

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

J O H N F O S T E R,

S P E A K E R

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS OF IRELAND,

DELIVERED IN COMMITTEE,

ON THURSDAY THE 11TH DAY OF APRIL, 1799.

D U B L I N :

PRINTED BY JAMES MOORE, NO. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.

1799.

REPORT

OF THE

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JOHN FOSTER,

MEMBER

OF THE

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BUBLIN:

PRINTED BY JAMES SMITH, AT THE CORNER OF THE

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S P E E C H,

&c. &c.

Mr. ROCHFORD,

THE noble Lord, when he declared his assent to the Bill's going into a Committee, has spoken of it as part of a system, and dwelt upon the necessity of a Union, as the only means of effecting the purpose of the bill, and the rest of the system. He has connected the subject of a Legislative Union so much with it, and enlarged so amply upon it, that I feel myself justified in following him. He has gone into the connexion between the two kingdoms, and stated the constitution of 1782 as the source from whence the evils he affects to apprehend, and the remedy he proposes of a Union, flowed. I will go therefore through the whole of the subject, and if I trespass on the patience of the House, which I much fear, from the little practice I have been in for years, of speaking in public, I shall have much reason to entreat their indulgence.

In discussing the subject, I must often allude to a speech published as Mr. Pitt's, and as various editions of it have been circulated, I shall select that to which the Government has given the sanction of its authority,

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the one printed by the King's Printer, under their direction, of which 10,000 copies have been circulated gratis by them, and all of which have been paid for at the public expence.

It is certainly a very flattering compliment, that on so great a subject, on which the Minister spoke for hours, he should have employed a great portion of his time in endeavouring to borrow argument and authority from speeches said to have been made by me so long ago as 1785, and that he should occupy so much of the attention of the British Senate in observing on the conduct or opinion of an individual.

The noble Lord has quoted the speech of Mr. Fox as an historical document, and has told you that the addresses of Parliament, and the speeches of Lord Lieutenants, are not to be relied on. He is the first Secretary who has ever presumed to make such an assertion, who has ever publicly advanced, that what the Commons say to his Majesty, and what his Majesty's Viceroy says to them, is meer matter of form, not to be relied on, but that a casual, unauthorised publication of a Mr. Debrett is a genuine document. He has also used an expression, such a one as I never heard in this House, either before or since the settlement of 1782; the noble Lord has said, (and if I am wrong, he will correct me, I do not wish to mistake any man, much less the noble Lord, for whom I have always had the highest respect,) that the evils he mentioned arose out of the settlement of 1782, because until then this kingdom *acknowledged* the power in the British Parliament to bind Ireland.

Lord

LORD CASTLEREAGH—I did not mean to say, *acknowledged*, but that before the adjustment of 1782, this Country was in the *habit of paying obedience* to that power.

SPEAKER.—The noble Lord copies his brother minister in ambiguity of expression, as well as in all his positions; the minister says, what *puts an end* to any thing is not *final*, and his Lordship tells us, that *paying obedience to a power* is not an *acknowledgment of that power*.

I will enter into the settlement of 1782: the measures of that year arose out of our disavowal of that very power. Our denial of the British claim gave rise to the glorious settlement of 1782, it removed all those evils which this project of a Union would again heap upon this kingdom, and when the British Minister wants us to give up that Constitution which was then confirmed to us, it is no wonder he should apply all his endeavours to explain it away, as it and his Union are wholly incompatible with each other. His arguments, indeed, (if they deserve that name) are matter of surprise, for they either rest on mis-recollection of facts, or so far from being born up by the authorities he refers to, are clearly and incontrovertibly overturned by them. He says, he will prove his assertion, that no final adjustment was then made, by the recorded opinions of the British Parliament expressed at the time, and by the opinions of the then Government and Ministers, all of which you will presently see, prove the contrary,—but why did he not refer also to the opinions of the Irish Parliament and Irish ministers, whose concern it more immediately was, and whose declarations were explicit? Are we to suppose they escaped his notice, and that he entirely forgot that the Country which demanded redress

redress for its Constitution, best knew how to deem the adjustment of it, final and complete? or that he knew he would find at every step a direct refutation of his assertions?

Before I examine these opinions, it will be necessary that I should state the origin of that settlement, in order that the whole may be perfectly understood.

‘Ireland had for a long series of time,’ to use Mr. Pitt’s words, ‘felt the narrow policy of Great Britain, who, influenced by views of trade and commercial advantage, and tainted and perverted with selfish motives, had treated her with partiality and neglect, and never looked upon her growth and prosperity as the growth and prosperity of the Empire at large.’ It is unnecessary to dwell on the circumstances of the times, or any other cause, which enabled Ireland at last to speak out with effect, but the fact is, that in 1782, her grievances reached the Throne, and on the 9th of April, in that year, Mr. Fox delivered a Message to the British Commons, from his Majesty, ‘That his Majesty, being concerned to find that discontent and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, he earnestly recommends to this House to take the same into consideration, in order to such a *final adjustment* as may give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms.” The Irish Parliament at this time stood adjourned to the 16th of April, on which day similar Messages were delivered to both Houses here, each of whom instantly voted an Address to his Majesty, both corresponding exactly in substance, I will therefore detail only the one presented by the Commons.

It went ' to assure his Majesty of our unshaken attach-
 ' ment to his Majesty's person and government, and of our
 ' lively sense of his paternal care, in thus taking the lead to
 ' administer content to his Majesty's subjects of Ireland ;
 ' That, thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we
 ' shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before
 ' his Majesty the causes of our discontents and jealousies ;
 ' to assure his Majesty that his subjects of Ireland are a
 ' free people ; that the Crown of Ireland is an Imperial
 ' Crown, inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great
 ' Britain, on which connexion the interests and happiness
 ' of both nations essentially depend ; but that the king-
 ' dom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament
 ' of her own, the sole Legislature thereof ; that there is
 ' no body of men competent to make laws to bind this
 ' nation, except the King, Lords and Commons of Ire-
 ' land, nor any other Parliament which hath any authority
 ' or power, of any sort whatsoever, in this country, save
 ' only the Parliament of Ireland ; to assure his Majesty
 ' that we humbly conceive, that in this right the very
 ' essence of our liberties exist ; a right which we, on the
 ' part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-
 ' right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives.'

Are these words—empty sounds without meaning—as
 the noble Lord insinuates ? Did we involve our lives and
 fortunes without meaning ? Did we claim our birth-right
 without meaning ? The Address goes on, ' To assure his
 ' Majesty that we have seen, with concern, certain claims
 ' advanced by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an Act,
 ' entitled an Act, for the better securing the Dependency
 ' of Ireland ; an Act containing matter entirely irrecon-
 ' cileable to the fundamental rights of this nation : that
 ' we conceive this Act, and the claims it advances, to be
 ' the great and principal cause of the discontents and jea-
 ' lousies

'lousies in this kingdom.' Now, Sir, what was this Act
 of Dependency, but in its essence, in its practical ef-
 fects, the very Union which is now recommended, nay,
 this Union is still worse, for while Ireland retains a Parlia-
 ment, she has the means of redress; but the measure
 proposed by the noble Lord goes expressly to take away
 for ever those means. The Address proceeds, 'To assure
 'his Majesty, that his Majesty's Commons of Ireland
 'do most sincerely wish, that all Bills which become
 'law in Ireland, should receive the approbation of his
 'Majesty, under the Seal of Great Britain; but that
 'yet we do consider the practice of suppressing our
 'Bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering the same
 'any where, to be another just cause of discontent
 'and jealousy;—To assure his Majesty, that an Act,
 'intituled an Act for the better accommodation of his
 'Majesty's forces, being unlimited in duration, and
 'defective in other instances, but passed in that shape
 'from the particular circumstances of the times, is another
 'just cause of discontent and jealousy in this kingdom.
 'That we have submitted these, the principal causes of
 'the present discontent and jealousy of Ireland, and re-
 'main in humble expectation of redress,—that we have
 'the greatest reliance on his Majesty's wisdom, the most
 ' sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief
 ' Governor, and great confidence in the wise, auspicious,
 ' and constitutional councils, which we see with satisfac-
 ' tion his Majesty has adopted: That we have moreover a
 ' high sense and veneration for the British character, and
 ' do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this coun-
 ' try, founded as they were in right, and tempered by
 ' duty, must have excited the approbation and esteem,
 ' instead, of wounding the pride, of the British nation;
 ' and we beg leave to assure his Majesty, that we are the
 ' more

‘ more confirmed in this hope, in as much as the people
 ‘ of this kingdom have never expressed a desire to share
 ‘ the freedom of England, without declaring a determi-
 ‘ nation to share her fate likewise, standing and falling
 ‘ with the British Nation.’

You will observe in this Address that four objects, and four only, are pointed out as the grievances, the removal of which is desired, and that they are all *constitutional*—Britain’s claim to bind Ireland—the Appellant Jurisdiction—Poyning’s Law—and the Perpetuity of the Mutiny Bill. In truth, we, who were in Parliament at the time, know that as the freedom of trade was demanded, and acceded to in 1780, and a free intercourse with the colonies confirmed, what remained for *commercial* regulation, or even for attainment, was not then in contemplation.

This address from the Irish Commons, together with a similar one from the Irish Lords, was laid before both Houses in Great Britain, who had not proceeded on his Majesty’s Message, waiting I suppose to know the sense of the Irish Parliament—and they came to a resolution on the 17th of May, which I shall mention presently, and which was laid before the Irish Parliament, on the 27th of the same month, by the Duke of Portland’s order, when he made the following Speech from the Throne:—

‘ My Lords and Gentlemen,

‘ It gives me the utmost satisfaction that the first time
 ‘ I have occasion to address you, I find myself enabled
 ‘ by the magnanimity of the King, and the wisdom of
 ‘ the Parliament of Great Britain, to assure you that im-
 ‘ mediate

'mediate attention has been paid to your representations,
 'and that the British Legislature, have concurred in a
 'resolution to remove the causes of your discontents and
 'jealousies, and are united in a desire to gratify every
 'wish expressed in your late addresses to the Throne.

'By the papers [meaning the resolutions of the British
 'Houses] which in obedience to his Majesty's commands
 'I have directed to be laid before you—you will re-
 'ceive the most convincing testimony of the cordial re-
 'ception which your representations have met with from
 'the Legislature of Great Britain. But his Majesty,
 'whose first and most anxious wish is to exercise his royal
 'prerogative in such manner as may be most conducive to
 'the welfare of all his faithful subjects, has further given
 'it me in command, to assure you of his gracious dis-
 'position to give his royal assent to acts to prevent the
 'suppression of bills in the Privy Council of this king-
 'dom, and the alteration of them any where, and to limit
 'the duration of the act for the better regulation and
 'accommodation of his Majesty's Forces in this kingdom,
 'to the term of two years.

'These benevolent intentions of his Majesty, and the
 'willingness of his Parliament of Great Britain, to se-
 'cond his gracious purposes, are unaccompanied by any
 'stipulation or condition whatever; the good faith, the
 'generosity, the honor of this nation afford them the
 'surest pledge of a corresponding disposition on your
 'part, to promote and perpetuate the harmony, the sta-
 'bility and the glory of the Empire. On my own part
 'I entertain not the least doubt but that the same
 'spirit which urged you to share the freedom of
 'Great Britain, will confirm you in your determination
 'to

‘ to share her fate also, standing or falling with the British
‘ Nation.’

An Address was returned next day by the Commons
in which they say, ‘ That we feel most sensibly the atten-
‘ tion which our representations have received from the
‘ magnanimity of your Majesty, and the wisdom of the
‘ Parliament of Great Britain.

‘ We assure your Majesty, that we conceive the resolu-
‘ tion for an unqualified, unconditional repeal of the
‘ 6th of George the first, to be a measure of consum-
‘ mate wisdom and justice, suitable to the dignity and
‘ eminence of both nations, exalting the character of both,
‘ and *furnishing a perpetual pledge of mutual amity.*

‘ We assure your Majesty, that we are sensibly affect-
‘ ed by your virtuous determination to accede to the
‘ wishes of your faithful people, and to exercise your royal
‘ prerogative in a manner most conducive to their welfare,
‘ and accordingly we shall immediately prepare bills to
‘ carry into execution the desires of your Majesty’s peo-
‘ ple, and your own benevolent purposes.

‘ Gratified in those particulars we do assure your Ma-
‘ jesty, that *no constitutional question between the two nations*
‘ *will any longer exist, which can interrupt their harmony;* and
‘ that Great Britain, as she has approved of our firmness,
‘ so she may rely on our affection.

‘ We remember, and do repeat, our determination to
‘ stand, and fall, with the British Nation.

‘ We perceive with pleasure the magnanimity of your
‘ Majesty, disclaim the little policy of making a bargain
‘ with

' with your people, and feeling with pride the confidence
 ' your Majesty repofes in the good faith, generofity and
 ' honor of the Irish Nation, we anfwer with all humility,
 ' that your Majesty entertains a juft fenfe of our charac-
 ' ter. Common intereft, perpetual connection, the recent
 ' conduct of Great Britain, a native affection to the Bri-
 ' tish name and nation, together with the constitution
 ' which we have recovered, and the high reputation
 ' we poffefs, muft ever decide the wifhes as well as the
 ' intereft of Ireland, to *perpetuate the harmony, ftability and*
 ' *glory of the Empire.*'

This Addrefs received a flight oppofition, and very
 fortunately, becaufe a divifion took place, which fhews
 not only the decided fenfe of the Irish Commons, but that
 the Houfe which expreffed that fenfe was uncommonly
 full.—The ayes were 211—the noes *none*, there being
 only the tellers.

On the fame day the Commons alfo addreffed the Lord
 Lieutenant, and among other things they faid, ' We
 ' cannot but rejoice that the name of Portland, fo intimate-
 ' ly connected with the great æra of Britifh liberty will
 ' be handed down to the lateft pofterity infeparably
 ' blended with *the full and perfect eftablifhment of the Con-*
 ' *ftitution of Ireland.*'

I fhould here obferve, that his Majesty's anfwer to
 their firft addrefs of April, which had arrived during
 the recefs, was not prefented until the next day, being
 the 28th, and is in fubftance as follows :

' It gives his Majesty the higheft fatisfaction to obferve,
 ' that in their opinion, in which his Majesty perfectly
 ' concurs,

‘ concurs, the *constitutional connexion between Great Britain*
 ‘ *and Ireland is essential to the interests and happiness of both*
 ‘ *nations*, and that it is the determination of his people of
 ‘ Ireland, to share the fate of, and to stand and fall with,
 ‘ the British nation.

‘ His Majesty conceives that these principles cannot fail
 ‘ to contribute to the *accomplishment* of his earnest desire to
 ‘ remove all cause of discontent and jealousy; with that
 ‘ view his Majesty has recommended this weighty and
 ‘ important subject to the consideration of his parliaments
 ‘ of both kingdoms, trusting that their united wisdom will
 ‘ suggest such measures as may terminate in a *final adjust-*
 ‘ *ment* to their mutual satisfaction. With the same view
 ‘ his Majesty intends forthwith to communicate to the
 ‘ Lords and Commons of Great Britain the addresses of
 ‘ the Lords and Commons of Ireland.’

His answer to the latter address of the 27th of May, did
 not arrive until the 13th of June: in it he says, ‘ He has
 ‘ received with the most sincere satisfaction the dutiful
 ‘ and loyal Address of his House of Commons of Ire-
 ‘ land—his Majesty assures his faithful Commons, of his
 ‘ affectionate acceptance of their grateful acknowledg-
 ‘ ments for the attention which his Majesty and the Par-
 ‘ liament of Great Britain have shewn to their represen-
 ‘ tations, and which they so justly consider as *furnishing a*
 ‘ *perpetual pledge of mutual amity.*’

The declarations of the House of Commons, ‘ that *no*
 ‘ *constitutional question between the two nations will any longer*
 ‘ *exist that can interrupt their harmony*, and that Great Bri-
 ‘ tain may rely on their affections, are very pleasing to his
 ‘ Majesty.

‘ His

‘ His Majesty is fully convinced, by their present professions of entire satisfaction and dutiful attachment, that his Majesty always entertained a just sense of their character. *The zeal which they have shewn to perpetuate the harmony, and their determinations to uphold the glory, of the Empire,* justify his Majesty for having on his part given the most unequivocal proofs of his royal confidence in the honour and good faith of the Irish Nation.’

You will keep in mind that in this Answer, his Majesty omits any expression recommending *final adjustment*, which he mentioned in his first Message, and repeated in his answer to the first Address, because I shall have occasion to call it to your recollection.

After this the Session drew to a close, and it was in those days the custom to address the Lord Lieutenant, previous to the prorogation, as a compliment, and as a review of the material objects of the Session; accordingly, the Commons, in their Address to the Duke of Portland, on the 23d of July, say :

‘ At the close of this session we shall have seen under your Grace’s administration, the Judges rendered independent of the Crown; the law for the punishment of mutiny and desertion, abridged in duration, and so altered as to become a vindication of the constitution; the jurisdiction of the hereditary Judges of the land restored; the vicious mode of passing laws, which was heretofore exercised in this country, reformed; and the sole and exclusive right of Legislation external as well as internal, in the Irish Parliament, firmly asserted on the part of Ireland, and unequivocally acknowledged on the part of
‘ Great

' Great Britain. We shall have seen this great national
 ' *arrangement established on a basis which secures the tranquili-*
 ' *ty of Ireland, and unites the affections as well as interests of*
 ' *both kingdoms.* When we consider how long we had
 ' been labouring for those great and important objects,
 ' and that they have been *accomplished* in the short period
 ' of your Grace's Administration, we should be wanting,
 ' in justice to your Grace, if we did not acknowledge
 ' your virtue.'

The Lord Lieutenant's speech with which he concluded
 the Session, soon followed, and his Grace's words deserve
 to be most particularly attended to, for language more
 emphatic could not be used.

' Many and great national objects must present them-
 ' selves to your consideration during the recess from par-
 ' liamentary business, but what I would most earnestly
 ' press upon you, as that on which your domestic peace
 ' and happiness, and the prosperity of the empire at this
 ' moment most immediately depend, is to cultivate and
 ' diffuse those sentiments of affection and confidence which
 ' are now happily restored between the two kingdoms.
 ' *Convince the people in your several districts, as you are your-*
 ' *selves convinced, that every cause of past jealousies and discon-*
 ' *tents is finally removed, that both countries have pledged their*
 ' *good faith to each other, and that their best security will be*
 ' *an inviolable adherence to that compact,* that the implicit
 ' reliance which Great Britain has reposed on the honor,
 ' generosity, and candor of Ireland, engages your
 ' national character to a return of sentiments equally li-
 ' beral and enlarged, convince them *that the two kingdoms*
 ' *are now one, indissolubly connected in unity of constitution, and*
 ' *unity of interests,* that the danger and security, the prof-
 ' perity

‘perity and calamity of the one, must equally effect the other, and they stand and fall together.’

