

AN
ANSWER
TO THE
PAMPHLET
STILED
“Faction Unmasked,”
IN A
LETTER
TO A
YOUNG GENTLEMAN IN DUBLIN.

BY J. M.

*To fight for faction is a common evil,
But to deal out dirty slander is the devil.*

DUBLIN:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

1816.

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ANSWER

TO THE

MEMORIAL

PRESENTED

TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN A

LETTER

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BY J. M.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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ANSWER,* &c.



To *fight* for faction is a common evil,
But to deal out dirty slander is the devil.†

DEAR SIR,

YOU request my opinion of “*Faction Unmasked*”—it is easy to form an opinion of it, though not easy to convey this opinion in suitable terms. So atrocious, so indecent, so furious a libel—any thing so extravagant and raging in its slander,

* This Answer was prepared shortly after the appearance of “*Faction Unmasked*”—some circumstances, personal to the writer, have occasioned the publication to be deferred till now.

† An humble imitation of the motto adopted by “*Faction Unmasked*”—

“ To die for faction is a common evil,

“ But to be hanged for nonsense is the devil.”

perhaps was never published—at least, in an active course of more than twenty years' reading, any thing to equal it, even in this prolific age of abuse, I have never met; if I may not except a pamphlet by RICHARD BURKE, in the time of the French Republic, entitled, if I recollect correctly, "The Regicide Peace." The same storming, the same phrenzy, the same undistinguishing and remorseless traduction of conduct, character and principles, the same daring falsehoods, misrepresentations and lies pervade the two performances; vulgar as Billingsgate, rude and boisterous and licentious as Billingsgate, disgusting the ear of taste, shocking the feelings of good and generous minds. RICHARD BURKE was the son of EDMUND BURKE, who, in his old age, sullied by a shameless apostacy a career of glory. A memorable and a fatal example in our times. The reputed author of "Faction Unmasked" is also the son of a man who has rendered eminent services to his country, but who has often disgraced those services, and is now far advanced in the infamy of BURKE. Is it not a singular, a very extraordinary circumstance, that the sons of two such men, bred up under their immediate care, should adopt all the little, unworthy ideas of their fathers, instead of rising to an emulation of their nobler and glorious conceptions? But such is the fact; and the world will,

and perhaps justly, ascribe the phenomenon to degeneracy in the sons, and to faded intellect, and to sordid and low views to *family interest* in the fathers. Alas! poor human nature! to behold BURKE and G——N departing from themselves in old age, and such middling or mischievous beings issuing from their loins!

From a tissue of open and daring misrepresentation, it is difficult to select—it is also difficult to repel, but by giving one unqualified and sweeping *lie* to the whole—to say to the writer in frank and simple terms: You are a liar and a slanderer, the most impudent and unblushing that ever existed—a most shameless tool of private revenge, bigotry, and oppression—the most envious, envenomed and malicious wretch that ever worked in such a cause, or courted the contempt and detestation of the better part of mankind. Your pamphlet contains all that is desperate and wicked in intent, all that is base and brutal, all that is dastardly and inhuman. Compared with you, the Indian savage pursuing with his tomahawk and scalping knife, persuaded that he can possess the qualities of the victim of his massacre, is an enlightened and tender being—you brandish your knife to mangle and destroy, to glut a dark and bloody enmity, or as bad a passion, not with the hope to invest yourself with the physical or moral spoils of the object of your

hatred. The mind sickens at you—the heart, chilled with horror, shudders at such a monster of calumny—we feel our nature lowered, our species dishonoured by your existence.

As a writer, the critic may address him—“With little learning, less thinking, a bad taste, and a poor imitative genius—the mere *paternæ fecundiæ imago* (on the sofa is Tacitus)—affected, quaint and pert in phrase, not original in diction; wordy, not eloquent; eternally labouring after conceit and antithesis, turgid and puerile; you are a declaiming coxcomb, a fop in letters, the Paul Prig of the political drama; but in beastly slander unequalled—of foul and wicked invective a master.”

Throughout this infamous libel one feeling, my dear Sir, prevails, of undisguised and savage hostility to Mr. O'CONNELL, in his private as well as public character. To this end all the measures that have, these twelve years past, been adopted and sanctioned by the whole body of the Irish Catholics are abused, ridiculed and insulted, as having proceeded from Mr. O'CONNELL, and every failure charged almost exclusively to this gentleman. The attack is so personal and rancorous, so devoid of truth or decency, that you instantly see the writer is a tool of the Anti-catholic faction in Ireland, and a heated partizan of Mr. G——N. To lower Mr. O'CONNELL in public estimation, would completely

advance the views of the faction, and to the wounded vanity and fallen character of Mr. G——N afford consolation, if not minister to his jealousy or revenge for the supposed affront put upon him by Mr. O'CONNELL, in taking from him the management of the Catholic Petition. A little to mask this plan of operations, Mr. O'CONNELL is associated with a few others under the title of '*leaders*;' but it is against him alone that the piece is levelled, that the shot is directed. To take down the general is a main step towards gaining the battle. I will return to this part of the libel, after the consideration of some topics preparatory to the grand assault on our beloved PATRIOT.

