

DR. MILNER'S

APPEAL

TO

THE CATHOLICS

OF

IRELAND.

Without examination or knowledge of the truth, you have condemned.

Return again to judgment. Daniel xiii. 48, 49.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY H. FITZPATRICK, 4, CAPEL-STREET.

Houses of the Oireachtas

DR. MILNER'S

A P P E A L,

&c. &c.

MY CATHOLIC BRETHREN,

OVERPOWERED as I am, by the number and the diversity of my literary foes, rather than their force, it seems to me that I can disarm, if I cannot drive off, one of the most formidable bodies of them, if you will permit an individual, who has, for a considerable time past, devoted himself to your interest and service, now to appeal to your characteristical justice and generosity, and indulge him with a cool and deliberate hearing; for it is notorious, that I am unremittingly attacked in the front by the Musgraves, the Duigenans and their Orange bands,* whose unbounded indignation I have drawn

B

drawn

* See Sir Richard Musgrave's Remarks on my Tour, and Abraham Plymley's Answer to his Brother Peter, Le Mesurier's Bampton Lectures, and the different numbers of the Anti-jacobin or No-Popery Review.—This monthly publication

drawn upon myself, chiefly by fighting your battles. It is equally manifest that *I am*, on one hand, assailed and harrassed without ceasing, by a confederate band of Irish Catholic writers, who shew me no more respect or mercy, either as a fellow Catholic, or as a prelate of their church, than the Orangemen themselves do: and you will now, at least, learn that I am annoyed on the other hand, with weekly pamphlets, essays, and satyrs, by a desperate Gallic sect, who threaten, as well as insult me, because I will not acknowledge them to be Catholics, whilst they proclaim our venerable Pontiff, the exemplary Pius VII. and the great universal Church, in communion with him, to be involved in schism and heresy! I say, you will necessarily learn this now, because the champion of this sect, Abbè Blanchard, has recently appealed from my judgment, and that of his own bishop, to your prelates, in a book of 244 pages, * declaring at the same time, that he shall take their silence for an approbation of his doctrine. Behind me are ———, but as they

lication is the common vehicle of the anonymous calumnies and invectives of Dr. D. and Sir R. M. against Popery, and its defenders. See, in particular, the number which has just appeared for December last, in which the Orange writer makes common cause with my Catholic foes in Ireland.

* The author has very properly entitled his last production *Abus sans Example*.

they keep out of sight, I will not drag them into it.

Yes, my Catholic brethren of Ireland, for these six months and more—during which I have been chiefly taken up, as you will soon see, with prosecuting my former undertaking of illustrating your history and antiquities, of vindicating your apostle and ancient saints, of demonstrating the purity and truth of your religion, and of beating down the different adversaries who have risen up against it, of celebrating your national character, and more particularly, of defending your clergy and hierarchy, with all their divine rights and jurisdictions, to the best of my power, and at the risk of losing what is most valuable to me in this world—a confederate host of your Catholic writers have been employed in executing their threat, made in August last, of depriving me of my popularity; that is to say, of your affection and esteem. In the prosecution of this most uncharitable undertaking, they have kept no bounds in the malice of their insinuations, or in the grossness of their misrepresentations and calumnies. Do you fancy this an exaggerated complaint? Look at the hand-bills posted upon your walls, or dispersed through the post-office, over the two islands; in which I am charged with being “an agent in selling your venerable
“ hierarchy to the highest bidder.” Happily for

my credit, but unhappily for that of our holy religion, two other prelates were associated with me in the charge; one of whom, probably the immediate head pastor of the calumniators, for his zealous and successful exertions in defence of this religion, has long been the common shooting mark of all its declared enemies; while the other, by his charity, piety and sweetness, has the rare merit of having disarmed those enemies, in every country in which he is known. To say one word now of myself: so, it seems, I am posted throughout England and Ireland, as the salesman of your hierarchy!—Take up, fellow Catholics, that book,* which probably first taught my accusers to appreciate the dignity and the value of that hierarchy, to judge me on this charge, by the contents of it. Turn in particular to that passage, page 29, in which I deprecate, with all the energy I am master of, the pensioning of the Catholic clergy, and be assured that I shall repeat the same sentiment in the new edition of my work. If you have any doubt concerning the meaning and tendency of that passage, consult the commentaries of your enemies upon it, namely, the “Remarks” of Sir R. Musgrave” upon my Tour, and “the Report of Lord B——shire’s Speech” in a certain illustrious assembly, on the 27th of last May,

* Letters from Ireland, &c.