I have omitted to state in its proper place as to time, that on a difference of opinion happening as to the sufficiency of the repeal of 6 Geo. 1. to secure the Independence of the Irish Parliament, Mr. Flood moved for leave to bring in heads of a bill to declare the sole and exclusive right of the Irish Parliament to make laws in all cases whatever internal and external for the kingdom of Ireland, which was refused, and a resolution was moved, that leave was refused to bring in said heads of a bill, because the sole separate and exclusive right of legislation in the Irish Parliament in all cases whether internal or external had been already asserted by Ireland, and fully, *finally*, and irrevocably acknowledged by the British Parliament. The word *finally* was objected to, and a motion made to expunge it, but on the question being put, it was retained without a division, and the resolution agreed to.

But I will now give you a stronger record than any I have produced, to prove not only the sense of the nation as to the *final* accomplishment, but as to the inestimable value of the settlement. On the 30th of May, being the second day after our Address declaring our entire satisfaction, and that no constitutional question could ever after exist between the two kingdoms to interrupt their harmony, an Address was agreed to by both houses, ‘to represent to his Majesty, that they were so impressed with sentiments of gratitude to Divine Providence, for the many blessings bestowed of late on this kingdom, and *particularly for that union, harmony, and cordial affection which now happily subsists between his two kingdoms, whose interests are inseparably the same*, and for the great and signal success of his Majesty’s

‘ Majesty’s Arms in the East and West Indies ;—that
 ‘ they had the most sincere and ardent disposition to ex-
 ‘ press their unfeigned thanks to Almighty God, for these
 ‘ his mercies to both kingdoms, and that whenever his
 ‘ Majesty shall please to appoint a day of Public Thankf-
 ‘ giving, there will not, as they conceive, be any one
 ‘ person throughout the nation, who will not most cor-
 ‘ dially and sincerely join in the religious observation
 ‘ thereof.’

Thus did the nation call on Almighty God to receive their solemn thanks for his blessings to both kingdoms, in the accomplishment of this final adjustment, and yet this is the settlement Mr. Pitt has the hardiness to tell you, is not *final*, and this is the constitution he wants to delude, to threaten, or to force you, into a miserable and abject surrender of.—Can he, can you, can any of us who offered our Thanksgivings on that day, and invoked the Almighty Dispenser of the fate of Nations to receive the overflowing effusions of a kingdom’s gratitude, think so lightly of what we then acknowledged so sacred, as wantonly and foolishly to change those solemn sentiments, and demolish the object of a nation’s Prayer, and of a nation’s Thanks, for the speculative theory or idle declamation of any Minister, however great his talents, his integrity, or his power.

It would be needless to recur to the several arguments, or rather assertions, used by Mr. Pitt, respecting the point of final adjustment—all who hear me I am sure must be of opinion with me, that never was there yet a great speech made by a great man, which contained so little matter ; and if any thing could make me believe that the noble Lord possesses less good sense and political talents than I am disposed to ascribe to him, it is the pains
 which

which he has taken to disseminate in this country such a paltry production. I see the gentlemen are taking down my words,—let them do so—I will repeat them—a paltry production—paltry, not in regard to the Gentleman that made it, who is certainly entitled to the highest respect, but paltry in regard to argument, for it is the merest tissue of general assertion without proof, high-flowing language without meaning, and assumptions without argument, that I ever read.

We will now go to the proceedings in Great Britain; I have mentioned that his Majesty sent a message to the British Houses, on the 9th April, which they did not then take into consideration. The Lord Lieutenant's message which was similar to his Majesty's, and the Irish Addresses of 17th April to the King, were delivered by his Majesty's order to both the British Houses on 1st May, and they were taken into consideration by them on the 17th.

In the Lords a bill was introduced to repeal 6 of Geo. 1. and a resolution entered into 'that it is indispensable to the interests and happiness of both kingdoms, that the connexion between them should be established by mutual consent on a solid and permanent footing, and that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be pleased to take such measures as in his royal wisdom he shall seem think most conducive to that important end.'

On the same day the Commons, in a Committee of the whole House, came to two resolutions; one, that 6 G. 1. ought to be repealed; and the other, 'that it is indispensable to the interests and happiness of both kingdoms, that the connexion between them should be established by mutual consent, on a solid and permanent basis,' to both of which the House agreed nem. con. Leave was accordingly given for the bill, and an address
voted

voted to the king, containing the substance of the latter resolution, "that he be graciously pleased to take such measures as his Majesty in his royal wisdom shall think most conducive to the establishing, by mutual consent, the connection between this kingdom and Ireland upon a solid and *permanent* basis." This is the Resolution that Mr. Pitt relies on, to shew that the British Legislature had some *further* measures of constitution in contemplation, than those contained in the Irish addresses, and I will in candour suppose that he has been led into this erroneous inference by his mistaking, and of course mistating the date of it.

It is remarkable that although pressed to it, he would not let it be read from the Journals, but boldly maintained that it would appear from them, that a *further* agreement between the two kingdoms, than the settlement of that session, is there stated, in the opinion of the administration of the day, to be absolutely necessary. Under this mistaken impression he asserts that *after* the Bill to repeal the 6 Geo. 1. was passed, an address was moved and carried, (praying his Majesty to take such *further* measures &c. meaning the foregoing address) whereas the Journals would have shewn that this address was voted not only *before* the Bill passed, but *before* it was even presented, and that no one measure of the adjustment had been at the time taken, but that this resolution and address were, on the part of the Commons, the commencement of it.—The address was on the 17th May. The bill was not presented till the 11th of June, and did not pass till the 14th. Had this Address been proposed, as he mistakes, *after* the Bill had passed, that is, after the Irish Parliament had stated their perfect content by declaring "that no constitutional question could ever after exist between the two kingdoms to interrupt their harmony," he

might possibly have had some reason to say, the movers of that Address had *further* constitutional measures to propose, than those which induced that declaration. It is under the mistake of date that Mr. Pitt introduces into the resolution the word *further*, whereas there is no such word in it.

But not only the language of the Ministers of the time, but every circumstance of the proceedings shew that further constitutional measures were not in contemplation. Lord Shelburne in introducing the Address to the Lords, after urging the expedience of repealing 6 Geo. 1. in which the two subjects of the British claim to bind Ireland, and the judicial appeal, were connected, says, "This repeal *was all he meant to propose as matter of Parliamentary decision*, but there were other points for the executive power, the alteration of Poyn-
ing's act, and of the perpetual mutiny Bill, in which it would be wise to comply with the wishes of Ireland." This address therefore, in common sense, must have had those points in view, and as to them, it meant to convey to his Majesty the approbation of the House to his exercise of his prerogative in assenting to such Bills, as Ireland should transmit for the purpose.

In the Commons, on the same day, Mr. Fox, after stating the various demands and grievances of Ireland, premised his motion on the resolution, by observing that "the committee must see *that there were only one or two points in which the interference of the British Parliament was necessary*, the repeal of 6 Geo. 1. and the restoration of the appellant jurisdiction to Ireland; the other points lay before the Parliament and the King, and no doubt he would, as one of the servants of the Crown, advise his Majesty to satisfy the other demands of his Irish subjects," and to sanction this advice the resolution

was

was evidently pointed; but admit Mr. Fox might have had further objects in view, and those even of a *constitutional* concern, from the fear which he expressed, that Ireland might think of fresh grievances, we shall see that fear completely removed, when we recollect that this resolution was agreed to on the 16th of May, ten days before it was communicated to the Irish Parliament in order to make the liberal intentions of Britain known,—that the Irish address of the 28th May was founded on this very resolution, to which it is an answer, and that Ireland therein declares her perfect satisfaction, and that the adjustment is *final*, by assuring his Majesty “that no constitutional question can ever hereafter exist between the kingdoms to interrupt their harmony.”

There would have been a great absurdity in that resolution being laid before the Irish Parliament, if it meant *future arrangement* not alluded to in it or explained, when the object declared by his Majesty was *an immediate and final* settlement—at all events Ireland did not consider it to respect future arrangement, or if she did, she gave it a complete answer in saying, every object was accomplished.

We see then, that whatever fear the Minister entertained on this head, if any—was effectually done away by this answer to his resolution; for though he continued in office, and the British Parliament continued sitting some months after, he did not renew the subject or bring forward any measure grounded on it, nor did Mr. Pitt when he became Minister, the commercial propositions only excepted. The fact seems to be, that the resolution in respect to future measures had *commerce only in view*; Mr. Pitt says so, Lord Liverpool relies on it, and although Mr. Fox in the reply, which the noble Lord has read, says it was

to extend to political objects only, yet he explains them to be what are really commercial, by saying, that they alluded to, and were to comprehend the whole system of the *navigation* of the empire, and as such Mr. Pitt and Lord Liverpool relied on it, as a ground of the necessity of the commercial system of 1785.

Mr. Pitt said, “ the meaning of the Resolution moved
 “ in 1782 by the Right Hon. Gentleman himself, was
 “ too stubborn and obvious to be explained away, or
 “ denied.” And Lord Liverpool’s (then Mr. Jenkinson)
 words are very strong.—“ The noble Lord had denied
 “ that any proof had been given of there being any
 “ necessity of coming to a system of commercial arrange-
 “ ment with Ireland, and had contended no such neces-
 “ sity existed. In answer to this, he should think it suf-
 “ ficient to refer the noble Lord to the state of the two
 “ countries, as an ample proof of the necessity, had he
 “ no better proof to advert to; but he was furnished
 “ with the best authority, the authority of that House.
 “ And here he said he must again refer to the Resolu-
 “ tion of May 17th, 1782, wherein it was declar-
 “ ed, ‘ That it was indispensable to the interest and hap-
 “ piness of both kingdoms that the connection between
 “ them should be established by mutual consent, upon a
 “ solid and permanent footing,’ he was aware that the
 “ Right Hon. Gentleman opposite to him had asserted
 “ that the Resolution had no reference to a commercial
 “ arrangement, and that it related merely to a political
 “ one. He never, he declared, attended to hear what
 “ was said in another place, but he had read in a news-
 “ paper that a great authority who had sat in the Ca-
 “ binet when that Resolution had been moved, had de-
 “ clared it did mean a commercial arrangement. For
 “ his part, he could not think it possible for those who
 framed

“ framed the Resolution to have had any arrangement
 “ in their contemplation but a commercial one, and if
 “ it did not mean that, he wished the authors of it
 “ would have been so good as to have declared what it
 “ did mean.”

After reading the address of the Irish Parliament of May 28, which I have stated to you, it could hardly be believed that Mr. Pitt could assert, “ That with respect to that part of the King’s Message which related to the propriety of adopting some measures for a *final* adjustment between the two countries, the Irish Commons were wholly silent,”—yet he has done it roundly and without reserve in the very words I mention. Is the declaration in that address, that no future constitutional question could exist, mere silence? How? Has their language to the Lord Lieutenant of the full and perfect establishment of their constitution, no meaning? What sophistry of argument, what casuistry of language can draw a distinction between the expressions that no future question can exist, and that the matter is finally adjusted; between the words final, and no longer existing—If it puts an end to all future questions, it must be final, because what puts an end, is final—but the whole amount of his reasoning is, that what puts an end to any thing, is not final. It is a powerful proof how little argument he has to stand on, when he resorts to such a wretched play upon words, on a subject of such magnitude.

I would dismiss it without further observation, but that there is one part of that arrangement, and a most material one as to connexion, which he has flurred over without observation; I mean the modification which was then made of Poyning’s law. It will not only fully disprove his assertion, that nothing was then done by Ireland towards establishing a connexion, but it will shew farther
 the

the basis on which it was then constituted and firmly placed.

The act making this modification, which regulates the manner of passing bills in Parliament, received very uncommon solemnity in its progress. It was moved for 31st of May, three days after the address, and so essential was it deemed, that it was presented as a bill, not as heads in the accustomed manner, and it was sent to the Lords prior to its going to Council, and was carried to the Lord Lieutenant by a joint Committee of both Houses. It enacts, that no Bill shall pass into a Law in Ireland, unless it be returned under the Great Seal of Great Britain. Thus not leaving the connection a bare junction of two kingdoms under one Sovereign, but securing the continuance of that connection, by making the British Minister answerable to the British nation, if any Law should receive the Royal assent in Ireland, which could in any way injure the empire, be incompatible with its imperial interests, or tend to separate Ireland from it. I did at the time say, and do now repeat, that the arrangement would have been imperfect, without this security attending what the British Minister weakly calls a Demolition of system, and what we call a glorious Establishment of the Constitution, confirming the freedom and independence of the Irish Parliament.

I do not hesitate to say, that in thus rendering the Great Seal of Britain necessary to the passing an Irish Law, if we created a theoretic difference in the Constitutions of the two kingdoms, which renders ours inferior, it is one not injurious to us, but necessary from our situation in the empire, and one with which we are content, and which secures Union and Connexion on a firm and lasting basis.

I therefore

I therefore agree that the power of the British Parliament extends, as Mr. Dundas has stated, to the controul of the third estate of the Irish Parliament; but it is a controul on the King's naked power of assent only—and this very controul, I say, gives to Britain an effectual pledge to retain in her own hands, that it never shall be in our power by any act of ours to weaken or impair the connexion. On the other hand, we are not without a security on our part, for, by the confirmation of our independence, British law cannot bind us; and, therefore, the Union cannot be altered, impaired, or severed, (putting force and convulsion out of the case) except by our confirming the measure by a law of our own. Great Britain cannot throw us off. An act of the British Parliament is inadequate to it. As an instance, no law of hers could repeal our Annexation Act of Henry VIII.

If I wanted authority for the statement I have given, Lord Auckland, in moving for the repeal of the 6th Geo. I. confirms what I say, in very explicit language:—"As
 " no Irish Bill can pass into law, without the previous con-
 " sent of the King in his Council of England; so there
 " was no danger that the independence of the legislature
 " of Ireland could be made use of to make laws injurious
 " to the sister kingdom; the English Council being re-
 " sponsible for every advice they gave their Sovereign,
 " and England would have nothing to fear from the en-
 " creased power of the Irish Parliament, as the consent
 " of the King would be still necessary to sanctify all their
 " Acts."—Thus, then, our modification of Poyning's Law
 gives England a security that we cannot dissolve or im-
 pair the connexion by any Act of our separate Legisla-
 ture, while the very independence of that separate
 Legislature gives us a security that Great Britain cannot
 by

by any law of her's destroy it; we are by these two measures of that day, confirmed in what was, and ever must be our dearest interest, in being an unalienable and inseparable part of the British Empire, not joined together, as some have foolishly asserted, by the nonsense of a Fœderal Union; not, in Mr. Pitt's unmeaning language, by a connexion which hangs on a thread, exposed to all the attacks of party, and all the effects of accident. Fatal would it be for us if it hung on a thread, exposed, as he says, to all the attacks of party, and all the effects of accident; for he and his party have attacked it with such weight of abuse, such a complication of insulting threats, such an ill-judged bombastic exposure of our supposed weaknesses to our enemies, and such an unjustifiable attempt to consolidate to his aid every accident of the circumstances attending both our internal and external situation, that our not being convulsed by these very attempts, is a solid refutation of his assertion, and we may plume ourselves the more on its stability, in as much as it is not in the range of human invention to suppose a more powerful attack of party, or a more artful application of all the accidental circumstances which the present crisis has unfortunately brought to bear together at the same period.—No, Sir, we are, and we are happy to be a Dominion of the Crown of England; a constituent and inseparable part of the Empire, under the same Sovereign; and the Acts of the executive, with regard to our legislation, are the Acts of the King of Great Britain as well as of Ireland in his British Council; unfortunate would it be for us if Ireland was held by a connection as of the person of the King only, and—[a cry of hear! hear! from the Treasury Bench]—I am glad the noble Lord approves of what I say; I am glad he thus shews himself to be of opinion with me, that a better basis already exists for a connexion

connection between the two countries, than that which Mr. Pitt, and the noble Lord would fain impose on us.

Here, then, we see a new and incontrovertible ground whereon not only to assert that the adjustment was *final* as to the Irish constitution, but that it even fulfilled the construction given now by Mr. Pitt, to the resolution of 1782, however contrary to what he gave it in 1785. It also fulfilled his Majesty's gracious recommendations at the time, and in looking back to them, we shall find another proof of every object of constitution or constitutional connection being then considered as finally adjusted; for it is observable that the King, in his first Message, proposes the consideration of Irish grievances in order expressly to obtain a *Final Adjustment*, he uses the same words *Final Adjustment* in his Message by the Duke of Portland, stating his own and the British Parliament's intentions; but as soon as the Irish Parliament on hearing these intentions declared on the 27th of May their satisfaction, and that an end would be put thereby to all constitutional questions, he drops the expression of *Final Adjustment* ever after, and in his answer on the 13th of June, he declares his pleasure in receiving this Declaration, commends them for considering the attention of Great Britain as furnishing a *perpetual pledge of mutual amity*, applauds their zeal *to perpetuate the harmony*, and uphold the glory of the British empire, and he *mentions Final Adjustment no more*.

Would his Minister have advised him to these expressions, if the adjustment furnished no pledge; if it tended no way to perpetuate connection; in short, if it only destroyed the connection, as Mr. Pitt says, by demolishing one system, and not substituting another; or did they not advise him to this language, and

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omit

omit the further mention of Final Adjustment; because they considered the declaration of the Irish Parliament, and the modification of Poyning's Law to have accomplished every object of constitutional adjustment, and constitutional connection?

But I will give you further evidence of their sentiments having been as I state them in July, 1782. The Lord Lieutenant's language to the Parliament, in the speech which I have read to you was, that they should convince the people that every cause of past jealousy and discontent was *finally* removed (there his use of the expression *finally* is decisive); that both countries had pledged their faith to each other, and that their best security would be an adherence to that compact, that the two kingdoms were now one, indissolubly connected in unity of Constitution, and unity of interests, that they stand and fall together.

If the British Minister of that day had in view more than was done—if he thought the work incomplete as to his object, he would have followed up the measure to its completion, he would not have allowed the Duke of Portland to use language tending to impose on, and not to conciliate both kingdoms. He would not have added to a dereliction of duty, a gross and unworthy deceit—nor would his Grace have submitted to the mean office of stating a compact that was never made, a unity that was not formed—that both kingdoms were indissolubly one, when the very measure, in Mr. Pitt's ideas, untied the only bond that held the two kingdoms together.

Mr. Pitt could not have been ignorant of all these facts in 1782, however he may have forgot them in 1799—and that he was not ignorant of them, but considered

dered the work of 1782 as final and complete to its object of constitutional concerns, I may appeal to his own conduct the year following, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and spoke to the subject on Mr. Grenville's motion—and when, if the measures of 1782 were incomplete, if the resolution of 1782 alluded to further objects of Constitution, he had had several months for consideration, and it would have been his duty to have proposed means to supply the defect, whereas he did not in that speech complain of any defect, nor talk of any Constitutional measures unfinished as part of the system of 1782. He became Minister the year after, and I may appeal more forcibly to his conduct ever since, full fifteen years, during all which time he has done nothing towards Constitution—nay not only done nothing, but even during the Commercial Propositions in 1785, not a word did he utter to imply that the settlement of 1782 was not final as to Constitution.

