

A
L E T T E R
TO THE
PEOPLE OF IRELAND,
WHICH
THEY ALL CAN UNDERSTAND,
AND
OUGHT TO READ.

BY A REAL FRIEND.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED FOR J. MILLIKEN, No. 32, CRAFTON-STREET.

1799.

THE STATE OF

IN SENATE

JANUARY 1862

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1861

ALBANY:

WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

ALBANY: WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS, 1862.

doubted of a favorable reception. I intended neither to flatter you by hopes, which never can be realized, nor to gratify you by censures, which never have been merited, and consequently could not expect to make an impression upon your minds. But if ever a people had reason to be undeceived, to see and to repent their folly and their crimes, you of Ireland, my Friends, are that people. You have been terribly misled by bad advisers, you have been plunged into the deepest calamities, a Country can sustain; and now whilst your wounds are still fresh, whilst you are smarting from your sores, is the moment to step in with salutary counsel, and if possible, to restore you to "your old good manners, your old good humor, and your old good nature." For one, I am persuaded, that even were every sense of Religion and of Law excluded from your breasts, your misfortunes must convince you of the mischief and the madness of
your

your conduct. The greater part of your leaders are either hanged or transported, and have loaded their families with affliction and disgrace. Many of them, who might have been or were ornaments to the professions they were in, now languish away their lives in melancholy confinement, their friends and relations lamenting their profligacy, and complaining of the infamy, which attaches on their names. Thousands of your companions have perished at the gallows or in the field, and have left their wives and children, outcasts upon the world, dependant alone upon the charity of the rich, whose lives and properties, they had conspired to destroy. Instead of living to maintain the partners and the offspring of their beds by honest industry, they have sent them, widows and orphans as they are, to beg, from door to door, their daily morsel, and are accountable to the Almighty Judge for every tear *they* shed, for every night *they* lie down

cold and hungry. Such of you, the survivors, who were active in the rebellion, are not much better off. If you had houses, they are burnt, if stock, it is destroyed, if corn, consumed, if leases, they are forfeited, and if money, it is spent. By your open treason and your cowardly plans of assassination, you have made enemies of the brave and loyal; and even the timid and undecided, who waited, 'till some important blow was struck, like rats have left the sinking ship, and are now among the most forward to prosecute and condemn you. To complete the catalogue, your allies, the French, after some paltry efforts to invade us, have entirely abandoned you to your fate, and are now themselves in such a situation, that were their armies twice as numerous, they have more than sufficient employment for them at home. Indeed, when they were here, they afforded you a specimen, which you never should forget, of what
you

you might expect, had they performed their engagements and sent to your *assistance* a considerable force. The wretched peasantry, that joined them, some from terror and many from inclination, were treated with more cruelty, than the beasts of burden, exposed to every hardship, denied almost every necessary of life, and for the slightest awkwardness, murmur or disobedience, punished, without even the mockery of a trial, by instantaneous death. In short, my Friends, whether you look to the sufferings of the present or the past, you have abundant reason to regret the day, that you forsook your allegiance to your King, and entered into a desperate conspiracy; a conspiracy which had it been successful, so far from bettering your condition, would have made you infinitely worse, than the very poorest could pretend to be, before they sent their ploughs to be converted into pikes, and

and neglected their farms to attend on their Committees.

It is not without a motive, evidently, that I have presented this picture to your view. My object is to excite you to a serious meditation on the consequences of your late disorders. Were you convinced, they could confer no benefit upon you, but must be productive of infinite misfortunes, you would probably avoid a repetition of them, for the future. If you had time and opportunity to read the history of your country, it would be unnecessary for me to remark, that similar attempts have invariably been attended by similar success. In the last century, (to go no farther back) there were massacres and rebellions, to which the ignorant and wicked multitude were prompted by the ambitious, the turbulent, and disaffected. But they all terminated alike in the defeat and disappointment of the people

