A Privy-Counsellor analised:

IN A

LETTER

TO

MR. GRATTAN.

CONTAINING

EXCELLENT REASONS FOR THAT GENTLEMAN'S

LATE COMPLIMENTS TO THE

CORPORATIONS AND UNIVERSITY

OF

DUBLIN.

WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF MR. GRATTAN'S
CALM AND POINTED FORGIVENESS
OF ALL HIS ENEMIES:

AND THE HAPPY END OF POPULAR SOCIETIES.

"

WHEN THE SPANISH ARMADA ASSAIL'D YOUR
HIGHNESS—E'COD! THEY CAUGHT THE WRONG SOW BY
THE EAR!!!"

Mayor of Coventry's Address to Queen Elizabeth.

DUBLIN:

Printed by William Porter, Grafton-Street.

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LETTER

TO

MR. GRATTAN.

Dublin, November 20, 1798.

SIR,

As you have been pleased to address the Guild of Merchants—Corporation of the City—and the University of Dublin—through the channel of a British print, you will pardon my noticing you through the medium of an Irish one.—We may have our mutual reasons for the adoption.—You may wish to attack in a kingdom where you are not known, and I may wish to parry in a kingdom where you are.

—In the former, you might justly hope to fink your political character in your literary a expertness;

expertness; but in the latter, an unequivocal intimacy with both precludes you from a chance of profiting by any ignorance of the one, or any activity of the other; and as the Courier has done you the irreparable injury of publishing your Letter, I trust he will be impartial enough to make you the only atonement in his power, by copying mine.

You might still have enjoyed the advantages of obscurity, amidst the great body of the English Nation, but that the celebrity of your evidence at Maidstone officiously introduced you to their notice; and the favourable impression they must now receive from the publication of your Paragraph and Letter, (with the feveral Answers thereto,) will probably create an intimacy as lasting as your life; and I can assure you, that your publications leave in Ireland not one doubt respecting you, save as to the situation of your understanding; and, in Great Britain, no doubt whatsoever as to your literary capacity.

But perhaps you will think me too partial to you, when I declare, that I should attribute the rhapsody rhapfody of your stile rather to the soreness of your pride, than the overslowing of your folly, but that the unparalleled incoherence of some passages cultivates a strong ground of conjecture; and almost induces me to doubt the charitableness of risking any expression which might tend to increase the malady.

However, as you feem to court a war of words, it is probable that your next Paragraph or Letter may determine the true state of your situation; and, until then, I shall be inclined to adopt your own expression to the Guild of Merchants, " That at present you deserve not ab" solute silence, nor yet much notice."

Your Paragraph in the Oracle, of the 29th of October, does so much honour to your judgment and discretion, that any eulogium of mine must be squandered on so sinished, and so convincing, a performance; and, therefore, if I notice it at all, the only course lest me is to criticise on its defects, which a very sew words will fully perform, and which such an ingenuous author, as you are, must disinterestedly admire.

A 2

In that argumentative Paragraph you very shrewdly affert, that " the nonsensical and false " charges brought against you, by the Guild of " Merchants, are not grounded on legal evidence;" -and then, with equal shrewdness, and more ingenuity, you produce the most extraordinary and convincing species of legal evidence, to disprove their charge, and establish your own innocence, that forenfick expertness could, by possibility, give birth to-namely-you produce yourself as your own witness, and give decifive testimony in your own favour, by further afferting, " That the charge is false and " nonsensical, and that it is remote and unsupcoported; and that therefore the Corporation have " put their seal to falshood and folly. - No doubt, this is most eligible evidence to justify a politician in his own opinion; but I much fear the reasoning part of the nation will say, that it is not quite so legal as that which it asfumes to answer.

Quære—will much doubt be entertained whether the feal of the Corporation, or (the late Right Honourable) Henry Grattan's fignature, has been affixed to the greater folly, or the more remote affertion?

But

As Nelson and Hughes, who had the affurance to accuse you before the Irish Lords, did not rely solely on their seals or their signature, it happened most fortunately for your character, that their accusation was corroborated only by oath; whilst your justification has been (more legally) certified upon honour.

