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81
SPECULATIONS

ON

Mr. GRATTAN'S

A D D R E S S

TO HIS

CONSTITUENTS.



BY A BARRISTER.



DUBLIN: PRINTED 1797,

AND

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1802.

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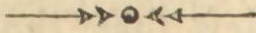
AND

By J. G. ...

1802.

Houses of the Oireachtas

SPECULATIONS, &c.



September 26, 1797.

THERE must be more than common apathy in that temper, which the present condition of Ireland does not stimulate to activity. To me the crisis seems to present somewhat of an awful and irresistible call of duty, upon the man of influence to employ his credit—upon the man of reflection to interpose with remonstrance—upon every man in his respective sphere, to assist in restoring harmony to this distracted country. It is a duty, melancholy indeed, but necessary to chastise infatuated men who disturb the harmony of the state; but the objects of punishment are our fellow-citizens, whom it is not less a duty to warn against delusion. When persons of consideration promote the designs of that coalition of vice and folly, which has for some time undermined the happiness of the Nation—the danger to the political morals of the people becomes more alarming, and I feel the summons more urgent. Let that people, in some places misled, but generally honest and well-intentioned, hear the language of unsophisticated common sense, let them be calmly led to a fair understanding of their rights, which faction misrepresents; and of their political and commercial interests, which it tramples on or despises. Under this impression, and with this

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apology,

apology, I offer the sentiments of a dispassionate mind: the reasoning, upon which, a spectator, not an actor in political transactions, I formed my own opinions; remote from the passions of party; from the influence of expectation, and of feelings, from which few active adherents are exempt, but none less than those, of whom the prospects are reverfionary.—The Enemy menaces invasion; and although arms or negociation may avert that evil, we have every ground to apprehend his further endeavours to distract us. Probably to hazard an open attack may not be consistent with his prudence; but he will rejoice in dissentions which occupy Great Britain; he will rejoice to see Ireland engaged with constitution-mongers, whilst he draws out of her hands the monopoly of the Linen Trade, which we derived from the early events of the war, and re-establishes his own ruined fabrics in Britany and Flanders. France, if she can, will protract the period of that delirium, by which she profits. At home a number of discontented persons, some restless by temper and habit, others perverted by the malignant assiduity of their fellow-citizens, unambiguously menace revolution. The remnant of a party, once respectable, displays its readiness to pioneer for either mischief. Desperate and desponding, they court the confederacy of a body of men, who often have reviled and still despise them. In the public calamity, they consider alone the means it affords of harassing administration, or the opportunity to supplant it. To what other motives can any man attribute that valedictory manifesto published by Mr. Grattan, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, the opposition party in the late Parliament. These gentlemen must have formed a mean idea of the investigating spirit of Ireland, if they expect, that their arrogant

gant pretensions, and ostentatious display of merits shall not provoke animadversion.

When I am to blame the excesses, into which this knot of gentlemen have been betrayed, I am far from imputing to them as a crime, the mere matter of opposing government. In a free state men may differ; they necessarily must differ, about the enjoyment of civil liberty, about the management of the commonwealth: Even their personal consideration, although a concern of less moment, may be permitted to enter into their discussions. I would pardon ordinary foibles to the partizan, provided the operation of them secures discussion, in my humble apprehension, the most essential advantage in popular institutions; men, who have the management of public affairs, must in publicity and enquiry feel a controul, although they may not dread the majority of their judges. A good minister will not shrink from this tribunal.---It is the theatre of his glory. No exertion of private vigilance can so effectually prevent the lapse into indolence, or correct the errors inseparable from extensive occupation. I neither admire Mr. Grattan's paper-projects of government, nor that more substantial part of his system, which points to the block and axe, as the sole controul and corrective. No; let us rather take advantages where they can be found, as they grow out of human nature; than rely on the resource of punishment, which, when it is most deserved, will most easily be eluded.

But political men acting in these combinations, are no more than other citizens exempt from the laws of moderation and decorum. Circumscribed by these limits, party combinations are allowable, they are sometimes useful: they prove the reality of that liberty of which they affect to question the existence. For who would make

this appeal to public opinion, unless in that public he saw a tribunal free, and competent to judge; and powerful to make its decision respected? Take them at the worst, partial discontents are to civil liberty, that inconvenience, with which Providence qualifies all its blessings: The inseparable thorn that, in defiance of art, springs spontaneously with the rose. Let our liberty arise under the same form, let her bear the same lincaments, let her even exist with the same imperfections to which other free nations have submitted. The conformity of resemblance will attest the lineage.

Before I take up the political opinions delivered by Mr. GRATTAN in the name of the party of which he appears the leader, I shall endeavour concisely to appreciate their claim to the favour of their country. They challenge no less prerogative than to guide the public mind of Ireland, as most deserving to be followed from integrity and wisdom. If they are to be driven from this ground, it must be at the hazard of offering reflections, which can only be excused, even to the writer's own feelings, by the necessity of refuting an haughty claim, so prejudicial to the interest of the country. On this justification of a public duty more impressive than any private feelings, I shall proceed with calmness and respectfully.

Few, who possess such an ample power of doing mischief, are so little competent, as the persons who compose this faction, to improve the advantages they find, or to correct the evils they have occasioned. There are among them men of talents, but no statesman. The reason is, that the greater part having found full occupation in the labour of profession, had no leisure to acquire political information, and no opportunity to
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gain experience: and that gentleman, who early withdrew from professional pursuits, has chosen to cultivate his fancy, rather than his understanding. He seems to have formed himself upon some ancient models of mere verbal declamation; when he brings his discourse to a point at which his audience ought to expect somewhat of close reasoning, he flies off in a sky-rocket, "perish the empire, live the constitution." This answered very well, when the sole end and purpose of all political exertion in Ireland was to bear down the legislative supremacy of Great Britain. Mr. GRATTAN fitted himself out at that period for political adventure, and whether the limited faculty of his mind did not admit a second idea; or that having attained his *acme* in reputation, he neglected the exercises that were calculated to improve him, he has never since spoken, nor does he seem to have thought, upon any subject but the influence of Great Britain. Hence has he ceased to be an useful legislator. We want a statesman to improve our energies, to extend the resources of the country, to encourage manufacturing skill, to open useful channels for commercial enterprize. The animating eloquence of this gentleman seems to me rather to have given us a contrary direction, to have thrown us into difficult and injudicious speculations in commerce, and visionary projects of constitution. Against every concession of ministers he has at hand a fresh supply of grievances, which being separately produced, seem more designed to diffuse discontent, than to benefit the country, and afford little prospect of a settled government, whilst he interferes in politics.

—Uno aucto, non deficit alter,
 —Et simili frondescit virga metallo.

Some

Some members of this party are dexterous in debate; others splendid in declamation: In general complaint, and unsubstantiated accusation, all are admirable; but they are ever unargumentative; they give general assertions without end. In vain would you seek among them for comprehensive views or solidity in reasoning; never did they display a single quality beneficial to the public; never from their political discourses was the hearer's mind enriched with a single idea. Flippant volubility of language, the powers of imagination, eloquence too, for it is among their attributes, may circulate discontent. Mankind is but too prone to that restless humour, and most disposed to it under the most free government; but widely do the powers, to compose an agitated public mind, differ from the qualifications to disturb it. Far from the author of this essay is the disposition to rail improvidently. I deliver my opinion under a candid conviction that I am fairly describing the weight and respect due to their counsels. In the House of Commons, these gentlemen were permitted by men of superior minds to domineer, from indolence, from apathy, perhaps sometimes from jealousy, or the want of combination, or the court quarrels of the friends of government. Out of parliament, the public was amused and captivated. Perhaps it is the weak side of the Irish to be dazzled by brilliancy, and to yield to what is specious. If Providence designed to visit a state with calamity, it would permit that persons with such natural and acquired endowments, as those I have described, should by a few years of opposition unsettle the confidence of the people, the great basis of authority, and then, amidst public agitation, that they should assume the reins of government.

These

These gentlemen will not refuse to be tried by the example of a political body, to which they were long attached; "the weather-beaten remains" of which, if they do not adhere to, they certainly imitate in its most unwarrantable proceedings. When the Fox, or the Portland party, in England, were put out of office on the business of India, their temper was put to the test of no inconsiderable provocation; yet, backed by a majority in parliament, they refused, by withholding the supplies, to endanger the peace and honor of the kingdom: they acted as men, who, in the warmth of feeling, did not forget their duties. Where was Mr. Grattan's sense of obligation in a similar predicament?—Where his patriotism?—Where his pious wish to spare his country many horrid scenes she has witnessed, many calamities she has felt, and others, which without his vigilance she has averted? In his two exhibitions in print, the one immediately after Lord Fitzwilliam's recall; the other, this on which we animadvert; he displayed his supposed grievances, as worthy to be vindicated by the extreme vengeance of an indignant people. He slept so long over these very political questions, that I cannot imagine his sober sense of their value directed the heightened colouring he bestowed upon them. I do not assert that he proposed to the people to avenge his quarrel by arms; but if they had the folly to fly to that excess, there was not, mixed with his violent counsels, a whisper of forbearance to repress them.

Mark how a man who passed the greater portion of his life in the practice of opposing government, defines the excess I criminate. "To oppose things which are not blame-worthy, or which are of no material consequence to the national interest, with such violence as may disorder

order the harmony of government, is certainly faction." Lord Bolinbroke observed this rule of patriotic decency, in combating his persecutor, Sir Robert Walpole, and what has occurred to place the Irish opposition above a similar sense of propriety? This is not the place to enter into the ill-treatment, this party alledge to have received in the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam. But granting, for argument, that they were justly exasperated, what is the apology for goading the country into that aggregate of all mischiefs, political intemperance? Resentment; stale and long rankling, and long brooded over resentment: That which would aggravate the felon's crime, and deprive the suffering murderer of compassion; and this excuse is to atone for every fault! and to advance these gentlemen to the rank of patriots! Well did the pirate reply to Alexander: I am led to death because I rob in a single vessel; you who plunder at the head of an army, are an hero.