“Your question,” cries this libeller, “had been carried, and your leaders lost it.”—“In June, 1812, for the consideration of your question, in the ensuing session, the numbers stood.....235

Against it....106

Majority in your favour...129”

In a balance-sheet, too long and useless for insertion, he presents a gradual reduction in favourable majorities on every discussion, till, from an adverse majority in May, 1813, of *four*, in May, 1815, (three short years) appeared a majority against entertaining the question at all, of *eighty-one*. Then, with much solemnity and in pointed

phrase, the libeller assigns the cause—"In fact your question was carried; it was not lord Graves's place, it was not a majority of "*four*" (nor of course of *fourscore-and-one*) "that beat you; it was the needy adventurers of the board, quack doctors and brawling barristers, Ollapod and Thersites."—A more candid observer, a less noisy and conceited rhetorician would have given a more obvious and credible cause of this *beating*—the continued disasters that befell Buonaparte, and the final defeat and fall of that terror of the world—and of England. No sooner was the issue of the Russian campaign announced—(that campaign after which he was to have fallen on England with a "clap of thunder")—no sooner were the joyful tidings published than the smothered passions, the old prejudices burst forth with volcanic fury; the war-whoop of intolerance, bigotry, and fanaticism was sounded; petitions upon petitions poured into Parliament against Catholic claims; vetos, clauses and securities, not heard of in the day of distress and danger, arose. Any, every captious and petty obstacle was thrown in the way. No, sir, it was not Ollapod nor Thersites, quack doctors nor brawling barristers that *beat* the Catholics—it was the "hoar frosts" of Russia. Did your own marvellous wisdom steer the bark of the Catholic question, it would in such an hour have foundered. The

“ turbulent leaders” were as much so in June, 1812, and the years preceding, as in the period since June, 1812. Your *liberales*, your philanthropists, your enlightened statesmen, the whole host of your new-born patriots and philosophers, lords and commons, dismayed at the motion of the French comet, and looking to every shelter from its wasting influence, became themselves again when it was cooled in the polar circle; recanted or qualified their professions in our favour, and soon after entirely abandoned or resisted our cause. Mr. O’CONNELL better informed than you, Sir, or more guided by truth, has asserted, supported by her history, that England was never generous or just but through necessity or fear. Was she generous and just in 82? or subdued by imperious and alarming events? in 93? at any time?

Having played off his majorities against the *leaders*, the libeller then sweeps through ten pages of a tirade on boards, petitions, prosecutions, vetos, verdicts, restrictions, securities, a bill, a commission, Quarantotti, the Pope, the P——e R——t, the P——ss of W——s, Lady H—f—d. I beg leave to lay before you the substance.

The Libeller says, “ the leaders exclaimed against the bill brought into parliament for the relief of the Catholics;” so did the people at large, so did the clergy, so did every enlightened and liberal

Protestant. "The Catholics will never get so good a bill;" you may turn out a false prophet, and I trust in God you will. "It was originally proposed unrestricted, and with the only exception of the places of Lord Lieutenant and Lord Chancellor." What signifies how it was originally proposed, when it did not pass? "Mr. G—t—n proposed no restrictions, he proposed no clauses—he supported them because"—enough, he should neither have proposed nor supported restrictions or clauses hostile to the doctrine and discipline of the religion of the Catholics, and against their known aversion, their declared resolution not to barter their faith for civil rights and privileges—to force on them a benefit which they viewed as an insult and an injury. "These turbulent leaders cried out against the commission to be composed of four or five Catholics, one of them a bishop, and called it a double Veto;" so did the people, so did their clergy, better judges of it in that light than the framers, or than even you, with all your knowledge; "the commission was better than the veto"—"*bad was the best of them*;" pardon the grammar for the sake of the adage. "They will not get the commission, and the crown will get the veto;" they will not take the commission, and the crown will not get the veto—"Quarantotti, in his rescript, has decided against your leaders;" he has decided against Catholic doctrine too, and is de-

spised by the people, the clergy, and the leaders—
 “The Pope has decided against your leaders”—
 false—it is temporizing and ambiguous at best—
 and “government will *not* get the Pope,” or if it
 do, it will not get the Catholic Church—nor “will
 the Pope prefer Carlton-house to the Catholic asso-
 ciation, that is the Catholic clergy and people.—
 “Government, in the end, will gain the clergy”—
 no sir—nor will they (“like all other clergy”) prefer
 salary to duty, as you charitably and courteously
 foretell, and as you say they did before (“if you
 mistake not”)—“Government will win the Eng-
 lish Catholics”—your knowledge or your prophecy
 is no credit to them—“and the English Catholics
 may be preferred to the Irish Catholics”—so they
 may, and so they will, as they ever have; but
 not for their religion—and yet the “noisy isolated
 leaders” will not be in the condition you predict
 notwithstanding; “that if they take any thing
 it will be as imitators, ashamed not to follow the
 example of others; and when they get their li-
 berty, they will take it as recanting slaves, not
 freemen.”

It is a pretty character given by this libeller of our
 government, that if the Catholics do not do an act
 of impiety or nonsense, the government will not do
 them an act of right or justice—give other securities

than liege subjects, than their other fellow subjects, their oaths and tried fidelity: "if you refuse these securities, I" (government) "will refuse your privileges."