However, as I fear the British and Irish nations are too solid and sulky to be convinced by the most exquisite ingenuity, if it has not some sense or argument to embellish it, I apprehend you had better handsomely give up the Paragraph at once, and try if we can have better success in commenting on your Letter.

But if I should continue the same stile of approbation and panegyric on your Letter, which I have used to your Paragraph, we might justly be suspected of being in collusion to impose upon the public, and therefore I shall now affect to proceed under colour of a more serious animadversion; though I trust you will do me the justice of thinking that I am so entirely disinterested on the subject, that I feel neither

neither influenced nor biassed in the most remote degree, by any puerile respect for either your writing or your character.

As your Paragraph had the fingularity, fo it had the end, of the phænix, and from its ashes, after eleven days' labour, has arisen a Letter, which possessing all the qualities of the parent, adds the additional ornaments of length and rhapfody; and to enliven the former fubjects of invective, adds a compliment to the University of Dublin and its reverend Doctors, as it were to give variety to a production, of which you perhaps doubted the infipidity. -- In that folid, argumentative, and well-digested Letter you fay, "You wish to begin with the MERCHANTS, as " you respect them most;" and to convince them of that respect, and of your own bumility, you proceed to tell them, very respectfully, (by a figure of rhetoric) " that in bearing down your character they forfeit their own."-I presume you mean public character, and on that point we disagree; for, on the contrary, I know of no means by which fo respectable a body as the Guild of Merchants could fo effectually forfeit their

their characters, as by any futile effort to support yours.

And perhaps you are the only man of this country, who is at this moment ignorant, that every public body in Ireland elevates its character in the fame proportion as you reprobate it, and that every loyal fubject becomes estimable in the same degree as he is honoured by your invective:—therefore, the Guild of Merchants, I apprehend, find themselves both served and honoured by your first animadversion, and would willingly return you the same compliment, but fear it would not answer you the same purpose.

However, guessing the imbecillity and imprudence of your first observation, you proceed to qualify it by a worse—and affert, "that "the Guild of Merchants are no more the Mer-"chants of Dublin, than they are the People of "Ireland!"—Singular! to find such a faithful sympathy between public character and private memory, that no sooner the one is injured, than the other instantly becomes impaired. And in the critical moment, you totally forget, that the Guild of Merchants compose almost all the respectable

respectable traders in the city of Dublin; and at a full meeting of whom, and by a unanimous fuffrage, (the late Right Honourable) HENRY GRATTAN was disfranchifed from the rank of freeman "because he was concerned in promot-" ing the Rebellion."-- This naturally startled you, and to the pardonable flush of your spirits on that occasion, I am willing to impute your florid and laconic description of the Guild and their motives. But for the total absence of Wit, in your description, I should have been led to think it favoured of reverie. --- And the purest advice I can give you, to avoid similar failures in fatire and irony, is-rather to pursue your old and successful practice of plagiarism, than hazard the invention of any new fystem of calumny, which none of the subjects could feel, and very few of them could under-Stand.

But seeming to seel that your painting of the Guild could hardly catch the eye of your own country, you most plaintively complain to the British Nation of the "fcandalous proceedings" which a certain description of people had adopted to bear down your character." But you very judiciously

judiciously prevent all British strangers from forming any grounded opinion as to the extent of the charge, or the justice of the punishment—by wisely omitting to specify the persons, the charge, or the infliction; and most bravely hold out "the shield of a character" with which they are unacquainted, to "receive the shafts" of a charge of which they are ignorant, and then cunningly plume yourself upon the invisibility of both.

However, in pity to the shade of departed reputation, I will try to lay the spirit of enquiry by which it is tormented, and drive all your disgraces within the circle of a single period—You have been degraded by your King—your Country—your City—your Corporation—your Parliament—your University—and your Connections—'Tis done!!

Public curiofity is now fatisfied—enquiry will be at rest—and your ingenuity will be faved the expenditure of any further equivocation. Nothing is now requisite but explanation.

B

You have been degraded by your King from the rank and confidence of a privy-counsel-lor.