He must either then retract his new doctrines of 1799, or plead guilty to a shameful and continued dereliction of his duty, in having suffered the empire to remain during 15 years in a state which he now represents as having all the while endangered its very existence. The fact is, he was guilty of no dereliction, and I am happy in any thing to be his advocate. The measures of 1782, were all constitutional and final, notwithstanding he has begun in 1799 to say otherwise.

Any one of the many proofs I have adduced, would be sufficient to justify me in asserting, that the settlement of 1782, so far as regarded *constitution and constitutional connection*, was final—and I most devoutly trust it ever will remain so. I might rest singly on the opinions of the Irish Parliament, repeated often throughout

three months in various ways (which Mr. P. never stated), or the opinions of the British Parliament and British Ministers, who conducted the measure, which he relied on with such an assuming superiority, or even on his own conduct at the time, or on his conduct and language in 1785, or on his conduct and language ever since; but the whole concurrence of them forms such a mass of evidence, such a chain of incontrovertible argument, that he must have more than common dullness, or a most persevering obstinacy, who can entertain a doubt upon the subject.

Further to expose the futility of his assertion, that nothing was done in 1782 towards connection, I might remind you of one other measure of connection attending that period, the act called Lord Yelverton's, which passed the same day with the one I have just explained as to the British seal. Its preamble states a principle of connection for the future conduct of our Legislature—"Whereas
 " it is the earnest and affectionate desire, as well as true
 " interest, of your Majesty's subjects of this kingdom, to
 " promote, as far as in them lies, the navigation, trade,
 " and commercial interests of Great Britain as well as
 " Ireland—and whereas a similarity of laws, manners,
 " and customs, must naturally conduce to strengthen and
 " perpetuate that affection and harmony which do, and at
 " all times ought to subsist between the people of Great
 " Britain and Ireland"—and the body of it proceeds on the same principle, by enacting, "That all such clauses and
 " provisions contained in any statutes made in England or
 " Great Britain, concerning commerce, as import to im-
 " pose equal restraints on the subjects of both kingdoms,
 " or to entitle them to equal benefits or as equally con-
 " cern the seamen of both kingdoms, save so far as the
 " same have been altered or repealed, shall be accepted,
 " used, and executed in this kingdom, according to the
 " present

“ present tenor thereof respectively,” thus enacting at one stroke every law of Britain respecting commerce, and making it the uniform law of the whole empire, if it equally affected the whole empire.

Let us look back then for a moment to facts, and contrast them with Mr. Pitt’s assertions. Ireland said in 1782, “ *no constitutional question can ever after exist to interrupt the harmony of the two kingdoms. Constitution is finally settled.*” Mr. Pitt says, we are a silly nation—we did not understand the words we used, and there was no final settlement.

Ireland in 1782, placed a negative controul in Great Britain over her acts, in order to secure the connection. Mr. Pitt says we are mistaken, and did nothing, or it’s of no avail.

His Majesty applauds the Irish Parliament for their declaration that the *constitutional connection between the two kingdoms, is essential to their interest and happiness.* Mr. Pitt says it is all a mockery—there is no constitutional connection.

His Majesty congratulates them on their declaration that *no Constitution can exist to interrupt harmony.* Mr. Pitt says it is all unfounded, and every constitutional question still exists that can interrupt their harmony.

His Majesty says *the attention of the British Parliament to Ireland, furnished a perpetual pledge of amity;* the Irish Parliament said the same; but Mr. Pitt says it was no pledge, or it must be destroyed, to introduce a wild theory of his own, not asked or fought for by either nation.

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The Irish Parliament said, *the constitution which they recovered in 1782, bound them to perpetuate the harmony, stability, and glory of the empire.* Mr. Pitt says he will annihilate that constitution, at the risk even of that harmony, and without regard to the circumstances of the times, which may make the attempt peculiarly fatal.

The Irish Parliament states with gratitude to the Duke of Portland then Lord Lieutenant, that *their constitution is fully and perfectly established.* Mr. Pitt says it is all a falsehood—we neither have, nor ought to have, nor can have a constitution of our own.

The same Lord Lieutenant tells the Commons that *to settle the constitution of Ireland on a secure foundation, and to unite its interests and affections with those of Great Britain,* were the principal objects of his administration, and he is happy *that they are accomplished.* Mr. Pitt gives his Grace a direct contradiction, and tells Ireland, Don't believe the Duke of Portland; there was no constitution settled—no foundation formed—no interests united—or if there were, that he must annihilate that constitution, destroy the foundations of it, and with it all that unity of interest and affection which Ireland said rested on them.

The same Lord Lieutenant desires you to convince the nation, as you are yourselves convinced, *that every cause of jealousy and discontent is finally removed.* No such thing, says Mr. Pitt; there was no final settlement to remove them, or if there was, it must be given up, and I will risk their being aroused afresh.

The Viceroy proceeds—*both countries have pledged their faith to each other, their best security will be an inviolable adherence to that compact—I deny any compact,* says Mr.

Mr. Pitt, and I will break that pledge, and here let me request your attention, while I ask that gentleman and his representative here, if this be his conduct, as to a compact so solemnly made and ratified by both nations; what reliance can this kingdom place on his adherence to any compact on which he would rest his projected Union, especially when there would not be an Irish Parliament sitting then, as there is now, to enforce and protect it?

The same Viceroy goes on, "*the two kingdoms are now one, indissolubly connected in unity of constitution, and unity of interests, and they must stand or fall together.*" You are not indissolubly connected, "says Mr. Pitt, your connection hangs by a thread, your constitution is of a nature to prevent unity, and your separate interests are destroying that connection, which the Viceroy called indissoluble."

Does this Gentleman who thus contradicts King, Lords, Commons, Viceroy and, himself, forget our solemn acknowledgment of that day, let him look to our Journals that I have read to you, and he will find that we thought our connection so happily settled, and our connection with Britain rendered so secure, that the whole nation desired to return their solemn thanks to God for *that Union, harmony and cordial affection which the final adjustment of 1782 secured to both kingdoms.* In these thanks we acknowledged their interests to be inseparably the same, and offered our unfeigned gratitude to the Almighty for his blessings to both kingdoms, and the accomplishment of that final adjustment. All a mistake, says Mr. Pitt, you called Heaven to witness in vain, there was no final adjustment.

Need

Need I go farther? is not the imposition too gross, even for the dullest understanding ever imputed to the Irish climate? every thing shews you the adjustment was final; it is our Second, if not our Great *Magna Charta*, and he would never labour with so much, but so impotent sophistry to deny it, if he did not know its value and its strength.

A Union is in its instant operation a total extinction of it, and after it has not only secured, but absolutely showered down upon you, more blessings, more trade, more affluence than ever fell to your lot, in double the space of time which has elapsed since its attainment; will you be cajoled, duped, or threatened into a surrender of it? Forbid it, every honest heart that glows with Irish blood, forbid it virtue, forbid it patriotism, and forbid it Heaven, whose blessings we implored on its perpetual continuance. For years you laboured to acquire it, in 1782 it crowned your glorious efforts, and did you gain it only to destroy it? will you give ear to the folly that you asked it in order to annihilate it? for such is the consummate folly of those who argue that the British resolutions which confirmed it, looked at the very time to future measures for destroying it.

Is it to be supposed, (to return again to the resolution Mr. Pitt relies on,) that when a free constitution was offered to Ireland, it was accompanied with a resolution to destroy it? and that that very resolution was presented to our Parliament at the same moment with the offer of that free constitution? No, Sir, Union and the Constitution of 1782 are incompatible, they are direct opposites, and that is the reason why I lay so much stress on the adjustment of 1782, because while we hold it sacred, *this accursed Union* never can take place. I am not so silly as to say its being final, renders it physically or politically unalterable; but I state its perfection
to

to urge its value and its efficacy for every end of happiness, and I shew you the dangers which must follow its annihilation; to warn you against surrendering it. I say again that it is not to be wondered at, that those who now advise the ruinous measure of an Union—a measure calculated to disturb the harmony and threaten the existence of the empire, should wish to calumniate the glorious constitution of 1782; and ascribe to it neither permanency of principle, nor permanency of adjustment.

I have shewn you, that if the Minister in 1782 looked forward to any measures beyond that year, it was to commercial ones only. No advance was made as to commerce in general, except what was done by Yelverton's bill. I will therefore now examine the following measures of 1785, which were merely commercial, and the proceedings and opinions declared by the Parliaments of both kingdoms; and all the ministers concerned will add many incontrovertible proofs to what I have already adduced so many proofs to, that the adjustment of 1782 was constitutional only, and final.

Towards the close of the Irish session following that of 1782, the Commons address the Duke of Rutland:—

“ We reflect with true pride and satisfaction upon
 “ the solid advantages which have been obtained for this
 “ country within a very short period. We are aware of
 “ the situation of the empire, and the peculiar circumstances which have *prevented the adjustment of some*
 “ *points which concern our trade and manufactures*, and we
 “ rely upon the readiness of your Grace's liberal and

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“benevolent assistance for the furtherance of such practical measures, as deliberate wisdom and generous policy may adapt to our real necessities and general interests,” and here mark the words, the adjustment of some points which concern our trade and manufactures; —not a word about Constitution,—it was all settled.

The day following the Commons, in an address to his Majesty, which passed Nem. Con. represent to him “their warmest hope, that the interval between this session and the next will afford sufficient opportunity for forming a wise and well digested plan, for a liberal arrangement of commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland to be then brought forward; that such a plan formed upon the broad basis of reciprocal advantage, would be the most effectual means of strengthening the empire at large, and cherishing the common interests and brotherly affections of both kingdoms.”

The Recess was accordingly employed in forming such a plan, and it is well known, that I, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had the honour of being called on by the British Minister to assist in the work.

The next session opened with a Speech from the Duke of Rutland, which begins with these words.

“I am to recommend, in the King’s name, to your earnest investigation, those objects of trade and commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not yet received their compleat adjustment.”
(Mark the expression—*which have not yet received their compleat*

compleat adjustment.) “ In framing a plan, with a view
 “ to a final settlement, you will be sensible that the
 “ interests of Great Britain and Ireland, ought to be for
 “ ever united and inseparable, and his Majesty relies on
 “ your liberality and wisdom for adopting such an equi-
 “ table system, for the joint benefit of both countries,
 “ and the support of the common interest, as will se-
 “ cure mutual satisfaction and permanency. The uni-
 “ formity of laws and of religion, and a *common in-*
 “ *terest in treaties* with foreign states, form a sure bond
 “ of mutual connection and attachment between Great
 “ Britain and Ireland: it will be your care to cherish
 “ those inestimable blessings, with that spirit and wisdom
 “ which will render them effectual securities to the
 “ strength and prosperity of the empire.”

You will observe, that treaties with foreign states are here mentioned, because it shews they were in consideration as part of the commercial subject afterwards declared final. They have been stated by the noble Lord to-day as an imperial consideration calling for a Union, and notcapable of arrangement by a distinct legislature?

A plan was submitted to the Irish Commons in eleven propositions which were agreed to, and the address conveying them to the throne received, I may say, the universal and warm approbation of the House, as on a division there were no Noes except the Tellers. Both Houses joined in the Address, which shews the decided sentiment of Parliament, that the passing of these Resolutions into Law, would have completely answered all the purposes of the present project.

The Address is worth attending to:—

“ That our gratitude is peculiarly due to his Majesty, for the measures which, since last session of Parliament, have been taken by his royal command, towards forming an arrangement of commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland. That with the most sanguine hope they look forward to the confirmation of these resolutions, containing the principles upon which, they trust, the commercial interests of the two nations will be finally established. When these shall be happily and fully carried into effect, through his Majesty’s paternal goodness, and the wisdom and liberality of his Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, they shall, with the most sincere satisfaction, behold a system established upon the firm basis of reciprocal advantage, which will completely strengthen and cement the common interest and mutual affection of both kingdoms, and will indissolubly unite the efforts of all his Majesty’s subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, in maintaining the strength, increasing the resources, and extending the power and credit of the British empire—and that it is their fervent prayer, that his Majesty may long possess the true reward of a great and generous mind, in beholding the blessings derived under his royal auspices, and in receiving the just tribute of the most zealous duty and attachment from his loyal and affectionate people.”

In Great Britain the King, in opening the session of the same year, (1785), said, “ Among the objects which now require consideration, I must particularly recommend to your earnest attention the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland, as are not yet finally arranged. The

“ system

“ system which will unite both kingdoms most closely on
 “ principles of reciprocal advantage, will, I am per-
 “ suaded, best secure the general prosperity of my do-
 “ minions.”

Observe here, from the proceedings in both king-
 doms, that *commercial arrangement* only was in contem-
 plation—and Mr. Pitt’s words, when he introduced
 the subject, deserve particular attention :

“ There was not a man in the House who would not
 “ agree, that settling the commercial intercourse of the
 “ two kingdoms on a firm, liberal, and permanent basis,
 “ by which an end might be put to all jealousies and
 “ clamour, and by which all future pretexis to discontent
 “ might be removed, and by which the surest foundations
 “ of future strength and opulence might be laid, was
 “ one of the greatest topics which could be agitated
 “ in Parliament, and one of the most desirable objects
 “ that they could accomplish.”

Again—“ He desires the House to recollect, that
 “ amongst the many objects to which the Legislature had
 “ for some years directed its attention, the affairs of Ire-
 “ land, and the forming a suitable arrangement between
 “ that country and this, were nearly the most considera-
 “ ble. A vast deal had already been done by former ad-
 “ ministrations, but not enough—and his present plan was
 “ *nothing more than a necessary supplement* to those which
 “ had formerly been adopted (meaning those of 1779 and
 “ 1780, and the settlement of 1782), for the purpose of
 “ creating such a mutual interest as should for ever pre-
 “ serve inviolable and secure the connection between the
 “ countries.”

Here

Here we have his own authority for all that was necessary at that day to secure the connexion inviolate, and form a complete arrangement. The previous measure of constitutional settlement in 1782, was in his opinion of that day, final and complete as to its object. His *supplement* of commercial arrangement alone was wanting to perfect all; let us examine it; not a word in it of constitution, of the concerns of peace and war, which the noble Lord and he now so magnify, of treaties which the Duke of Rutland suggested for consideration; of these difficulties which he now states as curable only by his new medicine; (all of which I shall bye and by remove)—not a word of Regency, the object of the present bill, or of the objections he now starts to the independence of our Legislature.

But I will not only give you his authority in 1785, I will shew you the same sentiment expressed in the same year in stronger language, by both Houses, in a joint Address, which he moved in the Commons, and by his Majesty's Answer to it.

The Address says:—

“ We have thus far performed our part in this important business; and we trust, that in the whole of its progress, reciprocal interests and mutual affection will insure that spirit of Union, so essentially necessary to the great end which the two countries have equally in view.

“ In this persuasion we look forward with confidence to the final completion of a measure which, while it tends to perpetuate the harmony and friendship between the two kingdoms, must by augmenting their resources, uniting

“ uniting their efforts, and consolidating their strength, afford your Majesty the surest means of establishing on a lasting foundation, the safety, prosperity, and glory of the empire.”

To which his Majesty replied :

“ A full and equal participation of commercial advantages, and a similitude of laws in those points which are necessary for their preservation and security, must be the surest bond of Union between the two kingdoms, and the source of reciprocal and increasing benefits to both.”

Thus do the Lords and Commons of Great Britain declare, that the measures proposed in 1785, which were all commercial, will perpetuate harmony between the two kingdoms, and must, by augmenting their resources, uniting their efforts, and consolidating their strength, afford the surest means of establishing on a lasting foundation the safety, prosperity, and glory of the empire—the very phrases and high-sounding language which he applies to his plan of Union.

Thus does the King say, that the same measures must be the surest bond of Union between the kingdoms, and the source of reciprocal and increasing benefits to both.

And thus, what Mr. Pitt, the Parliament, and the King, all declared sufficient and complete in 1785, to have worked all the wonders of his present *Nostrum*, without any of the poisonous, political, or constitutional ingredients, he would now dose us with, this same Mr. Pitt

Pitt says, in 1799, was a *partial and inadequate measure*. These are his very expressions as published.

What in 1785 he declared to be a supplement to the establishment of 1782, cannot in 1799 be accomplished without destroying that establishment, which it was to support and strengthen.

In 1785, he told you that the measure he then proposed "was to preserve and secure the connection inviolate."—He tells you now it would not have done either; it was a *partial and inadequate measure*.

In 1785, he told you "it was the only possible means by which the connection between the two kingdoms could effectually and with prudence be established;"—his very words as recorded in Debrett's Debates;—and he now tells you, *it was partial and inadequate*, and could not have established any thing.

In 1785 he stated "it was to form a final adjustment of commercial interests between the two countries—in 1799, he says the adjustment would have been *partial and inadequate*. And thus he again puzzles us with his use of the word *final*. In 1782 what puts an end to any thing, is not final.—In 1785 what is partial and inadequate, is final.

In 1785 "it was one of the greatest topics which could be agitated in Parliament;" now it is no great topic, but a *partial and inadequate measure*.

In 1785 it was "of the greatest and most decisive importance to both kingdoms, since the end and object was no less than to establish a system that should be permanent

ment and irrevocable, (his own words, as Debrett records them), but now that system is called *partial and inadequate*.

In 1785 he states the measure to be “the one among
“all the objects of his political life the most important
“he had ever engaged in, nor did he imagine he should
“ever meet another, that would call forth all his feelings,
“and rouse every exertion of his heart in so forcible a
“manner—a measure in which he verily believes was in-
“volved every prospect that still remained to Great Bri-
“tain of again lifting her head to that height and emi-
“nence which she possessed among nations.”—He tells
you now, it had no importance, it was a *partial and inadequate measure*.

Would to God he had kept those same feelings, and that same heart of 1785 to actuate his conduct at this day, and our growing prosperity and happiness would not be interrupted, as they now are, by his wild projects! Would to God he had preserved the consistency, which I preserved, and he has abandoned, and he would not now bring the connection and safety of this kingdom into hazard, by endeavouring in 1799 to destroy the final adjustment of 1782, which in 1785 he proposed to strengthen and perpetuate for ever!

And is this the consistent gentleman who is wantonly and unprovokedly to charge me with inconsistency? and what inconsistency does he charge me with? that I expressly stated in 1785 that the final adjustment of 1782 could not last. Not even the imperfect record of my language that day, asserts any thing like it. I never said so, expressly or impliedly; on the contrary, I deemed that adjustment so sacred, so valuable, and so rivetted to the interest and feelings of the whole kingdom, that I premised what I was going to say by the following

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words

words:—" (Mr. Foster said) he could not sit silent when
 " he heard a measure in which he was proud to have
 " had a considerable part, represented by so many gentle-
 " men as injurious to the independence of the Irish le-
 " gislature, and a barter of the constitution for com-
 " merce. *He should think himself, indeed, unworthy of a*
 " *seat in that House, or of the name of Irishman, if he*
 " *could consent to barter an atom of the constitution of his*
 " *country, for all the commerce in the world;* but he was
 " so fully satisfied the present measure did not violate it,
 " in the smallest degree, that he could not repress his sur-
 " prise at its being supposed to do so." Here I cannot
 help remarking, that in a publication of Mr. Pitt's speech
 with an extract annexed, of what Woodfall recorded of
 me at that period; these words are wholly omitted,
 though they are in Woodfall's debates.