He talks and rants of the leaders losing verdicts, but forgets to tell that not a single Catholic was admitted on the juries, that they were chiefly composed of Orangemen, Corporation functionaries, and hot, high flying Loyalists. The libeller raves at bringing an action against the Chief Justice, instead of bringing it against a poor instrument, a Peace officer.—If this heroic youth were drubbed by the master, he would bravely seek reparation of the servant. He asperses, because he cannot comprehend the dignity of moderation. Has he never heard or read that forgiveness of injury is the noblest revenge, and should conciliate enmity? With our libeller it is a crime in the Catholics to collect subscriptions to defray the expences attending their petitions to Parliament or to controul their application—It is a crime in them to form boards, associations, or meetings of any description—It is a crime to discountenance traitors to the general cause—It is a crime to succour the oppressed, or endeavour to procure them justice—It is a crime to speak of any public transaction or measure of an administration, in fact of any thing—It is a crime to speak

of the disastrous act of Union,* that, after sweeping from the country its rank, wealth and property, has placed Dublin in a state of frightful decadence—is fast advancing it to the condition of Tyre, Sidon, or Palmyra, a spectacle of ruin, a subject of pity and reflection to some Philosophic stranger who may exclaim—“Here an opulent city once flourished”—In his eyes it is a crime to apply for juries *de medietate* (what a legal and constitutional scholar!) How, I ask, would he feel as a Protestant, if a jury to try him as a libeller should be composed, exclusively, of Catholic Bigots, Catholic Peacemen, Catholic Policemen, and the whole tribe of the retainers of a party? Would he not think it equitable to be allowed on his trial at least an equal proportion of Protestants? to be allowed in his native land the privilege of an alien, of the Turk or Jew, who looks upon Christ as an impostor, or his dispensation superseded?

A private bill, it seems, a bill for a turnpike gate, may be prepared by those concerned, and presented to Parliament, without offence; but a bill for the redress of national grievances may not be drawn up by the sufferers, who best know their own case, and respectfully entrusted to the mem-

* “This murderous question that puts all to the sword,” said Mr. GRATTAN in the debates on it.

ber who moves their petition. In the former cases it passes unnoticed as an act of customary and obsequious duty; but in the latter it is a high crime and misdemeanor—it is prescribing to Parliament—it is insolent instruction—it is presumptuous dictation.

Take the following extracts as a sample of the truth and moderation of this part of the piece—“You (the Catholics) follow bad men, who have at heart any thing but your interest, who lead you into difficulties and then abandon you. In the last century, and in the century before last, the Catholics were misled by foolish leaders; in the present century they are misled by knavish ones.”

“From this production (of fear and craft, folly and wickedness) are the men who affectedly stile themselves Catholic leaders; and of such men your character and your question will become the victims—Such men are determined not to profit by any favourable circumstance, or any fortunate relationship?—they know your weakness, they see your imprudence, they experience your generosity and of all they avail themselves most fatally.”——

“The leaders of the present day are more low; (than Renuccini of wicked cunning, and Plunket of signal baseness) equally incapable, and just as imprudent:—they ask for freedom, and insult all

the parties* from whom they are to obtain it;— they abuse the persons who are to propose your question, they threaten the Parliament who are to discuss it—they insult the prince who was to accede to it; they offend one personage” (i. e. Mr. G—T—N) who could render you service, and flatter another” (my Lord Donoughmore) “ who could procure for you *nothing*; and finally on all occasions, they abuse Great Britain, and inculcate this rant on the minds of the people with an appropriate coarseness, and a mischievous activity.—Guided by such men you can never hope to advance”— “ they speak nothing that they ought, and every thing that they ought not, till at length this limbo of vanity, this fiery pandemonium” (that is, the *Court of Hell*) “ becomes the resort of every base and busy character in the society, who enters and bawls, and transformed from his proper image, hisses, with bestial noise, whatever is virtuous, dignified, or moderate.”

“ These leaders make no *honest* national statement; they present to the public eye no grave remonstrance; they present at the bar of Parliament no moderate petition; they know little about the history of their country; they know less about the mode to govern her; turbulent, not rebellious; in

* I beg to say, that the Catholics expect to obtain their liberty from no party— but from the constitution—from the wisdom and justice of the three estates of King, Lords and Commons.

discourse, seditious; in action, not bold for treason."

"They degrade the character and dignity of your cause; they go a begging with their petition (a *tattered* petition) and hawk it about for presentation; &c."

I come now to the hideous picture given of Mr. O'CONNELL, to which the preceding caricature is merely introductory. This, after some prefatory observation I shall exhibit contrasted with a portrait by the faithful and delicate pencil of Mr. Finlay, who does not himself escape a rub from [the filthy brush of this vile painter, this *painter for the devil*, as honest Sancho says. The able and learned Scully, author of the admirable work on the Penal Laws, the enlightened and accomplished Phillips, is also disfigured—so is that noble gentleman Mr. Lidwell, the revered Milner, Mr. Hay, &c.

Of an ancient Irish family, Mr. O'CONNELL cherishes the lofty ideas inspired by his descent. Perhaps there never was a man so formed to influence a popular assembly. When he rises to speak you are struck with the masculine action and unaffected delivery of an eloquent and learned *gentleman* rather than with the artificial enunciation and gesture of the *pleader*, whilst his winning mein and manly figure command favor and respect. At the aggregate meetings his speeches abounding with national ideas

and liberal principles, are ever hailed with bursts of constant and rapturous applause. Of his professional talents it is almost needless to speak—he stands in its first ranks—equally eminent as an advocate or a profound lawyer—surpassed by none, perhaps equalled by none. A match for Burston³ a match for Curran, equal to both, superior to either; Burston was no advocate, Curran a moderate lawyer. As a *politician* and *patriot* his name will go down the stream of time one of the ablest and purest—original, undaunted, and uncompromising. His country may exult in him as a rival to the brightest characters of ancient or modern times. On the whole he is one of the first public characters in Europe.