I have extended my preliminary observations to some length, in order to embrace the political merits of the party and the leader. These pretensions are so much diffused through Mr. Grattan's address, so often and so ostentatiously insinuated, that I preferred to place the subject under a single point of view, and close the account with his hints, his boasts, and his allusions. Let these gentlemen withdraw from the service of the state. Perhaps they imagine that in politics, as in love,

—Silence denotes more woe
Than words, tho' ne'er so witty.
The beggar who is dumb, you know,
Deserves a double pity.

Let them try what dumb shew may effect;
they have played off in vain their political sleights
and

and monkey tricks. They over-rate their capacity to govern, and the opinion which universally prevails on the subject of that capacity, when they expect that the longing eyes of Ireland will ever turn to their retreat, or that her patriotic voice will summon them to relinquish it. I hold in view, whilst I express this sentiment, even the ruinous and improbable events which our sanguine reformers never cease to look to, as the end and object of their labour. Mr. Grattan and his friends will have the plaudits of the staunch republicans, whilst they endeavour to embarrass government. The earlier revolutionists are too subtle not to perceive, that eloquent men, to whom the public willingly listen, and who are not scrupulous as to what they tell it, may by diffusing speculations and discontents, dispose the people to receive their own doctrines. These persons will encourage such useful precursors of their mission; but, when the assistance becomes unnecessary, they will not hesitate to shew them the propriety of yielding to political masters, "the latches of whose shoes they would be found unworthy to unloose."

When Mr. Grattan, in the year 1782, acted as the minister of the Irish people, and both the original tie of duty, and the recent obligation conferred on him by his country, should have concurred in inducing him to exercise that function with accurate fidelity, he could not be ignorant in what manner the government of Ireland was like to be conducted. He ought at once to have produced his constitutional budget, and suffered the people to sit down to their industry. He must have been aware at that time, (for every novice in politics knew the fact) that no minister could pretend to manage the concerns of a state, unless a majority of the legislative body concurred

red in the general propriety of his measures. He must have been aware too, that if his constitution of 82 added any thing to the importance of the Irish Parliament, the co-operation of a majority became more essential to the minister. Still no proposal was made by him to diminish the influence of the crown; nor did he appear anxious to infuse a greater portion of popular spirit into the House of Commons. He therefore either trifles with his country now, or he did so on the former occasion. Either he exaggerates the inconvenience of our parliamentary constitution at present, by representing it as a mischief that cries for vengeance and correction; or he extenuated it *then*, when he acquiesced in it as a good institution, or at the utmost, as only blemished with venial imperfections. When the confidence of the crown was withdrawn from himself, Mr. Grattan's perception grew instantaneously more acute, and he discovered excess and misapplication in the influence of the Sovereign;—he produced a second project of constitution; not his present indispensable essentials, reform and emancipation; but what the party denominated the internal reform of the House of Commons. Irish Liberty was not yet made to consist in the exclusion of the King's confidential ministers, from any concern in the affairs of this member of the empire. No; the cant of the party was to assimilate the Irish to the English constitution. Grant, said they, this reasonable boon, and a sound and salutary government will necessarily be the consequence. The means to attain an end so desirable were specifically stated.—These were to limit the pension list, to exclude pensioners from Parliament, to regulate and restrict the admission of placemen into that assembly, and to establish a responsibility in certain officers for the

the issue of public money. Here again the political integrity of Mr. Grattan and his party fails; either he was on that occasion below the mark of reasonable regulation, or he is far beyond that point at present. The servants of the crown uotbid him in the article of concessions. Beside acceding to the internal reform proposed by Mr. Grattan's friends, they extended the privileges of the Catholics beyond what that people had ever proposed*. They eased the poorer orders of the hearth-tax: they gave up for the benefit of the public,

* I quote the following passages from resolutions of the general committee of the Catholics, dated 4th Feb. 1792, Edward Byrne, Esq; in the chair, signed Richard M'Cormick, secretary. These resolutions are prefixed to an address from the general committee, published by P. Byrne, 1792.

“ Resolved, That the committee has been informed, that reports have been circulated, that the application of the Catholics for relief, extends to total and unlimited emancipation.

“ That therefore we deem it necessary to declare, that the whole of our late application, whether to his Majesty's ministers, or to men in power, or to private members of the legislature, neither did nor does contain any thing, or extend further either in substance or in principle than the four following objects :

- 1st. Admission to the profession and practice of the law.
- 2d. Capacity to serve on county magistracies.
- 3d. A right to be summoned and to serve on grand and petty Juries.
- 4th. The right of voting in counties only for Protestant members of parliament; in such a manner, however, as that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote, unless he either rented and cultivated a farm of twenty pounds per annum, in addition to his forty shilling freehold, or else possessed a freehold to the amount of *twenty pounds* a year.

I do not cite these passages by way of binding the Catholics to this declaration; on the contrary, I think the points on which they explained themselves very injudiciously selected; but the above declaration was made in 1792. In 1793, Mr. Hobart brought in a bill, by which all the above privileges were conferred upon the Catholics, and in addition,

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public, that part of the hereditary revenue which his Majesty held, as a kind of private property, by a tenure strictly legal, but, according to modern principles of government, unconstitutional. On Mr. Grattan's other cardinal merit, the emancipation, as he chuses to call it, of the Catholics, every man's recollection will supply remarks nearly analogous. Mr. Grattan had on some occasions, delivered in obscure hints and oracular ambiguities, so much of his sentiments as sufficed to prove, that he had made up his mind upon this question, and that he considered the political interests of Ireland to be crushed beneath the depression of the Catholics. Mr. George Ponsonby had not yet seen the vision which produced his miraculous conversion, changing him, like Saul, from a persecutor to an apostle. I am not entering here into a discussion of what path the state ought to pursue, or ought heretofore to have pursued in the matter of the Catholics. I propose merely to relate an historical fact, and to deduce from thence an obvious inference. That person who professed himself to be the man of the people, and who was bound by his situation to devote himself with peculiar assiduity to the public welfare, discerned a set of regulations which, whilst they pressed with peculiar

the franchise of voting at elections was given to them without restriction, and they were made capable to hold civil offices with few exceptions. In 1795 and 96, Parliament gave 21,000*l.* to found a college for the education of the Catholic clergy. In 1797 Mr. Grattan and a multitude of subordinate agitators, have the modesty and candor to instruct that people, that the few subsisting restrictions constitute a burden so intolerable, as to justify the most outrageous discontent. And that instead of trying the effects of time, temper, and negotiation, they should seek to redress their inconvenience by subverting the constitution, and letting in the mischiefs of democracy.

peculiar grievance on a particular description of his fellow-citizens, were detrimental to the cause of liberty, and weakened the effects of public spirit through the entire community. Such must have been the decided opinion of Mr. Grattan, when about fifteen years ago he delivered that celebrated apophthegm, "the Irish Protestant can never be free until the Catholic ceases to be a slave;" yet he then made no effort as a member of Parliament to relieve the Catholics, he published not any address, out of Parliament, to cheer their hopes, or to dispel the prejudices entertained against them. His answer will probably be, that the time was not fit for the experiment. I reply, that Mr. G. might have created the occasion; for less men than Mr. G. created it. I reply, that if this was the interest of Ireland, or if he thought it to be such, he ought to have created the occasion, and acted in the grievance of millions, with the hazardous zeal he now affects to feel for the inconvenience of hundreds. But in this, as in his other acts, he consulted not the welfare of Ireland, but of his party. There is on record a charge against him by that part of the Catholics, whom he denominates the most "popular and energetic," by which he is represented, in the year 1792, to have been unwilling to present their petition to parliament*. Now the difference, in the state of the Catholics, is worth noting, between that former

* "The Catholics of Ireland, constituting at the lowest three-fourths of the inhabitants of the kingdom, had not sufficient influence to induce *any one* member of Parliament to bring in their petitions."—See *vindication of the cause of the Catholics, ordered to be published by the general committee, at a meeting held December 7th, 1792.*—Signed Edward Shiel, Chairman, Richard M'Cormick, Secretary. Pages 1 and 2, printed by H. Fitzpatrick.

former period when Mr. Grattan was a supine spectator of their grievance, and this present time that he is at so much pains to prove it oppressive and intolerable. They were then barely permitted to purchase land, but excluded from every political franchise, from every office, from every profession. They are incapable at present to sit in either house of parliament, or to hold any of about thirty great offices of state. They are free to engage in every profession; and with these enumerated exceptions, are capable of every franchise and promotion enjoyed by their fellow-citizens. The system of popery laws to which Mr. Grattan was indifferent, affected every man of the millions who compose the Catholic body; the restrictions, he so warmly resents, may affect about one hundred individuals at the utmost. A college is now maintained by government for their clergy, who then were scattered round Europe in search of education. Yet this state of things is called "proscription," by the man who never meddled in redress until the measure was forced upon him; by the party, of whom the major number opposed the great and serious emancipation of the Catholics, whilst their opposition was of any moment to retard it*. And this "proscription," as they term it, is to justify "the deep-rooted and established discontent and jealousy," which they find to exist, I presume, among the noisy and turbulent, and mischievous men, whom by a sort of elective attraction in their own character, they select for their

* I need not remind my reader, that the gentlemen in the Ponsonby interest, spoke and voted against the Catholics until 1793, and then only changed, on the administration declaring itself in favour of that people. In the pursuit of popularity, they found it inconvenient to be left behind on a popular question.

their political confederates. For shame, Mr. Grattan, to present yourself eternally mourning over the tomb of a departed discontent, or dressing up a fictitious grievance for popular delusion.

