, our Rights, and our Liberties I will call upon the noble Lord to declare whether the measure of a Legislative Union is not in contemplation to be brought forward, although not directly mentioned or set forth in the Speech; for until that subject is got rid of, the public mind cannot get quiet. In the County I have the honour to represent, the property between the landlord and tenant must stand in a very precarious situation; it will be the interest of the landlord to say there will be no Union, and the interest of the tenant to say there will be an Union. Therefore, decision must take place; it must be evident that from 4l. to 5l. an acre hangs berween those two opinions. I hope the high feeling and honour of this House, will from this night scout the measure (so degrading to the Nation) from its walls.

Lord CLEMENTS said he should support the Hon. Member's Amendment, and would ask leave to say a word or two on the subject. His Lordship hoped that this measure would be scouted by every honest man, and that the independent Members of that House, by expressing their justly indignant sentiments against it, would induce the minister to withdraw so mischievous a project. In no situation, nor under any circumstances could he think it proper to accede to such a measure.—He should oppose it equally as the friend of England as of Ireland; because he thought it fatally inimical to the connexion and prosperity of both countries. He hoped too it would be strenuously opposed by all the virtue of the British Senate, as a measure only calculated enormously to increase the power of the Crown, and influence of the Minister; and therefore ruinous to the true prosperity of the Empire.

Mr. FITZGERALD (late Prime Serjeant). The error committed by my Right Hon. Friend (alluding to the Attorney General calling him Prime Serjeant) was not at all necessary to con-

vince me that he was uninformed of my dismissal from an office in which I had long acted with him, and to my conduct, in which he has borne such strong, such honourable, and such voluntary testimony—I know him to be superior to such impolicy—for, as he supports the measure, his good sense would tell him that nothing could contribute to defeat its success, or to awake the honest indignation of the independent gentlemen of Ireland so effectually as such an open and avowed war against the freedom and liberties of Parliament, commenced by the removal of my Right Hon. Friend and myself from situations, which I am bold to say, we held with honor to ourselves, and advantage to the public. But it was necessary to hold us out as examples to stop the growing mutiny and insurrection of honor and conscience against the influence of office—and though my Right Hon. Friend and I have suffered, it must be a consolation to us to think that our suffering will produce an union of the honest pride of those we have left in office, with the independence of the country gentlemen of Ireland, to rescue their country from that ruin with which it is threatened; for I cannot conceive any man arrived at such a pitch of political depravity, as to support by his puhlic vote, that which was the subject of his private execration. The situation of my Right Hon. Friend is filled—mine is kept in abeiance, and will not be disposed of before the determination of the question. I perfectly agree with the Right Hon. Member who spoke last but one; (Mr. Conolly the near and respected connection of the noble Lord)—that much independence is not to be expected from an House of Commons, wherein he stated 116 place-men to be; and yet with that House of Commons the Right Hon. Member seems inclined to vote away the freedom and independence of Ireland—that freedom and independence, for which he enrolled himself among the saviours of Ireland in 1782—and how does he propose to preserve them? By an Union—a tranquillizing Union—an Union to be voted by 116 place-men, as stated by the Right Hon. Member. Connect the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman with the conduct of the government, with which he is so closely connected, and this inference must follow:—No man can hold a place under government who does not vote for this measure. The British minister is too wise and too magnanimous to wish for an Union on such terms.

If the amendment which my Honourable and Learned Friend has proposed, and supported with such transcendent ability shall

not be carried, this, Sir, I fear is the laſt time which I ſhall have the honor to addreſs you in an Iriſh Parliament; for though the pageant and ceremony of its funeral may take up ſome time and give opportunities for lamentations, yet, if the amendment is negatived, the character of Parliament will be extinguiſhed—and character is a phœnix which dies but once, and from its aſhes there is no reſurrection. I had ſome doubt whether I ſhould avail myſelf of this melancholy opportunity, but upon reflection, conſidering that the queſtion involves every thing that can be ever dear to a nation, I have reſolved to treſpaſs upon the Houſe, and to briefly ſtate the principle of the vote which I ſhall give. Contrary to the influence of every private affection, and differing from thoſe with whom I have long acted, and to whom I would yield my own opinion on any meaſure of temporary effect. I adopt the amendment moved by my Honourable Friend, becauſe my mind is impreſſed with this conviction—that the extinction of the Legiſlature of Ireland would, ſooner or later, produce a convulſion in which the connection between Great Britain and Ireland would be at ſtake, and that it would render this country more than ever ſubject to the intrigues of France—and that in this devoted iſland, emaſculated of that vigour and energy with which it ever has, and I truſt it ever will ſtand by Great Britain; the conteſt would take place—with this impreſſion upon my mind, could I, as an honeſt man, vote for ſuch a meaſure? and becauſe I could not I feel the heavy hand of power. If a deliberative aſſembly is called upon to adopt any extraordinary propoſition, the firſt enquiry ſhould be, whether it was within their power? The next, if it be, whether it ſhould be adopted? If the queſtion had never been made, I ſhould have declined the diſcuſſion of it; but as it has, I muſt declare that it is not, in my opinion, within the moral competence of Parliament, to deſtroy and extinguiſh itſelf, and with it the rights and liberties of thoſe who created it. I acknowledge the competence of Parliament to extend and improve its conſtitution; to regulate and prevent the progreſs of abuſes, neceſſarily ariſing in every inſtitution; I acknowledge the competence of the Engliſh Parliament to adopt the Union with Scotland; becauſe the number of Repreſentatives and Peerage only was increaſed; which, as the Crown by its prerogative may do, ſo may the act of the Legiſlature. But after that Union, the Conſtitution of England continued, but the Conſtitution of Scotland was diſperſed. And of this opinion muſt the great advocate of conſtitutional eſtabliſhments have been. (Here he ſtated the opinion of Mr. Burke

that the House of Lords was not competent to dissolve the House of Commons; nor even to dissolve itself; nor to abdicate, if it would, its proportion in the Legislature of the Kingdom; that though a King may abdicate for his own person, he cannot abdicate for the monarchy, and that by as strong, or by a stronger reason, the House of Commons cannot renounce its share of authority. The constitution forbids such invasion or surrender.) The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who desire *any serious interest under their engagements*; such a compact may, with respect to Great Britain, be an Union, but with respect to Ireland, it will be a Revolution, and a Revolution of a most alarming nature. And here give me leave to observe, that when an Union was proposed to Scotland, it was proposed in plain, simple language, and not as a piece of metaphorical architecture. The Scotch Parliament was elected with a notice to the people, that such a measure would be submitted to their discussion. How different the line adopted on the present occasion! But if it is competent to the Parliaments of both countries to adopt this measure, will it not be equally competent to the imperial Parliament to rescind. Where, then, is the security for any stipulation which may be made? While I am on this head, permit me to remind the House of the opinion of a great Lawyer, (Sir R. Raymond) on the Septennial Act; That it was a subversion of the Constitution. He was shortly after appointed Attorney General and Chief Justice of England. Let me tell my young brethren of the law, that the support of the Constitution is the road to honor, and preferment, and though they should fail of them in that road, they will be sure to find the honor and respect of the profession, whose opinion on this gteat subject, it was thought prudent to anticipate, and to endeavour to disparage, by the grossest libel. It was natural to suppose that the virtue and learning of that great body, would come forward to protect their country against political invasion, as their gallantry and spirit prompted them to lead in arming to protect her against domestic and foreign enemies; and therefore the Bar of Ireland was to be traduced and villified by anticipation. But if you had the power, I have no hesitation to say you would not barter the inestimable rights of a free nation, for the greatest commercial advantages. You would cry with one voice, "Perish commerce! but live the liberty and constitution of Ireland!" You could have no security for any such advantages; you could hold it at the will only of a Parliament, in which your weight would be ridiculously insignificant. What was the language of a Noble Lord in the British

Parliament, in the debate upon the attendance of the Scotch Judges, in the caſe of Capt. Porteus? The Scotch by conſenting to be governed by one and the ſame Parliament, in which they knew we would always have the majority, did, in effect, ſubmit every thing to our honor. And Harrington, in his Oceana, expreſſly ſtates, that if Scotland, when united to England, ſends fewer Repreſentatives to Parliament than England, the former is enſlaved to England. And he therefore preferred a fœderal, to an incorporating Union. What was the language of a great authority of our own country, upon a memorable occaſion? Independence upon the Parliament of Great Britain, is our freedom—dependence upon her Crown is our ſecurity—ſeparate Legiſlatures—unity of Executive. Our connection is ſecured by an Act of the Legiſlature. The King of England muſt be the King of Ireland for ever;—away, then, with the bugbear! The ſeparation of the countries can never enſue from a legiſlative meaſure. The conſtitutional negative of the Crown affords ample ſecurity againſt the hoſtility of any legiſlative meaſures. Will the meaſure propoſed, quiet the country, and remove the cauſes of the diſcontents? In my opinion, not. It will, on the contrary, encreaſe the agitation of the one, and aggravate the other. Will it tranquillize this great metropolis, which, ſo lately as the laſt Summer, by its valour and ſpirit, preſerved this country to herſelf, and to Great Britain; while the Government of the country lay ſhuddering in the caſtle. Whom then will it gratify? not the Loyaliſts, but the United Iriſhmen. Nine in ten of the men execrate the meaſure; the women are unanimous againſt it; Would to God, that they would emulate the Athenian ladies, and ſubject the man who ſhall vote for it, to the ban of their diſpleaſure. Will it give you any ſtronger claim on Great Britain? No—and I am ſatisfied that the honor of the Britiſh Nation would reject ſuch an inſinuation. Would Great Britain, that arms for the deliverance of Europe—that ſubſidized Pruſſia—Sardinia—the Emperor—and guarantees his loans—that makes Egypt an object of his care—will ſhe refuſe her protection and aſſiſtance to Ireland—unleſs purchaſed by the ſurrender of her liberties?—Ireland that has been ſo ready to pour out her beſt blood, and to contribute ſo far as ſhe was able, to the ſupport of the common cauſe. Thoſe who argue in that way, defame the character of Great Britain. She knows the value of liberty too well, to ſuppoſe it can be either ſold or purchaſed. The ſpeech from the Throne calls our attention to the growing proſperity of the country, and its encreaſing commerce; and if I could permit myſelf for a moment to adopt the ungenerous motives to which the aid

and assistance of Great Britain to this country, are imputed, I should think there was some foundation for Dr. Johnson's remark; talking to an Irishman on the subject of an Union, "Don't unite with us," says he, "we shall unite with you only to rob you; we would have robbed the Scotch, if they had any thing to be robbed of." But I think too highly of the British Nation. She has been deceived to think that the People of Ireland were tired of their Parliament—that their Parliament was unworthy—and that it would prove its unworthiness, by consenting to its own extinction. It is a great misfortune of the present day, that the opinions and motives of men are misrepresented. To prevent a possibility of misconceiving mine, with respect to our connection with Great Britain, I shall express it in a line and a half—

——— Paribus se legibus ambæ,
Invictæ gentes eterna in fœdera mittant invictæ.

Unawed by terror, unconquered by force, and unseduced by corruption.——If any imperial arrangement remains to be made, I am ready and anxious to adopt it. If our connection in peace and war is not ascertained, (tho' I think it is) and that Ireland should have no friend or no enemy, that is not the friend or enemy of Great Britain, let it be ascertained; let even the ratio of our imperial contribution be fixed; let every adjustment be made, consistent with the preservation of the Irish Legislature; the extinction of which would endanger, and not secure, the liberties of Great Britain, and leave us poor indeed. These are the opinions which disqualify me for that situation which I have so long held. If an unalterable resolution to withhold my consent to any measure that may extinguish the legislature of Ireland disqualifies me, I am most eminently disqualified. It is a disqualification of which I am proud. I enjoy it in common with you—with the great body of the landed interest of Ireland which I see about me, and with the great body of the learned, enlightened, and uninfluenced profession to which I have the honor to belong.

Mr. Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry, opposed the amendment, because the rebellion having shaken this country to its centre, made some arrangement necessary, because it was obvious the country could not have been saved, and was now preserved but by force, and that was a state in which things could not long remain, because principles had got among the people of the country which induce them to give their confidence to Parliament,

ment only ſo far as the Parliament tends to ſever the connexion, and finally, becauſe if this principle were not checked, it muſt ultimately end in ſeparation. As to the objection to the competency of Parliament to effect an Union, it could have no force, unleſs it were ſaid that the people have always a right to depoſe their Governors on every ſuppoſed error they may commit. He attributed much of the exiſting miſchief, to the Parliament being founded on too narrow a baſe, and to the unhappy difference of religion which exiſted in the country, both theſe circumſtances give a caſt of prejudice and bigotry to the Iriſh Parliament. The happineſs of the country then demand that they ſhould reſort to an higher and more enlightened Legiſlature, who would be above thoſe local prejudices. He ridiculed the idea of national pride, when we were not able to defend ourſelves, and conſidered the Legiſlature of this country to be unable to that object, being exhauſted, and that on that circumſtance hung the hope of thoſe who looked forward to a ſeparation. With regard to the civil rights of the people of Ireland being ſurrendered by an Union, he knew of no rights which they had not from the law of England, and by that law they would continue to be governed after an Union as well as before.

Col. VEREKER.—I lament exceedingly that any thing ſhould have been introduced into the Addreſs, to interrupt that unanimity that I ſhould always wiſh to ſee prevail in this Houſe. Whenever the name of my ſovereign is mentioned loving and revering him as I do, it goes to my heart to be obliged to object to any Addreſs directed to him. But however great my attachment may be to my king, I muſt not forget my country.

Sir, if I could be perſuaded that a Legiſlative Union with Great Britain would inſure internal tranquillity to this diſtracted country, if I could be perſuaded that it would prevent foreign invaſion; or if I could be perſuaded that it would add to our national wealth, I ſhould moſt cheerfully agree in the principle of it, but ſir, when I conſider that inſtead of ſecuring our internal tranquillity, it would be more likely to create a renewal of the rebellion, when I conſider that inſtead of preventing foreign invaſion it would from the diſturbance ſuch a meaſure would occaſion be more likely to invite it; and when I reflect that ſo far from enriching the nation it would evidently impoveriſh it, by draining it of the men of principal property in the country, I cannot for a moment heſitate to give the meaſure my moſt decided diſapprobation. Sir, it has been ſaid that if we reject if this project, England will leave us to ourſelves, but Sir, I thank God there are loyal men enough in this country, (if they are not forced from their allegiance) to put down the turbulent; and there is little reaſon to fear that England would be ſo blind to her own intereſt in the event of an invaſion, as to allow the French to make any ſerious impreſſion on

this country. Sir, these being my sentiments not taken up heartily, but the result of mature consideration, I shall vote for the amendment of my Hon. Friend.

Mr. O'Hara said, the Irish Parliament had uniformly been making acquisitions for the country from the time of the Octennial bill to this day. He denied the right of Parliament to alter the Constitution. The people also would deny that right, and they would equally deny the right of the British Parliament, though encreased with a Irishmen, to legislate for them. The Parliament of Ireland he considered as a peace-maker between the King and People. Send them to England, and to whom could the People then complain? To the King only or his Minister, for in the British Parliament they cannot have confidence. Of the connexion between the two countries he thought there was no danger, so long as Great Britain preserved her navy exclusively, nor should she in that case entertain any jealousy of our progress in wealth and commerce.

Mr. Lee would willingly give up national pride, or any such passion, if the sacrifice would secure tranquillity. But he had well considered the subject, and was convinced it could have no such effect. It was a wicked and an atrocious attempt, and could produce only eternal discontent and rebellion. Should the Minister attempt to force it, language would want a name for his crime, even already fraud and force had been resorted to, fraud in turning out the old servants of the Crown, because they would not violate their conscience and force, by introducing a foreign force to over-awe the people. But he was convinced an English soldier would never fight against the liberty of the Irish people, the firelock would fall from his palsied arm. This measure could not tend to tranquillize, for it was exactly that measure which the disaffected wished to be adopted. Did the Minister wish to divide the loyal men of Ireland? This was the way to do it. Did he resort to this measure, confident of his superior strength in his imported foreigners? If so, he would find himself mistaken. Ireland would not be kept down. The 260,000 men, whom the British Minister had in arms, would not be able to effect it. When America attempted to shake off the yoke, France assisted her—France, with her old government, assisted America at the other side the Atlantic. Is not Ireland nearer than America? Is not the new Government of France more powerful than her old one? It is in Ireland that Britain is now vulnerable. Hither, then, she should direct her care. It is apparent there is some radical error in the system of Irish Government. It should be sought for and corrected, else here the seeds of discontent would fructify for ever. England herself seemed now to be approaching to her grand *climacteric*. Once she was democratic, and at that time the Minister was obliged to look to the landed interest for support, but since the Revolution, though there were

not 116 Placemen and Penſioners in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons (there are now only 80), yet the Miniſter was become leſs dependent on the country gentlemen, they continued ſince to become leſs important to the Miniſter of the day, and dupes indeed would be the landed men of England, if they ever ſuffer 100 Iriſh Members to be introduced into the Britiſh Commons, for then indeed the Miniſter will be independent of them and of the country. With his forty-ſix Scotchmen on one land, his corps of ſeapoys (for even the Nabobs have repreſentatives in that virtuous Parliament to which you are called on to give up your intereſts), on the other, and his one hundred hardy Hibernians as a corps of reſerve, what may not he do, thus ſupported? Mr. Lee declared it his opinion as a Lawyer, and he ſtaked his character upon it, that the Legiſlature was not competent to the change they were now called on to make. But they might be made competent. Let the Parliament be diſſolved, and a new one ſummoned, public notice being given that they are aſſembled for the expreſs purpoſe of conſidering this meaſure. Such a Parliament would be competent, becauſe they would come commiſſioned with expreſs authority for the purpoſe. He boaſted of being among the firſt who reſiſted this meaſure, and did not wait to know the terms, its a queſtion of principle and not of terms. No terms ſhould induce a man to commit murder, no terms ſhould induce a woman to part with her honour, no terms ſhould induce a nation to part with its conſtitution, or a people to part with its liberties, all thoſe are incommenſurable with terms, there was a moral turpitude in the thing itſelf, that no terms could make admiſſible. A nation ſhould not chaffer about the price at which it ſhould ſell his liberty. Who would ſettle the terms? Who would appreciate the value of a nation's liberty? Could it be calculated by arithmetic, or meaſured by a gauging-rod? For theſe reaſons he gave his decided approbation to the amendment.

Mr. Crookshank. Sir, I riſe to ſupport the amendment:—When I contemplate the awful magnitude of the queſtion now before you, and reflect on the ſacred duty impoſed on every member of this Houſe, I feel myſelf almoſt diſcouraged from obtruding my ſentiments on this momentous occaſion. But, Sir, I cheriſh the ſanguine hope, that this Houſe will liſten with patience and indulgence to the ſentiments of every individual, however humble or obſcure, in a diſcuſſion which involves in it's iſſue, not only the exiſtence of national independence, but moſt probably of ſocial order in this country. Sir, I truſt I ſhall be able to ſhew, that ſhould this Houſe pronounce the ſentence of it's own annihilation, it will by that fatal vote, at once violate the great truſt of legiſlation, and for ever ſacrifice to the avaricious monopoly of a rival kingdom our commercial energy, and national proſperity. Sir, in the diſcuſſion of this queſtion, I ſhall beg leave to ſubmit two propoſitions to your conſideration:—In the

firſt place, I deny (with the utmoſt deference and reſpect) that this Houſe has any right, or is in anywiſe whatever, competent to ſurrender or transfer by compact or otherwiſe, without the previous authority of it's conſtituents, that legiſlative truſt, delegated by them for a limited period, and ſubject to the conditions aſcertained by the conſtitution.

And in the next place, granting, but by no means admitting, it to be competent to this Houſe, to make any ſuch ſurrender, or transfer of it's truſt, I hope I ſhall be able to prove, that the propoſed Union can be in no way beneficial to this country; that it can neither extend our trade, or augment our capital; and that ſo far from tending to the reſtoration of tranquillity, it muſt, by inflaming the general diſcontent, contribute to that moſt dreadful event, a ſeparation of the two countries.

Sir, in diſcuſſing the queſtion of the competence of this Houſe to annihilate it's own independent authority, by the propoſed Union with Great Britain, I truſt we ſhall be guided by the great and unalterable principles of reaſon, juſtice, and good faith, and not ſtoop to a ſervile imitation of narrow and arbitrary precedents, formed by other countries. Let us by thoſe great principles, examine the right and competency of this Houſe, and ſee how they can be ſupported.

Deputed by the people to exerciſe the ſole power of making laws, choſen for a limited period preſcribed by the conſtitution, and at the time of it's election, no meaſure of Union avowed by Government, or in the contemplation of it's conſtituents, will any man who underſtands the principles, or has imbibed the ſpirit of the conſtitution, ſay—that this Houſe, conſtituted under ſuch reſtrictions of duration and authority, has a right, or is competent to ſurrender or transfer that temporary and qualified truſt, by compact with ſovereign power of another kingdom? Sir, I deny that the parliament of an independent ſtate, for which the members of that parliament are truſtees, has any right whatever, without the permiſſion of it's conſtituents expreſsly or impliedly given for the purpoſe, to ſurrender to another country the whole or any part of it's legiſlative authority.

Sir, I am aware that parliament, by the conſtitution, contains within itſelf, the undoubted right to remedy thoſe defects which, from accident or authority, may have crept into the frame of the Conſtitution itſelf; but this power is confined to the reformation and improvement of the conſtitution within itſelf, and does not extend to the annihilation or tranſfer of any of it's integral parts to the ſovereign power of another country. This power can never, upon principle or precedent, be contended to belong to the repreſentatives of the people, but by expreſs or implied delegation. And ſo ſtrongly (as it has been already well obſerved) were the Britiſh miniſters, in the reign of queen Anne, impreſſed with

this great conſtitutional principle, that in preparing for the Union of England and Scotland, they felt it neceſſary to declare in the proclamation for convening the Scotch parliament, that they were called together for the purpoſe of arranging and ſettling the treaty of Union then in contemplation; reaſonably concluding, that the election of repreſentatives, after ſuch an avowal of the intended project, muſt be conſidered as permiſſion to diſcuſs, and finally decide upon that queſtion.

But, Sir, can any man pretend to ſay, that that the Engliſh Miniſters of the preſent day, have proceeded with the ſame conſtitutional deference to the public mind? Did they, at the election of this parliament, avow, or even hint, this long-premeditated deſign againſt the liberties of this country? Was not this meaſure, till very lately, wrapped in a fraudulent and myſterious ſecreſy, in order to ſurpriſe a terrified or indolent people into a ſudden ſurrender of their independence? Sir, there is no colour for ſuppoſing any permiſſion expreſſed or implied to diſcuſs this great queſtion, given by our conſtituents, who did not even ſuſpect, or contemplate ſuch a ſubject, as intended for the conſideration of parliament, at the time they had choſen this Houſe for the ordinary purpoſes of legiſlation. Sir, it has been ſaid, and I preſume may be ſaid this night, that the ſilence of the people in ſeveral diſtricts of the kingdom, is a proof of their acquieſcence in the parliamentary diſcuſſion of this queſtion; to this conſtruction of their ſilence, I proteſt, as falſe and utterly unfounded. Sir, that ſilence proceeds either from terror, languid indolence, or more generally from inſidious policy. Sir, it is the ſilence of the republican, who exults in the proſpect of a meaſure, tending to inflame the general diſcontent, and thereby promote his favourite object of ſeparation. Sir, let us not be deceived by deluſive appearances. Let us guard againſt the inſidious ſophiſtry of thoſe who would perſuade that the people of Ireland are ſo inſenſible to their intereſts, as to remain the approving ſpectators of a baſe unequal compact, by which their commercial rights and intereſts muſt for ever be ſurrendered to the care and guardianſhip of a people whoſe habit is ſelfiſh monopoly, and whoſe uniform diſpoſition to this country has been envious emulation and illiberal jealouſy. Sir, I truſt there is not in human nature credulity to ſwallow that falſhood, that the people of Ireland would chooſe ſuch benevolent guardians for their riſing commerce. Let me, Sir. diſmiſs this part of my argument, by conjuring this Houſe to obſerve the moſt inviolable faith with their conſtituents, to inculcate by their conduct and example a reſpect for the principles of the conſtitution; without which it will be in vain to enforce it from the ignorant multitude by the accumulation of penal laws. Sir, we are the truſtees of the people for a limited time; let us, at the expiration of our truſt, render back that conſtitution

improved, if poſſible; if not, at leaſt inviolate. Let us diſarm the calumny of thoſe democratic incendiaries, who will not fail to inflame the people, by repreſenting the conduct of this Houſe as an unwarrantable aſſumption of power, in order to deſtroy a conſtitution, of which we were only the depoſitaries.

Having ſaid thus much on the firſt part of my argument, permit me, with great humility, to ſay a few words on the laſt part. Let me, Sir, having ſuppoſed for argument's ſake that we have the right or are authorized to entertain this great queſtion, and to enter on the treaty, enquire what will be the immediate and manifeſt conſequences of it's adoption. Sir, the evils of this meaſure will be certain and immediate; its alledged advantages, if any, contingent and remote. We are required to ſurrender our national dignity, conſtitutional privileges, the natural and proud right of exerting our own faculties in the care of our own intereſts; and for what equivalent are we to make thoſe immenſe ſacrifices? No immediate advantage, no preſent benefit is pretended to reſult from an union; but we are amuſed with the deluſive picture of its diſtant conſequences in our extended commerce, augmented capital, tranquillity reſtored, ſocial order improved and ſecured. Sir, let me with great humility caution this Houſe againſt liſtening with too credulous confidence to the fallacious hopes and ſpecious proſpects of chimerical advantage held out by a country from which this nation has too often experienced commercial reſtraint and graſping monopoly. Let us calmly weigh the reality and ſolidity of thoſe pretended advantages which we are told muſt reſult from an Union, and for which we are required to reſign for ever to a rival ſtate the abſolute controul of our national concerns. Let us for a moment conſider what is, at preſent, the commercial freedom of Ireland, and whether it is likely to be profitably extended by the propoſed Union with Great Britain? Sir, Ireland, after many glorious and ſucceſsful ſtruggles, at length extorted from the monopoly of Great Britain, and now enjoys an unreſtrained freedom of commerce to every part of the world, (the Eaſt Indies and Great Britain excepted.)

Sir, as to the Eaſt India trade, it will be ſufficient to obſerve, that with reſpect to it, we ſtand exactly upon the ſame footing with Great Britain; that branch of commerce being confined (with the exception of ſome privileges of private trade, ſecured under the Eaſt India charter and the 33d of the King) to an excluſive company, of which the Iriſh may become members as eaſily as the inhabitants of Great Britain, by the only mode, that of purchaſing Eaſt India ſtook. So that with reſpect to it, we have the ſame privileges of private adventure, and the ſame opportunity of ſharing the profits of the company with the Britiſh nation. But, Sir, we are told that an Union will remove the pre-

ſent reſtraints on the direct trade to Great Britain, and open the Britiſh markets to our riſing manufactures.

Sir, it can afford no aſſiſtance or protection to our great ſtaple manufacture the linen, beyond what it at preſent enjoys by compact with England. Our linens are preferred in the Britiſh market to thoſe of the north of Europe; becauſe of their ſuperior quality, and becauſe we relinquiſh the woollen trade to England, as an equivalent for the preference of our linens. But, Sir, let me aſk, does any man entertain the moſt diſtant idea that in the other leading branches of manufacture, Ireland, without capital to ſupport or ſkill to conduct them, could hope not only to rival England in them in foreign markets, but even excel her in her own; for this is the proſpect gravely held out to Ireland, that ſhe may one day, by ſucceſsful emulation, underſell England in her own markets. Sir, our commerce can never be extended or improved by an Union, which transfers to the jealous controul of a foreign power the protection of our commercial rights, and for which in return no additional freedom of trade is provided, but the barren and prepoſterous privilege of attempting to rival Great Britain in her great ſtaple manufacture, and in her own markets. Still more abſurd and inconſiſtent it is to ſuppoſe, that our capital could be augmented by an Union.

Sir, the enormous drain of wealth from this country, in conſequence of the almoſt incalculable encreaſe of abſentees, muſt exhauſt the beſt reſources of the ſtate, and to ſuppoſe that this loſs could be ever counterbalanced, by the influx of Britiſh wealth, through the channel of commercial adventure, would be to indulge in a falſe and chimerical hope. Sir, can it be reaſonably expected that the Britiſh merchant or manufacturer, quitting the tranquil and orderly ſociety in England, will embark his capital in a country juſt emerging from rebellion, and but too likely to relapſe into the ſame calamity, from the encreaſed cauſes of general diſcontent? Sir the future ſtate of this country, inſtead of giving new confidence and furniſhing incitement, muſt, I fear, finally diſcourage, and even baniſh our own. What then is the general reſult? With our foreign trade clogged by Britiſh controul, our Channel trade wholly impracticable and deluſive, our reſources drained away, and our people diſaffected,—will any man ſay, that we can hope for the reſtoration of tranquillity? Sir, with ſuch ſtubborn elements of diſcord, I fear we may expect that an Union with Great Britain, will be the awful and fatal prelude to a convulſive ſeparation of theſe countries. Sir, it is but too obvious, that an Union muſt contribute to this dreadful event. In the firſt place, by augmenting the number of the diſaffected, it muſt reinforce the conſpiracy in the country, now rather checked than ſubdued; and in the next place, by inducing our principal landholders to reſide in Great Britain, we ſhall be de-

prived of the influence, courage and activity, which they exerted so successfully in opposing the late rebellion. Thus, Sir, by the augmentation of the disaffected, and the absence of the loyal, should rebellion again arise, our defence will be weakened, and who can answer for the consequences that may ensue?

Let me then, Sir, humbly conjure this House to recollect its sacred trust, it's solemn responsibility; let me entreat them to preserve and restore to their constituents inviolate, that constitution under which we have prospered beyond example, and the surrender of which, by a sordid unequal contract, can produce no benefit whatever, and must entail evils and misfortunes incalculable on this country.

Mr. St. G. Daly thought nothing but a radical arrangement like this, could heal the distractions of this country. He allowed Parliament was incompetent to take away the rights of the people—but he denied that an Union violated any right. He allowed praise to the framers of the Constitution of 82—but contended it was the separate existence then established that made the measure now necessary.

Mr. M'Naghten. I confess I had great hopes from the liberal manner in which the Noble Lord introduced his motion on the address, as well as from the wording of the address itself, that it would not have met with any opposition in this House. The Address went no further than to recommend to the wisdom of Parliament to consider of some effectual means to strengthen and render permanent the connexion between this country and Britain; and surely, Sir, after the late violent and wicked attempt which we have all witnessed to tear this kingdom from England, no man can deny that some scheme to render the connexion between the two countries more secure is absolutely necessary, since an Hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House has thought fit to move an amendment, as it were, to force an explicit declaration from the House, of the specific measure it thinks best to adopt for this purpose, I should feel that I did not do my duty as a Member of Parliament if I did not meet the question fairly; and Sir, I do not think any man will do his duty this night if he endeavours either to skulk from, or to evade the question. Sir, I feel no difficulty in declaring it to be my firm opinion, that the only method to secure the connexion between the two kingdoms, and the existence of this country as a civilized state, is a Legislative Union. I did not take up this opinion this day or yesterday, it is the result of long and serious reflection; and Sir, I trust the Gentlemen on the other side will allow every Member of this House to form an opinion for himself; for my part, I shall clearly and distinctly avow mine before their House and the country in spite of all the violence and clamour of the Hon. Gen-

tleman. Sir, the honourable Gentlemen have been very liberal of virulent and abusive epithets when they speak of England; they tell you that she is a selfish, a monopolising, and an illiberal nation; and they assert that she is the rival, not the friend and benefactress of Ireland.—Sir, after denying these assertions *point blank*, and asserting that the conduct of England towards this kingdom deserves no such harsh and ungrateful return,—I shall take the question upon these grounds,—and, Sir, shall assert without without the fear of being contradicted, that if it is true that England is that selfish country she is described to be, by the honourable gentlemen, she will for that very reason take especial care of the interests of Ireland, if it shall so happen that Ireland, by an Union, shall come to be made *part and parcel* of Britain. The interests of this country and of England will in that case be identified; and I do say, that England will have as good reason to promote the welfare of the county of Cork, or the county of Antrim, as she will have to promote that of the county of Middlesex, or the county of Rutland.—Sir, although I have declared very explicitly my opinion on the measure of an Union, I have by no means pledged myself to support it on the terms that may possibly be offered to this House; at the same time I must declare that I have, from the liberal policy of the age and the enlightened wisdom of the Prime Minister of England, no apprehension that any terms will be offered to us derogatory to the interest or honour of the nation.

Sir Boyle Roche said, that a great deal had been spoken and written about Union and about John Bull, and Sheelagh and Hibernia,—now for his part he saw no reason to prevent a consummation between the parties, as the issue would be a young Hibernian;—and although Lawyers and Attorneys, and Aldermen and Butchers, and Chandlers and Blacksmiths, were talking and writing upon what they knew nothing about, he was for an Union, to put an end to uniting between Presbyterians and Protestants and Catholics, to overturn the Constitution.

Hon. Mr. Skeffington declared, that no person was more firmly attached to British Connexion than he was, for no man was more fully impressed with the reciprocal advantages both countries derive from their mutual exertions and affections; but he reprobated in strong terms the idea of transferring or surrendering the Legislative Independence of Ireland to any Power on earth, and warmly supported Mr. Ponsonby's Amendment.

Mr. French said, that the very able discussion which had taken place, fully convinced him that Parliament was not competent to decide on the question of an incorporating Union with Great Britain;—that whatever commercial or other advantages

might be derived from ſuch a meaſure, he felt that he was not authorized to give it his ſupport without the expreſs directions of his Conſtituents,—he therefore ſupported the Amendment, and oppoſed the Addreſs.

Colonel B. Maxwell ſaid he would not have troubled the Houſe with his ſentiments this night, was he not convinced, that from the ſpirit and enthuſiaſm which pervaded the Houſe, he would be precluded from any other opportunity. He truſted that the deciſion of the Houſe this night, would for ever put to reſt a queſtion which, fatally for the peace and tranquillity of Ireland, was now brought forward by thoſe who were totally ignorant of the ſentiments or the real intereſts of Ireland.

He fully concurred with the Honourable and learned Gentleman, (Mr. G. Ponſonby) who moved the Amendment, that Parliament were totally incompetent to entertain the meaſure,—he therefore gave it his moſt unequivocal and decided oppoſition *in limine*. He found himſelf ſtrongly fortified in this doctrine by the beſt writers on civil government,—and quoted a paſſage from Locke, which fully corroborated his aſſertion. Parliament were competent to every good purpoſe ;—but it was abſurd to ſuppoſe, they were competent to their own annihilation :—He would ſuppoſe for a moment, that a Parliament could be got baſe or corrupt enough to ſurrender their Legiſlative Functions to the Executive Power, will the ſtrongeſt advocate for the omnipotence of Parliament ſay, that they were competent to do ſo. To him it ſeemed that the act they were now called on to do, was an act very little inferior in political turpitude, namely, to ſurrender their functions to a foreign Legiſlature. Expunge from your Journals the glorious Reſolution of 1782, "that the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland were the only power competent to make laws to bind Ireland,"—declare this reſolution to be a libel on Conſtitution, before you paſs a law, which transfers to the Legiſlature of Great Britain the power of making laws to bind Ireland. To this it will be anſwered, that Ireland will be repreſented in the Britiſh Parliament :—will any one be weak enough to believe, that were any differences to ariſe as to local advantages or local prejudices, 40 or 50 Iriſh Members, in an Houſe of Commons conſiſting of above 600, will have ſufficient weight to protect the trade, commeree, or liberties of Ireland ; we may be repreſented in the theory of this meaſure, but in practice of it, it would in his mind be infinitely better to make a total ſurrender of our Legiſlative Rights to the Parliament of Great Britain, than to have all the inconveniencies of this mock Repreſentation. He thought this meaſure ought equally to be oppoſed by Great Britain :—he underſtood, in the detail of this plan, the borough ſyſtem was to be preſerved ; ſo that the county Members only

would be ſent from Ireland, the remaining ſeats would, he feared, be filled at the pleaſure of the Britiſh Miniſter ;—beſides, the people of Great Britain ſhould be aware, that if Iriſhmen could be found baſe enough, to ſurrender the liberty and independance of their native country, they would ſoon become fit and ready inſtruments in the hands of a deſpotic Miniſter, to overturn the liberties of Great Britain.

He then adverted to the arguments made uſe of by an Hon. Member, (the Knight of Kerry) in ſupport of the meaſure, to which he replied at ſome length. He conjured the Houſe to reflect on the importance of their deciſion this night. He had often heard the Parliament calumniated, an opportunity now offered, to reſcue themſelves from every obloquy that had been thrown out againſt them. No ſtronger argument could be made uſe of in favour of the meaſure, than they would themſelves afford, if they negatived the amendment. A Parliament which could be baſe enough to betray the rights and liberties of their country, not only at preſent, but to all future generations, would deſerve annihilation.—He conjured the Houſe, as they valued their own character, as they valued the liberties of themſelves and their poſterity, as they valued the Britiſh Connexion, to convince the Miniſter of Great Britain, that they were determined, at the riſque of every thing that was dear to them, to ſupport and hand down unimpaired to their poſterity, the rights, liberties, and independance of their native land.

Colonel Archdall ſaid, I am one of thoſe gentlemen who did not receive inſtructions from his Conſtituents. The loyal Electors of the county of Fermanagh have too much confidence in their Repreſentatives, to think that any thing from that ſide of the Houſe could tempt them to vote for ſo infamous a meaſure, or make them betray the truſt they have repoſed in them. I am convinced there is ſcarcely a man in the North-weſt who would not deprecate the perſon who would betray them and vote for an Union : for my part I will oppoſe it in every ſhape it comet before me.

Mr. Barrington (judge of the admiralty) declared he roſe with the greateſt agitation. The exiſtence of Ireland was in queſtion, and he felt even the feeble talents with which nature had bleſſed him, ſhrink before the coloſſal magnitude of the ſubject ; —he had heard of calm and diſpaſſionate diſcuſſion, it was the language of a ſlave; he who could reflect on the annihilation of his country with apathy or indifference muſt be leſs than man or more than mortal. Whatever capacity, whatever ſpirit, whatever energy God or nature had given him, he conſidered himſelf as holding but in *truſt for his Country* to be expended for her uſe, whenever her oppreſſions or her diſtreſſes drew for their aſſiſtance.—He loved his

King, he adored the Conſtitution, and he now conſidered himſelf as defending both againſt the deſperate ſyſtem of an indefinitely ambitious miniſter. The Iriſh Parliament had heretofore deliberated on revocable local regulations, or national arrangement, but now a mighty and an imperial queſtion opened itſelf for their diſcuſſion—a project, to ſubject irrevocably one independant country to the will of another, and *both* to the will of a Miniſter already ſtronger than the Crown, and more powerful than the People, —and this great and important uſurpation ſtolen into Parliament through the fulſome paragraphs of an echoing congratulation—pledging the Houſe to the diſcuſſion of a principle ſubverſive of their liberties and in the hour of convaleſcence calling on it to commit ſuicide.—Ireland had not fair play; her Parliament had not fair play; the fouleſt and moſt unconſtitutional means he believed had been uſed to intimidate and to corrupt it, and either to force or to ſeduce a ſuffrage, when nothing but general, independant, uninfluenced, opinion could warrant for a moment the moſt diſtant view of ſo ruinous a ſubject. He had good reaſon to believe that corrupt and unconſtitutional means had been uſed by the noble Lord to individuals of the Iriſh Parliament (here Mr. Barrington was called to order and his words deſired to be taken down, on which Mr. Plunket roſe and declared the ſame opinion, and his determination to uſe ſtronger language; and recommended the words to be taken down in order to bring the ſubject forward. This not being perſiſted in by the Treaſury Bench, Mr. Barrington continued:)—He repeated that he had reaſon to believe that corrupt and unconſtitutional means had been uſed towards individuals of the Iriſh Parliament; ſome of thoſe means were open and avowed: two of the oldeſt, moſt reſpectable, and moſt beloved officers of the Crown had been diſplaced, becauſe they preſumed to hint an opinion adverſe to the Striplings dictates on a ſubject where their Country was at ſtake; their removals crowned them with glory and the Miniſter with contempt. He aſſerted that other Gentlemen in office, whoſe opinions were decidedly adverſe to the meaſure, but whoſe circumſtances could not bear ſimilar ſacrifices, were dragged to the altar of pollution, and forced againſt their will to vote againſt their Country;—he had good reaſon to believe that unconſtitutional interference had been uſed by the Executive power with the Legiſlative body—one Gentleman refuſed the inſtructions of his conſtituents and had been promoted. Peerages (as was rumoured) were bartered for the rights of minors, and every effort uſed to deſtroy the free agency of Parliament; if this was true, it encroached on the Conſtitution, and if the Executive power overſtept its bounds, the people are warranted to do the ſame on their part, and between both it may be annihilated, and leave a wondering world in amazement how the ſame people could be wiſe enough to frame the beſt

Conſtitution upon earth and fooliſh enough to deſtroy it. The Britiſh nation feel too well the value of political liberty to countenance the deſtruction of it in a ſiſter country, and muſt well know, that a Union forced or corrupted, can be neither permanent or advantageous; therefore were the meaſure beneficial inſtead of ruinous to Ireland, he ſhould object to any diſcuſſion brought forward under ſuch circumſtances. Misfortune has broken the ſpirit of Ireland, but ſhe is reviving.—She has been ſtunned by her fall, but has ſtill power to ſee her liberties and ſpirit to defend them;—the property, the talents, and the integrity of Ireland are devoted to her cauſe—draw tight the bonds between Great Britain and Ireland—but her Legiſlature ſhall be ſacred—one King and two kingdoms is the cry of her people.

The Britiſh Miniſter has too much wiſdom to have preſſed this meaſure on Ireland, had he known her temper and ſituation; but he has been greatly deceived by miſrepreſentation from this Country;—hot-headed injudicious ſpirits have been liſtened to, whilſt the ſage and honeſt repreſentation of the wiſeſt of Ireland's children has been diſregarded. Theſe were objections to any diſcuſſion of the ſubject, and much as he reſpected Great Britain, no idle parade of compliment ſhould prevail upon him one moment to loſe ſight of Ireland. He then argued at length on the in competence of the Iriſh Commons to ſurrender the eſſence of their delegation;—Scotland was no example, her Parliament was differently framed; nor had Ireland any great reaſon to follow her meaſures.—She had ſold her country, but not till after ſhe had ſold her King; where then was the virtue of her precedent? the Iriſh Parliament was delegated by their conſtituents to make and modify laws, but not to form and mould revolutions; the power of that delegation was limited, and if the repreſentatives exceeded the ſubject of delegation in *one* inſtance, they might as juſtly exceed it in *another*, and they might in that caſe diſcuſs the queſtion of ſeparation with as much conſtitutional reaſoning as the queſtion of Union; becauſe the King being only one part, and the Parliament being only another part of the Conſtitution, they have no more right to ſay, we will give up our Parliament, than we will give up our King; they are not delegated for either purpoſe, and are *equally* bound by their Conſtitution and their *oath* to preſerve both; the miſconſtrued argument of parliamentary *omnipotence* falls before this reaſoning, nothing 'tis true, can controul or counteract Parliament *within its conſtitutional bounds*, but nothing can warrant it to *exceed them*; the very inſtant the delegated repreſentatives in Parliament grant away the Conſtitution which they were appointed to protect, the compact between them and their conſtituents becomes a nullity, their law of relinquiſhment is a nullity, and the conſtitution is virtually and inſtantly diſſolved.