One or two topics of his slanderer I will just notice:—“ he (Mr. O’C.) “ does not attempt to allay the passions of a warm and mercurial people; he does not exhort them to works of industry and peace,” &c.---False as hell---he is even tiresome, if any thing from him could be tiresome, in recommending and enforcing submission to the laws, to avoid tumult and riot, to comport themselves as industrious and sober citizens, to shew themselves exemplary in the duties of their station, and in the various relations of fathers, husbands, children, to await the redress of their grievances from the established and legitimate sources. Did not the persecuted

board, through the medium of the press, circulate among the people energetic and feeling addresses on this head? Abominable traducer!---“ In debate he is more than a hero; in every sentence there is a challenge; in the field he is a *diplomatist*; he was insulted and did not fight:---again insulted, he was goaded to the ground, where his antagonist (*Roderigo*) fell: he then offered an insult, was noticed by the condescending spirit of an imprudent minister, was challenged, travelled four hundred miles, (*incognito*) was arrested through *unforeseen accident*, and did not go to the ground, being prevented by *unavoidable necessity*.” He was insulted and did not fight”—You mean, I suppose, the transaction in Limerick with his intimate friend Counsellor M'GRATH. Is, I ask you, a mutual apology on the ground no cause of the adjustment of a quarrel? Is a heroic regard for Mr. M'GRATH's safety from the fury of the people of Limerick, had the event been fatal to Mr. O'CONNELL, not the noblest cause of an adjustment? To the most forward and violent of the thousands that pressed to the place of the intended duel, Mr. O'CONNELL addressed the most persuasive and moving words, beseeching them if they had any regard for his memory, to offer no insult, no injury to Mr. M'GRATH in case he himself should fall. How differently the people of Limerick, the immediate witnesses of this af-

fair, thought of Mr. O'CONNEL's conduct and resolution? they who would have drawn him in triumphal procession in his coach back to the city, had he not eluded their intention by taking a private way on foot attended by a few of his friends. Oh malice! oh faction! thy jaundiced eye! thy cankered heart! Of all the actions of his life, Mr. O'Connell, at the hour of dissolution, can perhaps review this with most satisfaction.

“ Again insulted, he was goaded to the ground, where his antagonist (*Roderigo*) fell”---When Mr. O'CONNELL stooped to a meeting with *Roderigo* there was not a worthy man in the kingdom who heard it, that did not lament his forgetfulness of his own dignity---“ The first of Irishmen” to notice a bravo, a ruined, desperate character, whose only chance of rising above the distress of his condition lay in cutting off Mr. O'CONNELL. It was, sir, a plot to assassinate, not the fair and honorable duel of gentlemen. But the GUARDIAN GENIUS of Ireland flung her shield over her darling son, and preserved him for his country.

“ He then offered an insult, was noticed by the condescending spirit of an imprudent minister, was challenged, travelled four hundred miles (*incognito*) was arrested through *unforeseen accident*, and did not go to the ground, being prevented by unavoidable necessity”---To assert that any man in

any office, from his Majesty's representative *as such*, condescended to Mr. O'CONNELL, is silly, very silly, very fulsome, very foolish---But he offered no insult---he merely repelled injurious, if not worse expressions, reported in the current press to have fallen from this minister, who, apart from his politics, possesses private worth, engaging and highly finished manners, with a taste and magnificence becoming his station. But my fine, dashing fellow, how came it that when Mr. O'CONNELL was to have met *Roderigo*, (a high antagonist, no question of it) he found no obstacles to stop his course, but had a clear way left him---but when a first minister of state is involved with him, Mr. O'CONNELL is fettered by every busy and restless and terrified authority of the capital, down to the very constable and watchman---all his motions watched with (not sly, slow, but) eager-circumspective eyes! Poor *Roderigo* was a cheap thing, or employed on special business: but the minister who dispensed the golden showers of patronage, he was quite another person, not to be risked in a contest with him who had lately given such fatal proofs of valour upon a hero of the first notoriety, the *Don Bellianis* of the Corporation: Gulliver in Lilliput, was never so watched and *bound* as was Mr. O'CONNELL both here and in England, where they had such a dread of him, that they actually stationed Bow-street

officers on the beach of Calais to seize him, lest after all their restrictions he should break through--and a man who bore him some distant resemblance in apparel only, was actually taken into custody by these alarmed and watchful "*guards of the coast,*" and found some trouble in proving his own identity ---in proving that he was not Mr. O'CONNELL; the minister himself, meantime, happy in evading every search, or left at perfect liberty to wait his foe and shew his spirit. And yet it is an absolute fact, that Mr. BECKET, the confidential friend of the minister, had Mr. O'CONNELL arrested in London, on his way to the place of meeting.---The *confidential* friend of the minister has the man arrested whom the minister had challenged to the field!

Character of Mr. O'CONNELL, by the Libeller.

“ Examine their leader O'C——ll; he assumes a right to direct the Catholics of Ireland; he advises, he harangues, and he excites; he does not attempt to allay the passions of a warm and mercurial people; he does not exhort them to works of industry and peace, in close alliance with Great Britain to promote agriculture, commerce and manufactures, and derive wealth and strength and credit from the

various benefits of this rich and luxurious connexion. No such thing;—full of inflammatory matter, his declamations breathed every thing but harmony, and vented against Great Britain the most ignorant, the most mischievous, and the most disgusting calumny, falsehood and nonsense; equalled only by its excessive imprudence.—He said that Great Britain was the most stupid, the most dishonest, and the most besotted nation that ever existed! he said that Ireland could not confide in the promises of England; he said that the English hated the Catholics, and hated the Irish simply because they were Irish!—he declared that the re-enactment of the whole Penal Code would be preferable to the measure that was to repeal that Code! without discrimination he pronounced the Protestants bigots, and the Catholics slaves; and at the same instant that he talked thus idly, and raved thus wickedly, he said, there existed no freedom of the Press,—no liberty of speech!!