Vixque tenet lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit.

In general design and objects, the councils of Ireland must necessarily coincide with those of the same sovereign in the other member of the British confederacy. The combination of the countries would otherwise be a scheme, not of mutual assistance, but of debility. Freedom does not, in the mind of any rational man, consist in eternal squabbles with our rulers. It is only the punctilious vanity of a mean character, that catches at encroachment, or disrespect among the ordinary unmeaning offices of life, and thinks independence languishes, when it is not arrogantly displayed or captiously asserted. This doctrine of national concurrence, (the influence of Great Britain Mr. Grattan now chuses to call it), cannot be novel to that gentleman. No man ever reduced it to practice on a more extensive scale than he did when minister, although at present out of power, and likely to continue so, his imagination peoples it with hobgoblins. I do think, that the temper of these times is likely to lead us, in the intercourse with Great Britain, rather to an extreme of jealousy than of acquiescence. I think of the evils, that the less dangerous and the more easily repaired is the latter; and perhaps Mr. Grattan may be of the same opinion; for to that side, when he was in power, was the inclination of his errors. He chuses at this day to confound the influence of the crown in matters of internal police, with the commercial bickerings which necessarily must arise between
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the trading interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and from the circumstance of his Majesty's residence in the sister country, to call the law of the land a foreign yoke—to call acts of Parliament to prevent pillage, a submission to foreign influence; and to qualify with the name of tyranny, the necessary precautions of the executive government to check a deluding spirit of revolution. I never understood that the actual presence of the sovereign, was necessary to authorise self-preservation. Treason was punished, and the change of government prevented, whilst William the Third was absent in his wars; and laws were enforced when George the Second, or George the First, were on their respective visits to Hanover. Yet England never complained of such necessary acts of authority, as oppressive. With equal propriety, because the sovereign, under whose sanction infractions of law are punished, happens to live out of Ireland, the transportation of a sheep-stealer or the execution of an highwayman, might be denounced, most floridly, a sacrifice to foreign dominion or to foreign prejudices; but I am at present on the subject of consistency.

Whilst I endeavour to warn my country “against the errors of those who are honest, and the machinations of those who are not,” it requires apology to trifle by the detail of any man's political versatility. Questions that affect the morals and happiness of mankind, are to be examined on their own merits; and when I had proved Mr. Grattan to be the veriest weathercock, that ever was placed on a political edifice, it might well be replied, grant him to be mutable as Proteus, I require an answer to his argument. Reasoning shall have the reply to which it is entitled; but the address to the citizens of Dublin consists principally of counsels and assertions, such as are frequently

frequently taken on the credit of the adviser and relator. It is allowable to warn the nation, that this person does not feel the generous sympathies he pretends to. If the man, who, calling himself my bosom friend, assumes the privilege to direct my conduct, appear to be actuated by little passions which it does not become me to adopt, I ought to be on my guard against his confidence. If I discover that he is biassed by views, and engaged in interests in which I have no concern; nay, if indifferent to my fate, he endeavours to render me the instrument of these passions, and subservient to these interests, it is incumbent on me to examine his opinions, with scrupulous exactness, to require proof of the facts he states, and receive his representations with suspicion. Little use shall be made of the charge of inconsistency; but it is essential to shew how strongly it applies. Against that wing of the opposition which Mr. Grattan has always led, the imputation is well founded; it belongs alike to the gentlemen, who follow the fortunes of Mr. Ponsonby. —But what are the characters of individuals, when the fate of a nation, of an empire, is submitted to our judgment? Matters of secondary importance and frivolous investigation. I hasten to conclude and dismiss this uninteresting accusation.

I pass by the several patriotic effusions, that “Ireland should stand or fall with Great Britain,” either uttered by the author of the address in debate, or formally moved by him in parliament. If I were to notice these expressions, it would be to praise, not to censure the sentiment; but I should also notice them to observe, that when similar declarations, and even when declarations in a much higher tone, were made, under the administrations of the Duke of Portland, of

Lord Northington, and in part, of the Duke of Rutland, the constitution, which we were haughtily enjoined to support, was less good, than that we are now arrogantly invited to destroy, by the substantial emancipation of the catholics—by the place, the pension, and responsibility bills*.

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* Contrast with this gentleman's recent hostility the following speech, made when he was in better temper with himself and with the government. In 1797, the Irish Parliament is the "slave of the English cabinet,"—"a humiliated and a tame tyrant."—In 1785, Mr. G. spoke thus:

"It is a mistake to say they (the volunteers) forced Parliament. They stood at the back of Parliament, and supported its authority. When they thus acted with Parliament, they acted to their own glory; but they attempted to dictate, and they became nothing.

"If they persist in their folly, I will tell them that *we are the legislature, and they the subject: an high-minded Parliament will not be terrified by these men.*"—See Irish Parliamentary Register, vol. iv. p. 237. The inaccuracy of reporters does not here come into question, as this gentleman is understood usually to direct the publication of his speeches.

Speaking on the navigation act in the year 1787, he says, "I am against advancing on that subject; I do not wish to make new points with England. There are some things might be better adjusted; but I would leave that adjustment to temper and time." Irish Parl. Debates, vol. vii. p. 381.

In the same speech, after an historical retrospect to the former state of the two countries, he proceeds—"Thus you stood, or nearly thus, until the settlement of 1779; here the two nations came to an honourable explanation, in which the characters of both were raised, *and in which, coupled with the settlement of 1782, their animosities were buried for ever.*" Ibid. p. 376.

I should esteem it a very contemptible species of cavilling, to fix upon expressions delivered in the warmth of debate, *obiter dicta*. But it is obvious, that the passages I have here selected, contain certain principles, the apparent result of deliberation. Let this language be compared with the general tenor of Mr. Grattan's address in 1797; and be it remembered, that the second speech I quote, was pronounced above a year after the æra of the propositions, to which he eternally recurs. At a time too, when, from among the "political measures, of which we cannot so well express

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Since the independence of Ireland was claimed at this side, and acknowledged by Great Britain, I recollect a single instance of the surrender of national privileges. It was unlooked for, unsolicited, without object, and without compensation. Mr. Grattan was the person, who made this voluntary oblation; and he made it at a moment, when he affected to combine the characters of minister of the Crown, and agent for the people. He maintained under Lord Fitzwilliam's government, that Great Britain being engaged in a war, it merely was left to Ireland to contribute her assistance, without pretension to advise, or without a right of censure over the motives or management. In the prosecution of this doctrine, he opposed an address to his majesty, to recommend a peace, which was moved by Mr. Duquery. And the cabinet of St. James, "the humiliated and tame tyrant" of his exhibition in 1797, happens to be composed of precisely the same individuals, to whom in the year 1795, he presented the brightest gem in the parliamentary independence of his country.

*Ubi tunc Mezentius acer, et ista
Effera vis animi.*

If Ireland were only the ally of Great Britain, it would cost her little to make this sacrifice; she might

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"our detestation as by recital," (Address, p. 19.) the following merited as much, as at any time subsequent, the appellation of grievances. "The propositions—the new taxes without the trade—the new debt, notwithstanding the new taxes—the surrender of East India trade for the re-export trade—the refusal of the re-export trade without such barter—the inequality of the channel trade—the present provincial tariff still suffered to obtain between the two countries." I transcribe the catalogue: not that I think any one item in it deserves notice, but merely to shew, that granting him the full advantage of all his arguments, he has varied his tone without any alteration of circumstances.

might dissolve the compact whenever the burden became disproportionate to the advantage. Temporary convenience alone binds distinct states; and whilst that convenience is not exposed to hazard, any member of a confederacy may perform his stipulations, without adverting to the policy or management of the other. The prudence or justice of the American contest could never be a question with the subsidized powers of Germany. But the case of treaties can never be, with propriety, applied to the connexion of Ireland with Great Britain. Both nations are combined into a single monarchy, indissoluble by the law of their political existence. We must follow the fortunes of the empire. If warfare be imprudently undertaken, or injudiciously conducted, the calamities are severe, by which we must ransom the indiscretion. Are the ills of war, nothing, that our parliament should be bound not to weigh the necessity, against the calamities of hostility? Do the relations of peace or enmity, and all the diplomatic intercourse of his majesty's ministers with foreign states, sit so lightly on the trade and general welfare of Ireland, that we may renounce the constitutional jurisdiction of the legislative bodies on these subjects? To assert this privilege could create no jealousy; the crown, the ministers, the people of England recognize us in possession of it. In the exercise it is important, in the enjoyment it is unenvied. The care of our appropriate concerns being no longer a charge upon the parliament of Great Britain, where are they to find protection, if that of Ireland declines to intermeddle? This parliamentary prerogative of Ireland did Mr. Grattan "leave, to look upon the hideous god of war in disadvantage." Here, indeed, was the colony or provincial government, the object of his frequent
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and flippant sarcasm; the danger and disgrace, he pretends and deprecates, but which never was so much to be apprehended, as when his own hand attempted to pluck, from his country's brow, the characteristic of her independence. In imperial concerns, the author of the address sinks Ireland into a province, whilst, by fomenting petty jealousies, frivolous or unfounded in their origin, he seeks on other occasions to provoke her into a peevish rivalry with Great Britain.