The crowns of Great Britain and Ireland are as diſtinct as their Parliaments; but by the great conſtitutional compact, the Crown of Ireland is for ever to be worn by the king of Great Britain, and he is to govern Ireland, not in right of his Crown of Great Britain but in right of his Crown of Ireland. The two countries are indiſſolubly bound by this great compact, and the more ſacredly it is obſerved, the more confidence amongſt the people of both; but this compact is entirely mutual, and would the Britiſh nation call it a Union or a revolution if Mr. Pitt was to propoſe to reduce the Britiſh Parliament to 200 Commoners and 60 Lords, and ſend them over to legiſlate in Dublin for the good of the Empire? It is argued, that a Union with Great Britain is not a revolution, he conceived that to be a revolution which melts down one totally *independant* Crown into another, and incorporates one totally independant Legiſlature into the power and vortex of a greater ſtate, which takes away its excluſive authority over its own concerns, and transfers even its moſt trifling internal arrangements to another kingdom. But it is ſaid, we ſhould ſtill have a delegated body acting in the Parliament of the Empire; ſo we ſhould, but a body ſo totally diſproportionate to the united Parliaments of England and Scotland as to give no chance or poſſibility of carrying any meaſure of commercial rivalſhip in favour of this Country; 100 Iriſh to 547 Engliſh and Scotch would make a wretched diviſion, even if we could ſuppoſe all our repreſentatives pure which the example of Scottiſh repreſentatives diſproves: it is aſſerted that our intereſts would then be identified, and mutual, and no queſtion of rivalſhip could occur; that is falſe in fact, becauſe it is evident, that queſtions of commercial rivalſhip do at this inſtant exiſt, and ever muſt between the two countries; but they are immaterial cauſes of rivalſhip in compariſon to the effects of independance and ſecurity, and which our own Parliament can modify as well as the Parliament of Great Britain; but which, if united, is ſubject to theirs,—and it is a folly to ſay, that *any* articles of Union with Ireland can ever be ſecure—if the intereſt of Great Britain induces a breach of them, where is our remedy? —the Scottiſh articles were broken, but ſhe had made herſelf a province; her Parliament was gone; ſhe had no redreſs but in the generoſity of Great Britain, like the paſſion of a lover which was loſt in the enjoyment; Scotland ſighed, and after two rebellions ſubmitted;—Ireland has riſen more in ten years by her independance than Scotland in a hundred by her ſubjection; and yet we are called upon to *try* the irrevocable *experiment* of dependance. Another proof that the articles of the Scotch Union are not conſidered ſacred is this, 45 Scotch repreſentatives were after a long debate agreed upon as a *proportionate* number to ſit in the Britiſh Parliament, and the imperial compact muſt neceſſarily have been, that the proportion ſo agreed on was to be kept up to

retain to Scotland her due proportional influence, and this appears a fundamental principle of that Union. Now the incorporation of 100 Irish members with distinct if not adverse interest to those of Scotland into the British Parliament, by increasing the number of the whole totally takes away the proportionate influence of the 45 Scotch delegates, and so in fact destroys the most material and fundamental principle of the Scotch Union and of Scottish security. If then the British Minister violates that engagement with Scotland, to subjugate Ireland, it is equally clear he will play the same game when Ireland is dependant; and that as the Scottish Union was infringed to gain Ireland; so the Irish Union will be infringed to regain Scotland, and when the interest of Great Britain suggests the measure, will the voice of a few Irish delegates prevent it? we should then have but little consolation in regretting our own folly and reviling the treachery of the Minister. But surely the Irish representatives in this House, have no power or authority to elect other representatives to delegate for Ireland, yet by uniting to the Parliaments of Great Britain they in part elect 547 English and Scotch members to legislate for Ireland, whom Ireland never saw nor heard of, nor ever delegated, this is an assumption extrinsick of their delegation, and which will not bind the nation. In point of Constitution therefore Ireland gained nothing and lost every thing by the project; national pride like individual honour, stimulates to prosperity, and he could not without horror and dismay behold the spirit of Irish independence and of Irish honour, sinking lifeless into the grave of a British Legislature. In point of commerce the project was equally fallacious—Ireland had at this moment a right and a capacity to trade to every quarter of the globe more extensively than her capital could pursue; the trade of Liverpool is owing to the enterprize of her merchants; and the trade of Dublin and of Cork is only cramped by the timidity of theirs, at this short notice detail was impossible, but could any honorable member point out any one instance in which a Union alone could encrease the trade of Ireland for the benefit of *Irish* subjects, in what instance could our trade be advanced by a Union, which could not be effected *without* it? but even if it could be advanced by the project, could it be advanced in a degree commensurate to the loss of national security, national legislation, national property, and national independence? If England meant us well, surely she might take away our restraints without rifling our liberties; and equalize our commerce without robbing our constitution—it was said that British merchants would send capital to Ireland, that in fact is, that after Ireland is drained of her specie by her absentees, and of her commerce by monopolies, perhaps the British merchants might venture a hundred thousand pounds to usurise in Ireland, and transmit the profits to Great Britain, a glorious ex-

change for the ſecurity of a reſident Parliament whoſe efforts had already raiſed Ireland from poverty to ſplendor—with a reluctance bordering on a breach Great Britain granted us the trade we now enjoy, and is it to be conceived ſhe will ſacrifice more willingly to our intereſts when *in* her power than when we were *out* of it?

A moſt diſguſting example of ſordid folly is exhibited by the corporation of Cork only. In order to prevail on Cork to declare for an Union ſhe has been informed by Government, that her trade will increaſe by Britiſh capital, and her city be embelliſhed by a royal dock-yard; what is the preſent obſtruction to the trade of Cork? want of enterprize only—ſhe has the ſame capacity to trade ſhe could have by a Union: and however well ſituated for trade, there is not a naval town in Great Britain that has any trade. Cork has been groſsly deceived; even if ſhe did receive any advantage from the project, ſurely partial and uncertain advantage can never weigh againſt certain, general and national injury; Cork will yet return to her reaſon, and feel that ſhe can have no intereſt independant of or ſeparate from Ireland.

The farmer will feel this project—the demeſne will be deſerted by the abſentee, and the labourer remain unemployed on the demeſne; the produce of land muſt lower in value, whilſt the rents of the preſent farms will remain the ſame, and as the conſumption decreaſes, the evil will accompany it, till the once wealthy farmer becomes an impoveriſhed heart-broken bankrupt. Abſentees have already been juſtly accounted an important injury to Ireland; that injury muſt increaſe ten-fold—all the ſpecie of Ireland will follow them half-yearly to Great Britain, the griping Engliſh agent will ſupplant the kind and indulgent landlord, and the Iriſh tenant become the impoveriſhed ſlave of the Iriſh abſentee.

The firſt meaſure of a Union muſt be taxation; the firſt act of kindneſs a tax of 10 per cent on Iriſh property, not modified to Iriſh circumſtances by an Iriſh Parliament, but calculated by a Scottiſh miniſter and executed by a Britiſh authority; the tax-table of England will become the ſtatute book of Ireland, and the great doubt will then be, whether our wants or our burthens are the greateſt?

The treacherous reaſons aſſigned for the completion of this project are our differences and our misfortunes: Differences which aroſe from the duplicity of that ſame Miniſter who now ſeeks to ſubdue us, and misfortunes which were ſtimulated by him, to adapt us for his own conqueſt.

But the ſettlement of theſe differences, and the alleviation of theſe misfortunes, is adapted to the deliberation of an Iriſh, and not of a Britiſh Parliament. The Iriſh Parliament is fully competent to conſider, diſcuſs and remedy the grievances of their own country; if a modification of tythes, an adjuſtment of religious controverſies, an extenſion of trade by bounties or drawbacks, an encouragement

to manufactures, or to inland navigations; an equalization of taxes, or any other regulations become neceſſary. Why ſhould we apply to 547 Engliſh and Scotchmen, to arrange our trade and modify our national eſtabliſhments? 'Tis abſurd and inſolent to demand, and it would be mean, vicious and puſillanimous to ſubmit to.

Great Britain has *nothing* to give, which can compenſate the loſs of independance: we aſk no favour from her, and we will ſubmit to no injury; we will unite with her as a friend and as a ſiſter in the common cauſe; our lives and our properties ſhall be united with her in ſupport of our King and our conſtitution; we will riſe and fall with her; but we will not ſubmit to be ruled by a Britiſh faction, and plundered by a Britiſh Miniſter, to ſatisfy the avarice or the jealouſy of thoſe perſons, to whoſe confidence and liberality this Miniſter owes his gratitude, and which he can only repay by heaping burthens upon Ireland. If alledged to be a meaſure ſolely for the good of Ireland, he believed experience had convinced us that no Britiſh or Scottiſh Miniſter ever yet attempted to *force* upon Ireland any meaſure for the benefit of her commerce or conſtitution. When ſuch meaſures were brought forward, how lukewarm was the Miniſter's acquieſcence; and when the famous Propoſitions were diſcuſſed, it appeared that he affected to aſſiſt our trade; but it was at the expence of our conſtitution. The Iriſh Parliament ſaw the trick; the ſtate juggler was unveiled, and the meaſure relinquiſhed. What reaſons have we to place more confidence in Mr. Pitt's intentions towards us now, than at that memorable period?—the reverſe. It is as clear as noon-day, that his ſyſtem has been moſt treacherous; his government here excited the different ſects to oppoſe each other; an indolent ſyſtem was adopted, to permit ſome ſtrength to the diſaffected; then a vigorous ſyſtem, to give energy to the loyaliſt. Then government acted on the defenſive againſt treaſon; then the Miniſter plunged into martial law; the catholic and the proteſtant were alternately encouraged and depreſſed; the loyalty of the yeomanry ſaved Ireland; both parties had bled and were weak; and what is called the lenient ſyſtem was adopted; the rebel was pardoned, and ſent back to rob, to murder, and burn; the yeoman and the loyaliſt were either inſulted, oppreſſed or degraded, in ſome inſtances *executed*; the loyal national ſpirit was purpoſely ſuppreſſed; and, when all was ripe for a government revolution, the meaſure of a Union, equally oppreſſive and diſguſting to every claſs and every ſect, was brought forward in expectation that we were too worn, too weak, and too indifferent to reſiſt or reject any thing which profeſſed to be for our tranquillization. And to prove that this ſyſtem was adopted for theſe purpoſes, it is only neceſſary to recollect the words of the noble Lord who propoſes it; "that it had been a meaſure long con-

ſidered and maturely weighed." If that was the caſe, it was obvious that it might have been brought forward in a time of tranquillity; and equally obvious, that it had been purpoſely poſtponed, till this deſperate ſyſtem had ſufficiently worked upon the nation, to adapt it to the Miniſter's will and pleaſure. But the Parliament has yet virtue enough to reſiſt an act of national degradation. The Britiſh Miniſter had better beware of this ſyſtem of treachery and fraternization; it was by the very ſame means, and with the very ſame objects, that the French Republic have overrun all Europe; and with the very ſame ſyſtem, and for the very ſame purpoſes, that ſhe has aſſailed Ireland—a deſperate example to the Britiſh empire, and an attempt unworthy of the generoſity and character of the Britiſh nation.

The object of the Miniſter is, in another reſpect, fully obvious; his meaſures have been ſpeculative; deſperate, deep and unparallelled. Great Britain owes much to him for preſerving her from foreign power; but it has been atchieved at the expence of much blood, much money, and much conſtitution; his ſucceſs has warranted his meaſures ſo far: but the day may come, when ſome rival Miniſter may dare to queſtion thoſe meaſures, and *particularly Mr. Pitt's conduct and ſyſtem in Ireland*; that may be a grievous day, and it is neceſſary he ſhould be able to meet it with effect; he is already more powerful than the Crown, and more powerful than the people: but it will be neceſſary he ſhould inſure the perpetuity of that power. One hundred Iriſh members in the Britiſh Parliament, loaded with the patronage of Ireland, ſeduced by the art of the Britiſh Miniſter, and uninſpired by that ſpirit which national reſidence will naturally inſure, give themſelves up to his guidance, and for ever confirm his power and his authority, which for ever prevents even the queſtioning of his conduct, and leaves to the Britiſh nation only the power of murmur.

Surely that wiſe nation muſt ſee the danger, nay the ruin, of giving ſo great a power to any Miniſter, as that which the incorporation of 100 Iriſh members muſt inevitably inſure. The liberty, the free agency of the Throne and the conſtitutional rights of the Britiſh people, muſt ſink before ſuch a power; and the plunder of Ireland will but poorly atone for the diminution of their liberty.

The compact between Great Britain and Ireland was not all of one ſide; there was a mutual dependance, to the mutual advantage of both. She took our linens; we fed her fleet—ſhe protected our trade; we gave her our ſoldiers. Her fleets and her armies were as material to her, as our linens and our commerce to us. There is no nation on earth would not be proud of our connexion on the ſame terms; and therefore let it never be ſaid, that the dependance is ſolely on our ſide. England might ruin us; but in doing ſo, ſhe would deſtroy herſelf; and ſhe is too wiſe and too cunning to ſuppoſe, that a wounded limb could give vigour to an enfeebled body—he ſaid it was called a meaſure of

permanent ſtrength and ſtability to the empire; but if that ſtrength and ſtability is to be purchaſed at the expence of Ireland, and its annihilation among the nations of the world, there is no man who bears the heart of an Iriſhman, will dare aſſent to its adoption. He ſaid that on the abſtract queſtion he was clear and decided, the diſcuſſion of detail admitted a principle which he was determined to reſiſt by every means and to every extremity, he declared his ſentiments openly, boldly and deciſively, that no terms Great Britain could grant, no favour ſhe could beſtow, would form any compenſation for the loſs of our independance and ſecurity; and though he had on moſt ſubjects freely and zealouſly given his ſupport to the king's government,—on this queſtion no earthly conſideration could ever conſole him for ſurrendering the honour, the ſecurity, and the liberties of his country.

Sir J. Blaquiere followed Mr. Barrington, and in ſtrong terms reſiſted the charges of undue influence and corruption, made by the honourable member againſt the Adminiſtration, obſerving how completely this charge was refuted, by the conduct and ſpeeches of ſo many gentlemen, the reputed friends of Government.

He aſked, emphatically, if there was a man in that Houſe, who ſeriouſly wiſhed that things ſhould remain as they were? Would it offend the pride of gentlemen, to ſay he thought the country incompetent to its own defence? What ſort of a ſtate might it now have been in, if Monſieur Hoche had landed; or if any other attempt made in force, had ſucceeded? Were we to wait for ſuccour, till acts of Parliament had paſſed the two kingdoms, and then rely on the precarious ſupport alone of ſuch men, whoſe loyalty and ſpirit would prompt them to volunteer in our ſervice, as had been the caſe on the preſent occaſion? He animadverted in the moſt pointed terms of reproach, upon the ſtrictures which ſome gentlemen had indulged their fancies, in making upon the motives of their being ſent hither, forgetting what a different language was held in the moment of trouble, the time they came. He honoured and admired the gallant ſpirit of the Iriſh gentry, and people, as much as any man, becauſe he knew them; ſtill he contended we were not a match ſingly for any of the great powers of Europe. You cannot fire a 24 pound ſhot out of a 12 pound gun; you muſt ally with ſomebody. Shall it be, ſaid he, with the German Kings, the arch-deſpoilers of their helpleſs neighbours, who have parcelled out their territories, as robbers do their plunder? It began with Poland, when the falſe policy and forbearance of England is much to be lamented. Savoy, Switzerland, Venice and Rome, were forced in their turn to yield; and much it is to be wiſhed, that Naples may be the laſt victim of their rapacity; gorged with which, they are now vindicating each other's crimes, by a participation

in each others guilt.—You cannot connect yourself with profligacy like this; to England you must recur; it was so ordained by the God of Nature, and is so essential for both, that he thought England, like Ireland, incapable of resisting the common enemy, and still more formidable enemy, the fatal spirit of innovation, without it.

But wave those concerns for a moment, he said, and look no further than home: Is it possible that any tranquillity can be expected in the land, whilst so many causes of discontent and dissatisfaction among the people remain?

Are not the Catholics looking for emancipation—the Presbyterians for reform—a great bulk of the people for a regulation of tithes? and do not all these discontents aggregated together, and abetted by the machinations of the United Societies, make a formidable enemy in your bosom? There are not two ways of meeting it. The honourable member who proposed the amendment (Mr. Ponsonby) with a flow of such transcendant eloquence, as had seldom been heard in that House, had, among other things for his purpose, expressly stated, that the Roman Catholics must oppose the Union. He knew not the mind of Catholics upon the subject: but he should speak his own—That the Roman Catholics, under the present order of things, could never be accommodated, as he feared, with what they asked, without imminent danger to the Protestant establishment, both in Church and State; but if once an Union shall be adopted, all these difficulties would vanish, and he should see none in granting them every thing they desired. What the sentiments of Government upon this subject were, he knew not; he spoke his own; those he would ever maintain; but be this as it may, sure he was, that this and every other cause of dissatisfaction, would make fit objects of discussion, when that great question should come under consideration.

Remove these difficulties, unite with England, and see the proud ground on which you are placed: Ireland, geographically and physically considered, stands pre-eminently before all other nations, the fit mart or emporium of the known world: She embarks in the inviting commerce, aided by English capitals, without taxes, and without a debt, whilst all the other nations of Europe are sinking under their burthens. In the great articles of land and money, behold for a moment the change—Why pay 6 per cent. on mortgages here, when in England the common interest is 4, the highest five? Why shall a 5 per cent. Irish debenture, in the London market, sell for 70l. only, when an English debenture, of the same value, shall fetch 75l.? But above all, see how this measure would affect the landed interest: In England, the ordinary value of land is rated at from 25 to 30 years purchase; in Ireland has seldom been known to exceed 20 years purchase; at

the prefent moment, not half that value: yet the land is as good, the titles as far as the law can go, as well fecured; the rents in general better paid—then, why this defalcation? Becaufe, there muft be a fomething vitally defective in our political fituation, of which not the feller, but the buyer is the judge; and on many other fubjects he enlarged more.

He honoured the independence, the pride; he adored the conftitution, the liberties of his country; with fome of thefe, he would part only with his life; but the object neareft his heart, and for which he was difpofed to make fome facrifices, was the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom; and appealing to Heaven, he declared, that he faw no poffible means of obtaining that bleffing, but through the meafure propofed; he had given every poffible confideration to the fubject, which the limited portion of underftanding with which the God of nature had endowed him, would admit—peace among ourfelves, and fecurity againft the common enemy, were all he defired—and added Sir John, if any man will fhew me any other means by which thefe objects can be attained, I will vote againft the Union; but gentlemen know, that it is impoffible.

Mr. Dobbs.—Sir, when this queftion was firft fuggefted, I am free to confefs, that I thought it worthy of confideration. The fyftem of governing Ireland by corruption, had filled me with difguft and indignation. The horrors of the late rebellion, and the dreadful animofities ftill exifting, inclined me to liften to any thing likely to tranquillize this country. But Sir, even when in doubt, I never for a moment confidered a Legiflative Union, in any other light than an evil: All that I ever hefitated about, was whether, by accepting of it, I might not avoid a greater. In this temper and with thefe feelings, I have given the fubject a full, and I truft difpaffionate inveftigation, the refult of which is a decided opinion, that Great Britain cannot propofe any terms, that Ireland ought to accede to.

Sir, it has been held out that great commercial advantages would be gained by this Legiflative Union, and alfo that it would end our domeftic animofities. Both, Sir, are fallacious. In point of trade Great Britain has nothing to beftow. Cork and fome of the fouthern, and weftern ports of Ireland, I am informed think differently; but if they do, I am perfuaded they they are under a deception. They have at prefent every advantage that their fituation can give them, as to their foreign trade; the whole kingdom of Ireland poffeffing it as fully as Great Britain herfelf; for the trade to the Eaft Indies is equally open to an Irifhman, as to a native of Great Britain; it being vefted by charter in a company, whofe ftock is every day at market. There might be fome regulations as to the channel trade; but if the ports of both

countries were free ports to each other, it would be pernicious to us; because every infant manufacture of Ireland would then be annihilated. As a proof of this, I will only give one instance, the cotton manufacture, as the reasoning as to it must apply to every other. It is protected by a duty of upwards of ten per cent. and yet in every article of that branch, that rises to any degree of fineness, we are undersold in our own market, owing to English superiority in skill and capital. Sir, no man in this House knows better than you do, that our infant manufactures can only be supported against the established ones of England by protecting duties. It may however be said, those necessary duties might be settled by the terms of the Union; but if so, we would only stand where we now are, and therefore it would be no advantage. I therefore, Sir, pronounce that no commercial benefit whatsoever can be given to Ireland. This Sir, I would not venture to assert, if I had not consulted some of the most respectable merchants of the city of Dublin, whom, if necessary, I can produce at your bar.

Now, Sir, let us examine how a Legislative Union will tranquillize Ireland? Will the destruction of our own Parliament make the republicans of Ireland relinquish their principles, and become attached to the King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain? Can any man conceive so wild an idea? Will it attach to the King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain the catholics of Ireland, because one of the objects of the Legislative Union, is to preclude some of their claims for ever? Is it agreeable to the loyal yeomanry of Ireland? The contrary is well known. Will then a Legislative Union, which cannot change the republican opinion, which cannot satisfy the catholic, and which is highly disagreeable to many of the most loyal men in Ireland, tranquillize the kingdom?

Sir, let me take this matter in another point of view. Does this country owe its present safety to the absentee lords and gentlemen of Ireland? The answer must be in the negative. To what then does it chiefly owe its safety? To the resident gentlemen, who have raised and headed the yeomanry. If this measure takes place, you take away 100 of the principal resident gentry, and 30 or 40 of the lords: and it will not rest there; for the other nobility and men of fortune will also crowd to England, to be at the fountain of honour and preferment; vast sums of money will necessarily be spent out of the kingdom. But this is trivial to the danger that follows, from the loss of their personal influence and example.

But Sir, let me for a moment suppose that terms were in the first instance given, that were of pecuniary advantage; and also that a Union would not lower our natural strength; where is the security, that the terms of that Union might not be altered at

another day? The moment we part with our own Legiſlature, the few perſons ſent to the Lords and Commons of England, even ſuppoſing them incorruptible, become ſo inſignificant in point of proportional numbers, thnt it is clear Ireland muſt remain at the mercy of the Britiſh members. We are told, however, of the generoſity of the Britiſh nation. Sir, if I were to confide Iriſh happineſs to any other than our own nation, it would be to Great Britain. But it is the nature of all nations to abuſe their power over another; and the honourable mover of the amendment has ſhewn us, from true and undoubted hiſtory, the uſe of power in England, when applied to Ireland, prior to the true date of Iriſh liberty in 1782.

Sir, I will not go into the abſtract reaſoning, of whether the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, have a right to bind poſterity as to a radical change of conſtitution. It is enough, if we feel this, that men delegated for eight years, have no right to vote away for ever the privileges of thoſe who ſent them, unleſs by their expreſs deſire. On this ſubject, I have no heſitation to ſay, that were I as fond of this Union, as it is odious to me, I ſhould think myſelf a villain, if I voted away the right of that borough, that ſent me to Parliament.

Sir, the noble Lord ſays, if it be the wiſh of the people and Parliament, that the meaſure ſhould be adopted, it ought to be acceded to. I do not deny it. But that ſenſe ſhould be fully aſcertained, without compulſion, or undue influence of any kind. Now Sir, ſo far as the voice of the people has been yet collected, it is decidedly againſt it; and nothing but force, actual or implied, with the aid of undue influence, can carry the meaſure againſt Iriſh independence. What ſignify declarations of conſulting Parliament and the people, when actions, the beſt of all teſtimonies, ſpeak coercion and undue influence? Sir, it is not even denied, that two gentlemen high in office, have been turned out, becauſe they choſe to expreſs a will of their own on this great occaſion. Is not this, Sir, in terrorem, to all who hold offices, from which they can be diſmiſſed? A moſt reſpectable right honourable Member, who has declared he will vote for this Union, has ſaid, that when he attended Parliament, which, except in one inſtance or two, had not been for many years, there were 116 placemen and penſioners in this Houſe; and, that ſince that time, a number of new places had been created. I will not ſay, Sir, what number of placemen and penſioners are now in Parliament; but be they few or many, theſe diſmiſſals tell them, in language not to be miſunderſtood, you muſt vote for a Union, or take the conſequences. Sir, I had a partiality for the preſent adminiſtration; but a conduct of this nature will turn that partiality into enmity. I tell the noble Lord, that if this meaſure be carried by ſuch means, againſt the public ſentiment, he is not uniting, but ſeparating the two countries.

I tell the noble Lord, that if Mr. Pitt had ſat down to plan a ſpeedy ſeparation, he could not have thought of a meaſure more likely to accompliſh it. I tell the noble Lord, that though I have hitherto been the warm friend of Engliſh connexion; I for one will meditate ſeparation, from the moment that a Legiſlative Union ſhall be carried by force; whether that force be direct or implied. Sir, there are men who argue, that Ireland could not exiſt without England: I hope, Sir, the ſiſter kingdom will have too much good ſenſe, ever to force us to the experiment. But, Sir, I know from the annals of hiſtory, that countries infinitely worſe circumſtanced, have been able to reſcue themſelves from tyranny. I need only mention the ſeven United Provinces and Switzerland. The firſt, though inſignificant in numbers and in wealth, were able to repel the vaſt reſources in men and money of their bigotted tyrant, Philip the 2d. The laſt, though alſo poor and weak in numbers, threw off the yoke of the rich and powerful houſe of Auſtria.

Sir, a right honourable Member, to whom I have before alluded, alſo pointed out former Parliaments of Ireland in a very degraded point of view; a pamphlet aſcribed to, and not denied by the Caſtle, preceded him in a ſimilar deſcription. Sir, I truſt there is a ſpirit in this Houſe to refute theſe charges. I truſt there is wiſdom enough in this Houſe, to feel the neceſſity of gaining the full confidence of the people, in order to repel the attacks of the Engliſh Miniſter. I rely, Sir, on even the ſelf-intereſt of this Houſe, to effectually reſiſt a meaſure, that leaves every thing that ought to be dear to man, at the will and pleaſure of a Legiſlature foreign to us, and over which we can have no controul.

Sir, I cannot ſit down without paying my tribute of veneration to your virtuous and manly conduct, in oppoſing this pernicious meaſure.

Mr. Knox.—(Member for Philipſtown.) I am ſatisfied that in point of commerce, England has not any thing to give to this country, but was it otherwiſe, I would not deſcend to argue it, for I would not ſurrender the liberties of my country for the riches, for the wealth of the univerſe.

This has been called a queſtion of great importance, from its great magnitude and ſtill greater deformity, one would be naturally led to expect that it would have made its frightful entrance into this Houſe alone, and unmixt with other matter, but it has been managed otherwiſe, and has been inſidiouſly introduced into the ſpeech from the throne.

This accurſed meaſure has long been the favourite object of that Miniſter in England, whoſe wild ambition has already led to the deſtruction of Empires; and would now ſeek to annihilate

this Nation. In order to forward this wicked ſcheme, what has been the conduct of thoſe who managed the affairs of government under his guidance and direction; what pains have not been taken to promote and keep alive among the people every diſtinction of party and religion, have not all differences of opinion whether in politics or religion been induſtriouſly fomented and encouraged, and every means taken to diſtract and divide the inhabitants of this land? Is it perfectly clear that zeal and diligence has been uſed to put down inſurrection where it has appeared, and may not all this have been to take advantage of our inteſtine diviſions and diſtractions, to forward a meaſure which at any other time dare not even have been hinted at? but I cannot ſuppoſe that my countrymen will be the dupes of ſo ſhallow an artifice; no, Iriſhmen of all deſcriptions ſhall agree to bury in one common grave all jealouſies and differences, and be greatly unanimous to ſave their country. Would that to gain ſo deſirable an end, I could yield the ſpot where I now ſtand to a *Grattan*, or a *Curran*, whoſe matchleſs eloquence might thrill this Senate Houſe and ſhake it's dome; or that the cauſe itſelf could faſcinate from the higheſt firmament a *Flood* to ſpeak in its behalf, not only with the tongue of men but of angels!

I cannot find words to expreſs the horror I feel at a propoſition ſo extremely degrading and inſulting, to entertain it even for a moment in my opinion is not free from ſome criminality. What, ſhall we deliberate, whether this kingdom ſhall ceaſe to exiſt; whether this land ſhall be ſtruck from the ſcale of nations; whether its very name is to be no more, but eraſed from the map of the world for ever? Shall it, I ſay be a queſtion, whether we ſurrender to another ſeparate country, and to another ſeparate legiſlature, the lives, liberties and properties of five millions of people who delegated us here to defend, but not deſtroy the Conſtitution? It is a propoſition monſtrous in the extreme, and ſhould be conſidered merely to join our diſguſt and execration with that of the nation; then daſh it from us, never to take it up again. Will any advocate for this deteſtable Union tell me we ſhall be repreſented with any effect in the Senate of the Empire; how could our few tranſported itinerant ſtrolling members have any weight in the ſcale of Britiſh repreſentation, the idea is prepoſterous and reſembles the folly of the gnat in the fable, who having lit on a bull's horn hoped he was not an inconvenience, when his preſence had never been perceived;—will it be ſaid that we are not annihilated but merged and become part of the Britiſh Empire? this ſir, is a diſtinction without a difference. Pour the entire of that ſea which Providence deſigned to keep for ever diſtinct and ſeparate theſe two independent kingdoms into the Great Pacific ocean, and what trace or track can you diſcern of the former, or how will it affect the ebbing or flowing of the latter?

Why, or for what reaſon ſhall we exterminate the ſtate, or tranſport it into another country? To be a great ſtate, ſays the Abbe Raynal, the ſeat and centre of power muſt be in the ſtate itſelf, nothing but the deſpotiſm of the Eaſt, can inure men to receive laws from rulers far remote, or from the Baſhaws by whom inviſible tyrants are repreſented, a general governor here without a Parliament to controul him, would be as dangerous a deſpot as any Turkiſh Baſhaw in the meridian of authority. Unfortunate countrymen, what a ſtate of wretchedneſs and ſlavery will be yours, how proſtrate, how fallen,

Night even in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is ſunſhine to the colour of your fate.

The native inhabitants of this country degraded like the human merchandize of Africa, to cultivate the ſoil at the will of foreign taſk-maſters, not as freemen but as ſlaves; the Iriſh and Indian negroes will then only be diſtinguiſhed by the colour of the ſkin.

But if from the country we turn to the metropolis, wherein we are now aſſembled, what awaits us there? In the city is left deſolation and her gates are ſmitten with deſtruction.

Induſtrious, enterpriſing, affluent citizens, as if by pantomimic touch reduced to ſudden beggary and ruin.

This capital which for magnitude and grandeur, ſurpaſſes any other in the univerſe with the ſame extent of empire, is no more! for the claſh of chariots and the torches blaze, the melancholy bird of night ſhall ſhriek and glow worm pale her ineffectual lamp. Sir, it has been ſaid that ſtrong meaſures will be reſorted to; that threats and promiſes are held out, and that the former have already been reſorted to, but let me warn Miniſters to conſider, to pauſe before they proceed to paſs upon the country judgment of death, and execution thereon. There is not any power on earth, ſhort of the united force of the people, competent to deprive a nation of its conſtitution, its liberties, and its exiſtence; I am ſatisfied if this meaſure be purſued, one half of the inhabitants muſt be exterminated to enſlave the remainder, and whether death ſhall be won in the field or on the ſcaffold, among Iriſhmen the only emulation will be, who ſhall die; and the only regret that man can die but once, to ſerve his country; nor will our beauteous country-women feel leſs intereſt in the glorious cauſe, they will tell their gallant countrymen, that no chains but thoſe forged by them can be worn without diſhonour, and that vaſſalage to them alone can redound to their glory.

Sir, there is not within or without theſe walls any individual who more highly prizes the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, may it be perpetual! The ſhamrock and the roſe, entwined together form a wreath round the royal brow, and periſh the hand that would tear them thence; but force them too

closely together or unnaturally conjoin them, and one or both will wither. But dearly as I value this connexion, I still estimate my country more, when the constitution of this country was assailed in the form of Irish propositions, that great man* who was chiefly instrumental in acquiring that constitution, when it and the Empire would be committed, nobly exclaimed, Perish the Empire, live the Constitution. If that connexion I so highly prize, and the existence of this nation must now be at issue, I say, Perish the connexion, live the nation. Could my feeble voice be heard, I would call upon Englishmen as they regard this connexion, I would implore them as they value their own liberties to resist this measure, I am satisfied the Minister means not only to annihilate Ireland, but to enslave Great Britain; any reform, or renovation of the British Constitution will be rendered then impracticable. This insulted, degraded, debased country will be made a barrack, a depôt from whence to draw the means of enslaving Great Britain, and no resource left to save either country but a revolution.

Let me however once more intreat, implore my countrymen to mutual forgiveness, to bury in eternal oblivion all jealousies and animosities. Then will the salvation of the country be at hand, though heaviness may endure for a night, joy will come with the morning; though clouds should lower and tempests roar; though a night of deep dark desolation may depress; yet the mornings dawn will rise upon our land, a great, free and independant nation.

Mr. Hans Hamilton (member for Co. Dublin) declared that no vote he had ever given, could afford him half the delight which that he should now give in support of the amendment must ever ensure; an Union was a measure he should ever firmly oppose within those walls with his vote, without them with his life, but he foresaw that the hour was at hand, that would prove this to be the most glorious day that Ireland had ever beheld, and that would enable the members to go forth to their constituents, and to assure them they were represented by an Irish Parliament that never would betray their independance.

Sir. J. Freke—in a short but animated speech, fraught with a spirited expression of his love for his country, and its established constitution.

Lord Castlereagh felt that he would not act with justice to himself and to his country if he did not state his reasons for favouring the measure of a Legislative Union with Great Britain. He had listened with patient attention to what had been advanced on the subject from the other side, and he must confess that from the mass of clamour which was dealt forth, he had

* *Mr. Grattan.*

been able to collect very little ſound reaſoning. He had heard imputations caſt againſt his ſide of the Houſe that might have been retorted, but for the interference of more refined manners.

His Lordſhip truſted, that no man would decide on a meaſure of ſuch importance as that in part before the Houſe, on private or perſonal motives, for if a deciſion were thus to be influenced, it would be the moſt unfortunate that could ever affect the country. What was the object of this meaſure but ſuch as every loyal man, who really loved his country, muſt feel the ſtrongeſt attachment to—by an incorporation of our Legiſlature with that of Great Britain, it would not only conſolidate the ſtrength and glory of the empire, but it would change our internal and local Government to a ſyſtem of ſtrength and calm ſecurity, inſtead of being a garriſon in the iſland—here was but a part of many and numerous advantages, which the ſtage of the buſineſs did not then render neceſſary to be entered into, and which would come more ſuitably at a future period. As to the argument of the Parliament's incompetence to entertain the queſtion, he did not expect to hear ſuch an argument from Conſtitutional Lawyers, or to hear advanced the poſition, that a Legiſlature was not at all times competent to do that for which it could only have been inſtituted—the adoption of the beſt means to promote the general happineſs and proſperity. After the melancholy ſtate to which this country had been reduced, his Majeſty's Miniſters would feel that they abdicated their duty to the empire, if they did not ſeriouſly conſider that ſtate, and adopt the beſt remedy for the evils which it compriſed. It was the misfortune of this country to have in it no fixed principles on which the human mind could reſt—no one ſtandard to which the different prejudices of the country could be accommodated. What was the price of connexion at preſent with Great Britain? A military eſtabliſhment far beyond our natural means to ſupport, and for which we are indebted to Great Britain, who is alſo obliged to guarantee our public loans. It is not by flattery that the country could be ſaved—truths, however diſagreeable, muſt be told—and if Ireland did not boldly look her ſituation in the face and accept that Union which would ſtrengthen and ſecure her, ſhe would perhaps have no alternative but to ſink into the embrace of French fraternity. You talk, ſaid his Lordſhip, of national pride and independance, but where is the ſolidity of this boaſt? You have not the Britiſh Conſtitution—nor can you have it conſiſtently with your preſent ſpecies of connexion with Great Britain—that Conſtitution does not recognize two ſeparate and independent Legiſlatures under one Crown—the greater country muſt lead—the leſſer naturally follow, and muſt be practically ſubordinate in imperial concerns—but this neceſſary and beneficial operation of the general will muſt be preceded by eſtabliſhing one common intereſt.

As the pride of this country advances with her wealth, it may happen that you will not join Great Britain in her wars—it is only a common polity that will make that certain.—Incorporate with Great Britain, and you have a common intereſt and common means. If Great Britain calls for your ſubjection, reſiſt it—but if ſhe wiſhes to unite with you on terms of equality, 'tis madneſs not to accept the offer. Gentlemen have diſtinguiſhed the caſe of Scotland from that of Ireland—but they are directly the ſame. The vicinity of Scotland to England was rather an unfavourable circumſtance—for neighbour nations are moſt apt to quarrel.—What was the caſe of Scotland? She was connected like Ireland by a common Crown—but the game of jealouſy was played—the ſame game which is played here. The Jacobites would have been glad the Crown had continued in that way—for it would have aided their views. 'Tis true, that after the Union the miſchief partly continued for a time—and no doubt it would do ſo here too, becauſe the minds of the people might for a time be diſguſted, but the evil would gradually diminiſh, and the countries go on in growth of affection and reſources. All queſtions have arguments on both ſides—the leaſt evil is to be choſen. To this meaſure he objected that Legiſlature won't be local—'tis for that reaſon the meaſure is adopted—for with a local Legiſlature, and the preſent diviſion of your people, you can't go on. Other objections ariſe—but they all terminate in local prejudice, or pride, and all of them that have been ſtarted, diſcuſſed and refuted in the caſe of Scotland. Abſentees another objection—they would be ſomewhat encreaſed, no doubt, but the evil would be compenſated by other advantages, and among them by the growth of an intermediate claſs of men between the landlord and the peaſant—a claſs of men whoſe loſs is felt in Ireland, to train the mind of the lower claſs. Theſe we would have from England. We would alſo have capital from thence.—And as to emigration, the difficulty and expence would counteract that evil. At all events, theſe inconveniences would be but a grain of ſand compared with the advantages which would be derived by internal ſecurity, and by our growing together in habits of amity and affection.

He concluded by profeſſing himſelf attached to the meaſure only by the love of his country, and his conviction that the intereſts of that country would be promoted permanently and effectually by an incorporation of the two Legiſlatures.

Col. Gilbert King.—Conſcious as I am that I poſſeſs neither ability, nor conſequence to juſtify me for intruding myſelf on the Houſe at this late hour, yet I hope that gentlemen will have the goodneſs to accept of the beſt apology in my power, that is the duty I owe my conſtituents, my country and myſelf. The magnitude of this important queſtion, as to the expediency

of a Legiſlative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, induced me to appropriate much of my time towards the attainment of neceſſary information on the ſubject; and having mixed with the people of every deſcription in my neighbourhood, (the good diſpoſition of all whom I have had long experience of,) to learn their opinion on the ſubject, I am now prepared to give mine, which is, that a Union with Great Britain would prove detrimental to Ireland; I therefore give my vote for the amendment to the addreſs, and am determined to vote againſt the Union whenever it may be brought forward. The very enlightened and brilliant arguments I have heard on this ſide of the Houſe, convince me (had any doubt remained on my mind of the rectitude of my conduct.) I will trouble the Houſe no further at preſent, and once more aſk their forgiveneſs for this intruſion.

Mr. Plunket.—Sir, I ſhall make no apology for troubling you at this late hour, exhauſted though I am in mind and body, and ſuffering though you muſt be under a ſimilar preſſure; this is a ſubject which muſt arouſe the ſlumbering, and might almoſt reanimate the dead. It is a queſtion whether Ireland ſhall ceaſe to be free; it is a queſtion involving our deareſt intereſts and for ever. Sir, I congratulate this Houſe on the manly temper with which this meaſure has been diſcuſſed; I congratulate them on the victory which I already ſee they have obtained; a victory which I anticipate from the bold and generous ſentiments which have been expreſſed on this ſide of the Houſe, and which I ſee confirmed in the doleful and diſcomfited viſages of the miſerable groupe whom I ſee before me. Sir, I congratulate you on the candid avowal of the Noble Lord who has juſt ſat down, he has expoſed this project in its naked hideouſneſs and deformity; he has told us that the neceſſity of ſacrificing our independance, flows from the nature of our connexion; it is now avowed that this meaſure does not flow from any temporary cauſe, that it is not produced in conſequence of any late rebellion, or accidental diſturbance in the country, that its neceſſity does not ariſe from the danger of modern political innovations, or from recent attempts of wicked men to ſeparate this country from Great Britain; no, we are now informed by the Noble Lord, that the condition of our ſlavery is engrafted on the principle of our connexion, and that by the decrees of fate Ireland has been doomed a dependant colony from her cradle. I truſt that after this barefaced avowal there can be little difference of opinion, I truſt that every honeſt man who regards the freedom of Ireland; or who regards the connexion with England, will by his vote on this night refute this unfounded and ſeditious doctrine; good God, Sir, have I borne arms to cruſh the wretches who propagated the falſe and wicked creed, "that Britiſh connexion was hoſtile to Iriſh free-

dom;" and am I now bound to combat it, coming from the lips of the noble Lord who is at the head of our Adminiſtration?

But, Sir, in anſwer to the aſſertion of the noble Lord, I will quote the authority of the Duke of Portland in his ſpeech from the throne at the end of the ſeſſion of 1782, "that the two kingdoms are now one, indiſſolubly connected by unity of conſtitution and unity of intereſt, that the danger and ſecurity, the proſperity and calamity of the one muſt mutually affect the other—that they ſtand and fall together." I will quote the authority of the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, who aſſerted and eſtabliſhed the Conſtitution of our independant Parliament founded on that connexion, and the authority of the King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain, who adopted and confirmed it. With as little proſpect of perſuaſion has the noble Lord cited to us the example of Scotland, and as little am I tempted to purchaſe, at the expence of two bloody rebellions, a ſtate of poverty and vaſſallage, at which Ireland in her worſt ſtate, before ſhe attained a free trade, or a free Conſtitution, would have ſpurned. But, Sir, the noble Lord does not ſeem to repoſe very implicit confidence in his own arguments, and he amuſes you, by ſaying, that in adopting this Addreſs you do not pledge yourſelves to a ſupport of the meaſure in any future ſtage. Be aware of this deluſion. If you adopt this Addreſs, you ſacrifice your Conſtitution: you concede the principle, and any future enquiry can only be as to the terms: as to them you need entertain no ſolicitude; on the terms you can never diſagree: give up your independance, and Great Britain will grant you whatever terms you deſire: give her the key, and ſhe will confide every thing to its protection. There are no advantages you can aſk which ſhe will not grant, exactly for the ſame reaſon that the unprincipled ſpendthrift will ſubſcribe without reading it, the bond which he has no intention of ever diſcharging. I ſay therefore, that if you ever mean to make a ſtand for the liberties of Ireland, now, and now only, is the moment of doing it.