And in the last debate on it I said that " I would stand
 " or fall with the bill, that not a line in it touches our
 " constitution," and not a line did touch it, whatever
 interpretation might be put on the alterations made
 by Mr. Pitt in the propositions. I assert the Irish Par-
 liament never gave a decision on these alterations, nor
 was any question ever put here upon one of them.
 The advocates for the commercial propositions wisely
 chose to express their sentiments, in a bill which effected
 every purpose, without adopting even any the most
 distant or doubtful encroachment on the independence
 of our Legislature. This bill is on your records.

By what fatality this measure failed at the time, and how
 the alterations made by Britain overthrew it I need not
 state; I will only say, that where a suspicion, that the
 operation of them might affect the independence of our
 Legislature, created such a general disapprobation as
 obliged him to abandon the measure, he should have
 learned

learned wisdom thereby, and not have proposed at this day, to a nation so greatly attached to that independence, and the more so for her rising prosperity since its attainment, a measure which does not barely go to alter it, but avowedly and expressly to extinguish it; he should have recollected, that he now offers no one practical or even speculative advantage in commerce when the total extinction is required; and that a measure suspected only to infringe on that independence failed in his hands, though accompanied with offers of solid and substantial benefit to trade.

The measure then of 1782 was all constitutional—that of 1785 all commercial—and to select general expressions made use of on the one subject, and apply them to the other, shews no great candour in reasoning; however, I can safely give him all the advantage of it, and still refute him.

The words ascribed to me in the publication by Woodfall, were supposed to be spoken in the debate before the propositions were agreed to—"That things could not remain as they were."—I believe I did use that expression, at least I accede to it, because it was my sentiment, and I say so still, that things could not have remained as they were—and things do not remain as they were.

By what fatality is it that he cannot recollect that the great grounds of commercial jealousy, which it was the object of 1785 to settle for the permanency of our connexion, and to which alone my words applied, have been since adjusted by laws of his own supporting in the one kingdom, and approbation in the other.

I repeat again the same assertion, *things have not remained as they were*. The construction of the navigation act, which prevented Britain receiving colonial or
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foreign

foreign goods through Ireland, has been done away in 1793, by a law, introduced by Lord Hobart, to permit the import into Great Britain from Ireland, of all goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British colonies, or of Asia, Africa, or America. The former construction, was the great and constant object of Irish jealousy, and it was a leading measure in the propositions of 1785.

In the same year, in order to remove a great and pressing object of British jealousy, which was likewise a great and fundamental article in those propositions, we restrained, by an Irish act, Ireland's acknowledged right to trade within the limits of the East India Company's charter, and confirmed to that Company their monopoly of the whole trade to all the world beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Straights of Magellan—although when Mr. Eden, in 1785, talked “ of the period of the expiration of the Company's charter not being very distant, and that there remained no power in Britain to renew it or any exclusive privilege,” he said, “ that the disposition which was already manifested in Ireland, to avail themselves of the advantages of the Oriental trade, would shew that on such an event they would not be induced to resign their pretensions.”

We adopted the navigation act, which Great Britain justly boasts to be a main prop of the commercial system on which the naval strength of the empire rests, by making it Irish law, not by reciting its provisions, but taking it in toto by its title.

We enacted the same laws for registry of shipping, for increase of shipping, for manifests—all great and imperial objects to the trade of the empire.

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We established the necessary regulation for Greenwich Hospital, and Light-house duties.

In short there is no one measure of general or imperial concern, or even of colonial trade, unattended to by us, or left for Irish law to enact a similarity of rule in.

I do not call the arrangement of duties on the interchange of native productions or manufactures, between the two kingdoms, an object of imperial concern; but if I did, I would assert on the authority of Mr. Pitt, of the Parliaments of both countries, and of experience, that separate Legislatures are perfectly competent to it, and the more so, as more likely to give that stability which mutual content and satisfaction can alone secure. And I would further assert, that every practicable benefit in that respect, which those propositions might have arranged, is actually and practically enjoyed ever since, and will continue to be so, as long as mutual interest and good-will shall direct each country.

Our object was to secure the continuance of the intercourse in a sort of *statu quo*, and so it remains.

I will not hesitate then to say, name to me any one matter of general or imperial concern which those propositions would have arranged, and which is not arranged—if you can, I should not fear to say, the same attention will instantly adopt it, and that he is not a good Irishman who knows of any such, and refuses to suggest it. Let the noble lord propose them, and not keep the country in agitation by suspending this ruinous measure over it. Let the silly attempt to encourage its revival, by getting resolutions privately signed for it, be abandoned. If you doubt the general execration in which it is held, call the counties—take their sense at public meetings,

ings, instead of preventing those meetings, lest the general sense should be known, and put an end to all the idle and silly tricks of circulating stories that this gentleman and that gentleman has changed his mind. Why, Sir, it has been told industriously that I have altered my opinion—what I have already said shews I have not; but the noble lord shall have ample proof of it, before I sit down.

But, to return to my argument—I ask where is the difference of our situation now from what it would have been, had the commercial measures of 1785 been established?—None in fact. The only distinction is, that what the policy of that day intended to have made matter of *compact*, the mutual interest, common concern, brotherly affection, and inviolable connection of the two kingdoms, have effected voluntarily and gradually since—and thus we have not only looked forward with the British Parliament to the final completion of a measure which, to use their emphatic language, must perpetuate harmony between the kingdoms, augment their resources, unite their efforts, consolidate their strength, and establish on a lasting foundation the safety, prosperity, and glory of the empire; but we have attained it, and the empire is actually in the complete practical enjoyment of all its benefits, and of the full and equal participation of commercial advantages, and that similarity of laws for their preservation, which his Majesty, like the wise and benevolent father of all his people, declared to be the surest bond of union between the two kingdoms, actually and effectually exists.

It is charged further to me, that I not only said in 1785, that things could not remain as they were, speaking of the commercial propositions, but that I added,

ded, "commercial jealousy is roused, it will increase with
 "two independent Legislatures, if they don't mutually
 "declare the principles whereby their powers shall be se-
 "parately employed, in directing the common concerns
 "of trade."

I was right in that assertion; the navigation act, East-India act, and other laws since, have extinguished the commercial jealousy I alluded to, and declared the principles I mentioned, and each Legislature has been effectually employed thereby in directing the common concerns of trade.

I added too, "that without united interest of commerce, in a commercial empire, political union
 "will receive many shocks, and separation of interest
 "must threaten separation of connection, which
 "every honest Irishman must shudder to look at."—
 Now, thanks to the good sense of both kingdoms, that united interest of commerce has been cherished and maintained by those very laws, and in every circumstance from that day a mutual affection, a wish to support a mutual and common interest, has marked every act of either Legislature, and of course no political shock has arisen, nor could arise, save only the fatal and desperate shock which now awaits us, from this unprovoked, unnecessary, and destructive project of a Legislative Union—a shock which, if persevered in, must threaten separation of connection, which every honest man, Englishman or Irishman, *must shudder even to look at as a possible event.*

Is there a word in all the language ascribed to me in 1785, against the final adjustment of 1782? Quite the contrary—I argued that two independent Legislatures existed, and therefore commercial settlement was necessary. I took their existence as a position not to be
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altered, or controverted, and therefore drew that inference. He agreed with me then in the theory, and has since realised it into practice, by the laws I have mentioned. But to put the argument in the strongest logical form it will bear, two independent Legislatures and unsettled commerce cannot exist together with safety; but commerce has been settled, and therefore the two independent Legislatures may exist—or again, either a Legislative Union, or a settlement of commerce must take place, the settlement of commerce has taken place, therefore the Legislative Union need not. The fair statement is, as it would have stood in 1785—two independent Legislatures and unsettled commerce cannot exist with safety, but the two independent Legislatures must exist, therefore the commerce must be settled, and it has been.

I will only add, that the present flourishing state of the Empire confirms my assertion, that things have not remained as they were; for if his prediction was true, Great Britain could not, if they so remained, have lifted her head to that height and eminence which she once possessed among nations, whereas she not only has done so, but has towered above the whole surrounding world, notwithstanding the question in 1785 failed, in which question, to use his own words, was involved every prospect that still remained to her of doing so. His assertion was right, and it has proved true; why? because every measure in his view, when he made that declaration, has actually taken place since, although the mode of effecting them as proposed in 1785 was abandoned at the time, and here I will dismiss this part of the subject, with applying it as a full answer to one of his disjunctive sophisms, which he states so boldly when he asks, “how
“ is the evil of commercial jealousies acting upon the
laws

laws of two independent legislatures to be remedied? and answers: by two means only, either by some compact entered into by the legislatures of the two countries, or else by blending the two legislatures together. I defy the wit of man, he says, to point out a third. I answer, his own conduct and that of both the kingdoms has pointed out a third, that of the good sense and mutual interest of each country from time to time, passing all laws necessary to prevent the operation or inconveniencies of commercial jealousies: a mode which was not as certain at the time as the Propositions, because there was no security of its being adopted, but which being carried into execution, is not only equally effectual, but is more sure and permanent, in as much as mutual good-will and interest form a more indissoluble junction than the compulsion of law, which as between states, has never proved a valid bond, when the others ceased to exist.

Experience too shews us this third mode has answered, for though we have greatly extended and encreased our trade, not a jealousy has arisen to interrupt harmony; on the contrary, the final adjustment of 1782 has proved itself, as we then stated it would be, a sure pledge of mutual amity. This refutes too, (if it had not been already refuted) his strange assertion, that there is not a man who believes there is a solid bond of connexion between the countries; if he means by solid that only which is by express and written compact, I answer, a connexion founded on the content, the interest, the affection of the country, alone deserves the name of solid, such we are in the ample and full possession of, and any other, which affects to bind by a parchment roll against inclination, interest and feeling, is too frail to continue long. Bonds of force, or even deluded or delusive consent, will only exist to be broken, such bonds soon assume the galling shape of

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fetters, and the more they are felt, the greater exertion will be provoked to throw them off; whereas those of interest and good will grow stronger in proportion to the feeling they arouse. But let us examine fully this part of the existing connexion between the two kingdoms; and the noble Lord invites me to it, for he rests all his arguments on the insufficiency of the present connexion.

We might have expected that the advocates for innovation and changing the situation in which we are rapidly thriving, instead of general and bare assertions that there is not a sufficient connexion at present existing, would have stated the instances wherein it was deficient. I can find only two even suggested, the one of peace and war including treaties, the other of a regency.

As to peace and war, which the noble Lord in his adoption of Mr. Pitt's assertions relies upon, he should recollect that the sole and absolute right of making either rests in the executive power, it is the King's prerogative. I need not shew that by law the executive is and ever must be the same, and with the same constitutional powers, in each kingdom. The prerogative not being conferred by statute law, has and ever must have equal powers in each, when not controuled by law. Separate legislatures don't affect the executive, where he acts independent of the authority of legislation; but from the balance of power to which the British Constitution owes its great excellence, the executive, though vested with power to act by declaring war, is forced to apply to Parliament for the means to carry it on, and therefore must consult their opinion and ask their advice. Suppose then the British Parliament to approve a war, and that of Ireland to disapprove, the only difficulty which this difference of sentiment could create would be, that
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the one who disapproved, might withhold its supplies until good sense should induce it to acquiesce. It could not by the refusal stand clear of the miseries, and hazards, and losses of war, because the King's declaration involves it equally as Britain.

As to peace, no refusal of supplies could there inconvenience or embarrass the executive, nor is it likely that any nation, much less the smaller, could ever decline to receive the blessing of peace, when the Sovereign should offer it:—any difference therefore of conduct in separate Legislatures, however unpleasant, could create no real difficulty there. Thus neither peace nor war necessarily requires the act of either Legislature, and their separate powers form no constitutional difficulty.

As to treaties, which neither concern peace or war, but are merely commercial, and therefore may require the aid of legislative acts to confirm them, or in other words, to impose duties, prohibitions, or restrictions in trade. I am not read enough in the Constitutional doctrine, on which the Executive can pledge itself to a foreign power, for any act to be done by the Legislature, of which it is only a third estate; but of this I am sure, there is not so much reason to apprehend that the Irish Parliament should differ from the British, as there is to suppose, that the British might differ from the Executive; the latter case is equally possible as the other; and not having ever been guarded against, and being indeed incapable of being guarded against, the former may safely rest on the same footing. The argument which suggests the difficulty is entirely theoretic, and many things which appear difficult, or even hazardous in theory, are not only safe, but even reconciled in practice.

Theory says, the Parliament may disagree with the King in his declaration of peace and war, or in his treaties ; but in the course of the British history, how often has it disagreed, and have any, and what, national injuries followed such disagreement ? It would be difficult to find them ; never, I believe, since the Constitution has been the happy one it now is.

Theory says, the two Houses may, in legislative acts of material necessity, disagree with each other ; and therefore, would you venture to prevent the evil, by an absurd and impracticable attempt to force one to surrender its liberty to the other ; or in the fashionable phrase, by consolidating them both into one great mass of wisdom, united strength, and increased power ?

Theory, and theory only says, the same of the separate Parliaments of the two kingdoms ; and there is no one argument you can apply for the necessity of consolidating them, that will not apply much stronger for the consolidation of the two Houses in each ;—and the same arguments will all further apply, with equal strength, to consolidate the two Houses after such junction, with the King, as the third estate, for fear of the national concerns being impeded by their disagreeing with him, or he with them,—and thus your arguments will end in the absurdity, that you must consolidate the three estates of each kingdom into one, for fear of an inconvenience from a difference of opinion arising from the exercise of their free judgment ; that you must abandon the glorious Constitution of a mixed government, which you now enjoy, and adopt that of a single Monarch, or single power, wherever it may rest, either in a Monarch, or a Republick, or an Oligarchy. But practice, which is a more steady guide than theory, tells you
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the reverse. In points of peace and war, the Irish Parliament has never, even during centuries, differed in opinion from the British, though its power to do so has ever been as unlimited, and equally free before, as since the Constitution of 1782. No,—Interest is a sure guide to nations, and it never was, nor never can be the interest of the smaller number, to differ from the larger, of the weaker to differ from the more powerful on such a matter; and it is no rash prediction to say, that good sense and even necessity must soon reconcile the differing body, if unfortunately such an instance should ever happen.

But if we look into the principles of the British Constitution, we shall there find abundant reason not only to reject the arguments of such a theory as would consolidate the legislatures, but even not to adopt it if it were practicable. That Constitution was not the work of one man or of one age, it has gradually been softened down in the course of centuries into the perfection we now enjoy it, more by the collision of circumstances than by the efforts of human wisdom or foresight.

That collision has imperceptibly formed a balance in its constituent parts, which by the power of mutual checks, keeps each within its bounds, and preserves the whole in its true perfection.

That balancing check is the true principle to which it owes its preservation; destroy it, and the whole is gone. Is it wrong then to look to similar good effects from the same balancing principle in the connexion between the legislatures of the two islands, as in the connexion between the component parts of each legislature?

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If it keeps the three estates of Parliament together all in their just proportion in each kingdom, why not depend on the same principle operating the same way, and keeping the two legislatures of both kingdoms in their just relations to each other, so as that their mixed powers, like those of the mixed government, shall by their separate exertion so checked, preserve the symmetry and union of the whole machine of the empire, which a theoretic or unwise merging of the one into the other, might so affect as to render incapable of working?

No man is wise enough to foresee all the consequences of changing system even in small affairs, much less can he in such a stupendous work, as the constitution of a great empire; and if it goes on practically even with some, or if you please with great speculative imperfections; he is a rash statesman who would venture to change its progress, even on the plausible suggestions of a clear and persuasive theory; but here there is none such; and even if there were, how often is the best theory defeated by practice? We may find many instances; I will give you one. Juries from the vicinage are liable to all the prejudices, animosities, friendships, which those from a remoter country would be free from; and looking to the theory of justice only, we should never have chosen them from the neighbourhood, yet the experience of a thousand years thro' every change the constitution has undergone, has proved that the very matter from which we might have apprehended the imperfection of this mode of trial is its great and peculiar excellence. Mr. Pitt, on the same theory, tells us that our Parliaments may be influenced by local prejudices and partialities, from residing in the country, whose interests are to come before it, and therefore he would send those interests to a foreign Parliament, who know nothing of them

them nor can have the same means of knowledge I reply to him, that the practice of juries shews—that the local knowledge is the very essence of its capability to administer its functions.

It would be endless to run into all the cases wherein practice is a better monitor than theory—in none is it more so, than in the policy of governing mankind, and in no age or at no period is it more particularly worthy of being deemed so than in the present, when so many metaphysic researches and theoretic plans of meliorating governments and reforming systems which have stood the storms of ages, have convulsed and desolated the fairest countries of Europe. Look away then from the present project, however decorated with the powers of eloquence, and turn your eyes to the history and practice of your own country;—that country whose safety at this instant is endangered by a theoretic proposal to reform the system of its constitution, at the time that it is working with ease and increasing benefit.

Has the Irish Parliament in peace or war, or in treaties, since we have any records of its proceedings, clogged the progress of the Empire, by holding a different opinion from the British?—more particularly, since the restoration of its independence roused in it the pride, the spirit, and the sense of honour, which always attends true liberty, has it through peace, or war, ever differed from the British, or been less zealous in improving the one, and prosecuting the other?—From that period to this day the times have been peculiarly marked with great and trying events, and will afford us numerous examples of concurrence; none of difference, except you call the Regency such.—In every one then in which Ireland could shew its opinion,

nion, that opinion has been to support and strengthen Britain, to adopt the same regulations, to confer the same powers. Look to the many regulations in the commercial system, navigation act, manifest act, intercourse with the United States, treaty with France, expiration of the East India Charter and the arrangement of trade there.

But the noble Lord has told us the real motives of this scheme of Union, and I thank him for stating them so fairly. Ireland, he says, must contribute to every war, and the Minister won't trust to interest, affection, or connexion, for guiding her conduct. He must have her purse within his own grasp. While three hundred men hold it in Ireland, he cannot put his hand into it, they are out of his reach—but let one hundred of you carry it over and lay it at his feet, and then he will have the full and uncontrouled power.

What though you have given eight millions this year, a greater sum than any proportion of calculation calls for, yet it is no part of his finance system, and you may not do it hereafter when it might be a breach of trust in you to give it.

Finance so occupies his mind, that it is the ruling principle of all his measures, it attended the commercial system in the shape of a supply for imperial concerns—and if you could contrive now to give him the purse of the nation, without extinguishing your Parliament, believe me you would hear no more of Union. I respect him personally—I look on him as the greatest minister for finance that ever existed in any country, but in this fatal project of a Union, I do not scruple to say, he is the worst minister Ireland ever met.