Mutual forbearance must be in many respects, a prevailing principle, in the connexion of the British kingdoms. The end of the combination is the strength of the entire—the means are the harmony of the parts. Under the protection of that imperial strength, social happiness ripens, and prosperity and comfort, the result of security, are distributed through all classes of the industrious. Sacrifices must on many occasions be made, and there are many circumstances that deserve it. Independent nations, with distinct legislatures, united under one head, the constitution of each in a great degree popular, the spirit of the people yet more so than their institutions, constitute that political anomaly, the British empire. It requires no ordinary prudence to combine materials thus discordant. We ought to applaud the temperate wisdom of a statesman, who forbore to open controversies, which it would prove difficult to allay, and dangerous to irritate. I did for this reason applaud Mr. Grattan, when he determined “not to make new points with England, “but to leave some matters to be adjusted by time “and temper.” He “of late has thought better “of that doctrine.” The maxim of judicious forbearance no longer finds a place among his rules of policy. After having relinquished the dignity and public weal of Ireland without necessity, he brings

brings now unseasonable and unfounded accusations against the connexion: and will Ireland suffer itself to be guided by a man, thus convicted of using no other rule of political conduct, but the convenience of the faction he has adopted, and who capriciously plays off his grievances, as it suits their purpose to soothe or to exasperate?

The Party struck on this expedient, of adopting the war without discussion, in order to leave open a back door for their return into opposition, whenever the course of their cabals and intrigues should render a relapse into invective adviseable. Probably too they felicitated the dexterous manœuvre. Miserable, petty-fogging subterfuge, unworthy the pretension to liberal and extended principles! we submit to war, as to a calamity rendered inevitable by the turbulent ambition of mankind. But in these islands, our social arrangements do not require of us to submit to it, without scrutiny. It is given to the sovereign to judge on what occasions the honor and interests of his subjects are to be vindicated or protected at the expence, the inconvenience, and the perils of hostility. This prerogative is sacred, and is wisely held so. It is well, that the head of the state wields the power of the community, which he represents in foreign relations, and the executive government is more competent than popular assemblies to employ it judiciously, and in proper season. On Parliament that privilege is conferred, which a popular assembly is fit to exercise. They discuss the motives, which induced his majesty's ministers to advise a war, and may censure, if they see occasion, the indiscreet abuse of authority in provoking it. I believe no British minister, no British individual, ever imagined that Ireland, a co-independent member of the monarchy, was to abstain from this censorial jurisdiction. Neither

ther do I suppose that any man on earth could think the co-operation of the Irish people more cordial, or the concurrence of the Irish Parliament more valuable, because the legislature of this kingdom took the merits of the war on hearsay. A spirited enquiry into the occasion of it, and a fair exposal of the motives and causes, that produced hostilities, could not, at least, have weakened the effect of national and parliamentary approbation.

As we have had occasion to notice the existing war, it will not be irrelevant to offer some remarks on it. When Mr. Grattan was desirous to animate the Irish against the foe of Great-Britain, he delivered very highly-finished invectives against their irreligion and bad government. That style he now unbecomingly changes for applause, and something very near to approbation. I shall avoid either extreme, in vindicating the propriety of the contest we are engaged in. The war has ceased to be popular in Ireland. The attempt to invade this kingdom produced serious and unpleasant consequences, and we still are sore from them. Circulation stagnated of course, when the monied men were intimidated. It was dreaded that another attempt might prove more successful. In that apprehension many hoarded their property, and diminished their consumption; trade felt the check of demand; and manufacturers were necessarily left without employment. The malcontents, who abound in every country, eagerly drew an omen of future success even from the baffled enterprize. With the elevation of their hopes, their activity redoubled; but idleness, and the interruption of industry, proved more effectual to procure them proselytes. The boldness of the enemy has been unparralleled; his success rapid and brilliant. Combining whatever was advantageous to himself, in the two social extremes of refinement and ferocity, he brandished with the most dexterous

dexterous hand the most formidable weapon. Attila, or Alaric, or Ghengis Khan, might have been resisted with success, if science had encountered them; but here was the most accomplished proficiency to direct an overruling desperation. Great Britain has been victorious on her favourite element; but by land the war has proved disastrous to her allies. *Victrix causa diis placuit.* However the fickle multitude, or changeable politician, may vary with events, principles guide the reflecting mind. In the immutable nature of things, it will discern the justification of the most necessary contest we have maintained since the Revolution. The author of the address talks lightly, jeeringly—I rather should say, of the attempt of our ministers to check the enemy in Brabant. But let me inform him, that the British minister who did not make the attempt, ought to answer to his country with the most severe penalties. I conceive, that to oppose the annexation of Flanders to the government of France, was very little short of combating for our own safety. From the days of Queen Elizabeth, to the present time, this has been the known and invariable policy of England.

I have before me the authority of two statesmen, either of whom I may venture to quote against Mr. Grattan. The Duke de Sully, in the reasons he gave to Henry the fourth, against taking the Flemish provinces, under the dominion of France, insists on this, “in whatever manner we may disguise our intention, it will infallibly bring England upon us, as soon as we seem desirous of getting a footing, and making an establishment in the Low Countries,” Sir Wm. Temple is yet more explicit; speaking of the progress of France after the peace of Nimeguen, and the means that power possessed to become master of Flanders,

Flanders, he says, “ After which (the reduction
 “ of the great cities of Flanders) all the rest must
 “ follow, and thereby Holland be left to take
 “ what measures they can with France, and be-
 “ come at best a maritime province to that crown;
 “ though *perhaps under the name of a free state*
 “ *for fear of dispeopling their country, but with*
 “ *such dependance as will leave France upon occasion*
 “ *the use both of their ships and money in other*
 “ *parts.* Whenever this happens, what condition
 “ England will be left in upon such an increase
 “ of the French territory, and land, as well as
 “ naval power, is easy to conjecture, but hard
 “ how it can be prevented, otherwise than by our
 “ vigorous conjuncture of counsels, as well as
 “ interests with all the late confederates. And
 “ by a firm union between the court and the
 “ nation upon one common bottom, both at home
 “ and abroad, and chiefly for the preservation of
 “ Flanders against the French designs*.”

Let the foes of the most respectable empire, that the world has yet seen, rejoice, if they think proper, that the effort to counteract this formidable dominion proved ineffectual. But, whilst France was making such strides to the acquisition of an extent of territory, and a degree of power more than alarming to the liberties of Europe, particularly so to our independence, no British minister could consistently with the duties of his situation, have withheld the interference of his sovereign.

The war broke out with France, whilst the Brissotine faction possessed the government. We are not ignorant of the designs of that party upon the states of Europe. We have under their hands
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* 2d Vol. Temple's Works—Memoirs from 1679.

the particular kindness they intended for Ireland*. They were by far more formidable to the tranquillity of mankind, than the sanguinary men of inferior talents who succeeded to them. Like our reformers, they were speculative persons, who took their models and their lessons, from every thing, except the human heart and character. Wit, learning, eloquence and ingenuity qualified them, in an eminent degree, to give extensive currency to the opinions, they proposed to circulate. The project of this party was to excite, in every neighbouring nation, a jealousy of the People against the Government; whilst France was to be set up, as the grand model of improvement, and arbiter of all differences. Her Generals were directed, by a decree of the convention, not to hesitate at throwing in the gallic sword, where the balance vibrated slowly to the side of insurrection. In the contemplation of this design, the Republicans were desirous to amuse the British government by an insidious appearance of peace. It was their interest to dissemble their subtle views of hostility for some time, in order to keep the communication open. They were by that means better enabled to intrigue with the disaffected, and to propagate their doctrines by the "excellent writings," of which Mr. Brissot expresses himself with very animated approbation. Was it for our ministers, having a clear insight into their designs, to be dupes of the artifice? Certainly not; and I shall never consider the war to have been without an object and
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* Brissot, in his address to his constituents, laying open the means France possessed of annoying the neighbouring powers, says:—"We might disturb England by exciting ferments in her bosom; in Ireland, which is jealous; in Scotland, which is discontented;" and again, "Ireland, whose movements to liberty we were bound to encourage."

an advantage, if by it, the fiery spirit of cabal which the revolution generated in France, was compelled to rage within its own bosom; and if, whilst that revolution passed through so many eccentric movements, we were kept aloof from its contact. A man must indeed approve of the constitution, who thinks the protection of it, against foreign intrigue and domestic conspiracy, a sufficient inducement to go to war. That complaisance cannot be expected from persons, whose first wish is to overturn the government, and who consider peace or war, as either may facilitate the enterprise. One option alone remained to the British government, to chuse the time of attack, or to leave that election to the enemy *. A feeble administration might have looked on, whilst France selected her ground, and prepared herself at leisure. Ireland would probably then have become the theatre of war, and its property have anticipated the sacrifice of that of Holland and of Belgium. It was the object of France to protract a state of insidious neutrality; Great Britain preferred open warfare.

But wars, I presume, are to cease under the Halcyon days of the reform of parliament. "The English wars of the next century," says Mr. Grattan, "will have the same effect as the English prohibition of the last—they will annihilate the trade of Ireland;" and he proposes his panacea of a popular constitution, to remedy the evil. Rare expedient! when we are at variance among ourselves, foreigners will look peaceably on! the contentions of the world will cease to molest us, when we shall have separated from
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* It is notorious that privateers were preparing in the French ports to intercept our trade, before there was any pretence for hostility.