But, Sir, the freedom of diſcuſſion which has taken place on this ſide of the Houſe has, it ſeems, given great offence to Gentlemen on the treaſury bench; they are men of nice and punctilious honour, and they will not endure that any thing ſhould be ſaid which implies a reflection on their untainted and virgin integrity. They threatened to take down the words of an honourable Gentleman who ſpoke before me, becauſe they conveyed an inſinuation, and I promiſed them on that occaſion, that if the fancy for taking down words continued, I would indulge them in it to the top of their bent. Sir, I am determined to keep my word with them, and I now will not inſinuate, but I will directly aſſert, that baſe and wicked as is the object propoſed, the means uſed to effect it have been more flagitious and abominable! Do

you choose to take down my words? Do you dare me to the proof? Sir, I had been induced to think that we had at the head of the executive Government in this country, a plain honest soldier, unaccustomed to and disdaining the intrigues of politics, and who, as an additional evidence of the directness and purity of his views, had chosen for his Secretary a simple and modest youth *(Puer ingenui vultus ingenuique pudoris)* whose inexperience was the voucher of his innocence: and yet I will be bold to say, that during the Viceroyalty of this unspotted veteran, and during the Administration of this unassuming Stripling—within these last six weeks—a system of black corruption has been carried on within the walls of the Castle, which would disgrace the annals of the worst period of the history of either country. Do you choose to take down my words? I need call no witnesses to your bar to prove them. I see two Right Honourable Gentlemen sitting within your walls, who had long and faithfully served the Crown, and who have been dismissed, because they dared to express a sentiment in favour of the freedom of their country. I see another Honourable Gentleman, who has been forced to resign his place as Commissioner of the Revenue, because he refused to co-operate in this dirty job of a dirty administration: do you dare to deny this? I say that at this moment the threat of dismissal from office is suspended over the heads of the Members who now sit around me, in order to influence their votes on the question of this night, involving every thing that can be sacred or dear to man: do you desire to take down my words? Utter the desire, and I will prove the truth of them at your bar. Sir, I would warn you against the consequences of carrying this measure by such means as this, but that I see the necessary defeat of it in the honest and universal indignation which the adoption of such means excites: I see the protection against the wickedness of the plan, in the imbecillity of its execution, and I congratulate my country, that when a design was formed against their liberties, the prosecution of it was entrusted to such hands as it is now placed in. The example of the Prime Minister of England, imitable in its vices, may deceive the noble Lord. The Minister of England has his faults: he abandoned in his latter years the principle of Reform, by professing which he had attained the early confidence of the people of England, and in the whole of his political conduct he has shewn himself haughty and intractable; but it must be admitted that he is endowed by nature with a towering and transcendant intellect, and that the vastness of his mortal resources keeps pace with the magnificence and unboundedness of his projects. I thank God, that it is much more easy for him to transfer his apostasy and his insolence, than his comprehension and sagacity; and I feel the safety of my country in the wretched feebleness of her enemy. I cannot fear that the Constitution which has been formed by the

wisdom of sages and cemented by the blood of patriots and or heroes, is to be smitten to its centre by such a green and limber twig as this. Sir, the Noble Lord has shewn much surprise that he should hear a doubt expressed concerning the competence of Parliament to do this act, I am sorry that I also must contribute to increase the surprise of the Noble Lord; if I mistake not, his surprise will be much augmented before this question shall be disposed of, he shall see and hear, what he has never before seen or heard, and be made acquainted with sentiments to which probably his heart has been a stranger. Sir, I in the most express terms deny the competency of Parliament to do this act, I warn you, do not dare to lay your hand on the constitution, I tell you that if circumstanced as you are; you pass this act it will be a mere nullity, and that no man in Ireland will be bound to obey it; I make the assertion deliberately; I repeat it, and I call on any man who hears me to take down my words, you have not been elected for this purpose, you are appointed to make laws and not legislatures; you are appointed to act under the constitution and not to alter it; you are appointed to exercise the functions of legislators and not to transfer them; and if you do so your act is a dissolution of the Government, you resolve society into its original elements and no man in the land is bound to obey you. Sir, I state doctrines which are not merely founded in the immutable laws of truth and reason, I state not merely the opinions of the ablest and wisest men who have written on the science of Government, but I state the practice of our constitution as settled at the æra of the revolution, and I state the doctrine under which the House of Hanover derives its title to the Throne. Has the King a right to transfer his crown? Is he competent to annex it to the crown of Spain or any other country? No, but he may abdicate it, and every man who knows the constitution knows the consequence, the right reverts to the next in succession; if they all abdicate, it reverts to the people. The man who questions this doctrine, in the same breath must arraign the Sovereign on the Throne as an usurper, are you competent to transfer your legislative rights to the French Council of Five Hundred? are you competent to transfer them to the British Parliament? I answer, no. If you transfer you abdicate, and the great original trust results to the people from whom it issued, yourselves you may extinguish; but Parliament you cannot extinguish; it is enthroned in the hearts of the people; it is enshrined in the sanctuary of the constitution; it is immortal as the island which it protects, as well might the frantic suicide hope, that the act which destroys his miserable body should extinguish his eternal soul; again I therefore warn you "do not dare to lay your hand on the constitution," it is above your powers. Sir, I do not say that Parliament and people by mutual consent and co-operation may not

change the form of their conſtitution, whenever ſuch a caſe ariſes it muſt be decided by its own merits, but ſuch is not this caſe; if government conſiders this a ſeaſon peculiarly fitted for experiments in conſtitution, they may call upon the people; I aſk are you ready to do ſo? Are you ready to abide the event of ſuch an appeal? What is it you muſt in that event ſubmit to the people? Not this particular project, for if you diſſolve the preſent form of government they become free to chooſe any other, you fling them to the fury of the tempeſt, you muſt call on them to unhouſe themſelves of the eſtabliſhed conſtitution and to faſhion to themſelves another. I aſk again, is this the time for an experiment of that nature? Thank God the people have manifeſted no ſuch wiſh, ſo far as they have ſpoken, their voice has been decidedly againſt this daring innovation, you know that no voice will be uttered in its favour, and you cannot be infatuated enough to take confidence from the ſilence which prevails in ſome parts of the kingdom, if you know how to appreciate that ſilence, it is more formidable than the moſt clamorous oppoſition, you may be rived and ſhivered by the lightning before you hear the peal of the thunder. But Sir, we are told that we ſhould diſcuſs this queſtion with calmneſs and compoſure, I am called on to ſurrender my birth-right and my honour, and I am told I ſhould be calm and ſhould be compoſed. National pride! independance of our country! theſe we are told by the Noble Lord, are vulgar topics fitted only for the meridian of a mob, but unworthy to be mentioned to ſuch an enlightened aſſembly as this; they are trinkets and gew gaws fit to catch the fancy of childiſh and unthinking people like you, Sir, or like your predeceſſor in that chair, but utterly unworthy the conſideration of this Houſe, or the matured underſtanding of the Noble Lord who condeſcends to inſtruct it. Gracious God! we ſee a Pery reaſcending from the tomb and raiſing his awful voice to warn us againſt the ſurrender of our freedom, and we ſee that the proud and virtuous feelings which warm the breaſt of that aged and venerable man, are only calculated to excite the contempt of this young philoſopher, who has been tranſplanted from the nurſery to the cabinet, to outrage the feelings and underſtanding of the country. But Sir, I will be ſchooled and I will endeavour to argue this queſtion as calmly and frigidly as I am deſired to do, and ſince we are told that this is a meaſure intended for our benefit, and that it is through mere kindneſs to us that all theſe extraordinary means have been reſorted to, I will beg to aſk, how are we to be benefited? Is it commercial benefit that we are to obtain? I will not detain the Houſe with a minute detail on this part of the ſubject; it has been fully diſcuſſed by able men, and it is well known that we are already poſſeſſed of every thing material which could be deſired in that reſpect; but I ſhall ſubmit ſome obvious conſidera-

tions.—I wave the conſideration, that under any Union of Legiſlatures, the conditions as to trade between the two countries muſt be either free ports which would be ruinous to Ireland, or equal duties which would be ruinous to Ireland, or the preſent duties made perpetual, which would be ruinous to Ireland, or that the duties muſt be left open to regulation from time to time by the united Parliament, which would leave us at the mercy of Great Britain.—I will wave the conſideration, that the Miniſter has not yet thought fit to tell us what we are to get, and what is ſtill ſtronger, that no man amongſt us has any definite idea of what we are to aſk, and I will content myſelf with aſking this queſtion,—is your commerce in ſuch a declining deſperate ſtate, that you are obliged to reſort to irrevocable meaſures in order to retract it? Or is it at the very moment when it is advancing with rapid proſperity beyond all example and above all hope? Is it I ſay at ſuch a time that you think it wiſe to bring your conſtitution to market, and offer it to ſale, in order to obtain advantages, the aid of which you do not require, and of the nature of which you have not any definite idea,—a word more, and I have done as to commerce: ſuppoſing that great advantages were to be obtained, and that they were ſpecified and ſtipulated for; what is your ſecurity that the ſtipulation will be obſerved? Is it the faith of treaties? What treaty more ſolemn than the final conſtitutional treaty between the two kingdoms in 1782, which you are now called on to violate? What treaty more ſolemn than your original compact with the people which you are now called on to violate? Is it not a mockery to ſay that the Parliament of Ireland is competent to annul itſelf, and to deſtroy the original compact with the people and the final compact of 1782, and that the Parliament of the empire will not be competent to annul any commercial regulation of the articles of Union? And here, Sir, I take leave of this part of the queſtion; indeed it is only juſtice to Government to acknowledge, that they do not much rely on the commercial benefits to be obtained by the Union, they have been rather held out in the way of innocent artifice to delude the people for their own good; but the real objects are different, though ſtill merely for the advantage of Ireland;—what are thoſe other objects? to prevent the recurrence of rebellion, and to put an end to domeſtic diſſenſions; give me leave to aſk, Sir, how was that rebellion excited? I will not enquire into its remote cauſes, I do not wiſh to revive unpleaſant recollections, or to ſay any thing which might be conſidered as invidious to the government of the Country—but how was it immediately excited? by the agency of a party of levellers actuated by French principles, inſtigated by French intrigues, and ſupported by the promiſe of French co-operation. This party, I heſitate not to ſay, was in itſelf contemptible—how did it become formidable? by operating on the wealthy, well-informed,

and moral inhabitants of the north, and perſuading them that they had no Conſtitution, and by inſtilling palatable poiſons into the minds of the rabble of the ſouth, which were prepared to receive them by being in a ſtate of utter ignorance and wretchedneſs. How will an Union effect thoſe pre-diſponent cauſes? Will you conciliate the minds of the northern, by caricaturing all the defects of the Conſtitution and then extinguiſhing it, by draining his wealth to ſupply the contributions levied by an imperial Parliament, and by outraging all his religious and moral feelings by the means which you uſe to accompliſh this abominable project? and will you not by encouraging the drain of abſentees, and taking away the influence and example of reſident gentlemen, do every thing in your power to aggravate the poverty, and to ſublimate the ignorance and bigotry of the ſouth? Let me aſk again, how was that rebellion put down? by the zeal and loyalty of the gentlemen of Ireland, rallying round what?—a reed ſhaken by the winds; a wretched apology for a miniſter who neither knew how to give, or where to ſeek protection? No, but round the laws and Conſtitution, and independance of the Country.—What were the affections and motives which called us into action?—To protect our families, our properties, and our liberties. What were the antipathies by which we were excited?—Our abhorrence of French principles and French ambition. What was it to us that France was a republic? I rather rejoiced when I ſaw the ancient deſpotiſm of France pulled down. What was it to us that ſhe dethroned her monarch? I admired the virtues, and wept for the ſufferings of the man, but as a nation it affected us not. The reaſon I took up arms and am ready ſtill to bear them againſt France, is, becauſe ſhe intruded herſelf upon our domeſtic concerns, becauſe with the rights of man, and love of freedom on her tongue, I ſee that ſhe has the luſt of dominion in her heart; becauſe, wherever ſhe has placed her foot ſhe has erected her throne, and that to be her friend or her ally is to be her tributary and her ſlave.—Let me aſk, is the preſent conduct of the Britiſh miniſter fitted to augment or to transfer that antipathy? No, Sir, I will be bold to ſay, that licentious and impious France in all the unreſtrained exceſſes which anarchy and atheiſm have given birth to, has not committed a more inſidious act againſt her enemy than is now attempted by the profeſſed champion of the cauſe of civilized Europe againſt a friend and an ally in the hour of her calamity and diſtreſs, at a moment when our Country is filled with Britiſh troops, when the loyal men of Ireland are fatigued and exhauſted by their efforts to ſubdue rebellion—efforts in which they had ſucceeded before thoſe troops arrived—whilſt our Habeas Corpus act is ſuſpended, whilſt trials by court martial are carrying on in many parts of the kingdom—whilſt the people, are taught to think that they have no right to meet or to deliber-

are, and whilst the great body of them are so palsied by their fears, and worn down by their exertions, that even the vital question is scarcely able to rouse them from their lethargy—at the moment when we are distracted by domestic dissensions—dissensions artfully kept alive as the pretext for our present subjugation, and the instrument of our future thraldom.—Sir, I thank Administration for this measure—they are, without intending it, putting an end to our dissensions,—through this black cloud which they have collected over us, I see the light breaking in upon this unfortunate Country; they have composed our dissensions, not by fomenting the embers of a lingering and subdued rebellion—not by hallooing the Protestant against the Catholic and the Catholic against the Protestant—not by committing the North against the South—not by inconsistent appeals to local or to party prejudices: No, but by the avowal of this atrocious conspiracy against the liberties of Ireland, they have subdued every petty feeling and subordinate distinction.—They have united every rank and description of men by the pressure of this grand and momentous subject, and I tell them, that they will see every honest and independant man in Ireland rally round her Constitution, and merge every other consideration in his opposition to this ungenerous and odious measure; for my own part, I will resist it to the last gasp of my existence and with the last drop of my blood, and when I feel the hour of my dissolution approaching, I will, like the father of Hannibal, take my children to the altar and swear them to eternal hostility against the invaders of their Country's freedom. Sir, I beg I may not be misunderstood, when I said that an ungenerous advantage was taken of the moment when British troops were in this country, I did not mean to impute the base motive to the British people or to the British soldier, in the contrary I am convinced in my conscience that they were sent here from the most friendly wish to protect this kingdom and that they came, and continue here with the same honourable and affectionate views; I respect the British soldier, I received him as a friend and an ally, as such I still respect and esteem him; and I feel assured that he never would raise his sword to stab the liberties of Ireland, when he knows that the life blood of England must issue through the wound. I acquit the people of Great Britain of all share in this base transaction, I am satisfied it would be rendered finally abortive by their wisdom and patriotism, even if we were wanting to ourselves, I consider it merely as the project of a desperate minister, who feels that he may be called to a severe account by his country at no very distant period, and would enable himself to say "true, I have deluded and impoverished you, but in return I have "subdued Ireland, there she lies fettered at your feet, use her "as you please." Sir, I shall not detain you by pursuing this question through the topics which it so abundantly offers, I should

be proud to think my name might be handed down to posterity in the same roll with those disinterested patriots, who have successfully resisted the enemies of their country; successfully I trust it will be, in all events I have my "exceeding great reward," I shall bear in my heart the consciousness of having done my duty, and in the hour of death I shall not be haunted by the reflexion of having basely sold or meanly abandoned the liberties of my native land. Can every man who gives his vote on the other side this night lay his hand upon his heart and make the same declaration? I hope so; it will be well for his own peace, the indignation and abhorrence of his countrymen will not accompany him through life, and the curses of his children will not follow him to his grave.

Mr. C. Osborne supported the Union, on the firmest conviction of its propriety and necessity to preserve the connexion between both countries, and secure the tranquillity of Ireland.

Right Hon. George Ogle.—I shall be but short in this stage of the business. It has ever been, on all great and constitutional questions, an invariable maxim of mine, that a representative of the People, when he has really and unequivocally been made acquainted with the wishes and feelings of his Constituents, should obey them: I can have no doubt of the sentiments of my Constituents, and they shall be the guide and rule of my conduct. If ever I shall be so unfortunate as to differ with them in opinion on any great political subject, I know full well the duty I owe to them and to myself—I would resign that sacred trust they confided to me inviolate; I will never hold it to betray them: My governing principle in life has ever been to preserve and maintain our happy Constitution in Church and State, as founded at the glorious Revolution; and I will add the Protestant Ascendancy of Ireland, though I may be looked upon as one of the bigotted Sect who have fallen under the displeasure of some of the Gentlemen who have spoken in this debate. I should carefully have avoided touching upon that subject at all, had not Gentlemen set me the example: But why are we called Bigots? were we the aggressors? No, Sir, the attack was made upon us, and we have only acted on the defensive, in support of the Constitution handed down to us by our Ancestors.—I will not trespass further at this late hour; it would be impossible for me to throw any new light upon a subject so amply and so fully debated; I will vote for the amendment, as I execrate the principle of the Union; and if the spirit and virtue of the House should not now put a stop to its further progress, I will oppose it in every stage.

Mr. HARDY after ſome prefatory matter, obſerved that all which he had heard that night, only confirmed him in his original ſentiments as to the extraordinary buſineſs then in agitation. Had any doubts remained on his mind as to the impolicy of ſuch a meaſure as a Legiſlative Union between the two countries, the arguments adduced by thoſe gentlemen who were advocates for that meaſure muſt have entirely removed thoſe doubts, and more ſtrongly induced him to ſupport the Amendment of the Hon. Gentleman, (Mr. G. Ponſonby) on the floor. He apologiſed to the Houſe for riſing at that unſeaſonable hour (5 o'clock on Wedneſday morning) but ſo many gentlemen expreſſed ſuch anxiety to deliver their ſentiments againſt this meaſure, that he was happy in giving way to them, "No wonder," continued he "that thoſe gentlemen expreſſed their ſentiments not only with peculiar ability, but with a zeal, a fervour, and animation hitherto unexampled in this Houſe, and from which I augur the moſt beneficial conſequences." A learned and reſpectable gentleman, (Mr. C. Oſborne) had ſaid that the great obſtacles to the attainment of a Union, were local intereſts, and commercial jealouſies, forgetting at the ſame time that theſe local intereſts, and commercial jealouſies had ſo uniformly and fatally prevailed in that very Parliament, with which it is now propoſed to incorporate ourſelves, that the queſtion of a Union was in a great meaſure generated by them. They have not yet ſubſided, and in all probability never will, if Ireland therefore now indulged thoſe local jealouſies on her part, ſhe only copied the example of England, and it is no conſolatory proſpect to find on the outſet of this queſtion, the ſiſter kingdoms employed in mutual recriminations on this head. The learned gentleman has alſo ſaid, that he looked back with pride and ſatisfaction to the year 1782, but the principal ſource of his ſatisfaction in indulging ſuch a retroſpect is, it ſeems, derived from the power which Ireland then obtained, (being raiſed to a ſituation ſhe never enjoyed before) of negociating with more effect ſuch a treaty of Legiſlative Union as is now in the contemplation of Miniſters, that we are more enabled by that revolution to make better terms with England in caſe a Union ſhould be propoſed to us, than otherwiſe we ſhould have been. I confeſs this appears rather extraordinary to me, that independance, greater wealth, a higher rank among nations, muſt entitle this country, or any country, to treat on a broader and more permanent baſis, than poverty, and ſubjugation can ever aſpire to, can admit of no queſtion; but according to this explanation of the tranſactions of 1782, Ireland only roſe higher at that time, to be now more precipitant in her downfall, and the freedom, the pride, the dignity of that celebrated year, have only, it ſeems, facilitated, or were only meant to facilitate the thraldom of 1799.

The Noble Lord, (Castlereagh) who, if I know any thing of the temper of the House and the spirit now so alive amongst us, must totally fail in this business, (God forbid Mr. Speaker that he should succeed) has given it as his decided opinion, that nothing but a Legislative Union can effectually secure the connexion between the two Countries, or preserve the tranquillity of Ireland. If this is really the case, our situation is a most deplorable one indeed; but I trust that the Noble Lord's opinion does not rest on the most secure foundation:—1st, with regard to strengthening the connexion between the two Countries. I ask any thinking, impartial man, does he really imagine that if this projected Union was to take place to-morrow, it would give one additional soldier or sailor to the British empire? It would not; if attachment to England and British connexion, if loyalty cannot give soldiers or seamen, I believe it would be vain to look for them from a Union. But attachment to England and loyalty to his Majesty, at present supply both in abundance without this Union; and then come his Majesty's Ministers, with their plans and their projects, tormenting themselves and the Country with a proposed scheme of legislative incorporation, which, if any thing could weaken our attachment or diminish our loyalty, would most speedily effectuate both, and this, they call, strengthening the connexion;—on what can any such connexion rest? On the removal of all national distinctions, and the improvement of our affections towards our English fellow subjects. What national distinction would this Union remove, or what affection would it augment? Are the name of Scot and Englishman convertible terms? Yet almost a century has elapsed since the Scotch Union; will it take a smaller or greater portion of time to merge the distinction between Englishman and Irishman? Have six centuries, with such a mixture of English blood in almost all our veins, made any progress towards it? But it is in vain asking such questions, a school boy might answer them, and yet statesmen seem to forget them. If, indeed, there had been on the part of the Irish Parliament, something like disloyalty to the Crown, or disinclination to participate in the burthens of the war, the advocates for this measure might put forth their favourite position—that the Parliament of Ireland had been found inadequate to every purpose of imperial concern, or to make use of the words of the Noble Lord, a Union is now necessary to strengthen the connexion between the two Countries. But, says the Noble Lord, it is also necessary to secure the internal tranquillity of Ireland. This is the opinion of the Noble Lord; but I have not heard him give any reason for this opinion, at least such a one as could convince me. But, if one great object of the Union is the internal peace of the Country, which cannot be obtained without it, that is, in other words, without disbanding the present Irish Parliament; then, it seems, we are

ourſelves the great enemies to this tranquillity; the Iriſh Parliament is the ſource of all diſorder, all diſturbance—Ireland cannot enjoy peace on account of its own legiſlators; thoſe very legiſlators, the majority of which his Majeſty's Miniſters in England, and the noble Lord along with them, have been in the habits of upholding, of panegyrizing on all occaſions whatever: Lord Cheſterfield ſays, that all large aſſemblies are mobs; but at this rate, a more dangerous and deſperate mob than the Iriſh Parliament never was collected together, for, 'till we are diſperſed, his Majeſty's Miniſters candidly confeſs, that they find themſelves utterly unable to preſerve the peace of the Country. Really, Sir, if the Members of both Houſes of Parliament, after ſo long looking up to the noble Lord for ſupport, and being ſo long humbly acquieſcent in his meaſures, are now to ſubmit to this, they may truly ſay to him, what was ſaid of Lord Macartney's Embaſſy to China, "We came to you as paupers, we have been "detained by you as priſoners, and we are now diſmiſſed by you "as vagabonds." An honourable Gentleman over the way ſays, that this Union is the moſt effectual mode of combating French principles; that is, in other words, the men of largeſt property who are particularly adverſe to thoſe principles, and moſt likely when acting rightly, to put them down, are to go away, and if the war is continued, their places in ſociety will be filled up by men of more humble fortunes, more active minds, and not only, not adverſe to, but intereſted in the adoption and extenſion of thoſe French principles. Is it then by an extinction of religious diſcord that this internal peace is to be had? It may certainly, but the Union will not be that extinguiſher. A Rt. Hon. Baronet (Sir John Blaquiere) aſks, if gentlemen will not try this experiment of a Union, what mode of reſtoring tranquillity will they recommend? The only anſwer which I can make to this queſtion is; put an end to the war, aſſiſt England to the utmoſt of your power in procuring the means of a ſpeedy, and honourable peace; there never can be internal tranquillity throughout this country, till there is no war; till the diſaffected in Ireland, by that event, ſee every proſpect of French aſſiſtance (for the preſent at leaſt) totally cloſed on them. This bleſſing may be attained without a Union, and if it was attained to-morrow with one, there is no meaſure, in my opinion, ſo likely to prevent its continuance.

The Union with Scotland has been mentioned at this ſide of the Houſe, and the Noble Lord has ſaid, and moſt truly too, that it was as much oppoſed as the Union here, but then, he adds, all the prophecies of thoſe who oppoſed the Scotch Union have totally failed. Here I beg leave to differ from him; in many, nay in moſt inſtances, theſe predictions have not failed, it was ſaid that the Scotch Peerage would lie at the mercy of the Engliſh Miniſter, the Scotch repreſentation, defective as it was then, would

become more ſo, Engliſh Councils would predominate more in Scotland than ever, and that if the articles of the Union were violated, Scotland would have no redreſs. All this was ſaid at the time of the Union; and all this has invariably proved true: that Scotland, has in general improved ſince that time, is equally ſo; it may be added that Ireland has alſo improved without a Union, but it is no fair reaſoning to attribute the improvement of Scotland excluſively to the Union. The affair of the Darien Company would alone prove what exertions Scotland was even then capable of making, and conſidering the Scotch character, which is acute, enterpriſing, induſtrious and national to the higheſt degree, there is no reaſon to imagine that whatever reſources Scotland had, would not in the courſe of a century have been ſo far drawn forth, as to put her in point of commercial conſequence at leaſt as far as ſhe is now; but there is no neceſſity for any ſuch ſpeculation as applied to Ireland, for every circumſtance with regard to the two countries is totally diſſimilar. Look at the map, and then conſider the capability of Ireland compared to Scotland, look at our conſtitution, it would be difficult to ſay what ſort of conſtitution Scotland had at the time of the Union: the two Houſes of Parliament ſitting in the ſame chamber, the Lords of Articles and ſo on. What is her preſent repreſentation, or from whence is it generally derived? The ſuperiorities, as they are called, in the counties, and the nomination in the Royal Burghs. But above all, the origin of the Scotch Union was totally different from that of Ireland, it was not brought forward to preſerve that internal tranquillity which her own Legiſlature was declared incapable of keeping; it was not brought forward in the midſt of terror and diſtraction to Scotland; commercial jealouſy was certainly rouſed in England by the Darien buſineſs, but the principal object of the Union was, as every one knows, the preſervation of the ſucceſſion to the Crown, and whatever mortifications Scotland ſuffered ſince, the origin of the Scotch Union never was, nor could be half ſo humiliating to Scotland, as this propoſed Union muſt be to us. Can any thing on earth be more humiliating? To ſay that this country, after enjoying a ſeparate Legiſlature, centuries upon centuries, and within theſe laſt hundred years riſing ſuperior to any thing it before experienced, ſhould on account of a rebellion, which, whether totally extinguiſhed or not, I do not know, but the frenzy of which did not laſt more than three months, which in point of extent was limited to five, or ſix counties at moſt; and in point of ſupport was not upheld by one member of either Houſes of Parliament that I ever heard of, and only countenanced by half a dozen perſons of real rank and fortune, if ſo many; that this country ſhould be ſo agitated by this rebellion, and ſo ſhaken from its propriety, that in a ſtate of helpleſs imbecillity, and wretched diſtruſt of one another and of Par-

liament, we ſhould call out for a Union, and as a Legiſlature, declare ourſelves incapable of removing any evil from our countrymen, or conferring any bleſſing on them, this, I ſay, is ſuch a procedure, ſo mortifying, ſo inſulting, ſo humiliating that I never read or heard of any thing like it whatever. The conduct of Denmark in the courſe of the laſt century, when to get rid of an ariſtocracy, it made the King abſolute, is not half ſo unjuſtifiable as ours will be, if we adopt this Union, for we have a Conſtitution, capable, if properly dealt with, of removing any uſurpation, but the people of Denmark had none.

The time, the very improper time of introducing this buſineſs has been frequently mentioned, and no ſatisfactory anſwer can be given on that point. The Miniſter, in fact, takes a moſt ungenerous advantage in now bringing forward this Union, the country is deſolated in many places, panic-ſtruck in all; he may plead the predominating neceſſity of the times, but it is a libel on the wiſdom of Parliament, and the loyalty of the people co-operating with Parliament in putting down rebellion, to ſay that any ſuch neceſſity exiſts, and I lay down this poſition, that there is no calamity to which the country has been, or can be ſubjected to, no error in our civil, or even religious polity, no defective repreſentation in this Houſe, or improper introduction to the other, the evils of which may not be removed by our own exertions, by ſimplicity and uprightneſs of dealing, by magnanimity enough to acknowledge paſt errors; and equal magnanimity to amend and correct them. I ſay, that this is certainly a moſt inauſpicious period for introducing ſuch a ſubject, but I equally declare, that any time whatever is improper for its diſcuſſion, provided Ireland is true to itſelf; if it is not, the Union may come on now as in ſome months hence, in this ſeſſion of Parliament, as well as another.

But what is the character of this Parliament, that we are to be incorporated with? Is it better acquainted with Ireland than we are, or has the Miniſter himſelf never complained of it's formation, or at leaſt that of the Houſe of Commons? Certainly he has; but in latter days, he has oppoſed the times as improper for the diſcuſſion of any parliamentary reform. It was, according to him, pulling down a houſe in the ſeaſon of a hurricane, and to prove his conſiſtency, he now attempts to pull down both houſes of the Iriſh Parliament, in the greateſt hurricane that Ireland ever experienced. As to the Britiſh Parliament, it may be a wiſe, and dignified aſſembly; but I ſhall ever maintain, that, conſidering the relative circumſtances of the two countries, the Iriſh Parliament is not ſo inferior in point of probity, or capacity, as to reſign the management of its own concerns, and merge itſelf entirely in the ſuperior and more numerous aſſembly. How long has England enjoyed almoſt the commerce of the world? How

long has Ireland enjoyed even a limited portion of it? Compare the wealth, the conſequence, the enlarged knowledge, the independance which ſuch a commerce brings in it's train, and diffuſes over every claſs of ſociety in England, and then aſk, whether the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, ſitting now, and for ages paſt in the ſunſhine of ſuch bleſſings, ought not to be in proportion more independant than the Iriſh, and if that is not the caſe, as it certainly is, if we are in proportion as independant as they are, why are gentlemen ſo ready, ſo obſequiouſly precipitant in abandoning their own Legiſlature? But, ſays an Honourable Gentleman on the floor, (and he has expatiated with much eloquence on this point) the Engliſh Parliament has none of our prejudices.—No, nor have we theirs.—They have none of our religious, and political animoſities, and the members of both Houſes in Ireland, are to be occaſionally and periodically ſent to England in order to get rid of theſe prejudices and animoſities. This is certainly a very original idea. I have read of two or three legiſlators, eminent men of antiquity, who went abroad for the advantage of their countrymen, but it is the firſt time I ever heard of a whole Legiſlature, and that too an old and eſtabliſhed one, being ſent acroſs the ſeas, in queſt of improvement. This is ſomething like Sir Wilful Witwoud in Congreve, who ſets out on his travels, when he is paſt fifty, in order, as he ſays, to learn the languages. I fancy, that the Legiſlature like the Baronet, would be infinitely leſs expoſed by ſtaying at home. But of all aſſemblies that ever exiſted, for the Engliſh Parliament to turn lecturer on prejudices and local intereſts, is ſurely the moſt ridiculous.—The noble Lord in the courſe of his ſpeech ſeemed angry at the denial of the competence of Parliament to diſcuſs this queſtion. For my own part I think it cannot, or at leaſt it cannot deſtroy itſelf. No ſuch power was ever given to us, nor could it be given, for if more than half the counties in Ireland petitioned in favour of an Union, I think, that this Houſe could not, conſiſtently with its ſtrict duty, attend to ſuch petitions. The people have no right to demand the abolition of their own independant Legiſlature, either totally, or in part. The Parliament may do much both as to electors, and elected, but it cannot at its own diſcretion, nor can the people by their bidding, force it to change the frame of the Legiſlature itſelf. This would be to adopt the principles of Mr. Paine exactly. For if the Legiſlature, in conſequence of any calamity, is to be the ſport of popular caprice, or occaſional averſion, what Legiſlature could poſſibly ſtand? Have the people a right to call on Parliament to make the King abſolute, or to make his crown elective, inſtead of hereditary, as the ſucceſſion is now regulated? They have juſt as much right to do ſo, as without any fault aſſigned, to change the hereditary no-

bility into elective. They form part of the Legiſlature equally with the Monarch. He may abdicate his truſt, and be removed, as was the caſe of James II. the Commons may abdicate their truſt, and be diſſolved, but the Crown cannot, as the law now ſtands, be made elective, nor the Commons be annihilated. I am not to be told of what was done by Scotland. Every country muſt defend itſelf, and manage its own affairs as long as it can, and there are numberleſs inſtances in every hiſtory, of the more powerful nation obliging the weaker to acquieſce. It was the caſe with England and Scotland, but I never deſire to be annihilated by precedent, according to all the forms of departed oppreſſion. What would England ſay to this propoſal? Would ſhe yield the management of her concerns to any nation on earth? It is not to be expected from her, and yet ſhe expects it from us. If gentlemen ſay that England is the ſuperior nation, and that which may ſuit our ſituation is not to be expected from her, I ſay in anſwer to England, "Keep your ſuperiority. We neither can, nor wiſh to deprive you of it; but uſe it properly. *Sic utere tuo, ut non alienum lædas.* If Ireland is the inferior nation, then its independance ought to be more reſpected, and more guarded againſt; for with ſuch a powerful neighbour it is the only ſecurity we have. But admitting the right of the people to call for a Union, I aſk who, except the corporation of Cork, has aſked for it? Has Parliament, or either Houſe of Parliament, or any body of men whatever? Juſt the reverſe: The moſt reſpectable public bodies, with the city of Dublin, and the law at their head, have remonſtrated moſt ſtrongly againſt it. Then, it ſeems, his Majeſty's miniſters bring it forward, the cabinet of England, who know what is for our good better than ourſelves, whoſe opinions, as in the caſe of Lord Fitzwilliam, outweighed the unanimous voice of the Houſe of Commons, who never had any plan or ſyſtem for the Government of Ireland, but conſulted merely the exigence of the moment, and no more. In 1792 they ſupported the Proteſtants; at the latter end of that year, Dumourier's arms prevailed, and in the beginning of 1793, they favoured the Catholics. In 1795 they again abandoned them, and thus having gone through a variety of ſchemes, they come at laſt to the extremeſt bound of their policy, and they propoſe a Union. This, they think, is to cloſe all differences. Suppoſe it does not, and I am certain it will not, what will they propoſe next? A diſſolution of the Union, or dragooning, or what? Did not theſe miniſters, or at leaſt the major part of them, guarantee the final conſtitutional adjuſtment of 1782? One of them moved the Act of Renunciation in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons. And what was that? An entire ſurrender of all claim to legiſlate for us on the part of the Britiſh parliament for ever. That the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland ſhould

alone make laws to bind Ireland; not a word of the Engliſh or Scotch repreſentatives; but it ſeems they are now to legiſlate for us, or to co-operate with us in the proportion of five to one. In fact, we are to ſurrender our ſuperintending authority to them. We are, like King Lear, ſo bowed down with imbecillity, that we muſt get rid of the cares of government for ever. If ſuch a ſurrender is to be made, I can ſuppoſe our Parliament addreſſing theſe Britiſh repreſentatives in the words of Lear himſelf:

" We do inveſt you jointly with our power,
" Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
" That troop with majeſty. *Ourſelf by monthly courſe*
" *With reſervation of a hundred knights,*
" *By you to be ſuſtain'd,* ſhall our abode
" Make with you by due turns. Meantime
" We ſhall preſerve the name.
" The ſway, revenue, execution, truſt,
" Beloved friends, be your's. Which to confirm
" This coronet part betwixt you."

If we do part with this coronet, I am afraid that like Lear, there will be bitter compunction and repentance on our part, and perfidy and ingratitude on theirs. But, Sir, the treaty of 1782 was final and irrevocable, and always conſidered ſo. An adjuſtment merely commercial and no more, was alſo propoſed, but to this hour was not acted on; but the Act of Renunciation guaranteed our Independance and Conſtitution, and if thoſe miniſters now attempt to violate it, they will act towards this Country as the late King of Pruſſia acted towards Poland; for under his auſpices the people of that country formed an excellent Conſtitution, which would have ſecured to them happineſs and independance, and he was the firſt to betray them and deſtroy that Conſtitution. And are we to ſubmit to this? And is the repreſentative of the Engliſh Miniſter to ſit here, like the Ruſſian ambaſſador at Warſaw, telling us of our dependance, and by intimidation (for what elſe is meant by diſmiſſing two principal officers of the Crown) and by influence, forcing us to accept this Union,—and with fifty thouſand men at his back;—but let me do juſtice: they were brought here from neceſſity, and it is very generally ſaid, that ſeveral of that moſt reſpectable body, the Engliſh militia, expreſſed their private feelings on the ſubject, and declared they never would co-operate with the Miniſter in this buſineſs, if he was ſo unwiſe as to puſh it againſt our inclinations, which I cannot think he will. Such ſentiments do them honour—they form the only true Union between Engliſhmen and Iriſhmen—they form the only permanent junction between us, not the falſe miniſterial heraldry of hands, not hearts. The noble Lord ſpeaks of terms; after all that Ireland has gained, what has England to give us

but honeſt affection? What bargain and ſale can be made with national independance? At any rate, in this ſtage of the buſineſs, and the preſent queſtion before us, any detail of terms would be idle, I hope it will never be entered into. That the Iriſh Parliament, which, ſince the acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty, has been uniformly thanked by our ſovereign for their wiſe and judicious conduct, ſhould now, on account of temporary calamity and no more, be called on to ſolicit its own diſſolution, relinquiſh its own privileges, diminiſh and diſband its own members, record its own imbecillity, acknowledge its inability to govern, and throw itſelf and the Country along with it on another Legiſlature, from the thraldom of which they had ſo lately emancipated themſelves, is a moſt unſeemly ſpectacle indeed; I ſee not the ſhadow of neceſſity for ſuch a propoſal, and therefore I heartily approve of the amendment.

Mr. Corry obſerved that the manner in which gentlemen treated the motion, was very unbecoming the dignity of the Houſe. Were not gentlemen at all events bound in common ceremony and reſpect to conſider the Speech from the Throne? His Majeſty, from the unfortunate complexion of affairs in this country recommended it to his Parliament of Ireland, to take meaſures for conſolidating the connexion between both countries, while it is in danger of being diſſolved by the attempts of an invading enemy, and the machinations of domeſtic traitors.

The meaſure of an Union was propoſed for diſcuſſion only; and though he conſidered it the only means that could afford ſafety to Ireland, and ſecurity to the Empire, yet if it ſhould meet the diſapprobation of the Houſe, and of the people without doors, he had no heſitation to ſay, that it ought to be rejected. However, ſurely gentlemen would give it the diſcuſſion it deſerved, for a rejection *in limine* would be treating the ſpeech from the Throne with diſreſpect. He aſked the honourable and learned Member (Mr. Ponſonby) what meaned his amendment? He (Mr. C.) thought it merely introduced to mar the diſcuſſion. Was it not always the uſage of the Houſe to enquire firſt, and then reject, if neceſſary or proper? On the Roman Catholic queſtion, there was once much difference of opinion in that Houſe, and yet its merits were diſcuſſed, it appeared on the Journals that it met the diſcuſſion it deſerved. Gentlemen ſurely would not be pledged to one ſide or the other by enquiring what advantages it might offer, When gentlemen talked of their conſtituents, were they ſatisfied of their loyalty, or that they could aſcertain the merits or demerits of ſuch a charge? Inſtead of inſpiring the miſguided people of Ireland with fidelity and attachment to their King and Country, the language of ſome gentlemen ſeemed calculated to encreaſe their diſaffection.

Was it proper to aſſert that England gave us loans with jealouſy, while ſhe laviſhed money on Continental powers? The readineſs of England to promote the convenience, and relieve the exigencies of Ireland, was good policy; and her furniſhing the Emperor with money to maintain the war againſt an abandoned ferocious enemy, whoſe revolutionary ſtrides were overturning Europe. If Mr. Pitt ſupplied the Emperor with money, it was ſound policy, it became neceſſary to aſſiſt him with the ſinews of war, leſt his efforts ſhould be paralyſed, and thus no barrier or check be oppoſed to the fury of France. Unleſs the Britiſh Miniſter did ſo, the treaty of Campo Formio had not taken place, and probably the French had been ſucceſsful in their attempts to invade this country. An honourable Baronet had ſaid, no argument had been offered to ſhew the expediency of ſuch an incorporation; but whoever conſidered the manner in which the Government of this country was obliged to be adminiſtered, muſt wiſh that ſome more certain and diſtinct ſyſtem were reſorted to. The Britiſh cabinet, it was known, could controul the councils of Ireland; and thus, diſtraction and confuſion ſpoiled the operations and retarded the progreſs of ſtate affairs. Thus it appeared, that unity of councils was neceſſary; and, unleſs by an Union of the Legiſlatures, that deſirable object could not be obtained. Our ſeparate exiſtence was the cauſe of our ſeparate and claſhing intereſts. While our cabinets were divided by the Britiſh channel, our government muſt be fluctuating, and could not afford us the ſolid and ſteady bleſſings of the Engliſh conſtitution.

Thus it appeared, that to leave our diſtractions, and get real independence, our Councils muſt directly flow from the other ſide of the water. An honourable and learned gentleman had uſed an impetuoſity that was unbecoming the dignity of that Houſe; and the whole of his temper and manner of arguing had a tendency to degrade the high character of Parliament; he would put down gentlemen on his ſide of the Houſe for their youth, but he truſted their propriety of deportment, and ſoundneſs of argument, would ſhew them more worthy of attention than many of thoſe on the other ſide. The learned member ought to obſerve more temperance than to aſſert, that ſuch a meaſure, if paſſed, ought to be reſiſted: he had urged that the Union with Scotland was no precedent for an Union with Ireland, but his arguments made againſt himſelf. There were many unfavourable circumſtances attaching to Scotland, unpromiſing to ſuch an incorporation, which do not exiſt in Ireland; the ſucceſſion to the Crown of Scotland was not ſettled; the language was a good deal, and the laws very different from thoſe of England; the people were unaccommodating to each other, on account of frequent hoſtility; in ſhort, there were various features of diſcord and difference,

none of which attach to Ireland; our laws, our language, our manners, are nearly the ſame with thoſe of England. There is a great intermixture of blood and property, which cements the intereſts, and ſecures the affection of the Engliſh and Iriſh people. Mr. Corry, in ſeveral other obſervations, concluded with an earneſt entreaty to gentlemen, to conſider that they were not pledged to the meaſure by voting the Addreſs.

Mr. Coote expreſſed, that warm as was the language of ſome gentlemen, he would not agree to record in the Journals an interdict to the diſcuſſion and conſideration of any Union whatever with Great Britain; on the other hand, he was ready to pledge himſelf never to ſupport any Union which did not meet the decided approbation of Parliament, and of the People. He aſked, if gentlemen were ready to declare that no plan, or terms of Union could be formed, to which they would accede? Or, did they chooſe that Ireland ſhould continue to be harraſſed by all thoſe evils that are produced by the ſtruggle for political power, and by thoſe religious animoſities, which have almoſt ruined the country? What ſecurity or comfort can we expect in Ireland, ſo long as we are hoſtile to one another, and ſo long as our paſſions and prejudices can be raiſed againſt one another? If a Union can be formed, which may remove thoſe evils, and reſtore ſecurity and tranquillity, it is a ſtrong meaſure to reject the diſcuſſion of it. This meaſure ought to be viewed in a broad ſcale, and not confined to the narrow or local policy of one town or county. It has been argued, that a Union will encourage France to invade us; hiſtory, however, proves that France has been always playing the game of ſeparating Ireland from England, by raiſing up religious and political animoſities: If, therefore, a Union ſhould have the effect of removing thoſe calamities, France would ceaſe to have the ſame encouragement to invade us. In the reign of Elizabeth, when Auſtria aimed at univerſal monarchy, Philip the Second conſtantly ſtruck at Queen Elizabeth in Ireland, by ſending agents here, and by landing deſultory expeditions in Kerry, at Kinſale, and at Donegal. When France became the enemy of England during the civil wars, ſhe employed the Pope to ſhake the Engliſh connexion here by ſending his Nuncio and an Italian army to ſeparate the two countries; an attempt which was defeated by the ſagacity and patriotiſm of the Duke of Ormond, who ſurrendered Dublin to the Parliament agents from England, rather than to the Italian Nuncio and to the Iriſh confederated with him. The ſame game was played by France, thro' King James II. at the head of a French army in 1690, and continued till the capitulation of Limerick. The ſame game was again attempted by Spaniſh troops in 1717, and defeated by the blockade of Cadiz and Ferrol. The ſame game was played in 1747, was

defeated by Lord Anſon and Hawke: Again attempts from Quiberon Bay in 1760, by 16,000 men, who were embarked in the ſquadron of Conflans, when Thurot was ſent to make a diverſion in the North; and it is in the recollection of every one of us, what have been the attempts of France againſt us theſe laſt three years; and I will venture to ſay, that ſo long as France ſhall expect aſſiſtance from our diviſions, and political jealouſies, ſo long will ſhe aim at wounding the Britiſh empire thro' Ireland. It is therefore the bias of my judgment, to allow to this queſtion a fair, ſober, and diſpaſſionate diſcuſſion. Much has been ſaid of the independance of Ireland; God forbid, that Ireland ſhould ever be otherwiſe than rationally and honourably independant! but to a certain degree Ireland muſt always depend on Great Britain, and Great Britain depend on Ireland; our connexion depends on each other. Independence is a phantom, if it is not underſtood; in the month of June we depended on Britiſh troops to protect us from rebellion, and for the arrival of thoſe troops what was our anxiety and impatience? We depend on the Britiſh navy to protect our commerce, and to ſecure us from invaſion. We have not the means of raiſing money for our ſupport, but guaranteed by England—Not a ſhip of war to protect us—England at this hour pays near a million a year to protect us. I do not wiſh to quarrel with terms; but in ſtating our independance, our ſituation ſhould be remembered. He would ſay nothing of the detail of this meaſure, but the conduct of Great Britain in the Scotch Union aſſured him, that the detail would be favourable to Ireland, and that revenue would not be the object of Great Britain: It was not ſo in the Union with Scotland, for forty years Great Britain never gained any thing from the exchequer of Scotland. The Scotch Union was brought about by the whigs of both kingdoms; and I truſt and hope, that every man who wiſhes well to whiggiſm, will conſent to the diſcuſſion of this important queſtion; which, in my judgment, would ſtrengthen our connexion with Great Britain, and eſſentially conſolidate the permanent intereſts of Ireland.

Mr. D. B. Daly.—I am not in the habit of taking up much of the time of the Houſe, and I am ſure I ſhall not begin to do ſo at this late hour. My conſtituents have given in their opinion, and they have given it boldly, like Iriſhmen, determined to hazard their lives and properties in defence of the independance of the Legiſlature of their country; they have adjourned their meeting to another day, in order to watch over the conduct of all their repreſentatives; they have ſpoken out, Sir, and I ſhall not give a ſilent vote. I coincide perfectly in every ſentiment of theirs. I know that I cannot ſay any thing to add weight to the

unanſwered, to the unanſwerable arguments of the gentlemen of this ſide of the Houſe; but, perhaps, I ſhall be able to ſay ſomething to the gentlemen oppoſite to me, that may have ſome effect. I remember a gentleman in the ſituation filled by the Noble Lord, who, on an occaſion like the preſent, was left with 39 devoted victims, whilſt almoſt all the property and talents of the Houſe walked out of that bar, in ſupport of their country. I hope ſome gentlemen, for whom I am intereſted, will take warning, and not appear again in the ſame ſituation. On a queſtion like the preſent, I believe it is fair to ſpeak of myſelf. Thoſe perſons, with whom I am in habits of intimacy, have heard me at all times, and on all occaſions, ſay that I conſidered there was no permanent happineſs for Ireland, no exiſtence for Great Britain, as a great or free country, unconnected with each other; feeling thus, can I vote for a meaſure which I am convinced leads to ſeparation? No, Sir, I have been between 20 and 30 years in Parliament—I call God to witneſs, that in that time I never gave a vote, which was not influenced ſolely by what I thought was beſt for my country; that I never will; and that I will venture my life and my property in defence of the Legiſlative Independance of Ireland.