“ When he enumerated the grievances of the Catholic body, he omitted the greatest grievance!—himself! When he called for the repeal of civil and religious disqualification, he shewed that there existed another, more durable, and much more insurmountable, a moral disqualification in his own person, a mental incapability, that discovered his unfitness to get power among a people whom he

he made it his occupation to mislead and misadvise; a man that could make the speeches that he has made, utter the sentiments that he has uttered, abuse the characters he has abused, and praise the characters that he has praised, violate the promises that he violated, propose such votes of thanks, and such votes of censure, shews that he has little regard for private honour, or public character; that he does not comprehend the spirit of liberty, and is not fitted to receive it. He betrays such a scattered understanding and barbaric mind, that if he got liberty he would lose it; almost unsuited for the British constitution, and almost ignorant of the bonds of civil society, of such a mold and such a disposition, as to be incapable of accomplishing any rational object. If a man loved treason, and that this person was a traitor, he should not join him; if a man was love-sick with royalty, and that this person was a high flown royalist, he should not join him; his rebellion would be a rout, his loyalty would be servitude; turbulent as a citizen, he would be worse as a soldier; he may live like a Clodius, he could not die like a Cataline.

“ His declamations to the lower order are full of extravagance, unreality and *ambiguity*: he sets afloat the bad passions of the people, makes them restless in disposition, and impotent in action; he

leaves a *vacuum* in the meaning of his harangues, to be filled up by the heated imagination of a warm-hearted and too sensitive people. He is well aware how wicked it is *jactare in vulgus voces ambiguas*; he is well aware that it is the part of a bad man to make use of a grievance as an instrument of power, and render it the means of discontent, without a single honest attempt at redress; he knows, or at least ought to know, that this conduct is of such a nature as must always tend to confirm bad ministers, and strengthen stern authority; it seduces the people into unmeant mischief, and after exciting them to folly, it abandons them through fear; it may lead them to rise against an exciseman or a titheman, to burn a haystack or murder a farmer, but will never teach them to redress a grievance, or to bring an offending minister to the scaffold,

This leader in spirit is poor; his fire is of a paler colour, his courage is of a hesitating quality; he would smile on tyranny in fine clothes, and wink at disaffection in disguise; he would avoid tumult if he was not brave, and would resist power if he was not bribed. His political imprudence is prodigious, his martial *prudence* prodigious also; in debate he is more than a hero; in every sentence there is a challenge; in the field he is a *diplomatist*; he was insulted and did not

fight:—again insulted, he was goaded to the ground, where his antagonist (*Roderigo*) fell: he then offered an insult, was noticed by the condescending spirit of an imprudent minister, was challenged, travelled four hundred miles (*incognito*), was arrested through *unforeseen accident*, and did not go to the ground, being prevented by *unavoidable necessity*. Too much in the habit of attacking legal authority, he will retract his error, he will read one recantation, he will make his peace with the police constables; and a sense of gratitude, if not of honour, will ever make him recollect the *services* of a Bow-street-officer.

“His speaking is extravagant diction, a vulgar boast, a swaggering sentence, affected bombast and ludicrous composition; his liberty is not liberal, his politics are not reason, his reading is not learning, his learning is not knowledge,*—his rhetoric is a gaudy hyperbole, garnished

* “Their liberty is not liberal”—from this paradox of Burke in his “thundering attack” on the French Revolution, the poor plagiarist spins out this foolish sentence—as he does by a vile and blustering imitation the following beautiful sentence of Junius—“In the shipwreck of the state trifles float and are preserved, whilst every thing solid and valuable sinks to the bottom, and is lost for ever”—*the imitator*—“it is in the stormy season, when every thing valuable sinks to the bottom, that the lightest substance rides across the topmost wave along with broken spars and rotten cordage, and all the shattered fragments of the wreck; which, had they been good, would have saved the vessel; but being worthless, have precipitated her destruction.”—The whole libel is a servile imitation, as to stile and manner, of Mr. GRATTAN’S Letter to the Citizens of Dublin in 1796, and other pieces of that fallen Patriot.

with faded flowers, such as a drabled girl would pick in Covent Garden, stuck on with the taste of a kitchen maid, and delivered in a barbarous dialect and Connaught declamation.

“He makes politics a trade, to serve his desperate views and interested purposes; he thinks that they are fair game for every enterprising cheat to play at, and what F—x, and B—e and G—n, after years of labour, could scarcely gain, he imagines that a bullying barrister can win, in league with a legal Jesuit, and idle lawyer, a quack doctor, a fanatic newspaper editor, an Iago or a Drances. Turbulent beings, like this man, have strolled and blustered too often across the confused scene of Irish affairs, with more or less audacity and mischief, according to the support they received, or the applause that was too fatally conferred on them by the inverted orders of our disturbed society, the upper ranks in the lower tiers, or the lower ranks in the upper galleries; the composition is not novel; the character is not original; it has appeared before; but of all the performers, this is (except one) the lowest and the vilest; to compare him to such predecessors would disgrace them; they have been seen in the form of a Rotunda agitator, a learned Bœotian doctor, a common council blood-hound, an A——r O’C——r, and a D——l O’C——l; this man

can bring about nothing good ; in abortions he is most fertile ; the womb of his mind is of such a sinful mould, that it can never produce any thing that is not deformed ; he cannot bring a point to bear ; he never succeeded in any project, except the loss of your question ; he barks and barks, and even when the filthy slaver has exhausted its poison, and retires to its kennel ; there still barks and howls, within unseen. This man never would have been a gentleman, but with the knowledge that he possesses of his profession he might have risen as a lawyer, if he had not attempted the Politician. Now he has forfeited all chance of promotion ; no administration would injure their reputation by advancing such a character ; not—the present Government, not—the Opposition, not—the ever succesful miscarriage B—d—t : if his party was in power, even *they* would not effect a reform or a promotion. Had E——t succeeded, he might ; but with all E——t's faults, none of his feelings, and nothing of his talents, he would have fallen more quickly even than E——t did, and the same sun that would have risen in crimson horror upon such bad pre-eminence, would have sunk in blushing shame after beholding his downfall.