Great Britain! I am not so sanguine as to expect, that the century which now opens, will pass differently from that which is just gone by. There will be wars, whilst there is among men, a disposition to use power for any purpose, or to regulate it by any rules, but those of justice. A state must in proportion to its opulence, and external traffic, submit to the expence and inconvenience of warfare, as a man of extensive estate, or a merchant, of dealings widely diffused, is more exposed to law-suits, than a common mechanic or day labourer. But how the change of our constitution, to a more popular form, is to assuage the hostile propensities of other nations. I really cannot comprehend. Perhaps it is expected that, by attending rather to politics than industry, we may become too poor to have any object to contend for. The precaution is insufficient; even poverty, even natural sterility is not competent to secure a land from aggression. The love of rule, or love of acquisition, stimulates adventurers, and renders it incumbent to make, at least defensive preparations. Two or three score of hunters, who range over as many hundred miles of wilderness, will shed their blood in attempting, in repelling, or in avenging an intrusion. When the Ostmen invaded this land, they had little beside the glory of the achievement to attract them; nor could the inducements of Henry the second have been more alluring. It is indeed a vulgar artifice to impose on simple men by promising an exemption from unavoidable accidents. That system of social arrangement is preferable, and deserves as such to be cultivated, which best enables us to bear the ills, and to improve the advantages, annexed by heaven to our situation. Our vicinity to Great Britain, renders combination with
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her most easy, and hostility most inconvenient. Placed between the old and new worlds, the situation of this island renders it of too much importance in the modern political system, not to attract the attention of the great European powers. We could not, unnoticed by them, withdraw from the connection with Great Britain. Without the aid of some of them, the separation, could never be effected. France is that power most likely to promote the enterprize; she is also that power from whom it is most chimerical to expect disinterested interference. What simpleton expects to see the conquerors of Italy, the Rhine, the Meuse and Sambre, stoop to the alliance of independent Ireland? It cannot be; there can exist between us and them no other relation, but that of superior and subordinate. Combined with Britain, we may contribute to controul the ambition of France. But suppose the force of England diminished by the alienation of Ireland, what barrier, what obstacle can we oppose to avoid receiving the dictates of a master from the arrogant Republic? Believe it, my countrymen, our complaints would not then be of theoretical ills, and fancied degradation.

I address myself to opinions, which I know to be disseminated through Ireland, although no man dares to avow them; and I address them with the more zeal, because I foresee that, if these opinions should unfortunately prevail, in the pursuit of greater independence than our situation admits, we should forfeit that independence we possess, are competent to manage, and prize so deservedly; we should forfeit that prosperity, which for above thirty years back, heaven, with a bounteous hand, has showered upon this island. I know the author of the address is above being an emissary of France; but I know that France
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has her emiffaries at hand, to hunt down the game he starts. I know he is no more than a fplenetic, incautious politician, who takes this method to revenge his difappointment; but what avail his motives, if the practical confequence of his proceedings be, to render the people four and unhappy, under a condition, which deserves to be reputed comfortable and convenient; and if he difpofe them to receive with avidity the novelities, which fo many incendiaries, lefs competent to perfuade, are ready to prefent to them.

A fucceffful invafion by the French could never be a matter of indifference to any order of people in Ireland. Grant, however improbable, that their troops abftained from the diforders to which men are prone, who hold arms in their hands, who invade a foreign country, and who conquer. Still no man could expect to fubfift by the profit of land, the fale of goods, or mechanic employment. If on the approach of an enemy to the coaft, obftmcted circulation was feverely felt through all the community; if ftruck with terror at the feeble manifeftation of revolutionary propenfities, monied people clofed their purfes and contracted their expences, what confequences might be looked for on an actual change of government?

But the miferies of a revolution would be recompens'd by its fubfequent advantages. That pofition I deny. France never would truft to political gratitude for the friendship of a country fo important to her as Ireland. She would reduce us to the condition of a dependance. To fubdue Ireland, and retain the conqueft, is not more expenfive in effort and exertion, than to expel the influence of England. We are too remote from France to be left at our own difcretion, and yet fufficiently

sufficiently contiguous, if she were once established, to be easily overpowered on any attempt to shake off her dominion. Here the question is narrowed to a single point. Taking into consideration all the circumstances, in which Ireland is placed, which is it more for her interest to be a member of the British monarchy, or a dependance on the French Republic? The most obvious dictates of national pride, and common sense, direct the option in favour of our present political establishment. As England could ill spare the subtraction of the force of Ireland from the common stock of imperial energy; and as our strength bears some proportion to that of Great Britain, but none to that of France, we are certain to procure a greater degree of respect from the former than the latter. And with that state we are equally certain to live more upon a footing of equality, than with any power possessed of opulent and extensive continental dominions. I do therefore as an Irishman maintain, that the connexion established upon liberal terms, between Ireland and Great Britain, even taken with its contingent inconveniencies, is the system best calculated to promote the opulence and happiness of my country, and to preserve its internal and external strength, without which either of the former blessings would be only fugitive and transitory enjoyments.

It will be said that France has not treated Holland, and the Italian Republics, with the austerity of conquest I represent her likely to exercise in Ireland. Whilst Buonaparte remains at the head of his army in Italy, creating states and parceling out territories, the independence and liberty of the Cispadane, or Transalpine Republics, can only be mentioned with ridicule. Some great men probably have been made in that country,
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and a few great men perhaps might be created amidst the calamities of Ireland; but nothing which has happened can authorise a conclusion, that an improvement in the condition of the people has taken place, either in their individual capacity, or their corporate character as nations. The possession of Ireland would open to the French, views of maritime and commercial convenience, which Italy does not present to them; but still have they not effectively established in Italy that, which we prognosticate them likely to attempt in Ireland? They have organized local governments, all subordinate to the main design of their own aggrandizement.

If France affects to treat Holland with the attentions of an ally, the disguise is too superficial not to be seen through: she has placed Holland as a decoy to the rest of Europe; and she may venture that step without deviating from her obvious policy; for, mistress of Brabant, she can pour troops into that country at her discretion. Holland is by consequence under the forms of independence, as completely at the disposal of France, as if she were governed by a French consul.

I never heard an argument offered against the association established between Ireland and Great-Britain, which may not be equally applied to prove, that every parish in Europe ought to be erected into an independent government. The question must be decided either upon the principles of mere right, political expediency, or legal settlement. The first ground of argument proves too much; it goes to divide Canterbury from York, Connaught from Leinster. It would prove the ancient provincial principalities of France, to be preferable to the one and indivisible

ble government, which for centuries had been substituted. It proves the Saxon heptarchy superior to the monarchy of Britain; and the petty septs, which devastated Ireland by their eternal collision, to be a state of society preferable to the uniform operations of a limited monarchy. Self-legislation, the late adopted child of Mr. Grattan, and this right of every individual, (for certainly it extends so far) to submit to such political regulations, as he judges proper, are both filiations from the same parent stock; both have been vaunted equally by unquiet politicians, in their endeavours to win the favour of the multitude; and both equally refuted by the bayonet, when the deluded people proposed to realize their speculation. I speak of the most popular governments that ever existed—America and France. How often have the guillotine and fusil marked, in the latter country, the line of duty and obedience, which no refractory subject should transgress with impunity? It is not two years since President Washington ordered out the continental troops, to reduce certain districts of America, who imagined the practical benefit of not paying taxes, to be a part of the liberty they had acquired from Great Britain. Something in the same stile was Mr. Grattan's declaration, already quoted, made at a time, when he thought proper to repress the spirit of innovation, he had himself excited. "We will tell them, that we are the legislature, and they the people." But, that gentleman had the precaution to rebuke his too forward disciples from under the shelter of a strong government. Cambon and Roland, and their coadjutors, sang the same canticle, but with less effect; for the resources of their discipline were no more than rights and virtues, self-legislation, and voluntary obedience.

That a political institution has existed long, or is firmly established, constitutes in general a recommendation to preserve it. Attachments arise. The habits and prejudices of men assimilate to the settlement they live under. Imperfections, where such exist, are gradually removed, and people form themselves to bear with the lesser inconveniencies. At the accession of George I. a great, perhaps the major part of the English were Jacobites. From 1715 to 1745, they supported the Brunswick family, merely to avoid the mischiefs of altering the legal settlement. This reasoning acquires superior force in the application of it to Ireland, for nearly every man in the nation holds his estate by some tenure, derived under the connection with Great Britain. The first cost of a revolution, as laid down by the amateurs of the project, is sufficient to deter any reasonable or benevolent person from the experiment. New tribunals, new crimes to be examined, 30,000 lives, and an extensive confiscation. This too is but the peace establishment. In case of resistance, the calamities of war are a separate calculation. A war to be carried on in this island, between France and England, respectively aided by the several Irish parties, who would esteem it patriotism to espouse the quarrels of either nation! Now, Ireland appears to me that country to which peace is emphatically essential. Hostilities might rage in La Vendee and in Flanders, without affecting the interior provinces of France; there may even be places in that extensive territory, at which the commotions of Paris are but the idle wonder of the hour. No such exemption could be expected, where an army in fourteen days march might traverse the entire island.

Credit

Credit was not so well established in France as even in Ireland; the total circulation was in hard cash; the quantity of specie in the country must necessarily have been enormous. Within two years after the royal authority was undermined by the constituent assembly, this vast accumulation of silver money disappeared. Have the deluded men, who united to harass their country with new schemes of government, considered how barter was to be carried on among us in similar circumstances? The specie in Ireland does not, to that of France, bear the proportion of one to one hundred. The timidity of the money-holders is equal.

Have these persons ever turned their speculations to the fate of the many, engaged in sedentary or handicraft occupations; who derive a comfortable subsistence from supplying wants, which nobody would think of gratifying, under a fluctuation or precarious establishment? let them join, reply the democrats, in the effective service of the revolution. But the most inquisitive pillage, of our Irish opulence, could not maintain for twelve months the hands whom disturbance would throw into idleness. And how are you to dispose of those, whom age or sex incapacitates? In the scheme of self-legislation, what place will you assign to a mantua-maker, to atone for her loss of customers? Luxury may be envied, but must be permitted. Unless the wealthy distribute, the industrious can never accumulate. The Aristocrat, he dooms to destruction, is a necessary being to this stubborn weaver, or that speculating retailer. That luxury, which given to the knife, will scarcely furnish out the consumption of a single festival, is, under a judicious management, abundant; in its produce is inexhaustible.