ple and in the triumph and confirmation of the Government. The losses of the loyal were comparatively small to those of the rebellious. In the end, the former were rewarded and encouraged for the cause, in which they suffered; the latter were devoted to the vengeance of the violated laws, and justly left to struggle with the difficulties they had brought upon themselves. Such has been and ever will be the fate of treason in a Country, that is blessed with the British Constitution, where there is equal protection to the liberty and property of every individual, be he rich or poor. To the goodness of that Constitution, are we indebted for its victory over those, who had endeavoured to undermine it. When there are just grounds for complaint, a *party* may be formidable to those, with whom the power of the State is lodged, unless managed with discretion and satisfied in reason. But when there are no real grievances, when

a *faction*

a *faction* rises up, whose only object is to turn out from their places one set of men, and to bring in another, then are they sure to be baffled in the design, and their wretched instruments, the people, are deserted, the dupes of their folly and the victims of their crimes. Apply these observations to France and Ireland, and you must perceive their truth. In the one the people were enslaved and oppressed; the best part of the community espoused their cause, and they were successful in the destruction of a tyrannical Government*. In the other, the

* The writer cannot be supposed by this to justify the progress of the French Revolution. It has been marked by such horrid violations of every thing, we hold sacred and valuable in life, that no one can look back on it, without shuddering at the review—It affords a most important lesson to the people of all countries to be cautious, how they engage in political contests. At this moment there is less real liberty in France, than in any country of Europe. The peasantry of that ill-fated land may say with a sigh, “Better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others, that we know not of.”

people

people were free and happy; they enjoyed every political blessing, which it is practicable to possess in civilized society, and yet they wantonly made war upon their Government. With the exception of a very few, the honest and the honorable supported the Government; and the people met with that punishment their ingratitude and obstinacy deserved. Experience is a better guide than history; it teaches more directly and more easily. The proof of what I said above is at your doors. The example is living before your eyes, is, as it were, speaking to you every hour, cautioning you against the artifices of an angry and unforgiving faction; and yet it is rumoured, that many expect and more intend to rouse you into tumult once again, upon the question of the Union. After all which has already taken place, I can hardly think it possible.—But it is more easy to prevent than to cure a disorder; and to deprive you of every pretext for insurrec-

C

tion,

tion, which ignorance or misconception might supply, I recommend to your perusal the sentiments of one, who, from his heart, is anxious for your prosperity and peace.

Amongst the various pamphlets and speeches, which have been published on the occasion, few are adapted to your capacities, few have a tendency to make you wiser, better or happier subjects. Without distracting you by arguments or calculations, which you could not comprehend, I take it upon me to assert and prove, that an Union with Great Britain will not only be highly conducive to your interests, but is indispensably necessary to your welfare. And for these simple reasons; that it will be an eternal and effectual bar against rebellion; that it will save you from the seductions of foreign incendiaries and domestic traitors, who have for centuries been thwarting your prosperity,

prosperity, and that it will enable you to cultivate and improve the natural advantages, with which Providence has blessed you in so eminent and bountiful a degree. It is a fact which cannot be contradicted, that within the last twenty years, the comforts of the lower classes had rapidly increased. Notwithstanding, the ever restless faction I alluded to, indifferent about the consequences to you, and only thinking upon their own projects of ambition, determined to convert you from a happy and contented peasantry, into dissatisfied and unfortunate politicians. Profiting by the French revolution, which had excited such a ferment in the public mind, you were addressed as Catholics, and called upon to *emancipate*. A fine word has often been found useful to impose upon the ignorant and foolish. With no other purpose was this lofty term introduced, and unluckily for you, it answered but too well the expectations

tations of its parent. The meaning of emancipate, is to give liberty to slaves. It were an insult on your common sense to undertake to prove, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland are not slaves, and nothing but a bad heart and a perverted understanding could have insinuated so notorious an untruth. The only foundation for it is, that they are excluded from Parliament and most of the great offices of state, circumstances which inflict no mighty hardship upon you. But still, so long as this pretended grievance shall continue, the factious and the turbulent will employ it to detach you from your peaceful occupations, and by fine words and inflammatory speeches, involve you in the dangers and distresses you so lately were engaged in, and yet feel the smart of. Accept then the offered Union with Great Britain, and the flimsy pretence vanishes for ever. You will be admitted to a full participation of the honors of the state, you will be placed

