TRACTS

ON THE

SUBJECT

OF AN

UNION,

BEWTEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CONTAINING

I. Obſervations on the projected UNION by J. H. Cottingham, Eſq.

II. Jebb's Reply to "Arguments for and againſt an UNION.

III. The Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland aſſerted and maintained by J. Barnes Eſq.

IV. Memoire of ſome Queſtions reſpecting the projected *Union*, by Th. M'Kenna, Eſq.

V. UNION or not, by an Orangeman.

VI. Strictures on a UNION, by an Officer.

VII. UNION or SEPERATION

VIII. Verbum Sapienti, a word to the Wiſe.

IX. Addreſs to the Roman Catholics.

X. Bethell's Reply to Cooke and M'Kenna.

XI. Prophecy from Pue's Occurrences.

XII. Probable Conſequences of an UNION.

XIII. Obſervations on Arguments by a Student of Trinity College.

XIV. To be, or not to be a, Nation.

XV. Unconnected Hints and Looſe Ideas.

XVI. Ireland Sabinized, or a Caſe in Point.

XVII. Impartial View of the Cauſes leading this Country to the meaſure of an *Union*.

XVIII. Keep up your Spirits, or Huzza for the Empire.

XIX. Reply to the Arguments for and againſt, &c. by Molyneaux

XX. Speech of Joſhua Spencer, Eſq. at the County Meeting.

DUBLIN:

SOLD BY J. MILLIKEN, 32, GRAFTON-STREET.

1799.

SOME

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PROJECTED UNION

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,

AND THE

INEXPEDIENCY OF AGITATING THE MEASURE AT THIS TIME.

By J. H. C. Esq.
BARRISTER AT LAW.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY WM. M'KENZIE, NO. 33, COLLEGE-GREEN.
1798.

THOUGHTS

ON AN

UNION,

&c. &c.

ARGUMENTS on political ſubjects are always more indeciſive, and produce leſs conviction, than on any of thoſe theoretick ſubjects, which the combining power of the human mind can frame for diſcuſſion. The human paſſions are ever more deeply engaged in them—Thus that cool deliberation is deſtroyed, which is ſo neceſſary to judgment. Party-ſpirit, and the fatal power of *influence* interfere; candour is thereby ſhut out from the debate; intereſt often and generally

generally claſhes with policy. Falſe concluſions are therefore the reſult of the diſcuſſion; pride, vanity, falſe opinions, the power of prejudice, the want of fixed principles, the fear of conſequences, the impreſſions received from the hiſtory of the laſt ten years—every thing that can diſtort or blindfold our judgment in the diſcuſſion of political ſubjects, has in its turn it's individual weight, and nothing but cool deliberation, and a cloſe inveſtigation of the ſecret motives which actuate parties, can prevent error in our concluſions.

Never did a moment occur, in which this leſſon was more neceſſary than at the cloſe of the year 1798; never did the danger of precipitancy appear more formidable; never did ſo many cauſes unite at one time to throw obſtacles in the way of fair diſcuſſion; and yet, ſuch is the time, when the Iriſh nation is called on to determine on a ſubject of unmeaſured magnitude and importance.

The propoſition, which thoſe, who are entruſted with his Majeſty's Government in Ireland, openly avow, as being amongſt the firſt, on which the Iriſh Parliament will be called to debate, is one, that

embraces

embraces every national concern at once ; the public mind is agitated, and, I fear, is inflamed by it. If ſuch is really the caſe, the meaſure will be adopted with indiſcreet and indiſcriminating haſte, or rejected with intemperance—unweighed and unvalued.

The chief object of the following pages is to ſhew, that the preſent ſtate of Ireland is ill calculated for the impartial diſcuſſion of a ſubject of ſuch national importance, and to point the public attention to ſome of thoſe conſiderations, which muſt ariſe in the diſcuſſion and previous arrangement, and which ſhould be well and calmly weighed, before the hour of deciſion comes. The difficulty of determining the queſtion at once, which the writer is anxious to impreſs upon the minds of others, and the various ſubjects for previous conſideration, which muſt occur, ſhould deter a judgment more acute, and a mind more enlighten'd than his, from giving that haſty opinion, which it is his endeavour to prevent others from forming.