May, ——. But I am wandering from my subject, which at present is not to argue, but to relate. Examine then the files of the Dublin Evening Herald, from July to December, inclusively; you will see me therein charged with “ a blasphemous attempt against the existence of the hierarchy;” * with “ sacrificing the principles, tenets, and discipline of the Catholic Church;” † with being “ an agent sent to Ireland, by Mr. Perceval, to accomplish the work in which Lord Redesdale failed, that of subverting the Popish superstition, and of grinding down the faith and morals of Catholic Ireland, more than all the efforts of Luther and Calvin could do;” ‡ with being “ disposed to barter away the inalienable spiritual rights of the Church for my own temporal advantage;” § with being “ a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” the hypocritical priest described by Boileau, and “ Judas Iscariot, agent to the party that sought to arrest Jesus Christ.” || In consequence of this accumulated guilt, formal notice is given to me and to the British empire, that “ I have been tried and found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged in effigy by the parliament of Pimlico, (in Dublin,) under the prosecution of Mr. Attorney General, Sarsfield, and Mr. Solicitor General, Laicus, for conspiring, at the instigation

* Evening Herald, July 20. † Sept. 2. ‡ Sept. 12.

§ Ibid. || Sept. 23.

" tion of the devil, under the form of thirty
 " pieces of silver, to adopt resolutions subver-
 " sive of the faith I was sworn to protect." *
 I have more recently been compared, in a copi-
 ous parallel, with " the proud Pharisee" of the
 gospel. † It has been roundly asserted before
 the public, that, " as much as in me lies, I
 " encourage persecution against the Christian
 " Church;" ‡ that I am " so far maddened
 " by disappointment, as to be instrumental in
 " quickening the malice of the avowed enemies,
 " or affected friends of the Irish bishops," and
 that " the Irish prelates and Catholics in general
 " are (possibly) doomed to a new persecution,
 " unnaturally roused into action, by that un-
 " grateful accusing spirit which dictates all my
 " furious letters on the question." §

I ask you now, my Catholic brethren, whe-
 ther the picture which I drew of your confe-
 derate Irish writers is overcharged? and, in
 your opinion, whether Sir R. Musgrave himself
 is capable of writing with more rancour and
 coarseness against the author, who has exposed
 the falsehoods and fabrications in his darling
 Memoirs of the Rebellions, than these good
 Catholics do write against a prelate of their
 own communion? I sincerely hope, for the
 consistency of what I have published and am
 publishing of your moral and religious charac-
 ter,

* Evening Herald, Sept. 26.

† Nov. 13.

‡ Dec. 2.

§ Nov. 30.

ter, that the number of these writers is not great, though they describe themselves as constituting a parliament. For my part I never found any thing like this rancorous disposition amongst those who are considered as the refuse of your nation; I mean the poor sailors and soldiers, who were brought from Portsmouth and Gosport to my parish town of Winchester, for trial, on some indictment or other, to the number of many hundreds, during the twenty-four years I resided there. On the contrary, I found such an innate goodness of heart, and respect for the ministers of religion, and especially that exuberance of gratitude for the services of which it was my duty to render them in life and at their deaths, as to endear their national character to me, at a time when I little expected to become acquainted with the more religious and moral orders of their countrymen. Alas! till of late, I thought the mental poison of your country had been confined to the breasts of Orangemen!

These writers, of the Herald, boast of having covered me "with shame and confusion, by putting me down in argument; a circumstance," they are pleased to say, "which I had previously been a stranger to."* If this be true, let them have the full merit of their victory: for thus much is certain, that the question at
issue

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13.

issue was to me a professional subject, and the very subject on which I have published three different works;* while my antagonists professed to be utterly unacquainted with the great Catholic theologians and canonists, whom we bishops and priests are obliged to study, but to draw all their information from that single source from which Luther and Calvin drew their information.† I must add what you my brethren will naturally suppose, that in consequence of their writing numerous hasty and desultory essays, on subjects which they had never studied, they fell into grosser errors and more numerous contradictions than any one of those several adversaries has done, whom they admit I have had the advantage over during the twenty-five years of my literary polemics. However, they fancy they have “put me down in argument,” and it is not my intention to disturb them in the enjoyment of their triumph; only I will mention to you what they themselves avow, namely, that long ago I signified my resolution not to have any controversy with them at all under the disguise of feigned signatures; and in this resolution I was fortified by the advice of the Catholic prelates, who never spoke of these anonymous Herald writers but in

* The Letter to a Layman, the Divine Right of Episcopacy and Ecclesiastical Democracy detected.