In short, this agitator has led astray the Catholics ; he exhorted them not to take their liber-

ties from England; he advised them rather to suffer the entire penal code to be re-enacted; he impelled them to refuse their privileges for a point which they did not understand, which he did not understand, and in which there was absolutely nothing; a point which the Catholics will yield, which they could not carry, and which, least of all, he could not carry for them; he traduces England, he disgraces Ireland; he abuses the Protestant; he deceives the Catholic; he misled the people; he misled the clergy. He affected to forget their concession in 1799, when the Irish constitution was the sale, and confirmed them against concession in 1813, when Catholic privilege was the purchase!

“He never praised that vagrant ecclesiastic M--l--r, so much as when he was cashiered by his own countrymen! He never abused England so much as when she was on the eve of concession! He never abused Mr. G-----n so much as when he recommended moderation! and never opposed the authority of the Pope, until that authority recommended allegiance!”

*Character of Mr. O'CONNELL by Mr. FINLAY,
in a Speech delivered at the Catholic Board, 11th
December, 1813.*

“We are assembled to give some permanent evi-

dence of our opinion on the public services of a public man—to publish and perpetuate our sense of obligation to an energetic and indefatigable Patriot.

“ Look to the nature of that virtue which you are obliged to reward. Of all human virtues, the virtue of Patriotism is most important, and most suspected, and justly is it the object of suspicion—it is the surrender of a personal advantage, for the attainment of a greater portion of general good.

“ Of the vicious, none can be patriots—of the selfish, none can be patriots—of the virtuous *few* can be patriots. The love of ease, the fear of slander, the dread of power, the dislike to strife, the value of a man's life to his family, the value of a man's repose to himself, the indifference of public apathy, the inconstancy of popular applause, but above all the liability to misrepresentation, discourage the good from the ambition of a Patriot.

“ When he steps forth from the ranks of tranquil life, and devotes his time to public interests, he avows that he employs himself in that which is equally the business of all. Thus, that people in whose service he starts a volunteer, are placed in Censorship over his words and actions—and the members of the community protect themselves from the self reproach of civic inaction, by scrutinizing his motives with all possible doubt, and accounting for his acts with the least possible charity,

“ This caution, though sometimes unfair, is seldom unreasonable—it is frequently justified by the event, and always allowable, under the principle that no class of men should be more suspected than patriots, because no class produced more impostors.

“ But this suspicion, like every thing else, should have its limits, and there is a length of time—a quantity of fidelity beyond which jealousy or suspicion cannot exist without injustice to its object.—Time is the true ordeal of Patriotism—to preserve a Patriot’s purity, it is not to be expected that he should be always *right*, because he cannot be always *wise*—but it is necessary that his acts should be always honest.

“ Therefore, when time has essayed and established the fairness, not of his acts but of his intentions, his exertions, his talents, and his purpose, it then becomes the duty of the people to repay, by an increased portion of their gratitude, for those doubts, which their caution compelled them to entertain.

“ Ten years (*now twelve*) have tried the fidelity of O’CONNELL, and you stand now indebted to him in the article of gratitude, not only for the quantity of service conferred, but the time during which the trial has been protracted, and the expression of your collective gratitude deferred.

“ This line of reasoning applies to every free

country—but it applies in a more particular manner to Ireland. In Ireland, there is one simple division of its inhabitants—Catholic and Protestant—Religion in truth, makes no part of the political results which flow from this distinction. Protestant is another word for the possessor or expectant of place—Catholic, another word designating those whom the law excludes. Thus power, place, patronage, and a large portion of franchise, being, in fact, denied to the great majority, and confined to a few, they become real property in the hands of their possessor, and unless their possessors be endowed with no common portion of disinterestedness, they have every motive deriveable from self to examine with severity, and interpret without charity, the motives and conduct of those men who would destroy that property by the generality of its diffusion. Therefore the advocate of Catholic Emancipation, appears in a greater or less degree of hostility to every Protestant who has not the virtue to dismiss the calculations of self—therefore the advocate most efficient, prominent and persevering, presents an aspect of political hostility, varying its phases, exactly in proportion to the degree of self-love, which sways the motives of those Protestants, to whom he is an object of observation, and for this reason, DANIEL O'CONNELL is hated by some, disliked by many, and cannot, in the nature of things,

depend on any approbation, not purely disinterested—therefore he must suffer from calumny as long exactly as you must suffer from injustice: and the amount of injury in this way inflicted is the exact measure of reparation, which mere justice should prompt you to compensate. The permanency of his country's affection is the only species of remuneration to which he ever looked forward. The vulgar value of the certifying instrument is a matter of indifference to him, and should not be subject of deliberating œconomy with you.

Such are the disadvantages, moral and political, which for a time must always operate to obstruct the actions and obscure the motives of him who struggles for the public good. The moral disadvantage applies to all countries, but the moral and political unite to Ireland.