on

on a perfect footing of equality with your Protestant brethren, and the licentious democrats of the day will lose that fatal engine which has sent so many of you to untimely graves, - and doomed so many more to poverty and shame. You will naturally enquire, why if so little could save you from the designs of traitors, and secure to the country permanent tranquillity, that little is not granted, without the addition of an Union. With you the question is reasonable, and entitled to an answer. From your situation, as an island, you must, in a great measure, subsist by commerce; but having neither wood nor iron, indeed wanting almost every thing for the equipment of a fleet, but men, you must depend on the assistance and protection of some more rich and powerful neighbour. Your relative position on the seas has pointed out Great Britain as that neighbour, and so great is her power, and her wealth, that her friendship is as necessary

ry

ry to you, as her enmity would be fatal. Her King, her Parliament, her entire establishment is Protestant, and without endangering the connection, yours cannot but be the same. Were you permitted to make and to administer the laws, so numerous is your body, that ere long, the Houses of Parliament and the Seats of Justice would be completely in your hands. Every man has a preference for his own religion, and you would then naturally ally yourselves with Catholics on the Continent. What would be the consequence? Your country would become the theatre of war. After a struggle, in which your choicest blood and treasure would be spent, Great Britain, who commands the ocean, would again subdue you, and with a view to your mutual advantage, would repeat the severities, which, at the conclusion of the last century, your conduct had provoked. Listen then to the language she now holds, and the proposal she presents
to

to you. We are sisters by nature. Separation would be death to one and injury to the other. You have imprudently solicited a boon, which, if granted, would dissolve our connection. We are the elder sister, we have more experience, and more property at stake than you. We, therefore, firmly have resisted your request. But anxious to silence your complaints, and reconcile all differences, we propose to draw you still closer to ourselves, and by identifying, by uniting our interests, to prevent the possibility of murmur for the future. Our Parliament, our purse, our trade, our liberty and laws shall be one, without danger to us, and with benefit to you. The hopes of the unprincipled and factious crew, who have been leading you to ruin, shall be for ever blasted, you shall pursue your trades and cultivate your lands in peace, and no longer be the melancholy tools of every pretended patriot,
entailing

entailing misery upon yourselves, and beggary upon your children.

This, my Friends, is the point of view in which your real interests are most plainly and materially concerned. Be assured, there is but one thing wanted to make you a virtuous, a rich, and respectable people, and that is, to be taken out of the hands of traitors. An Union can alone establish this, and therefore should have the prayers of every wise and honest man in the community for its success. Reject it, and Ireland must continue to be poor, and miserable, and profligate; embrace it, and she becomes wealthy, happy and religious. Believe me, notwithstanding their professions of regard, they are your lasting enemies who have advised you to oppose it.

You have heard a great deal about the loss of your Parliament, and uncommon industry

try has been used to persuade you, that the removal of it from Dublin to London will be injurious to your interests. But they who have endeavoured the most anxiously to impress you with this idea, were influenced by selfish motives, and by no tenderness for you. To those, who look upon a seat in that assembly as so much property in trade, and like prudent shopkeepers begin by extolling the value of their goods, that they may dispose of them more profitably to the purchasers; to those, I acknowledge, it will be a serious disadvantage. They will be deprived of a market for their abilities at home, which has been most ruinous to you, although to many of them but too productive. They will no longer have an opportunity of displaying their talents at the risk of your tranquillity, nor of obtaining your confidence, that they may afterwards betray it, and smile at your simplicity. But if you would employ the natural guardians of your

D

rights,

rights, if you desire in Representatives independence of fortune, integrity of principle, and the pride of birth, which, depend on it, is no bad security against corruption, if such you would entrust, you will be sure to find them in an united Parliament. The expences attendant upon travel, and occasional residence in England, will determine this, and to you it must be a matter of complete indifference, whether my Lord this or Mr. that is one or six days on the road, assured that an attachment to your interests accompanies him throughout, and that he has no temptation to sacrifice them to a bribe.