† Evening Herald, Sept. 23.

in the severest terms of censure and displeasure. The writers, however, ask by what rule of Locke I can shew, that a knowledge of the disputant is of any consequence as to the force of his argument? Undoubtedly there is no rule either in Locke or in Aristotle of this nature; but there is a rule of common sense, which tells every gentleman and scholar not to commit himself, either by word of mouth or in writing, if he can properly avoid it, with any person, unless he has some sort of pledge that the person will observe due decorum of language, that he will adhere to the fundamental principles on which the controversy rests, and that he will abide by the consequences of a refutation, so far at least as to acknowledge his error, or to be silent on the subject. Now, it is evident that I am bound by all these laws, while I give my name to the public, as I invariably do, whether in periodical papers or in other publications: but what hold have I, and what hold has the public, upon *A. B.* and *Laicus*, and *Sarsfield*, and *Detector*, for their observance of any of them? For example, is it to be supposed that any of these writers would have the confidence to address me in such language as that set down above under *his own name*, supposing at the same time this name to belong to a gentleman? And would any controvertist, whom I could tie down to the laws

of the Catholic Church, and who is amenable to the reproof of its pastors, vauntingly scoff at the authority of Cabassutius, Thomassinus, and Bellarmine,* on a question concerning the canons and discipline of the Catholic Church, and that he would appeal from them to his own interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, and to some unknown clergyman's interpretation of a Greek word, which the writers do not know even how to spell?† Well, and supposing now, that, after having been so often "put down in argument" by these profound canonists and linguists, I should, by mere chance, gain a victory in my turn, what shall I be the better of it, or my enemies the worse? *Laicus*, perhaps, will transform himself into *A. B.* and *Sarsfield* into *Detector*, and in these new characters they will open batteries upon me upon fresh grounds: in the mean time Mr. *C.* and Mr. *D.* which I suppose to be the real names of my opponents, will walk the streets with unblushing countenances, and will insult as usual that of Dr. Milner! But my anonymous calumniators have two other reasons for keeping in the dark; they say that by "avowing their names they would expose themselves to the dagger of the vile Orangeman, or to the slanderous tongue of the more vile pensioned and pension hunting Catholic."‡ Both these reasons:

* Evening Herald, Sept. 23. Nov. 13.

† Sept. 23.

‡ Nov. 13.

reasons I submit to the consideration of the public; first, whether the writers are not quite a match for the pension hunters in the line in which they affect to dread them? And secondly, whether it is not at least probable that the names of these writers, when they come to be known, will not be found more obnoxious to Orangemen than that of Dr. Milner, which name, however, the owner of it never conceals either in Ireland or in England?

There is a case, my fellow Catholics, in which I might be induced to affix a false signature to my publication; namely, in case (by way of an essay, or for any other reason) I were to write upon a subject which I knew nothing at all about. But in no case whatsoever could I reconcile it to my ideas of justice to lay an accusation, or, what is worse, to insinuate one against any man, whether prelate or peasant, whether Catholic or Orangeman, without giving my name, as a pledge that I would stand the issue of a trial with him before the public, or even before a court of justice. Never could I reconcile it to the feelings of *my heart* to hide myself in a corner, and thence to shoot poisoned shafts at the man whom I think, or who actually may be my enemy. No; if for any good purpose I must fight with him, it shall be on equal terms; he shall have the advantage of his sword as well

as of his shield. Irishmen! do not your hearts beat in unison with mine?

I shall conclude this long digression with expressing my surprise and my concern at the conduct of my adversaries. I am surprised that, in extolling the resolutions of their upright and edifying prelates, in their Synod on the 15th of September last, they should take no notice of, and should even trample upon, the third and fourth articles of them: for have they ever once appeared sensible of the severe censure which was then passed by that venerable body upon their licentious pens? Have they paid the least respect to the four and twenty crosiers that were then projected in my defence? No; for the bitterest, the most libellous calumnies of these Heraldists are those which were published within a week or ten days from the breaking up of the Synod. I shall here insert the resolutions in question, the original of which is in my possession.