The ſecret and deep laid plans of republicaniſm, which have been fatally ſucceſsful in winning ſo many

many thouſands from their allegiance, have during the laſt ſummer months rendered Ireland a miſerable ſpectacle of deſolation, murder and rapine. The ſtandard of rebellion has been ſeen in every province, and in every county. A war, not of political controverſy but of bloody animoſity, was raged againſt the peaceable inhabitants as well as the ſoldiers of royalty—Scenes, ſo freſh in the eye of every man, need not to be deſcribed; it is enough to ſay that every inſtitution, which had the defence of the conſtitution and the protection of the country for its foundation, was the object of deſtruction. The effects produced by a ſtate of unceaſing alarm and danger, and the daily detail of bloody actions with the rebel armies—by the deſolation and ruin, which every where threatened us, and by the terrors of an approaching winter—were viſible to every eye. A dejection and wearineſs of body and mind—an apathy in ſome—deſpondence in others—and paſſion and reſentment in the reſt. In which of thoſe claſſes would philoſophy find a habitation? Is it when the human mind is in a ſtate of political as well as natural debility, that its energies are to be brought to the teſt? is it when the fretfulneſs and irritation, or the lethargy and liſtleſsneſs, which

are

are attendant on the fever, under which the nation has ſuffered for ſeveral months paſt—is it when theſe have their fulleſt influence, that a ſubject is laid before it, which would require the moſt active energies of the mind to examine and decide upon it? Will the nation forget its own illneſs—and undertake a taſk adapted only to the vigour of health? Is it to the bed of ſickneſs and debility, that an intricate and difficult examination of a complex and abſtruſe queſtion ſhould be brought? How often have the arrangements, which have been thus made between man and man—been annulled by our Courts of Equity?

If it is poſſible by ringing the alarm to rouſe the public to an examination of the cauſe—before the mode of action ſhall be reſolved on—If it is poſſible to check that impetuoſity, which hurries to decide, before reaſon has been conſulted—the nation may reap advantages, but cannot ſuffer injury by the delay.

An Union between Great Britain and Ireland is ſo comprehenſive in its effects on the latter, that the avowal of the meaſure cannot but create uncommon agitation in the public mind. It engages our feelings

and

and implicates our intereſts both as individuals and as a nation. It will be irrevocable in its conſequences. Its effects are not temporary but permanent. Its operation is not limited in its extent or duration, but embraces the whole nation and poſterity. Not partial in its action, but general in its influence. Every conſideration of pride and intereſt—of property and profeſſion—of national dignity and private conſequence—of ſpeculative enterprize—and eſtabliſhed modes of trade—all come within the coloſſal ſtride of this projected meaſure.

And on ſuch an occaſion will this nation yield at once to firſt impreſſions? Will the nation liſten with gaping folly to the frothy, or the arrogant, or the inſidious arguments of thoſe who would hurry them in one inſtant to embrace with childiſh haſte, or to reject with ſullen obſtinacy a meaſure ſo momentous? Is this nation to be pamphletized out of its own judgment?

And who is he, whoſe philoſophic eye can at one glance, ſee the ſubject in all its conſequences immediate and remote?—Who is he, that will tell this nation with all the pedantry of an academick, or all the hankering prejudices of an alien—that

Ireland

Ireland can derive from the adoption of the meaſure nothing but benefits—national proſperity and individual advantage—religious ſecurity and a more dignified repreſentation?—Who is he, that will tell you that if you embrace the meaſure, even under any modification, you will be the murderer of national honor and proſperity—and the curſe of your poſterity? Is it in the *ipſe dixits* of an official writer, that we ſhall find a clue to lead our judgments? Is it in the hypocondriac terrors of an alarmiſt, that we ſhall read the leſſon of caution? Let us rather diveſt our minds of blind confidence, and of falſe fears. Let us examine with ſtrictneſs, but not with partiality. Let us debate with calmneſs—liſtening to the arguments of thoſe, who ſpeak from deliberation, not from party; and weighing the concluſions, which flow from the hypotheſis of other men, let us deliberate thereon in private, and argue in public; and from the general fund, which is formed of the opinions of calm and ſenſible enquirers, let one determination be adopted. By ſuch a mode of proceeding the general good will not be the ſufferer.

