

Mr. GRATTAN'S

OBSERVATIONS

ON

CERTAIN PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HIM

IN DUBLIN:

IN A

LETTER, WRITTEN BY HIM,

ADDRESSED TO

THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

Which appeared also in the SUN, and ORACLE.



DUBLIN: PRINTED BY

VINCENT DOWLING, COLLEGE GREEN,

THE CORNER OF ANGLESEA STREET.

And Sold by all the BOOKSELLERS.

1798.

IN the ORACLE of Wednesday October 31st.
and several other London Papers of the preceding
day, the following Note from Mr. GRATTAN
appeared.

“ TWICKENHAM, OCTOBER 29.

“ To the nonsensical and false charge against Mr.
GRATTAN, in a published resolution of the Guild of
Merchants of Dublin, affecting most untruly to found
itself on legal evidence, to which falsehood and folly
they have set the Seal of their Corporation, Mr.
GRATTAN only observes, that the charge is false and
nonsensical; he adds, that the remote and unsupport-
ed charge against him, contained in the statement of
the evidence before the Committee of the Irish House
of Lords is in every material part totally without
foundation.”

The following Letter appeared in the London Courier of the 9th November, instant;—and also in the SUN and ORACLE of the following Day :—As it has excited much curiosity and conversation, respecting a Gentleman, whose political fame has at different times experienced very opposite vicissitudes in popular estimation, the Publisher feels that he shall satisfy a very general wish, by laying it in this form before the public.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

SIR,

I RESORT to your Paper to communicate a letter to certain descriptions of persons in Ireland, who have been extremely busy in their attacks on me, and who deserve not absolute silence, nor yet much notice.

I choose to begin with that rank which I respect most, the Merchants; and were those persons using the name of that Corporation the mercantile body of Dublin, I should be sorry indeed; not because I allow that the whole body, much

as I respect them, could, by a scandalous proceeding, bear down my character, but because I should be afflicted that by such a proceeding they had forfeited their own. I feel myself so linked and connected with every thing which belongs to the great body of the People of Ireland, that a comprehensive description of them could not, by any injustice, disgrace itself, without involving their natural friend and advocate in their degradation. Happy am I, however, that the persons in question are no more the merchants of Dnblin than they are the People of Ireland; on the contrary, that they are an inconsiderable gathering, actuated by what folly or faction I care not, who have, in the charge against me, uttered not only what cannot be true, but what is recorded to be false: they have said, that they have legal evidence that I was concerned in the late Rebellion, and the only matter they could have had before them was the Report of the Committee of the Irish Lords, which is no legal evidence of any charge whatever against me; and which, if it were, is not evidence of that crime—so that those men, calling themselves the Guild of Merchants of Dublin, have asserted, published, and sealed, a *self convicted falsehood*. I lament to be forced to use such words, and yet they are the mildest words such a
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conduct deserves, and must be understood by them and applied to them in a sense the most unmeasured, and the most unqualified.

To the Corporation of Dublin I wish to say a word: They are not the Citizens of Dublin—they are not even a considerable part of them, and they never spoke their spirit nor their sentiments; but as they have the honour of appertaining to the City, they are entitled to a degree of attention; and the best method of shewing it, is by advising them to be less fond of displaying themselves on every occasion. There are cases where their exertions are proofs of their folly, and where their repose would be an argument of their wisdom. All Ministers, all men in power, all clerks, and the whole mob and rabble of the Court, have been so sweltered with their charms, that it now requires a more than popular appetite to encounter their embraces; but very little share of philosophy to endure their displeasure. They ever wait on the wink of power to praise or persecute, and to blemish a reputation by unjust calumny, or unmeaning panegyric. With respect to them—with respect to the other Corporations—with respect to all persons adopting similar proceedings, I am inclined to attribute much less to malice, and much more to folly—a good deal

deal to influence—a good deal to servility, and to that low, impotent persecuting spirit, by which the slavish mind shews its devotion at the expence of its understanding.

I ought not to be angry with these men, because I am one of the few of his Majesty's subjects, whom their charges, even if they were echoed as they are reprobated by my country, could not affect, and who might receive a thousand such shafts on the shield of character, not with indignation, not with contempt, but with calm and pointed forgiveness, the result of a proud superiority, founded on my services and their injustice. To be angry with such men were to be degraded. On the subject of the charge I will make no explanation to them. I have said thus much to them, and they deserve much more; but I am not in the habit of reproaching any portion of my Fellow-citizens: if their mortification were the wish of my heart, I would refer them to the invectives of some of his Majesty's Ministers.

Were it not robbing Heaven of their time, I would say a few words to the Doctors. They have judged, they have condemned; but they forgot to try, they forgot to inquire. Pindaric Poetry I admire; yet, I desire not to be tried by Pindaric Justice. But Divine men have privileges over the moral order of things, and in the
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holy way may spurn the vulgar bonds of equity,
 and pedant rules of evidence; perhaps the sable
 Buckler of Divinity is not always Court proof—
 up and down, exalted and detested, his picture
 high, his person just *not hanged*; mildness and
 Fitzwilliam; coercion and torture—do I mention
 these things to condemn the learned Doctors?
 No. But may I congratulate the memory of mad
 Athens and tempestuous Rome, who find a pious
 shade cast over their insanities, by an example of
 more than Republican inconstancy, in the in-
 stance of grave, orderly, regular solid, and most
 excellent Clergymen. I assure them, I am not
 their enemy, though they may be mine. But
 that is not the case with another description of
 men, with whom I should be ashamed to dis-
 course in the same tone of temper and moderation
 —I mean that Irish faction, which is the secret
 mover of all this calumny and all this injustice—
 they stand at the head of a bloody combination—
 I look on them as the cause of every evil that has
 of late fallen on their country. I protest I do not
 know a faction which, considering the very small
 measure of their credit and ability, has done so
 much mischief to their King and Country. They
 opposed the restoration of the Constitution of Ire-
 land; they afterwards endeavoured to betray and
 undermine it; they introduced a system of cor-
 ruption unknown in the annals of Parliament;

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they then proclaimed that corruption so loudly, so scandalously, and so broadly, that one of them was obliged to deny in one House the notorious expressions he had used in another. They accompanied these offences by an abominable petulance of invective uttered from time to time against the great body of the People of Ireland, and having by such proceedings and such discourse lost their affection, they resorted to a system of coercion to support a system of torture attendant on a conspiracy of which their crimes was the cause. And now their country displays a most extraordinary contest, where an Englishman at the head of its Government struggles to spare the Irish People, and an Irish faction presses to shed their blood.— I repeat it, I do not know a faction more dangerous, more malignant, or more sanguinary.

I am ready to enter into a detail of all this: enough at present to say, that I have been forced to write thus much, because I have no opportunity of vindication but the Press, and no Press but that of England.

I shall conclude by assuring that faction, that I am apprized of their enmity, and shall wait to meet their hostility; hoping, however, that they may not be my Judges, or their blood hounds my Jury. At all events, if such a faction be permitted to dominate in Ireland, I had rather suffer by its injustice than live under its oppression.

HENRY GRATTAN.

Twickenham, Nov. 9.