You have been degraded before the Parliament, by evidence upon their fecret committee.

You have been degraded by the Metropolis, from the privileges of a freeman and constituent.

You have been erased by Derry from the rolls of their loyalists.

You have not been much flattered by the felfconviction of your intimates.

And the brilliant shadow of your former honors has been wisely chased from the walls of our university, lest even its shade should obscure the principles of the rising generation.

Your talents—your name—nay, even the pride of your fervices—have been degraded: and can never be restored, unless (in the words of your own address to your constituents) it shall "please

" please Heaven to dispose of Kings and of Parlia-

66 ments!!!

These are grievous punishments, it is true—asfailing at once the pride of a vain man, and disappointments of an ambitious one, to whom no consolation can now remain, save the honest reflection of having at least attempted to ruin his country.

But so strong is my veneration, even to the mourning reliques of virtue or of patriotism, that if it were possible to palliate the insatiableness of your ambition, or the tortures of its disappointment, I should pardon the efforts of your asperity, as I should the greans of Tantalus, or the curses of Ixion.

However, as you declare in your Letter, that "you receive your injuries with calm and pointed forgiveness, the result of a proud superiority,"— I am happy that your pride, and your philosophy, anticipate the purposes of my commisseration, and furnish that miraculous panacea to your conscience, which, under every circumstance and through every measure, can keep pace with the climax of your errors.

B 2

You fay, "to be angry with fuch men were to be degraded;" I should be equally inexcusable with yourself, were I by any unnecessary rebuke to rouse that anger, or increase that degradation, which is already more than sufficient to undeceive your country. I shall therefore restrain myself to the humble office of keeping the result of that proud superiority" in practice, for the exercise of which you have had, and probably will have, so many and such pressing occasions.

Your justification is the most judicious that under such circumstances could possibly be adopted. Wide and comprehensive,—it envelopes all crimes and all difficulties,—and wants nothing but proof and argument to render it efficacious.

You begin by faying, that "You are so linked" and connected with every thing which belongs to the Irish Nation, that a comprehensive description of them could not by any injustice disgrace itself, without including their natural friend and advocate in their degradation."

So far as that sentence is intelligible, I perfectly agree with you.

I freely

I freely admit, that you have been lately fo linked and connected with a thing that belonged to a great body of the Irish nation, that it is now doubtful which the disgrace belongs to. And I also admit, that your degradation does arise from being the natural friend and advocate of that body of the people with whom you were so linked and connected; and which body, after having caused the veins of 35,000 of his Majesty's deluded subjects to be opened, has at length given you the slip, and (at least affected) to return to its allegiance.

And as to another great body of the Irish nation, of whom if you were not the natural—I admit you were the pretended—friend and advocate, it is now pretty well ascertained, that your friendship has ruined the credit, and your advocacy the cause, of your clients; and that the only advantage they can now derive from their experience, is the comfortable reflection, that in destroying them, you have ruined yourself; and must now relinquish your trade, as you can expect no farther credit.

Your next ground of defence is neither so general or so judicious. You rely (as a proof of your innocence) that there was not legal evidence of your guilt before the Guild of Merchants, and I equally admire your play upon the word "concerned," as used by the Guild; and your silence on the word "promoted," as used by the Corporation. The former expression you conceived more difficult of proof than the latter, and if you could weaken the application of the one term, you would let the other take its chance of credit.

But when you took and subscribed the oath of a Freeman, you had quite comprehension enough to understand the extent of your obligation; and I do not recollect in that oath any falvo for a play upon expressions, more especially relating to treafonable practices. However, if you have any doubts upon that subject, you can easily reconcile yourself by recurring to your own jurat.