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If a similarity of laws be, an essential means of Union, it is already attained and zealously continued by the voluntary acts of both kingdoms.—But the noble Lord wants more, he wants your purse and your trade, for the only question of imperial concern, (the Regency excepted) which he has stated, and the only one which Mr. Pitt, in his speech has attempted even to suggest, is this of war and treaty; and the only difficulty relied on, as to war, is the want of power to tax you, and the only legislative act for treaties is to restrain or regulate trade, and thus the whole truth is discovered.

He wants a Union, in order to tax you and take your money where he fears your own representatives would deem it improper, and to force regulations on your trade, which your own Parliament would consider injurious or partial.—I never expected to have heard it so unequivocally acknowledged, and I trust that it will be thoroughly understood, that it is not your Constitution he wants to take away for any supposed imperfection, but because it keeps the purse of the nation in the honest hands of an Irish Parliament.

I have mentioned the Regency in 1789. Unfortunate as it was that the two countries differed, the difference was not as to the person, but as to the limitations of power; nor was it properly speaking, the Parliaments that differed; it was the two estates, deprived of the third estate, which equally belonged to each Parliament, and in an instance wherein the controul of the British Council over that estate in its power of assenting or dissenting with the two houses of Ireland, was by the fatality of the case necessarily extinguished,—and I rely on it that if his Majesty's unfortunate illness had continued, all differences which marked the conduct of the two Houses here and those in Britain must have been

done away, the moment that the controul I have stated should be established by the Great Seal being again put into exercise.

Let me again advert to this circumstance, for it is a most impressive proof of the efficacy of that connexion which the adjustment of 1782 established in regard to the Great Seal of Britain, and which I have detailed already.

It shews, that the only instance, which the advocates of Union produce, happened when the bond of Union which 1782 established, was suspended from operating; and this is a powerful argument in favour of this bond.

But I say, that no real difficulty does exist. For it is clear, notwithstanding what passed in 1789, that the act annexing the Crown in Hen. 8. extends to the person authorised by Britain to administer regal power, whether King, Queen, or Regent. At the Revolution, the British Parliament altered the succession to the Crown, and when the event took place, the successor became our Sovereign through their Act under ours of Hen. 8. and so would a Regent invested by them with regal authority become ours without any Act on our part. Our law of 1782 concerning the Great Seal puts it out of doubt; whoever is Regent of Britain has that Great Seal, the functions of the Irish Legislature must cease without its use, and therefore the Regent of Britain alone can represent the 3d estate of the Irish Legislature. The identity of the person, that the same person shall necessarily be the Regent in both kingdoms is the essential point—the Act of Annexation and 1782 secure this; and if local circumstance require any difference of power, either enabling or disabling, the Irish Parliament will be equally competent to establish it, under the

the Regent, as it is now to establish any difference if necessary under the Sovereign.

But suppose doubts still continue, nay go farther, and suppose, contrary to all reason, that the present Bill cannot remove them, we should be idiots if we were for a casualty which may never happen, and for a disagreement which may not attend that casualty, and for the very slight, and trifling, and temporary, and theoretic inconveniencies which might be the consequences of such disagreement, to sacrifice our free Constitution, degrade the country into the state almost of a colony, and surrender that legislative independence which, in the very act of surrendering, we should shew ourselves unworthy of enjoying.

One argument which the advocates for the Union urge is, that it will augment the general force of the empire. Were it calculated to produce that effect, we ought to sacrifice much to such an attainment, but do they prove it? no, nor even attempt an argument, they give general terms, pompous phrases and unsupported assertions, and speak of us as if there were no Union, as if we were actually separate, and then attribute to their project every merit, every advantage which we now enjoy, as if they could confer them, and as if they did not exist. The case is, we are now united, so as if our whole strength is the strength of the empire. And as to resources against the enemy, the consolidation of both kingdoms is as firm as human policy and individual interest can make it.

Consider the measure what it really is, a merging of the Irish Parliament into the British, and the consequent removal of it to Britain; that is all, it is no otherwise a Union; it is simply the leaving Ireland without the residence of a Parliament.

ment. This is the whole of the mighty project which is to do such wonders, and in plain English the mighty wonder ends in this, to leave us in every respect exactly as we are, except as to our Parliament. Will its removal raise one soldier or one guinea more? will it encrease the capacity of doing either?—On the contrary, by debilitating Ireland, by debasing its spirit, and draining it of the leading fortunes and talents of the Country, by creating an encrease of absentees, by checking trade and manufacture, it must weaken our resources; and instead of the energy and zeal of a free people offering their lives and their properties, the empire will at most have the tardy and inanimated support of a dispirited and discontented province.

When Mr. Pitt says, If we were to ask the agent of our enemies, what measure would be most likely to render their designs abortive, the answer would be the firm consolidation of every part of the empire, I would bid him tell those enemies it is and has been consolidated, I would bid him do this, instead of holding us out as he does through his whole speech to the visitation of the enemy, by stating us as the vulnerable part of the empire, torn by contending factions. It is painful to go through all the phrases in which he insults our feelings, and which every Irishman knows not to be founded, I will omit repeating them, and ask you—Can we see in this repeated and open statement, the sound discretion which has marked his progress as a statesman in most of his other measures? He knew the assent of Ireland would be necessary to his present scheme, supposing it as salutary, wise, and practicable as he states it: should he then in common policy have held out our weaknesses even if real, and assert with all the impressive force of language that those weaknesses must continue if we should refuse our assent, before he knew we were ready to give it?

Providence

Providence has been often a kind friend to Ireland, and it is our good fortune now, that the enemy knows we are not in the state he paints us. They will not be imposed on—they know and feel that we are firmly united to Great Britain in affection and in interest, and they will pay no regard to the manner in which Municipal Laws cement or qualify that Union. If they have secret assistants in this kingdom, they are not so senseless as not to know that a roll of parchment won't change their minds, or remove them from the means of giving the expected aid;—on the contrary, if they entertain any hope of success, will they not think that the affections, interests, united resources, and united strength of those parts of the Empire, cannot be strengthened by such a roll,—but that the leaving so large a kingdom without a Legislature, whose energy they felt to their great discomfiture in their late attempts to promote rebellion, will give their secret friends more power to act? Was it wise by a hasty and immature proposal to risk the misconception which a watchful enemy might be led into, by an assertion that no real Union ever existed?

But the argument is still more inapplicable; the danger he threatens us with is instant; and the measure for our protection, the Union, must be a work of time. He tells the enemy the danger and the remedy, the danger immediate, the remedy distant. He destroys a Constitution which we hold, as the dear and sacred Palladium of our liberty, and would persuade the world there will be more zeal in Ireland, when that Constitution no longer shall remain, to animate its spirit and invigorate its exertions.

Another advantage mentioned by the advocates of the measure is still more strange, and if possible couched in more general

general terms without specifying any particular instance by which or on which the operation is to have effect.

That it will tranquillise Ireland.—It is again disgusting to me as an Irishman, to repeat all the insulting epithets and phrases with which he describes the state of this Country:—If a resident Parliament and resident gentry cannot soften the manners, amend the habits, or promote social intercourse, will no Parliament, and fewer resident gentry, do it? What is the great misfortune with respect to the tenantry of this kingdom? the middlemen, who intervene between the owner and the actual occupier, and these are mostly to be found on the estates of absentees. I have ever understood, that the example of the upper ranks, was the most effectual means of promoting good morals and habits among the lower orders; that their attention to the education, the health, and the comforts, as well as the protection they afforded the lower ranks, all which can only arise from residence were the surest mode of conciliating their affections, as well as improving their manners; that if every estate and every village afforded a benevolent protector, an easy and impartial dispenser of justice, and allayer of the little feuds which headstrong passions, untamed by education, are too apt to carry to the last excesses, the lower orders would learn not only obedience and veneration to the laws, but would feel an attachment to the country which afforded them such blessings—but it has remained for Mr. Pitt to advance a new system, that depriving a country of those persons whom I have described, encouraging land-jobbers and land-pirates, degrading the hospitality of the old mansion-houses into the niggardly penury of agent's dwellings, is the most approved, modern mode of making happy and contented tenants, of forming good men and good subjects.

That

That the adding to the bishop's duty of attending to his diocese, the new and imperial duty of quitting the kingdom for eight months in the year, is the best way to make him acquainted with his clergy, and of enforcing their attention to their parishioners.

That a Parliament unacquainted with the local circumstances of a kingdom which it never sees—at too great a distance to receive communication or information for administering in time to the wants or the wishes of the people, or to guard against excesses or discontents, is more capable of acting beneficially than the one, who by being on the spot, and acquainted with the habits, prejudices, and disposition of their fellow subjects, best know how to apply relief.

But if we advert to the treasons and rebellions which have so degraded this Country, there we can apply to fact,—Could any Parliament sitting in Great Britain have developed the secret system of conspiracy, animated the loyal, and supported the executive, with the effect this very Parliament did? what would the ridiculous exhibition have been at that time, of a united Parliament walking through St. James's Park with their address, and yet what vigour and energy did the instant procession of near two hundred members with the mace to the castle, give to the loyal ardour of the country,—it animated the loyal spirit which crushed the rebellion before a single soldier could arrive from England, notwithstanding the uncommon exertions made there to expedite their sailing.

The extraordinary, but wise and necessary measure of proclaiming martial law, required the concurrence of Parliament to support the executive. The time would have past by, before that concurrence could have been asked for, and
received

received from London ; and it would have given a faint support, coming from strangers, compared with the impression of its springing from Irishmen, all liable to every danger and inconvenience from its operation, and yielding themselves and their properties to its control.

Recollect the volunteers, the saviours of the Country and terror of its enemies ; when their great work was effected, and by the indiscreetness of a few leaders, their zeal was mislaid, and they began to exercise the functions of Parliament, we spoke out firmly—they heard our voice with effect, and took our advice in instantly returning to cultivate the blessings of peace. I ask you, would equal firmness in a Parliament, composed five parts in six of strangers, sitting in another country, have had the same effect ? You know it would not. Personal character, respect to individuals, opinion of their attachment to one common country, all impressed an awe which was irresistible.

But how has tranquillity been preserved in Britain ? Don't the secret reports shew that France has a sanguine hope of separating Scotland as well as Ireland, though she carries the charm of Union to protect her ; that even in England there are conspiracies, and I will put this question to any man who considers the reports of their Parliament and ours—have they probed the conspiracy to the bottom as we have done ? Is it a vain supposition, that if Scotland had had its Parliament sitting in Edinburgh, the conspiracy which spread so widely would have been sooner developed, and not shewn itself again there after it had been put down here ?

Need I go to more instances to shew you how tranquillity has been secured, and disturbances prevented by the interposition of this Irish Parliament which you are called upon for the sake of preserving tranquillity to transport out of your kingdom,

kingdom, to treat like the traitors and rebels who plotted to have destroyed your country? I feel it would be waste of time.—No, no, cherish the Parliament that was able and willing to save you. All natives of one country, their stake is in it; their hearts as well as their interests are engaged in its preservation, its prosperity, and its glory.

But you are to be improved into British manners and British customs! Idle talk; much as I admire Britain, I am not ready to give up the Irish character or to make a sacrifice for the change. But is it by Englishmen coming here that the change is to be effected? I answer, how will the transporting our Legislature, our men of fortune, and men of talents invite them? will men come with a view of profit to settle in a country, at a moment when the principal customers, who may be in their contemplation, are in the act of leaving that country and going to them? Look to the immense residence now in your kingdom from the unusual number of British officers, soldiers, and those of the English militia particularly, because the privates afford the example of manners and civilization to the classes which are in most want of them here. Will the Union bring so many or diffuse them so generally? in war they come without it, in peace they cannot come as soldiers.

Look to Scotland which has been united near a century, look to Wales which has been united above five centuries. Have English manners and English habits been able ever to get the English language into full use? and if they have not put down the native language, are new habits which arise from social intercourse to be communicated by persons who cannot understand each other when they speak? after forty years experience, they were forced to have recourse to the compulsion of law to put down the Highland dress, yet even that has been ineffectual to extinguish the national attachment to it, the truth is, the manners of a people can-

not be changed in a country suddenly. Great advances have already been made by wholesome laws towards meliorating them here; they have been for years in a state of progress towards improvement; this progress must not be hurried, or you check it. Encourage the residence of the rich, cherish and maintain that free Constitution, that Independence, without which no country is worth living in. In an island blest with soil, climate, and situation beyond most islands in the globe, industry and wealth must encrease, and if you will but abstain from experiment, civilization and meliorated manners will be the sure attendants.

He tells you, his project will diffuse British wealth, and induce British capital to settle here, but he does not tell you how or why, because he cannot. What practical difference in the actual state of the country will his Union occasion, to induce an Englishman to settle here, or what encouragement will it hold out to him, which is not at this very instant in existence? taxes won't be lowered; the whole object of the measure is to raise them; it has been explicitly stated so, and they are in a pretty rapid state of progression already. The same vague and idle bombast of expression, of assertion without proof, is made use of here.—Mr. Pitt says, it will give to Ireland the common use of the British capital—will identify Ireland with England, and so forth; these general unsupported expressions have no meaning, and we will examine the subject minutely.

I will first go through the particulars of the trade and manufactures of each kingdom to shew you the absurdity and futility of asserting, that a Legislative Union will bring capital into Ireland.

With regard to manufactures, those which employ the capital of Britain, and are of course the most profitable, are the Woollen, Cotton, Iron and Pottery. The two latter depend
so

so totally on plenty and cheapness of fuel, that they exist only in the coal countries, and have never have been known even in England to make what can be called a settlement at any distance from a plentiful colliery, and fire is so great a portion of their expence, that the part of the country which affords it best and cheapest, must have such a decided preference, as to induce any loose capital, if there be any such, to vest itself there. In the iron manufacture, Ireland has offered an encouragement superior to Britain. Her duty on imported iron is 12s. 6d. per ton, the British near 3l. which operates as a bounty of above 40s. a ton to the manufacturer in Ireland, yet this bounty has not brought capital into Ireland, and we must expect an equilization of those duties, when our legislature shall be extinguished, whereby this bounty will be extinguished also. The export of iron wrought to Ireland on the average of the last three years, was in value 119,000l. all subject when unrated to at least 12l. 14s. per cent. In the pottery too, the flint and clay which is so abundant in England has not yet been found in any quantity in Ireland, and in fact there is not a single pottery in Ireland.

It is self-evident, therefore, that these manufactures never can travel from the country which has the coal, to that which has it not, from Britain to Ireland. The same facility of fuel must give to Britain a decided preference in all manufactures, where steam-engines cheapen the price of labour.

As to the woollens, look at Yorkshire, their old and great settlement; though established there for centuries they have never travelled in any direction ten miles from the coal country. Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, and the circuit around the east north and south of the seat of manufacture, these support me in what I assert, as if nature had drawn a line
on

on the surface, as in the subterraneous stratum, and said, thus far shall you go, and no farther.

The late introduction of machinery by steam, which not only cheapens labour, but improves the quality beyond manual operation, adds argument to fact, and therefore we can never suppose sound speculation would send any capital to the distance of Ireland across the seas, when it has not sent it ten miles in England. But great as the consideration of fuel is to any man in forming speculations to extend himself in this business, there are others so obvious that they cannot be overlooked.

England finds a full call for all she makes, every year affords an increasing demand; suppose a man there speculates to vest more capital in the business; to settle a son; a nephew or a brother in it. Will he not prefer the extension on his own spot within his view, and under his direct controul, to attempting it in a new and distant country? but of all countries would he in common sense look to that which comes to him for the very goods he makes, which offers him their market at his own door, without trouble risk or change?

Would he not say to himself, the place I live in must make the goods as much cheaper than the Irish can, as the whole expence of carriage, and import duties which Ireland charges, will amount to.

He would find these duties 7d. a yard on old drapery or woollen cloth, operating as $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on a cloth of 7s. 6d. a yard in value, and 2d. on new drapery, or stuffs, serges, durants, &c. operating as $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on 2s. 6d. a yard, and he would naturally wish to see what great and countervailing inducements this measure of Union holds out to him before he ventures on his speculation. Suppose

pose he applies to the Minister for information, he will hear from him, 'it consolidates interest, it gives a full participation of all the commerce of Britain; it identifies the two countries into one; it diffuses common wealth,'—well, all this is fine language which I don't understand; but what does it do as to my trade? Is it to increase the duties there, so as to hinder more goods going from England? 'No, look to the 6th Proposition, they are never to be raised, and they are even to cease in time.'

Will it find fuel for me there? 'No.' What then does it do? 'Why it does every thing: it removes their Parliament here,'—worse and worse, he would say, I have found my trade nurtured and encouraged by Parliament, and you want to send me to a country without a Parliament, no. If you will send the British Parliament to Ireland, I might then think of going there, for where the Parliament is, there should the manufacturer be also: until then, you shall not induce me by imposing phrases to hazard my capital in a country, whose market I fully enjoy at my own warehouse, without offering me any one reason why my neighbour, whom I leave behind me, won't undersell me, even to my present customers there, as I now undersell all the Irish makers to them. No no, I see your plan, you want to impose on the Irish Nation. If they are fools let them be so, but I won't be your dupe, nor your instrument.

Suppose he were even to persist farther, and giving up the idea of supplying the home consumption of Ireland, he should look to supplying foreign markets from Ireland, when he should settle his capital, his machinery and his workmen here; he might say, you talked to me of Ireland's being to enjoy hereafter a full participation of the British commerce, and if I go there, I may export from thence. 'Yes that is one great advantage from the measure.' Then, I suppose the Irish are prohibited now from exporting

to foreign markets. 'No, they have had a full and free liberty to do so these twenty years past.' The Union then gives a bounty I suppose on export? 'No, that would be unfair,' and so you only offer me the same freedom which Ireland has enjoyed without avail for these 20 years past, and which I can enjoy from my own ports, and you don't remove the disadvantage which now enhances the price of the fabrick in Ireland so as to force her home market to be supplied from Britain, and which enhanced price must equally prevent her from meeting the British at a foreign market.

Were he further to look into the state of the trade and enquire into the progress of the export of woollen cloth from Ireland, he would find that in 1698, they exported 110,207l. in value (one-fifth of all their exports) and in 1798, 12,500l. only. — Were he to examine in Britain, it would appear that ten years ago she exported in woollen manufacture to the whole world 4,368,936l. in value and in the last year 6,836,603l. that out of the former there went to Ireland 353,781l. and out of the latter 580,723l. so that in ten years the encreased export was one-third to all the world, and more than one-third to Ireland. He would further find on enquiry that Ireland exported no unmanufactured wool; it worked up all it had, and there was little reason to suppose the quantity would be enlarged, as the great encrease of agriculture and of the linen manufacture gave a better profit in land than sheep afforded, so that Ireland could not even supply him with wool to work and if he were to ask the minister is British wool to follow him there, it is obvious what would be the reply.