I have passed over the difficulty, in case the present system of constitution were abolished, of compressing, into regular order, the heterogeneous parts, which compose the Irish nation. The hardy levellers of superannuated establishments, make no account of the labour of replacing. I pass by the fate of the merchant, the public creditor, and the landholder. These classes, I know, were consigned to their doom without compunction, "to be knocked on the head like seals, whom the tide has left sleeping on the shore." I cannot sympathize with such reformers. When I talk of public good, I mean effective advantage to my fellow-citizens. The objects of my patriotism are not the rocks, and trees, and mountains, which constitute the land we live in. If our constitution were more defective than it is, I would not redeem it on the condition of that expenditure. Let the good sense of Ireland answer, what is the vice in our political system, that requires to be expiated by a civil war? What is the injustice, which calls for the blood of thirty thousand citizens to avenge it?

But wherefore, in a reply to Mr. Grattan, interweave this warning against revolution? Because his doctrines lead directly to that catastrophe. Do I believe, that gentleman aims at a revolution in this kingdom? It is impossible, after what has passed, to resolve that question. I think he would prefer to govern the country without disorganizing it. He has something to lose in the confusion of property; if he could ruin the present ministry, by any means less perilous, doubtless he would prefer them. But urged on by strong passions, he makes hazardous strokes, with a gambler's desperation. We cannot suppose the author of the address to this
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City sufficiently cordial to that connexion with Great Britain, which it is for the interest of Ireland to maintain. He has written to disgust us against the sister kingdom. He revives forgotten altercations; he gropes into the annals of distant times, for obsolete grievances and rectified misconduct. He collects all the factious effusions of splenetic and malicious men, into articles of impeachment against what he calls English influence. Where the politician is partial, and the historian uncandid, we cannot go out of the way to supply principles. These charges ought not to be made without supporting them. The expence of the war, is one of the accusations in the address. If the war was necessary, the charges of it can furnish no reasonable cause of murmur. Mr. Grattan holds that we should support England in her contests with foreign powers. Does he imply that we can do so without expenditure? But the war, in my opinion, was emphatically the war of Ireland, for it was principally undertaken to frustrate the designs of the first republicans against the peace of this island. We know, from Brissot's narrative, the views of that party. We know them from the mission of emissaries into Ireland, to indispose the lower classes of people against the government*.

I repeat

* It is now well known that a Mr. Oswald, by birth an American, passed through the Southern parts of this kingdom, distributing inflammatory hand bills, which were the occasion of an insurrection in the county of Limerick. This was previous to the war. He was sent to Ireland under the reign of the Brissotine faction. The unfortunate Jackson also got his mission before the war, and from the Brissotines.

I repeat again, that our prosperity must bear the charges of its protection. " We have voted 8,000,000*l.* on account of the war, without commercial compensation, liberality or equality." A person, unacquainted with the appropriation of this money, would suppose, from Mr. Grattan's statement, that it was a free gift of Ireland to the sister nation in her emergency. No such thing. We were threatened with invasion and insurrection, and we expended this money to put ourselves in a posture of resistance. Whilst Great Britain lavished millions to engage the enemy abroad, we incurred less than a tenth part of her expence for self-preservation. If it were necessary to impose 15*s.* in the pound on all the property of Ireland, the object was worthy the expenditure, " without commercial compensation." Are we then to be bribed to keep our houses over our heads? Must we like infants, be induced by sugar plumbs, to do what is good for us?

It required the microscopic eye of Mr. Grattan to find a grievance in the bar bill. The delays which the poor experienced in the pursuit of justice, formed a standing satire on all the old governments of the world. Early in the present century, a remedy was applied in Ireland to this inconvenience, by rendering small debts cognizable in a summary manner, before the judges on circuit. The regulation was at first temporary, but experience justifying its propriety, the legislature made it perpetual. As this mode of recovering small debts was universally resorted to, the number of litigations was found to obstruct the public business of the assizes; a greater inconvenience was discovered, in drawing the farmers and mechanics to the assize town, frequently a distance of forty miles from their residence. The jurisdiction was removed to the quarter

ter sessions, which are held in different parts of the county, and a barrister of six years standing, who is also incapacitated to sit in parliament, appointed in each county, to preside at the sessions. Never before was the utility of this regulation questioned. The country deems it a wholesome law, and common sense ratifies the decision. It is good to bring justice to every man's door. It is good to confer the jurisdiction upon educated men, removed from the local prejudices of country magistrates, and acting under the censure of an honourable profession, jealous of its dignity and vigilant to reprehend the violation of decorum in its members. Until the address to the metropolis gave this regulation a place in the catalogue of grievances, it universally was considered a most excellent institution.

There are difficulties in the arrangement of the channel trade, which the common friends of Great Britain and Ireland must regret, but which angry crimination is a very improper mode to rectify. England makes high demands for opening her ports, as fellow-subjects; and Ireland, who asks boldly, will not purchase the advantage. There is jealousy in England, there is ambition in Ireland, both immense obstacles, to an amicable adjustment; and no adjustment, unless it be amicable, can, in the circumstances of the countries, be desired. I must recall here the observation of a judicious writer, on the mutual interest of the associated kingdoms. The claims of Ireland, upon Great Britain, are made on the footing of fellow-subjects; but, when the former is required to wave any advantage, however petty, however doubtful, in favor of the sister nation, there are always persons at hand to alledge her independence. I do certainly coincide

incide with that noble author, that we ought to chuse the one ground or the other, and continually abide by it. Unfortunately, upon these subjects, the public mind too frequently receives its direction from mercantile selfishness, pretending an anxiety to improve trade, and parliamentary faction, in the mask of patriotism.

Semper querula est Hibernia, said the historian of queen Elizabeth. The remark was in him unfeeling and unjust; for it was made when the negligence of some, and the oppression of others, to whom the affairs of Ireland were committed, rendered the expression of complaint the proper language of the people. Our discontented fellow-citizens of this day, whether traders or politicians, cannot, with equal facility, shew themselves exempt from the imputation. We owe to these persons the idle outcry on the India trade, which holds a conspicuous place in this late black list of national calamities. The British East India company purchased, at a very high expence, the monopoly of that trade from the common government, and it maintains heavy establishments for the accommodation of its commerce. We are not to expect that the company should open these establishments to a traffic, undertaken with views, the most directly adverse to its own interest. We should then be put to the alternative of sailing to China, without any friendly port to refresh in, or endeavouring to establish a settlement, like that attempted by Scotland in the reign of King William.

Suppose this latter expedient adopted, have we in Ireland that redundancy of capital, which fits us for the undertaking? I have ever understood, that we have not a capital adequate to the domestic improvement of the country. In that case, nothing could be so wildly injudicious, as to di-

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vert any part to a purpose of so remote and uncertain advantage as founding a settlement, which to give a recompence in profit, must, in its infancy, rival the veteran establishments of other nations. Deduct then the employment of Irishmen in the service of the company, and the wealth we occasionally derive from the return of these persons to the country. This convenience must be renounced, when we go to variance with the British establishment in India. I pass by the strong probability, that our settlement would be opposed and frustrated, like the colony at Darien, after altercations, ten times more pernicious than the value of the traffic could compensate. I purely, as an Irishman, examine the interests of my country in a distinct trade to China, and detect from internal circumstances the error of those who advised it.

Let us wave these difficulties, and take the subject on an assumption, that we might sail to China, with as little interruption as to Liverpool. It is a distant navigation, the returns from it are slow, and the outfit consists of very valuable articles; very considerable property must, of course, be embarked in the trade, and the proprietors must be in a condition to bear a tedious reimbursement. The other European powers have, under the pressure of these obstacles, had recourse to the establishment of companies; unless we followed the example, we should remain where we set out, for we could not expect many important exertions from private merchants. Our company should establish an emporium, as the French did at port l'Orient, as the Imperialists at Ostend, and as the British company at London. Indeed, whether the company were established or not, the convenience of the trade would, in all probability, occasion
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the formation of an emporium. There must also be a monopoly of the home market to our own adventurers, otherwise nothing would be done; for the British East India company would continue to supply us. Suppose Dublin the mart and the seat of the company, the Western coast would be no less excluded from the benefit of the trade than it is at present. Suppose it settled at Cork, then the Northern ports from Drogheda or Newry, instead of sending to England for tea, that necessary article of modern consumption, should bring it coastways from Cork, with which they have little or no occasion for maritime intercourse. For this, they should give up the cheaper and more contiguous market, which is rendered yet more convenient by the frequent communication arising from the export of linen to England. *But we should buy at home.* True; we should purchase an article of foreign produce, within our own island. In a matter of home manufacture, which gave employment and subsistence to many hands, and circulated a good deal of property through the country, it might be politic, at the expence of one part of the nation, to encourage the industry of another. But here is a mere process of loading and unloading, without further national profit than the commission of the importer; without greater loss, in dealing with the British company, than the small profit, which an establishment so opulent and so extensive can afford to accept; and this profit applied to the maintenance of a company, one of the principal resources of the British state, and a great bulwark of the Imperial power, under which we flourish. Tea is become a necessary of life; next to corn, it is perhaps the branch of commerce most delicate to tamper with; how in policy or prudence
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could we reduce ourselves to depend on the precarious supply of raw adventurers, encumbered with all the difficulties to which a new undertaking is exposed? when the East India trade is laid before the public in a holiday harangue of Mr. Ponsonby or Mr. Grattan, it seems an enterprize of as sure and easy execution to make a trip to Canton, and bring home tea, as fitting out a wherry for Holyhead, to procure eggs for the Dublin market. From the rapid sketch we have taken, it is obvious that, however authorized by our independence to trade to China, it is a barren right, which we could not exercise with any efficacy, and which, as the assertion of it alarmed the East India company, it was wise to barter for what, in truth, was more than an equivalent. What would have been the consequence, had the counsels of opposition been attended to? Some traders, perhaps, more in the heat of party than in the mature judgment of speculation, might have adventured. Two or three cautious rich men might have made money; the others would be ruined. Some would cover, for a trifling emolument, the illicit traffic of British merchants. After great heats and petulance, after very churlish and unfriendly conduct, we should return with a bad grace to the ware-houses of the company. Lo! the concession which our leader boasts! Lo! the mighty good we were to procure by resisting *English influence!* I really should not be astonished to see, in his next batch of grievances, a doleful remonstrance on the depreciation of thirteen pence to a shilling, when we cross the channel.