Col. O'Donnell (*in a maiden ſpeech.*)—Mr. Speaker, This is the firſt time I ever attempted to raiſe my voice in any public aſſembly; nor ſhould I at preſent, did I not imagine that to give a ſilent vote on ſo momentous a queſtion, would be highly criminal. Had I not been determined to oppoſe ſo infamous a meaſure, previous to my coming down to this Houſe, the able and ſpirited arguments uſed this night by the oppoſers of a Legiſlative Union, would make me anxious to have my name enrolled with ſuch a band of patriots.—On that ſide I ſee oppoſing the meaſure, the landed intereſt, the talents, and the integrity of the nation: On this ſide, I behold it ſupported by placemen and penſioners; few only indeed excepted.—

There is no perſon in or out of this Houſe who can be more anxious for ſupporting the cloſeſt connection between England and Ireland than I have been, and ever ſhall.—I have fought to preſerve it from being interrupted by external and internal foes; but ſhould the Legiſlative Independance of Ireland be voted away by a Parliament, which is not competent thereto, I ſhall hold myſelf diſcharged from my allegiance (a cry of order, order;) I ſay, Mr. Speaker, the conſtitution will be violated—I will join the people in preſerving their rights—I will oppoſe the rebels in rich cloaths with as mnch energy as I ever have done the rebels in rags.

Mr. Mahon.—I am not one of thoſe placemen or penſioners to whom the honourable gentleman (Col. O'Donnell) ſo liberally alludes. I love my country as truly as any one man on the other ſide of the Houſe, be that man who he may; and I do moſt ſolemnly declare, that no object of ſelf-intereſt does, or could influence my vote upon this occaſion. It is not the opinion of a day, Sir, but the beſt conſideration which for ſome years I could give to the ſubject now before you, that convinces me of the advantages both to Ireland and to Great Britain, of a Legiſlative Union between the two countries. It is my decided opinion that it is neceſſary; and were I to ſtand alone upon the queſtion, I would not allow clamour and prejudice to deprive me of the free exerciſe of that judgment which God has given me.

Mr. J. C. Beresford.—It was not my intention to have opened my lips this night; the many Gentlemen who have ſpoken before me on the ſubject, and who have handled it in ſo able a manner, render it unneceſſary for me to enlarge upon it; and my feeble aſſiſtance would only have tended to fritter away their eloquence; but an argument that has fallen from an Hon. Member on the oppoſite ſide of the Houſe, who has entreated us not to preſs the queſtion, but to give time for our conſtituents to declare their opinion of the matter, induces me to ſay a few words, as my ſentiments on that ſubject are perhaps a little peculiar, and I am anxious for an opportunity of declaring them. In my opinion a Member of Parliament is by no means bound to an implicit obedience to the inſtructions he receives from his conſtituents; for as ſoon as he is returned to Parliament by them, he ceaſes to be the Member for the individual ſeat for which he is returned, but becomes a Member for the Legiſlative Body of the Nation at large, in which capacity he is not to conſider the local intereſts of the nation; for was the repreſentative to recur in every inſtance to the conſtituent body, he would himſelf be but a cypher in the Parliament.

With thoſe ſentiments, I feel myſelf fully at liberty to act according to the feelings of my own breaſt in almoſt every queſtion that can occur in Parliament; but if there is any caſe that admits of exception, it is the preſent caſe, for the conſtituent body have a right to demand from their repreſentatives that legiſlative capacity which is only entruſted to him for a limited period, and if I felt in my breaſt an approbation of an Union in oppoſition to the inſtructions of my conſtituents, I ſhould ſurrender to them that truſt, which I ſhould think it baſe in me to alienate from them, I would declare my ſentiments, and reſign my ſeat. But it fortunately happens, that the opinion of my conſtituents on this occaſion perfectly coincide with my own, but had it occurred that thay had intruſted me to ſupport the meaſure of a Union,

I ſhould have diſregarded thoſe inſtructions; for though they might chooſe to barter their rights for local conſiderations, they would have no right to pledge me, an independant Member of the Legiſlative Body, to vote away the rights of the Nation at large. The warm friend, and the zealous advocate in the cauſe of Britiſh connexion, I ſincerely lament that a queſtion ſhould be brought on ſo replete with deſtruction to that connexion. I have the higheſt perſonal regard for the Noble Lord, who in his official capacity as Secretary has brought forward this queſtion, ſo deſtructive and deteſted by the Iriſh Nation.—And I am ſincerely ſorry that he has been made the inſtrument to bring forward ſuch a propoſition. For the Miniſter of England I entertain the higheſt reſpect—I have been ever in the habits of ſupporting his adminiſtration, from an approbation of his conduct, and an admiration of his abilities; but no motives of perſonal regard, not even to my deareſt and neareſt connexions, could induce me to give a vote in Parliament, whereby I ſhould conceive myſelf acceſſary to the annihilation of the legiſlative independance of my country.

Mr. Edgworth—in a ſhort ſpeech delivered his ſentiments againſt the meaſure, and concluded with approving of the amendment.

Mr. Egan—went very fully into the queſtion, which he argued with much ability, reprobating the meaſure, and concluded with giving his hearty ſupport to the amendment.

Mr. H. Osborne ſaid a few words in ſupport of the amendment.

Dr. A. Brown—in a very neat and conciſe manner condemned the meaſure of an Union, and declared himſelf an enemy to it.

Mr. Ball.—The only apology I can offer for obtruding myſelf upon the attention of the Houſe at this hour of the debate is, that I feel a confident hope that this unconſtitutional and profligate meaſure will never again be propounded to the Iriſh Parliament; and I am unwilling to diſmiſs it from the Houſe for ever, without bearing my teſtimony againſt it.

It is not my intention now to enter into any detailed diſcuſſion of the ſubject, or to conſider the conſequences likely to reſult from this meaſure; if I was diſpoſed to do ſo, I ſhould find little difficulty in proving, that the evils ariſing from it are *certain*, *inevitable* and *immediate*; ſuch as muſt end, at no very remote period, in a total ſeparation from England; or what is worſe, in a regular plan of government, uniformly and ſyſtematically enforced againſt the will of the people by military coercion: I

ſhould find it eaſy to prove, that the advantages which are held out as likely to accrue from it, are not only remote and precarious, but that they are falſe, imaginary and deluſive: And that even if the meaſure were in itſelf a good one, the attempt to precipitate it at a time of general commotion and public alarm, muſt ſuggeſt a ſuſpicion to the nation of unfair dealing, and lay the foundation of incurable jealouſies hereafter.

But I purpoſely waive all ſuch topics of diſcuſſion; and I object to the meaſure on higher and more conſtitutional ground; the incompetence of Parliament to entertain it. My opinion is, that this Parliament emanating from the people, elected by them, and ſent into this Houſe for the purpoſe of guarding and defending the conſtitution, has no right to ſubvert it; has no right to overturn thoſe liberties, which they were appointed to defend, or to annihilate that power, from whence they derive their own. We ſit not here by virtue of any original or inherent privilege of our own: We are the temporary truſtees of delegated power: and any act of ours tending to defeat or betray the truſt repoſed in us, muſt be inconſiſtent with the nature of our authority, and cannot be warranted by it: therefore I do not heſitate to ſay, that if this Parliament ſhould be weak enough to paſs an act for the ſubverſion of the Conſtitution, the act would be a nullity, and not binding upon the nation. Though we ſhould vote away the Conſtitution, which we are appointed to maintain; though we ſhould pronounce ſentence of death upon thoſe liberties which have been entruſted to our care; yet that Conſtitution, being the pre-exiſting and paramount authority, being the energetic and vivifying principle of our own exiſtence, would ſurvive an impotent vote; thoſe liberties would ſtill continue to live; I hope they will live for ever.

Let it not be ſaid, that I am ſounding the trumpet of ſedition, or raiſing the people to reſiſtance; it is better to hold this language now, than after the miſchief is done, when no appeal lies but to the ſword, which God avert from this country! You cannot conceal from the people their own natural or conſtitutional rights; they know them already, they have ſpoken already: And in the opinion I have given, I am only reporting the ſentiments expreſſed by them in every county, in which they have aſſembled: I am echoing the voice of this very Parliament, when in the year 1782, they demanded a free Conſtitution, and declared, "that no power on earth was competent to bind Ireland, but a Parliament of its own."—I am ſpeaking the voice of the Britiſh Parliament, ratifying and confirming this demand of the Iriſh nation. I am ſpeaking the voice of the King himſelf, the common parent of both countries, proclaiming from the throne the compact between the two nations, and declaring that ſhould be inviolable and irrevocable.

If then this right of being governed only by our own laws, is not only congenial to the ſpirit of a free people, and eſſential to the exiſtence of liberty; but if it has been recognized and eſtabliſhed by a ſolemn compact between the two kingdoms; by what ſpecies of Logic can we arrogate to ourſelves the power of overthrowing it, without the clear, explicit and unequivocal aſſent of the people, whoſe right it is, derived from nature, and confirmed by the moſt ſolemn and authentic public acts.

Let it not be ſaid, that this right is ſtill retained by a Legiſlative Union, or that ſuch a Union would be an incorporation, and not a total annihilation of our legiſlative authority: It cannot be ſeriouſly contended, that any proportion of repreſentation, which we may expect to have in the Parliament of the united kingdoms, would be a feather in the ſcale, or be of the ſlighteſt poſſible uſe, in caſe of a competition of intereſts: On the contrary, I think we would be better without any repreſentation at all; as ſome of the calamities neceſſarily reſulting from the meaſure would be thereby mitigated: The number of abſentees would be leſs; that fatal drain of our wealth, and our reſources would be diminiſhed; and the power of the Britiſh Miniſter would not receive ſo alarming an acceſſion.

If then the proportion of one to ſix, which we are taught to expect would be of no avail to protect us from the jealouſies of the Engliſh merchant, or the rapacity of the Engliſh Miniſter; let us not deceive ourſelves by a name, but conſider the projected Union to be, what in fact it is, not an incorporation or participation of power, but an abſolute ſubjection to the will and uncontrouled dominion of a ſuperior. Suppoſe the abſtract propoſition once made to us to paſs an act, aboliſhing for ever the powers of Ireland to legiſlate for itſelf, and declaring that it ſhould be competent to the Parliament of Great Britain to make laws, binding this country in all caſes whatſoever; will any man contend, that a propoſition conceived in ſuch terms could be ſupported? Would it not outrage the feelings of every Iriſhman; and would any man deny, that it would be an infringement of the Conſtitution as ſettled in 1782; and for that reaſon, if no other exiſted, be an unwarrantable violation of the duty of Parliament, and a breach of the truſt repoſed in us by our conſtituents, who ſent us here to preſerve and guard that Conſtitution. And I challenge any gentleman on the other ſide, to ſhew in what reſpect a law, ſimilar to that which is now propoſed, would, in point of effect and operation, be more favourable to the liberties and intereſts of this country, than ſuch an one as I have ſuppoſed. Would we not thereby put it into the power of Great Britain to make ſuch laws, as might advance and promote her own intereſts, in prejudice of ours; and what ſecurity are we to have, that ſhe

would not do ſo? I do not heſitate to ſay, that I would conſider ſuch a ſtate, as we ſhould be thereby reduced to, as a ſtate utterly incompatible with civil liberty: as in fact that kind of connexion, which ſubſiſts between a victorious nation and a conquered province; and what in my mind amounts to downright unqualified ſlavery. It is ſuch a ſtate, as in my own individual capacity, I would rather loſe my life than ſubmit to; and why ſhould I feel leſs zeal for the rights of the community to which I belong, and which rights have been intruſted to me to defend, than I ſhould be of my own?

Much has been ſaid of the tranſcendant power of Parliament, and its omnipotence: I admit it to the utmoſt extent that any law writer ever contended; I admit that although periſhable itſelf, yet it has a right to enact perpetual laws, and thereby extend the influence of its authority beyond the limits of its duration: But ſtill I ſay, that the *correcting* power remains in the hands of the people; and if the Parliament ſhould paſs an unjuſt, a tyrannical, or an abſurd law; yet the ſucceeding Parliament, which is in fact a new emanation from the people, has full power to correct, to modify, or to repeal the act of its predeceſſor; and the blunders or errors of this new Parliament, may again be ſet right by its ſucceſſor.—So that the correcting power, the renovating principle ſtill remains; and the miſchief ariſing from the corruption, or the temporary fatuity of Parliament, ſtill admits of a conſtitutional and legal redreſs. Whereas if the preſent meaſure is carried, the evil (if it ſhould prove to be one) is without remedy; the unanimous voice of the whole Iriſh nation, and of all their repreſentatives in the new Parliament, would not be able to correct it; the miſchief would be perpetual and irremediable.

I find at this hour I am treſpaſſing too long on the attention of the Houſe; and ſhall conclude by ſaying, that I am not only ſpeaking the genuine opinion of an independant Member, but what is of more conſequence, the unanimous ſentiments of a numerous, reſpectable, and uninfluenced body of electors.

Mr. Martin ſaid he perfectly agreed to every part of the Addreſs, and diſſented to the Amendment which had been moved by an honourable and learned Gentleman. He begged of the Houſe not to betray themſelves, if they even doubted ultimately the propriety of adopting on any terms, or in any circumſtances, a legiſlative Union between the two countries;—he ſaid that if there was any man who had made up his mind to reject every poſſible propoſition tending to the meaſure in queſtion, even that perſon could not conſiſtently negative the amendment, and vote for the original queſtion—he ſaid a rejection of the propoſition, after ſuch a conſideration would be more reſpectful to the royal perſonage,

muſt be infinitely more impreſſive on the ſenſe of the country if the country attended as much as they ought to it.—But he ſaid he feared, and he did not chooſe to ſtate the reaſon he had for believing, that Parliament had ſurvived its character and worn out of faſhion.—For his part, he did not deſire to ſhrink from any reſponſibility attending the opinion he might hold. A Union upon fair and equitable terms to the country he believed was the only mean between an oppreſſive ariſtocracy, and the late democratic licentiouſneſs of the people.—He was ſorry he could not agree with any deſcription of gentlemen who oppoſed the Addreſs. Some he could not agree with, for they did not agree with themſelves, others he had uniformly differed from, but he differed moſt from them when they oppoſed thoſe meaſures of mercy, which were the firſt and propitious acts of his Excellency's government, acts to which we owe our preſent exiſtence as a nation, and which if they can add nothing to the full meaſure of his glory, did more to ſubdue the rebellion, than all your ſanguinary laws and all the permitted exceſſes of them which deluged our land in blood. That thoſe gentlemen who ſupported the worſt Parliament, and ſupported with moſt zeal, thoſe meaſures that were the worſt, it did not aſtoniſh him that they ſhould deſire to perpetuate unchanged that Parliament, which if it was not their honour to ſit in, conſtituted their beſt fortune.—There were however others he obſerved, whoſe inconſiſtency in this debate could not be ſo eaſily explained,—he meant thoſe men who declared that from the manner in which this Houſe of Commons was elected and more from their perſonal conduct members had ceaſed to be in any degree the Repreſentatives of the People,—and in fact that the Empire of China was as well repreſented in the Iriſh Parliament, as the people of Ireland could be themſelves repreſented by ſuch an aſſembly. That thoſe gentlemen ſeceded from ſuch an aſſembly he did not wonder at, nor did it meet ſo much of his diſapprobation as it did the ſtrongeſt reprobation of thoſe late allies with whom they ſeem now ſo ready to fraternize ſince their return from the wilderneſs of ſin, to which they fled where if they did not bear our ſins for our propitiation, I hope for their own ſakes they depoſited their own. On the whole ſir, I applaud this meaſure.—It has the approbation of my head and heart.

Mr. Holmes ſupported the original addreſs.

Lord Corry felt it his duty to deliver his decided diſapprobation of the meaſure as diſgraceful to the country, as well as pregnant with every poſſible miſchief to its conſtitution, commerce and manufactures—he would therefore oppoſe it in every Stage.

Lord Cole followed, and in a warm and ſpirited manner condemned the meaſure, and pledged himſelf to oppoſe it in every ſhape.

Mr. J. M. O'Donnel.—In the courſe of this night's debate the gentlemen on the other ſide of the Houſe, have been profuſe indeed of their abuſe, not only againſt the ſpeeches of particular perſons in Parliament, but alſo againſt conduct of Parliament itſelf—to them they have attributed the preſent ſtate of this country. I truſt the noble Lord and the gentlemen on his ſide, may on ſome other occaſion remember their language this night—for my part, Mr. Speaker, if even the accuſation was true, I can ſee no reaſon why we ſhould ſurrender our freedom, by agreeing to the infamous, the wicked, the degrading meaſure of a legiſlative Union.—I believe the unfortunate mutiny in the fleet laſt year, is ſtrong in the recollection of every perſon in this Houſe.—It was admitted that it took its riſe from ſome inflammatory ſpeeches in the Britiſh Parliament; did it ever occur to the Britiſh Miniſter, on that account, to ſacrifice the legiſlative independance of England?—no, Sir, he thought it neceſſary, in order to appeaſe and quell that mutiny, which threatened with immediate deſtruction, the whole Britiſh Empire—to remove the Britiſh Parliament,—thoſe fiery orators—to Portſmouth, to the every ſcene of riot and commotion—and had not the mutiny been ſuppreſſed at the moment it was, the King and his Parliament would have removed to Portſmouth.

The Noble who acts as Miniſter to this country, has preſented this Houſe with a melancholy picture of this unhappy country—he tells us we cannot ſupport our military eſtabliſhment;—*that we have not the means of getting the money unleſs we go and* BEG *it from Great Britain.*—He tells us that "we have not the Britiſh conſtitution, nor can we have it"—I truſt, nay, I am confident the noble lord, influenced by a terrified immagination, has drawn a very falſe and unfounded ſtatement of our real ſituation.

If Great Britain has lent money to Ireland, it is on Iriſh ſecurity—it is on the principle of being paid intereſt, and ſure the noble lord will not ſeriouſly tell me, that this is *begging* from Great Britain, or that we ſhould on this account ſacrifice our legiſlative rights to England, who has lent ſo many millions to the Emperor and guaranteed the *punctual* payment both of principal and intereſt thereof—who has ſubſidized Pruſſia and Sardinia, and is now ſubſidizing the Turks. But, ſir, let me here, ſet this Houſe right in regard to a miſtatement made by a right hon. gentleman, as to the anſwer ſent by this Houſe, in the year 1782, to the Duke of Portland's meſſage.—I know the right honourable gentleman did not miſtate intentionally, he is incapable of having done ſo—but from your Journals it appears,

that what the right honourable gentleman read, as the anſwer of that Houſe, was propoſed and rejected,—and ſo very appoſite is the anſwer of the Houſe, on that occaſion to the ſubject now before you, that I ſhall read it, and on ſo important an occaſion I aſk your attention; [here Mr. O'D. read the anſwer in full.] I am happy I have an opportunity of ſetting this anſwer from your Journals in its proper point—each word is declarative of a determination to continue a *free*, an *imperial* kingdom;—declarative of legiſlative independance, and their unalterable reſolution to continue ſo;—good God, why ſhould we be called on in 1799, to ſurrender that independance, which we ſo lately acquired, under which our commerce and agriculture have encreaſed;—has the noble lord, or the ſupporters of this infamous meaſure, adduced a ſingle reaſon or argument to induce us to ſuch an act of legiſlative ſuicide?

The noble lord indeed has ſaid, "you refuſe now from Great "Britain, that which you applied for, and were refuſed one "hundred years ago."

The noble lord has not told you, nor was it neceſſary, how greatly the ſituation of both countries have changed—we were then enſlaved by Britain, we had little or no commerce, we had no legiſlative independance, we were bound by Britiſh laws.

Britain unincumbered by debt, in the zenith of power and national greatneſs, holding Ireland in ſlavery and bondage, rejected *then* what was applied for and humbly aſked for by her poor dependant;—were Ireland now in the ſame ſituation ſhe then was, I ſhould vote for an Union, unleſs I ſaw ſhe poſſeſſed a ſpirit to aſſert her right. England then, with haughty and ſelf-intereſted arrogance, diſdained the petition of her poor ſiſter, no, ſaid ſhe, my commerce, my liberty, you ſhall only ſee and hear of, but ſhall never ſhare.—Now that England has grown old, ſinking under a debt of *five hundred millions*, and Ireland owing a debt of only fourteen millions, independant as ſhe, poſſeſſing commerce, wealth and agriculture, ſhe generouſly propoſes a Union, to rob us of every thing that ſhould be dear to a nation —but let me tell the noble lord, that we are not competent, that we have no power to vote away the rights of the people;—let me tell the Iriſh Miniſter, and he will do well to tell the Engliſh Miniſter, that if the Parliament of Ireland ſhould be mean enough to vote away the legiſlative independance of Ireland, the people would not be mean enough to ſubmit to it, they would aſſert their rights, die as freemen, rather than live as ſlaves.

A ſhort time ago I looked on the adminiſtration of this country to be exactly that, which every honeſt Iriſhman ſhould wiſh to have continued. At the head was placed a nobleman equally diſtinguiſhed for his public as his private virtues—humane—wiſe—generous and brave; that man who ſaved India—the Marquis

Cornwallis—Lord Lieutenant. A young nobleman, an *Irishman*, poſſeſſing rank, property, and conſequence in the country, acting as the firſt Miniſter of Ireland; who was bound by every tie to be the ſupporter and defender of its rights. Yet, Mr. Speaker, it will ſcarcely be credited in future ages, that he has dared to propoſe, this night, to an Iriſh Parliament, a ſurrender of our independance; and that by inſidious attempts he has aimed a mortal ſtab at every thing dear and intereſting to the Parliament of Ireland, which no Engliſhman has ever yet been found baſe or daring enough to do. I call on the noble Lord in time, to conſider what he is about, and not ſuffer himſelf longer to be the tool of the Britiſh Miniſter. But we are told by gentlemen, that our commerce will be encreaſed, that we ſhall be a great and tranquil nation; I foreſee and I aſſert the very reverſe; once agree to this meaſure, and not only the kingdom, but the Britiſh empire is loſt; we ſhall become the eaſy prey to a powerful nation. But what poſſible ſecurity can Ireland have for her rights or commerce, once ſhe parts with the power of legiſlating for herſelf?—None—there will be none on earth. I deny that Conſtitution is an article to be bartered for; I deny the power of Parliament to barter or diſpoſe of it, on any terms; and I publicly aſſert, that ſhould we ever be baſe enough to do ſo, the people will have a right to oppoſe it;—for my part I will oppoſe it, here—there and every where; if my oppoſition to it in this Houſe ſhall not be ſucceſsful, I will oppoſe it in the field; it is no common queſtion; it is one which goes to the very exiſtence of my country. I have made up my mind on what my conduct ſhall be;—I ſhall either live free, or fall by Cut Six of ſome Heſſian ſabre, or ſome other foreign mercenary. While I have exiſtence I ſhall oppoſe it. On a ſubject of this nature, I did hope for ſome information from his Majeſty's Attorney-General, ſince *he* could be prevailed on to ſupport ſuch a meaſure; he has roſe in his place it is true, and has pulled out a little book from his pocket, the name of which he has not favoured us with, from it he has read ſomething of Edward I. and ſeveral other Kings, but I declare not one atom relative to the ſubject of debate, I ſtand in the judgment of the Houſe if he has adduced a ſingle reaſon or offered an argument why Ireland ſhould ſurrender her freedom; why ſhe ſhould at once ſacrifice the very name of nation and become a province of Great Britain: much has been ſaid and juſtly ſaid of the infamous conduct of the French Republic; no man diſapproves of it more than I do, the government of both theſe countries have often called on the people to view how under the pretence of friendſhip France had plundered Holland, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland, and deprived them of their freedom. What is the conduct of England, I will not ſay England but the *Engliſh Miniſter*, under the profeſſions of friendſhip and

great regard, he ſends us word, we muſt give up all idea of taking care of ourſelves, that we cannot know what is for our own benefit, and that to a Britiſh Parliament we muſt entruſt our lives, our properties and our trade: O! wiſe and generous Miniſter of England; O! proud and honourable Miniſter of Ireland, who can condeſcend to become his tool, and offer to your own country the poiſoned cup to drink out of! Is ſuch the affectionate ſiſterly conduct of England? *that* England for whom we were ready to ſacrifice every thing, but our liberty; is it thus ſhe repays our enthuſiaſtic attachment?—For ſhame, O Senate of Ireland, to ſuffer to be debated within theſe walls, a queſtion ſo degrading, ſo inſulting to your Conſtitution;—if there are any who doubt the inſpiration of that beautiful Poet and great King,—I mean King *David*—they muſt be now convinced thereof, for he ſurely foreſaw—I am confident he did at that diſtant period, what England would attempt in 1799, againſt the liberties of her friend and ſiſter, Ireland;—and he ſpeaks lamentations and upbraidings of Ireland in the moſt beautiful and moving language, on this occaſion, and at this hour, (½ paſt 7 in the morning) it will not be improper to read a few verſes from the Pſalms:

The 55th Pſalm, the 11th—12th—13th and 14th verſes, you may meet theſe words:

11th. "Wickedneſs is therein, deceit and guile go not out of their ſtreets."

12th. "For it is not my open enemy that hath done me this *diſhonour*, for then could I have borne it;

13th. "Neither was it mine adverſary that did magnify herſelf againſt me, for then peradventure I would have hid myſelf from him:

14th. "But it was even *thou*, my *companion*, *my guide*, *and my own familiar friend*."

I aſk you Mr. Speaker, can there be a doubt, that David foreſaw this infamous, this deteſtable attempt now brought forward with all the craft and ſubtility which we are told the Devil poſſeſſes?—I truſt, Sir, the ſpirit, the determination ſhewn this night, will convince the Miniſter that, it will be as impoſſible as dangerous to attempt forcing from Iriſhmen their freedom and independance.

Hon. Major Acheson ſaid he would oppoſe the meaſure of a Legiſlative Union as derogatory from the dignity of Ireland, and would ſupport the Amendment.

Sir H. Cavendish oppoſed the amendment in a ſhort ſpeech,

Mr. Massey ſupported the original Addreſs, and oppoſed the Amendment.

Sir W. G. Newcomen not having been instructed by his constituents to oppose the measure of an Union, considered himself at liberty to vote for its discussion, not pledging himself however to any future support of the question.

Hon. James Butler opposed the Amendment.

Mr. Attorney General then went into history, to shew that this Country had formerly sent members to the English Parliament; that a resident Parliament was inefficient to obtain to this kingdom real Legislative freedom; and that circumstanced as we are, in danger from foreign and internal foes, an incorporated Union with England was absolutely necessary for our own security and that of the Empire. When in the year 1782 this country had obtained from England what was called an independant Legislature, did that produce the expected consequences? Certainly not; such a Legislature was found as insufficient as the former—new claims were made at home, and we found ourselves as much dependant on England as before. When such claims could not be conceded, without destroying the Constitution itself, a formidable conspiracy was made, that aimed at a separation from Great Britain. The revolution in France gave this conspiracy aliment—revolutionary doctrines were disseminated, and the public mind was poisoned. In this melancholy state of things, the Parliament was considered the *origo mali*, and the existing cause of all our national grievances. The members of that House had lost all confidence with the people, and their acts were considered the most tyrannical measures. It was surely matter of curiosity to observe even members of that House, who seceded as it were in disgust; who pronounced the present Parliaiament incurable; who lamented to their constituents that they must decline their exertions—it was surely matter of curiosity to see some of the gentlemen return, and exclaim that the Constitution was surrendered to Great Britain, with that identical Parliament.

To England alone, Gentlemen should now look for protection and force, and losing all confidence with their own people, they should join in undivided connexion with England. But gentlemen argued that such an incorporation was degrading, and that Great Britain could not be trusted by us. Was it degrading to obtain a partnership of safety and power with a nation to which Europe looked up as their protectress against the perfidy and fury of Revolutionary France? Had we reason to distrust England, that gives us her armies and navy, that at present secures us with her militia? Gentlemen who so loudly deprecated the measure of an Union should consider, that Molyneux, that great friend to Ireland, approved of such a measure: For he says in his famous book, that it was hardly to be expected from England. Gentle-

men who ſeemed to reprobate all who take a part in the preſent projected Union ſhould reflect that the virtuous Lord Somers did not diſdain to promote a Union with Scotland, by his writings and his perſonal exertions to forward it. Mr. Attorney General concluded by voting for the Addreſs.

Col. BAGWELL delivered his ſentiments againſt a Union.

Mr. RICHARD DAWSON gave his decided diſapprobation to the meaſure of an Union, and would therefore ſupport the amendment.

Mr. SAUNDERSON feeling his ſituation as an independant Iriſh country gentleman, thought himſelf bound to oppoſe every attempt on the free Conſtitution of his Country; he would therefore oppoſe the Union in every ſhape.

Mr. TRENCH, (Wood-lawn)—On a queſtion ſo important as the preſent, I think it a duty incumbent on me to declare my ſentiments. They are uninfluenced, I think, by paſſion or prejudice, and I am ſure, they are unbiaſſed by intereſted or party motives.—Scarce allowed time to breathe after ſuppreſſing a cruel and unnatural rebellion, we are called upon to decide on a queſtion of unparallelled magnitude in the annals of our Country—we are called on to decide on the principle of a legiſlative incorporating Union with Great Britain; any deciſion on this great point would be in my mind premature, till the wiſhes of the great body of the people are fully and ſufficiently known, and without their conſent either expreſſed or implied by their acquieſcence, the Legiſlature ought not, they have no right to make a radical change in the Conſtitution. The people have not yet had time to make their ſentiments known, ſome few counties have indeed inſtructed their repreſentatives, but the northern counties are ſilent, the ſouth and weſt are ſilent. The Preſbyterians in the north, and the Roman Catholics in the ſouth and weſt, a numerous and reſpectable part of the Community, have not yet declared their ſentiments, they ſeem to hold back with a reſpectful deference till they underſtand the ſubject better.

Under theſe circumſtances, I cannot approve of either the original Addreſs or the Amendment; as the one tends to approve of the principle of a Union, and the other to preclude any diſcuſſion of the ſubject. I think it a duty we owe to ourſelves, and to the high authority from whence it comes, to diſcuſs the meaſure coolly and impartially; if after ſuch a diſcuſſion we reject it, our rejection will be more dignified and more effectual, as it will appear to be the calm reſult of reaſon, and the deliberate voice of the nation—not the effuſion of paſſion or prejudice. Though I cannot approve of either the original Addreſs or the Amendment, I ſhall vote for the Amendment, as it appears to me the leaſt evil

of the two, and that the principle may be brought forward again for discussion in some other form when the wishes of the people are better ascertained if it should appear agreeable to those wishes.

Mr. Trench afterwards in the course of the debate declared that he was convinced he was mistaken in thinking that by voting for the Amendment, the field was left more open for future discussion, that he now saw it went to prevent all discussion, and therefore should vote for the original Address. He was not ashamed, he said, to avow his error, and he thought it more honourable than to persevere in it,

"Falsus honor juvat & mendax infamia terret
"Quem, nisi mendosum & mendacem?"

Sir Edward O'Brien.—I will oppose the measure of a Union whenever it is proposed, and I will vote for the Amendment.

Mr. S. Moore supported the original Address, and opposed the Amendment.

Mr. R. Archdall said, as the hour was so late, he should not detain the House by a speech, though it had been his intention, if so many gentlemen had not preceded him, to have offered his reasons at large for the opinion he supported on so momentous a question, especially as he differed, for the first time in his life and he hoped for the last, from a most respectable, and respected member (Sir John Parnell) who had indeed, on this occasion, ceased to be a servant, but who could never cease to be a friend to the Crown, and who, though he had lost a public situation could never lose the public esteem. He said he rose in consequence of what had been expressed by a worthy and honourable gentleman (Mr. Trench) who had spoke not long before him, and who seemed not quite decided in his sentiments of opposition to the Address as it stood; he said he had observed another honourable, and ingenious gentleman (Mr. Edgworth) who had, with great candour and credit to himself, declared he had altered his sentiments in the course of the debate, and from being once rather inclined for the Address had now formed his judgment against it—he therefore thought the first gentleman, to whom he took the liberty to allude might perhaps on further consideration alter his sentiments in the same manner, and instead of continuing in opposition to the Address, might give it his support. He said he was the more induced to think this might be possible, from what had been stated in debate by the Noble Lord on the treasury bench, who had declared that gentlemen were at this time not pledging themselves to any thing farther than a consideration of the question. He asked what was it? The common father of all his people had graciously condescended to recommend to this part of his

political family, to consider by what means the interests and safety of all might be most permanently improved; and what was the meaning of the Amendment? That we would not enter into any consideration of the subject. He asked, did this look like duty, or like decorum? Would it satisfy Parliament? But still more could it satisfy the people? For what—would not even the people say on such an occasion? Would they not say, here is a House of Commons who are thinking of themselves and call it thinking of us; here are representatives who will not even examine what, perhaps, may prove for our advantage if they but suspect it may not be for their own? He said, if this was to be a method of gaining popularity, it would be a popularity without thanks. Another reason, he said, for not agreeing to the Amendment was, that it would preclude all further parliamentary information on the subject, as gentlemen by stopping in this manner the question in so early a stage of it, would preclude themselves from receiving the best, and most interesting information they could receive on it, he meant the information of a gentleman, who could not at present *speak*, because he was the Speaker. In short, on every principle of duty towards his Majesty, of giving satisfaction to the people, and allowing better information for themselves, he entreated the House not to refuse their consideration of the question, and said that for his own part when the day for calling the House, announced by the Noble Lord near him, (Tyrone) should arrive, he would not be afraid to meet the proposition, and to consider it, and dispose of it, as it might deserve.

Mr. W. B. Ponsonby had no hesitation in declaring the very proposal of Union an attack on the Constitution of Ireland, that argued unpardonable temerity; he would therefore oppose it in every form.

Mr. Arthur Moore. Sir, I had many hours since made the determination, not to trespass upon the attention of the House this night, from the fullest conviction that I could not contribute to the powerful effect of those impressions, which the incomparable speech of my honourable and learned friend in opening the debate, and the great ability with which he was followed by so many honourable gentlemen, must have already made upon the judgment and feeling of the House. But, Sir, I am induced to rise, lest it should be conceived that I, who am in the habit of sometimes addressing the House, should by giving a silent vote on this important morning, (10 o'clock) appear temporising or lukewarm in that cause, in which I am as willing to perish as to speak; and lest I should be precluded from my humble share in the glory of that triumph which we are just going to achieve, in defence of the Constitution of our country over its mortal and inveterate enemies,—I must at the same time, Sir, confess, that

I am impelled by a motive of ſtill more perſonal feeling, when I ſee the deareſt intereſts of a great and independant county (Queen's), of which I am an elector, abandoned before my face; when I perceive the repreſentative of that county, in which, though I have myſelf but a very inconſiderable property, I have many reſpectable connexions, and for which my regards are affectionate and hereditary, almoſt if not altogether the only perſon in this Houſe, who, upon this momentous queſtion has diſobeyed the inſtructions of his conſtituents; I cannot refrain from availing myſelf of the opportunity, which the indulgence of the Houſe gives me, of telling the honourable gentleman, (I beg pardon of the honourable Colonel) he is going to do that, which he has no right to do; and that if he ſhall vote againſt this Amendment, he is a faithleſs truſtee of thoſe rights and of that confidence to which perhaps his beſt claim was an implicit reliance on his perſonal honour and political integrity. But the Hon. gentleman (I beg pardon again of the Hon. Colonel) is not only determined to vote, but has ventured to ſpeak in favour of this ruinous project and of his own principles of action, and the Hon. Gentleman (I beg pardon again of the Hon. Colonel) aſks with a voice of triumph inſpired I preſume by the authority of his new Command, how will Gentlemen quiet the country? How will they put an end to the diſſenſions by which it is torn, but by the meaſure recommended from the Throne? I will tell the Hon. Gentleman (I again beg pardon of the Hon. Colonel) I run into thoſe miſtakes from want of uſe as I underſtand the Hon. Colonel's Commiſſion is no older than yeſterday, I will tell the Hon. Colonel how the country may be quieted and how it is poſſible to put an end to her diſſenſions, and that too by the moſt conſtitutional means; by independant men ſuch as the Hon. Colonel, not preſuming, when the Conſtitution is at ſtake, to diſobey the inſtructions of their conſtituents, by ſuch men as the Hon. Colonel holding themſelves above the allurements of office or promotion, when honeſt and virtuous men are removed for daring to adviſe and to act for the public good, and when it may be diſgraceful and degrading both in point of the time and the conditions, to accept of any favour from thoſe in power. If the repreſentatives of the people of Ireland will act that part, the Hon. Colonel will then ſee that he is groſsly in error when he calls the Independance of Ireland a phantom. But the Hon. Colonel has ſpoken of his great exertions, of the many ſleepleſs nights and active days he has paſſed during the rebellion in diſcharge of his duty as a ſoldier. I acknowledge the Hon. Colonel's claims to praiſe on this account, but then his gallantry and ſpirit are very inconſiſtent with the ſentiments he avows of the neceſſity of ſurrendering the Conſtitution in order to preſerve the country, and I am ſtrongly impreſſed with a conviction that the neceſſity for the extraor-

dinary activity in repressing the late rebellion in which the Hon. Colonel and every other gentleman of his description, so justly pride themselves is one of the strongest reasons against the measure now proposed, because I conceive that if the Union were to take place, its first effect would be to withdraw from the country those very persons whose rank and exertions had contributed so essentially to her safety, and who would again, I doubt not, make our main security, in case through any mismanagement of the present conjuncture the country should again relapse into the calamities and horrors of civil war, but we who oppose this wicked measure are accused of holding opinions of a dangerous and inflammatory nature, when we assert the incompetence of Parliament to put an end to its own existence, and to dissolve the social compact which according to our system is the Constitution itself, —for my part I shall ever adhere to the opinions which have been delivered on that subject in the course of the debate by so many gentlemen who are so great an ornament to the profession, to which I have the honour to belong, and if I could reassert the principle in stronger language than that which they have used, I should do so. I maintain that though Parliament may assume the *power*, it has not the *right* to change or alter, much less to abrogate altogether the Constitution of this land, of which they are only the delegated functionaries, and not the exclusive owners, and I maintain, that if by the violent exercise of the *abstract power* of Parliament to do that which its *moral competence* is insufficient to do, the measure of a Union should be carried against the sense of the people, that in such a case the laws of the incorporated legislature would not bind this island, and that then "the question of resistance (to use the words of Mr. Fox) would no longer be a question of morality but of prudence, and Sir, if these be strong doctrines, who has forced them from me? those who have made this atrocious attack upon the independant Parliament of this land which I am sworn to defend as part of the existing Constitution, in which no man is altogether *sui juris*, but a trustee for the rights of others whose boast and birthright it is. I would put this case; and it has not been put yet, though there have been enough of hypotheses upon this wild project of destroying our excellent practical establishment.

Suppose it were proposed to reduce the number of Members in either House of Parliament; for instance, suppose it to be proposed to reduce the number of Members in this House to one hundred, would any man hear it without indignation? Would the nation be bound to submit to it, in case the Parliament could be supposed wicked enough to adopt such a plan?—No, they would not—because it would involve a dissolution of the very frame and fabric of Parliament, and would be a proceeding beyond the *moral competence* of its power;—and yet, where is the

difference in point of *right*, whether you reduce the representation to one hundred members to be kept at home, or to be incorporated into the Parliament of England? though there certainly is great difference in point of *injury*, for I conceive, that even a representation of one hundred members at home, would be infinitely more useful than even a greater number could be in another country, when mixed with the representation of that country to which they would bear no proportion. It has been argued that the Revolution itself is an example of the great and indefinite power of Parliament; but I contend for it, that (besides that the conduct of Parliament at that time was dictated by the most imperious of all authority, namely necessity,) the precedent of the Revolution, as far as it can be argued upon, is against the measure now proposed, inasmuch as it is a precedent of a casual deviation from the line of the Constitution, "not for its destruction but for its preservation," and in as much as the very offence for which James the Second was declared to have abdicated the Crown, was similar in its nature to what I conceive an incorporating Union would be, namely a subversion of the legislative and established Constitution of this kingdom. Sir the nature of our alliance with England hitherto has been that of a federal Union, with one Executive Head, but distinct Legislative Bodies; but it is a mockery to say this country will have any Legislature after a Union shall take place. In matters where the interests of the countries may be distinct, (and we have seen they may be distinct, though their affections never can be torn asunder) is it in the nature of things that this country can have justice in the United Parliament, even supposing the whole portion of her representation to be faithful to their trust—a supposition surely which the experience of this night will not hesitate to verify—but if an incorporate Union of legislative functions between two independent States, having (as I admit we have, and hope always will have) the same common imperial interests be an object so very desirable and so highly expedient (and particularly for the inferior state) to embrace, why have not the advocates for this measure been able to adduce a single instance from history ancient or modern, savage or civilized (save the Scotch Union) of such a system? for my part I know of but one example of the practical experiment of the principle of the Consolidation of Legislatures, and that is in the conduct of republican France towards its allies in the Low Countries and in Italy. Do you think, Sir, the Batavian Provinces have been more free, prosperous, or powerful, since they have been united into one Legislature, than when they enjoyed their distinct provincial legislation, when each province had its peculiar resident legislative assembly? or are the Swiss cantons (heretofore the asylum of sturdy and unconquered liberty for centuries) more remote from slavery, ruin and national

weakneſs, with their preſent Directorial form of Government, and a general aſſembly for the purpoſes of legiſlation, than they were when the independancy of the ſeveral confederacies on each other was at once the ſecurity and incentive to their independancy on foreign ſtates? The Hanſeatic league too is an inſtance of what I am contending for; this league (for it is a league and not a Union) continues to be reſpected to this day, and has ſtood unaffailed and unſhaken amidſt the ſtorms which have from time to time convulſed and deſolated the ſurrounding nations, and this merely from the reſpect paid to their ſyſtem, and to their commercial importance, the conſequence of the equality of their condition, each member of the league uniting for the general good, but no one *legiſlating* for, *taxing* or *encroaching* on the other. Is it not then manifeſt that the federal Union which leaves the right with each State of local taxation and legiſlation, and merely unites the powers and energies of the ſeveral parts of the confederacy for general imperial purpoſes has always been the form moſt favourable to the growth of freedom, wealth, and general proſperity? whereas an incorporate Union, in the only inſtances (beſides that of Scotland) in which it can be ſhewn to exiſt, has had the direct contrary tendency as the obvious change in the ſtrength and freedom of thoſe countries which have been *obliged* by the power of France to make the experiment moſt indiſputably ſhews. But the Rt. Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry) urges the precedent of the Scotch Union, I thought that precedent had been abundantly expoſed as inapplicable to the caſe of this country by the number of Gentlemen who have diſcuſſed it in the debate, and though it has been ſhewn (and I am ſure at this hour I will not attempt to ſhew it again) that the analogy by no means holds between the caſes of the two Countries, whether we conſider the time, the exiſting circumſtances, the objects, the means, or the inſtruments; ſtill the Rt. Hon. Gentleman is pertinacious in inſiſting that the inſtance of the Scotch Union is not only applicable, but the only material difference is, that the Union now projected is an enterpriſe of more eaſy accompliſhment than that was. Does the Rt. Hon. Gentleman think that the Iriſh Union can be purchaſed for 22,000l. as the Scotch was? I ſhould think he has calculated the ſurrender of our liberties, even at a leſs price, for he ſays it is *more eaſily* accompliſhed; this day I think will tell him at what price the people and their honeſt repreſentatives will ſell their Conſtitution, it will tell him there is a ſpirit of public virtue and integrity in this Houſe and in this country, which political arithmetic cannot calculate, and which is beyond the purchaſe of the moſt liberal corruption. My Rt. Hon. friend (late Prime Serjeant) has adduced the opinion of the late celebrated Mr. Burke, that Parliament is incompetent to deſtroy itſelf and to abandon its poſt in the ſyſtem of our Conſtitution, and I do not know any

opinion which the advifers of this meafure of an Union would be more inclined to follow than that of Mr. Burke if it had happened to be on their fide, but as it is againft them, it is of no authority whatfoever, but I will give them the opinion of a man to whofe fentiments they will all implicitly fubfcribe, it is the opinion of Mr. Pitt upon the fubject of the exclufive independance and competency of the Irifh Parliament to legiflate for this country, and to provide for the emergencies of her difturbed fituation, it was given fo lately too as the 23d of March 1797, on the motion of Mr. Fox to addrefs his Majefty, to oblige his Miniffers to adopt a fyftem of lenient meafures with regard to Ireland.

The words of Mr. Pitt are thefe "The Parliament of Ireland "was confidered to be the natural fource of the laws of that coun- "try; it was confidered proper to entruft to its care and pro- "tection the intereft of the country. And furely the Hon. "Gentleman cannot mean to fay, that when we gave Ireland a "Parliament of its own, we only gave it nominally; he did not "mean, that we had put them in poffeffion of a conftitution "which was like the Britifh conftitution, but was at the fame "time wholly unfit for the exercife of exclufive legiflation; he "will not fay, that the conceffion of 1782 was not intended to make "the Parliament completely independant of controul, or that, if "its fundamental principles are the fame, he nevertheleefs confi- "ders it defective in point of rational, real and folid power. "If the Hon. Gentleman thinks it was a conceffion on our "part to the well founded claims of the Irifh nation, on what "ground, then, can he expect that this Houfe ought to af- "fume it as a principle, that fuppofing there are diforders ex- "ifting in Ireland, we ought to remedy thofe diforders by an "alteration in the fundamental form of its legiflation? How "can fuch an interference be admitted, after we have declared "the Parliament of Ireland independant, and placed it beyond "our reach and controul? The Hon. Gentleman will, I truft, "find it difficult to convince the Houfe, that the only way to "remedy thofe diforders, is to alter the legiflature of the "country, which, for the purpofe of making laws, is rendered "independant and exclufive of this country. If we have given "up the *right* of interferring in the internal policy, we have "alfo given up the *power* of fo interfering; and any interfe- "rence with refpect to the internal laws or regulations of Ire- "land, would be an invafion of thofe very fundamental princi- "ples which, in 1782, we recognifed; and on that ground I "am authorifed in confidering, that the addrefs propofed "would be an addrefs for the exprefs purpofe of violating thofe "fundamental principles." Here is the explicit recognition of our Parliamentary Independance by that Miniffer, under whofe

auſpices it is now, in this maſqued and inſidious manner, attempted to be taken away. But, Sir, I did not riſe at this hour ſo much for the purpoſe of *debating* a ſubject already exhauſted, as of giving an *opinion* on it—that opinion I now repeat, and it is, that Parliament, unleſs authorized by the explicit unequivocal ſenſe of the People, has no right to conſent to the meaſure of a Legiſlative Union with Great Britain, and that if it ſhould adopt ſuch a meaſure againſt the conſent of the people, there is no inherent moral *right* in the legiſlature ſo to do, by which the nation would be bound to adopt the proceeding.