Though the great leading principles of legal evidence, as admitted or applied by the superior

or ordinary courts of criminal judicature, are decided and immutable, yet, the practice—the necessity—the mode—and the extent of evidence, is frequently varied before other tribunals. Parliament, -courts-martial and military-courts of admiralty - corporation courts - jurisdictions by statute-&c. frequently admit evidence for special purposes, by privilege, custom, or ex necessiate rei, which strictly would not be sufficient in the ordinary criminal courts of justice; yet, by that privilege, custom, or necessity, it becomes legal evidence, quoad the subjects-purpose-or application; and I believe you will hardly rest your justification on an argument that a corporation, in excution of its corporate power or capacity, must, in all instances produce the same strict, technical, full, extent of legal evidence to amove a corporator, which would be necessary to HANG And your charge against the Guild being disfranchisement, without as much legal evidence as would take away your life, I apprehend that so far from reprobating the Guild of Merchants, for not going far enough in evidence, you ought rather to have given them your most fincere and public

public thanks, for not having gone further than was necessary to a civil purpose.

I do not deny a precipitancy of the Guild in your amoval, but (it being performed) I admire your hardiness and courage in provoking a canvass of its causes.

Yet, however the Guild might have been zealous or precipitate, the one was fully authorized by your conduct, the other by your absence. The evidence of Hughes and Nelson, and the silence of Sweetman, were equally comprehensive and convincing; being concerned in rebellion, and promoting it, though different words have the same In rebellion all are principals, from the crude conspirator to the finished rebel, through all the tools and instruments of its workmanship; and the Guild of Merchants, who (not you) were to judge of the credit to be given to your accusers, unluckily thought differently from you, and fupported their opinion by a corporate expulsion. You were not called on for your defence, because you had fled from its jurisdiction, and to the errors of your conduct, had wifely added the impossibility of being called upon to defend it. Therefore,

Therefore their zeal in your amoval, you must attribute to their loyalty, and the want of notice to your elopement.

I do not wish to hurt your feelings by a recital of the Freeman's oath; -as you always evinced a very just detestation to the revenue, in all its departments, I should not presume that you would class the obligation of a free merchant with the oath of an exciseman, taken for form, and observed at discretion. Yet if you attempt to refine upon the construction of the one, you establish the doctrine of the other; and defend yourself upon the same principle, which you have spent half your life, and all your argument, in reprobating .--Lord Mansfield has clearly determined—that a breach of a corporate oath is fufficient cause of amoval, (without conviction in a court of law)-Analyse your oath-consider your conduct -reflect on the accusation-readthe proofs-and as you are now very justly indifferent to public opinion, and all its confequences, give me a little of that candour, a retention of which can now be of no further value to you, and fay truly-Have the Guild or Corporation proceeded upon evidence

evidence, "not only not true, but recorded to be "false?"—I shall again appeal to your candour—it seems the most valuable quality to persons so illiberally accused as you have been.

—Candour has been the most reviving preservative amongst many of your friends and intimates—by their recent, candour, some of them have lately obtained a general leave of absence from this kingdom, instead of being obliged to travel a much more troublesome and painful journey.

Therefore take courage—answer me with candour (like Beattie's argument for the Christian religion) " if it can do you no good, you may be assured it can do you no harm."

Queries—Have your Speeches in Parliament, fince Lord Fitzwilliam and you were deposed, tended to promote Rebellion?

Has your Address to the Catholics, desiring them "instantly to embrace, and greatly to emancipate," tended to promote Rebellion?

Has your celebrated Address to your Constituents, (so prettily handled by his Worship, Dr. Duigenan) tended to promote Rebellion?

—I do not suspect you for countenancing the Union Star—the instructions there were too plain and intelligible for your pen—But pray did you write for the *Press*?

—I shall ask you no questions relative to your journey to Maidstone, as a witness to the purity of O'Connor, because he gave you the retort courteous, and confessed himself guilty—circumstances not equally confirming your credit and his veracity.

But, Mr. Grattan Did you, with all your innocence on your head, when a mortal, cruel, and bigoted rebellion, burft forth in your country—when the Irish gentry were proferibed—butchered—and would have been annihilated but for their union and their gallantry.—I say, did you sly for the same, or not?—Were you then found in the ranks of loyalty and of honour, encouraging, by your counsels, or aiding by your person, (such as it was) the cause of your country?

Or, did the Evening-star find you an emigrant in Anglesea—skulking behind some corresponding cragg—and rehearing to the unconscious rock the fabricated periods of that inflammatory eloquence, which at once fired and consumed your country?