There is a third disadvantage, if the Patriot be a Lawyer, which I call a professional disadvantage. The Bar is an educated, enlightened community. It has been truly said, that the pursuit of the law exercises in its study the noblest faculties of the mind, and engages in its practice the cardinal virtues of the heart—Ambition is a passion suitable, perhaps essential to a Barrister, but in the mind of all who are not great or good, Envy is the inseparable handmaid of Ambition.—In the Barrister's career of professional success, the course

is so narrow, the competition so violent, and the prize so important, that all praise is rigorously denied, except when extorted by unquestionable desert. Thus, then where a man happens to unite the characters of a Patriot, an Irishman, and a Barrister, there is a threefold Censorship imposed o'er his conduct, which nothing but eminent virtue can sustain, and which if sustained, cannot well be overrated.

“Eminent and prominent in these three relations, history will describe DANIEL O'CONNELL—spotless in the relations of private life, matchless in the duties of private Friendship, beloved by every man who knows him, esteemed by all who have not a prejudice or an interest in disliking him—with manners that *instantly* disarm bigotry, there never yet was a man introduced to him for the first time, under prepossessions to his disadvantage, that did not feel his dislikes hastily evaporating, and depart from the conference a convert to esteem. At five in the morning, you will find him at his study—at five in the evening you will probably find him still labouring in the public service—if you cannot find him thus employed, you may be always certain of finding him at home. I never knew any man of equal industry—I never thought any man to be so industrious. No man at the Bar labours *more* in his profession, and no man at the Board labours so *much* in Politics—but to labour *so much* and to labour *so well*, far exceeds the common notions of human capability.

“Social and sober, polite and unceremonious, cheerful, affable, candid, and sincere—proud with the haughty, and meek with the humble; his

frown rebukes Arrogance to inferiority, and his smile lifts Humility to his own level; his virtues cannot be indifferent to you; they should be subjects of your care, for they have been agents of your interest.

“Such a man, in difficult times, volunteered as the advocate of Press and people. The apathy that followed the measure of the Union, had depressed the Nation to political indifference. Lord Clare had declared, in the British House of Peers, that the Catholic People felt uninterested in the Question of Emancipation! It became necessary to correct the error of the fact. The two great pillars on which Emancipation could be raised were the exercise of a free Press, and the Exercise of the Right of Petition. O’CONNELL started the Advocate of both: and here commenced the political hostility between the interested Advocate for the Governor, and the disinterested Advocate for the Governed—that is between Mr. S——N and Mr. O’CONNELL.

“It is your duty to hold up O’CONNELL. It has been said, with some truth, that no man yet yoked his fortunes to the fate of Ireland, who was not ruined by the connexion. The Catholic cause is of considerable weight, but it is said, that its weight has often operated rather to sink than to float its adherents. Contradict those imputations—give me now in the instance of O’CONNELL a practical proof that this rumour is untrue; and in doing so, I make not this an occasion to express your respect for the virtue of economy; parsimony, is among the minor virtues; it is a

personal attribute; it should make no part of a people's character, when developing their affections to a great man, for great services in a great cause. If you do exercise it upon this occasion, it may be said in fact as it must be said in law, you do not represent the benevolent purposes of my generous Countrymen. Power has attempted to put down O'CONNELL; it is the People's interest to hold him up.—What would you do without him? who would you get like him? In his political and forensic capacities, his enemies allow that he always combines an INTREPID advocate—an HONEST Patriot—a clear head, an honest heart, a manly purpose. He possesses that every-day-working talent, which does the business of practical usefulness, and which curious to say, is compatible with eminence of talent—a sort of talent that does not work itself down—that, like the memory gathers vigour from its toil—and like the bridge of Cæsar acquires strength and solidity from every weight of its burthen. Compared with such a man what are the dozens of periodical orators, who, like myself, occasionally come forth with a holiday speech, decked in the finest trappings of eloquence? Give me the man who is not afraid to lose character by every day work—who will speak well to day and ill to-morrow.—Every man who speaks often must sometimes speak ill—health, indisposition, constitution, fits of dullness, many things may cause it; but give me the man who will not avoid speaking, when necessary, because he may speak with less effect—who will not deem it necessary to let the soil lie fallow, in order to give value to the future production—who, in truth,

is more anxious for the public service than his own fame; and who, in calling the public attention, rests upon facts, and not upon phrases!

“ This power of continual exertion falls to the lot of very few—for my own part in my humble exertions, I have found occasional periodical exertion more than enough—and I have often been surprised and astonished, at the power of uninterrupted and successful exertion which exists in O'CONNELL, and does not at all exist in the same degree in any other man in these countries.

“ These talents are now yours. You should prize the highly gifted *honest* owner. Fighting the battle of his country, against the enemy of his country, he stands exposed to the shafts of angry power. Let Hibernia in whose cause he acts and suffers, cover her patriot with her ample shield.”