On questions of commercial arrangement, it is not wise to adopt the passions of mere mechanical merchants; short-sighted men, whose
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views never extend beyond their own interest, and who would sacrifice the welfare of ages and of empires to temporary convenience, and the prospect of immediate profit. It is not alone on the India trade that their counsels were pernicious. The same confederacy of parliamentary discontent, and mercantile impatience would drive us to a war of protecting duties. So far as the experiment has been tried, it failed, and the public was delivered over to the grinding exactions of monopolists, (in the sugar trade for example.) Does it not occur to every man, that if he consumes, what does not grow at home, it must have come to Ireland, in exchange for some article of native produce, and that promoting this exchange, he effectually encourages the commodities of his country? This principle must certainly be qualified by limitations, which every man's good sense and experience will suggest, but which it exceeds the scope of this little essay to enumerate. Upon these two heads, of "the provincial tariff," as Mr. Grattan calls it, and "the channel trade," I must say, that I see some matters, which I should wish were on a better footing, but nothing to warrant "detestation." It would be uncandid in any Irishman to deny, that we do, under the protection of Britain, enjoy valuable commercial participations. That, whilst Great Britain bears the burden of so many hundred millions of debt, of heavy taxes and excises, we cannot fairly expect, without consenting to some conditions of compensation, an unrestricted access to her home market. To give complete satisfaction on this subject, some arrangement must be made between the independent countries in the nature of those "propositions," which appear to me to have been rejected with more
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vanity than wisdom. If on this side of the water we object to such treaty, the trade of the universe beside is open to us; and thank heaven! we have used it not unprofitably: within twenty years the mercantile capital of Dublin, has been twenty fold augmented. But disappointed politicians have at all times endeavoured to make the public a party to their contest, and represent the public interest affected by their exile from power. The ruin of England had long since been complete, if Mr. Shippen, Lord Bolingbroke, Sir William Wyndham, had been true prophets. The empire prospered alike when Mr. Pulteney was a patriot, and an earl. Dean Swift, above sixty years ago, made false prognosticks upon the national debt of Britain, which might have warned Mr. Grattan not to foretel, that the trade of Ireland must necessarily sink under the expences of the British confederacy*.

The error arises from considering the public burdens, in the light of a permanent charge, upon a stationary fund. I am not to speak of the national

* "Continue that rate of expence, and the English wars of the next century will have the same effect, as the English prohibition of the last; they will annihilate the trade of Ireland."

I have observed, that since politics became a matter of general speculation in this country, it has been usual to predict, that liberty was shortly to be overturned, and particularly the privilege of free discussion. These predictions have been going on since the year 1780, and still we find that instead of being gagged, the judgment of the people, upon public measures, is delivered in a tone more and more firm. I have just opened a pamphlet written under the administration of the Duke of Rutland which begins thus: "as we know not how long the privilege of speaking out our opinions may be left to us, &c." This stile reminds one of the grants of old to monasteries, the greater part of which began, "*appropinquante jam mundi fine.*"

onal debt of England, although I may cursorily offer an opinion, founded on the observation of former experience. The energies of Great Britain will, I doubt not, upon a peace, rise to meet the pressure of its recently imposed burdens. They did so after the war with America. There is in trade, an elastic principle, where, as in these islands, enterprize and ingenuity are encouraged. Liverpool was a fishing village in 1694. The spring is pressed down by war, but rebounds on the return of tranquillity. Will the same restorative energy reanimate Ireland? I discern but a single ground to hesitate at deciding in the affirmative, the perennial turbulence of selfish or superficial politicians. Let silence be imposed on the determined revolutionists. Let those respectable persons, your well meaning men, who act as the scouts and auxiliaries of the anarchists, be warned by the fate of France, to desist from officiously promoting measures, of which they cannot calculate the consequences. Let Mr. Grattan, whom I do not rank in any of these classes, sincerely secede from parliament. Perhaps the laurel of eloquence may less luxuriantly sprout, but the horn of plenty will remunerate the deficiency.

As applied to the present state of Ireland, I can see no error in raising money for public works and necessary expences by funding, more especially, when a sinking fund is established to prevent extraordinary accumulation*.

The state may benefit, by drawing inactive capital out of the hands, in which it stagnates, and returning it to circulation even at the expence of a perpetual annuity. Persons, who wish to mislead, or who do not take the pains
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* Mr. Grattan suppresses this useful establishment.

to be instructed, describe the debt as an incumbrance charged upon a fully improved estate. It more truly resembles the condition of a landlord, who borrows the unemployed cash of his tenants, and expending it upon the estate, increases their rents proportionably. But you may estimate the utmost extent, to which lands are improveable, whilst the subject of this other operation, the progressive efforts of human skill, ingenuity and industry, are utterly incalculable. I have touched thus loosely on the heads of an argument, obviously too extensive for a passagery publication, but very fit to exercise the literary and ingenious speculation of Ireland.*

In the order of discussion, I arrive at that series of coercive measures, which most persons consider to have been adopted purely on the defensive, but in which Mr. Grattan represents the government to be the aggressor. By Mr. Grattan, Mr. Fox,—by men more impartial than either, the passing of the convention bill has been declared, the cause and the epoch of every dissatisfaction in this nation. Persons who hold that language, are very imperfectly acquainted with the history of two years previous to that event.

I do not apprehend that, either practically or in theory, extraordinary convocations of the people ever made part of a system of political institutions. Singular circumstances will sometimes apologize for an irregular proceeding, or at least, extenuate the irregularity; but when it is attempted to render that habitual, which only exists as an exception to general rules, some power ought to recall the people to their original and

* This subject was introduced in the original edition (1797) in order to meet some popular observations on the effect of the national debt of England, circulated at that period in a publication of Mr. A. O'Connor.

and salutary usages. I will ask Mr. Fox, or Mr. Grattan, or any candid man of observation, whether he thinks that a government can be effective for the purposes of its creation, or whether any social good can be advanced among the subjects, if without legal function or qualification, any man may, when he thinks fit, and many men actually do convoke assemblies to deliberate upon the conditions of their submission to authority? When such meetings become familiar, the public mind must be solely occupied with political discussion, and the rulers can only attend to the management of parties. But there was more than the general inconvenience of conventions, as applied to Ireland, when the legislature interdicted the further use of them. The persons who usually called, and who took the lead in these meetings, did not dissemble their aversion to the established constitution. The convention, which immediately provoked the act, met at Dunganon, in February 1793. It set itself in direct opposition to parliament; for, although convened under the pretence of procuring a change in the representation, which parliament alone was competent to ordain, the members declined to apply to the legislature for that purpose, or to take any cognizance of its authority; they proceeded to deduce their claim, and derived their expectations from the anarchical principles of a right, natural and indefeasible; to republicanism, in general, they offered their devotion, although they did not think it necessary, at that moment, to stipulate for its establishment in Ireland. As to the expression of their sentiments, they did indeed condescend to notify, that they "abhor principles which tend to destroy all government, and to abolish every wise and salutary distinction." The former part of the

the declaration, all men would readily make, who set up for creators of a constitution, for assuredly, they could not desire the subversion of their own labours; and the latter part was fitted to answer every person's sense, of what is wise and salutary. Another feature of the convention deserves notice; it betrays the design to separate population from property; not certainly with an intention to deal mercifully with the latter. Certain men of fortune, who had addicted themselves to the doctrines of reform, accepted a delegation to this assembly. They not only were without weight, but were treated with a mixture of contempt and jealousy, not arising from any conviction of misconduct or duplicity, but from the original sin of their situation, the stain of aristocracy, which no devotion to popular principles could expiate. We are enabled to be circumstantial upon this subject; a gentleman, who assisted at the meeting, and who saw with disgust the chicane and manœuvres of its ambitious leaders, has taken the trouble to publish the reasons of his disapprobation*.

This provincial congress of Ulster terminated its labours, by a resolution to call a national convention. Was the legislature still to slumber? So many are dazzled by popularity, the prevailing delusion of the day, that I must seek to illustrate the subject, an example on which all men are now dispassionate. If the secret partisans of the house of Stuart had, between the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, called assemblies, representative too in order to make the interest more extensive, to deliberate on the question of hereditary succession, ought the sovereign on the throne to have continued the

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* Letters to the inhabitants of Newry.

indifferent observer of their activity? I apprehend no reasonable man will reply in the affirmative.

Acting in other characters, the leading persons of this meeting, who were also destined to be the grand figures in the projected national convention, were yet more explicit in their declarations. It was little to insist upon unqualified suffrage, little to claim the reform of parliament. The inhabitants of Belfast, I believe, in the very address which summoned the convention, but certainly about that period, avowed in a resolution, solemnly agreed to at their town-house, "that finding a constitution of King, Lords, and Commons established, they would suffer it to exist, provided they can attain, *without violence*, the real representation of all the people." The debate, which preceded this resolution, was given to the public: from motives of delicacy to men, not at present in a condition to bear animadversion, I forbear to repeat the idle rant it contained against hereditary dignities; and all the gasconade of what was to be done, in case parliament were not reformed adequately. The newspapers published in the North of Ireland were, for six months previous to the passing of the convention and the gunpowder acts, stuffed with the verbose declarations, and vapid menaces of rustic politicians, the inhabitants of this town-land, and the volunteers of that village, expressive of their doctrines of dear equality, sometimes of their toleration of royalism, always of their determination not to flinch*, although violence should become necessary.