Need I add further, to expose the absurdity of such a position as that of the Union bringing over British capital to establish Woollen, Iron or Pottery manufacturers? — The case of the Cotton is not less strong. We cannot even on the eastern coast of Ireland opposite the
British

British collieries make cotton twist within at least 20 per cent. as cheap as Britain can supply us, and we do not at this instant make sufficient for the necessary consumption of the kingdom.—Machinery is more used in this manufacture than the others, and one circumstance respecting it is worth observation: In Britain it was for years subject to a heavy charge, I have heard to 2s. 6d. a spindle annually, for Arkwright's Patent, from which it always was entirely free in Ireland; yet not a penny ever came from England to set up that machinery here, though the patent operated as a bounty to encourage the erection of it. I understand that patent has expired within these few years, and if no capital came, if no Englishman thought the speculation good while that bounty existed, it is nonsense to suppose he will think it a better speculation when the bounty has ceased. If the imports of British cotton manufacture were to be examined, it would appear that Britain in 1789 exported to Ireland to the value only of 32,500*l.* and in 1798, 107,293*l.* though subject to a duty of above 12 per cent in general.

But to save entering into more detail, I will adduce the arguments and authority of the same gentleman, Mr. Pitt, in 1785, though he now maintains a different opinion, and holds out the idle phrase of Diffusion of British Capital. In speaking of the memorable propositions he says:

‘ That besides the different degrees of the industry of
 ‘ the two nations, he was well informed and suf-
 ‘ ficiently convinced that the rate of wages as well as of la-
 ‘ bour, was greater in Ireland than in England, in any
 ‘ branch of manufacture which required execution and inge-
 ‘ nuity; instancing a gentleman whom he described to be the
 ‘ first and the principal person in the cotton business in Ire-
 ‘ land (Major Brooke) who was several times in danger of
 ‘ losing his life, because he refused to allow his workmen a
 ‘ greater

' greater price than they had at Manchester. He could not
 ' help observing, that the fears and apprehensions of the ma-
 ' nufacturers were extremely far fetched, and ill founded, nor
 ' did it appear to him that there were such grounds for them
 ' as ought to weigh with any reasonable man. They had
 ' declared themselves to be under great anxiety and uneasi-
 ' nefs, lest the Irish in consequence of this arrangement,
 ' should be able to draw over all their workmen, all their
 ' trade, and all their capitals, and be able to undersell them
 ' in their own markets by at least 13l. per cent. Now he
 ' desired the committee to attend to that single subject; the
 ' Irish cotton trade was to be imported into England accord-
 ' ing to this plan at 10 and one-half per cent. duty, and yet
 ' it was said they were to undersell the English manufacturer
 ' 13l. per cent. These two sums amounted to 23 and a half
 ' per cent; besides this, England had hitherto imported into
 ' Ireland at a duty of 10 and a half per cent; this, there-
 ' fore, added to the other two sums would amount to 34l.
 ' per cent.' And again, 'he most earnestly entreated the
 ' House not to suffer themselves to be carried away with the
 ' idea that a poor country, merely because she enjoyed some
 ' comparative exemption from taxes, was therefore able to
 ' cope with a rich and powerful country; the fact, he was
 ' ready to contend, was by no means so.'

I will to his authority add that of another gentleman, then a
 Commoner, now Lord Grenville, who, speaking of the opinion
 that the cheapness of provisions would enable the Irish to un-
 dersell the English manufacturer at his own door, said ' But
 ' the noble Lord (North) brought no proof of this, indeed it
 ' would have been wonderful if he had, for nobody knew
 ' where to find any such proof. On the contrary it had been
 ' proved at the bar by a very respectable gentleman, Capt.
 ' Brooke, who had set up an extensive cotton manufactory in
 ' Ireland, that he had always given the same wages that were
 ' given

“ given at Manchester, and that he had on more occasions
 “ than one, with difficulty escaped with his life from his
 “ workmen, who had confederated in order to compel
 “ him to raise their wages higher, than those that were
 “ paid at Manchester. So far no greater cheapness of
 “ labour appeared in one country than in the other, but
 “ supposing the wages were somewhat lower in Ireland
 “ than in England, he could not admit that, as a proof
 “ that labour was in fact cheaper, for the true way to esti-
 “ mate that point would be to see what work was done for
 “ the money, and if the work was not proportioned or
 “ equal to the price, then labour could not be said to be
 “ as low as from the wages it might appear to be.”

If then British capital wont come to establish those ma-
 nufactures in which Britain excels us, and supplies us, it
 will be fair to examine whether the Union will bring it
 to that Manufacture in which we do certainly undersell
 England, and possess natural advantages she does not,
 I mean the linen, for if British capital could be in-
 duced over, here is an article obvious to invite it.
 But what has been the fact? It has been free and
 prosperous for these ninety years, and has afforded
 many great fortunes to the industrious who have
 engaged in it; yet hardly any British capital has set-
 tled here in it. (I speak not of trifling capitals, nor of
 Wakefield or any other persons who have almost instantly
 disappeared) and if none have come to remain, while it has
 been cherished and supported by large grants and bene-
 ficial laws from the Irish Parliament, will it come when
 that natural and protecting guardian is no more? Will
 Mr. Pitt's threats to refuse it the British market induce
 settlers here? Will its great progress in Britain invite
 men to quit the profits it affords there, merely to
 make equal profits here? No, the fact of no British
 capital having settled here gives a stronger answer
 L than

than any arguments can, to all the idle theory that is held out to deceive us; and I will conclude this subject by observing that if British capital has not come here to a manufacture which we do work as cheap as Britain can, much less will it come to manufactures in which they undersell us in our own home in despite of duties and freight.

If then this foolish assertion, that the Union will induce Britain to vest her capital in this country on manufactures for home consumption, falls to the ground, we will examine whether it can induce them to do so for the supply of foreign markets, and one simple answer will be decisive, that if they can undersell us at home in any manufacture, they must do it abroad and therefore the speculation is absurd.

And it is equally absurd to suppose any will come to deal in foreign articles of import; but suppose a person willing to venture, he must import either for home use, or for re-export; if for home, instead of an acquisition he will be an injury by encreasing an import to the prejudice of our manufactures, and if for re-export, I might say with Adam Smith, there is little benefit thereby to Ireland, but let Mr. Pitt give him a full answer as follows:

To the question, is it likely Ireland is to become the emporium, the mart of the Empire, as it is said she would, he replies, “ he did not believe that would ever
 “ be the case, by emporium he means, that Ireland would
 “ import the produce of Africa and America, afterwards
 “ to distribute it to all the world, and to Britain among
 “ the rest. No such consequence could arise, Ireland
 “ did not covet the supply of the foreign markets,
 “ nor was it probable that she would furnish Britain with
 “ the produce of her own colonies in any great degree.
 “ Ireland was to have the liberty of bringing to Britain
 “ cir-

“ circuitously, what she herself had the liberty of bringing directly. It must be proved that Ireland could afford this circuitous supply, cheaper than Britain herself could give the direct supply, before any idea, or alarm, or apprehension could be raised in any bosom.”

But we are told in the same glaring parade of general assertion that this project will give us a full participation of all the extended commerce, and with it of all the wealth of Britain, the greatest and proudest country under Heaven; that she offers a full partnership. Why Sir, this talk might do to People who are ignorant, but let me tell you and no man can contradict me, that we are as free to trade to all the world as Britain is at this moment, and that if the Minister was to ask me what benefit he could offer, what trade he could open, what manufactures he could promote, my answer, and I speak it from a firm conviction, would be this,—you can give us nothing, and my only request on the part of Ireland is, *that you will let us alone.*

I speak not of some few trivial articles which possibly, in hunting through the book of rates, might occur on paper, but they are very few if any, and of so little moment that they are not felt, for it would require a hunt to find them. What port in the known world can a British ship go to from Britain, that an Irish ship cannot go with the same cargo from Ireland? what article great or small can a British ship import into Britain or Ireland, that an Irish ship cannot import equally, into Ireland or Britain? I speak not of the East India settlements, though Ireland is as free to them as Britain is. What manufacture can Britain establish or encourage, which Ireland is not equally free by law to do. If new sources of trade shall be opened by conquest or by treaty, do they not belong equally, and at the same instant, to Ireland?

I ask these questions explicitly, and defy any man to shew an instance. In point of power to trade or manufacture, she can give us nothing, and so conscious is he of this, that in mentioning benefits, he relies entirely on continuing to us the undisturbed possession of what we enjoy, as if we were to pay him with the sacrifice of our Liberty, for his not doing us an injury.

Away then with his fine unmeaning words of a fairer and more perfect connection leading us to an equality of commercial advantages—and when he talks with such a proud contumely of the dependent nature of our commercial intercourse with Britain, as how the prosperity of our linen trade lies at the will of the British Parliament; that it rests upon its bounty, its discretion, or liberality; that the advantages we have gained for the last fifty years are falsely attributed to the Irish Parliament—and such stuff, I can hardly repress my indignation. These humiliating assertions require a full answer, and I will give it; but let me distinguish between the Minister and the People of Britain. I have a strong feeling of veneration for the wisdom and liberality of the sister kingdom for these last twenty years—and I will never take the Minister's language as stating her sentiments, or those of her Parliament, when it threatens us with hostile measures, if we don't surrender to him our Constitution. Her generosity and her justice, as well as her prudence and true interest, would stop his hand, if he were to attempt to raise it in the desperate attempt of crushing our prosperity. I lament he introduced the subject—it is not pleasant or wise in private life for two friends to enter into a detail of their mutual powers of benefit and injury, to taunt with obligations, and boast of their means to vex and harass, much less is it so between nations; but he has begun, and I will go through the whole state of our intercourse.

And

And first as to its general state, which, if I were to take from the Custom-house books, according to their accustomed valuation it would appear, that

Great Britain on an average of three years to 1799, im- ported annually from Ireland to the value of	2,870,981l.
And exported to Ireland	2,775,330l.

Leaving a balance against Britain of 95,623l.

But fortunately an authentic paper has come to my hands; it was delivered lately to the British Parliament by Mr. Irwing, the inspector general of the British trade. The values in it are estimated by the price current of the article, instead of the Custom-house rate, and by the declarations of the merchants, on similar goods exported to other countries under the Convoy Act.

These values are stated to be about 70 per cent. in the gross above the rated value.

We will not enquire why this mode was adopted now, but if the value be fairly stated, it certainly is better to argue for present expedience on the present real state of trade than on a fictitious one, which might deceive us.

In it the statement appears as follows:

Imports into Britain from Ireland for the same average.

	Value.
Linen,	£2,600,101
Raw materials, provisions, i. e. beef, butter, pork, bacon, corn,	2,910,724
Total,	5,510,825
Foreign produce,	101,864
Total import,	5,612,689

Exports

Exports from Britain to Ireland.

British manufactures,	£1,640,195
Colonial do.	970,000
British raw material, including coals, hops, salt, and bark,	447,277
Foreign merchandize,	498,173
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	3,555,645
	<hr/>

Leaving an apparent balance
in favour of Ireland, of 2,056,824

But on examining the nature and amount of the several articles, we shall find, on a comparison of mutual benefit, that the balance is much in favour of Britain. To shew this, we will state the trade in three points of view, as it regards manufactures, raw materials, or articles of prime necessity, and foreign articles.

As to the first, the only article of manufacture exported from Ireland to Britain is linen, and in those exported to Ireland I include all East Indian and colonial produce, much of which is really manufacture, and the rest of which may be deemed so, on account of the employ of labour in the colony and of the shipping.

It will stand thus:

1. Manufactures.

To Ireland,		
Manufactures of Britain,	1,640,195	} 2,614,000
Colonial goods,	970,000	
From Ireland, manufactures		2,600,000
		<hr/>
Balance,		14,000
		2. Raw

2. Raw Materials, &c.

Raw materials supplied by
Ireland to Britain, in-
cluding articles of prime
necessity, as beef, but-
ter, pork, bacon, corn,
&c. &c. 2,910,724

Raw materials supplied by
Britain to Ireland, in-
cluding coals, hops,
bark, salt, &c. 447,477

Excess of supply by
Ireland, 2,463,447

3. Foreign Articles.

Foreign articles taken by
Ireland from Britain, 1,468,173

Do. by Britain from Ire-
land, 101,864

Excess taken by Ireland, 1,366,309

Thus we see in manufactures the account is nearly equal, but in articles of necessity and raw material, the balance of supply is very great to Britain; and in the foreign articles, or carrying trade, the excess of gain to Britain must appear prodigious, if we consider that 407,000*l.* of it only is East Indian, and of course 1,061,173*l.* is open to be imported direct to Ireland, were she obliged or inclined to import it so. Sugar alone amounts to 505,000*l.* and I must observe to you, that all the East and West Indian articles in this statement, about 930,000*l.* are the means of Britain's re-mitting home so much of her foreign wealth, and our taking them is consequently of great moment to her,
exclusive

exclusive of her profit on the manufacturing or raising, and in the shipping, they employ.

To complete the comparison, we must add the monopoly we give to the produce of her Colonies as well in the part stated to be received from thence, as in all that we import directly, which amounts to about 140,000*l.* a year for the above average, making in the whole the produce of the British Colonies, imported directly and indirectly—660,000*l.* a year. All of which, if rash councils should ever unfortunately compel us to take them from foreign Colonies, might not only be paid for by our linens, but a very extended and beneficial market might be opened thereby.

I have detailed these statements accurately from the printed report, and you see the advantage of arriving at truth by such a detail; for if the gross amount only of these imports and exports be stated without attending to the nature of the articles, it would appear, as I before said, that the trade was greatly against Britain—whereas this statement shews us clearly that the trade is mutually beneficial, more so perhaps to Britain, but certainly so much so as to put an end to all the foolish threats which have been made, particularly as to our Linen Trade, depending wholly on British bounty and British discretion.—

I acknowledge the value of the market which Britain affords us for our linens, and I am ever willing to take every act of her's as a favour and mark of friendship; but when he asserts our linen trade depends on the British Parliament, I must examine the subject minutely.

He relies on two British measures to support him in this assertion.

1. The British Duties on the foreign linens.
2. The British Bounties on the export of Irish linens.

When

When he says the former were imposed for our sake, I must reply that the fact is otherwise, and I appeal to the Report of the British Board of Trade, in the British Journals in 1698, to which the great authority of Mr. Locke's signature appears: and when we are insultingly told that we are indebted to the British Parliament for our linen manufacture, I reply, Britain is bound in every instance to encourage our linen trade, by compact so strongly manifest in the proceedings of both Parliaments, as cannot be denied.

We gave her a valuable consideration in putting down our woollen trade, laying 20 per cent. on its export, and in prohibiting our wool to all countries except Britain. The value of our woollen export then was, as I have stated 110,000*l.* (one-fifth of our whole exports.)

But to return to the British duties on foreign linens. Many petitions in the British Journals shew they were granted to protect the British linen manufactures and the trade of British drapers in Irish linens. The Scotch in those petitions state the linen as their staple, and Mr. Dundas measures the wealth of Scotland by its increase since the Union.

The various Reports in the same Journals shew it is a rising and valuable manufacture to Britain: these duties on foreign linen, therefore, so far as protection goes, are as desirable to her as to us, and were imposed for her protection first, and continued since for the general benefit.

As to the bounties on exports, by which he vauntingly asserts the Linen Trade of Ireland has been brought to its present height; they were not given for us, nor were they suggested by us; the British Journals state them to have originated in a petition from London traders and the manufacturers of Scotland. They were granted in pre-

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ference to refusing drawbacks on the foreign linen which was the plan suggested, and in which no benefit to the Irish, was in contemplation; so far from it, the bounties extended to Irish linens, were confined to the property of persons *residing* in Great Britain till 1780, because they were intended for the benefit of the British merchant, and to prevent the direct export of linens from Ireland.

The Report of the Board of Trade, of which Lord Auckland was a member in 1780, upon the bill which I introduced here to grant similar bounties on export from Ireland, affords us decisive evidence on this head.

The Report says, “ we see with some regret an experiment of similar bounties in Ireland on Irish linen, tending to interrupt and hazard a great branch of the commercial intercourse between the two countries, which has been highly and reciprocally advantageous; we are convinced too, that this new speculation, so far as it succeeds, will operate to the diminution of our export trade, to the diminution also of the returns for that trade, and consequently to the prejudice of our navigation, and commercial interests in general; but we cannot think that such mischiefs are suddenly to be expected to any considerable extent.”

Again.—“ We submit to your Lordships that as far as the direct export of Linen from Ireland may take place in consequence of the bounty proposed there, in so much will our exports be affected, and the detriment resulting to our general trade from that circumstance will be increased by the returns made for exports, and by all the collateral consequences of a proportionable transfer of our navigation and general commerce to the ports of Ireland.”

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In the same paper it is also stated, "That though
 " Great Britain carried on her Linen trade, subject to
 " great and irremovable disadvantages, she is supposed to
 " manufacture more linens than are exported from
 " Ireland."—And with regard to the bounties, "They
 " have been the means of forcing forward an exten-
 " sive Linen Manufacture in Britain, though struggling
 " under a great disadvantage as to the growth and supply
 " of the raw material."

Till I brought forward the measure of Irish bounties, Britain never would let us pay bounties for them from our own ports, and she was at the expence of them from her own ports to secure to herself the benefits of trading in our linens. Were a kindness to our manufactures the object, she should have let us pay them.

When their operation is boasted of by Mr. Pitt, as having raised our manufacture to its present height, he forgets the fact—They took place in 1743, and operated, as the Report I have mentioned, states, as 12 per cent. on British, and $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. only on Irish, the remaining $5\frac{1}{2}$ compensating the charges of freight, commission, &c. from Ireland to Britain. By this unequal encouragement, the export of British bounty linens rose in 1763 to be equal to that of Irish; since which time the export of British has so increased over the Irish, that the bounties paid by Britain on her own linen in 1797, came to 82,935*l.* exclusive of a farther sum of 56,935*l.* on linen and cotton printed, which was entirely confined to British, making all together on British, 139,970*l.* and on Irish to 24,459*l.* only.

Let me further tell you that they did not, at an average cost 10,000*l.* a year from 1742 to 1771, and that this 24,459*l.* in 1797, was given on the export of about 3,000,000 yards, and this is the mighty sum,

and this the mighty quantity, by which the linen trade of Ireland has been brought to its present height.

When he holds out a threat by talking of the foreign linens, and insinuates Great Britain loses revenue by not imposing import duties on ours, I would tell him we know it is an idle threat, and that the British nation will never consent to a war of Prohibitions or Duties, between the two kingdoms, the two great limbs of the same empire, to gratify his speculations; should such a hostile measure seriously engage his mind, I would advise him to reflect, that Great Britain cannot make linens equal to her demand, that if by such a measure the import of Irish were to be checked, that from Germany and Russia must be encreased; and the British consumer would pay the tax to the state, and his money to a stranger. But should it happen not to check the Irish—Britain who would pay the tax on them, not we, should be the losers. And if he entertains a hope to increase the British manufactory thereby, he will find it vain, for the capital and the hands of England are so fully employed by the immense encrease of demand from all the world almost, that there is none to spare; he cannot therefore turn more to linen, without withdrawing from other fabrics,

He seems to have got into a labyrinth on this subject; his mistakes and threats are very curious; he says Great Britain takes from Ireland, manufactured produce, to the amount of between four and five millions, whereas even the British statement at the price current makes the linen 2,600,000, and it is the only manufactured produce.