—When the plunderers of Europe invaded that country which you profess to adore—and defperately plunged at its religion and its constitution—when you had no pretence to say it was the cause of the Irish People—where were you?—Why did you desert your standard, when the enemy were French?—Answer—or plead guilty.—I ask you but one question more—now—Are the charges against you remote and nonsensical?

The Guild of Merchants—the Corporation of Dublin—and "all other Corporations and "persons adopting similar proceedings,"—receive with equal satisfaction the acrimony of your reproach, and the "calmness of your forgiveness,"—and offer you neither their enmity or their friendship; they know you can want neither an enemy or a flatterer, while you posses your own considence.

In atonement for my foregoing strictures upon your performance, and the pain and constraint I feel in becoming your commentator, I must now express my delight and admiration of the style in which you have so ingeniously painted—" your calm forgiveness" of the Reverend Doctors—so admirably adapted to decry the principles of the Union—your compliment, judiciously beginning with blasphemy, and ending with nonsense—the glorious prototype of religion and politics UNITED.

The first part of your compliment to the Doctors is admirable. You say—" Were it not "robbing Heaven, &c. &c."—the sublimity of the idea must strike even the stupidity of the Guild—and robberies of that kind having been seldom attempted since the time of the Giants, in Ovid's Metamorphoses, must give an admirable scope to the researches of the learned and accomplished professors of astronomy, to discover the manner by which you intend to perform the same; and the Reverend Professors of Theology and Divinity will certainly seel much obliged by your timely notice of your intention to plunder a place, which they have hitherto been

been accustomed to consider as very much belonging to themselves; whilst the boldness of the expression displays an undaunted contempt for danger, both of soul and body—and must render immortal the name of that hero, who having made every attempt upon this world, has declared his intention of assaulting the next.

As to the residue of the compliment, beginning with the words "up and down," and ending with the word " Clergymen," nothing can be fo complimentary to the profound learning and erudition of the Reverend Doctor Barret and the learned seminary, as the solution of a fentence, which most certainly will puzzle all the rest of the world.—If the Reverend Doctors cannot decypher it, they will probably take it as a greater compliment than you intended .-If they can, they will have the honour of folving the ambiguity of a diction, unparalleled in any language, living or dead, upon the face of the habitable globe, (except one passage of Rabelais, which his Most Christian Majesty referred to the learned College at Salamanca for an explanation.)

My humble advice to the Doctors of the Holy Trinity is— to refer your compliment to the Historic Society, as a *standing* subject for disquisition and argument—and the more especially, as I understand that one of the fundamental laws of that learned institution is—
"never to come to any decision."

The fole cause of your compliment is said to have arisen by the amoval of your picture from the Hall of the University, where it had been placed in opposition to the Right Hon. Henry Flood—who, to shew how inferior his mode of "forgiveness" was to your's, bequeathed almost his whole fortune to the Reverend Doctors.

Yet however you may be attached to the other fystem, you may, with great propriety, copy the moderation of the Court—when you recollect the vicious treatment your (former) friend, Mr. Broom, has given to divers Kings, Queens, and Lord Lieutenants, who appear, stuck up in rags, in his riding-house, to frighten his horses—and that not one of them—their heirs or successors—have ever complained of the indignity they have suffered.

Nor do I apprehend that Mr. Broom will even be attainted for the same, (as by law he might) at least for a considerable time after his *death and interment;—and as your's has only experienced the sate of other samily pictures, and the same which probably your own heir will think proper to perform in time to come, if he shall, at any period, chance to read your life and adventures, or these presents, I should recommend it to you, not to give yourself further uneasiness upon this subject, unless you think proper to recur to your invincible and standing argument, viz. that the learned Doctors had not legal evidence sufficient to amove your—portrait.

As I am aware that any thing respecting an Administration of which you are not a Minister, must be ungrateful to your feelings, I have postponed that subject to the last, and I shall only advert to that branch of it in which you have been official.

