

1758

THE
RECORDER'S
SECOND
LETTER
TO THE
Gentry, Clergy, Freemen and
Freeholders,
OF THE
CITY of DUBLIN.

*Velit rabiem tollere civicam,
Qui curat pater urbium subscribi statuis;
Carus post genitis.*

HORACE.

DUBLIN:
Printed for G. FAULKNER, and P. WILSON,
M,DCC,LVIII.

THE

RECORDS

SECOND

LEADER

TO THE

County, Clerks, Recorders and
Treasurers

OF THE

CITY OF DUBLIN.

— I have taken the liberty
to send you a copy of the
first volume of the
Records of the City of Dublin.

DUBLIN:
Printed by G. F. & W. Wilson,
15, N. B. Street.



A
L E T T E R
T O T H E
Gentry, Clergy, Freemen and
Freeholders,
O F T H E
C I T Y o f *D U B L I N*.

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING told you I would trouble you with a second address, I am now to keep my word: and the purpose of it is no more, than to take notice of the several objections I have heard made to me, upon the occasion of the present competition, for the honour of being your representative. When they are fairly laid before you, you will be the better able to judge of their weight.

BUT, before I go into them, I cannot but remark, how very unworthily a very worthy gentleman, as Mr. *Dunn* certainly is, has been treated by some of those, who would be thought to espouse his interest warmly upon this occasion; when they do in a manner, depart from almost all consideration of his personal merit, though he has confessedly so much of it; and betake themselves to objections against me. Objections founded on facts notoriously false; or arguments, to the lowest degree, disingenuous and fallacious; and, I am persuaded, are known to be such by those who are the most forward in urging and sending them forth.

When I say this, I will do from my Pen, what I most sincerely do from my Heart, freely and honourably acquit my brother-candidate, as I do some of his principal adherents, whom I know, from all suspicion of being concerned in practices so very unworthy. I charge them only upon those, who, for some vile purposes of their own, which they think they can promote by the event of this election going one way; do, in the prosecution of those purposes, stick at nothing. Persons who care as little for Mr. *Dunn*, as they do for his humble servant; and probably would not be much displeased to see us both hanged.

By the first objection, my principles have been called in question; and, by some, in terms more
strong

strong than by others. This, I own, at first surprized me ; as I was not conscious of any thought that ever turned in my breast, or of any word that ever fell from my lips, or of any one action of my life that could give the least room for any doubt about them. But since I am called upon to explain them, these they are.

THEY are no way in the extreme, but are precisely upon the plan of those, which were the principles of the ever-memorably great and good men ; who legally and constitutionally projected and promoted the excluding of king *James*, at the latter end of king *Charles* the second's reign : wisely foreseeing, from symptoms in his conduct (in which they were not deceived) that should he ever come to sit at the head of our constitution, he would betray it if he could. They knew that they must turn him out if he should ever get there ; and therefore thought it best to keep him out, in order to prevent the shedding of that blood which they feared might be spilt in a contest for their liberties. In this they failed, but they were not dismayed ; they stuck fast to their purpose, and when they found that that did happen which they foresaw would happen ; those very men, or such of them as were left, co-operating with others who had the same principles, but, some of them, not the same sagacity, turned out king *James* for his disloyalty to the constitution. But these principles, though they were eminently conspicuous in those times, yet they were not new. Rea-

son had taught them, and every honest mind had adopted them long before; for upon these it was, that the great lord *Falkland* acted, when, about the year 1641, the beginning of those times of dire calamity, he coolly, firmly and honestly set himself to bring back and to establish the true *British* constitution; but meant to go no farther. These, which are my principles, do necessarily lead me to that firm attachment which I have to his Majesty's government, and most sincere affection to his person: for I look upon him (as his royal father was most deservedly looked upon before him) as one, who, owing the establishment of his throne to the free maxims of that constitution which he is placed over for its protection, has ever, with the utmost honour and fidelity, watched over that sacred deposit. And this declaration I make, free from all sentiments of servile adulation, and without any other expectations of favour from him than are common to every true subject. As to those, who are not altogether of my system in these matters, this is my way of thinking. Where the legislature has found it requisite, for the security of our government, to put restraints upon any particular set of men; I think those restraints ought prudently, discreetly and firmly to be enforced as occasions may make it necessary: But as to those rights which the law has left to such men, and to which such restrictions do not extend, I think them equally under the protection of the law with those of any other subject.