“ At a meeting of the Roman Catholic arch-
 “ bishops and bishops of Ireland, held in Dub-
 “ lin, September 15th, 1808, resolved unani-
 “ mously, that the satisfactory explanation of
 “ the Right Rev. Dr. Milner’s conduct in a late
 “ arduous transaction, as received this day,
 “ through a specially deputed friend, most
 “ amply proves to us, *how grossly he has been*
 “ *misrepresented in certain newspaper publications.*

“ We

“ We are fully convinced of the unblemished
 “ rectitude of his principles, of the purity of
 “ his intentions, and of his disinterested zeal in
 “ the Catholic cause: and we hereby entreat
 “ him to accept of our warmest thanks, for his
 “ powerful and unwearied exertions in promot-
 “ ing it.—Resolved unanimously, that the Right
 “ Rev. Dr. Milner be requested to act as agent
 “ to the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland at
 “ the seat of government, agreeable to such
 “ instructions as he may occasionally receive
 “ from the Archbishops, in concurrence with
 “ their Suffragans.”

The concern which I feel arises from a zeal
 for the reputation and interest of our common
 Church, one of the essential and mostly con-
 spicuous marks of which you well know, my
 Catholic brethren, is HOLYNESS. This holyness
 implies the strictest observance of the Ten
 Commandments, and, above all, the practice of
 the favourite virtue of our Divine Master,
 charity. Without this, as you have oftentimes
 heard, your *faith*, “ *though strong enough to
 move mountains, would avail you nothing.*”
 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Now, I appeal to your cool
 consideration, what ideas our mistaken fellow-
 christians of other communions must form of
 the sanctity of that Church, in which such men
 as Lord Fingall and Lord Southwell are con-
 stantly

stantly held up by Catholic writers, as nominally irreligious; half Catholics, the disgrace of their Church, &c. They who have made, and who constantly do make, such sacrifices to it; they who are universally revered for their moral and religious virtues by the public at large, as well as by myself, who have known them from their childhood; whilst the men who put themselves forward in the face of the public, as the genuine, strict, conscientious Catholics; and who, to use their own swaddling language, "have been saved by their religion," * are chiefly distinguished by the uncharitableness of their language, as appears by the specimen I have given of it, and by their continued, open violation of the commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour!* What scandal must not you, my brethren, take at the conduct of these men, who, as strict, conscientious Catholics, of course, you know are in the habit of frequenting the holy sacraments, whilst you are constant witnesses to their detraction and calumnies against their own prelates, as well as against others, and never hear of the least attempt, on their part, "to make their injured neighbour satisfaction, and to restore his good name as soon as possible." *Catholic Catech. p. 32.*

It

* Evening Herald, Nov. 30.

It is pleasant enough to hear these anonymous writers retorting the charge of injustice and uncharitableness upon me, because when they began to call me to an account, and to a number of impertinent questions, (threatening me first with the loss of my popularity, and then with gibbets and fire to enforce their requisition,) I took the liberty of enquiring their *real names*, in order to judge from their characters, of their motives, and their authority in questioning me; adding that "Sarsfield and Laicus may be good Catholics, or mere nominal Catholics, a disgrace, by their principles and conduct, to the religion they profess; or that they may even be wolves in sheep's clothing, who come only to kill and destroy, for any thing I can know of them, and that the disclosure of their real names would probably settle my opinion upon these points, and enable me to decide how far they are deserving of my respect and regard." This is the passage, which some man, woman, or child, who falsely assumes the name of the Great Sarsfield, Lord Lucan, maintains is contrary to justice and charity.* But, tell me, my brethren, I beseech you, what injustice or uncharitableness can be deduced from it, except that, in my opinion, some bad Catholic or some Orangeman is as capable

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13.

capable of writing in the newspapers, under the signature of SARSFIELD, or LAICUS, as a good Catholic is? Heavens defend me from insinuating, that your immortal countryman, *the real Sarsfield*, (for as to *Laicus*, I suppose the millions whom I have the honour to address are all *Laici*,) who nobly faced in the field “the hero of Glencoe, and the pacificator of Limerick,” was “a disgrace to his religion, or a wolf in sheep’s cloathing.” If any thing were wanting to the completion of the jest, it is, that this mock Sarsfield complains I have “attacked a *character* which I cannot possibly know,”* and which, he adds in the same paper, he “keeps concealed, for fear of the dagger of the Orangeman, and the slanderous tongue of the pensioned Catholic.” To attack a fabricated name; to injure a reputation which is a profound secret; to ruin a character which does not exist; by what name, I pray you, my brethren, do you call this in your country?