I cannot but think it ſtrange, that his Majeſty's Miniſters in this kingdom, have not, in the avowal

of the meaſure, ſtated any outline, by which the nation might be guided in its previous deliberation, before the parliament ſhall have met. It is ſtrange, that the public attention has not been called to the terms, on which the union between the two kingdoms is intended to be framed. It is ſtrange, that in this avowal of the meaſure, no official communication has been conſidered as neceſſary, to the commercial part of the metropolis, or of the kingdom.

My moſt firm belief is, that it is by no means the wiſh or intention of the Engliſh Cabinet to force the meaſure, or to be heedleſs of the voice of this nation, ſhould that voice be againſt it. I condemn that readineſs to impute ill motives to thoſe, who ſent an Engliſh army into Ireland,—nor do I give any credit to the aſſertion, that the object of that force was, not to repel a foreign enemy or ſubdue a domeſtick one, but to overawe the kingdom into a compliance with the will of the Engliſh Cabinet. Thoſe who wiſh to ſeparate Ireland from Great Britain, are the worſt enemies this nation has to encounter. Nature has linked the two kingdoms together by ſo many ties, that a ſeparation would be a convulſion, fatal perhaps to both.—And wicked

muſt

muſt that ſpirit be, which would wiſh for the ſake of experiment, to riſque the happineſs, nay the exiſtence of his country.

Many of thoſe, who have delivered their ſentiments on the ſubject of an Union, ſeem to me to injure the diſcuſſion, by aſſuming certain data, the exiſtence of which is almoſt as much a matter of controverſy as the main queſtion itſelf. One writer builds his little argument on a foundation, which is ſapped by general opinion. He reſts his ſuperſtructure on this unlevelled baſis, "that two "independent ſtates, finding their ſeparate exiſ-"tence mutually inconvenient, propoſe to form "themſelves into one ſtate for their mutual be-"nefit."—If this hypotheſis be true, would it not have been worth his labour, to have wrought a conviction of its truth in the minds of a doubting nation?—How like the Cretan, who paſſed Ætna by to view the volcano in Lipari.

The analogy, which is ſought for in the reference to ancient ſtates, or even to thoſe more modern, will produce but little advantage to the adducer. Examples of this kind are, in almoſt every inſtance, found to exiſt between ſtates at war and enmity with

each

each other, and whoſe relative ſituations and jarring intereſts excluded the probability of a laſting peace. Where an Union takes place between nations ſo circumſtanced, no force of argument can be drawn from thence analogous to the queſtion now before us ;—and for this reaſon, that in thoſe inſtances no alternative was left to either but a continual war, or an unlimited, inſeparable, unconditional Union—not ſo much an union of the nations, as of the people. No previous arrangement of the terms—no inequality of intereſts—no limitation of benefits—no diſtinction of rights were to be argued and adjuſted—were to be enrolled and preſerved as land-marks to aſcertain ſeparate eſtates to either nation. In the Swiſs Cantons I ſee nothing that can be quoted with effect, except in the inſignificant inſtance of the country of the Griſons. One example indeed, and a familiar one, ſeems to come near the queſtion now before us, and has been introduced by others.—I allude to the union of Scotland with England. In the ſecret hiſtory of the inſtruments and means, by which that event was accompliſhed, the enquirer will find much to guide him on this occaſion. He will there read, what were the ſeparate views of each nation—what were their motives,

and

and what were their objects. He will see how far the general good was pursued, how far partial advantage was sought after,—he will see what was left undone, as well as what was finished. "There is," says Bolingbroke, "in every state measure, an avowed reason and a reserved motive."

At the commencement of the 18th century, Scotland laboured under many inconveniencies and disadvantages, which Ireland is not exposed to. Besides the unity of the two Crowns being lost, Scotland had a constitution by no means like to that of England, and far, very far inferior to it. By her incorporation with England, her constitution received many great improvements,—much yet remains to be improved and corrected. Here no similarity can be found with Ireland. It is not in the theory of our constitution that we can reap advantage by an Union with Britain.—In the practice let it be sought:—Wisdom may find employment there.