KNOW

KNOW these to be my principles, and know them for such all ye that pretend ye did not know it before, that they were so ; and know, besides, that by these I mean to stand, and very fast too, as long as I live, and will carry them with me to the grave. And if these are my principles, and my actions have always corresponded with them ; if I have made myself no party in your city-divisions, nor have been under the influence of any party, as ye know I have not ; if my publick conduct has been equal to you all, and my demeanour in the civility of private intercourse has made no distinction ; why have some bodies of men gathered themselves together upon this occasion to make head against me, united as against a common enemy ? And why is it that some among ye have said, that you thought you could not in *conscience* vote for me ? For shame, and for common decency, recall those words, ye that have said them, and let not your own ears hear you to utter them again ; there may be those sagacious enough, to give them a meaning which ye would not care to own.

The next grand objection, is, That I am your Recorder, and a lawyer. The objection has two parts, I will consider them separately. But before I take notice of them, I must declare that I should not urge what I am now forced to do, as tending to give me advantages over my brother-candidate on account of my accidental situation ; were it not that the uncandidness of the objection has made it necessary

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for

for me to do so. And, as to my being Recorder, if you, gentlemen, who belong to the corporation of this city, do at all times your duty in the filling up of that office, who is there so fit as your Recorder, to explain and to assert your rights in the great council of the nation. Such a one, by his office, must be supposed best to know what they are : and from his course of study, and way of life, the best able to set them forth to advantage. Accordingly, the instances are, I believe, but rare ; I have not heard of one, where, when there was a vacancy, and your Recorder out of parliament, ye have passed him by. Some of you have said, that the Recorder should, indeed, be in parliament, but not for the city : So that by this reasoning, if Mr. *Fitzgibbon*, who is not in parliament, should desire to be your Recorder (which I am sure he has no thoughts of ever doing) and such a one, as at some future time might be of a character very different from his, and yet be in parliament, was his competitor ; you would, on your system, accept of the latter, and reject Mr. *Fitzgibbon* ; tho' no qualification were wanting in him to engage your highest confidence, but that which it was in your own power to give him, and you could not bestow more worthily. I decline exposing this ridiculous maxim in the manner that it deserves ; because I can guess at the person who principally has adopted it, and endeavoured to propagate it ; I have received some personal civilities from him, and therefore I shall spare him. Thus much I thought it necessary to say,

say, in order to prevent a notion from prevailing, which may be prejudicial to the city at some time hereafter, when ye shall have a more worthy gentleman in my place, and a less worthy one to oppose him than [is the case in the present competition. Some have said, that it was made a condition with me, and that I engaged upon my coming in to be Recorder, not to stand a candidate for the city. I deny it, and not only deny it, but do thus publicly declare, and declare it to the honour of those gentlemen who concurred in the appointment of me, that no terms or conditions whatever were so much as insinuated to me to be complied with, in the course of my application for that office : and I cannot but be surprised to hear that this has been said by one, who is a citizen of note, and must well remember, that when I waited on him upon that occasion, he was so far from making any terms with me, that tho' he made me professions of his personal regards, he told me he was not free, and could not serve me, and gave me his reasons ; which, tho' he has since mentioned them to others, I shall only do it to himself. I have, indeed, more than once, since I have been Recorder, voluntarily made declarations of my purposes as to this matter. I have said, that if any one of three particular persons, whom I named, and who were materially instrumental in bringing me into the office, should ever contend for the honour of representing the city, I should not be the person to disappoint them in their hopes, by
standing

standing in their way, upon that ground where they had so great a share in placing me. I have likewise said, I never would engage in a contested election for this city, nor did I mean to do it now : and the reasons I gave for taking this resolution, were much the same with those which I have given for my present conduct. That the Recorder should represent the city in parliament, I think, a right thing, if he deserves to be trusted ; but cannot think it right in him to engage in the usual methods of sollicitation ; nor would you of so great a city as this is, require it of him, or of any other, if you judged well for your own Interest.