He says our Linen constitutes four-fifths of our exports to all the world; but our Irish books state the linen not to be one half, and the British paper shews that what linen goes to Britain, who takes, as he says, seven-eighths

eights of all our linen, is not one-half even of our exports to her,—if then 2,600,000*l.* the nett value of linen sent to her is not four-fifths of 5,600,000*l.* our whole exports to her, much less can it be four-fifths of our exports to all the world.—When he says all articles essential to trade, to subsistence and raw materials are sent free of duty, he forgets the fact.

Nor can I leave unnoticed his quotation from me in 1785. The language, I used then, did state the advantages to Ireland from her situation and trade with Britain, and I did urge this house to secure the continuance of them. I thought a Minister might one day appear, who might threaten a war of duties and prohibitions, and I wished to have the security of a legislative compact, but I never thought that that Minister would be the one I was then co-operating with. I was speaking to Ireland only, had I been speaking to England I should have stated to them the advantages they derived from their trade with us. This was his business to do, not mine. We were working together in one cause to effect the measure of the propositions, and when Mr. Orde was attacked, he defended him by shewing the distinction between himself and Mr. Orde, “that it was necessary for “the latter to state the advantages which would result “to Ireland, whereas he had only to prove they could “be given without detriment to Britain.” Why does he decline to hold out the same shield for me, instead of the unprovoked attack which pervades so much of his speech? But I don’t ask for his shield; every thing I said then, I could now with perfect confidence repeat. Coals, hops, bark, and rock-salt, are of equal value to us now as then. The whole export of articles in the nature of raw materials, at an average of

of the three last years, including them, was in value 447,477*l.* stated at the price current. I need not repeat how inferior that whole amount is to the articles of raw materials which we send in return, 2,910,724*l.* in value; nor do I hesitate again to say that those four articles are of great and essential consequences to us—but I will not submit to any threat on their account, and much less to a sacrifice of constitution, which even then I refused to barter for trade.

Should rash counsels, forgetting the advantages of friendly intercourse, attempt to prohibit or clog them with duties, which no man in either country deprecates more sincerely than I do, necessity may compel us to search for coal, which exists in Ireland, but which we have never looked for effectually. It would not take many years with proper and regular application, to supply ourselves with bark, nor perhaps with hops—and salt can be got.

Such rash counsellors should learn to dread the consequences of changing the course of manufactures, by forced measures, and that four million and a half of people will not remain idle.

Let them reflect that England raised the woollen manufactory here, by prohibiting the importation of Irish provisions, and she established the woollen manufactory afterwards in France, by destroying the child of her own creation in Ireland. Should she attempt and prevail in prohibiting our linen to her ports, it is impossible to foresee what ports we may find, what returns we may get, and in those, how much of what she now supplies us with, may be included. We know our linens beat the German, and the Russian, in the American market—they are preferred even to the Scotch, and no nation can bring the fabrick to the perfection we do—not so much perhaps from superior skill, as from the peculiar fitness of our climate

climate for bleaching, which gives a pleasing whiteness and durability that no other bleached linen possesses.

We know that Spain and Portugal consume an immensity, not only at home, but in their extended colonies, which their fabrics don't furnish, and which we were beginning to supply. In no place are we protected against German linen, except in Britain, and yet ours is finding its way almost every where.

The British duties on foreign linens are stated to be 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per cent. Does he know when he threatens us with that duty, that at this instant Irish linens have risen 35 per cent. above their usual value? And yet the British merchants are so anxious to purchase them, that they are even securing them on the Greens, before they can go to market. I acknowledge this is a temporary circumstance; but it serves to shew that as far as 35*l.* is more than 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*; the Irish linens do not monopolize the British market by means of the duty, and could at present find their way there, even if there was no duty on the foreign. In his general assertions he forgets that though the Irish and foreign fabrics bear the general appellation of linen, much of the Irish is of a quality no other nation could furnish, and no duties could make the British, who are used to Irish shirting, relish the wear of German fabrick.

But I will call Lord Grenville to my aid on this part of the subject, and I cannot use stronger arguments, more forcibly expressed. He said in 1785, "If England should prohibit the importation of linens, the noble Lord thought Ireland would retaliate only by prohibiting the exportation of provisions. But here the noble had surely forgot the evidence that had been given at the bar, where it had been asserted, that the raw materials of many of the great manufactures of England were brought from Ireland.

"Should

“ Should the latter then prohibit the exportation of
 “ them, what would become of the English manufactures?
 “ Should she prohibit the exportation of woollen yarn,
 “ how greatly would the staple manufacture of this coun-
 “ try suffer. Should she do the same with respect to raw
 “ hides, the different branches employed in the leather
 “ trade of Britain would be utterly undone.”

Again—“ He observed that however fortified the noble
 “ lord might think this country against any hostile pro-
 “ ceedings of the Irish merchants, by the power which
 “ she had of prohibiting the importation of Irish linens,
 “ this was no security, because such a prohibition would
 “ operate as much against England as Ireland, and ulti-
 “ mately more, because by that means we should be in-
 “ jured in the article of our shipping, and lose the carry-
 “ ing of the Irish linens to the foreign markets. Nor
 “ would this be the only bad consequence, this car-
 “ rying trade being thus thrown into the hands of the
 “ Irish, they would thereby contract habits of inter-
 “ course with the states of America, and with other fo-
 “ reign nations that would by degrees undermine us in
 “ our trade to these countries.”

To quit the subject of linens, if we look to the British
 trade in general, Ireland is not such a customer as
 Britain should quarrel with. In 1797, the export of her
 manufactures to Ireland, was - - - 1,310,996*l*.
 and to all the rest of Europe - - - 3,870,335*l*.
 including Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man, and Greenland;
 so that the Irish market alone was equal to one-third of
 all Europe.—I state the year 1797, as it is the latest I
 have seen the accounts of, and you will observe, it is
 from the Custom-house value which serves every pur-
 pose of proportion or comparison.

It is to be lamented that Mr. Pitt has, by his threats,
 begun this discussion. I know that it is in the power of
 Britain

Britain to injure this country for a time, by a war of duties and prohibition—he need not tell us so—America affords ample proof; but she must herself suffer in the contest, and I have no fear that she will give her assent to such hostilities—her wisdom, her liberality, her own interest would forbid it.

The inferences which Mr. Pitt and I draw from the consideration of our mutual trade, are very different—I wish to shew from it, that we are of mutual use, and ought to assist each other. His arguments tend to shew he can commit hostilities in trade, he states our advantages, to threaten us with a deprivation of them. I stated them to shew our interest in maintaining them. But let us turn to the more pleasing view, where the detail of our mutual powers of trade, and of our actual state of intercourse, holds out the mutual benefits we can confer on each other, by reciprocal preference and amity. Let us look to those benefits, and protect them from the danger which this measure of a Union threatens, for I have said, and I repeat it, that it would injure our trade and manufactures; instead of serving them, and I will now prove it.

If it takes, as it must do, a great portion of the men of property to England, the manufacturers will be deprived of their best customers to the extent of what they heretofore spent. If it increases the absentees, it will reduce more estates to the miserable state of uncultivation in which theirs generally are—and it is morally certain that every member chosen to an United Parliament will be a new absentee—in county elections and popular boroughs at least, for no man, now an absentee, can expect to be chosen—and that every member must be a man of considerable property, is equally probable, because no other could bear the expence of parliamentary attendance.

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But this is not all—the articles of Union propose a possible period at which the duties that at present afford a sort of protection to the manufacturer, are to cease. Is there no danger then that the further expenditure of money may cease immediately, that individuals will look to winding up their business, in order to withdraw their capital against that period—for all idea of permanency of protection being done away, its effect becomes temporary and unavailing.

Again—our import duties on some raw materials, are fitted to our infant state. Iron we import at 12*s.* 6*d.*—Britain imports it at near 3*l.* Every man concerned in the iron manufacture here, must expect the United Parliament will put these duties on a level.

They may expect the same as to raw silk for which we pay, on import about one half the duty they pay.

Further, the farmers, whose spirits we have raised by our corn laws, must look with uncertainty to the continuation of the bounties they afford—and expect the principles on which those bounties were discontinued from one part of the kingdom to another, and from the whole of it to Dublin, will be extended on a similar reasoning by the United Parliament to the whole of the United Empire.

But the evils will extend still further—What security will the nation feel in any thing, when it loses the protection of its Parliament—whose competence to support and protect them, they have found effectual proof of, on all occasions.

Every law, every regulation which you now value and rely on, will be subject to repeal, not by a Parliament whose knowledge and attachment you can confide in, but by a foreign one, to which access will be difficult, communication expensive, and who cannot know the local grounds which gave rise to them.

Few

Few mercantile men will be able to represent you in an United Parliament, their business wont allow them to go out of the kingdom for eight months, though they could with ease attend in Dublin from any part of Ireland; neither can you avail yourselves of the constitutional knowledge of lawyers, for they must give up their profession to go there, and you will all agree that in the present question they have stood forward nobly.

New laws equal in appearance and in phrase, may be very unequal in effect, to countries differently situated. I will instance taxation laws.—Ireland is a young country, rising and likely to rise in wealth; it is her best plan to borrow money, instead of raising an annual income to bear the war expences, because the certain prospect of her encreasing prosperity gives a moral certainty of her paying the debt gradually, and an encrease of annual taxes to the necessary arrears, might curb her enterprize. Britain is at maturity; the state of warfare has thrown the trade of the world into her hands, and there is no reason to expect it will encrease upon a peace; perhaps the speculation of its decrease might not be chimerical; she therefore should take advantage of her temporary affluence, and by annual taxes, not by borrowing, make it support the yearly expences of the war: a system, therefore, of taxation for the whole expences of the year, though equal in appearance, would be very unequal in effect.

A further discouragement must arise from the people feeling that their prosperity and happiness will be given back again to the controul of a British Parliament whose partial conduct against this country, until the constitution of 1782 gave freedom to our Parliament, and with it the power of protection, Mr. Pitt has described in language so particularly forcible that I will read it to you, “ he bids the com-

"mittee recollect, that from the revolution, to a pe-
 "riod within the memory of every man who heard
 "him, indeed until these very few years, the system
 "had been that of debarring Ireland from the enjoy-
 "ment and use of her own resources, to make the
 "kingdom completely subservient to the interests and
 "opulence of this country, without suffering her to
 "share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of
 "her citizens, or making them contribute to the gene-
 "ral interests and strength of the empire, this system
 "of cruel and abominable restraint had however been
 "exploded. It was at once harsh and unjust, and it
 "was as impolitic as it was oppressive; for however
 "necessary it might be to the partial benefit of districts
 "in Britain, is promoted not the real strength of the
 "Empire. That which had been the system counter-
 "acted the kindness of providence, and suspended the
 "industry and enterprise of man. Ireland was put
 "under such restraint, that she was shut out from every
 "species of commerce. She was restrained from send-
 "ing the produce of her own soil to foreign markets,
 "and all correspondence with the colonies of Britain
 "was prohibited to her, so that she could not derive
 "their commodities but through the medium of Britain,
 "this was the system which had prevailed, and this was
 "the state of thralldom in which that country had been
 "kept ever since the revolution."

Again—"Ireland had for a long series of time felt the
 "narrow policy of Britain, who, influenced by views of
 "trade and commercial advantages, and tainted and per-
 "verted with selfish motives, had treated her with partiality and neglect, and never looked upon her growth
 "and prosperity, as the growth and prosperity of the
 "empire at large."

Mr,

Mr. Grenville's expressions too are strong :

“ If England was heavily taxed, she had now, and
 “ had had the benefit for a whole century past of a
 “ widely extended trade, from which she had excluded
 “ Ireland—and the latter had already given to England
 “ all that she would have made, if by a barbarous and
 “ equally absurd policy she had not been debarred from
 “ those advantages that God and Nature had given her.”

If any man says that this Union does not bring us back under the controul of the British Parliament, because we shall have the mockery of 100 representatives to sit among 558—I answer, it is a mere imposition, a play on words. Is there a man can doubt that 100 must yield to 558, and that our sending such a shadow of representation, will only give legal form to the power of the 558 to tax us; How can their feeble voices be heard, if the others choose not to listen; but if you want proof, Scotland affords it; tradition says, all her representatives joined in a motion to dissolve the Union, and they were overcome.—Virtually, and to every practical effect, therefore, this projected Union will put us back again even into a worse state of dependance than we were in before 1782, into that miserable, abject situation which, in Mr. Pitt's words, “ counteracted the kindness of Providence, and suspended the industry and enterprise of man, which debarred us of those advantages that God and Nature gave us,” with this difference, that we should then be legally bound by our own act which we could not get rid of, whereas before 1782 we never acknowledged the old usurpation, and we had a Parliament which rescued us from it.

Perhaps you would depend on the articles you may frame to secure your trade and your purse; but you must recollect, that if the doctrine of the omnipotence of Parliament be just (and it has strong advocates),
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it will extend to the United Parliament, who will have the power therefore at it's pleasure to alter any act of the Union itself—and you must see, that as no article, so neither will the whole of the Union exist longer than while it is beneficial to Great Britain; but it will exist for ever though Ireland find it injurious to her interest, the power of extinction resting in a Parliament composed of 558 British and 100 Irish members—and even should the Union cease to exist, are you sure that you can or will be restored to the free and independent legislature which you are now called on to abandon.

Observe also, as I before stated, that the disavowal of the compact of 1782 must create a suspicion that any compact made in 1799 may be treated as lightly.

But look to Scotland, we shall there see that time and circumstances have set aside the great beneficial difference in taxation which induced that kingdom to consent to Union. Her lands were to pay only about one-fortieth part, or rather less, of the British land tax, but by annihilating the measure of a land tax, another is raised by the name of an income tax; that is, *instead of taxing the land, the income arising out of that land is taxed*, and estimating Scotland in her income at one-eighth of England, as Mr. Pitt has done, her lands will pay henceforward one-eighth instead of one-fortieth of what those of England do. I am far from insinuating that this measure is a breach of any article in the Scotch Union, or that it was intended even to evade it; on the contrary, I mention it to shew how futile any language in which articles of Union can be expressed, may be rendered by the accidents of time and unforeseen circumstances, and that the effect is the same to the Scotchman as if the articles of Union were broken.

If I asked what security will the nation have when it loses the protection of its Parliament, of whose competence to protect, effectual proof has been given?
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the obvious answer would be, that all security will be annihilated, when we lose our own, which is both competent and effectual—it and not the British Parliament has raised our staple trade to its present great height.

It gave the export bounties which besides the benefit of navigation, has put our linen trade on equal footing with the British, whereas till then our linen was exported from Britain, as the Lords of the Council have stated, under a diadvantage of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Recollect when the Executive was unable to procure for you, the full participation of the Methuen treaty with Portugal, and lamented the delay; your Parliament stepped in, and by its vigour and decision compelled Portugal to submit to your just claims.

Recollect, when during forty years your victualling trade had been harassed and restricted by 24 embargoes, one of which lasted three years, where did you find relief? Your Parliament took up the subject, the embargo ceased, and none has appeared to oppress you from that day. Your Parliament gave you bounties to promote your agriculture, which have maintained and enriched you ever since; it gave you the octennial bill which first infused the spirit that animated its exertions to demand and obtain for you a free trade and a free constitution, the ever sacred and prosperous constitution of 1782.

After these incontrovertible proofs that the Union must injure Ireland: were I to select the place in the kingdom which is least capable of receiving benefit, and most capable of suffering injury by a Union, it is Cork and the country around it.

The only manufactures in which any successful attempts have been made in or near Cork, and those not extensive, are the woollen and the cotton; but I have shewn you that no manufacture of woollen or cotton

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can be promoted any where in Ireland by the measure. And I have shewn you too, that a Union can no way increase the powers or capabilities of export or import. In manufacture therefore, or in import or export, the Union offers nothing to Cork—and that Cork cannot be an emporium or depot for storing foreign goods, Mr. Pitt has shewn clearly, in the quotations I have made from him, wherein he exposes the folly of Ireland's entertaining such a hope.

In these respects, then, a Union offers nothing; but perhaps some may represent to themselves that the establishment of a naval dock-yard would be the consequence? In return, I ask, What could induce the establishment of a dock-yard after a Union more than before? or, What has hitherto prevented it, but that it did not appear to be a useful or desirable situation? However, suppose they persevere, if they look at Plymouth, Portsmouth, &c. the latter, one of the best situations in Britain for commerce, they will see that no trade exists where those great naval dock-yards are established; and if they look at Milford-Haven in Wales, a glorious harbour, yet as a place of naval resort, much abandoned, they will find, I believe, that any trade which it may have formerly enjoyed, has not returned to it. Let them look at Scotland, has the Union in the course of a century caused a navy dock-yard to be established there? What hope, then, can Cork entertain? Its situation was always the same it is now; and the fact must be, that it is no desirable one for the purpose, or the great attention of the various successive Ministers of Britain to the naval strength of the empire, would long since have taken advantage of it.

I would bid the people of Cork recollect that their two great and enriching articles of export, corn, and provisions may be deeply endangered by the Union. Their corn trade has increased the agriculture in that province
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to a great extent; should the alteration of bounties follow the measure, which I have stated rational grounds for apprehending, they will lose not only the internal benefits which agriculture has lately begun to let them taste the blessings of, but with them all the advantages of the corn trade. Nay more, there is a further value to them in agriculture, from the turn that has taken place, and is likely to encrease in the demand for provisions; I mean the preference that is given to pork over beef. Pork depends on agriculture; and those gentlemen of Cork who export provisions, lately experienced as I believe, the truth of this assertion; for, if I am not mis-informed, the demand for Irish pork was much lessened by the stoppage of the distilleries in Britain having induced the farmers there to fatten pork; nor did the demand return to its usual course here till the distilleries were allowed to work again; therefore if agriculture decreases, they may bid farewell to the pork trade, which will go along with it.

Let Cork advert to the other branch of their provision trade, beef. I have already mentioned Embargoes; and it is in the recollection of many merchants there, how often their interests used to be sacrificed to the advantage or avarice of British contractors, and how the trade was almost annihilated by the continuance of one embargo for three years, they know how vain were all their applications for redress until the Parliament, which they are now invited to extinguish and banish from the land, took up their cause and by its bare interference, not only put an end to it, but has prevented the renewal of any such injustice since. Let even those who don't agree with me in these apprehensions, consider that it is possible they may not be altogether ill-founded; let the people of Cork see that no temptation is held out by the Union to induce them even to hazard the

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possibility

possibility of danger, that they are thriving rapidly, and safety advises them to rest content and not to try experiments, and more particularly such as will be without remedy if they prove injurious.