I confess that it appears to me to be a matter of no serious import to Ireland, to learn the secret motives of England in seeking the accomplishment of

of this project. Grant, that ſhe ſeeks her own aggrandizement by it.—Grant, that it is not the intereſts and proſperity of Ireland which are her object, but her own power and ſecurity.—Grant that the advantages which muſt accrue to her, far outweigh thoſe which Ireland can derive from the adoption of the meaſure.—Yet, if by an incorporation of the two nations, Ireland will receive conſiderable benefits—and no loſſes or ſacrifices are to follow to counterbalance thoſe benefits, why ſhould ſhe with envious churliſhneſs deny herſelf advantages, becauſe that which will bring them to her will bring greater to England? I am firmly perſuaded, that were the two nations connected by an Union formed without diſhonorable partiality, that each would ultimately benefit by every advantage of the other. The great difficulty is ſo to frame that Union, that Diſunion be not the conſequence. On the previous arrangements, on their ſecurity, and the wiſdom of their formation, (ſhould the meaſure be adopted) depend the happineſs of Ireland.—

The imperious neceſſity of caution and deliberate examination, ſhould never for a moment be forgotten. If the advantages reſulting to Ireland from

an

an incorporation with England are not outweighed by the ſacrifices ſhe muſt make, and that the wiſh of the nation is, that that incorporation ſhall take effect,—let a ſecurity be had, that theſe advantages be not fleeting or revocable, whilſt our ſacrifices are permanent and irrevocable.—Let a ſecurity be had, that when the power of reviſion is gone, the neceſſity of reviſing be not left behind.—Let a ſecurity be had, that when an unanimity of the Iriſh Repreſentatives in the Britiſh Parliament would point out the injurious and unfair tendency of any meaſure to the kingdom which they repreſent, that unanimity may have the power to reſiſt it with effect. The eye need not wander far to find an example of the neceſſity of this caution.—Let a ſecurity be had, that the Iriſh Repreſentatives in the Britiſh Senate cannot become the inſtruments of a Britiſh party in that Senate.—Let a ſecurity be had, that the election of Iriſh Repreſentatives to ſerve in a Britiſh Senate, be not under the influence of a Britiſh Miniſter.—Let a ſecurity be had, that the articles of Union be not infringed.—Let a ſecurity be had, where prudence may ſuggeſt and expediency require it.

I am

It is intended, I am told, that on every queſtion which relates to Ireland alone, the Iriſh repreſentatives alone are to decide on it. If this be true, I doubt not but the framer of that modification had the intereſt of Ireland for his object. But I conceive any queſtion of moment ſo excluſively relating to Ireland alone, that no direct or indirect intereſt of England can be involved in it. If ſo, it will be no difficult matter to exclude the operation of ſuch a clauſe on almoſt every poſſible occaſion.

That which is termed national dignity, ſeems to me to be as little underſtood, as it has been greatly miſapplied on the preſent occaſion. Where two kingdoms have but one Crown, yet ſeparate legiſlatures; where a phyſical incorporation, but not a political one, has been formed by degrees;—where one fleet and one army, nationally indiviſible even in thought, have been formed from the ſubjects of each without diſtinction;—where the enemies of one are the enemies of both;—where peace and war affect both or neither;—where the ſubjects of the one are entitled to all the natural rights of the other—where is the diſtinct and ſeparate national

dignity

dignity of either? I know of none. The dignity of ſuch an empire is not diviſible into parts.

National pride is but too generally national prejudice. The introduction of thoſe plauſible terms amongſt the objects of real conſideration, is loading the enquiry with gilded baubles. They are like the foils and ſpangles on the ſlipper of the opera-dancer, which catch the eye and give a falſe appearance of action.

Alluſions to partnerſhips in trade, and other unions amongſt men, not in their collective capacity, bring with them no force of argument to the preſent queſtion,—and for this great reaſon, that they reach not beyond the lives of the parties; another reaſon forbids the aſſimilation—namely, that the poſſibility of a ſeparation is not excluded in caſe of mutual or partial unhappineſs.

In conſidering this ſubject, the Legiſlature will preſs itſelf firſt upon our attention,—becauſe, it is that part of our conſtitution which is the keyſtone of our happineſs, and will be principally affected by an Union. The importance of it demands a

moſt minute examination of the changes it will undergo, and the effects thoſe changes may be productive of to the nation. It is true, that the Houſe of Commons of Ireland is not filled according to the true theory of repreſentation. It is true, that defects and blemiſhes are to be found therein, and could a ſafe correction of them be deviſed, I would rejoice at its application—but not at once. Alterations in ſo material a part of our political ſtructure muſt be gradual. But party ſpirit, and diſaffection, and a rage for innovation have magnified every defect; and the moſt criminal induſtry has been employed to league the people of Ireland againſt the conſtitution. The violent and wicked remedies which have been preſcribed, urged, and even fought for, muſt ſhew to every reflecting mind, the neceſſity which has been created of even cheriſhing theſe blemiſhes in the Iriſh repreſentative body, which do actually exiſt, rather than ſubmit to the regimen, which traitors and republicans would force or perſuade us to adopt.