I am far from wishing to lay additional restraints upon the press; but again, and again, my Catholic brethren, I beseech you, to discourage, by all the means in your power, *anonymous publications upon matters relating to your religion*. I have much higher motives for

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13.

for this advice, than those which I have already suggested; and, take notice, they are such as all and every one of your excellent prelates and pastors will decidedly sanction. For under their correction, I, though a doctor and a prelate of your Church, always speak to you, my brethren of Ireland, upon these subjects. The case is this; there is a living authority, a speaking tribunal in the Catholic Church; the singular, the happy prerogative, the immortalizing principle of which is, that we all and every one of her children, are subject to it. By publishing our real names with our religious essays, we profess ourselves, or at any rate we become, amenable to this tribunal. But if bad Catholics, under the pretence of being good ones, if the heterodox, under the pretence of being orthodox, by means of feigned names, and specious declamation, are permitted to lecture you, how can your real pastors and prelates arraign them? What security have you that they will not impose false doctrines upon you, for the genuine doctrines of the Church; as I maintain the above mentioned anonymous writers have done in scores of instances?

I give you my word, my Catholic brethren, that when I sat down to write this letter, I had no intention of running into this exposure of the anonymous writers in the Evening Herald;

my business not being to refute their calumnies, but to eradicate some groundless prejudices against myself; which I fear have been instilled into the breasts of several of the most upright and edifying persons among you. However, as these prejudices have probably originated in the still repeated and unrefuted calumnies in question, (in confirmation of the Machiavelian maxim, *calumniare fortiter*, &c. (throw on dirt enough, some of it will stick) this digression may be of service to me, in the cause which I have undertaken; at the same time that it will be useful to you for the different purposes which I have pointed out. The prejudices which I mean to combat are nearly allied to the following assertions of my adversaries, in their latest publications: “ Dr. “ Milner at the last hearing of the Catholic “ petition, *engaged* that the King should hold “ a veto upon the election of our bishops. “ *He did grant* a veto. Before the passing of “ the resolutions, we were advised by Dr. “ Milner to *leave the settling* of the dispute “ to our worthy *prelates*. The bishops did examine the question, and unanimously decided “ against *Dr. Milner’s plan*.”* “ He is enthusiastically attached to it.”† His recent letter “ in

* Evening Herald, Dec. 2.

† The present state, by *Inimicus Veto, Esquire!* This writer

“in the Morning Chronicle, has filled the
 “nation with astonishment, and excited loud
 “and general censure on this wanton and un-
 “politic renewal of hostilities.”* In opposition
 to these assertions, I undertake to prove; first,
 that neither the plan, which the great bulk
 of you so strongly object to, for allowing of a
 certain interference of the Crown in the nomi-
 nation of your bishops, nor any other plan for
 making the least change whatsoever in your
 ecclesiastical discipline, is *my plan*: secondly,
 that I never did *grant to the Crown the power
 of a veto* in this business, *nor engage that your
 bishops should grant it*: thirdly, that, as well
 since, as before the passing of the resolutions,
 I have uniformly advised the Catholics to leave
 this matter to their worthy prelates; knowing
 perfectly well that it is for them, and THEM
 EXCLUSIVELY, to decide upon the expediency
 of the measure, as it is mine to obey their
 instructions. I disclaim an attachment to any
 measure which the prelates of any part of the
 Catholic Church may deem inconsistent with
 its safety or its welfare; and I maintain my
 late letter was not intended by me, nor indeed
 generally calculated to occasion hostilities of

D 2

any

writer proves himself by his language to be a gentleman,
 no less than Mr. Trotter, Mr. Clinch, and one or two others
 of my opponents: yet I never, before now, heard of an
 Esquire of that name in any part of Ireland.

* Evening Herald, Dec. 5.

any kind, but rather to promote the inestimable blessing of peace. Should I, my Catholic brethren, obtain that success which I promise myself in establishing these three points, I foresee that I shall have nothing to fear from the utmost malice of my inveterate foes on your side of the water, and that I shall have no future occasion to renew this disagreeable topic, in either island, barring such explanations as may become inevitably necessary, in consequence of the expected debates in Parliament. Of one thing remain perfectly assured, that, as I have received no instructions whatsoever from your prelates, or from any one of them, relative to the business in question, so I should decline receiving any if sent to me. In any other concern I should be happy to serve them, but of this I trust I have washed my hands for ever.