* The Maghera volunteers declared, that "they would not be deterred from their duty, until their country shall pluck the fruit luxuriant from the tree of liberty." There were an infinity of similar declarations published in the Northern Star at that period.

cessary. The poor people were elevated to this phrenzy, by assiduous representations, that taxes were to cease, and the price of necessaries to be diminished, by a reform of parliament. Now it certainly must be allowed, that the political zeal of the North of Ireland, (and no other part of the kingdom was disposed to think about Conventions) did not want the provocative of thus publicly chusing delegates, of perpetual harangues, and perpetual conventions. The most tranquil people upon earth would be driven, by such expedients, from the industry that blessed them. What public good could result from suffering conventions to act between the people and the parliament? The sober sense of the former could be fully as well taken at their respective habitations; and further, I do not see that parliament by abolishing conventions, took away any right of application; for the persons, who composed them, declining all intercourse with that body, abjured the regular jurisdiction of the state in matters of legislation. A direct alternative was, of course, imposed to abdicate its authority, or repress a rivalry perilous in ordinary times, and even when sober men conducted the competition; but formidable, to the most tremendous extent of danger, when the very system of social arrangement was attacked, and that this was but an expedient employed to facilitate its overthrow. Even admitting for an instant the propriety of altering the fundamental laws of the constitution, the modern leaders and promoters of conventions were extremely unfit to be entrusted with the delicate charge of innovation. Every act, and every declaration, betrayed in them that maturity of enthusiasm, so bold in undertaking, so frail in executing, the infancy of which had in another coun-

try proved the bane of freedom, and scourge of humanity. Republican France had no inducement to shut up her clubs, which did not apply to monarchical Ireland, as thundering in our ears the imperative injunction of reason and self-preservation, to suppress these schools of disaffection.

In support of my position, I must recur again to the recorded declarations of these gentlemen. I shall not select what was casually, or intemperately uttered, but public professions of faith, proposed by men of influence in the faction, deliberately adopted, and solemnly promulgated. The relation of Leader and Follower, in a democracy, is too well ascertained by experience, for any man to doubt, that the sentiments of the former are a sure test of what the latter would practice, should a favourable occasion offer. " Drive not us, the people, to *extremities*, (says one meeting,) a reform we will have. To attain it, we shall think no *sacrifice too much*, no *risk too great*. And no reform can ever be adequate or useful, satisfactory or just, unless *all* Irishmen of every description, shall be equally represented*." Was the influence of the men, who made this avowal, to be encouraged or resisted? were their views so innocent, as to deserve permission calmly to concentrate their means, and combine their leaders? The partisans of reform, in the same breath which invoked their favourite measure, celebrated the memory of the King of Sweden's assassin. " Save your country in mercy to yourselves," exclaimed, in a celebrated address to the public, the society of United Irishmen. " Give us reform, said

* Town meeting of Belfast, 26th December, 1792.

said the friends of reform at Belfast *, or you alone will be answerable to God and your country for the consequences." As I would wrest a razor from a maniac, so would I, compulsorily, deprive such men of the means to effect the political suicide they menaced. Admirable improvers, whose first proposal was to introduce anarchy! Whose initiary steps were to be the extravagant exertions of violence, to which France had only been led progressively.

That *vexata questio* of modern times, the sovereignty of the people, is determined at once, if this principle of irregular deliberations be adopted. We know not of any democracy so complete, as to admit an heptarchy system of jarring and uncontrolled assemblies. Here a parliament supported by the power of the state, and exercising the supreme jurisdiction; there an assembly, existing by credulity, (a foolish, but a formidable delusion) and industriously disseminating the contagious foibles that produced it. Apply this practice to our commercial interests. A redundant population demands employment to subsist by. The want of capital is, precisely, that deficiency which leaves their exigencies unsatisfied. And we feel it more severely, because, as a contrast to the mediocrity of our means, we have ever before our eyes the opulence of Great Britain. But, was that opulence gained by political controversies? No; the firm face of government, the patient labours of the people deserved prosperity, and they enjoy it. The Irish people cannot be expected to improve in manufactures, if they are liable to the continual recurrence of meetings and

* Declaration and principles of the friends of Parliamentary Reform, at Belfast, January, 1793.

and elections, which capriciously withdraw them at every instant from their useful industry. It is a fancy yet more chimerical to hope that strangers will give credit, or suffer their capital to pass into a country, in which they behold three or four rival governments, ready to fly to extremities with each other. How, in the name of common sense, are these discordant and incoherent elements to be reconciled with external strength and internal tranquillity? If a particular practice must necessarily leave the country poor, and that by altering it, we have a probability, in our turn, of becoming opulent, there is no wisdom, no humanity, no patriotism in obstinately persevering. To me it seems, that the remedy of extraordinary interference, which is fatal to public and private confidence, and disinclines the people to their necessary occupations, bears in it greater mischief than could be inflicted by the most profligate court, and most venal parliament.

But the right of the people to investigate public matters was infringed. Never was that right more fully exercised, than subsequent to the event we treat of. Witness all the addresses of congratulation, procured on the arrival of Earl Fitzwilliam in this kingdom. Witness the recommendations to his majesty to retain that nobleman in the government. This was surely a very unequivocal exercise of the subject's privilege. Indeed the right to represent the grievance, or express the sentiments of the subjects, otherwise than by delegation, is, in the body of the convention-act, recognized and re-asserted.

I have applied myself to this question, perhaps with greater emphasis than it merits, in order to meet the crimination thrown out in the British parliament, and re-echoed here, that
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an accustomed and legal utterance being denied to the public sentiment, discontent became conspiracy. It is, I hope, now demonstrated, that the disposition to such alteration, through the means of anarchy, existed previous to the restrictive measures of government, that these were provoked, and purely adopted on the defensive*. That delinquents conspired in private, when they were not permitted to do so openly, proves them to have been tenacious of their object; but no candid man will endeavour to affix as a crime, upon the executive power of Ireland, that it compelled its enemies to lurk and machinate in secret. I entertain little doubt, that the very persons, who impeached the necessary vigour of our administration, would have been foremost to call down the vengeance of the Empire on its remissness, if its conduct had been a timid tampering, or unnerved acquiescence. The masterly display of supreme talents, must necessarily ensure to Mr. Fox the admiration of every man of taste or understanding. Few have observed the movements of his genius with more respectful admiration than the author of these pages; but it is impossible to contemplate his recent interference in the affairs of Ireland, without recalling to mind the manœuvres of Lord Shaftsbury in the last century, to excite discontent in Scotland.

We have now passed in review the charges of misgovernment alledged by Mr. Grattan. I have undertaken

* In an address of the Belfast company of volunteers, December 17th, 1792, is this remarkable expression: "*If bad advisers, or weak, or wicked men, force the people into extremities, on them let all the miseries fall of civil convulsion!*" The description of themselves is accurate; a superstitious mind may, perhaps, apply the imprecation. Alas! the calamities which they invoked, have not been confined to the authors.

undertaken the humble toil, of following this gentleman in his appeal to the unbiaſſed understanding of our common country. I have endeavoured to aſcertain, that he is not qualified to be the guide of Ireland. His political character does not appear to me to be ſufficiently impartial, nor his judgment ſufficiently ſolid, nor his views of legiſlation ſufficiently extenſive. I make theſe aſſertions with great reſpect for the talents he poſſeſſes; no man can ſee with more regret, that one of the moſt brilliant fancies of the age, ſhines only as a meteor to miſlead his country. I make them with great deference for his perſonal character, which may be, and probably is, in a high claſs of honour and integrity. A man may be biaſſed by his paſſions, without being conſcious of the ſeduction. And who has ever appeared to be more under the dominion of paſſion, than the political Mr. Grattan, when he ſeeks to avenge his fall from the government of Ireland?

Far be it from the writer of this eſſay, to censure the watchful anxiety of any man to guard his country againſt encroachments. But he cannot conſent to follow that perſon, who is vigilant or remiſs exactly in proportion to his influence in the cabinet. In the profeſſion to protect a people, there is ſomething ſplendid, which may delude the unreflecting, and dazzle the unwary. A more mature judgment requires facts, and a more critical examination finds the promiſe unſatisfied. Mr. Grattan's political party was a few years back univerſally favoured through the nation. How ſmall the number of ſober and diſinterreſted minds, who at this day patronize it!

In the entire conduct of that party, I ſee nothing more mean and cenſurable than their management

nagement of the Catholics. The interests of that people I do faithfully adopt, so far as they have hitherto been stated to the public. But the means employed under the pretence of promoting those interests, I do as sincerely reprobate. The Catholic religion could not survive the establishment of democracy: The genius of the one is incompatible with the fanaticism, without which the other can never be effected. If the ministers under Lord Fitzwilliam, were so sanguine in the affair of the Catholics, as they have since professed themselves, why was not the act of redress introduced with the money bills? Why is it at present combined with irrelevant topics, which must alienate from that cause every man, who thinks a democratic establishment an inconvenient mode of enjoying liberty? Rather let the existing grievance of restrictions upon a part of the people, subsist for ever, than resort, as a remedy, to a democratic constitution. No person would more cheerfully co-operate in removing the misapprehensions entertained upon this subject; but never can I subscribe to a method of redress, more pernicious than the evil to be corrected,

THE END.

payment of the salaries. The interests of
 the people I do not wish to be sacrificed
 to the interests of the public. The
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Houses of the Oireachtas