I have dwelt so long upon this particular, that I had almost forgot the other part of the objection, which was my being a lawyer ; and, how shameful an objection is it in those who make it ! Do not your properties and all your rights, owe their protection to the laws of your country ? And who can assist you in the availing yourselves of that protection, if not they who have made the knowledge of those laws their peculiar study ? If they are not to be trusted, what a condition are ye in ? You have nothing for it but to become lawyers yourselves, and then, I am afraid, you'll be in a worse. Besides, how can you be sure, that, when any of your rights are called in question, you will have right done you in judgment : since they who are to determine upon those rights must have been lawyers before ; and must still be so. But it is almost

as ridiculous a thing as the objection is, to go about to answer it seriously ; as if their fidelity was the least to be depended on, whose necessary course of education, in order to be lawyers, must have taught them the true rules of right, justice and equity, and the natural obligations which enforce the observance of them, and shew them to be something more than names.

But it is said, that for a trading city a trader should be the representative. The words seem to run well ; let us see how they will come out in the meaning. I have as much respect for the traders of this city, and indeed of the whole kingdom, as any man can have ; I look upon them as a most useful and important body of men in society ; and if the question upon such an occasion as this, was merely about the granting of a favour ; there can be no doubt, but that, from a trading city, a trader ought to have the preference. But other considerations may be necessary, besides that of being a trader ; where the question is about the fitly placing of a trust ; in the due execution of which, as well for capacity as integrity, the citizens are so highly interested ; not only as to their mercantile affairs, but as to all their other rights.

These, gentlemen, are the main objections that have been made to me ; you are to judge how far

far they are well founded. There are, indeed, three others that have been mentioned, tho' I cannot think they could have prevailed with many; however I will give them an answer, and they require but a short one. The first is, that I, upon a certain public occasion, spoke ill of the traders of the city. This is an assertion not only without any foundation of truth, but had it's rise from a declaration of mine, upon the occasion hinted at, which was directly contrary to what is asserted. The next is, that, being consulted in my profession by one or two of the corporations upon some points in their charters, I gave an opinion which they did not like. My answer to this is, that I gave them the best opinion I could frame, upon the fullest consideration I could give the points referred to me, and after having got the best information and assistance I could, to enable me to form a right one; and I should give them the very same opinion now. The last is, that some of the traders of this town having lately had a promise extorted from them by their journeymen for the raising of their wages, they applied to me to know whether they were bound to keep that promise; I told them they ought to do it, but that they might punish those journeymen for a combination, if they had evidence for it: my answer, then to this objection, is, by owning the fact. I will not enlarge much upon these two latter particulars, lest I should be thought to bear too hard upon those few who mention them

them as objections to me. I would only wish them to consider whether they amount to any more, than that they think me an honest man: And if that be a reason for their voting against me, I do not see how they can possibly vote for Mr. *Dunn*, than whom there cannot be an honest