Mr. ODELL oppoſed the amendment.

Mr, WILLIAM SMITH.—Sir, I had intended to confine myſelf to night to a ſilent vote, and to have taken the chance of this queſtion's undergoing ſuch farther inveſtigation as would enable me hereafter to declare my ſentiments upon it. As it is, I ſhall treſpaſs but a very ſhort time upon the houſe, and with a view to brevity, ſhall follow an example which has been moſt liberally ſet me—by ſubſtituting aſſertion in the place of argument.

I riſe, Sir, becauſe I hold myſelf to be called on to abandon my intentions of remaining ſilent; by that confident denial, which I have heard repeated on every ſide, of the competence of Parliament to enact an Union. Every lawyer who has riſen to oppoſe the meaſure, has thought proper, at the ſame time, to proteſt againſt the authority of Parliment to achieve it. I riſe, Sir, as a lawyer, to record my diſſent from what I conceive to be ſo unfounded, and ſo miſchievous a doctrine. I riſe explicitly to declare my decided opinion, (without pretending to eſtimate the weight which that opinion ought to have) that Parliament is as competent to conclude an Union, as it is to enact a turnpike bill. I mean not to detract from the importance of the former great imperial arrangement, or to inſinuate that the ſenſe of the community upon it is not deſerving of our moſt ſerious attention: I mean merely to aſſert the theoretic, conſtitutional competence of the Iriſh Legiſlature. Public ſentiment, on a great and complicated meaſure, is weighty evidence of the miſchief or utility of that meaſure: as ſuch it ſhould be laid before, and may perhaps concluſively ſway the judgment of that body, which has the right of legiſlation. But public opinion is but evidence, not law:—it is evidence which the people may lay before that Parliament, whoſe province is to eſtimate the force and tendency of this evidence, but whoſe right of finally and excluſively deciding the queſtion, uncontrolled by popular whim, is a clear and undoubted principle of the Conſtitution. A contrary doctrine would not only impugn the expreſs authority of Coke and Blackſtone, and all legal and conſtitutional writers with whom I am acquainted, but would ſhake the fabrick of our rights and liberties to its foundation: would go to cancel the

title deed of 1706, by virtue of which his Majesty holds his Scottish Crown: would question the legitimacy of that mixed assembly, which was formed by the coalition of the Scotch and English Legislatures, and impeach the force of every statute which has been enacted since their junction: and would confound and violate the very elements of our Constitution, by transferring the supreme authority from the Parliament to the people.

Mr. Stewart, of Killymoon, said, that at so late an hour, he had neither strength nor inclination to take up much of the time of the House; but on a subject so important, and when by the vote of that night the fate of Ireland was probably to be decided, he considered it a duty he owed to his Country to declare publicly his opinion: that opinion, he said, was decidedly against a Legislative Union with Great Britain.—He feared that such a measure would create discontent and endless jealousies, and thereby endanger that friendly connexion which now subsists, and which he wishes may be perpetual between the two Countries, being convinced that it is indispensably necessary to the prosperity of each of them.—He acknowleged his gratitude for the generous services of the English militia regiments and fencibles, and reminded the House, that in happier times we had sent almost the whole of our standing army to assist Great Britain, trusting for our own defence to our glorious volunteers.—He concluded by declaring himself in favour of Mr. Ponsonby's Amendment.

Col. Uniacke opposed the Amendment, as did Mr. Staples.

Mr. Serjeant Stanley supported the Address to the King in its original form, and quoted Lord Coke's 4th Instit. the authority of Lord Somers and Judge Blackstone's Commentary, which he read in his place, to prove that Parliament were fully competent to adopt the proposed measure, and that in several instances, Acts of Parliament had passed to alter the succession to the Crown, and to change the Constitution of Parliament itself, as was done by the Act of Union between England and Scotland, and the Acts for Triennial and Septennial Parliaments. He said, he was sorry that too much heat and passion had been intermixed in the debate—that the Nobleman who was at the head of the Government, merely wished to submit the measure to the consideration of Parliament, as the most likely means to give permanency and stability to the Constitution, aud to communicate peace, true independance and happiness to the great body of the people, but that the high character and well deserved fame of Lord Cornwallis was a sufficient pledge to the nation, that it was not his wish to precipitate the measure or to persevere in carrying it into effect, if upon a full and deliberate discussion, it should appear to be repugnant to the interests of the Kingdnm, or against the general sense of the Nation.

Mr. Thomas Townshend rose in reply to Mr. Serjeant Stanley and to Mr. William Smith. He observed, that admonished by the hour, he would not press on the exhausted patience of the House, and would therefore lay down his original intention of going fully into the question. The learned Serjeant on the other side of the House had thought proper to oppose to the arguments of his honourable friends on the floor, the opinion of Mr. Justice Blackstone, on the competence of Parliament to vote away their liberties. But those arguments were impugnable and continued to stand in undiminished force; for the learned Serjeant, with the volume in his hand, did not condescend to point out where it was maintained by Blackstone, that the Parliament was competent to subvert the fundamental principles of the constitution, to abridge the right of popular representation, and to transfer the legislature of the country into another kingdom. The argument of the learned and honourable gentleman near him bore as little application to the question in debate. To assert that if Parliament be incompetent, the Act of Union between Scotland and England was a nullity, is to say nothing bearing on the subject; for if the precedent of a constitutional question in one country, be drawn into example as a rule for another, it should be first made to appear, that both those constitutions were constructed on the same fundamental principles which he has not done, and which if he had undertaken he could not have done. The Scottish constitution before the Union, and the constitution of Ireland now, are utterly dissimilar in principle and practice. He could not help congratulating the House, that on this question which involved the birthright of the Irish people, their civil liberty, they had preferred a courageous wisdom to the reptile policy of embracing an unendowed and barren servitude. He would oppose the Union which was projected by every possible means. It was fatal to the liberties of Ireland. As a Constitutional question it was utterly untenable, as a matter of Policy it was ruinous to the peace, honour, freedom and real interests of this kingdom as well as of Great Britain.

Sir L. Parsons said, that at that late hour he did not rise to speak to the question at large. The sentiment of the nation was now so decidedly evinced, by the sense of the independant gentlemen in the House against a Union, that he hoped the Minister would never give him an opportunity of speaking to the subject again, but would abandon it. If however he should further persevere, Sir L. would take the earliest opportunity of speaking his sentiments fully, and should now content himself with declaring his decided disapprobation of it.

Mr. L. Morres oppofed the amendment, as did

Mr. H. D. Grady.

The Hon. G. Knox faid, that he fhould referve himfelf for a full difcuffion of the important queftion in agitation, until it came more directly before the Houfe. At prefent he merely rofe to ftate, that nothing which he had heard that night, had produced the flighteft alteration in the fentiments which he, in common with his conftituents (the College) was known to entertain upon the fubject; and that by voting, as he fhould do on that day, for a Parliamentary Declaration in favour of our prefent Conftitution, the value of which he had been contemplating with the aid of experience for fixteen years, he could not juftly be charged with what had been called in the debate an act of precipitation.

Mr. G. Ponsonby in reply faid, that the principal arguments (if indeed they could be called fuch) advanced for the other fide of the Houfe, were drawn from the ftate of Scotland previous to the Union, and from the Parliament of that kingdom having fet a precedent of competency to enact an Union. Without, however, admitting this competency, he would briefly fhew that no two Parliaments could be more diffimilar than that of Scotland at that day, and the Parliament of Ireland at this; and that the Scottifh people had little or no intereft in upholding a Legifla-ture, confifting fcarcely of any conftituent part, and wherein the Crown was all—the people nothing. The two orders of Parliament were compofed of Barons and Burghers, who fat in one chamber, and gave their votes in common on a queftion. The Crown had a right to create the Barons at pleafure, and thus at any time could overpower the fenfe of the Burghers. There were befides Lords of Articles, who had a negative on meafures before they were publicly propofed. Who would then fay, that the people had any intereft in a Conftitution, wherein they were not repreffented, and only compofed of the King and a turbulent or corrupt Ariftocracy—or who could poffibly bear out a comparifon between a country in fuch a ftate, and this? where he trufted the votes on this night, as on a former occafion, would fhew that the people were repreffented by men who would not fuffer their rights to be betrayed. It was faid that the city of Cork favoured the meafure of an Union. It was poffible that a Corporation might have expreffed fuch an inclination, for it was too well known how Corporate bodies might be worked upon againft their own intereft; but he felt affured that the city of Cork, comprifing in that term its wealth, refpectability, and population, was incapable of yielding up the honour, independance, and general intereftS of Ireland,

for the conſideration of any partial advantages; and would never emulate Bœotian ſtupidity and Bœotian perfidy. Mr. Ponſonby then ſhortly refuted the other flimſy and fallacious arguments which had been urged againſt the liberties of the Iriſh nation, and conjured gentlemen not to be calculating on the probable effect of their vote, but for every man to act as if engaged in a battle, where the victory depended on his ſingle arm; and ever holding in remembrance, that conqueſt does not always depend on numbers; a ſmall and virtuous band of Spartans having ſaved the liberties of Greece, and a gallant officer (Member for Limerick) ſtopped the progreſs of an invader in their own country, with his ſmall, but brave band of 200 men;—and he concluded by declaring, that never in the courſe of his life did he feel ſuch delightful ſentiments as at that moment, when he contemplated the virtue and ſpirit—the proud integrity diſplayed by the gentlemen with whom he had the honour, he truſted, of cloſing in honeſt Victory an honeſt Conteſt. He omened great and ſolid, and permanent advantages and bleſſings to the country, from the ſcene which that day and the preceding night had been diſplayed in the Iriſh Houſe of Commons—not the "Permanent Arrangements" glanced at in the ſpeech from the Throne, but ſuch as would, in ſecuring the Honour and Independance of Ireland, contribute moſt effectually to the Strength and Glory of the Empire.

The Houſe divided,

Ayes,	105
Noes,	106
Majority,	1

Tellers for the Ayes, Sir Laurence Parſons and George Ponſonby.

Tellers for the Noes, Lord Tyrone and Col. Uniacke Fitzgerald.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

A

REPORT

OF THE

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF

IRELAND,

ON THE 24TH, 25TH, 26TH AND 28TH
OF *JANUARY*, 1799,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

AN UNION.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED FOR JAMES MOORE, NO. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.
1799.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 1799.

THE ſtanding orders of the Houſe were revived, and a a Committee of Privileges appointed. Lord Tyrone reported from the Committee appointed to prepare the Addreſs to his Majeſty, reading it paragraph by paragraph, and is as follows:

" WE your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of *Ireland* in Parliament aſſembled, beg leave to approach your Majeſty with the moſt cordial expreſſions of duty, loyalty and attachment to your Majeſty's ſacred Perſon, Family and Government.

" We ſincerely participate in the ſatisfaction which your Majeſty muſt feel in the happy effects which have followed the unparalleled achievement of the detachment of your Majeſty's Fleet under the command of Rear Admiral Lord *Nelſon*, on the total defeat of the *French* ſquadron off the coaſts of this kingdom by that under the command of Sir *John Borlaſe Warren*, and on the brilliant and important conqueſt of *Minorca*; theſe events, while they afford to us in common with every other deſcription of your Majeſty's ſubjects matter of juſt and honourable pride, are calculated to inſpire other Powers with confidence, and manifeſt to all *Europe* that a ſyſtem of vigour and exertion, directed with manly perſeverance againſt the deſtructive projects of the common enemy, may be attended with the moſt beneficial conſequences.

" We moſt ſincerely lament that in ſeveral parts of this kingdom a ſpirit of diſaffection ſtill exiſts, and that the expectation of foreign aſſiſtance is kept alive among the lower claſſes by the ſecret agents of *France*, but your Majeſty may rely on the firmneſs of our determination to counteract every machination of the enemy, and to continue our exertions with unabated vigour in ſupport of the honour of your Crown, the intereſts of this kingdom and the general cauſe of the Empire.

" We ſhall take into our early conſideration the public accounts and the eſtimates for the enſuing year, and in granting the neceſſary ſupplies we ſhall endeavour to render them as little burthenſome to the people as poſſible; it will be our deſire to make them adequate to the neceſſary exigencies of the ſtate, as we are confident they will be prudently and economically applied.

" In reflecting on the general proſperity of the Empire we feel with true ſatisfaction that notwithſtanding our internal calamities the Revenue and Trade of this kingdom have increaſed, and that our intereſts are ſo blended with thoſe of *Great Britain* as to produce a participation in the general proſperity.

" Your Majeſty may be aſſured that the Proteſtant Charter Schools and other charitable inſtitutions which have uſually received the aid of Parliament will continue to be encouraged by

our ſupport, and that we ſhall not fail in our attention to the Agriculture, the Manufactures, and particularly the Linen Manufacture of this Kingdom; the honourable claims of thoſe who have ſuffered from their loyalty during the Rebellion, as they have intereſted your Majeſty's humane regard, are recommended to our liberality by every endearing motive.

"We beg leave to aſſure your Majeſty that we ſhall direct our efforts with perſevering energy for repreſſing that ſpirit of diſaffection which ſtill requires extraordinary powers to check its malignant effects; we acknowledge the acts of ſeverity which have been exerciſed to be indiſpenſable, whilſt we are ſenſible that the rigours of penal juſtice have been tempered with as much forbearance and lenity as the public ſafety would admit.

"We rejoice that in the general cauſe which engages the Empire our proſpects are highly improved, and we feel the warmeſt incentives to redouble our exertions as the probability is increaſed of bringing the war to a ſucceſsful termination.

"It muſt be highly gratifying to your Majeſty to reflect on that zeal which has been manifeſted by the Regular and Militia Forces, and by that gallantry which has diſtinguiſhed the Yeomanry. We cannot too highly applaud their conduct, and when we conſider the honourable and effectual aſſiſtance of the *Britiſh* Fencibles and Militia, and the activity, ſkill and valour of your Majeſty's Fleets, we doubt not that every future effort of the enemy will be entirely fruſtrated; but reflecting on the ſituation and circumſtances of this kingdom, and conſidering on the hand the ſtrength and ſtability of *Great Britain*, and on the other thoſe diviſions which have ſhaken this kingdoms to its foundations, we ſhould feel happy if any adjuſtment can be deviſed which may extend the advantages enjoyed by our Siſter Kingdom to every part of this iſland.

"**The unremitting activity with which our enemies perſevere in their avowed deſign of endeavouring to effect a Separation of this Kingdom from* Great Britain, *muſt conſtantly engage our moſt earneſt attention; and as your Majeſty has condeſcended to expreſs an anxious hope that this circumſtance, joined to the ſentiment of mutual affection and common intereſt, may diſpoſe the Parliament in both kingdoms to provide the moſt effectual means of maintaining and improving a connexion eſſential to their common ſecurity, and of conſolidating as far as poſſible, into one firm and laſting fabric, the ſtrength, the power and the reſources of the* Britiſh *Empire, we ſhall not fail to give the fulleſt conſideration to a communication of ſuch momentous importance.*

"We return your Majeſty our ſincereſt thanks for continuing the Marquis *Cornwallis* in the Government of this kingdom, whoſe eminent military talents and whoſe experienced wiſdom and benevolence are ſo peculiarly calculated to inſpire your Majeſty's faithful People with confidence on this important criſis."

* *This is the paragraph expunged from the addreſs.*

Sir L. PARSONS.—Exhausted as every member must be by the last Debate, and exhausted as the subject has been by so long a discussion—its importance alone can apologise for my making any observations upon it at present. That paragraph of the Address upon which you are now going to decide, would pledge you by a metaphorical expression to admit the principle of a Legislative Union.—I am glad it comes before you again, as it will now give you an opportunity of reconsidering your late decision, and vindicating yourselves and your Country from the disgrace of countenancing a proposition so degrading to Ireland, as that which has for its object the surrender of your Independance. I hoped that in 1782, the Final Adjustment which was then made, would, in the language of the Parliament of that day, put an end to all controversies between these two kingdoms for ever. Such controversies have been always injurious to the Government of this Country, and dangerous to our connexion with England. Before 1782, when Ireland was struggling for her independency, and the English Government contending against it, the consequence was, that all the principal persons in official situations at that time, by voting continually with the Minister against our national claims, became so odious and were so blackened in the eyes of the people, that even after we had obtained our independancy, the people could place no confidence in a Government composed of those very men who had so long resisted it. Sixteen years had removed many of these men, and nearly obliterated the recollection of these old conflicts, and just at the time that it might be hoped that a Government well conducted might possess the public confidence, this unfortunate measure of a Union is now brought forward reviving political controversies, kindling anew political jealousies between the two kingdoms, and debasing and blackening all the official men in high situations here, in the opinion of the people; for never, never can the people of Ireland place confidence in an Administration, composed of men who on this occasion have shewn their promptitude to betray the dearest rights and privileges of their Country.—No! you are blackened, and blackened for ever in the eyes of the people of Ireland! But however unfavourable the sentiment of the people must be towards those men, there is this good consequence resulting from this project, that the sentiment of the people towards this House must be exalted.—The independant Gentlemen of Ireland in despite of all the direct and indirect means which have been employed to pervert them on this occasion, have proved this to the Nation, that their present Independant Parliamentary Constitution is dearer to them than their lives, and that it is but with their lives that they will ever surrender it: Yes, the Parliament, or, I should say, this House, has repeated the malignant calumnies of its universal corruption, which

have been of late induſtriouſly propagated from the quarter from which of all others they ſhould laſt come. There is not in the world a more open, warmhearted, grateful and unſuſpecting people than the people of Ireland.—This unfortunate and ill-adviſed attempt however, muſt deſtroy in them all future confidence towards the Government here, as long as it is conſtituted of thoſe men who on this occaſion have been ſo forward to ſacrifice the rights of their Country, even though this day ſhould, as I truſt it will, put a compleat and decided termination to the fatal project;—be aſſured, it is neceſſary that we ſhould now put it down deciſively, otherwiſe this Country will continue in a ſtate of ferment and agitation, every day more and more prejudicial to the connexion between theſe kingdoms; a Connexion, to which my reaſon and my ſentiments ſtrongly bind me, and which I would preſerve at any expence ſave that of Iriſh liberty. I do not know who was the adviſer of this project, but whoever he was, he muſt have been utterly ignorant of the ſentiments of our people. A ſtateſman ſhould conſider two things before he propoſes any public meaſure; 1ſt, whether the meaſure be intrinſically good? Next, whether it be adapted to the diſpoſitions of the people. Now, any man who knew the Gentlemen and People of Ireland, muſt have known that a Legiſlative Union would never have been borne by them.

The Noble Lord has ſaid as an argument for an Union, that this country is too poor to maintain its independance. The anſwer to that is in the Speech from the Throne, which repreſents our commerce and revenue to be in a ſtate of encreaſe. It is notorious to every man that the wealth and revenues of Ireland have augmented in the laſt 20 years beyond the example of perhaps any country in the world, yet we are told now that we are not rich enough to maintain our parliamentary Conſtitution, though we have maintained that Conſtitution for above 600 years when we were ſo much more poor. The Noble Lord ſays that an Union will tranquilliſe this kingdom, the anſwer to that is in the ſpeech of almoſt every county Member who has ſpoken, they ſay that ſo far from tranquilliſing, it will produce, if perſiſted in, the moſt violent convulſion. Indeed why ſhould a meaſure be ſuppoſed likely to tranquilliſe the people, which has not been called for by any claſs or deſcription of the people, and which every where that any ſentiment has been expreſſed by them, it has been unanimouſly and ſtrongly againſt it, ſave only the ſolitary corporation of Cork. The Noble Lord has ſtated the obligation we owe England, for the aſſiſtance ſhe afforded us this ſummer in ſending here her Militia and Fencible regiments. I coincide with the Noble Lord in highly appreciating that ſervice, and in honouring the gallantry of thoſe men to whom the Nation owes every poſſi-

ble demonſtration of gratitude, but while he recollects our obligation to England in this inſtance, let him not forget her obligations to us for ſimilar favours. In the American war Ireland ſtripped herſelf of her laſt man to ſend out aids to the armaments of England, and armed voluntarily to defend herſelf. In the beginning of this war we ſent almoſt the whole of our army to fight her battles on the Continent and in the Weſt Indies, as that on the 1ſt of June 1794, while victory was hovering doubtful over the fleets of England and France, if by any accident the former had been baffled, we ſhould have been invaded, at a time that we had not 2000 diſciplined men in our iſland. I ſay therefore that if the account were fairly ſtated of ſuch aids to each country, without detracting from the value of the force we have lately received, the balance would I believe be in favour of Ireland.

The Noble Lord admits indeed that Ireland muſt loſe ſomewhat by the encreaſe of abſentees but ſays that that loſs would be countervailed by the number of Engliſh merchants and manufacturers that would come to ſettle here. He repreſents them immediately covering the face of the whole iſland, and producing every where a new and valuable middle order of men. The ſame was ſaid in the American war when we obtained a free trade, but no Engliſhman came to ſettle here in conſequence. Now what inducement would they have to ſettle here after an Union, which they had not 5 years ago or 10 years ago? Since the year 1779 we have poſſeſſed a liberty of trade, a few articles excepted, co-extenſive with England, why then have not Engliſhmen come and availed themſelves of it? Why has not our ſuperior ſituation for trade tempted them here hitherto. It is now 20 years ſince we obtained that free trade, yet not a ſingle Engliſh merchant of any conſequence has ſince ſettled here. The only poſſible extenſion of trade England could give us, is what is called the channel trade and that in the firſt place is of but little importance, and in the next, it has been promiſed already by every repreſentative of the Engliſh Government in this houſe for ſome years paſt. It was promiſed by Lord Hobart; it was promiſed by Mr. Douglaſs; it was promiſed by Mr. Pelham, and it was promiſed by the noble Lord himſelf, and that in ſuch explicit and emphatic terms, that he ſaid in this Houſe, "that if no one elſe did, he would bring it forward whenever a ſeaſon of tranquillity arrived, and that if it ſhould be reſiſted by Government, he himſelf would oppoſe the Miniſter who ſhould reſiſt it." If then there is any faith in theſe Miniſters, we ſhall obtain it gratuitouſly, why then purchaſe it by the ſurrender of our Conſtitution? I believe, no man in his ſenſes would give any thing to purchaſe that which he could obtain for nothing, but what ſingular folly would it be for the Iriſh

Nation, to purchaſe that which it is aſſured of gratuitouſly, by the ſurrender of freedom and independence and every thing that is dear to a people?

The Noble Lord ſays that the preſent Conſtitution of this country cannot ſtand, that two legiſlatures co-equal and co-ordinate in the ſame empire are incompatible, that they may decide on the ſame matter contrary ways, and one declare for peace, when the other does for war. This objection to our independance, is exactly the ſame, as the objection of a noted writer, Thomas Paine, to the Engliſh Conſtitution. He ridicules the Conſtitution for having three co-ordinate eſtates, and ſays, that one may decide one way, and the other, another. But what is the fact? That the objection both of Thomas Paine to the Engliſh Conſtitution and of the Noble Lord to Iriſh independance, are both theoretical objections, contradicted by conſtant experience. The ſame kind of objection might be made to trial by jury, that twelve men would never agree in a verdict, but we find, notwithſtanding, that they do agree, and however extraordinary it may appear in theory, yet that in practice it is an admirable inſtitution, and has been found ſo from the times of our Saxon anceſtors to the preſent day. There is no danger of this diſagreement between the independant legiſlatures of theſe two kingdoms which the Noble Lord apprehends. There will be always ſo much good ſenſe in the gentlemen of this Houſe, it will be always ſo much their intereſt to accord with England in every thing reaſonable, and there will be always ſo much miniſterial influence, neceſſarily from the nature of our conſtitutions as will enſure a conformity of will in every thing eſſential.

See what Ireland already yields to England and then judge, if the government be reaſonably well adminiſtered, whether there can be any danger of a difference of will between the two kingdoms, or of any breach of the connexion—by giving to England the appointment of the King, we give her the appointment of the firſt branch of the Legiſlature, with a negative upon all our laws, ſo that Ireland never can paſs a law unleſs the great ſeal of England be affixed to it. Ireland alſo by giving to England the appointment of the King gives to her the creation of the ſecond branch of our Legiſlature, and reſerves for her own people only the nomination of the third; namely this aſſembly. By it, ſhe alſo gives her the diſtribution of all the honours of the ſtate hereditary and occaſional; ſhe gives her the appointment of all the Biſhops with the whole patronage of the church; ſhe gives her the appointment of the Judges and all the judicial officers of the Nation; ſhe gives her the nomination of all the officers of the revenue with the unbounded patronage attendant thereon; ſhe alſo gives her the appointment of the Chief Governor and of the Privy

Council; ſhe gives her the command of her army, militia and yeomen with the appointment to every commiſſion in theſe, together with the power of declaring peace and war. In trade too ſhe gives her a monopoly of the whole trade of the Eaſt, a hemiſphere; and in the Weſt, ſhe binds herſelf to trade only with Engliſh Colonies, the products of which are the deareſt in the world, inſtead of taking them from other countries where they are cheap; ſhe gives her beſides the ſole power of making her treaties of commerce negociated by her ambaſſadors and miniſters; ſhe pays alſo to England an income in money of about a million and a half a year which goes to our Abſentees, a neceſſary conſequence of the connexion, and a kind of tribute to it, greater than any vanquiſhed country ever paid for any time to its conquerors, and all this we are willing to give up to England, provided that we are allowed to retain our Conſtitution, yet are her Miniſters not ſatisfied, but want to deſpoil us of it alſo. That Conſtitution was eſtabliſhed by the original compact between the firſt Engliſh King that ruled here, and the Iriſh people, it was afterwards ratified by repeated charters and ſtatutes, the Nation has been in poſſeſſion of it for now above 600 years, and the Gentlemen around me have all declared that they will never part with it, but with their lives.

His Majeſty's Attorney General indeed has ſaid that the Parliament during the firſt three reigns after the eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh here, ſat in England and that there was then a kind of Union—if it were ſo, that would be of little import to us at the preſent day, the conſideration being not what the Conſtitution was then, but what it is now. I hold however in my hand a deciſive document againſt this aſſertion of the Attorney General. It is the anſwer of the Iriſh Parliament to Edward 3d, when ſummoned by him to England. I will read it to you to ſhew what the Conſtitution was, and alſo what the ſpirit was, which animated the Iriſh Parliament at that day. Mark their language ſpeaking to that wiſe and heroic prince Edward 3d.

"The Nobles and Commons unanimouſly and with one voice "declare, that according to the rights, privileges, liberties, laws "and cuſtoms of the land of Ireland enjoyed from the time of "the conqueſt of ſaid land, they are not bound to ſend any per-"ſons from the land of Ireland to the Parliament or Council of "our Lord the King in England as the writ requires. Notwith-"ſtanding on account of their reverence, and the neceſſity and "preſent diſtreſs of the ſaid land, they have elected repreſenta-"tives to repair to the King, and to treat and conſult with him "and his Council; reſerving to themſelves the power of yielding "or agreeing to any ſubſidies. At the ſame time proteſting that "their compliance is not hereafter to be taken in prejudice to "the rights, privileges, laws and cuſtoms which the Lords and

"Commons from the time of the conquest of the land of Ire-
"land, have enjoyed."

Thus at a time of great exigency, they consent for once to go; but knowing, that mingled with the Parliament of England, they must be outnumbered; and so that great subsidies might be imposed on their own country against their consent, they previously declare, that they reserve to themselves alone the power of raising any contributions on the people; and they conclude, that their compliance on this occasion should never be brought as a precedent for any future day. Nor was it; for never do we meet with an instance of this again.

His Majesty's Attorney General has also quoted the authority of Mr. Molyneux, as favourable to an Union: the name of Molyneux must be dear to every friend of Ireland; and therefore his sentiment should be fairly stated. He was contending against the usurped supremacy of the British Legislature, and writing at a time that our Constitution was so deformed by the perversions of the Law of Poyning, and so subdued by the overruling power of the English Parliament, that, in comparison of that state, he might say, that even an Union was a desirable measure: but if the spirit of Molyneux could now call to you from his tomb, beholding you invested with all the plenitude of supreme imperial authority, would it not invoke you to part with your lives, rather than with your independance? His Majesty's Attorney General has also quoted the authority of Lord Somers, as a favourer of the Scotch Union; and why should he not be a favourer of it? for he was an Englishman, and therefore a friend to the power of England. There is this difference, therefore, between the conduct of my Lord Somers and his Majesty's Attorney General; that the one was arguing for a Union to exalt his country, that the other is arguing for a Union to debase his. But were my Lord Somers now alive, and an Irishman and Attorney General of Ireland, he would sooner not only part with his office, but with his life too, than support the projected Union.

Were the Union ever so good a measure, why bring it forward at this time? Is it not evidently to take advantage of England's strength here, and our own internal weakness? It is always in times of division and disaster, that a nation avails itself of the infirmities of its neighbour, to obtain an unjust dominion. The history of mankind is full of such instances. Every page presents you with the injustice and rapine committed by one country against the credulity and weakness of another. You have no reason, therefore, to be much surprized at the attempt of the present day. It is a great project to destroy at once the Constitution of this country, which has lasted above 600 years, and at a fatal season to subject it to the domination of England for

ever. What indeed have mankind been warring for ſince the foundation of the world, but one country ſtriving to obtain dominion over another? and this is the ſimple ſtate of the attempt of the preſent day: namely, that Great Britain ſhould rule you inſtead of you ruling yourſelves. That Great Britain ſhould deſire to do ſo, I do not much wonder at; for what nation is there that would not deſire to rule another? Nor am I ſurpriſed that there ſhould be ſome among you baſe enough to conſpire with her in doing ſo; for no country can expect to be ſo fortunate as not to have betrayers and patricides among its citizens. But if this Aſſembly, the choſen protectors of the peoples rights, ſhould agree thus to betray them; that indeed would be matter of ſuch ſurprize and indignation too, as I have not a mind to conceive, or language to expreſs.

Our preſent Conſtitution of Parliament is as old as our connexion with England; and if you are not falſe to yourſelves and to your country, it will be as laſting as that connexion. According to my Lord Coke, Parliaments were eſtabliſhed here by Henry II. According to Mr. Pettyt, there is a record of the Commons being ſummoned to Parliament here, at an earlier period, than there is any record of the Commons of England being ſummoned to Parliament there. So much ſo, that it is from the Iriſh record that he argues the antiquity of the Engliſh Houſe of Commons; ſuppoſing, and reaſonably, that it muſt have been as ancient as ours.

We may therefore, without engaging in the diſputes of Antiquarians, date the being of our preſent conſtitution of Parliament inconteſtably from as early an Epoch as England can inconteſtably date the being of hers. Ireland has a Magna Charta too, more than once ratified and confirmed, and as full and as explicit a declaration of liberties as the great Charter of England: That of Henry the Third, runs word for word, the ſame as the Engliſh Charter, changing only the names. Thus not only were Parliaments ſo early eſtabliſhed in Ireland, but the broad baſis of chartered liberties, upon which they ſtood in England, was eſtabliſhed here alſo: our predeceſſors knowing that both were neceſſary to their liberty and happineſs, the charters, as defining their individual rights, and their own Parliaments, to watch over and protect them. And therefore when Edward the Third ſummoned the Iriſh Parliament to England, they proteſted againſt the precedent as I have ſtated. For our predeceſſors had not that ſilly confidence in the Engliſh Parliament which we find in ſome weak men of the preſent day—they knew that if they ſat in the Engliſh Parliament, they muſt be out-numbered—that if they were out-numbered, they ſhould be out-voted in the only inſtance in which the intereſts of the two countries were likely then to

come in competition;—namely the ſupplies that Ireland was to contribute—and therefore they previouſly declared that no Engliſh member ſhould vote on thoſe ſupplies, and this they did too unanimouſly; Sir, there was not to be found in the Parliament of that day, one man ſo inſane or ſo baſe as to truſt the intereſts of Ireland to the overruling numbers of the Engliſh Parliament. Will not their ſpirit animate you now, and their wiſdom dictate to you your duty?

The anſwer of this dignified Parliament to the ſummons of Edward the Third, ſecured the independance of Ireland for many ſucceeding ages. In later times however the extraordinary doctrine was broached, that the Engliſh Parliament had a right to make laws for Ireland. The firſt controverſy on this ſubject took place in the reign of Charles the Firſt, when this country had been torn and waſted by Rebellion. It was again revived and exerciſed in frequent inſtances, when this country was again debilitated by Civil War after the Revolution—and now is the ſupremacy of the Engliſh Parliament attempted to be revived once more, and in a more formidable ſhape than ever, by the extinction of our own, when this country has been once more enfeebled by its own internal diſſenſions and conflicts. So natural is it for a nation to encroach upon the rights of another, at the time that it is weakened and diſtreſſed, and ſo clearly is the deſign of England manifeſted by our hiſtory, her uſurpation continually treading upon the heels of our infirmity. In the American war, however, Ireland burſt the chain of theſe uſurpations—how?—by her Parliament. It was our own Parliament then, aided and urged by a high-ſpirited people, whoſe hearts throbbed with liberty, and whoſe hands were ſtrong with voluntary arms; it was here, I ſay, within theſe walls, that this aſſembly, the organ of the popular will, put forth its voice and demanded the freedom of our conſtitution, and the uncontrouled, legiſlative and ſupreme authority of the land. It was here before the breath of the Parliament of Ireland, that the uſurping domination of England bowed its head and dropped the ſceptre of its power, and therefore it is that our Parliament is now to be utterly deſtroyed, root and branch, not a fibre of it left in the land, leſt it ſhould grow again, and ſhoot, ſpread and flouriſh, and leſt Ireland at ſome hallowed moment ſhould once more through the medium of this aſſembly recover its freedom. Annihilate the Parliament of Ireland, that is the cry that comes acroſs the water—Now is the time—Ireland is weak—Ireland is divided—Ireland is appalled by civil war—Ireland is covered with troops—martial law brandiſhes its ſword throughout the land—now is the time to put down Ireland for ever—now ſtrike the blow—who? —*is it you?*—will you obey that voice?—will you betray your country?

Lord CASTLEREAGH ſaid it was by no means his deſire to re-argue the queſtion ſo extenſively debated on Tueſday; the object of the Honourable Baronet was to expunge this paragraph from the Addreſs, and to that only he would ſpeak.—What did the paragraph imply to any man who took the pains of reading it? Nothing more than the readineſs of the Houſe to enter into the conſideration of ſuch meaſures as ſhould be moſt likely to conſolidate the ſtrength of the Empire. Could any man deny that this was a deſirable object? or could any man expect that ſuch a metaphorical expreſſion would be laid hold of to imply that by it that Houſe was ſpecifically pledged to the meaſure of an Union?—It was urged, that the perſon repreſenting Government in that Houſe had not declared poſitively to the Houſe, that he would not again bring forward the queſtion this Seſſion: Could this be a motive for refuſing aſſent to the paragraph? What was the declaration made by that perſon? that he would look to the ſenſe of Parliament and of the Nation, and give it its fair weight, in the prudential conſideration of re-agitating the queſtion. But convinced, as he was, that the meaſure was one of great and important advantage, he would never loſe ſight of it; and if he felt that conviction, he would deſert—baſely deſert his duty, were he influenced by clamour to abandon it. He had not pledged himſelf to renounce it for the Seſſion, but he was pledged by a ſtronger tie—his attention to the opinion of Parliament and the Country: had it been neceſſary to bind him by ſuch a promiſe—had he been ſuch a perſon as nothing but an extorted conſent could bind, how eaſy would it be for the Miniſter to elude ſuch a promiſe; how eaſy, if the ſenſe of the country ſhould change, would he be able, by a prorogation, to put an end to this Seſſion, and propoſe the meaſure in a new one? Was the Parliament ſo diſtruſtful of itſelf as to find ſuch a promiſe neceſſary? was it ſo afraid of the change of ſentiment in the country, as to wiſh to tie up its own hands againſt the meaſure? if it were ſo, might not ſuch a Parliament be ſent back to its Conſtituents, if it were frantic enough to bind itſelf by a reſolution which might render it neceſſarily regardleſs of the voice and intereſt of the country? Parliament had at all times the power of diſmiſſing from immediate diſcuſſion any meaſure propoſed, but it could not exclude future diſcuſſion; it was the duty of the Miniſter to offer whatever he thought for the national advantage; by the Conſtitution, he could not be precluded from propoſing ſuch meaſures, it was his imperative duty, which he muſt diſcharge; had ſuch been the opinion, or ſuch the rule of Parliament, we ſhould not have the Britiſh Conſtitution. Were party cabal or party trick to influence his exerciſe of duty, we ſhould not enjoy that Conſtitution—for by the Britiſh Conſtitution the origination of great national meaſures is pleaſed in

the Crown; had it been heretofore in the power of party cabal to resist even the investigation of such measures, would that Constitution have been what it is? were a British Minister to be influenced by *Round Robins* and *Cabals*, by combinations, to withhold from men, on account of their political conduct, the bread due to their professional labours, the British empire would not be in the glorious situation in which it now stood.—If this country, said his Lordship, is to be governed by combination, it is brought to absolute ruin. Governmen has been charged with dismissing its servants for their political opinions: it is the right and privilege of Government to do so; the British Constitution does not consider places under the Crown as mere annuities for the emolument of the possessors: it invests the Minister with the right of choosing and dismissing the servants of the Crown, to give weight and dignity to the Crown; and if the Minister must retain those persons who are hostile to his measures, because such is the will of a faction, the constitutional power of the Crown, and with it the Constitution itself, are at an end.—The same Constitution gives to Parliament a controul of the conduct of that Minister; to Parliament he is answerable for his conduct, not to faction; and Parliament is no longer Parliament if it has not energy sufficient to controul the Minister. What kind of an opposition has been arranged against the measure discussed yesterday? Do not gentlemen perceive the effort of interested party to form a cabal for private purposes?—Look to the opposition in Scotland against the same measure—composed exactly of the same materials: see who are the most active here—some of the very men who by attempting to degrade and vilify Parliament have given a pretext to traitors and rebels. What were the last words of the person now most forward, upon his seceding from the House? "That the Parliament was so lost to every constitutional principle, that he was ashamed to continue to sit in it, and therefore abandoned his duty:" This was his last expression. What was the last effort of his public life? To assimilate the Parliament of Ireland to the Government of France, to carve out the country into French departments, and by a system of representation which had destroyed France, to introduce anarchy and massacre into this country. After failing in this project from the spirit and good sense of Parliament, did he not shrink from the contest excited by his own principles and his own example? Have the loyal gentlemen, who now strangely voted with him and his party, so forgotten all these circumstances; have they so lost the recollection of those calamities, that they can look to him and his friends with confidence for the future Government of this country? It is impossible;—the phrensy of a moment may have seduced them into such strange company; their returning good sense will permit them to look upon it as it deserves.—

Another deſcription of the opponents of this meaſure is of a very oppoſite kind indeed to that perſon and his friends:—They are the men, who, in the time of danger, ſtood forward like men to reſcue their country from the conſequences produced by thoſe who are now their allies. But thoſe men never can ſo far forget the common object—the connexion with Great Britain, (for which both of us are labouring, though with different opinions as to means) ſo far to diſgrace themſelves by acting with thoſe who wiſhed to debaſe Parliament and deſtroy their Conſtitution—let thoſe loyal gentlemen aſſure themſelves that they can never raiſe thoſe perſons to their own proud rank, though they may unhappily degrade themſelves to their level. Let them not be ſo hurried away by their feelings, as to entertain for a moment an idea that becauſe they happen to agree in this one point, a common co-operation with their enemies is neceſſary. Let them not be impoſed upon by the artifice of theſe inſinuations, that the meaſure is to be carried by a military force: it is a fraud practiſed upon their honeſty: it would be a wretched Government indeed, which would deſtroy the attached adherents of Monarchy by employing force or corruption to carry any meaſure, however advantageous in proſpect. Reſolved as I am, never to be deterred by cabal, from offering any meaſure to the diſcuſſion of Parliament, I never could embark in ſo abſurd a ſcheme as to conceive it poſſible to intimidate or corrupt the country into any meaſure whatever.—There have been in the courſe of debate inſinuations of a general nature, that Miniſters had employed illicit means to ſecure ſupport: I paſs them by as they deſerve, with contempt; but I have alſo heard particular circumſtances mentioned as facts, of ſo baſe and falſe a tenor, that I will trace them to the individual, be him who he may, from whom they originate, and force him to make a public diſavowal. I ſhall not delay the Houſe much longer, but before I ſit down, ſuffer me to deprecate that ſpecies of equivocal language which is neither altogether perſonal, or altogether parliamentary: if gentlemen conceive that any man on this ſide of the Houſe has done them perſonal injury, let them come forward and ſeek redreſs like men. If they wiſh to enter into perſonal conteſt, let them avow their wiſh and come forward like men; but let them not reſort to that kind of language, which is juſt ſo far ſhort of perſonal offence as to ſhelter them from perſonal chaſtiſement; let them not diſgrace Parliament by introducing that which has proved ſo fatal to the country—angry invective and illiberal perſonality.

Mr. G. Ponsonby ſaid, he once heard of a certain perſon who had been ſo bold as to tell the people of this country in that Houſe, that it was idle and ſilly in them to talk about ſubjects which they did not underſtand; though that ſubject was the

ſurrender of their Conſtitution and Liberty;—but he could not believe that even the bold inſolence of that man would venture to tell the majority of the Iriſh Houſe of Commons that they were dupes of faction; that they acted under the influence and management of factious men, when they refuſed to annihilate the Iriſh Parliament, and give up the independance of the country. How did the country gentlemen of Ireland feel on this? Are they tame enough to bear the imputation of being fools—inſtruments that are uſed by a few factious men for the worſt purpoſes? Would they ſubmit to ſuch a declaration from a young man, who had nothing to ſhield him from their contempt, but the office which he abuſed? Of what men was the body which oppoſed the Miniſter on this ſubject conſtituted? Certainly men of different political principles were to be found among them. —But was the Conſtitution of Ireland to be ſurrendered, becauſe there was a difference of opinion on ſome queſtions between thoſe who were unanimous on this? You, Mr. Speaker, ſaid he, are of that number—and, no doubt, it is the weakneſs of your mind which thus renders you the tool of party—or it is factious diſpoſition which has placed you at the head of that party. Where are the cabals and round-robin of which the Noble Lord ſpeaks? Is it in that profeſſion which is truly called the firſt profeſſion in the country; and in which are to be found men, to whom compared, the Noble Lord, in every point of view, is but a Puny Child? That profeſſion have this day declared unanimouſly that they will not accept of the office from which a Right Honourable Gentleman near him was diſmiſſed, becauſe he would not ſubmit his underſtanding and his conſcience to the will of the Noble Lord. Was that the reſult of intereſted faction? Had they been hunting for places, from which the Intemperate Folly of the Noble Lord had diſplaced the old and faithful ſervants of the Crown, his charge would have been founded; but acting as they had done, what honeſt man but muſt feel indignation at the aſperſions which were wantonly thrown on them? Did the Noble Lord know any thing of the Conſtitution?—If he did, muſt he not know that the Houſe of Commons have a right to adviſe the Miniſter; and that the People have a Right to expreſs their ſenſe of his meaſures? Did the Noble Lord already think himſelf an abſolute Monarch in Ireland; or that the King's ſervants held their places ſubject to him only, and ſo long as they agree with his meaſures? It was the duty of that Houſe to expreſs their ſenſe of public meaſures; and Parliament had often diſmiſſed the Miniſter for propoſing bad meaſures. But did the Noble Lord acquieſce in the opinion of the Houſe in this inſtance? No—he ſaid, indeed, he would not *now* puſh the meaſure; but he declared at the ſame time, that he would never loſe ſight of it. No thanks to the Noble Lord for now puſhing it, for he *could*

not carry it—thanks to the cabal; thanks to the virtue and ſpirit which had appeared both in and out of Parliament. But let the ſpirit of the Houſe or of the country ſlumber, and then we know from experience what uſe the Noble Lord will make of the favour of the Crown to force the meaſure on the country. Even then, he believed, the attempt would be unſucceſsful; but he would not leave it in the power of the Noble Lord to practiſe again in ſupport of the meaſure thoſe unconſtitutional arts which he knew he *had* practiſed. No; let the Noble Lord avow that he never will again propoſe to the country this abominable meaſure while he continues in office; let his friends adviſe him to this ſtep, the only one which can put the country at reſt. He would now addreſs himſelf to thoſe gentlemen who ſupported the meaſure; they were intereſted perhaps in ſupporting the Miniſter; but moſt of them muſt be more intereſted in the peace and proſperity of the country. He ſubmitted it then, whether their true intereſt did not call on them in this inſtance to oppoſe the Miniſter, and put to reſt a queſtion which cannot but agitate violently the public mind. It was not diſgraceful to recant an error; they might have miſ-reckoned on the ſentiment of the Houſe; they might not have known the ſenſe of the country; and they would not, as men of ſenſe, endanger the peace of the country, by keeping afloat a queſtion which it was already evident could not be carried.