To proceed now with some degree of order in establishing the two first points of my defence; namely, those which regard my conduct previously to the meeting of the bishops: I positively deny, that I formed the plan, or conspired with any other being or beings, to introduce any sort of interference, on the part of the Crown, in the nomination of your bishops, or in any other of your ecclesiastical concerns whatsoever. It is notorious to the public, both Protestant and Catholic, that I am not less a professed advocate for your hierarchy, and
the

the mode by which it is perpetuated, as being primitive, and calculated for the peace and welfare both of Church and State,* than I am a foe to every the least encroachment of the civil power, or of the people, upon that independent spiritual jurisdiction which Christ has left to his Church, and which is the very vital spirit of its never failing existence. For more than twenty years, my brethren, have I been engaged with the enemies, and chiefly the domestic enemies of this jurisdiction, who in various modes have attempted to infringe it, that is to say, either by recommending the *oath of supremacy* or the direct *Royal nomination*: God knows, my brethren, you will know at the great day of manifestation, what I have suffered for my constancy, in defending the independency of your Irish Catholic hierarchy and jurisdiction, no less than that of our little English Catholic flock. This being to a certain degree a matter well known to the heads of your hierarchy, and having first attracted, on my behalf, the honour of their notice and friendship, what likelihood is there that I should, all on a sudden, in the month of May last, when the ink was hardly dry in that pen with which I had been defending the divine rights and freedom

* See Appendix, No. 5, to Sir J. Hippesley's Additional Observations.

dom of that hierarchy and jurisdiction against their most inveterate and powerful enemy, Dr. Duigenan, * renounce the leading principles of my conduct and conscience, by devising a plan, or conspiring with other persons in devising a plan, against your hierarchy and jurisdiction? Again, my brethren, though conscientiously attached to the King and Country, to which we have sworn allegiance, as I have maintained you also are; I have always measured my allegiance and your own, not by the news in the Gazette, but by our duty and our oath; I have always vouched to this King and Country for the purity and firmness of your civil and social principles, and more particularly for those of your exemplary prelates, and have shewn that our Catholic ancestors, and the bishops and clergy, in particular, have evinced a principle of conscience, in opposition to apparent interest, beyond every other description of christians, even the *divine right* men. In short, I have always maintained, by the tongue and by the pen, what I am fully convinced of, that there is no need of any change at all in the existing discipline, by way of securing or ascertaining the fidelity of your prelates and clergy. Nay, I will go so far as to say that, in my opinion, the most considerable personages, who have called

† See Supplement to the second edition of Addit. Observ.

called for a change on this ground, do not think it necessary. They only sought to throw out a tub to the whale of vulgar Protestant prejudice; just as when they tacked new formularies of allegiance, but exactly the same in substance, to the different acts of parliament which they have, from time to time, passed in our favour. I had then no *political* motive for desiring a change in your discipline; and as to the personal motives of avarice and ambition, which the Herald writers have *alternately* attributed to me, I disdain to answer them when I am writing to you.

But, though *I* have never devised or desired a change in your Church government, *others*, in great numbers, have; I mean other Catholics; for as to Protestants, they, of course, must always wish it to be changed, and even destroyed. Instead, however, of enumerating the works written by Catholics, or mentioning the respectable personages among them who have negociated in favour of this change, so far as to recommend the vesting of *an absolute and uncontrouled power* in the Crown over all our prelacies in both kingdoms, I shall satisfy myself with citing the declaration, upon this head, of the celebrated and well informed writer whose publications have been more read, and have produced a greater effect than those of any other of our advocates whomsoever; I mean

mean Peter Plymley, so called. This is then, what he published in his Ninth Letter, a little before the late debates on the Catholic Petition: “ *To my certain knowledge the Catholics have long since expressed to his Majesty’s ministers their perfect readiness to vest in his Majesty, either with the consent of the Pope, or without it, if it cannot be obtained, the nomination of the Catholic prelacy.*” There was then a powerful conspiracy of still growing strength to which several of our Catholics were accessory, for enslaving the Catholic Church of both islands, or rather for extinguishing what I have called its *vital principle*: but so far was I from being a party to it, that I prepared myself to oppose it, whenever it might break forth, with all my might, as I am well known to have opposed other attempts of the same tendency.