THERE are objections of a scurrilous nature (for some such I have heard) which I shall not countenance so far as to take the least notice of them; they could be believed by none but fools, and framed by those that are worse. And now, my good friends, having said every thing about myself that I wanted to say, and much more than I desired to say, let us part in good humour; for these are my last words. I have given you a scrap of *Latin* at the beginning of this paper: Most of you will understand it, and those who do not, may be assured that there is no conjuring in it. The words are honest words and have nothing more in them than this plain meaning: 'That the best service that can be done to one's fellow-citizens is, to bring them back to their own right senses, if at any time they have departed from them.' For when this is once done, they can do all the rest for themselves; and if they don't, there is no one else that can do it for them. The reason why these words occurred to me, when I turned my thoughts on you, my fellow-citizens, was, my observing a too great forwardness in you, to run yourselves into parties and divisions, upon every occasion

cation that presents itself. By this your city is kept from flourishing to that degree it might do, and yourselves and your families much the worse for it. I wonder you never found it out before, for it is very obvious, that while you are bustling thus in parties, you are only bringing in the harvest of some other; which, when you have brought it in for him, he will not suffer you to touch a grain of; and your own is neglecting all the while. To be drawn into this, you must be deluded with something mighty dazzling to your hopes; which, very often, the nature of things makes it impossible that you should succeed in; and if you did, perhaps, you would not be the better for it. Your harvest is your own industry in your several callings. I cannot say it will make kings of you; but it will do what, I think, is much better for you; for, if you will take *Solomon's* word for it, by this, *you shall stand before kings and shall not be ashamed*; besides, if you were all kings, I'm afraid you would have no subjects. I wish, and most sincerely too, to see you all prosper and be happy; but look ye upon what *Solomon* has recommended to you, to be the only means to make you so. By this only you can secure your present peace and welfare; and from this alone can you, with any well-grounded hopes expect, your further advancement to higher ranks of life. If there should be any where among you, in your several quarters of the town, those, whose spirits are more warm and active than is for their own peace and for yours;

listen

listen to what they say to you, if it is worth the listening to ; but let your acting upon it not be, until after very cool consideration given it by yourselves. You have most of you heard of the famous Mr. *Addison* ; that he was a strong advocate for the people and for their liberties, and was therefore remarkably well attached to his late majesty and his government. He, in his much admired play of *Cato*, gives this lesson to his countrymen, and leaves it for posterity. He represents one *Sempronius* as having drawn in many of the lower rank of people, to favour some purposes of his own, that were not honest, and to co-operate with him in the carrying them into execution. The thing was discovered before it came to any ripeness, and he very dextrously contrived to slip himself out of the business in good time ; and contrived it so well, that he was the very person ordered to preside at the execution of those poor wretches, whom he himself had deluded ; and thus, he shews his love to them for their confidence, and comforts them in their last moments : “ know, says he, villains, that when such
 “ paltry slaves as you presume to mix in faction ; if
 “ the plot succeeds, they’re thrown neglected by ;
 “ but if it fails, they’re sure to die like dogs.” From these words you are to collect the precept which Mr. *Addison* meant to convey, and to make your own application of it ; but I hope that none will carry that application farther than it is intended by me that they should do. For I do not suspect any one of my fellow citizens of worse designs, than may be the result of overwarmth, misjudging and indiscretion ; but if
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there should be any so unhappy as to be too much under the influence of those failings, I would not have others to be misled by them, to their own prejudice.

WHAT I have said to you in the latter part of this letter, which is principally directed to those who are the members of the corporation of the city, and to all of them without distinction; is not a thing that first came into my thoughts upon the present occasion. I, long before, thought of it; and was determined to take the first opportunity of saying something to the same purpose to you. I take it for granted, that it will be cavilled at by some; but I shall not be deterred from saying or doing what I think fitting for me to say or to do, by cavils or any thing that may be stronger.

ALL I would have you to do upon the occasion now before you, is no more than this, To determine your choice upon the true and proper considerations for the determining such a choice. Wherever the lot falls, I shall be the same man I was before, am now, and mean to be hereafter. If the success should be my friend's, he shall wear the honour you give him without envy from me; if mine, I shall endeavour to shew my gratitude, by serving you to the best of my power. So, gentlemen, once more assuring you of my best wishes, I take my leave and am,

Your most obedient, and

Dublin, Feb.
22d. 1758.

most humble Servant,

James Grattan.