But it is said, allowing this to be true, it can have no weight, for that the voices of the Irish Members would be ineffectually opposed to the wishes of the British Parliament. If it be meant to tell you, that five hundred can out-vote one hundred, you may
 thank

thank them for the information, though you were as wise as they. But they artfully conceal what it concerns you to know, and you may be ignorant of, that were your countries once united, the British majority never would injure you, and for this simple reason, that they could not do so without injuring themselves. Your interests would be one and the same. Your riches would be her profit; your poverty, her loss. If she prospered, so must you, if she declined, your fall would be common. Were a richer neighbour to propose a partnership of farms and stock to one of you, who wanted encouragement and assistance, would you not be grateful for the offer, and with eagerness accept it? If at the conclusion of the year your profits and your losses were to be divided in proportion to your original shares, could any ingenuity convince you, that it was the interest of the richer to discourage your prosperity, and thus by jealousy to diminish
the

the total of your gains? No; he for his own sake would do every thing to promote your welfare. It might be wise in you at any rate to join your wants to his wealth; but in him, it were the excess of folly to admit you as a partner, unless it was his intention to relieve your difficulties. What madness would it be then to add to your necessities, and make you still more wretched than he found you! The case is so clear and applicable, it needs not to be more closely put. An addition to your taxes is the bugbear which is held out to terrify you from an Union with Great Britain. The object of the Minister is said to be to derive from this country a more ample revenue than it has hitherto afforded. Let me then ask you, in the name of common sense, how can your taxes be increased, unless your means are with them? No man will require impossibilities from you, and if you are to contribute much more to the Government, that

Government

Government must manifestly enable you to do so. Did you understand the principle of taxation, your minds would be perfectly at ease upon the subject. Attend then to what I shall say, and reflect upon it. No poor country ever can be taxed highly, because it possesses not the ability of payment. No article can be taxed which is not generally used, because it would be unproductive, would probably not discharge the expences of collection. It follows then, that taxation is the fruit of riches, is at once the proof and the consequence of wealth. Accordingly within a few years, yours has been moderately increased, because your condition was gradually improving. I remember, when the addition to that on leather was proposed, your patriots, as they were called, affected to lament the hardship on the poor. When, in reality, you must perceive, they were lamenting,

lamenting, that so many of you had been able to buy shoes; for had not that comfort become general, the tax could never have been raised. For want of explanation, you have been repeatedly misguided, and in this instance, those boasted lovers of humanity had the folly and the cruelty to deplore, that the poor people of Ireland did not continue to go barefoot. When therefore, you are informed, that an Union will increase your taxes, it is but in other words to say, that it will increase your comforts, that it will deliver you from wretched hovels, ragged clothes, bad food and high rents, that it will introduce cleanliness, sobriety, industry and morality, that it will make you an honor to yourselves and a blessing to your country.

That such will be the consequences of an Union with Great Britain, no one of impartiality can doubt. They must necessarily
 flow

flow from the intimacy, which will subsist between us, from the introduction of English capital and English ingenuity, from the interest she must feel in our prosperity, and her exertions to advance it. But this has been contradicted, and the supporters of the measure have been defied to prove, that it would induce the settlement of Englishmen, who have not shewn a disposition to establish themselves in Ireland. The answer is painful and degrading, but clear and conclusive. Such has been the condition, to which this Country has reduced herself by her internal feuds, that while many have been driven from their native land, to seek tranquillity and civilization on a distant shore, none have been so mad as to expose their lives and property to the more than probability of massacre and plunder here. The melancholy succession of Hearts of Oak, Right-boys, White-boys, Defenders and United Irishmen, explain but too fully the
the

the reason of that abhorrence, with which you have been avoided. What man in his senses would embark a capital in a kingdom, where he had not the security of a day's enjoyment of it, where the industry of a laborious and successful life might be sacrificed in a moment, to the wantonness of the rioter or the ravages of the robber? You are yourselves the causes of your shame, and it rests with you to remove it. Shew the seditious traitors, who have so long been forcing you to be the curse and the disgrace of Ireland, that you perceive the infamy of their designs, and are resolved to counteract them; that you blush at the recollection of your crimes, and are determined to atone for them; that you weep over the contemplation of your miseries, and will endeavour to allay them by an Union with Great Britain. Let the English manufacturer and farmer be but satisfied, that the artifices of the factious
to