I doubt not but that the incorporation of the two Legiſlatures would be the means of correcting moſt of thoſe blemiſhes, which exiſt in ours. Moſt certainly

certainly it would totally remove the chief and the only grounds, on which the exiſtence of boroughs can be juſtified. It is a mockery on repreſentation to behold the *voice* of an individual returning twenty members into the Houſe of Repreſentatives. It is inverting the object of repreſentation, not purſuing it. The delay, the impolicy and the inefficacy of taking the ſentiments of a nation by its individuals, on any propoſition, gave birth to delegation. By delegation was intended, that numbers ſhould be repreſented by one. How is this inverted, if one is repreſented by many? Inſtead of one voice acting as the aggregate ſentiment of many, this is multiplying the ſentiment of one into many, and giving each a ſeparate repreſentation in the Senate Houſe. Abſurd and irreconcileable as this may appear, and injurious as it has often been to the intereſts of the kingdom, and may again be ſo, yet in the events which have taken place in Ireland within theſe twelve months, we find not only an excuſe for its exiſtence, but even a neceſſity for its continuance, until the cauſes ceaſe, which juſtify it at preſent.

The

The term of that neceſſity will be, I hope, very ſhort. But the hour of political and private nervouſneſs is not a fit time for throwing off an old garment, under which, notwithſtanding ſome rents, we have found a genial warmth, and a protection againſt the fury of the ſtorm.

The commencement of an Union would undoubtedly be the death of thoſe reaſons, which ambition or venal ingenuity can frame in the defence of boroughs. If repreſentation is a meaſure of expediency—the more perfect that repreſentation is, the the more completely does it anſwer the ends of it. Every deviation from the principles, on which it is founded, is a corruption—and corruption in the body politick, like that in the body natural, gives birth to things diſguſting.

It is not ſuppoſed by any one, that the whole of the two houſes of Parliament are to be annexed to thoſe of Great Britain, but a proportion only. How much conſideration and debate and ſtruggle will that proportion occaſion, ſhould the meaſure take effect? on that proportion the hopes and fears of Ireland will reſt. Clamour here ſhould be ſilent,

leſt

leſt it confound the arrangement. Much is to be feared, leaſt the noiſy or ſubtle arguments of the agents of revolution or of power ſhould lead the multitude aſtray, and thus force the judgment of the wiſe and the learned to yield to popular tumult.

The example, which is drawn from the Union of Scotland with England, furniſhes to Ireland a leſſon of caution and wiſdom, which ſhould never be loſt ſight of. The fixed and unchangeable limitation of the repreſentation of that kingdom ſuggeſts to me the following obſervations:

If the proportion of Iriſh repreſentation to be admitted into the Britiſh Senate is to be aſcertained by her preſent relative conſequence and value in the Empire—how is the future exerciſe of that value and conſequence (in relation to the Empire) to receive hereafter its proportion of additional repreſentation commenſurate to that relative encreaſe? The growth of Iriſh proſperity is confidentially promiſed to be in a ratio far above calculation, by the adoption of this great meaſure, a previous article ſhould therefore be inſerted to provide for it, leſt the Engliſh Cabinet, compoſed of men without either

either the ability or the integrity of the preſent members, ſhould be hereafter deaf to a claim, which had not been provided for by the articles of Union. Ireland cannot be certain, that her conſequence will every ſeven years be weighed with impartiality and juſtice in the ſcale of the Empire, and a proportion of repreſentatives be allotted to her accordingly.

Whether the placing the dernier reſort in the Iriſh houſe of Peers has in its conſequences juſtified that proud exultation, which took place at the accompliſhment of that event, is a ſubject which I mean not to touch upon. Whether the dignity of our Peerage will be affected by an Union, I mean not to argue. The whole body of our Peerage cannot find ſeats in the Engliſh houſe of Lords.