I have often mentioned and reminded you, of the prosperous and rising state of this kingdom ; you all must know it, but I will not rest the fact as my own assertion. I will give you an authority, you must acknowledge your own unanimous address in July last to the present viceroy, wherein you say, ‘ that under his Majesty’s benevolent auspices his kingdom of Ireland had risen to a height of prosperity un- hoped for, and unparalleled in any former era ; that our commerce had been largely extended, our Constitution highly improved, and every class of subjects conciliated by the most liberal acts of concession and indulgence.’

Are you going to give up that Constitution almost at the moment you have declared it highly improved.—Do you want to be better than well ? Take caution from the history of that foolish man who was well, would be better, took physic, and died.

But we are triumphantly told of the example of Scotland, and the great advantages she has derived from the Union ; I say there is no similarity in our situation and hers ; she was connected with England only by the accidental circumstance of the Crown of England having descended to her monarch, in all other respects she was as foreign as Hanover to England.

By this junction of the crowns she lost the residence of her monarch, and became subject to foreign influence in all her national concerns ; depressed in her trade, in every thing

thing of value to her state, she was gradually declining as a nation from that period.

Scotland had no constitution like Britain—her two houses sat together, and the representatives of the people did not hold the purse of the nation—her king by his power of creating peers could at any day overpower the voices of the Commons by numbers, just as the 558 British members could overpower our pitiful 100 delegates—her parliament even with this imperfect constitution had not a deliberative power; it could discuss no subject but what was previously prepared by the Lords of the Articles, somewhat as ours was limited by Poyning's Act to whatever the Privy Council should think proper to point out. Moreover the two kingdoms had no affection, but much national dislike and prejudice towards each other, they never had been good neighbours, and the Scotch feelings had been particularly roused by many recent circumstances; she was the only maritime state without settlement or trade beyond Europe, and therefore had made a great effort in 1696, to establish a colony at Darien, and formed a company by Act of Parliament and Royal Charter for trading to Asia, Africa, and the Indies. The Parliament of England took alarm and addressed the King, and the company was broke in 1699, by the interference of Britain getting the subscriptions at Amsterdam, Hamburgh and elsewhere withdrawn; by prohibiting the American colonies from holding any correspondence with the Scotch, who had actually made the settlement, and by encouraging the Spaniards to attack it: the unfortunate colony was of course soon destroyed,—and the Scotch Nation saw with mortification many of their nobles slaughtered at Darien, 400,000*l.* of property destroyed and their hope of an extensive foreign trade annihilated. It is no wonder such proceedings should hurt
their

their feelings towards England, and the utter demolition of this Darien company, though encouraged by their King at first, shewed them their own desperate situation and the predominant and injurious effects of English power; those feelings still increased until they broke out in 1704 by their passing an Act of Security whereby England and Scotland were to be legally disjoined so soon as Queen Anne should die; this Act ordered Fencible troops to be raised, armed and trained.—They also passed an Act for the export of their wool to France which was then at war with England.

This conduct was followed on the part of England by severity and intimidation; an Act appointing commissioners for a Union was passed, it enacted the Scotch to be aliens, forbidding arms and ammunition to be exported into Scotland, and prohibiting the import of their cattle, which were five-sixths of their whole export, and the import of their linen and their coals, until they should settle the crown as Britain had.

Their trade had been lucrative with France and Holland—the English admiralty ordered cruizers to seize their ships—the lords addressed for troops to be sent to the Frontiers—hostilities were on the point of commencing and they had no means of prevention; being no part of the British Empire; they must see that the becoming a part would be a sure remedy---devoid of a constitution worth preserving, they might see a glorious acquisition in obtaining the British, in short they might see that in a Union they would obtain what they never before had enjoyed, a free constitution, and with it an equal administration of justice, which also they had been deprived of in some degree by their Privy Council.

They

They had every disadvantage of an unequal and very imperfect connexion with a powerful and a jealous rival, they had much to gain and little to lose, their situation at the time also rendered them susceptible of peculiar benefits—low in manufacture, cramped in trade, they must see happiness in an offer of being incorporated with a nation rich in trade and manufacture.—Scotland could not long hesitate to accept a share in all the benefits of a great and encreasing commerce, not one atom of which she could otherwise enjoy. Nature too seemed to point out to the inhabitants of the same island, to cease their mutual jars and become one people, and if Munster was a distinct kingdom in this island, situated as Scotland was, I should be a strong advocate for Munster's uniting with the rest of the island. But look at our situation,—a constituent part of the empire, we enjoy all its various branches of trade, and have a right to and receive its protection; separated by nature by the Irish channel, the two kingdoms have not been subject to the incursions, and deadly hates and animosities which distracted Scotland and England—we are not only united to the crown, but to the empire inseparably, our friends, our enemies always the same, and our interests as well as our laws binding us in that Union.—We have long enjoyed a free Constitution, we have it as free and as much calculated for happiness, for security, and for every blessing of society as any nation upon earth, equally of as England.—With this, with every power of trade, with every port in the universe that is open to England, open likewise to us, we have nothing to gain and we have much to lose,—we have to lose, that Constitution under which we have thriven since its Final Adjustment in 1782, and which has raised us into manufactures, trade, affluence, and station among the nations of the earth.

In preserving this Constitution we retain all the means of trade, through all the various channels of wealth, as open now to us as to Britain, whereas if we sacrifice it to the nonsensical project in question, wealth will vanish when freedom is banished, and we have more to lose than mere wealth or trade; we have that to lose for which Englishmen in every age have fought and bled; for which our ancestors gloriously persevered in battle; and for the preservation of which the British Empire is now engaged in the most arduous war,—Liberty, not as inculcated by modern political traitors, but sound genuine constitutional Liberty.

I have now proved the different situation of the two kingdoms, and that there is no similarity between that of Ireland in 1799 and that of Scotland in 1706, and I might dismiss the subject, but I will for a moment admit the comparison, to shew you that every argument drawn from it, strongly urges us against a similar experiment. The argument is shallow, which attributes every increase of trade, of population, of wealth in Scotland from that day to this, to the Union, as if nothing was due to the progressive state of the world during a century, and Scotland alone amidst surrounding nations was to have remained stationary; if such was the viciousness of her Constitution, the miseries of her situation or the depression of her resources; well might she have accepted any terms.

But has Scotland advanced in prosperity since the Union as much as Ireland? Mr. Dundas her great advocate, states the progress of her linen manufacture, to shew her increase of prosperity, it was one million of yards in 1706, and in 1796, 23 millions. How does the linen manufacture of Ireland stand the comparison?

Its

	<i>Tards.</i>	<i>Value.</i>
Its export was in 1706	530,838	22,750
1783	16,039,705	1,069,313
1796	46,705,319	3,113,687

that is 88 times greater, as to quantity, and 137 times greater as to value in 1796 than in 1700, and thus that manufacture which is the staple of both kingdoms, and which Mr. Dundas very properly brought forward to rest his arguments on, rose from 1 to 88 in Ireland, in separate and ununited, Ireland, under the nurture and protection of Ireland's Parliament, while during the same period it rose in united Scotland without a resident Parliament from 1 to 23 only. Has Mr. Dundas any more such arguments to produce?

He and Mr. Pitt seem conscious they have little to urge by holding Scotland to us as an example, for they both state one solitary instance of Glasgow's rise, and yet as I am informed, that very town has decreased in its trade ever since the American war.

But why don't they rely on the increased population of Scotland as well as on its trade, it was 1 million, at the Union, and Mr. Pitt says it is a million and a half now, but Ireland had little above $1\frac{1}{2}$ million of inhabitants at the same time, and has near $4\frac{1}{2}$ now. If population be a desirable object, if it be riches to a state, and the means of increasing the empire's strength, Ireland has increased three fold without a Union, and Scotland only one half with it.

Why don't he refer to their agriculture, which is peculiarly applicable to the question, because its rise began in Ireland with the Constitution of 1782, which the Minister now wants to annihilate? it has risen since that period to the value of full a million yearly, including the decrease or rather stop-

page of import, the immense accession of home demand, and the encreasing export; even so much as to supply largely every year, this affluent kingdom whose prosperity we are desired to imitate, and who cannot maintain itself.

And why does not Mr. Dundas who compliments me by saying I descended to create an alarm on the staple manufacture of Ireland, which is the great manufacture of the country I represent,—why does not he descend to tell us the opinion of his country-man, Mr. Adam Smith on the beneficial operations of the Scotch Union.—Did it promote trade or manufacture in Smith's opinion? No. His words are in 1775, 'of all commercial advantages which Scotland has derived 'from the Union, the rise in the price of cattle is perhaps the 'greatest.' The live cattle on which we have laid duties to check their export. And again, 'the price of wool was reduced by the Union, excluding it from the great markets 'of Europe, and confining it to the narrow one of England.'

If Ireland then stands the comparison with united Scotland, let us try how she stands even with united Britain.

		<i>Value.</i>
The exports of Ireland were in	1706	548,318
	1783	2,935,067
	1796	5,064,834
The exports from Britain in	1706	6,512,086
	1708	6,969,089
	1796	27,621,843

In Ireland the exports rose nearly from one to ten, and in Britain from the year after the Union, (which I have chosen for fair comparison, as it includes the Scotch trade,) from 1 to 3 and a fraction,—the Irish is [almost ten times as great as it was in 1706, the British not 4 times.

I take

I take the year 1796, because Mr. Dundas selected it, and you will observe in the Irish statements that the exports of 1783 are marked, that you may compare them with 1796 and see the great spring which the free Constitution has give to trade and manufacture. The general export rose in 78 years to 1782 from 1 to 5, and in 14 years after 1782 from 5 to 10. The linen export in the 78 years rose from 1 to 32, and in the last 14, from 32 to 88: so that the general export rose as much in the last 14 years, as it had done, not only during the preceding 78 years, but during all time preceding; and the linen encreased in the last 14 years very nearly to treble the amount of what it had been before.

And will you part with the Constitution of 1782? No!—If the whole of this comparison says any thing, it cries out in emphatic terms to all Ireland, to every honest Irishman—NO UNION!!!—Reject the offer, and adhere to the Constitution of 1782; the immense value of which, every argument advanced for the Union, every enquiry into the state of things since, points out to you in every circumstance.

To conclude this part of the subject. The question between England and Scotland was, Union or total Separation, immediately on the demise of the Crown. The question between us, is, the Minister's project, or the Constitution of 1782; the Union we possess, which guards us against Separation, and works well in practice, or a new one, at the expence of our liberty, our tranquillity, and our happiness, which, in its very terms, leads to Separation. Seton, whom Mr. Dundas quotes at length, recommended the Union of Scotland to prevent Separation:—we oppose the proposed Union from the same motive.

I now proceed to a subject which I wish had never been mentioned—the competence of Parliament; it is dangerous in a popular assembly to state, that there are points where the powers of the legislature end and those of the people at large begin; such points are incapable of definition, and the assertion is capable of very dangerous misinterpretation.—I am happy therefore it is no way necessary to go into it, let me only remark this: whatever may or may not be its competence, the doctrine of the omnipotence of Parliament which some Gentlemen have advanced, certainly goes too far, and much farther than they are aware of, for it argues against the permanency of the very Union it is advanced to promote. Is it not evident, that the united Parliament must be as omnipotent as the separate Parliaments, and may therefore break any article of the Union at its pleasure; and if this omnipotence can consolidate two separate Legislatures, it may equally consolidate the two separate Houses, or the three estates of each, and then take from the Commons the Constitutional power over the purse of the nation, and give it to the King, as was the case virtually in Scotland, prior to the Union.

It may, with the same power that it removes the Irish Parliament out of the realm of Ireland, remove the British Parliament out of the realm of Britain, to Jersey, Guernsey, the West Indies, or the Isle of Man: in the same course of reasoning, it may put down any branch of the Constitution, and justify the usurpation of Cromwell. An argument which proves too much, proves nothing. I wish it never had been mentioned, it makes an unnecessary waste of time; for if I have shewn you, that our station in the British Empire rests on a firm basis, that our connexion with Great Britain is solid to every practical purpose, that it does not hang by a thread, but is rivetted on the interests, the sentiments, and affections

tions of both nations ; and that those rivets are closed and kept firm by the regulations of 1782. That the Union thus consolidated, is the most strong and effectual, which human wisdom could form between two kingdoms, situated as Great Britain and Ireland are : that every imperial concern has ever since been arranged as soon as known : that the Constitution then established has not only worked well, (to use a modern phrase) to promote the strength and energy of the Empire, but to raise this kingdom into prosperity, and keep it in a steady and rapid advance even beyond the utmost hopes of its warmest advocates ; if, not only no necessity for the innovation has been proved, but the only real and avowed argument turns out to be, a desire to take from you the power of taxation, and vest it in Britain. If no trade, no manufactures, no capital, has been or can be given to you by the measure ; but on the contrary, all you enjoy will be rendered insecure : if it encreasess your absentees, draws away the property, the talents, and the industry of the country ; if it damps all enterprize, and degrades a great and rising kingdom into an abject and depressed colony ; if no means of tranquility or security against the enemy is to be its result, but discontent and danger is to arise from it : if it tends to disunite the affections, and to create jealousy between the two great members of the Empire, who are now firmly, happily, and cordially united : if the example of Scotland, which is held out to you as a temptation, affords no one inducement, but as far as any argument can be drawn from it, warns you loudly against the measure, in short, if your own Parliament is competent, and more effectual than any other, to every work of Legislation or Parliamentary exertion, for all the particular concerns of Ireland, and for every Imperial purpose, it is needless to enquire into its power, or its competence, as to an object, in which it can have no one inducement to exercise power

power, and every possible motive to decline it; it is wiser to look to its competence to do good, to protect and support the country. Store up in your minds then, the words of Lord Camden last May 'that the wisdom, the firmness and 'spirit manifested by the House of Commons during the 'whole of that eventful period, and their peculiar promptitude, alacrity, and unanimity, must tend in the most 'effectual manner to crush rebellion and save the state,' and again, 'the promptitude and spirit of the House of Commons must ever be remembered with gratitude by the 'country and myself, they have enabled me to develop and expose the deepest conspiracy that ever existed, and 'to place the kingdom in a state to meet the efforts of a 'foreign as well as a domestic enemy.' Remember the thanks of his Majesty to you by your present viceroy in October last, 'for the unshaken firmness and magnanimity, with which you met the many trying difficulties; 'and with which the measures were planned, which you 'adopted for the preservation of your country.' Be it your pride to be competent to such glorious exertions.

It is needless to enter into the details of a measure, the principle of which, I trust, will never be entertained: one thing only I will remark, that if the purity of Parliament depends on the purity of election—if that purity rests on Mr. Grenville's law for controverted election, which no man can deny, his law must be inoperative to Ireland in a united Parliament, and of course you cannot preserve the purity of election or of Parliament, so far as that law is concerned. You all know the number of witnesses to be examined on an election trial; the many whose evidence occur during the very trial to be necessary, and the great delay and heavy expence attending the whole. How then could you have such a trial in London? The expence

pence alone would be so formidable, that few, very few would be capable, and fewer willing to undertake a petition: the Sheriff would virtually enjoy the power of nomination, and if ever Government, in its zeal for the public service, should happen to think it right to appoint Sheriffs with a view to elections (I do not say they ever do) the nomination of the Members would finally rest with that government.

I have gone through every argument, or assertion, that any of the British or Irish advocates for this fatal measure have advanced, except one, which regards the state of Religion in this kingdom, it is too delicate a subject to discuss unnecessarily, and I cannot but condemn the imprudence which has brought it forward now, as if the object were by rousing animosities, and setting the nation by the ears, to make any change even that of surrendering its liberty and independence, worth consideration, if not worth trial. I will only observe on it, that Mr. Pitt's language is of such a nature, that one would imagine he had the two religions on either side of him, and one was not to hear what he said to the other. He tells the Catholic in his speech, that it is not easy to say, what should be the church establishment in this kingdom, and his 5th resolution states that the present church establishment is to be preserved. He tells them, that the time for discussing their situation must depend on two points, 'when their conduct shall make it safe, and when the temper of the times shall be favourable,' and Mr. Dundas adds, 'if ever such a time shall come.' Let me ask you, in common sense, is an Irish Parliament incompetent to decide these points, to deliberate, to judge on matters which pass in Ireland: and is a foreign and uninformed assembly adequate to it? It is a weak and silly imposition.

Were

Were I to address the Catholics, the Protestants, and all religions, I would say, your Country is in danger, a desperate attempt is on foot to seduce you to surrender the independence of your Parliament. You are all natives of the same island, interested in its trade, its prosperity, its freedom, and in all the blessings of a glorious and happy constitution—bound by every tie of duty to yourselves, your country, and your posterity, to preserve it, join all hands and hearts together, bring the vessel into port, forget all family differences, all local or partial jealousies, and save Ireland, save your country. Tell the bold minister who wants to take away your Constitution, that he shall not have it, that you will not be his dupes; that you love Britain as a brother, but you will be his brother not his dependant, that you will not degrade yourselves from an independant kingdom into an abject colony.

To any of you who have doubts on the measure, I would say, these very doubts call on you to vote against it—don't hazard a change where you have a doubt, a change from whence there is no return—accept it, you have it for better for worse, you never can untie the knot—no appeal, no Parliament left, to hear, to argue, or to speak for you; and if the step you take should prove wrong, if it should unfortunately end in the nation's calling for her old Constitution again, and the politics of a British Cabinet should be so desperate as not to listen to that call, think of the dreadful consequences you may be the cause of, if fatally the shock of arms should follow. Even to you whose conviction is clear, I would say, if the majority of your countrymen think differently from you, if even a respectable part of them only think so, don't rest so confidently on your own judgments, as to risk a measure which you cannot undo; remember then if the direful necessity should ever arrive to make it expedient—you may embrace

it when you please, but if once adopted, it is irrevocable.—Were I speaking in another assembly, and if in such assembly any member sat returned for a borough, where the wishes of the electors followed the voice of some one individual by which he became to have an habitual superiority, and of course a strong interest in its preservation, (I don't say such a case exists here, though it might not be unparliamentary to suppose it.) I would tell him, he is a trustee, and without positive and direct desire, he should not do an act which is to annihilate the interest he is entrusted with.—No, no—let all join in cherishing the Parliament—it is a good one, and has done its duty—it has proved itself competent to every purpose of legislation, to secure peace, to put down rebellion, and had its vigour been followed up since last June, peace would have been since secured, and rebellion extinguished.—Refuse the measure, but refuse it with calmness and dignity.—Let not the offer of it lessen your attachment or weaken your affections to Britain, and prove that you are, and wish to be, as the Duke of Portland told you you were, *indissolubly connected with Great Britain, one in unity of constitution and unity of interest*.—But above all, revere and steadily preserve that Constitution which was confirmed to you under his administration in 1782, and which has given you Wealth, Trade, Prosperity, Freedom and Independence.

FINIS.