to seduce you from your duty will be vain, and they will bring to you that capital and those arts, which alone you want to be a rich and prosperous people. Every natural advantage which a country can possess, is yours. Your soil is fertile, your climate favourable, your situation on the Globe for commerce, not to be surpassed. When united with Great Britain, those blessings, which have been so long a time neglected, will be gratefully improved. Those tracts of land, which now are unprofitable and dreary wastes will then be crowned with golden harvests, and all the fruits of labour will be collected from your fields. Those spacious and commodious harbours, which now are deserted, or but thinly occupied, will then be filled with vessels from every quarter of the world, and all the wealth of commerce will be diffused throughout the Kingdom. Comfort, contentment, tranquillity and virtue will then be as universal

E

as

as poverty, dissatisfaction, turbulence and vice now are; your injuries will be redressed, your offences will be pardoned, and your necessities relieved.

One happy consequence of the establishment of English customs in this country has a peculiar claim on *your* attention. It is the reduction of what you are too well acquainted with by the name of rack-rents. In England the tenant pays the landlord but one-third of the value of the land, the remaining two-thirds are reserved, one to enrich his farm by the purchase of utensils or of stock, the other to be his clear and personal profit. Accordingly, the yeomanry of England are in the enjoyment of all the conveniencies, and many of the luxuries of life. Whereas with you, the full value of the land, and often, I fear, more is paid in rent. The effect of such a system is unfortunately visible on your grounds and in your cabins. On
the

the former your utensils are few in number, and bad in quality ; your labour is of necessity increased, so that three men are employed to do what one should execute. After working, like slaves, from sun-rise to sun-set, at the conclusion of the year you are lucky if your crops have produced sufficient for your rents. As to laying up any money in provision for the chances of a bad season, of the death of cattle, or the various accidents you are subject to, it has occurred to few of you even to hear of such a circumstance. In your cabins, which resemble more the tombs of the dead than residences of the living, an equal degree of wretchedness appears. There are you suffocated by smoke or drenched by rain, living perpetually on your hard-earned potatoes, lying upon the ground, and often without straw or blanket, and altogether, in point of cleanliness and comfort, infinitely inferior to what your pigs should be. Consider then the difference

ference it would make, were your rents to be reduced to one-third, or even to one-half, of what you at present pay, and were that curse upon their country, the race of middle men, to be extinct: It might not be the immediate consequence of the Union, but rely on it, that at no distant day it would take place. When so closely connected, the introduction of English customs could not be long deferred, and this would be among the first, as rack-rents are one of the greatest national misfortunes and disgraces that Ireland is afflicted with.

My purpose is to instruct, not to confuse you, and therefore have I confined myself to such views of the question as are interesting to your prosperity, and suited to your comprehension. You well know, my friends, the injury you have done your country by your late rebellion, and your repeated insurrections. It is then particularly incumbent
on

on you as a people to make every reparation in your power for the evils you have brought upon her, and on your own account as well as hers to prevent the renewal of such horrid scenes, to the utmost of your ability. An opportunity will be soon open to you. Your representatives are soon to be assembled in their legislative capacity, and doubtless will attend to the opinions and wishes of their constituents. Let me, then, intreat you, as you regard the tranquillity of the kingdom, and your individual advantage, to address them to support the measure of an Union with Great Britain, when ever it shall be offered to them. You have shewn that you can be active in a bad cause, be as zealous in a good one. In your respective counties and cities, if resolutions shall be proposed in favour of it, come forward with a becoming sense and spirit, and prove to the world your penitence and your loyalty, by the subscription of your names. You owe it to yourselves,

felves, to your children, to your country, to your King, and to your God. It is all which is now left to recover you from the ruins of the past, and so long as your shores shall be washed by the waters of the sea, to secure to you the possession of happiness and riches, virtue and religion, liberty and laws. Could my name add weight to my advice, I should be proud to sign it—but no name could—I shall therefore content myself with assuring you that

I am

YOUR REAL FRIEND.

F I N I S.