Mr. Ponſonby then alluded to the charges of inconſiſtency which had been made againſt thoſe gentlemen who had ſeceded from Parliament in diſguſt, and now returned to it. He was one of them. He now found he miſcalculated the virtue of Parliament and the people. He regretted his miſtake; he now ſaw the gentlemen of that Houſe begin at laſt to ſee that their eſtates were better than their places: ſuch good ſenſe and honeſty in Parliament would lead to re-eſtabliſh the peace of the country. In the peace of the country alone was he intereſted; and to promote that, he would, day after day, preſs the Miniſter, until he forced him to make a full and formal renunciation of this dangerous and wicked meaſure.

Hon. D. Browne profeſſed that he never gave a vote in that Houſe which was more the reſult of honeſt conviction, or with which he was better ſatisfied than the one which he gave laſt night on the diſcuſſion of this queſtion: his ſentiments were not altered, and his vote would ſtill be the ſame. He could not but ſuſpect the motives of gentlemen who were for preventing a fair diſcuſſion of the meaſure on its own merits; for the only way to aſcertain the goodneſs or defects of a meaſure, was to give it a candid and diſpaſſionate conſideration. The judgment of any man would not be injured by exerciſe; and every Member of that

Houſe would be as free to reject the meaſure, implied in the paragraph now debated, after he had afforded a due conſideration to it, as before. After ſome further obſervations on the ſubject, not very remarkable for their novelty or application, he concluded by ſupporting the Addreſs as it ſtood.

Counſ. J. Beresford applauded the manly and honourable manner in which the Noble Lord (Caſtlereagh) had this night declared himſelf; that the Noble Lord had fairly declared, that he did not conſider the Houſe, by voting for the Addreſs as it ſtood, as binding the Houſe to ſupport the meaſure of an Union. The Addreſs barely pledged the Houſe to a conſideration of the ſubject. It came down to the Houſe, recommended for conſideration by our moſt gracious Sovereign, and on that account, at leaſt, merited conſideration. The unhappy feuds which had ſo long agitated this country, and converted it to a charnel-houſe, called for ſome effectual and extraordinary remedy: would the Houſe then reject without conſideration; would they preclude themſelves from hearing the Propoſitions ſuggeſted by the Father of his People, as a *panacea* for the diſorders of this diſtracted land? He deprecated that kind of imputation coming from gentlemen who oppoſed Miniſters on the laſt night's debate, charging on gentlemen who ſupported Miniſters on the principle of Union, the influence of private intereſt or corrupt motives. He ſpurned ſuch language with indignation; there was at leaſt as much honour, as much patriotiſm and independant principle amongſt thoſe who ſupported, as amongſt thoſe who oppoſed the principle of an Union; and in voting for that principle, as he ſhould this night, he ſhould feel himſelf entailing upon his country no diſgrace, by more cloſely and inſeparably connecting her with Great Britain, the miſtreſs of commerce, the protectreſs of Europe, and the admiration of the world.

Mr. Martin.—Mr. Speaker, I riſe to thank the Noble Lord for his declaration on cloſing the laſt debate on this ſubject, that he would not preſs the meaſure until the country had ſufficient time to be well informed on a ſubject of ſuch national importance; but I applaud the Noble Lord infinitely more for his declaration now, that he would take the firſt opportunity that occurred, after allowing a due time for a fair and liberal diſcuſſion every where. We have been told with great triumph by my friend the honourable Baronet, that ſince the year 1782, this country has afforded a perpetual ſcene of diſcontent;—Sir, I proteſt this is not, in my humble opinion, an argument againſt a Legiſlative Union: I think the reverſe. Since 1782, we are told that the nation has increaſed in agriculture, manufactures and trade; it is true, and yet this is no reaſon againſt a Legiſlative Union. Since that period, wealth has been more generally diffuſed through Ire-

land, than any other Country; the poor have grown rich, and there has arifen amongft us an agricultural yeomanry. If a country, Sir, that was poor, is increafing beyond example in its agriculture and its commerce, and yet becomes hourly difcontented, and at laft breaks out into open rebellion againft all its conftituted authorities; what is to be done? Will my honourable friend propofe to defolate the land, and deprive them of all thofe benefits? We are told again, that Great Britain was in earneft, and fincere in the Adjuftment that took place in 1782—fhe was; and and if fhe has changed her mind, it is, from the imperative fituation of affairs; for thofe difcontents we muft look for fome caufe, that caufe is faction. The mifchievous trade and fpeculation of Parliament; it is a faction that has arifen within thefe walls; who labour inceffantly, who fee the woes of the nation fo long only as the Minifter has been unmindful of their own, and for the redrefs of them are fo clamorous, that they "make the night joint labourer with the day." We are told by the honourable Baronet, that although Parliament had funk for fome time *a little* in his eftimation; and although *he once thought* that fome *little correction* by *reform* was neceffary, yet that fuch was his *prefent confidence* in their *integrity* and *difintereffed virtue*, that he was *very fure* that they would anfwer every beneficial purpofe to the nation, without any fuch *harfh* correction. The honourable Gentleman next to the honourable Baronet fpoke of *his confidence* in the Parliament, which Parliament *he abandoned* for their *incorrigible wickednefs and corruption*. This change of fentiment, Mr. Speaker, has not been publicly avowed much above eight and forty hours; and you may beft judge, Sir, whether there were any kind offices manifefted at an earlier period to bring about fo extraordinary a revolution in the moral frame. Now all this is no argument againft a Legiflative Union, but it is a very ftrong one for it. I appeal to the common recollection of the Houfe, and to every corner of the kingdom, whether the leaders of this debate did not declare, that the refufal of a Parliamentary Reform was the caufe of every mifery the country fuftained, and finally of the Rebellion. Did any, and which of them declare, that he would never accept any office under any Adminiftration, nor fupport any Government that did not adopt the plan of fpecific Reform, which he fubmitted to them? Now, Sir, I afk the nation, if the refufal of Parliamentary Reform was the caufe of all that has been afferted; (and I think it greatly contributed to it) and that that is to be perfevered in, how is the country to be faved? There wants none to this tiffue but one abfurdity, which is this, that thofe gentlemen who are become the inftruments of this faction, and who left the honourable Mover in a Minority of Seven, fhould now declare, that they had in turn changed their opinions, and would fupport that very Reform which

they rejected with indignation; let us now ſee, what means the gentlemen on the other ſide of the Houſe have to propoſe to ſave the country, other than that of *ruling* it; which ſome think would *not ſave it.* Even until this moment one party declared, that the refuſing to purify the Parliament was the cauſe, the ſole cauſe of every calamity; another diviſion of this ſame party declared, that the factious declamations, and the induſtry with which they taught the people to clamour for what they could not comprehend, and what could adminiſter no remedy to the evils they affected to cure, was the true, legitimate and only cauſe of theſe calamities. On all hands it is admitted that *ſomething muſt be done.* The gentlemen on the other ſide condemn *as ruin*, not only the *adopting* a Legiſlative Union with Great Britain, but the *conſidering* or *underſtanding* the ſubject before we determine not to entertain it. This *ſomething* then, is the Legiſlative Union which we are confident to hope may be ſo ſhaped by the wiſdom of the two countries, as to prove a true and laſting remedy for thoſe miſeries we have all lamented. We have ſhewn *our plan*; if it is condemned, let all thoſe gentlemen who ſo confidently cenſure, what they diſdain to conſider, and who are ſo deſirous to commit their minority, who almoſt conſtitute the majority of this Houſe, againſt the meaſure; we call upon upon them to produce *their plan*, which, if found better, will be the beſt condemnation of ours: and I promiſe them for one, I ſhall be the firſt to ſubſcribe it. What, Sir! Is it to ſave the country, to criticiſe with a jealous minuteneſs every plan offered by thoſe who are *really intereſted* in its ſalvation, and with a cautious policy, more *cautious* than *honeſt*, to withhold any propoſition of their own? We have ſhewn to the world our caſe; ſome of them are lawyers, and I call upon them to ſhew a better title than the Noble Lord has done, to the gratitude of the nation. They remind me of the humorous ſtory of a modern Traveller, who relates that his companion never paſſed the ſtatue of Jupiter without a courtly obeiſance; and, as not quite ſure of a ſudden reſtoration to the ſuperintending care of the Capitol, *as* regularly attended the reigning power at the Vatican.— If our Conſtitution ſtands, and may it ſtand for ever! they have avowed nothing ſo monſtrous as to be excluded from its bleſſings. If it falls, and is reduced to the firſt chaotic principles, ſome may hope, like what is lighteſt and vileſt, to float upon the ſurface.

But, Mr. Speaker, we are told that England will afterwards have a right to levy every arbitrary Tax upon this Country to its utter ruin; and the diſſemination of this folly has deluded many perſons out of this Houſe to diſapprove the meaſure. I tell the Hon. Gentlemen on the other ſide, and I deſire to be contradicted if I am wrong, That the terms of the Union may ſecure to this Country the quantum of Taxation which it ſhall be poſſible

for the united Parliaments in Britain to levy. The rate of taxes here may be after the Union infinitely leſs than they are at preſent.

An Hon. Gentleman not in his place, has told you Sir, that Gentlemen who prefer their eſtates to their places, will vote againſt this meaſure. I have no office, and I prefer my eſtate to the income of any three of the proudeſt offices in the Country, and therefore ſhall vote for taking this meaſure into conſideration. We hear that no one argument has been uſed in favour of any plan of Legiſlative Union, now here is one that I have not heard.—By an Union England and Ireland will be made in effect one Conntry, and England muſt then uſe the ſame exertions to ſave the county of Mayo, as ſhe would do to protect Suſſex. It is ſaid, in any event ſhe will protect Ireland—ſhe will undoubtedly; but there is a greater effort which England will exert after the Uuion even by *ſtaking her own* fate with *ours*. This is an argument and I rely upon it as ſuch. Have we not heard, that when the French landed at Bantry bay, England over-looked our ſecurity and was indifferent to our fate, and it became the ſubject of Parliamentary enquiry; we heard it from the hon. and learned Gentleman moſt forward in the Debate. Now Sir, if this calumny on the character of Great Britain weighs with no other Gentleman, it muſt with the Hon. Member who uſed the argument as a motive for conſidering the propriety of a Legiſlative Union. We are told a Union will degrade the Nation. Hear the anſwer, and it is a ſhort one. If Ireland Sir, be united to England, England muſt be united to us; now, it is not pretended it can degrade England, and yet if it degrades one it muſt both; ſo the true and only concluſion is, that it degrades neither. The Hon. Baronet is diſpoſed to forget the original ſin ariſing from the very formation of Parliament and the corruptions of its members in this one act of diſintereſted virtue. Has Parliament no intereſt in voting againſt this Union? Alas! Sir, they have much more *than their conſtituents*; but they have many county members. On the calculation of intereſt they muſt have *thirty one*, that is the number which it is ſuppoſed will be excluded from the Union Parliament; but they ought to have more, for in many inſtances, the collegue who is excluded, will by uniting his intereſt with ſome other perſon, exclude the Member who ſhould vote for the Union; and this argument might in very many inſtances apply to both the County Members. Many of the great borongh proprietors are againſt this meaſure; have they no intereſt in oppoſing it? Is it nothing to weigh in golden ſcales the fate of every Adminiſtration coming into this Country? Is it *no power* to be able to abuſe power, to expel two Lord Lieutenants for endeavouring to reſcue the Conſtitution, and turn to flight one Commander in Chief, Sir R. Abercrombie, who never fled in battle, becauſe he differed from them—becauſe he ſaid the

diſcipline in ſome part of the army was relaxed? He diſapproved of burning houſes and of free-quarters; and the borough proprietors choſe to have both. Are theſe matters fact? if ſo, they cannot recur frequently, and the *nation exiſt*; and yet, the Gentlemen on the other ſide, who once rent almoſt the vault of Heaven in their complaints, have now no remedy but ſubmiſſion; yet, Mr. Speaker, this is the language of this night, and after ſuch language can the Union continue to be unpopular?—It cannot, it ſhall not. For example: Galway a town juſtly dear to me, has ſuddenly prejudged the meaſure. In truth, Sir, the diſcuſſion of this ſubject in Parliament is what muſt and will decide the public mind. I will now engage to meet the Hon. Gentleman before his conſtituents and to convince them, and to poll them and the population of the town againſt him on this intereſting ſubject. But the Hon. Gentleman ſays it is unpopular; that indeed is an argument, if after due conſideration it ſhall continue to be ſo. But I am happy to think, that the worthy Baronet's conſtituents may change their opinion of this meaſure, as they did regarding himſelf and his collegue; I underſtand they now think moſt favourably of both. My hon. friend muſt know, that when public opinion ſets him higheſt, it is that ſentiment to which I would moſt willingly ſubſcribe. The beſt meaſures, however, were at firſt unpopular: The Octennial bill was in this Houſe unpopular. The Adminiſtration of the Country once offered to ſupport a tax upon Abſentees; would that, Mr. Speaker, have been a good meaſure or not? This meaſure was oppoſed and loſt, and ſome of thoſe very Gentlemen who but a ſeſſion ago oppoſed a meaſure that would bring home our Abſentees, now principally clamour againſt the Union on the ground that it will occaſion ſome Abſentees.—There was another meaſure greatly unpopular in the nation, which originated in the Duke of Portland's Adminiſtration; I mean fencible regiments for the protection of Ireland: I think, Mr. Speaker, ſuch a defence would have been at leaſt as conſtitutional as regiments of the line or alien troops ſubſidiſed. There have been even characters, Sir, very generally and univerſally odious, that have on a particular occaſion become popular; ſo that popularity, Mr. Speaker, though ſome teſt is not always a ſure one.—Is it not an argument for the Union to ſay, that the power of the Lord Lieutenant of this Country is abſolute as to evil, but circumſcribed as to good? That we have the theory of the Engliſh Conſtitution is our boaſt; that we have abuſed it is our reproach.—Is the 36th and 37th of the preſent reign an abuſe of it? Is the Preſs bill, which while it ſet at nought the liberty of the preſs, refuſes to recognize that that liberty is a conſtitutional right? Is *this* the Conſtitution? What ſhall I ſay of three Indemnity bills in four years, protecting every magiſtrate and every ſoldier for all the enormities which in

that time have been perpetrated, from a common aſſault up to murder and petty treaſon?

Mr. Dobbs—Sir there is one thing, and one thing only, in which I agree with the three Members who ſpoke laſt, on the oppoſite ſide. It is Sir, in reprobating with them all perſonality. But Sir perſonality has not been confined to this ſide of the Houſe, it will however I truſt in future be diſcarded by all: and here Sir I cannot help obſerving, that were I to ſay any thing perſonal of the Noble Lord, who is the firſt Miniſter here, it would be favourable to him. In a tranſaction of ſome importance during the laſt Seſſion, I had frequent intercourſe with the Noble Lord, and I found his manners pleaſing, and what is more to his honour, his heart humane. I found him bent as he ought to be, to do what juſtice demanded, but at the ſame time to temper that juſtice with mercy. Sir I am ſorry the Noble Lord has thought proper to make an attack on the Barriſters of Ireland; a body of men I will venture to ſay more truly patriotic, than any other in the Nation unleſs it be the preſent Houſe of Commons. We indeed have it in our power to take precedence, and I truſt we have not only the power but the will. Sir the conduct of the Iriſh Barriſters has more than once been inſtrumental in ſaving the Nation. They were among the foremoſt of the glorious volunteers of 1780, 1781 and 1782, who at once gave peace and ſecurity at home, and protected us from foreign invaſion, when the fleets of England hid themſelves in their ports, and the French and Spaniſh fleets rode triumphant in the Britiſh Channel. The Barriſters of Ireland originated the yeomanry to whom this country chiefly owes its preſent ſalvation. The Barriſters of Ireland originated the oppoſition to this intended Union that would at once degrade, and deſtroy a kingdom. But Sir it is not wonderful that men of birth, education and talent, ſhould be the protectors of the rights of their country. I ſay Sir for the moſt part of birth, for I will venture to aſſert, there is not a family in Ireland of 1000l. a year that has not a near relative at the Bar. I ſay Sir of talent, for every man in looking to the line of life, his children are to purſue, ſelects that ſon whom he ſuppoſes poſſeſſed of the beſt abilities, for the profeſſion of the law; and here too Sir let me obſerve, that where men have not the advantage of birth or fortune, it muſt be by ſuperior talents indeed, that they make their way through the difficulties attending the firſt commencement of the legal profeſſion. Let me not then hear again, a reflection on a body of men, that are the pride and ornament of their country,

Sir a Rt. Hon. Gentleman on the oppoſite Bench has ſaid, he will vote for the Addreſs becauſe he thinks it indecent not to give the queſtion of a ſpecific Union a fair diſcuſſion. What Sir

are we to go into the minutiæ of a Union, when the queſtion that has been lately debated for twenty-one hours, and is now again debating, is, whether we will have a Union at all? Sir the Rt. Hon. Gentleman cannot doubt the meaning of the words of the clauſe in debate, as to the connexion between the two countries, becauſe the Miniſter himſelf has avowed it is a Legiſlative Union. Sir another honourable member, who openly avows his approbation of a Legiſlative Union, argues that it will benefit our trade, ſtrengthen the connexion between the two countries, and give us permanent tranquillity. I did on the laſt debate endeavour to point out to you Sir, and to the Houſe, that in point of trade England has nothing to beſtow, and I offered to produce ſome of the moſt reſpectable merchants of Dublin at your Bar, to ſubſtantiate the fact. Sir I did on the laſt debate endeavour to point out to you and to the Houſe, that ſo far from ſtrengthening the connexion, it would lead to inevitable ſeparation. Sir I did in the laſt debate endeavour to point out to you, and to the Houſe, that it would weaken the ſtrength of the loyaliſts, and enable the republican to triumph over the Conſtitution. Sir I will not take up the time of the Houſe, in going over the arguments, I have before offered, but ſhall content myſelf with reaſſerting that a Legiſlative Union cannot benefit our trade,—cannot ſtrengthen the connexion between the two countries,—and cannot give us permanent tranquillity.

Sir there is but one way to tranquilliſe Ireland, it is to redreſs every real grievance and put an end to every religious diſſenſion. Let no man flatter himſelf, that Ireland has been hitherto governed as it ought. I would aſk no other evidence to prove the contrary, than the Reports of both Houſes of Parliament in the laſt Seſſions. What Sir, but radical errors in the Government, could make 400,000 men take an oath againſt the Conſtitution? Sir, I love the Britiſh form of Government, though I hate its perverſion, and abominate its tyranny towards Ireland. Sir I love Iriſh freedom, but I hate Iriſh treaſon, and Iriſh ſedition. Sir I revere the Chriſtian Religion, but I deteſt bigotry, and perſecution wherever I find it, whether it be amongſt thoſe of the Eſtabliſhment, the Diſſenters or the Catholics.

Sir the commencement of this Seſſion has afforded me infinite pleaſure. Nay Sir, the ſentiments that have lately been delivered here, ſeem to have operated on me as a ſalutary medicine. I have for the greater part of the laſt ten days been confined to my houſe by indiſpoſition. But the ſpirit diſplayed here on the laſt debate has revived me, and I hope by the determination of this night to be reſtored to health and vigour.

Sir, if there be three men upon earth to whom Ireland is peculiarly indebted, it is Mr. Pitt, the Noble Lord who is firſt Miniſter here, and the author of that Pamphlet which iſſued from,

and is acknowledged by the Caſtle. Sir, till now it was only ſuſpicion, that a plan had been formed, to reduce Ireland into the ſituation of a province. But from the declarations of the three I have alluded to, ſuſpicion terminates in certainty; for the Noble Lord has in his place declared, that it was a meaſure that would never be loſt ſight of, till it was carried. Sir we have now full notice of Britiſh intention and Britiſh determination. We alſo know Sir, that it has been held out in the pamphlet I allude to, that a Union ſhould be accompanied with certain benefits, to the Catholics, to the Diſſenters, and to the People at large. What Sir, ſhall we allow England to purchaſe our People by favours, which we have equally the power to beſtow? Sir I ſay if there is common ſenſe in this Houſe; if there is common ſpirit among us, we will ſhew to the People, that we are not a venal, a debaſed, a profligate Houſe of Commons; we will ſhew to the People that we have been vilified and abuſed by the author of the Caſtle pamphlet; and we will ſhew to the People that we are the true and legitimate gnardians of Iriſh happineſs, Iriſh proſperity, and Iriſh liberty.

Sir, the preſent attempt would never have been made, were the People of this country united in affection to each other, and at the ſame time ſatisfied with their Government. What then is the path that we are to purſue? It is this, decidedly this, to carefully examine the ſources of diſcontent, and diſſatisfaction, and do them away. I will not Sir at this moment, take upon me to ſay, what it is we ought to do; but this I aſſert without heſitation, that we ſhould give to the People every thing, that is conſiſtent with the preſervation of our preſent Conſtitution, and our preſent connexion with Great Britain. Theſe Sir, are the only bonndaries that I draw between what the People can demand, and what the Iriſh Legiſlature can beſtow.

Mr. Holmes obſerved, that he ſhould not apologiſe to qualify the vote he was about to give—his conduct was owing to the deciſion of his mind—it was truly aſtoniſhing, he ſaid, that from the ſame data concluſions ſo oppoſite could be drawn. The Houſe, he was bold to ſay, was competent to every thing; and, when it would come before the Houſe, he would be prepared to meet it. By ſuch a conduct, as gentlemen ſeemed willing to purſue, the Addreſs would probably be loſt.

Mr. I. M. O'Donnell.—It would have been well worth the attention of the Iriſh Miniſter, who ſeems to have made the ruin of his country his neareſt and dearest object, to have ſuppreſſed, previous to having brought forward this favourite and infamous meaſure, all ſuch books as this I now hold in my hand, the 5th vol. of Parliamentary Debates. Much pains have been uſed in England and Ireland, to prevent the circulation of all ſuch books

as would enlighten the underſtanding or teach men to prefer their country to their private intereſt. I ſhall in the courſe of delivering my ſentiments this night, not only be much influenced from what I have read in this book, but I ſhall uſe in ſupport of the Conſtitution of my country the very words ſpoken by a Rt. Hon. Gentleman oppoſite me, who now differs from what he formerly ſupported, a Gentleman whom I looked to as a pattern of private worth and political integrity. But Sir, before I quote from this ineſtimable volume, I muſt addreſs you in my own irregular and accuſtomed way: In oppoſing a Legiſlative Union I hope, I am confident, I have expreſſed the ſincere and determined ſentiments of my conſtituents, but as to a *Rt.* Hon. Gentleman, who *miſrepre*; I mean repreſents me in this Houſe as Member for Mayo, I thank God I have an opportunity of thus publicly declaring for myſelf, and I am confident for a majority of my brethren the freeholders of *Mayo*, that in his ſupport of an Union he is not acting in uniſon with our wiſhes, nor has he conſulted us on the occaſion. Sir the Rt. Hon. Gentleman wiſhes as he has often attempted to do before, to play a double fiddle, Both Sides of the Gutter, it is a deep game; it is a dangerous one; he will find it an unſucceſsful one, when he ſhall find himſelf rejected by his country, he will be publicly deſpiſed by the very Miniſter whom he ſtrives to ſupport even by the ruin of his country, but ſee how can this Rt. Hon. Gentleman reconcile to himſelf or his conſtituents his preſent conduct, his voting for a ſurrender of the Legiſlative rights of Ireland, to his conduct and ſtrong language at the time of the debate on the Commercial Propoſitions, at that time when the independance of his country was only ſquinted at; when the Miniſter of the day and his friends declared, that it could not be affected by the 4th Propoſition, what was his language then? I will repeat it, for I now ſee him in his place. On the 2d of Auguſt 1785, on the debate on the Iriſh Propoſitions, the Rt. Hon. Gentleman ſaid, "but Sir this arrangement has ſuggeſted an idea "in another country, that I am afraid to mention in *this* Houſe; "*I mean a Union*, Good God Sir, what Union could we have "with Great Britain but a Union of debt and taxation! a "Union depriving us of liberty and ruinous to our country," thoſe expreſſions reflected on him then immortal honour, what do they now? Eternal diſgrace. Sir, I will be bold to ſay that the great majority of the freeholders of Mayo are averſe to the meaſure, at any rate I am convinced they do not imagine that their repreſentatives have a right to vote away their freedom, even inſtructed for that purpoſe. Sir I love the connexion with England as well as the Rt. Hon. Gentleman; when my country was in danger, when the connexion was attacked by a foreign and internal force, while ſome were ſleeping, others trembling and ſome running from their country, I was running to defend it, and I

would do ſo this moment did the ſlighteſt neceſſity require it, but I will never vote for, nor will I ſuffer to be voted away, a ſurrender of the right of imperial Ireland, but I muſt excuſe the Rt. Hon. Gentleman, for he ſays "he is forced to ſpeak, but not by "his own inclination," how far that will ſatisfy his conſtituents I know not, as to the remarks and contradictions that the Rt. Hon. Gentleman has offered to the obſervations of the Hon. Baronet (*Sir L. Parſons*) as to our having ſurrendered for ever to Great Britain the right and power of making or appointing a King for Ireland, I do aſſert we have done ſo, for ſhould the Parliament of England and the King think fit to change the ſucceſſion to the Crown of Great Britain to any other perſon or family, we are bound thereby, and the King of England ſo appointed, would be *ipſo facto* King of Ireland, without any further recognition of our Parliament, for we have already provided it ſo, it is a part and a neceſſary part of our compact.

The noble lord, the oſtenſible miniſter, has thought proper to arraign the conduct of a body of men, who let me tell his lordſhip, ſtand on too proud and ſtable a foundation to be injured either by his praiſe or his cenſure. I mean the Bar, that reſpectable body who have ſaved this kingdom, it is to this ſet of men he has applied the gentleman-like word or epithet of *petty-fogging*; but that is a trifle to the noble lord in attacking thoſe, who dare oppoſe his projects, his deep, yet ill laid plans for Iriſh ſubjection; he tells the *country* gentlemen of Ireland, that they are *dupes* that have joined in cabal and party trick, and that they have aſſociated with democrats, ſeceders from their parliamentary duty and men who aim at the overthrow of the conſtitution, in the two diſtinctions made by the Noble Lord of us who oppoſe this meaſure. He has pointed out ſome as Democrats who failed in their attempt to overturn the Conſtitution, the others as loyal men, who in the hour of danger ſtepped forward in ſupport and defence of their King and Country. The minority on the laſt night amounted to 105; there never were ſeceders from this Houſe in number 15. Give me leave to aſk the Noble Lord, and I appeal to this Houſe, what an infamous meaſure muſt that be, propoſed by the Miniſter, which forced 90 acknowledged and tried loyal men to join with thoſe ſeceders, what a dangerous meaſure muſt it not be which unites men of ſuch diſcordant principles together for the defence of the country! That the Crown has a power to diſmiſs its Servants I will not deny, but I aſſert this Houſe has a power and it is a duty incumbent on it, to interfere and call the Miniſter to an account if he ſhall exerciſe that power for an unconſtitutional purpoſe, as has been done in the diſmiſſal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Serjeant. I declare Mr. Speaker, I do feel infinite regret at ſee-

ing a meaſure of this ſort brought forward under the Adminiſtration of a Nobleman I ſo fully reſpect—a Nobleman who has already, in ſpite of every effort to oppoſe him, nearly tranquilliſed Ireland, who ſatisfied and appeaſed *India* more by character than by arms, and has afforded Mr. Bacon an opportunity of uniting genius and truth in a ſtatue of Lord Cornwallis, ſheathing his ſword with one hand and with the other pouring the *cornucopia* of plenty over the nations of India. I am confident that Noble Lord has been deceived as to the wiſhes and determination of the people of Ireland on this ſubject. I will candidly ſay, I am certain the Miniſter in this Houſe was deceived, elſe he never could have proceeded on this extraordinary, this important attempt to revolutioniſe this country. For my part I never deceived the government, from the firſt I ſaid it was a meaſure I would oppoſe, that it was fraught with miſchief to the kingdom, and muſt be ruinous to the Empire, that no honeſt Iriſhman could exiſt without oppoſing it, and that would anſwer the wiſhes and deſires of the ſeparatiſts and republicans, if Government would attempt to ſupport the abominable meaſure.

The Attorney General has thought proper on a former night to bring forward in ſupport of this Union, the writings of the greateſt friend that the liberties of Ireland ever had, I need not ſay I mean *William Molyneux*, it is not the firſt time that patriot has been inſulted by an inſolent law officer of the Crown, I believe his book was once burned by the common hangman, why? Becauſe it vindicated the rights and ſupported the Legiſlative independance of Ireland. Under the ſituation Ireland *then was in*, bound and fettered by England, he thought an Union was a deſirable thing and that England would not grant it, but were he now alive ſeeing us poſſeſſed of independance and commerce, neither of which could be taken from us but by our own act, he would be the firſt to call forth every energy of a free people, to defend their rights, and would tell them, that where they were attacked, it was legal, nay it was in the light of heaven neceſſary, to have recourſe *to firſt principles* to protect and ſupport them. I have felt it neceſſary to ſay ſo much, as well in vindication of the character of the dead, as to ſatisfy the feelings of a living relative of his, to whom I have the honour to be connected of the ſame; an inheritor of his private virtues, fully equal to him both in loyalty and patriotiſm; a man who could never be drawn into the vortex of cabal or faction, or ſeduced from his duty to his country by the glitter or ſeduction of a court, who in the hour of danger forgetful of eaſe and wealth, underwent every fatigue and riſque in defence of his King, little imagining the Conſtitution of Ireland would be ſo ſoon attacked, I now talk of *Sir Capel Molyneux*, who has on this very occaſion been amongſt the foremoſt to apprize his coun-

try of its danger and to call them to *their posts*. Let me now addreſs myſelf to the Noble Lord, I have endeavoured to oppoſe this meaſure without being perſonal, I reſpect his private character, I am an avowed friend to the Adminiſtration in which he holds ſo oſtenſible and ſo honourable a ſituation. It is more than probable, that on every other queſtion he will have my ſupport. I belong to no party; I belong to no cabal, nor to any intrigue, nor am I a dupe. Let me entreat the Noble Lord, as he values the peace and happineſs of his country, every thing dear to him as a Miniſter and a man, candidly and avowedly to come forward and declare he abandons and wholly gives up a meaſure which is ſo oppoſite to the wiſhes and intereſts of the kingdom; that he will not keep it ſuſpended over our heads, to keep alive the fermentation of the public mind, which had it not been for this meaſure would have now been quieted. I invoke him not to keep this odious deteſted meaſure ſuſpended over our heads by a ſingle hair, to be cut at his will or that of any other Miniſter.

Mr. O'Donnel concludsd a very long ſpeech with many very appoſite quotations, from the ſpeeches of Members who ſupported the Conſtitutional rights of Ireland in 1785 on the debate of the Iriſh Propoſitions, but who conſented to ſurrender them on the debate for an Union in 1799.

In the courſe of his ſpeech Mr. O'Donnel went largely into the queſtion of the Scotch Union, paid many compliments to that Nation, and to the gallant conduct of their ſoldiers, and particularly mentioned the brave and ſoldierlike conduct of the Frazer Fencibles, who he ſaid were brave in the field and accommodating in quarters, but ſhewed in the clearest manner that there was no argument to be drawn from the Scotch Union, favourable to the propoſed one between Great Britain and Ireland.

Lord CASTLEREAGH roſe to explain, and to aſſure the Right Hon. Member, nothing was farther from his wiſhes than to throw any aſperſions on the profeſſion. In the courſe of his ſpeech he had uſed the word "petty-fogging," but not in application to the Bar; it was a vulgar phraſe, and he was aſhamed of it.

Mr. EDGEWORTH alſo roſe to vindicate the profeſſion, which he could not help ſaying, had not been well treated by the noble Lord. It was peculiarly proper in that noble Lord to inculcate temper on the Houſe, whoſe official ſituation gave him ſo many advantages over other gentlemen, but it was peculiarly improper in him to have forgotten his own precept, and held out an example of heat and violence. The expreſſion which he repeated in order to give the noble Lord an opportunity to recall it, (for he could not conceive that with ſo many high law-officers near

him he meant to insult the profession) was the phrase, "Round Robin." Which means a *mutinous demand made by men ashamed to avow themselves the promoters of it.* Did the noble Lord believe that any of the gentlemen to whom he alluded, were ashamed to avow themselves. The meeting was conducted by a gentleman who was the Father of the Bar—was not he an ostensible patron of the measure which they had adopted? Mr. Edgeworth proceeded to say many handsome things of the profession, to which he avowed himself to have been bred. He confessed that when first the measure of an Union was mentioned he was a friend to it: but when he found the sense of the nation against it, he changed his determination.—On great political questions the trustees of the people will necessarily resort to the opinion of their constituents.—To us it should be sufficient to perceive that the majority of the people of this kingdom are averse to a Legislative Union. It is sometimes difficult to determine what constitutes a majority; it may be of two sorts, either of numbers or of property.—Where these differ, a Member of this House, who is a man of prudence and integrity, must be decided by concurrent circumstances:—but when these coincide, there can be no doubt how a delegated Legislator should conduct himself.—The majority both of property and numbers coincide upon the present occasion.—It would be invidious to assert that most of the property and the talents of this House are on this side, but when the arguments that have been advanced, and the names on each side shall be laid before the public, they would determine for themselves. Considering these circumstances, Mr. Edgeworth said he could not conceive that the Minister would persist in the measure, and if not, to what end persist in retaining the obnoxious paragraph? Were Gentlemen ashamed to avow themselves in error when the Nation was against them? If so, he ought to be ashamed. Is there any thing disgraceful in yielding to conviction?—if so, he must submit to that disgrace. He was convinced that such a measure, urged against the sense or the feelings of the nation, would be ruinous and unjustifiable.—The opposition to this measure is not the opposition merely of a *cabal.*—Mr. Edgeworth said he did not mean to catch at the word *cabal*, for the country gentlemen of Ireland ought not to follow the example of intemperance and indiscretion which the noble Lord had set them; but if the Minister was determined to press this measure against their sense and that of the country, he hoped these gentlemen would unite against him and form *one* body, and then they would be able effectually to frustrate any attempt of his, or of any *cabal of pensioners and placemen.* This measure, he jocularly observed, was beginning to make country gentlemen of more importance than they had been. Formerly, he said, a country member might come into Parlia-

ment and ſit there for years before his face or name was known—now they are likely to become a very valuable commodity; and if the meaſure were retained much longer they would riſe in price. He therefore recommended it to the Miniſter for his own ſake to let the queſtion reſt.—He humoroufly remarked that much as had been ſaid of the Miniſter's arts of corruption, they did not ſtand high in his opinion; he could not compliment the Miniſter upon his addreſs in this branch of his buſineſs. Mr. Edgeworth ſaid he could not boaſt of having, upon this occaſion, withſtood ſeductive temptation; not even the offer of a peerage had been made to *him; his* political virtue remained therefore immaculate, for it is allowed on all hands that the nymph is chaſte who has never been tried.—To be ſerious: he rejoiced to ſee that on great conſtitutional queſtions the buſineſs of party ſtopped in that Houſe; and, that though gentlemen ſpeculated with the Miniſter on other occaſions, on theſe they acted practically with the people. Ireland, he thought, owed great obligations to the Miniſter and his friends, for they had ſhewn, not only to her, but to Great-Britain, that ſhe poſſeſſes a Bar honeſt, independant, and energetic, above the temptations of emolument or ambition.—They had ſhewn that ſhe had a Parliament, which, however its members might, at ſome times, be diverted from a vigilant diſcharge of their duty, was, upon great occaſions, awake and vigorous to preſerve their independance:—The ſpectacle of this night, he truſted, would convince a neighbouring nation, that, whatever defects there might be in our national character, ariſing perhaps from conſtitutional vivacity, the people of Ireland poſſeſſed warm hearts and ſound heads.—An honourable friend had complained, that it was ungenerous to attack this nation when ſhe was nearly proſtrate, and breathleſs after the violent ſtruggles to which ſhe had lately been expoſed.—For his part, Mr. Edgeworth ſaid, he had never ſeen any perſons more alert and alive than the gentlemen at this ſide of the Houſe appeared to be at this inſtant; and if they were thus awake and vigorous after the fatigues occaſioned by a Rebellion, what muſt they be at any other period?—Men of the moſt diſſimilar habits, of the moſt oppoſite parties have, on this emergency, united in one common cauſe; thoſe materials which, when ſeparate, had not ſufficient attraction for each other, began to conſolidate when preſſed together by external circumſtances.—The Miniſter might, perhaps, find it dangerous to protract the preſent ſtate of unanimity. Time might, perhaps, conſolidate the ſcattered country gentlemen of this kingdom, and give them, as a body, that conſequence which they ought to poſſeſs under ſuch a Conſtitution as ours.

A really wiſe Adminiſtration would ſeiſe this criſis to tranquilliſe the country.—When the veſſel of the ſtate makes no way,

it will not anſwer to the helm.—When the veſſel is in rapid motion it will ſteer, and may, by a ſkilful pilot, be at length conducted to ſecurity.—An able Miniſter might, by a prudent uſe of this happy opportunity, reconcile the diſſenſions of this country, and make Iriſhmen ſhake hands with Iriſhmen.

Sir Boyle Roche conſidered faction as the ſource of paſt, and the ſeeds of preſent diſſenſion in this country, which nothing could effectually eradicate but an Union, which had his moſt cordial concurrence. Colliſions on the ſcore of independance had already happened, but how frequently between the Parliaments of the two kingdoms, ſince 1782, and particularly on the Regency buſineſs, when a parliamentary faction had *riſked*, and be very believed *wiſhed* the ſeparation of the two kingdoms, by breaking the main link of the chain by which they were connected—namely, the unity and identity of the Executive Branch of the Conſtitution.

Mr. St. George Daly obſerved that this laſt ſentiment of the Hon. Gentleman came from the Preſs, where he remembered to have ſeen it almoſt verbatim in the Hon. Gentleman's words.—He ſaid inſinuations had been thrown out againſt the motives of gentlemen on his ſide of the Houſe; he deſpiſed them; one gentleman had ſaid he juſt came from a meeting of the Bar, who voted thanks, and reſolved to give precedence to a Right Hon. Gentleman who had been diſmiſſed from office; that might have been proper, but the Hon. Gentleman went farther, and ſaid they were ready to declare any man a traitor to his country who ſhould accept the office. What arrogance could induce any gentleman to attribute this diſhonourable and illiberal ſentiment to the Iriſh Bar. He was convinced they were incapable of it—they knew that a man might accept the office without diſhonour—and if they did not, he would deſpiſe them. This practice to attributing unworthy motives to gentlemen was not to be borne. The gentlemen on the other ſide of the Houſe ſhall not do it; if they throw out ſuch inſinuations they muſt name the man—gentlemen ſhould not be bullied! With reſpect to the queſtion, he ſhould only ſay he remained of the ſame mind in which he was yeſterday, and ſo ſhould remain till his underſtanding was convinced. It was baſe to be bribed—very baſe—but it was baſer to make the charge, when it was known to be falſe.

Mr. Ponsonby roſe to vindicate himſelf from what he conceived a perſonal attack by Mr. Daly; but the cry of ſpoke! ſpoke! from the other ſide was ſo loud that he could not proceed.

The SPEAKER interfered—and ſaid, that if Mr. Ponſonby roſe only to explain, he had a right to be heard—but if he meant to go beyond mere explanation, the Houſe muſt give him leave.

The cry of ſpoke! continuing, Mr. TIGHE moved, that Mr. Ponſonby be permitted to ſpeak a ſecond time.

Lord CASTLEREAGH was for giving him leave to reply to a perſonal application, but inſiſted he could not go into a general anſwer without expreſs permiſſion.

Mr. C. OSBORNE oppoſed the motion for hearing Mr. Ponſonby —he ſaid there were ſeveral gentlemen who had been up ten or twelve times and could not meet the eye of the Chair.—Mr. Ponſonby had already delivered his ſentiments twice on this ſubject—and he did not wiſh to hear him any more.

The motion was carried almoſt unanimouſly.

Mr. PONSONBY ſaid, that no man who had the feelings of a gentleman would refuſe to do that which the Houſe had now almoſt unanimouſly done, when a perſonal attack had called on a Member to riſe. It was ſaid that he arrogated to himſelf in ſaying, that the Bar of Ireland were ready to declare any man an enemy to his country who would accept the office lately filled by a Right Hon. Gentleman. This was the firſt time he had ever heard a gentleman make a private converſation the ſubject of a parliamentary attack. God forbid that he ſhould arrogate to himſelf the right of ſpeaking the ſenſe of the Bar—he was a very humble member of that body, and was happy to follow their ſpirit. He claimed no honour but that of defending them againſt their calumniator. Whether he had ſaid the Bar was ready to come to ſuch a reſolution as the Hon. Gentleman had mentioned he could not ſay—for he kept no regiſter of his private converſations—but he was convinced he might ſay ſo with truth—and he appealed to many gentlemen who heard him and were preſent at that meeting, whether the general ſenſe of the Bar did not appear to be ſo, and whether they were not reſtrained from doing ſo by the advice of one or two gentlemen, who thought it wiſe rather to confine them to the expreſſion of their eſteem and thanks to the Right Hon. Gentleman and others, for their conduct on this queſtion. But the Hon. Gentleman ſays, that gentlemen are not to be bullied! I would have the Hon. Gentleman know, that neither ſhall any man on this ſide of the Houſe be bullied—and though it be a word he was not much in the habit of uſing, he muſt ſay he felt the moſt perfect *contempt* for the threats of that Hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Daly replied, that the converſation to which he had alluded had not been addreſſed particularly to him, but had been addreſſed to a variety of gentlemen.

Sir J. Blaquiere had thought this queſtion was at reſt. What more could gentlemen want than the declaration made laſt night by the noble Lord, that he would not preſs the meaſure while he found the ſenſe of the country againſt it. This attempt to keep the ſubject alive could ariſe only from deſperate faction which wiſhed to wear gentlemen out by debate. On the whole, he thought this was an unfortunate meaſure, as it gave new ſtrength to faction, which but for it would not have again raiſed its head. He did not foreſee, he confeſſed, that ſo many country gentlemen would have oppoſed the meaſure—ſo many indeed had gone over to that ſide, that one might think that the Hon. Gentleman at the other ſide had corrupted them, but that he was *incapable* of it—he meant, did not *know how* to corrupt.

Sir J. Parnel ſaid, that from the refuſal of the noble Lord to declare that he would not again propoſe the meaſure, becauſe if he did make ſuch a promiſe, he could not bind the Parliament, he inferred that he would again preſs it when an occaſion offered—and when the noble Lord talked of people deciding on what they did not underſtand, becauſe they declared againſt an Union without knowing the terms, he uſed the language of a man himſelf ignorant of what was the true ſtate of the queſtion. Could any man be ſo ſilly as not to know what the queſtion really was? It was ſimply this—whether the Parliament ſhould vote to turn themſelves out of doors. Were they ready to give up their conſtituents, and transfer the ſacred truſt repoſed in them, becauſe they did not underſtand the queſtion.—Was any Hon. Gentleman ſo ſilly as not to underſtand it?—[Mr. Alexander ſaid yes, he did not underſtand.]—[He was called to order by the Speaker.]—I put it then, ſaid Sir John, to the broad ſenſe of the Houſe, whether they could miſtake it?—Whether they did not know that it was, whether the Parliament of this country, and the independance of Ireland ſhould be given up for ever? The noble Lord ſays, he cannot enter into any promiſe to prevent theſe great objects from being aſſailed. Who then could? The Parliament itſelf. The Houſe might by a vote declare, that they would never ſurrender the Legiſlative Independence of Ireland, and yield it to the dominion of another. This vote would not indeed be law, but like the vote of Agiſtment, it would be a declaration of the ſenſe of the Houſe, which no Miniſter would attempt to controvert. It was degrading to the very name of Parliament to entertain the queſtion whether they ſhould put an end to their own exiſtence. What was the object of this paragraph? It was to

bind the Houſe to conſider that queſtion. Either declare that you will never entertain that queſtion, or appoint now a day to diſcuſs it, that the mind of the nation may be relieved from its anxiety, and the ſubject ſent to immortal reſt. The queſtion was ſo momentous, that he believed the country might be loſt if the Houſe would thus enter into a pablic agreement to conſider it, and did not immediately do ſo. He repeated it, that what the Secretary had ſaid was no ſecurity againſt the propoſal of the meaſure—and if he wiſhed to keep himſelf free, the Houſe, at leaſt, ſhould expreſs their ſenſe on it. Sir John then adverted to his own peculiar ſituation—declared he would in all minor points, ſubmit his opinion to that of thoſe with whom he acted, but this was a queſtion of paramount importance, which endangered the quiet of the people and the ſafety of the State. He declared he had received great favours from the Crown, for which he would always be grateful—but he had eaten the bread of his country, and he would repay the debt! He diſclaimed party, and as he had always avoided it, he would continue to do ſo, and remain only of the party of nine-tenths of the people of Ireland—of the party of his conſtituents, who had given him whatever conſequence he poſſeſſed, and whoſe intereſts he would never forſake. It had been ſaid the country is ſo impoveriſhed it could not go on. He told the Houſe that Ireland was yet equal to the weight of a ten year's war—could the Parliament, with the confidence of the country, be brought to vote the expences of it, as they had done with him, unanimouſly; but this could not be, if they did not ſhew themſelves the guardians of the people.—He held that a country was able to go on while it could provide taxes to pay the intereſt of its loans. This country, he was confident, could do ſo—and without the guarantee of England could find money to borrow, if England would let her money market be open for us, as it was for the Dutch and other countries. He repeated that the country had abundant reſources untouched, and that the Treaſury was never ſo rich as at this moment. Great Britain, he allowed, had generouſly helped us to defend ourſelves, and we ſhould be grateful—but it was not true that we could not go on without her aid—we were as neceſſary to England, as England to us.