To return to the Libel; the rest of it is one unvaried repetition of this sort of calumny, unworthy of more reprehension or notice. It rails, with canine mania and canine howl, at LORD DONOUGHMORE, SIR HENRY PARNELL, Mr. CURRAN, Mr. O'CONNOR, Mr. MAGEE—at every one, at every thing. Lord CLARE was a *firebrand* and a *hangman*—Mr. SCULLY betrayed the *hellish* spirit of an artful *fiend*—“ the leaders are Beelzebub and Belial—a set of infuriated bedlamites, of Billingsgate bacchanalians, headed by a Janus or a Proteus, a Jack Cade or a Jack Falstaff.” Against the whole tenor of their unsullied and virtuous conduct, their public and solemn “ *pledge of honour not to accept of any place or*

emolument from Government till the Catholic Question was carried," this shocking Libeller roundly charges the Leaders with no other object than "*self-interest*"—roundly asserts that Mr. O'CONNELL offered himself to sale, that Mr. SCULLY did so—Mr. O'CONNELL for a *silk gown* (a king's counsel) and Mr. SCULLY for a *revenue situation*—The slanderer says so, judging from his own venal soul. No, Mr. O'CONNELL is too high for such a bribe, for any bribe but the emancipation of his countrymen. A silk gown for the *man of the people!* A silk gown! Poor creature! A silk gown or a revenue situation, or less, would buy you, did buy you, corrupt and characterless as you are. Mr. O'CONNELL and Mr. SCULLY would not so sell the *mighty meed of their large honors*. A silk gown—a pretty exchange for honored fame and virtuous glory! A silk gown—go you and get a silk gown, if fit for it, as you have basely earned it.

If persecution of every species be *self-interest* the leaders have been amply gratified, for like the first propagators of religion they have as yet reaped no other fruits of their labours. But which of them has accepted place or emolument? How and to whom have they applied for either? The brazen impudence of the charge!—But of this we may be morally certain, that the bribe has been offered, and rejected with indignation and scorn. The man who has spurned, must be charged with having solicited.

As a lover, an ardent lover (nothing less gentle reader,) of the Catholics, the Libeller exhorts them to take their cause from out the hands of these incapable and mercenary Leaders, and of course

from the objects of their confidence in Parliament, LORD DONOUGHMORE and SIR HENRY PARNELL, and to commit it to other and abler and purer hands—that is, to lay the cause of five millions of people prostrate at the feet of Mr. G——N, for whom and the faction that now fosters him this precious commodity has, most clearly, been manufactured—to lay our petition at the feet of a man who has manifested such supercilious disdain of our wishes—of a man whom gratitude for past favors (favours of the first magnitude) should have bound to our service against any considerations of vain punctilio or idle form—to lay it at his feet till he condescended to raise the suppliant from the earth—to lay it at the feet of the man who refused to present it to Parliament till it suited his own convenience, and his own ideas of propriety or dignity—of the man who contemptuously rejected the suggestions (say instructions, positive instructions,) of a people, his constituents, his “master,” his “creator,” of whom, by his own proud acknowledgment, he is the “pensionary”—And is the calumniated, the much-injured O’CONNELL their pensionary, risking life, and fortune, and character in their cause? Shame on the nation—on its ingratitude—that poor present of plate is not yet made up for him. Shame on the age—shame on its levity, its ignorance, its trifling folly, its wild inconstancy. The red-coated destroyer, a ——, a ——, or the Vandal ——, shall receive gold-hilted and diamond hilted weapons, gold boxes and corporation addresses and freedoms, felicitation and fulsome flattery—shall receive honours, wealth and dignity; insignias of orders, ribbons and gar-

ters—Triumphal arches, and monumental columns, and memorials, and stately palaces will be raised for them at enormous charge; but the bold assertor of a people's rights, of their fallen fortunes and trampled liberties, shall meet ingratitude and neglect—shall meet suspicion and hatred where he should meet love and confidence and adoration—shall meet any thing but a worthy return. This would almost tempt a man of sense and spirit to renounce for ever any concern for the public interests. Had Mr. O'CONNELL employed his great talents not *for* but *against* his country, how different would be his lot. If an apostate from his religion or an enemy of his country, wealth and favor and place and dignity would be showered on him. After a fidelity tried by the fiery ordeal of persecution and calumny, and corruption, we may be sure, any hired ruffian, any prostitute wretch, any abandoned rascal raking together revilings and scurrilities that would disgrace cleave-boys and basket-women, will be certain of meeting countenance, if not support, against men who can possibly mean nothing but the general good. His slanderous and lying production will be praised and purchased—will be puffed in newspapers professing themselves *independent* or *patriot*, and increased activity and virulence imparted to its malignity. This low ignorant fellow, and that low ignorant fellow, this slave and that slave, debased by thralldom, degenerate, unfeeling and heartless, without love of country or love of liberty, fat and contented, looking downwards on the earth, shall raise his mean, unhonoured voice and cry out, “It is all true, by G—d! O'CONNELL is not the man we took him for—Let us wait in

patient, humble silence" (as your fathers did for 100 years) "for the redress of our wrongs. Let us wait for the good pleasure of our lords and masters, who in their own time will grant our emancipation on wise and liberal terms no doubt. Let us withdraw our confidence and support from O'Connell, O'Connor, Scully, &c.—we will be better without them. We are fully competent to manage our own cause—or we will have other men to direct our proceedings." Poor, besotted creatures—I sicken at the reflection—at your wretched, lost condition.

But if, as the libeller recommends, the people discard their present leaders, Mr. O'CONNELL, Mr. SCULLY, &c. who are to succeed them? why does not this sage counsellor, this great politician, this virtuous patriot, unmask, come forward, and offer his services in their room? To cashier one set of commanders without appointing their successors, would be to disband the army, and leave it an easy prey to the enemy—In fine, LORD DONOUGHMORE and SIR HENRY PARNELL have proved themselves worthy their high and honorable trust, and they will again present our *Petition* to the legislature, and the veteran brows of his Lordship and the young and blooming patriotism of Sir Henry, will soon be crowned with the unfading glory of achieving the great MEASURE of CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

I am, my dear Sir,

With warm wishes for
long and happy days,

Affectionately and unalterably yours,

J.M.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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