I muſt ſuppoſe, that in the articles of Union, England will propoſe to aſcertain and limit the number of Iriſh Peers admiſſible to Parliament, as was done with Scotland. But let not this material point be overlooked in the arrangement, namely, that if the number to be admitted is to be aſcertained by a compariſon with the preſent number of Engliſh Peers—a proviſion ſhould be made, that in

every

every addition hereafter to be made to the Engliſh Peerage, Ireland ſhall be conſidered, and ſhall be enabled to ſend her proportion alſo to the Engliſh houſe of Lords—whether this point had been diſcuſſed at the ſettlement of the articles of the Scotch Union, neither my reſearches nor my enquiries have been as yet able to diſcover. But it is ſurely a proviſion well deſerving the attention of the kingdom, ſhould an Union take place betwen her and England. The credit of Ireland will greatly depend on the abilities and virtues of the Peers ſhe ſhall elect on this occaſion to repreſent her. Independence of ſpirit is as neceſſary as independence of fortune—integrity in politicks as much as integrity in private dealings.—The mode of election will be a ſubject requiring much deliberation. If the Union be not embraced, and the Iriſh houſe of Peers thereby remain on it's preſent footing—I ſhall only obſervè, that an hereditary repreſentative Body ſhould be ever moſt pure, becauſe it is not liable to that correction to which the octenial election ſubjects the Lower Houſe.

Utcunque defecere mores
Dedecorant benè nata culpæ.

I muſt ſuppoſe, that if the Union takes place, the mode of repreſentation of Ireland in the Britiſh

Houſe

Houſe of Commons, will be by an election, not by boroughs, but by counties, proportioned to their value in the nation. I muſt ſuppoſe that the preſent proprietors of boroughs will be recompenſed by Parliament for the loſs of their *inheritance* or *purchaſe* in thoſe boroughs. The introduction of ſuch a propoſition into Parliament, will call forth the metaphyſical ſubtilty of the mover to reconcile it to the rules of Parliament. An avowal muſt be made, that boroughs are mere private property, and that two-thirds of thoſe, who compoſe that very parliament, are not elected by the nation but by proprietors.—Proprietors of the boroughs—Proprietors of the votes in Parliament. But the breach of order in making ſuch an avowal in that Houſe, ſhould not ſtand a bar to ſo neceſſary a propoſition.

I have heretofore conſidered the Parliamentary modifications without involving the queſtion which brings into agitation, the power of Parliament to make any material innovation in the conſtitution. This will be a ſubject of debate, which will, I fear, create more heat, and produce more political animoſities and diviſions, than this already-divided

nation

nation can well bear. The ſcience of politics has this peculiarity in it, that every pupil or novice in it, at once thinks himſelf a maſter. Thus it is, that in every company, and at every table, political ſubjects are unceaſingly introduced; and no man departs with any other conviction on his mind, from the arguments he has heard, than that heat and paſſion are inſeparable from ſuch diſcuſſions, and that perſonal animoſities are the concluſions which follow.

And can it be hoped, that a ſubject, which rouſes the feelings and paſſions of every one more than any other political ſubject whatever,—becauſe it affects that conſtitution, which all have been taught to love and revere,—Can it, I ſay, be hoped that ſuch a ſubject will be weighed with impartiality in a moment, and in ſuch a moment as the preſent? Can it be hoped, that in proportion to its magnitude it will be conſidered with coolneſs? Are the objects which it embraces, and the intereſts which it affects, ſo eaſily compriſed within the compaſs of one glance, that time will not be neceſſary to form our judgements? Is the merchant of the north and the merchant of the ſouth ſo proximate, that each

can at the ſame inſtant whiſper in the enquirer's ear, the reſult of every commercial conſideration? Are the ſentiments of conſtituents to be collected throughout this nation without meetings, or without reference?—or is the repreſentative to reject the aſſiſtance of his country on a meaſure, which if adopted, will be without reviſion or repeal?

And is this nation in that ſober, calm, unagitated ſtate, that needs no reſt, and is fitted to this inflaming debate? Is it in the remembrance of murdered friends yet freſh upon the mind? Is it in the embers, yet warm, of thoſe fires in which the houſes and property of thouſands were conſumed? Is it in the Reports of the Secret Committees verified by events? Is it in the terrors, which a ſecret and domeſtic foe at this very hour occaſion? Is it in the depreſſion of private credit, and in the ſtill exiſting neceſſity of keeping the Yeomanry on duty? Is it in a nation divided and armed againſt itſelf? Is it in theſe, that we find an argument to prove the nation to be in that ſober and calm and unprejudiced ſtate of mind, which is ſuited to the reception and conſideration of a meaſure, the extent of whoſe effects, has called up a miniſterial officer

to

to publiſh his arguments *for and* " AGAINST" the adoption of it? Have the conſequences, which may follow an agitation in the public mind, been conſidered? Is the neceſſity of an inſtantaneous concluſion ſo imperious, that nothing can be conceded to caution? Who can yet ſay " the ſtorm " is paſt, and the wreck is cleared?"