Mr. Trench (Woodlawn) followed Sir John Parnell. As I have been perſonally alluded to, and particularly by a Right Hon. Baronet who has juſt ſat down, for whom I have, in common with this Houſe, and indeed I may ſay for the whole nation, the higheſt reſpect; I think it neceſſary to ſay a few words, to vindicate the conſiſtency of my conduct on the laſt night's debate.

I then declared my opinion, that the decision of this House, as to a Legislative Union, would be premature, until the sentiments of the people of Ireland were ascertained. Under that impression, I declared that I did not approve of either the original Address, or the Amendment; as the former tended to commit the House in favour of the measure, and the latter against it; but that I thought the Amendment the least objectionable of the two, as the question might be brought forward in some other form. From what occurred afterwards in the course of the debate, it appeared to me that the Amendment would put a final negative on the measure for this Session, before the opinion of the People could be sufficiently known; and as the Minister had declared, that the Address would not pledge the House to adopt the principle of a Union, I therefore said I should vote for the Address. My object was still the same, to keep the question open for discussion, though I certainly did change my mind as to the means of effecting that object. I have been accused, and by some, whose opinions I respect, of indecision; but, in my mind, decision ought to follow, not precede, discussion. Hasty decision is not always a proof of wisdom; and if ever there was a question, the transcendant magnitude of which would justify indecision, it is surely the present. I confess I have not that intuitive knowledge of a great and comprehensive subject, so complicated in its relations and arrangements, that other gentlemen may have; but of this I am sure, that even if the measure be intrinsically and abstractedly good, yet, if the People are against it, we have no right to force them to a compliance. Though the match may be an advantageous one to both parties; yet, if the inclinations of the lady are decidedly against it, I would not recommend even that gentle violence, which some suppose is agreeable to the fair.

The City of Dublin has declared its sentiments unequivocally; but though I highly respect this city, yet Dublin is not all Ireland, nor is Ireland the whole of the British Empire; and in the fate of the British empire is involved that of the civilized world. As Irishmen, our first duty is to consult the welfare of Ireland; but we are not to neglect that of Great Britain, in which we are so deeply interested, and whose generous assistance we have so lately experienced. The Roman Catholics of this kingdom have not yet declared their sentiments; and notwithstanding the outrages that have lately disgraced some of that persuasion, the great body of them are loyal subjects; and their opinion ought to have weight with the Legislature. If many of them have been concerned in the late rebellion, it was not because they were Roman Catholics, but because they were ignorant and uninformed, and therefore liable to be deluded by the misrepresentations of artful leaders. The Reports of the Secret

Commitees of both Houſes have proved this fact; the great volume of events have proved it; that volume ſo lately unfolded to our view, and which every day, nay every hour, continues to develope. In that book, the genius and tendency of French revolutionary principles, and the deſigns of their abettors in this land, are written in characters ſo broad and legible, that he that runs may read, they flaſh conviction on the moſt inattentive obſerver: obſtinate and inveterate prejudice can alone miſtake them. The late Rebellion was not a war of one ſect of Chriſtianity againſt another, but of Chriſtianity againſt Infidelity, of Religion againſt Atheiſm, of the ſupporters of Civil Society againſt thoſe, who wiſh for anarchy and confuſion. The Roman Catholic religion has a predilection for monarchy; perhaps even too ſtrong for the genius of our free Conſtitution. When we conſider that Roman Catholic loyalty ſurvived the miſconduct of the Houſe of Stuart, even of the laſt puſillanimous Tyrant, that diſgraced the regal ſceptre of the Britiſh Iſlands; a character certainly not formed to inſpire that enthuſiaſtic zeal, that glowing and diſintereſted attachment, that naturally warms the breaſt of a good ſubject in the cauſe of a brave, a virtuous, and a reſpected Monarch; can we ſuppoſe that they are deficient in that vital principle, when they have transferred their allegiance to a family, in whom the moſt heroic bravery ſeems hereditary, to a Monarch, in whoſe perſon the virtues of the man reflect the pureſt luſtre on the ſacred character of the Sovereign. When lately our foreign enemies combined with domeſtic traitors, to rob us of the invaluable bleſſings of Britiſh connexion, many of the nobility and gentry of that perſuaſion ſtood forth among the foremoſt in the ranks of loyalty, and proved by deeds their attachment to their King and the Conſtitution. An honourable and learned Member has expatiated on national pride; he has touched a ſtring, to which all our feelings vibrate in uniſon; and he has touched it with a maſterly hand. For my part, I feel a pride, I hope an honeſt and a rational pride in being an Iriſhman; but I confeſs no ſmall part of that pride is derived from the connexion of Ireland with Great Britain. Whether that connexion may be beſt ſecured by an incorporating Union, or whether any other means may be deviſed more effectual, and more conducive to the welfare of Ireland, our firſt and great object, may require ſerious and impartial conſideration; but I do not hold myſelf pledged, from any thing I have ſaid, either in this or a former debate, to ſupport the meaſure of a Union:—I only wiſh for a full and fair diſcuſſion.

Col. FITZGERALD ſupported the paragraph, as did Mr. H. D. Grady.

Mr. Fitzgerald, late Prime Serjeant.—Having already expressed my opinion on this subject, I should not have intruded again upon your attention, if somewhat, which has fallen from the Noble Lord, did not appear to me to bear upon the enlightened and uninfluenced profession of which I am proud to be. I owe the Noble Lord all personal civility; and feel that I do him a kindness, giving him an opportunity to remove any misconception. I pause for a reply; (here Lord Castlereagh disclaimed any intention to say any thing disrespectful to the Bar.) The Noble Lord has answered my expectation; I did not think it possible, that the Minister of Lord Camden and of Lord Cornwallis could entertain an idea disparaging to that great body, which lead the Spirit of Ireland, to arm in its defence against foreign and domestic foes, as it did the Virtue and Talents of the nation to resist political invasion. And here give me leave to say, that that profession ever has, and ever will be, the most zealous guardian of the rights and liberties of their country. I will not travel back into remote history, but call your attention to the debt of gratitude which this country owes to that profession within our own recollection. What does it owe to that distinguished character, whose successor I unworthily was? —*sublatum ex oculis quærimus invidi*; what do its Agriculture and Constitution owe to your illustrious Predecessor who first attempted to loosen the fetters by which your Legislature was bound; and taught the Parliament the secret of its own strength.

You, Sir, were of the profession, and abdicated it much to your own private loss; but with incalculable advantages to the commerce and liberties of your country—a country in whose gratitude, I trust, you will ever live. The services of that Profession are engraven in the marble of the Constitution, and will not be forgotten while the Irish Legislature exists; for vain and impotent must be every attempt to deprive them of the glory of being the first to enrol themselves for the protection of their country against foreign and domestic enemies, and for the continuance of the separate and independant Legislature of Ireland.

Mr. William Smith, in a speech of considerable length, of which we can give but an imperfect abstract, declared against expunging the paragraph which recommended Union; and avowed his opinion, that a Legislative Incorporation, provided the terms were just and equitable to this country, would be beneficial to Ireland, and to the Empire.

He should begin by noticing, while they were fresh in his memory, some arguments which had fallen from a Right Honourable Baronet, who sat opposite to him, (Sir John Parnel.) In answer to the fears of that Right Honourable Baronet, for the tranquillity of the metropolis, if an Union should be carried,

he would obſerve that he, for his part, felt little apprehenſion of this kind; and even though there ſhould be ſome ground for ſuch fears, yet he was ready to purchaſe the permanent tranquillity of the whole kingdom, at the expence of ſome temporary diſturbance in the chief City. That Right Honourable Baronet treated Union as if it were a meaſure whoſe operation was to put a period to the exiſtence of the Iriſh Conſtitution. He begged to obſerve, that this was mere and unwarrantable aſſumption; and to declare that he did not conſider Union as producing any ſuch effect. The Right Honourable Baronet aſſerted, that Union could beſtow no commercial benefit, except the Channel Trade: He would reply, that if Union promoted internal harmony and peace, it would give that ſoil, from whence alone commercial greatneſs could ariſe; and therefore in ſecuring our tranquillity, it muſt promote our trade. He applauded the Noble Lord for his promiſe of never loſing ſight of the meaſure; and adviſed him not to abandon his hope of one day, and ere long, opening the eyes of the country to the advantages which it would produce. He heard Union objected to, as leading to ſeparation. But he would aſk whence came it, that he found the enemies of Britiſh connexion ſo foremoſt in the ranks of oppoſition to an Union? Did they reſiſt it, becauſe it tended to diſſolve that connexion which they abhorred?—Gentlemen talked of our willingneſs to ſtand or fall with England. This was the mere rant of a generous ſentiment, which an angry feeling might eaſily ſupplant. He for his part would rather truſt the firmneſs of the connexion to a permanent political principle, than to a tranſient rant of loyalty. If, however, we were thus prepared to ſtand or fall with England, what conſolidation could be too intimate with a country with which we profeſſed to have our intereſts ſo cloſely blended? He heard ſuch contradictory objections founded on our ſituation, that he found it difficult to anſwer them. One reſiſted Union on the ground of our proſperity; another inveighed againſt the treachery of England, in chooſing the moment of our calamity to propoſe this odious meaſure.—Theſe Iſlands formed one Empire: how many Legiſlatures were ſufficient for one Empire to contain? In his mind one was quite enough. Two independant Legiſlatures in one Empire, tended to produce diſſenſions, and weaken and tear aſunder the energies of the whole State. Union then, by allotting one Parliament to one Empire, would fortify that Empire: ſo to fortify it would at any time be prudent in us, inaſmuch as we made a part of that Empire, and as with England we muſt ſtand or fall. But was it not peculiarly incumbent on us to fortify the Empire now, when foreign foes and inteſtine diſſenſions demanded the utmoſt ſtrength of reſiſtance that we could op-

pose? But Ireland must sacrifice her independance!—No; she was only called on to incorporate her distinctness; she would still have her due share and weight in the Imperial Councils; a share proportioned to her extent, contribution, and resources. Could any man who heard our execrations of this plan conceive, that if executed, we should thereafter continue to live under the theory, and perhaps begin to live under the complete practice of the British Constitution?—To participate fully in the blessings of that free and admirable system, was to surrender our Liberties and subvert our Constitution!—Our present distinctness tended to separation: the Regency shewed this. Our independant Lords and Commons appointed a Regent before the British Parliament had named one: We appointed a Regent with unlimited powers, though we knew the English were appointing a Regency with restricted powers. Thus our distinctness in that instance snapped the principle asunder, which held the two islands imperially together. That principle was one Executive for both; a principle enacted in the reign of Henry the Eighth. If his Majesty's illness had continued, we should, *in* consequence of our distinctness, have had different Executives for Great Britain and Ireland. The rejecting of the Commercial Propositions was another fruit of our distinctness; they were rejected as clogged with conditions derogatory from our Constitutional Independance. This objection would have lain to an Arrangement, however palpably advantageous in a commercial view; and yet England, perhaps, could not, compatibly with her own security, make the concession without annexing the conditions. Thus our Constitutional Distinctness would stand insurmountably in the way of our national prosperity. Mr. Smith proceeded to shew, that had any of those schemes of radical Reform, which he had known proposed to Parliament, been adopted, we should have had thenceforth a Legislature differently constituted from that of Britain; and thus our distinctness would produce a manifest source of estrangement and separation. If the mischiefs which thus arose out of Distinctness of Legislation, were prevented by the ascendant influence of Britain, what would thus be but by corruption, and at the expence of morality and public spirit, to achieve that which might have originally been secured by allotting a single Legislature to a single Empire? Mr. Smith derided the idea of contrasting the numbers of Irish and English Members in the Imperial Parliament. This contrast flowed from the erroneous notion that, though our Legislatures were joined, our interests would remain distinct. As well might one Irish province complain that the number of its Representatives was outweighed by the Representatives of the other three. Mr. Smith went on to demonstrate the competence of Parliament to conclude an Union, on authority and principle. Parliament, he said, possessed *abso-*

lute power; and cited Coke and Blackſtone in ſupport of this poſition. If the Iriſh Parliament was incompetent to enact Union, the Scottiſh Union was invalid; being the act of a not more competent Parliament. What ruinous doctrines might follow from ſuch a doctrine? His Majeſty's title to the Throne of Great Britain depended on the ſecond article of the Scotch Union, which limited the Succeſſion to the Houſe of Hanover. Impeach the Union, and you recogniſe the Pretender's title to the Scottiſh Crown. If the Scotch Union was invalid, what became of thoſe Acts which had ſince been paſſed in that illegal Aſſembly which was miſcalled the *Britiſh* Parliament? What became, for inſtance, of the efficacy of that Act of Renunciation which formed the baſis of Iriſh Independance?—To deny the competence of Parliament, was to aſſert the ſupremacy of the People; to inſiſt that in certain conjunctures they were entitled to dictate to their Parliament; and, as this ſame People was to determine when this conjuncture had ariſen, the doctrine would turn our mixed Government into an abſolute Democracy.

He freely admitted that Parliament was incompetent to ſurrender the Liberties and Conſtitution of the country.

(At this part of his ſpeech, Mr. Smith was interrupted by a loud cry of "hear"—from ſome Members that ſat near him: when it had ſubſided, he proceeded thus;)

I ſtand on too firm ground, to be embarraſſed by the inſinuation, which is involved in the clamour, by which I have been interrupted.—I love the liberties of my country as well as any man that hears me: I am as ready as any other man to ſhed my blood in their defence. Parliament, I repeat it, is incompetent to their ſurrender: not becauſe Legiſlative Authority is limited by the Conſtitution; but becauſe freedom is one main end of that Conſtitution; and becauſe to violate natural rights, is to juſtify revolt.—Let it be proved to me, that to promote our commercial proſperity,—to blend and harmoniſe a divided and diſcordant people,—to fortify that common Empire, whoſe ſecurity is our own,—to give Ireland a due and efficient weight in the Imperial Councils; and make her People participate fully in the Britiſh Conſtitution:—let it be ſhewn that this will be to ſurrender the Liberties of my Country, and I ſhall vote againſt the paragraph which recommends an Union.

Mr. Egan, in anſwer to Mr. Smith, ſaid, that Lord Somers, an Engliſh lawyer, had no more right to object to the Union, than a Lawyer who was called in to draw a conveyance had a right to examine into his client's title. The opinion of an Iriſh Lawyer, now forced to give his opinion, was, that the Scotch Parliament, unleſs ſpecially empowered for that purpoſe by the people, had no right to enact an Union. The Iriſh Parliament

alſo was incompetent to ſuch an act—and if he had had the misfortune to have voted for it, he would next morning either have committed ſuicide or withdrawn himſelf to ſome cavern, and hid his head the remainder of his days. Blackſtone, Somers, and Coke, were all Engliſh Lawyers—and as to Blackſtone, let him believe his doctrine on the competency of Parliament to enact an Union which ſurrenders the liberty of the country, who believes that other doctrine laid down by him that Ireland was dependant on Great Britain, and bound by the Britiſh Parliament. To that doctrine the Parliament of Great Britain had formally given the lie by the act of 1783, which he did not conſider as a *grant*, but as a *recognition* of the independance of Ireland. And if Blackſtone is convicted of ſuch an error as this in the caſe of Ireland, who could wonder that he ſhould decline telling the Highlanders that their country had been ſold, and deſiring them to come down and make war upon England? As to the danger of inculcating this incompetency of the Scotch Parliament, there was nothing in it.—The lapſe of a century has given validity to the meaſure which has been acquieſced under as legal during that time. Having got ſhut of the law authorities proving the competency of Parliament, Mr. Egan went farther, and denied the right of the people themſelves to bind their poſterity—and put this argument in a ſtrong point of view. He then went on to ridicule the pretended advantage of an Union—and ſtated ludicrouſly enough the bleſſing of having our iſland called Weſt Britain—the tax-gatherer coming to levy our proportion of impoſts for the imperial ſervice, &c. &c.

Dr. Browne [College] alſo entered into a refutation of Mr. Smith's arguments. He ſaid he had apprehended at firſt it would be neceſſary for him to expreſs his diſſent from the arguments the Learned Gentleman had advanced to prove the competency of Parliament to enact an Union—but he was agreeably ſurpriſed to find, in the cloſe of the Hon. Gentleman's ſpeech, that they both perfectly agreed in opinion, for at the long run it turned out that the Learned Gentleman was only endeavouring to prove that *ſo long as the Conſtitution laſted* the Parliament was competent to enact any meaſure, becauſe when they violated any of the fundamental laws of nature, then *the Conſtitution was diſſolved*, and the people were authoriſed to exerciſe this *inherent right* of reſiſting the wrong or tyranny. So that this argument to prove the *omnipotence* of Parliament conceded the point in diſpute, namely, that they were *not competent* to do certain acts—becauſe when they ventured on thoſe acts their authority became forfeited, and the people were juſtified in exerciſing what the Hon. Gentleman called the rights of an oppreſſed and enſlaved people. The Learned Gentleman attributed this doctrine of the limitation of

the legiſlative authority to Mr. Paine—but it was derived from a much higher ſource, it was the doctrine of that man to whom every gentleman in that Houſe had been taught to look up in his earlieſt days for the principles of the Conſtitution—it was the doctrine of Mr. Locke who declared expreſsly, that there were caſes in which the Legiſlature might exceed their authority—that in ſuch caſe the Government was diſſolved—and that one of thoſe caſes was, when they attempted to *transfer* into other hands the powers with which the people had entruſted them. It was ſaid, the Legiſlature had a right to alter the Conſtitution in certain caſes, and the limitation of the hereditary ſucceſſion and the octennial bill were mentioned as inſtances—But was there no difference between *altering* a Conſtitution for the better, and *aboliſhing* it all together? Or did the Learned Gentleman mean to infer, that becauſe the Legiſlature could modify certain power poſſeſſed—therefore they were authoriſed in transferring thoſe powers for ever into other hands? Blackſtone had been mentioned as an authority—but that writer would not admit the conſtruction which had been put upon him. He ſays indeed that the Parliament can do every thing—but he ſays the reaſon why the law does not mention a limit to their authority, is becauſe law can never ſuppoſe that which would be a diſſolution of all law—that is, it will not ſuppoſe that a caſe can ever occur when the Legiſlature by exceeding its powers will juſtify the people in reſorting to firſt principles. Authorities having been cited on this queſtion, he would take the liberty of citing one alſo. Every gentleman knew the high character of that great lawyer Lord Hobart—that luminary of the law in the moſt expreſs terms aſſerted, that the power of Parliament was limited. The caſe was one in which the city of London claimed under a cuſtom of the city—they claimed alſo to be themſelves the judges of that cuſtom—that is to be *Party* and *Judge* in their own cauſe. This right of judging of the cuſtom they claimed under a ſtatute—but my Lord Hobart declared that if they could produce an hundred ſtatutes giving them ſuch a power, he would pay no regard to them—for it was contrary to one of the firſt principles of natural juſtice, that a party ſhould be Judge in his own cauſe, and therefore any law conferring ſuch a power was void. He expreſſed his concern that his Hon. Friend ſhould entertain ſo odd a motion as that the independance of this country was its greateſt curſe—for to that moſt of his argument ſeemed manifeſtly to tend. Dr. Browne concluded by reaſoning againſt letting this paragraph ſtand in the Addreſs.

Mr. Corry ſaid, that he heartily joined in the general admiration of the ſpeech of an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Smith) who had delivered ſo able an argument in ſupport of the meaſure, and

had ſo ably defended the competency of Parliament to diſcuſs it. Much expectation had been raiſed by the manner of the Hon. Gentleman who got up profeſſing to anſwer that argument (Mr. Egan)—but the Houſe would recollect how he had done ſo. The Hon. Gentleman mentioned the names of Lord Coke, Lord Somers, and Judge Blackſtone, to whom the former argument referred for authorities. He obſerved of the firſt, that he was a Lawyer who wrote for the Empire, and ſo diſmiſſed Lord Coke —of the ſecond, the Hon. Gentleman ſaid, that though it was true he was one of thoſe who drew the articles of Union between England and Scotland, yet he could not be expected to object to the competency of the contracting parties, no more than a Lawyer employed to draw a ſettlement, could have the audacity to offer an opinion upon the titles of the contracting parties. The likeneſs ſtated by the Hon. Gentleman of Lord Somers to the conveyancer draughting in his office neceſſarily recalled the old aſſertion that the profeſſional habits of Lawyers made them often unfit for great Stateſmen, and it was to be feared the Hon. Gentleman brought himſelf into that predicament, unleſs he ſhould firſt ſhew why he was to be completely exempt himſelf from a charge which at the ſame moment he brings againſt that able and exalted character, Lord Somers, whoſe opinion of the competency of Parliament to contract the Union, was never queſtioned, and by whoſe conduct it was eſtabliſhed. He next proceeds to overthrow the authority of Blackſtone by ſaying, that the ſame man held that Ireland was bound by the acts of the Britiſh Parliament—and offers as a refutation of that doctrine of Judge Blackſtone, the Act of Renunciation. Blackſtone ſtated the fact as it ſtood, as he found it on the face of the ſtatute book, where it certainly never ought to have been found—but being there, he could ſtate the fact no otherways than he did, before the repeal of the act 6. Geo. I.—Of that ſtatute Ireland thought fit to demand the repeal by the act of renunciation—and that very demand of Ireland, and that ſtatute of renunciation are the proof of Blackſtone being well founded—wrote what was the caſe *de facto*—and he could have ſtated nothing againſt the then ſubſiſting ſtatute, unleſs he had thought fit to adopt the expreſſions of ſome of thoſe Lawyers of the preſent day, who had ſaid in that Houſe that it would not be unconſtitutional to reſiſt the law of the land, though enacted under the authority of the three branches of the Legiſlature—an aſſertion which he thought, when he firſt heard it, nothing ſhort of High Treaſon, and he remained of the ſame opinion. The Hon. Gentleman proceeded to ſay, the Houſe ſhall hear the authority of Iriſh Lawyers, and begins by ſtating that he has himſelf been for 16 years at the head of his profeſſion —but he did not recollect that any argument followed to ſhew the grounds on which that great authority founded itſelf on this

queſtion. The Hon. Gentleman next refers to an Hon. Gentleman on the ſecond bench, for whoſe opinion great reſpect was entertained, but Mr. Corry deſired the Houſe to recollect that the opinions of the Iriſh Bar upon this queſtion were certainly not all on one ſide of the queſtion, either in the Houſe or out of it —firſt, the meeting of the Bar was not unanimous—and though the minority there was certainly outnumbered in a very great proportion, yet it was to be conſidered how great a number of the juvenile, warm, and inexperienced part of the profeſſion that majority contained—and it muſt alſo be acknowleged that the minority who were at the meeting with the acceſſion of other names and characters who ſupport, and maintain their opinions, though not at the meeting, is of as much reſpect as that of any other ſet of men whatever—of which the argument lately delivered by an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Smith) was one ſhining proof. Other proofs were to be ſeen in the ſpeeches and characters of other Lawyers on this ſide of the Houſe likewiſe—but if Iriſh authorities are referred to, let the people of Ireland look to the authorities which have been lately exhibited in another place not far diſtant—he meant the authorities of the firſt Law Lord—of the Chief Juſtice of the Common Pleas—of the Chief Baron of the Exchequer—the Lord Chancellor, whoſe ſound and fundamental knowledge he had not heard arraigned, ſupported the queſtion againſt the Hon. Gentleman—the Chief Juſtice, Lord Carleton, whoſe able and diſpaſſionate opinions were univerſally reſpected, ſupported the queſtion againſt him,—the Chief Baron, Lord Yelverton, that great conſtitutional authority—one of the fathers of the independancy and liberties of Ireland, ſupported the queſtion againſt him. Would the Hon. Gentleman charge that name for which he has ſo often expreſſed his veneration, as acting upon the principles of a conveyancer, and betraying that Conſtitution and thoſe Liberties which he had ſo ably aſſiſted to eſtabliſh—let the people of Ireland look to thoſe authorities with whom they are better acquainted than with the venerable names of Coke, Somers, Blackſtone—they know them ſufficiently to pronounce between them and the authority of the Hon. Gentleman, whether or not the Parliament are proceeding to deſtroy the independance, and ſacrifice the conſtitutional liberties of Ireland.

Much has been ſaid of the Conſtitution of 1782; and it was aſſerted, that the meaſures now propoſed went to ſacrifice what had then been gained—but ſee what the queſtion of 1782 was: —Great Britain at that time exerciſed a power to legiſlate for Ireland, paramount to her own Legiſlature, which exerciſe Ireland reſiſted, upon the conſtitutional principle of not being bound by the authority of any body of men whatever, extrinſic of her own Legiſlature, in which Legiſlature alone the people of Ireland were repreſented. They took ground upon this principle,

namely, that Representation and Legislation were inseparably connected by the Constitution; and that Ireland, not being represented in, they could not be bound by, the British Legislature. The question was the same as that of America, where resistance had been made against Legislation without Representation. Founded in that principle irrefragably, Ireland succeeded in her claims to be free from any authority of the Parliament of Great Britain, in which she had no share, and no representation; and the Act of Renunciation, giving up all claim of that kind in the Parliament of Great Britain, was passed there, and our Independancy finally established.

But in 1785, the Commercial Propositions again set up an indirect invasion of the Independancy so established by a proposed compact, that Ireland should, on commercial subjects, pass laws similar to those which might be passed in Great Britain. This came to the same effect, as if Ireland was to be legislated for by the Parliament of Great Britain, in which she had no share and was not represented, and such a compact was accordingly resisted; and the Constitution of 1782, founded on the inseparable connexion between Representation and Legislation was maintained and established. Gentlemen then, who assert that the present measures are a surrender of the principles of 1782, must shew that they go to establish that Ireland shall again be bound by a Parliament, wherein she shall have no share, and not be represented. Now, the reverse is distinctly the fact; for the present measures have for their object, not that Ireland should be bound by the British Legislature without having share, and being represented in that Legislature; but that the British Legislature and that of Ireland should be united together into one body, in which Ireland should have her due proportionate share, and fair and constitutional representation; so that the Legislatures of the three kingdoms should be melted into one mass, that their triple powers should be reduced to unity on fair and just terms; and that they should form one great constitutional Representative Legislature for the Empire; and therefore those who support that measure, are acting in perfect consistency with the principles established in 1782, and supported and maintained in 1785.

But the House will recollect, that an Honourable Baronet at the same time that he incorrectly stated that this measure was inconsistent with the principles of 1782, proceeded to another topic, equally calculated to enflame the public mind. He stated the entire catalogue of the Prerogatives of the Crown, namely, the powers of war and peace, the church, the army, &c. and followed the catalogue by an assertion, that these were concessions from this country to Great Britain; an assertion equally un-

founded as the former, but equally calculated to enflame and to miſlead the people of Ireland. Mr. Corry here went into a reply to Sir Laurence Parſons's ſpeech. Mr. Corry ſaid, he would only add one word on the effect of the amendment which was intended to preclude an anſwer to that part of the Speech from the Throne. The writ for returning the Commons to Parliament, directs that they ſhould be returned to conſult *de arduis Regni*. The Houſes being met, the ſeſſion opens by a ſpeech from the Throne, certifying both Houſes of the cauſes and conſideration of ſummoning the Parliament, without which opening by a ſpeech, neither Houſe can proceed to any buſineſs whatſoever, of which the intricacies, at the time of the Regency queſtion, give one inſtance. If in reply to that ſpeech, either Houſe of Parliament ſhall proceed to anſwer and to declare, that they will not at any time enter into conſideration of a certain ſubject, it becomes an indecent and unconſtitutional violation of the rights of the other two branches of the Legiſlature—of the Crown, which has the conſtitutional right to ſuggeſt, and of the Lords, who have the conſtitutional right to diſcuſs, and tranſmit their deliberations and reſolutions for the concurrence of the Commons. Let the Commons make the caſe their own; for inſtance, on the ſubject of Union, it was ſaid in ſome of the Pamphlets, that it was to be accompanied by an arrangement of Tithes. Suppoſe the Bench of Biſhops had riſen in another Houſe of Parliament, and reſolved that they would at no time take into conſideration the ſubject of Tithes, would it not be placing the Reſolution of the Lords as a barrier againſt the rights of the Commons to diſcuſs that ſubject, and to ſend up their Reſolutions to the other Houſe; and would it not in effect be to ſet up, as in the arrogant vote of Agiſtment mentioned by a Right Hon. Baronet (Sir John Parnel) the Reſolution of one Houſe of Parliament in a uſurped authority, equal to a reſtrictive and prohibitory law of the three branches of the Legiſlature? Mr. Corry concluded with aſſerting, that the meaſures propoſed to be hereafter conſidered, were thoſe which alone could be effectual, accompanied by the approbation of Parliament and of the Country—and to reſtore tranquillity and permanent proſperity to Ireland.

Col. Vereker was againſt the Paragraph; and repelled with great ſpirit the charge of being dupes, which, he ſaid, was made by Lord Caſtlereagh on the country gentlemen.

Lord Castlereagh explained. He had only recommended it to them to conſider before they ſuffered themſelves to be duped by a faction.

Sir JOHN FREKE.—I oppoſed the Addreſs, and ſupported the Amendment of my honourable Friend. I will now oppoſe this Paragraph; as I will, on every occaſion, any attempt to wreſt from this Country its rights and independance.

Mr. ARTHUR MOORE.—I had flattered myſelf with the hope, Mr. Speaker, that the diſapprobation of this meaſure, which was yeſterday ſo unequivocally manifeſted by ſo reſpectable and independant a part of this Houſe, would have led on this day to a diſtinct abandonment of a project, ſo wild and viſionary in its nature, ſo repugnant to the ſenſe and feelings of this Nation, and ſo critically dangerous to the permanent intereſts and laſting conſolidation of the Britiſh Empire. But how have I been diſappointed at hearing the intemperate and peeviſh declamation of the Noble Lord; in which, while he arraigns the motives of gentlemen in this Houſe, and ſeems regardleſs of the ſenſe of the Country, he perſeveres with the moſt incorrigible pertinacity, and the moſt inſulting pervicacity, in deſpite of yeſterday's defeat or this day's reproaches; without regard either to experience or diſcretion, again to fight this unequal ſtate-battle in the ſame field, where the independance and virtue and talent of the Nation had ſo recently obtained ſuch a ſignal triumph over the corrupt and inſidious policy of thoſe who, under the plauſible pretext of national ſecurity and imperial conſolidation of intereſt, had aimed the moſt mortal blow at the proſperity, happineſs, and liberties of Ireland. But gentlemen who object to this clauſe ſtanding part of the Addreſs, are accuſed of wantonly provoking this ſecond debate, on the ſubject of the Union, after the explicit declaration of the Noble Lord yeſterday, viz. *that he would pay every reſpect to the ſentiments of ſo reſpectable a minority, though he never would loſe ſight of the object.* This, it ſeems, was to be the pledge of our ſecurity—the guarantee of our exiſtence as an independant Legiſlature—the tenure of our Conſtitution—and how has the Noble Lord kept his word; how has he ſhewn *his reſpect for the ſentiments of ſo reſpectable a minority?* by beſtowing upon them the moſt intemperate and indiſcriminate abuſe! by the imputation of the moſt miſchievous motives—the moſt dangerous principles—the moſt unjuſtifiable means—and by an imitation of that indecent ſtile of invective and low ſcurrility, which ſo eminently characteriſes the wretched oratory of ſome, for the raſhneſs of whoſe political enterpriſes, and the vulgarity of whoſe thoughts and ſentiments I never wiſh to ſee him forego the natural diſcretion of his own mind, and the acquired urbanity of his educated habits. I muſt, however admit, Sir, that if the Noble Lord has failed in his promiſed reſpect for the ſentiments of his opponents on this ſubject, he has been true to the latter part of his declaration, namely, *that he would never loſe ſight of*

the object; and indeed the ſtrenuous efforts that have been this night made to retain the Paragraph objected to, as part of the Addreſs, moſt evidently ſhew, that we are to expect neither reſt nor recreation; ceſſation from labour, or intermiſſion of diſcuſſion, until this Houſe ſhall have compelled the Noble Lord either unequivocally to abandon the meaſure, or to ceaſe to be the Miniſter, under whoſe auſpices it ſhall again be brought forward. And therefore, Sir, let it not be ſaid, that gentlemen on this ſide of the Houſe are a ſecond time agitating the Country by a ſecond diſcuſſion of this momentous ſubject; we wiſhed never to have heard of it again; we hoped we ſhould not—and if the Country is agitated, and the queſtion a ſecond time diſcuſſed, the Miniſter is anſwerable for the conſequences; who, with the moſt obſtinate inſiſtence perſeveres in retaining that Paragraph, which, according to his own explanation of its enigmatical language, contains an implied approbation of the principle of an Union of our Legiſlature with that of Great Britain. Another charge made this night againſt thoſe who oppoſe this ruinous project is, that we have uſed warm and paſſionate language, calculated to inflame and prejudice the public mind, upon a ſubject which ought to be temperately diſcuſſed and calmly inveſtigated. I appeal to the Houſe, whether there has been any warmth or violence of language, or manner manifeſted on this ſide of the Houſe, in any degree proportionate to the wild and headlong declamation, in which the Noble Lord has this night exhibited the intemperance of puerile indiſcretion, and the diſappointment of miniſterial ambition. But how is it poſſible to ſpeak upon ſuch a ſubject without warmth and feeling? How is it poſſible to reflect on the means that have been uſed to ſteal this meaſure upon us through all the ſecret windings of miniſterial treachery and perfidious policy, without rage and indignation? How is it poſſible to be cool and diſpaſſionate when the deareſt intereſts of a Nation—the moſt important concerns of an Empire—the moſt prized and valued privileges of human nature—the liberty, happineſs, and proſperity of millions of men, are put to the iſſue of a meaſure, introduced in language metaphorically obſcure and ſtudiouſly inſidious, ſupported by men of conſummate imbecillity and pre-eminent public profligacy, and brought forward on the heels of invaſion and rebellion;—before the ſocial order and regular ſubordination of ſociety have been reſtored—and before the rancorous contentions, the bitter animoſities of men, and the unexampled calamities of the Country (tho' faſt ſubſiding) have yet altogether given way to returning confidence and coincidence of opinion—to the ſentiment of national unanimity, and to the bleſſing of re-eſtabliſhed tranquillity? For my part, Mr, Speaker, I muſt candidly declare, that conſidering every circumſtance of men and things—of manner and occaſion—of pretext and deſign

—of arrangement and execution—I am ſo horror-ſtruck with this wicked invaſion of the independance of this land, that I am not only incapable of uſing any other than warm and paſſionate language; but I confeſs myſelf to be at this moment little ſhort of phrenſy. I am frantic when I conſider the duplicity and craft to which this nation has been made the ſacrifice; the double dealing and inſidiouſneſs by which her diſtractions have been made the pretext for the ſurrender of her liberties; and the audacity and wickedneſs by which that Conſtitution, ſo recently aſſerted by Ireland and recogniſed by England has in the moment of national weakneſs and calamity been attempted to be undermined and overthrown. Oh! unhappy country! how ſucceſsfully have thine enemies taken advantage of thy diſſenſions? With what a careful and judicious hand have they ſown the ſeeds of thy deſtruction? The errors; the deluſions; the crimes of *ſome* of thy people, have been the pretext for an attack upon the liberties of *all!* Had you never been divided, the ſurrender of your national pride, and independance had never been demanded! *Unite now, not in the hollow embrace of iniquitous republican fraterniſation, but in the loyal irreſiſtible Union of a brave and free people reſolved to preſerve their invaluable Conſtitution againſt all innovation or to periſh with it! Unite thus, and there is no array of power or policy which can be brought to aſſail your liberties but muſt vaniſh and ſink to nothing before the tremendous unanimity of an undivided people!*

Sir, I have often heard it argued with great ſucceſs, and I think with excellent reaſon, that the ſeaſon of war is of all others the moſt improper for the experiment of conſtitutional improvement or innovation. If a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People in Parliament (for which I do not profeſs myſelf an advocate at this day) were propoſed, it has uniformly been oppoſed upon the ground of the *time* being unſeaſonable for innovation and experiment. If a motion be made for a Reform of the Scotch Boroughs, or the ſyſtem of government for India, it is reſiſted by the argument that under the exiſting circumſtances of the country, it is dangerous to agitate the public mind by topics which have a direct tendency to alter or even regenerate our eſtabliſhments—and yet here is a queſtion not of innovation but ſubverſion; not of alteration but extinction; not of regeneration but of death—a queſtion, not to improve or ameliorate, but to deſtroy and annihilate the popular part of the Conſtitution of Ireland, brought forward at a period of external war and domeſtic troubles, under the auſpices of that ſame Miniſter who has ſo repeatedly and ſo juſtly oppoſed the arguments of *time* and *circumſtances*, to projects ſo infinitely inferior in dignity and importance to the meaſure now under the contemplation of this Houſe. Sir, I have very little doubt that a propoſition to diſſolve and overthrow the Popular branch of our Conſtitution would be little if at all ſhort of

Treaſon, but undoubtedly would be an overt act of High Treaſon, inaſmuch as it might lead by direct conſequence to a compaſſing the King's death, and it is worthy of obſervation that the principal overt-acts in the indictments againſt Hardy, Tooke and the reſt, were for *conſpiring to alter and overturn the Legiſlature, Rule and Government now happily and duly eſtabliſhed in theſe kingdoms*, and *for writing and diſperſing and cauſing to be written and diſperſed papers pamphlets and ſo forth, tending to ſubvert and alter the Legiſlature, Rule and Government of theſe kingdoms.* When therefore a Right Hon. Gentleman talks of Treaſon to loyal men, he ought to recollect the precedent of thoſe indictments, and that there is a nearer connexion with Treaſon, between the conduct of perſons who would propoſe *the alteration and ſubverſion of our Legiſlature, and circulate wicked and pernicious writings* for that purpoſe, than any which can be traced to the opinions and conduct of ſuch as boldly contend for the integrity and inviolability of the Conſtitution. It has been argued with great labour and ſubtilty that Parliament has at preſent, without the previous aſſent of the Nation, full and entire competence to enter into an incorporate Union with the Legiſlature of Great Britain, and to ſupport them in this principle, Gentlemen reſort to the opinions of Lord Coke and Judge Blackſtone, who both ſay that the power and juriſdiction of Parliament is tranſcendant, abſolute, omnipotent, and ſo I admit it is, *in the exerciſe of its conſtitutional functions*, ſo long (as Blackſtone ſays) *as the Conſtitution laſts the power of Parliament is abſolute and without controul*, or in other words, ſo long as it acts within the ſphere of the Conſtitution, it is omnipotent—it is omnipotent in legiſlation, and in the exerciſe of all the powers and energies of the ſtate, *but it is only a Truſtee for the Conſtitution, whoſe power is ſovereign, paramount and ſuper-ruling, it is omnipotent to preſerve, not to deſtroy the ſovereign power of the ſtate*, it is omnipotent in the diſpenſation of Government, but cannot annihilate it, or any branch of it. The Legiſlature therefore when it is called deſpotic, is, I conceive, only ſo *ſub modo*, it is deſpotic to all intents and purpoſes as long as it acts according to the rules and principles of the Conſtitution, whoſe organ it is, but it is reſtrained and limited from the commiſſion of any act which may alter or abrogate, injure or deſtroy, that Conſtitution or any of its conſtituent members. And I would again refer the Houſe to the authority of Mr. Burke, in his reflections on the French Revolution, page 28 for illuſtration of this ſubject, when he ſays "the Houſe of Lords is not competent to diſſolve itſelf nor "to abdicate, if it would, its proportion in the Legiſlature "of the kingdom." The King cannot abdicate for the Monar- "chy, though he may for his own Perſon; by as ſtrong, or by *a* "*ſtronger reaſon* the Houſe of Commons cannot renounce its ſhare "of authority, &c." It is indeed curious to obſerve, Mr.

Speaker, the courſe of the debate upon this part of the queſtion, the Noble Lords ſets out with a Philippic againſt the legal part of the Houſe, and ſeems to deſpiſe altogether the opinions of the gentlemen of the long robe upon this ſubject, and yet it is eaſy to obſerve that his main reliance this night is on certain Lawyers, who ſeem very full of the ſubject and who I ſincerely hope have been *refreſhed* ſince the laſt debate, and yet ſome of thoſe Learned Leaders whom one would expect to ſee in the front of the battle ſeem to have left their ground; I preſume having fired their platoon on the laſt night they have retired to the rere to prime and load, or to rally the broken and confuſed ranks already panic-ſtruck with the proſpect of a ſecond and more inglorious defeat. The Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry) who was a Lawyer, but is now a Miniſter, takes a different courſe from the Noble Lord (who holds the opinions of Lawyers except they be on his own ſide in the moſt ſovereign contempt) and preferring the habits of his former profeſſion to thoſe of his preſent ſtation, he comes forward with a new ſet of authorities (three of the Law Lords of our own country) and to make amends for the abſence or ſilence of thoſe ſpectres of profeſſional inanity, the law officers, he argues the queſtion upon what he calls legal grounds. But I confeſs, Sir, with all my attention awake to the ſpeech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, I have not been able to catch a ſingle argument or principle upon which my mind can dwell an inſtant, but if aſſertion and Dictum be ſubſtitutes for reaſoning and authority, if an uninterrupted continuity of ſpeech without the impediment of legal principle, or conſtitutional inference be calculated to convince and perſuade, the Right Hon. Gentleman whether he is to be conſidered as a Lawyer or a Politician, or as that hermaphrodite kind of character which conſiſts in being half one and half the other, has undoubtedly a claim to the higheſt praiſe for the manner in which he has diſcuſſed the ſubject. The Right Hon. Gentleman has relied chiefly on the opinions of three noble Lords now at the head of three of our Courts of Juſtice, he has merely told us their opinions, but has not informed us upon what authorities they were founded. I own I am not one who, feeling myſelf to be a Truſtee for the popular branch of the Conſtitution, am much diſpoſed to be directed in the diſcharge of my duty as a Legiſlator by the Dicta of judicial authorities however great and reſpectable—with reſpect to one of thoſe perſonages I am free to admit every weight to be due to the opinion of a man, who when a Member of the Houſe of Commons, was one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed advocates for the independance of Parliament and the freedom of his country—with reſpect to the other two, I am willing to ſubſcribe to the integrity and ability of one in a Court of Equity—and to the great and acknowledged qualifications of the other in a Court of Common Law, but I never heard that

either of the Noble Lords was ancillary to the emancipation of this country, or that they had any ſhare (ſave that which every Member of Parliament is virtually ſuppoſed to have in reſtoring the Conſtitutional independance of Ireland.) But the Right Hon. Gentleman might have quoted the opinion of a Law Lord of undiſputed authority upon ſuch a ſubject as this, whoſe ſhade (as was finely expreſſed by my Hon. and Learned Friend) has as it were riſen from the tomb to vindicate the invaded liberties of his country. Is his opinion equal to any of thoſe which have been mentioned? Or to which of them is it inferior? ſo far for authorities. There was a point which the Right Hon. Gentleman preſſed and dwelt upon in his ſpeech, which I do not think he managed with his uſual candour and delicacy. My Right Hon. Friend (Sir John Parnel) in mentioning the reſpect which was due and paid to the ſenſe of the Houſe of Commons inſtanced by way of illuſtration the reſolution with regard to agiſtment which has for many years been obſerved as a quaſi law of the land—but the Right Hon. Gentleman fired as it were with indignation at a principle ſo unconſtitutional, exclaims with great vehemence, what! Shall a reſolution of one Houſe of Parliament be called the law of the land? What if the Houſe of Lords ſhould reſolve, for inſtance, that they would not at any time take the ſubject of tithes into conſideration, would that reſolution ſtand as a barrier in the way of the Commons to diſcuſs the ſubject? No truly, nor did my Right Hon. Friend ſay that the reſolution reſpecting agiſtment, or any other reſolution of one Houſe of Parliament could conſtitute the law of the land, but that ſuch a reſolution while it remained unrevoked would be always attended with a certain degree of reſpect as well by the Nation as by the Miniſters of the Crown. The Right Hon. Gentleman is alſo of opinion that this meaſure is within the omnipotence of Parliament without *ſpecial authority* from their conſtituents, if then (to admit all that has been urged on that head for argument's ſake) Parliament be ſo tranſcendantly powerful, can I urge a better reaſon to this Houſe for refuſing to agree to an Union? The way in which gentlemen argue is this; they make Parliament the moſt deſpotic power upon earth, and then they call upon you to ſurrender the exerciſe of its authority into the hands of another Legiſlature. If Parliament be abſolute and omnipotent as 'tis ſaid, I ſhould think that common ſenſe and true wiſdom dictate to every man, *that it is better be the deſpot than the ſlave*; and therefore, though it be poſſible that Parliament may abuſe its powers, it is not to be apprehended that the Nation will ever ſink into abſolute and irretrievable bondage while the Legiſlature remains reſident, diſtinct and independant. The Noble Lord has honoured the Gentlemen at this ſide of the Houſe with the appellation of a cabal, will he allow me to remind him of the manner in which the

word cabal originated, the initials of the names of the five persons who composed the famous Miniſtry known by that name in the reign of Charles II. made up the compoſition of the word. I believe if there be a cabal in this country it is not at this ſide of the Houſe. I could find five names I think, but their initials are all conſonants (and the ſame conſonant too) and there is unluckily no vowel to harmoniſe them into a word, theſe five names I conceive to be the cabal of this country, in which he who ought to be the greateſt ſeems to me to be the leaſt, perhaps too the Members of this cabal are little inferior to the original in the miſchief of their councils and the pernicious folly of their projects, what was the fate of that vile conſpiracy againſt the Crown and the Nation? It is impoſſible not to repeat the lines of the Poet ſo deſcriptive of the fallen greatneſs of the mighty Buckingham:

"The George and garter dangling from the bed
"Where filthy yellow vies with dirty red,
"Great Villiers lies."