You were a Privy Counsellor—you took and subscribed the oath of a Privy Counsellor—you were thereby bound to your allegiance in its

firiclest sense—did that Oath speak of "discover"ing treason—misprision of treasons—treason"able conspiracies—&c. &c. &c.?"—Were you thereby bound to his Majesty's crown and dignity—and the Constitution in Church and State?—
and did you fully, fairly, and unequivocally fulfil that obligation?

Nelson and Hughes say, not !- They have the prefumption to fay-you enquired, and were informed of, the numbers of conspirators—the num. bers of their opponents—the state of the country and that you were " pressed to COME FORWARD," -and you concealed IT all !- Was that an infignificant inducement to remove you from the rank, and confidence of a Privy-Counfellor ?-Far be it from me, to accuse his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, with the crime of your degradation; -- your spirited description of his Excellency's "extraordinary contest-struggling to SPARE the Irish people, against an IRISH FACTION!!" is fufficiently comprehensive of your approbation, and his Excellency's merit. Nor could it be supposed, that he who removed you from the Privy-Council would have found more favor in your

your fight, than they who removed you from the Corporation: and we must therefore attribute your dismissal to your Sovereign—and your silence on his virtues substantiate the conjecture.

I shall not enter into any disquisition (at present) of his Excellency's measures—my mind is
made up—but it is foreign to the present subject.

As to Faction—I am equally inimical as yourself
—I own it not—and be assured, I shall never be
the advocate of a malignant or sanguinary Faction
—nor yet of a wrong-headed, obstinate, and mischievous Perverseness.—I despise Faction—I am
unconnected with it—and in my opinion nothing
can be more disgraceful—more dangerous—or
more dishonourable to a free Country, than a Faction to set up an Oligarchy—except a Faction to set up a Republic!!!

Your gracious Sovereign heard of your Curiosity, and has promoted you from the station of a
Privy-Counsellor to the rank of a Citizen—an
elevation so accordant to your Principles and Politics, that you must be delighted at your preferment;
—however, if any perverse chagrin should induce

you to think otherwise, you have still a salutary anodyne in your "pointed forgiveness—and a high consolation in your irrefragable argument—" That his Majesty had not legal evidence for "your amoval.—We have now, (I hope much to your satisfaction and amusement) gone through your Paragraph and Letter—I repeat to you—I belong not to the Faction you reprobate; but I am a Freeman—a Free-Merchant—(nay, something more in this country)—and, above all, I am a Loyal Subject. I write not to assail you—but to defend them. You ill-advisedly called out their advocates, whilst you oftentatiously assume that office for a Body you call The People, but I call The Dures!

I lean not on your private character, or your private conduct—I know of nothing reprehensible in either—and if I did, I am neither mean or malicious enough to publish it:—But you have made your public character—Fair Game—you have so interwoven your political delinquency with your calumny of the Metropolis—that any man attached to the one, is called upon to expose the other:—You have fallen from a great height—

D 2

and

and never will have strength to scramble back to your situation!

I shall have the honor sedulously to attend to your performances—and as often as you shall please to tumble for the amusement of my native City—so often I shall be ready to give due credit to that entertaining versatility of your native talents, which changed you from the Hero—to the Harlequin—of IRELAND.

N. B. As your absence from your Country, whilft the Rebellion was deciding, has probably prevented many of your Friends from corresponding with you (fince that unconstitutional practice, of opening gentlemen's letters in the post-office) you would, perhaps, wish to know the fate of your Brethren in the popular Societies for Reform and Emancipation—which you so judiciously planted, and so luxuriantly embellished—you have therefore annexed a List of a few of these dear Friends" with whom you were "fo linked" and connected" in bono publico—and whose glorious martyrdom in defence of their Societies, must

must furely twine another laurel round the temples of their Founder and their Patron.—Permit to assure you, (with the true spirit of diplomatic courtesy) that I hold you in the highest Consideration,

And am, &c. &c. &c. &c.

MERCATOR, &c.

A LIST

the lively twings manner buttle round the temor Teaming with right bring the minute light to we alked your (with the true faint of a placourses that I hald you thathe lifte? The state of the big the MIRCATOR, ES.