Some of your prelates, particularly two venerable metropolitans, will testify that I consulted with them long ago upon the best means of averting the dreaded mischief, and that I went up to London the last time I was there for the express purpose of making such efforts, as it might be in my power to make, against it. That noble Lord also, whose zeal in your cause made him a sort of courier between London and Dublin, in the worst weather of last spring, will testify that in every one of the visits with
which

which he honoured me in travelling between those capitals, I never failed to warn him, in the most emphatic language, against consenting to the projected change. You will certainly conclude that I had taken such means as seemed to me, at the time, sufficient for ascertaining the sentiments of the Irish prelates on this momentous concern. To be brief, I did understand that these sentiments perfectly agreed with my own; namely, that we could not, to save our lives, yield the direct patronage of our hierarchy, or the right of appointing Catholic bishops, to an A-Catholic state or sovereign; but that it would not be contrary to the faith or essential discipline of our religion, to yield that sort of negative interference which has been so often explained, provided *it were otherwise expedient*, for the welfare of the Catholic religion or of the Catholics themselves. Of this latter point I never took upon myself to judge, but I understood that your prelates, whose *exclusive right* it was to judge of it, were disposed to grant it out of a regard to you, their flock; namely, as the price of your civil rights, and the condition of your emancipation. For you are sensible that we, the ministers of the Catholic religion, and the religion itself, are to derive no benefit from the emancipation: come when it may, it is understood that we are to remain after it, just as we are before it. With

respect to yourselves, the Catholics of Ireland, I was not honoured with any commission from you, and I never took upon myself to judge of your political interests or your national feelings: there were other persons every way better qualified, and those duly authorized to attend to them, and who at the same time were privy to, and witnesses of, every step that I subsequently took. In a word, it never once entered into my imagination (here I confess my egregious error) that you, or any part of you, would conceive an alteration in the process of recommending candidates for episcopal institutions, to undermine "the only undestroyed monument of your national grandeur," any more than the different changes which have taken place in this respect since the year 1682 have done. So far from this, I really believed that you wished every concession, consistent with the principles of our common religion, to be made by your clergy, in order to obtain a complete redress of your existing grievances, and to annihilate for ever those odious distinctions which still make you, the population of the country, an inferior cast in it. I had seen Maynooth accepted with gratitude; I had witnessed your patient acquiescence in those disgraceful formularies of allegiance, unexampled in the history of civilized states, which I have mentioned above. For I judge of your feelings,
my

my brethren, by my own; and I solemnly declare, that I never felt myself so humbled in all my life, as when, in the public court at Winchester, I was forced to swear that “ I did not
 “ think myself bound by my adherence to the
 “ Catholic Church (that Church which my
 “ Protestant fellow-subjects call HOLY when-
 “ ever they repeat their creed) to rebel, to
 “ commit murder, and every other sin; and,
 “ lastly, *to perjure myself!*” Oh! with what enthusiastic ardour and galling sarcasm have I not heard my respected acquaintance, and your immortal advocate, the great Fox, dwell upon the absurdity of calling upon men to swear that they think themselves obliged to keep an oath!

But, to return to my defence: the very first morning after my arrival in London, and in consequence, I am persuaded, of my earnest cautions, mentioned above, to a noble and worthy personage, I was summoned to attend certain illustrious parliamentary friends, when this question was put to me, as nearly as I can recollect: “ What sort of power the Catholic
 “ bishops of Ireland were disposed to yield to
 “ the Crown, in order to bring about the eman-
 “ cipation?” The question, you observe, was, as the business itself was, not about my own dispositions or concessions, but about those of the *Irish bishops*. How now, I pray you, was