The commercial part of the nation forms ſo conſiderable an intereſt, and is ſo particularly liable to the effects of changes, that it eſſentially behoves it to examine with cautious care the conſequences, which may reſult to it from the projected Union. It is a misfortune, and a real one, that there is not that unity of commercial intereſts amongſt the merchants of Ireland, which exiſts in England ſo greatly to its advantage. The North, from the habits of a trade, which is fatally hurtful to general commerce in a nation, where impoſts and reſtrictions are neceſſary, differs in its intereſts from the South, and particularly from the metropolis. On few queſtions would the merchants of both agree. There has been, I believe, no inſtance of any conſiderable fortune being amaſſed in the North by commerce, ſave ſuch only where ſmuggling has been

been the means. The modes of commerce, which have been practiced there, create an intereſt, which will not be conſentaneous with the ideas of a fair trader. The geographical ſituation of the North gives ſo much encouragement to contraband trade, and the temptations are ſo ſtrong, that I fear the continuance of it will not be ſhort-lived. By this and other cauſes, which thoſe, to whom they relate, are well appriſed of, the voice of the Iriſh merchant is ſeldom liſtened to; and the weight, which it ſhould have in the ſtate, and with foreign nations is inconſiderable. The ſentiments of the Iriſh merchants are eaſily anticipated—they are therefore ſeldom conſulted. But on this great queſtion they ſhould deliberate and ſhould be heard. In a commercial nation, the voice of commercial men ſhould not be ſet at nought.

The Eſtabliſhed Church will have leſs reaſon to object to an Union thon the Bar. With ſorrow I ſee the gradual advances, which public opinion is making againſt the rights of the Clergy. Thoſe eſtates, which are the proviſion of the Clergy, are viewed with encreaſing jealouſy, and the Iriſh Houſe of Commons has not iufrequently witneſſed the

effects

effects of it. Too much cauſe is to be found in the manners and modes of life of thoſe, who now fill the clerical orders. Where is that reſpectability of appearance, that dignified modeſty of deportment, that holy zeal, and that impreſſive example of life, by which the vulgar were awed, and the reſt were won to reſpect them? The ſecurity of the Church eſtates totters from the loſs of its reverend pillars. I am, however, of opinion, that the extinction of a Parliament in Ireland, will be the means of giving ſtability to the poſſeſſions of the Church.

The Bar is ſo extenſive a field for wealth, fame, honors, and civil preferments, and is of ſuch weight in this country, that the profeſſion cannot but be moſt materially affected by the incorporation of the two kingdoms. With juſt reaſon the public attention is fixed on the reſult of a meeting of the members of that profeſſion, on the queſtion of an Union. Thoſe too, who are concerned in the Government of the kingdom, are not unconcerned as to the opinion of the Bar. The learning, the judgment, the connections, the influence, the power of that profeſſion muſt give

weight

weight to their political opinions. If the intereſt of the nation demands an Union, the Bar will not, I am ſure, balance its ſeparate intereſts againſt thoſe of their country. But if the meaſure ſhall appear to be inexpedient, the influence of that profeſſion will not be exerted in vain.

The landed intereſt will have leſs to guide it in the diſcuſſion of the queſtion, than any other part of the nation. Speculation will have its fulleſt ſcope. But the manufactures, and particularly thoſe, that are yet in their infancy, will be moſt materially concerned. The linen manufacturer will not be injured in any degree, but perhaps he will be benefited by an Union. The coarſe woollen manufacture, which gives employment to the South, ſtands much in the ſame ſituation with that of linens, and has nothing to fear from England. But the cotton manufactory, and others which Ireland has been ſtruggling to eſtabliſh in herſelf, and are now protected by duties on Engliſh goods of the ſame kind, will have reaſon to be watchful for their exiſtence. Proviſions and regulations will be neceſſary to ſave them, and the numbers who have embarked their properties in them ſhould have time

to

to frame thoſe proviſions, before the meaſure ſhall take effect.