Moſt of the reſt after having outlived their fortunes, their characters, and their power, the ſcoff and ſcorn of mankind (an awful example of the mutability of human greatneſs!) at length ſunk into the grave, where, though earth, duſt, and aſhes may cover and conceal the dead, there is yet no concealment or oblivion for their infamies, their iniquities, and their crimes.—Sir, amongſt other topics of abuſe (in which the calumny thrown on the Bar is a principal feature) the Parliament itſelf has not upon this night eſcaped traduction, and it is ſingular to obſerve, that the very perſons at whoſe ſuggeſtion and in proſecution of whoſe councils the Parliament of Ireland has, for many years paſt, taken all its meaſures, are now the firſt to charge it with corruption, with faction, and with utter incapacity to provide for the internal ſecurity of the country, or to prevent the return of thoſe calamities with which we have ſo recently been afflicted.—Will the Houſe endure this?—Will the ſpirit of Parliament ſubmit to the degradation of acknowledging its own diſgrace by juſtifying its own diſſolution?—Will the Houſe of Commons bear to be told that in order to be efficient they muſt be diminiſhed—to be virtuous they muſt be inſignificant—to be independant they muſt be annihilated?—The illuſtrious Camden never inſtructed the Noble Lord to entertain ſuch opinions:—He was the guardian-genius of Iriſh Independance, and the proud vindicator of our liberties.—Could he, from the grave, "behold the dwellers upon earth," and hear the ſpeech of the Noble Lord this night, he would reprobate the degenerate ſentiments it contained, and proudly indignant to find his ſound principles forgotten, and his precepts neglected in that ungrateful ſoil where he had cultivated them with ſo much care, he would aſſert the inſulted honor

and invaded independance of the Parliament, and would vindicate the character of that calumniated Profession by means of which he had honourably risen from obscurity to eminence, and which had in no small degree contributed through the medium of such a patron, to elevate the family of the Noble Lord himself from respectable independance to exalted distinction. Sir, a Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Corry) with what prudence it is not for me to say, has illustrated his argument by an allusion to the grounds of that unhappy contest which separated the American colonies from the mother country, and he tells you very truly, that the attempt by the British Parliament to legislate for America without the latter being represented in that assembly, was the original cause of that quarrel. But I would tell the Right Hon. Gentleman that, however the grounds of contest stood at first, in the course of the war *a portion of representation in the English Parliament* was offered to America, which the latter rejected—why? because she saw the utter incompatibility of incorporate legislation with independance—because she saw the inadequacy of a representation where distinct interests were to be guarded by a disproportionate body of representatives—because she saw that she would not be better protected from the scourge of unjust taxation by having *a few* members in the English Senate than when she had *not any*, and therefore I say, that if the American struggle is any parallel to our case, it is this, that that war was begun or at least continued on the part of America, for the obtainment of that which we now possess, but which we are called upon to surrender, namely legislation, not by incorporation of representation, but by distinct independant Legislatures.—But, Sir, the most striking similitude between the American transactions and the concerns of our own country, appears to me to consist in the identity *of object and design against both.* I think it is impossible not to see that in this project the end and ultimate pursuit is *Taxation*, in which respect there is no demonstration plainer, than that Ireland would be at the mercy of the British Parliament and Minister to all intents and purposes whatsoever;—and after all, Sir, I do not know that there is any appendage of legislation so important and interesting to a nation as the imposition of taxes. But there are gentlemen who argue, that, by our having a certain number of representatives in the British Parliament, we must be considered as *consenting* to our own taxation.—I am certain there will be a number (for alas! I fear there will be but few amongst them who have ever seen our country) who will *consent* to our being taxed to any amount, but supposing the best that can happen—supposing them all to *dissent*, can the unanimous voice of the whole one hundred, secure this country from any tax which the British representatives shall think proper to impose upon it. Where then is the difference in point

of *practical benefit* between a representation *which has not in the nature of things the power of doing us any service, and no representation at all*,—though there is great difference in point of *practical injury*, for I think it could upon various considerations be shewn, that the latter would be infinitely preferable:—But then Sir, it is said, if our proportion of members in the Legislature will not secure us against British taxation, the terms of the treaty may do so.—I like not treaties between the great and the humble—the strong and the weak—the Giant and the Dwarf—the ties of plighted faith are but a feeble barrier against the aggressions of conscious power.—The recognition of our Independance in 1783 did not prove to be a security against the demand of its abdication in 1785, and of its surrender in 1779.—I could instance Scotland, but the notorious violations of that treaty of Union are in every pamphlet and in the mouths of every man who speaks upon the subject; but there is one breach which I cannot pass over. By the Act of Union Scotland was to be assessed to 48,000l. when England should pay 2,00,0000l. or 4s. in the Pound to the Land Tax;—but see the Minister's budget this very year, and you will find Scotland rated at 5000l. for the tenth of the incomes of estates over and above the 48,000l. which she already pays according to the articles of the Union; so that by the Income Bill, the landed gentlemen of Scotland are now to pay a tenth of the receipts of their estates over and above the stipulated proportion between the countries at the time of the Union.—Are the gentlemen of Ireland prepared for these things?—Are they prepared to give up a tenth of their income to the English Ministers (perhaps more) however well they are disposed to the English nation?—Sir, I must confess I am not a little surprised to see the Minister of England pursuing the same system with regard to this country, by the reprobation of which, with regard to America, he first raised himself into notice, and afterwards into power—the system *of taxation when directly* exercised upon America was, in his opinion, a system *of tyranny*, but when *indirectly* attempted against Ireland, is a system of *kindness and concession*—in England it was not easy to find new resources—the luxury and industry of the country are exhausted—the necessaries of life can produce no more—capital and income have been resorted to—what remains?—Ireland! yes!—the generous hospitality—the social harmony of the Irish Nation must prepare for the *tax-gatherer and the task-master*—the "proud submission, the dignified obedience" of our national character must submit to the yoke,—we shall become hewers of wood and drawers of water—we shall have the rival plunderers of the East and West quartered upon our country, and after having drained the last drop of African blood, and exhausted the wealth and tears of Hindostan, they will be sent to this devoted island to

gratify their infatiable cupidity, by the ſpoil of our nobility—the plunder of our gentry, and the oppreſſion of our people—we ſhall then indeed be what Lord North ſaid America ſhould be "proſtrate at the feet of England".—But, Mr. Speaker, if Ireland does fall, depend upon it, (to uſe the words of the venerable Lord Chatham) "ſhe will fall like the ſtrong man, ſhe will embrace the pillars of the State, and pull down the Empire with her."—Sir, upon this occaſion I do not think it neceſſary, or indeed regular, to go into thoſe topics which may be ſuppoſed to belong to the detail and developement of the meaſure; I am indeed in hopes that it will never be detailed or developed; but there is one conſideration which properly belongs to that period of the ſubject which has been plauſibly repreſented and forcibly urged—I mean the probability of the transfer of Engliſh capital to this country—but for my part I cannot conceive how we are to expect Britiſh capital to come amongſt us after we have loſt the protection of a reſident Parliament—after the moſt conſiderable of our gentry have became abſentees—and after we have ſubjected ourſelves to Britiſh taxation—when the market for genius and talent is transferred to another country—when the arts of poliſhed and civiliſed life, thoſe main incentives to ingenuity and labour are gone—and when the lethargy of indolence, and the ſloth of ſullen diſcontent ſhall have enervated the arm of induſtry and degraded and debaſed our people.—Did Britiſh capital approach our iſland in any conſiderable degree when our taxes were low, our trade flouriſhing, and our country at peace? and is it to be expected that it will all at once pour in upon us in conſequence of a meaſure which will obviouſly encreaſe our taxes, certainly not improve our trade, and inſtead of contributing to our tranquillity will, I think extend the cauſes and enlarge the circle of public diſquietude and national diſcontent? in every point of view, therefore, Sir, in which I have been able to contemplate this meaſure, I conſider it as pregnant with the moſt alarming miſchiefs both to this country and Great-Britain—I look upon it as the nurſery of new misfortunes, and the grave of our antient liberties—and inſtead of its tending to ſtrengthen and conſolidate the general intereſts of the Empire, or to reſtore and confirm the internal tranquillity of this country, I am thoroughly perſuaded that the ingenuity or wickedneſs of man never yet deviſed a ſcheme ſo effectually adequate to bring about the Separation of the two kingdoms (the moſt diſaſtrous of all conſequences!) and ſo likely to renew in this ſcarce-tranquilliſed country, the calamities of civil war and the horrors of ſuppreſſed Rebellion.

Mr. Tighe.—Sir, I could wiſh rather to ſhorten, than to lengthen this debate, by bringing back the real queſtion to the conſideration of the Houſe. The queſtion ſeems to be ſimply

this: Adminiſtration have abandoned this object, which they had the imprudence and the misfortune to agitate; ſome of their moſt diſintereſted ſupporters have declared to-night, in a manner the moſt honourable to themſelves, that they will no longer ſupport the meaſure of an Union; ſince they are now convinced that it is perfectly contrary to the general wiſh of the nation. The queſtion is therefore, whether you will, or whether you will not, take the readieſt and moſt effectual means of ſatisfying the nation that it is abandoned? The readieſt and moſt effectual means of doing ſo, is by omitting that paragraph of the Addreſs which is now before the Houſe. I know with thorough conviction, that the Noble Secretary had the beſt intentions in bringing the ſubject forward; I am willing to attribute the very beſt intentions to thoſe who have ſupported him; and it is for that reaſon that I ſhould expect from them a concurrence in giving general ſatisfaction to the kingdom. Confident I am, that as long as there is the ſlighteſt open left, for the queſtion being revived, it will hang like a diſaſtrous meteor over the peace of the nation. Will you, by voting this Paragraph, pledge yourſelves to conſider that ſubject, which you are determined not to conſider? By doing ſo, you muſt either deceive the King, or deceive the People;—or will you at once, by rejecting this Paragraph, act with honeſty to the King, and with ſatisfaction to the People?

Or are the Miniſtry not yet convinced, by what they have ſeen, and by what they have heard, that tranquillity would not be the reſult of their meaſure! Are the People of Ireland not convinced, that they could gain no commercial advantages by an Union? but even, if it were in the power of Great Britain, to give us commercial advantages; if it was in her power to give us all the commerce of the Britiſh Empire, Ireland would reject the wealth of the whole world, when ſet againſt her Independance; that ſhe conſiders as a jewel of ineſtimable price; which, if ſhe poſſeſſed it not, ſhe would part with her all to obtain: but ſince ſhe is poſſeſſed of it, ſhe will not ſuffer the wealth or the power of the world to take it from her.—Tranquillity and Commercial advantages are held out as the price of our Conſtitution; permit me to ſay a few words to them.

I know but two ways of tranquilliſing a nation; either by giving ſatisfaction to the People, or by reſtraining them by military power:—what part of the People would an Union ſatisfy? —the Catholics?—No; it would place an eternal bar to the accompliſhment of their wiſhes, and render them deſperate of ſucceſs; it is in an Iriſh Parliament that the cauſe of the Catholics has prevailed; will they look up for relief to a Britiſh Parliament, who ſtill hold their own Catholics in depreſſion; whoſe numbers, whoſe claims and peaceable diſpoſition have afforded them no pre-

tence? Will an Union ſatisfy the Preſbyterians? by bringing them within the focus of Britiſh teſt-laws? Can they expect to remain in a ſtate more favoured than the Diſſenters of England? Will an Union ſatisfy the Friends of Reform? what, by annihilating that Parliament, which they wiſh to meliorate? I ſee no body of men, whom an Union could ſatisfy; tranquillity then could only be obtained by military force; Ireland would have a mere military government, and be the barrack of the Empire; with no Parliament to reſtrain, even by the force of opinion, the conduct of the Chief Governor, or his dependants, "*this diſtant and petty province*," as Mr. Gibbon ſtiles it, would be at his mercy; in power he would be a military Proconſul, or a Governor of Bengal; and it would depend on his diſpoſition only, to become a Verres or a Haſtings.

Would commercial advantages reſult from ſuch a ſpecies of Government? I cannot help admiring the generoſity of Britain, that now offers us, in return for the power of unlimited taxation, the long promiſed Equaliſation of Duties, the only pretended commercial advantage ſhe can offer, when, by the annihilation of our Parliament, we ſhould be unable to protect that advantage:—when the Britiſh merchants could play againſt us unreſtrained the whole force of their capital, credit, and induſtry. Who knows not, that the Britiſh merchants hold the Sceptre of Legiſlation in the Britiſh Parliament? Can the Britiſh Miniſter, all-powerful as he boaſts himſelf, aboliſh the Slave Trade? have they not compelled the Britiſh Parliament to break its faith, even when pledged to vindicate the Rights of Humanity? when did the Britiſh merchants ceaſe to turn the power of their Legiſlature againſt Ireland? what has been their conduct during the laſt enlightened century, from the time they compelled King William to deſtroy your woollen manufacture, till the time they diſfigured your Propoſitions? I am confident, that when the Corporation of Cork ſhall reflect again upon the ſubject, they will be ſenſible that they would rather be injured than benefited by an Union: Cork, in return for her proviſions, imports into Ireland chiefly the luxuries of life; the wines and commodities of the South of Europe; when an Union ſhall have baniſhed her principal inhabitants and landed proprietors, to whom will ſhe ſell her luxuries? Spain and Portugal will not take her proviſions, but in return for their commodities of luxury; and ſo far the trade of Cork muſt decline.

But Engliſh capital is to flow into Ireland; when we obtained real commercial advantages, when we obtained the Weſt India trade, no Engliſh capital flowed into Ireland; Ireland was then in a ſtate of peace and of riſing proſperity: here we have certain experience againſt fallacious ſpeculation.—Is it, at this time, in this ſtate of the country, that the plodding merchant of Britain

ſhall ſet his firm afloat, and ſail over to Ireland on his bags of gold, with a pen in one hand and a ſword in the other, to have the honour of joining a corps of our city yeomanry? At any time, what is more injurious to a mercantile houſe, than the change of ſituation? the merchant who would not change the profitable atmoſphere of Threadneedle-ſtreet for the airy elegance of Portman-ſquare, would now exchange the ſecurity and protection of England, for the convulſed, dependant, militariſed Ireland.

Is the drain of ſpecie, by the increaſe of abſentees, to be a commercial advantage? when the money tranſmitted to abſentees ſhall much exceed the balance of our trade, our ſpecie muſt neceſſarily vaniſh, as was the caſe in Scotland, in conſequence of her Union. Let the Houſe conſider, whether at this day the general balance of our trade compenſates for the drain by abſentees: but how much will that drain be encreaſed, when not only all the rich men of the country muſt be baniſhed, but when the man, who would ſolicit even a gauger's place, muſt ſolicit at Whitehall?

The loſs of ſpecie was not the only evil that Scotland ſuffered by an Union. The Union of two Crowns, about to be ſeparated, compenſated thoſe evils; but the Crown of Ireland is inſeparable, united and identified with that of Great Britain; we cannot gain the only benefit that Scotland gained; but the very Act by which ſhe gained it, ſubmitted her to a great political evil —it made her Conſtitution, as far as the treaty of Union went, incapable of amendment, except by the violation of ſolemn compact. She never could have obtained the Law of Treaſon, or the abolition of her heritable offices and juriſdictions, if the Britiſh Parliament had not directly violated the Act of Union.— The Britiſh Parliament were placed in this dilemma, either to leave Scotland ſubject to bad laws and inſtitutions, or to break forcibly through the moſt ſolemn engagement. She preferred the latter: perhaps wiſely; but when, for her own benefit, ſhe preferred the ſame line of conduct with regard to taxation, for ſuch was the unanimous opinion of Scotland with regard to the Malt tax, not the unanimous deſire of every Scotch repreſentative could break the Act of Union. Such is the abſurdity of a written Conſtitution, happily ridiculed by Mr. Burke in his firſt Philippic againſt the firſt "*unalterable*" Conſtitution of France; for he well knew, that the beſt part of the Britiſh Conſtitution was the "*lex non ſcripta.*"

But it is not on ſuch petty conſiderations that Ireland will reject a meaſure that involves her liberty and independance for ever. —This attempt of the Britiſh Miniſter is more atrocious than any of the incorporating ſchemes of the French Republic. The nations when France incorporated, had no free Conſtitutions to

loſe.—Brabant had ſeen her *joyeuſe entrée* trampled under foot, long before the French entered Flanders.—Had the ſlaves of Savoy, or the prieſts of Avignon, rights, liberties, or a conſtitution to loſe?—And yet even the contemptible Avignon, prieſt-ridden and pope-ridden, did not ſubmit with bloodleſs hands to her Union, and did not fall, untill mangled and breathleſs, at the feet of her political butcher and incorporating tyrant.—But it is not an affair of ſuch petty intereſts; it is not an affair of pariſh politics, as it has been called, when a free and a populous nation is called upon to ſnrrender the management of her own concerns for ever.—It is not whether the Sabin name ſhall be loſt in the Roman; whether a diſhonoured nation ſhall ſink into the arms of her conquerors.—The Britiſh Miniſter indeed may wiſh to raiſe a new altar to Neptune; he may wiſh to make Ireland the ſacrifice; he may wiſh to raviſh from her, her deareſt rights and intereſts; and on this Houſe alone, may it perhaps depend this day to ſave our country.

Mr. Barrington roſe to give his decided ſupport to the motion—a motion which he conceived the future peace and ſecurity of Ireland abſolutely required—and which could not be oppoſed but by the enemies of both.

On the laſt night the queſtion of a Legiſlative Union had met with unequivocal diſapprobation from the moſt reſpectable and independant minority that ever oppoſed a miniſterial meaſure; and he truſted a majority againſt it would this night put the queſtion effectually at reſt.

But as the Parliament juſtly reprobated this meaſure of the Britiſh Miniſter, he thought they were called upon to ſubſtitute ſome other arrangement which might tranquilliſe the public mind—and tend to give an equal intereſt to all the inhabitants of Ireland in the preſervation of its freedom and independance—He had too long witneſſed the deſperate conſequences of national diſunion;—but he now looked with an eager eye to the annihilation of theſe ruinous animoſities which the Britiſh Government had ſo long ſucceſsfully fomented—and now ſo treacherouſly made uſe of.

The vicious project of a Legiſlative Union avowedly intended to put down Proteſtant proſperity—annihilate Catholic claims—and equally extinguiſh the liberties of both ſects—had already opened the eyes of every ſect and claſs of Iriſhmen, to the dangers that awaited their country—and promoted a tendency to the national reconciliation, which was now the only bulwark againſt national ſlavery, and he truſted would induce any ſect to forget their private injuries in the public ſecurity.

Mr. Barrington then went into a defence of the Iriſh Bar, which he ſaid had been moſt falſly and inſolently aſperſed;—

ſpringing from the firſt families in Ireland, it ſpoke the ſenſe of the nation.—The Iriſh Lawyers had ſaved their country by their ſpirit as ſoldiers—and again would help to ſave it by their principles as politicians;—they had rouſed the nation to a ſenſe of its dunger, and would perſevere in its defence to the laſt extremity.

Their ſpirit—their independance—their integrity and their loyalty had been tried and ſtood the teſt;—and their late Prime Serjeant had reflected an honour on the profeſſion, which the profeſſion had been emulous to return;—he ſtood higher in their regard by his diſmiſſal,—and his ſucceſſor would ſoon feel the degradation of ſo deteſtable a ſituation.—Mr. Barrington warned the Miniſter againſt proceeding in a meaſure which would drive the country to deſperation—and might eventually prove the downfall of the Britiſh Empire;—he had deceived the Britiſh Miniſter by falſe repreſentations of our ſituation and temper—and ſhould anſwer for the conſequence of ſo wrong-headed a policy.—Having given his opinion fully on a former night, he ſhould not now go into further detail, and ſhould only congratulate the Houſe on the proſpect of a diviſion which would at once aſſert the independance and ſecure the liberties of Ireland.

The Attorney General ſpoke a few words in ſupport of the Paragraph; after which a diviſion took place, when there appeared

For the expunging the Paragraph relating to the Union, -	109
Againſt the motion, -	104
Majority againſt the Paragraph,	5

Tellers for the Ayes, Lord Tyrone and Mr. Smith.
Tellers for the Noes, Mr. Ponſonby and Sir Laurence Parſons.

Lord Castlereagh ſaid, that he had brought forward this meaſure in compliance with the duties of his ſituation, and with no other view than the mutual advantage of both countries, and the general ſtrength, welfare, and proſperity of the Empire. He would be a ſilly Miniſter indeed, who would bring forward ſuch a meaſure at this day, with any inferior views; becauſe he muſt know that any objects of a different nature muſt defeat, inſtead of anſwering a great imperial purpoſe. However, thoſe Gentlemen who thought fit to oppoſe the meaſure, without ſo much as examining a tittle of its purport, or its arrangements, would recollect, that when the day ſhould come that this Houſe would feel the neceſſity of its adoption, upon their own heads be the reſponſibility for rejecting this night a meaſure of ſuch

high importance to the tranquillity and ſolid happineſs of their country.

Mr. PONSONBY now roſe and ſaid, that in order that no Miniſter might hereafter venture to bring forward in that Houſe a meaſure ſo obnoxious, he ſhould move a Reſolution to be entered in the Journals, in the following words:—"Reſolved, That "this Houſe will ever maintain the undoubted birth-right of "Iriſhmen, by preſerving an independant Parliament of Lords "and Commons, reſident within this kingdom, as ſettled and "approved by his Majeſty and the Britiſh Parliament in 1782." This Motion, after ſome converſation, was withdrawn.

Col. FITZGERALD brought up the Report of the Addreſs to to his Excellency.

Lord CASTLEREAGH then ſuggeſted the propriety of expunging a Paragraph of ſimilar purport to that rejected from the Addreſs; which being done, the Addreſs was agreed to, and ordered that Mr. Speaker, attended by the Houſe, do wait on his Excellency to preſent the ſame.

Lord Caſtlereagh now moved a Reſolution of Thanks and Approbation from this Houſe to Sir J. B. Warren, and the Officers, Sailors and Marines under his command, for their gallant conduct in the defeat of the enemy on the coaſt of this Kingdom, on their way to invade it.

Agreed to *nem. con.* and ordered that Mr. Speaker do communicate the ſame.

SATURDAY—JAN. 26.

The SPEAKER having taken the chair,

Lord CASTLEREAGH moved, that a writ of election be iſſued for the borough of Newry, in the room of the Right Honourable Iſaac Corry, who had vacated his ſeat, by accepting the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. G. PONSONBY ſaid, the Noble Lord was ſomewhat premature in his motion, for that Mr. Corry had not vacated his ſeat, as he was not Chancellor of the Exchequer. The office, he ſaid, was derived immediately and ſolely from the Crown, and no new writ of appointment having been made by his Majeſty, the Right Hon. Baronet, who had recently exerciſed ſo honourably the duties of that office, was ſtill the undoubted and legal Chancellor of the Exchequer, although the name, or the buſineſs, may have been uſurped by another.

Sir J. Parnel said, that certainly he felt that he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, under the circumstances mentioned by his honourable and learned Friend;—but as, unfortunately, he happened to differ in opinion from his Majesty's Ministers iu this kingdom, on a great national question, he also felt himself called upon by delicacy to those Ministers, and his duty to his Country, to counsel his Sovereign only through the medium of his parliamentary privilege and conduct.

Lord Castlereagh acknowledged that he had been premature; and standing corrected by the opinion of the honourable and learned Gentleman who spoke last but one, he begged leave to withdraw his motion, which was granted accordingly.

The House then adjourned for half an hour.

The Speaker reported, that the House had attended his Excellency with the Address to his Majesty, and he was pleased to return for answer, viz.

"That he would forthwith transmit their dutiful and loyal Address to his Majesty."

The Speaker also reported that he had presented the Address of Thanks of that House to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, for his most excellent Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and that his Excellency was pleased to return the following Answer:

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"Your kind Address, which conveys an approbation of my "conduct in such marked and flattering language, is highly "grateful to my feelings.

"I am assured that in this arduous conjuncture you will stea-"dily pursue those measures which will be most effectual for in-"creasing the strength of the Empire, and employing its reve-"nues against the common enemy; and I shall faithfully repre-"sent to his Majesty, your zeal for his service and for the gene-"ral interests of Great Britain and Ireland."

Ordered, That his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's Answer be entered on the Journals of this House.

Lord Cole moved the Thanks of the House to the British fencible and militia Regiments, who came in time of danger to this country, to afford protection to its loyal inhabitants. The motion was seconded by several Members on his side of the House.

Lord Castlereagh said, that previous to the departure of those regiments who had so generously and seasonably volunteered their assistance to this Country, it was his intention to have made a similar motion to that which had been just proposed; but he

did not regret his having been anticipated, as it could not have fallen into more ſuitable hands, nor have been brought forward more ſeaſonably than at the preſent time; thoſe troops having but a few days ſince renewed their offers of ſervice in this country. He concluded by heartily coinciding with the motion of the Noble Lord.

Col. MAXWELL in a few words expreſſed his warm concurrence with the motion. The readineſs of thoſe troops to aſſiſt their loyal fellow-ſubjects in this country, merited gratitude and thanks, notwithſtanding that the native courage and loyalty of the country had left them nothing to do.

Hon. D. BROWNE paſſed an high eulogium on the Britiſh militia, and the generoſity with which they had waived the right of refuſal, with which the laws had armed them, and their promptneſs to face that war of Rebellion which had been raiſed in this kingdom. He commented particularly on the conduct of the Marquis of Buckingham's regiment, which had actually embarked for the purpoſe of aſſiſting this country, when menaced by the French fleet in Bantry Bay. He was happy that this motion was propoſed at a moment when there appeared in that Houſe a jealouſy and diſtruſt of the beſt intended acts, and the moſt important kindneſſes, manifeſted by the ſiſter Country—[a general and loud cry of No! No!]—He was happy, he ſaid, to ſtand contradicted; and hoped always to find ſimilar appearances equally fallacious. He expreſſed his hearty concurrence to the motion.

Col. BAGWELL, in ſupporting the motion, paid his tribute of approbation to the Britiſh militia; and ſaid, that the regiment he had the honour to command (the county Tipperary militia) were ſo ſenſible of the generous conduct of their Britiſh fellow ſoldiers, that the very day before he left the country, his ſerjeant major waited on him, to offer the ſervices of the regiment in any part of Great Britain, which any public exigence might render neceſſary.

The vote of thanks paſſed unanimouſly and was ordered to be communicated by the Speaker.

Mr. CORRY moved for ſeveral communications relative to the Public Accounts; he alſo moved for leave to bring in a Bill, to amend and explain a Bill paſſed in the laſt ſeſſion, for preventing perſons tranſported from returning to theſe kingdoms, or going to any Country at war with his Majeſty—Leave given.—He further moved, that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's Speech be taken into conſideration on Monday, after which the Houſe adjourned to that day.

MONDAY, JANUARY 28.

The Right Hon. Lord CASTLEREAGH rose and said, that in order that an opportunity might be given to the public officers to bring forward the public accounts, and that no interruption might occur to the public business of Parliament, in getting through the business of the nation, he should now move that the House at its rising do adjourn till the 7th of February.

Sir JOHN PARNEL opposed the motion, and said there never was a moment in which it was more necessary than at present for the Parliament of Ireland to remain sitting, vigilant at its post: For if he was to credit the reports made in the English newspapers of the discussions respecting the affairs of this country, which took place in another Parliament, and the declaration made by the British Minister "that he would unceasingly persevere in a measure respecting the internal situation of this country," to which the Parliament of Ireland had so recently and so decidedly given its negative, he trusted the House would see the necessity of resisting the measure of adjournment, at least until they should know what were the sentiments of the British Minister and the British Parliament, when they should come to learn the sentiments expressed and the decision which took place in the Parliament of Ireland on this subject; for it was impossible the British Minister or Parliament could have known the sentiments of the Parliament of Ireland, when they had discussed the measure on the very same day it was rejected here.—The Noble Lord near (Castlereagh) though he had said he would not lose sight of the measure, yet had declared he never should think of passing it against the sense of the country, and of Parliament—indeed no Minister of any talent or wisdom would. The British Minister he knew to be a man of great talents and great wisdom, who, he was convinced, however highly he approved of the measure, would not think of pressing it against every sentiment of sound discretion.—He must therefore presume his declarations on the subject were made under a mistake, or a misrepresentation of the sentiments of the Parliament and people of Ireland; and convinced he was that so soon as that great man should come to know the decision which had taken place in that House upon the subject, he could not be either so impolitic or so rash as to persevere. That House and the people of Ireland had learnt, since the decision of Thursday last, to consider the question as at rest; that the declaration of the British Minister could not fail now to excite new alarms, nor could those alarms ever be quiet in this country, so long as the people could consider the measure as still hanging over them; and if the British Minister were to persist in the declaration after the sense of the Irish Parliament and

Irish people were known to him, it is impossible for any friend to his country or British connexion, to contemplate the consequences without the most serious alarm. With respect to the public business, there existed in his mind no occasion whatever to adjourn the Parliament on that account. No adjournment at least should take place until the result should be known of the decision adopted by the Irish Parliament on the sentiments of the British Cabinet, and Parliament should continue sitting and be ready to act, as occasion might require, and to vindicate its own independance and maintain its Constitution. He was actuated by no other motive but a consideration for the tranquillity of the country, and the general welfare of the Empire, and no man could be more ready to sacrifice largely for those desirable ends; but it was impossible this country could be tranquil until that measure was at rest; therefore if the British Minister was resolved to press it forward to discussion, contrary to the sense of Parliament, the sooner it was decided the better.

Lord CASTLEREAGH rose and said, the Right Hon. Baronet himself furnished by his arguments the strongest reasons for the necessity of the adjournment. The Right Hon. Baronet had heretofore recommended that all discussion on this subject should be conducted with temperance and moderation; but unfortunately, in evincing his high jealousy for the parliamentary independance of Ireland, a species of intemperate warmth had crept into his manner of treating the subject. That House would but ill support its own dignity, if it were to be ruled in its proceedings by the unauthenticated reports of newspapers; it should wait for authentic documents, whereon to govern its conduct. But what was the language attributed to the British Minister in discussing this topic in the British Parliament? Nothing more than what had already been used by himself (Lord C.) in that House, merely recommending the measure of Union to the consideration of Parliament, and declaring it to be a measure, in his conception so essentially indispensable to perpetuate the connexion between both kingdoms, to consolidate their mutual strength, and promote their mutual prosperity, that he should never lose sight of it. Certainly not meaning that he would, or could press it against the Irish Parliament and the Irish people, if that sentiment should appear to be generally against the measure; but expressing his own full conviction of its utility and indispensability for the ends proposed; and he would not deserve to be a Minister, who though such a measure might for the present be contrary to the sense of Parliament and of the nation, would bind himself by any declaration that might forever hereafter preclude him from propounding that or any other measure for the consideration of Parliament, which he, as

a Miniſter, bound to promote the good of the country, ſhould conceive to be directed for that end. For though the meaſure would be now oppoſite to the ſenſe of Parliament, and perhaps of the people, a time might come when the queſtion might be better underſtood, and both the people and the Parliament ſolicit the meaſure. If ſuch a time ſhould come, would the Miniſter be bound by a declaration that he had abandoned it? Certainly it could not be the wiſh of the Britiſh Government to preſs the meaſure againſt the ſenſe of the country, when that ſenſe was known; and therefore, gentlemen, by an untimely warmth on this ſubject, imputed that to Government, which Government never intended. However, as the Right Hon. Baronet ſeemed to admit the propriety of awaiting the reſult of the diſcuſſion of the Iriſh Parliament by the ſentiments of the Britiſh Cabinet, the public officers would employ their time with much greater advantage for the public in their reſpective departments, by preparing the public buſineſs for parliamentary examination, than by meeting day after day to do nothing.

Mr. Barrington oppoſed the adjournment, and inveighed againſt the ſpeech of the Britiſh Miniſter on this ſubject. A Noble Lord had talked of coolneſs in diſcuſſing the ſubject; but it was that kind of propoſition, ſo inſulting to the honour and the ſenſe of the Iriſh nation, as no honeſt Iriſhman, alive to the love of his country, or who had any feeling for national honour, could hear with coolneſs. There was not, he affirmed, a man within either nation more zealouſly attached in loyalty to his King and the Government than himſelf, nor who would ſacrifice more chearfully to the maintenance of both; but if the honour and the dignity of the Iriſh Parliament was to be again outraged, by an attempt to preſs upon them the odious meaſure of an Uuion, againſt which that Houſe had already contended with ſo much ſpirit, virtue, and honeſt indignation, though ſupported by the moſt inſulting attempts to awe the honeſt independance of the members of that Houſe, by diſmiſſing from the higheſt ſituations ſome of the oldeſt and moſt reſpectable ſervants of the Crown, and beſtowing their places on men who had no merit, but ſupporting the politics of Government—he declared, that he for one, would go every length to oppoſe it in every ſhape and in all its ramifications. The people of Ireland ſhould be told, and in the ſtrongeſt manner, of this daring attack on the independance of their Parliament and the liberties of their country; they ſhould find in that Parliament the faithful guardians of their liberties and rights; and in the ſpirit of both, the Britiſh Miniſter would ſee the raſhneſs of his attempting to perſevere. He was firmly of opinion with the Right Hon. Baronet, that the Houſe ought vigilantly to ſit from day to day, to guard againſt every advance of

this insidious measure; and if it should be persevered in, that House ought to come forthwith to some strong declaration in assertion of its own authority and independance.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH supported the adjournment, as a measure necessary to give the Country time to express its sense generally on the subject. The sense of the Country, he was convinced, was not generally against the measure; he had conversed this day with a gentleman of great respectability from the county of Cork, who assured him, all that province were decidedly in favour of the measure.

Hon. Mr. TRENCH was for the adjournment, as the best mode of preventing the agitation of the public mind, so long anxious upon this question that it required time to repose; it would also afford time to collect the sense of the country at large on the subject, which the sense of the House had already considered as abandoned, and which he trusted the British Minister, whose declaration was made evidently under a misconception of that sense and without any knowledge of its decision, would never think of persevering in that measure against the sense of the Parliament and people of Ireland.

Sir JOHN FREKE rose in consequence of what had fallen from a Right Hon. Bart. (Sir H. Cavendish) touching the sentiments of the people of Munster. He had not this day conversed with many gentlemen from that country, but he had received letters from some of the most respectable and best informed gentlemen in that province, which so far from declaring the people there unanimous in favour of an Union positively assured him of the strongest persuasion, that had the vote of Thursday night passed in favour of that measure, the whole province would have been the next day in open rebellion; and added, that it would not be very safe for the Members who voted for the measure to return to that part of the country.

Colonel BAGWELL said, that he would only speak in this point for that county in Munster which he had the honour to represent, (Tipperary.) He had received several letters from some of the best informed gentlemen in that country, and so had his collegue, declaring the whole county to a man decidedly averse to the measure of an Union.

Mr. PLUNKET condemned the declaration of the British Minister, which was made under the influence of ignorance and delusion, as to what were the real sentiments of the Parliament and people of Ireland on the subject of Union.—He must suppose that the British Minister had been taught to reckon upon the certain and infallible success of his project for influencing the Irish

Parliament, and he could not have discovered his error in the decision of that Parliament, when he had the temerity to utter the speech alluded to, and of the authenticity of which there was pretty good evidence in a confidential paper of the Minister's (the Sun.) The public mind (as the Hon. Member had observed) stood in need of repose after so much agitation as it had recently sustained upon this topic, and therefore he should not oppose the motion for adjournment; but if it should appear in the next meeting of the House, that the British Minister still persisted in his rash design, he would call upon every gentleman on this side of the House who had already voted against the measure, and upon any gentlemen on the other side, who through false delicacy had not resisted the proposal for entertaining it, to come forward in vindication of the honour, the dignity, and the independance of the Irish Parliament and the Irish nation, and by some strong and decided declaration put an *extinguisher* upon this odious and abominable measure. The Noble Lord had intimated that the time might come when the Parliament and the country would be glad to solicit the measure, as the only means of effectually securing tranquillity. He hoped the Noble Lord did not mean to insinuate that measures would be adopted to produce such a situation in the country as would create the necessity of such a situation, in order that "what was spoken by the Prophets might be fulfilled."—He was not overfond to see a Minister ruling the country, who seemed to have a taste for verifying his own predictions as to the necessity he foretold; and he wished to see that Minister and his British collegue removed from office, a circumstance which could not much affect them, as they seemed to cool to feel for any event.

Mr. M'Cleland considered the declaration of the Noble Lord (Castlereagh) to be merely that he would not bring forward the question of an Union against the sense of Parliament and the country, on that principle he would support the adjournment, bnt if the country spoke out against the measure of an Union, then would he be found as strenuous in opposing it, as he had heretofore been in its support.

Mr. Dobbs said, that from the decision which the House had given, and the declaration of the Noble Lord, every man within and without those walls considered the question of Union as abandoned; but from the declaration of the British Minister "that he would lose sight of the measure but with his life," that House would see the indispensable necessity of its unceasing vigilance, in guarding every pass, and fortifying every avenue by which the liberties of Ireland and her Legislative independance might be attacked. He therefore called upon gentlemen who had succeeded in the first defeat of the measure, to watch vigilantly

on their posts, and by a constant and unremitting attendance to their duty in that House, to leave no opportunity for surprise when attack was openly and immutably avowed and determined.

Mr. Egan did not resist the question of adjournment, but hoped Gentlemen would take the advantage of that recess, in apprising their constituents in every part of the kingdom of the danger which menace the liberty and independance of their country, of guarding them against insidious attempts to cajole their understandings, and of coming back to Parliament fortified by their public and unequivocal declaration of sentiment on this subject; and thus, he trusted, the manly and dignified spirit of an Irish Parliament, backed by the resolutions of an Irish people, determined to maintain that Parliament in asserting and vindicating the constitutional independance of their country, would deter any Minister from venturing to attempt the subversion of that independance. If, in the year 1782, when this country attained that independance, any Minister was found daring enough to hazard such a proposal, there would be men found in this House to rise and move an address to his Majesty, praying him to dismiss from his councils, and remove from office such a Minister; and if any farther attempt should be made to force this measure on the House, he trusted men would still be found to bring forward such a motion.

Mr. Knox said a few words to the same purport.

Sir B. Roche asked the gentlemen who opposed the Union, how it was possible things could remain in the state they had so long continued? He hoped those gentlemen when they should return from their constituents after the recess, if they should still be resolved to oppose an Union, would be ready to bring forward some other effectual plan for securing the tranquillity of the country, and putting a stop to anarchy and confusion.

Mr. Wolfe (of Forenaught) took this opportunity to express his regret at not having been present on the discussion of the Union question; on that measure, however, he thought it but fair, manly and honourable, for every who had not voted, to declare his sentiments, and his own ever must decidedly be against that measure.

Mr. Brooke rose to declare, that had he been present, he should have certainly voted against the measure.

The question being now put, was carried in the affirmative without further opposition.

Col. (Maxwell) Barry aid, he had no objection to the adjournment moved by the Noble Lord; but as from the declaration

of the British Minister any stratagem would be apprehended for carrying his point, gentlemen hostile to the project would see the necessity of the fullest attendance throughout the session; and he should therefore move a call of the House on the 8th of February.

Lord CASTLEREAGH assured the Hon. Gentleman nothing could more satisfactorily accommodate the government than a full attendance of Members at all times, as the best means of expediting the public business; and with respect to the question of Union, he had already declared his determination explicitly, "that he should never bring it forward so long as it appeared "to him repugnant to the sense of Parliament and the coun-"try," But certainly it could never have been his intention to have brought it forward but with a view to the most ample discussion in the fullest attendance of Members that could be procured; and had the House decided in favour of the discussion on the former night, he should immediately have moved for a call of the House. The Hon. Gentleman might therefore rest assured he was incapable of taking the House or the country by surprise upon such an important subject, nor to attempt passing it against their sentiments.

Col. (MAXWELL) BARRY observed, the Noble Lord could not himself answer for what he might do, as he must act according to the instructions he received from the other side.

Mr. MARTIN wished the call of the House postponed to a further day, in order to give ample time for gentlemen to take the sense of their constituents.

Col. (MAXWELL) BARRY amended his motion to the 11th of February, which was agreed to.

Sir H. CAVENDISH, after a short preface, in which he stated, that the House of Parliament had been degraded by personal outrage and insult to several of its Members, coming to and retiring from that House, in consequence of votes given in that House, moved three resolutions to the following effect:

"That any insult or assault offered to any Member of Parlia-"ment coming to or going from that House, in consequence of "any thing said or done in Parliament; or any attempt to inti-"midate any Member from any vote in that House; or any tu-"multuous assemblage of persons meeting in the passages to that "House to awe or intimidate its Members, to or from any vote "on any measure, is an high infringement on the privileges of "that House."

Col. (MAXWELL) BARRY declared for himself personally he had neither witnessed nor heard of any such insult or violence of-

fered to any Member. If the Right Hon. Baronet alluded to the joy ſhewn by the people on a late occaſion, he thought, conſidering the exultation univerſally felt, the conduct of the populace extremely calm and patient before and during the diſcuſſion, and extremely moderate in their expreſſion of triumph on the defeat of the meaſure—he heard indeed of boys throwing ſquibs and breaking windows that were not illuminated. Such things were uſual and ordinary (though he could not juſtify them) on every popular occaſion; but he ſaw nothing particular on this occaſion; nor had the Right Hon. Baronet ſpecified any grounds to ſhew the neceſſity of paſſing reſolutions to declare now what was the known law of parliamentary privilege and of the land.

Dr. Browne expreſſed ſimilar ſentiments, as did Mr. Barrington, who ſaid he had heard it aſſerted this day in the Hall of the Four Courts, that the Right Hon. Baronet had declared his determination to move for the removal of the Parliament to Cork, in order to ſecure ſafety in its deliberations.

The Right Hon. Attorney General ſaid it was notorious that both the perſons of Members had been aſſaulted and abuſed by the moſt opprobrious names, their houſes attacked by mobs, and themſelves declared traitors to their country, for having voted in favour of Union; and that certainly ſuch attempt to overawe the Parliament would warrant its removal to Cork.

The Right Hon. Denis Browne, in proof of the daring inſults which had been offered to the dignity of that Houſe, read a paragraph from the Evening Poſt of Saturday night, calling the Miniſter of the country and thoſe members who voted for an Union "*a Corrupt Miniſter and his corrupt phalanx.*" It was, he ſaid, his intention to have called the printer to the bar this night, and moved for his committal to Newgate, which he declared he would do the very next time he ſaw ſo daring and contumacious a libel in print.

Lord Castlereagh moved that a ſupply be granted to his Majeſty. Agreed to.

Ordered that the Houſe do reſolve into a committee on the 7th of February to take the ſame into conſideration.

Ordered that the Speaker do iſſue his writ for electing a Burgeſs for Newry, in the room of the Right Hon. Iſaac Corry who has accepted the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and another for Galway in the room of St. G. Daly, Eſq. who has accepted the office of Prime Serjeant; alſo for Mullingar in the room of Mr. Hardy, who has accepted the Eſcheatorſhip of Munſter; and alſo for Mr. Luke Fox. who has accepted the Eſcheatorſhip of Ulſter.—The Houſe adjourned to Thurſday, February the 7th.

Houses of the Oireachtas