Local intereſts are deeply engaged in this great queſtion. The metropolis of Ireland looks with an agony of anxiety, at a meaſure, by which ſhe is apprehenſive that her ruin may be accompliſhed. If the Union is to be productive of an unbounded extenſion of commerce, how will Dublin be made partaker in the benefit? The Court and the Parliament brought that city to a ſtate of the higheſt beauty and improvement. Thouſands, building their faith on the ſeparate national exiſtence of Ireland, have ſunk their properties in purchaſes or in the eſtabliſhment of their trades in or near to Dublin. Their ſecurity totters, and their eſtates are already depreciated by the mere avowal of the intended meaſure. The ſituation of the metropolis, the badneſs and inſecurity of her harbour, the ſhallowneſs of her river,—theſe and many other cauſes will operate to prevent the exiſtence of her commerce, and her reaping any advantages from the Union, which can compenſate her for her loſſes. Cork on the other hand will derive every benefit, which Dublin muſt looſe. The ſituation of Cork

in

in the map of Europe will draw commerce to her great harbour. Thus one part of the nation will be aggrandized at the expence of another. The miſery of an impoveriſhed province is not counterbalanced by the proſperity of another.

How many arrangements therefore will be neceſſary to prevent the partial operation of an Union? How much time will it require to examine conſequences, and to guard againſt them? How much conſultation and deliberation will be wanting amongſt the different parts of the nation,—its Merchants, its Profeſſions, its Parliament, its Men of Eſtate, and its Men of Trade?

And can the advantages and diſadvantages of an Union, and all its conſequences, be ſeen and weighed in a moment? Does the yet agitated and nervous ſtate of Ireland afford that moment which prudence would ſelect? The public papers are yet filled with the detail of outrages committed daily throughout the kingdom, and which ſerve to keep the inhabitants in a ſtate of continual alarm. It will not be deemed unfair to preſume from thence, that one of two conſequences muſt enſue, viz. that the

the propoſition will be either embraced with inconſiderate eagerneſs, or rejected with reſentment: the former conſequence will be produced by that exhauſted ſtate of body and mind, which proceeds from unceaſing terrors, and flies for ſhelter to any thing, that ſeems to promiſe it a momentary relief, and a defence againſt continued attacks. The latter conſequence will follow from this, that an impreſſion (however falſe, yet natural to an agitated mind) may be received by the nation, which will unfortunately lead it to believe, that the hour of national diſtreſs was ſelected for preſſing a meaſure big with conſequences, and which without being fairly examined, will be conſidered as injurious to Ireland; candour, and cool judgment, and good temper will be ſtrangers to the determination, and the true intereſts of the nation will be overlooked; violent reſolutions and deciſions will follow: I know the impetuous and irritable temper of my countrymen, and I know how eaſily it is miſdirected.

An event the moſt extraordinary, the moſt dangerous, and I will add the moſt unnatural may ſucceed; a temporary and partial and deſigning coalition

may be formed between the diſaffected and the loyal: partial—becauſe it has only one object in view, namely, the defeat of the meaſure of an Union; deſigning—becauſe it is making the loyal part of the nation ancillary to the views of traitors; temporary—becauſe it will ceaſe with its object. The effects of ſuch a coalition are not eaſily calculated; animoſities would be created between Ireland and Britain, and the grand wiſh of treaſon would be accompliſhed by the creation of a diviſion between two kingdoms, which ought to be linked together by an indiſſoluble tie, and have no ſeparate intereſts.

And would the adoption of the meaſure act like a charm in inſtantaneouſly compoſing every diſcontented mind in Ireland? or would its operation be ſlow and gradual?

Is there not too much reaſon to fear, that the ill temper of the nation may now not only reject the meaſure without valuing it, but that an impreſſion may be left behind, which will impede the accompliſhment of it at a future period: many are the advantages which it promiſes—many are the ſacri-

fices

fices which muſt be made at its adoption. Prejudices are always clamorous and violent—Reaſon and Time may, and alone can remove them.

In the wiſdom of an honourable Government, and in the good ſenſe of England I reſt my hope, that the ſickly ſtate of Ireland will not be ſelected for the hour of change.

Ου παθημα, αλλα μαθημα σωφροσυνη.

ZEN.

FINIS.