I to act in these circumstances? Methinks every honest man amongst you would say, "Satisfy our friends to the best of your knowledge and belief; but take care not to add a word beyond that." Well, my brethren, I did exactly this; I answered, "that I had no instructions from the prelates to speak to this point, (in fact I had partly ventured to hope that reference would be made to them upon the business,) and that there was not time to obtain any answer from Ireland previously to the day (namely, the ensuing Wednesday) fixed upon for the debate." I added, that I was convinced the prelates neither would or could yield any *positive power* to the Crown in the business, nevertheless that I had good reason to believe (as in fact I had good reason, and as some of the most distinguished prelates have, since the assembly, publicly declared I had) that they were willing, upon the conditions, and in the circumstances mentioned, to concede *a certain negative power*: namely, that which has been so often explained. But, again and again, I emphatically repeated, that I could give *no pledge on their part*. I must here observe that, though I conceived it possible the dispositions of the bishops might be mentioned in parliament, I had not the least idea that it would come forward in the shape of a *distinct proposal*. I must also remark, that
the

the word *Veto* never occurred in any one communication which I held with our parliamentary friends, or previously with the bishops. In fact, it does not correspond with the idea which I entertained of the negative interference. The word was affixed to it in Ireland by those who were enemies to the interference in general.

It was so well understood by the personages alluded to, that I gave *no pledge* whatever on the part of the prelates, and, in short, that I did nothing more than declare *my opinion* concerning their disposition, that I was pressed to do what I was otherwise resolved upon doing, namely, to lose no time in consulting them upon the point. Accordingly, on the very day of my first conference with those personages, namely, on Saturday, May 21, I wrote to each of the four Catholic metropolitans, giving them an account of what had passed, and assuring them in particular, that “ I had entered into
 “ no pledge on their part, but that they were
 “ at liberty to throw me, like another Jonas,
 “ into the sea, in case they were not willing to
 “ sanction the measure.” Had I received, in due course, an answer to this effect from any one of them, or from any other prelate, (for I wrote to other prelates,) most undoubtedly I should have communicated the circumstance to our friends in parliament, and, I make no doubt, a proper explanation would have taken place in
 that

that assembly. But no such letter did I receive during the whole time of my continuance in London, which was till about the middle of June; nor indeed any other letter, which did not lead me to suppose that the measure would be sanctioned. It is true, that after I had quitted the capital, for Hampshire and Dorsetshire, that is to say, when it was too late for me to state the circumstance to members of the legislature, I received letters from three prelates, stating objections against the royal interference *in toto*. But not one of these "finds the least fault with my conduct," whatever the anonymous Herald writers, who pretend to know the contents of my letters better than I do myself, have asserted to the contrary.* I will not publish the confidential communications of my friends in the newspapers, as these writers very decently call upon me to do,† but they shall at all times be forthcoming to the prelates themselves.

You will naturally suppose, that if I was in such haste to communicate to my constituents the contents of private conferences regarding them, I should not be more slow in disavowing those false and detestable newspaper reports of the parliamentary debates, which represented me as authorizing a proposal for making an

A-Catholic

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13.

† Ibid.

A-Catholic king to become virtually the head of the Irish Catholic Church. No, my brethren; if I were capable of making or consenting to such a proposal, or even conceding to the Crown any *real efficient power or jurisdiction, little or great, direct or indirect, open or secret,* you may depend upon it, I would act a more consistent part; I would make better terms for myself; in a word, I would take the oath provided for the purpose, I mean the oath of the King's spiritual supremacy. The fact is, the very morning on which this lying and scandalous report of the debates appeared, which was no other than that on which they terminated in the House of Commons, May 26, amidst the religious duties of the festival,* I drew up, and caused to be printed, a formal disavowal of the scandalous imputation, and of certain other errors connected with it. It was my earnest wish to insert this in the newspapers, which had I done, I should still have retained your good opinion: but in this instance I sacrificed your favour, to what was considered by persons acting in your name, and by some of the greatest ornaments of the Catholic body, as your interest. In brief, I contented myself with circulating this printed disavowal among the prelates and a very few other friends, after it had been shewn
to

* Ascension Day.

to your parliamentary advocates, no one of whom condescended to authorize my circulation of it with greater kindness than the Right. Hon. George Ponsonby.

It may be objected to me that, in the interval between the debates in parliament and the assembly of the bishops, I was active and industrious in defending and promoting the plan in question. I grant, my brethren, that, considering it as a measure which virtually had already obtained the sanction of your metropolitans and senior bishops, and having sufficient grounds for supposing that it would obtain the sanction of the assembled prelacy, I took some pains to explain certain circumstances to some of them, which they had not otherwise means of becoming acquainted with, and of obviating objections which to me seemed ill founded; still adhering to that axiom which I published in the newspapers, and from which I have not, for one moment, swerved by act, by word, or by thought, that to the Catholic prelates of Ireland, and to them alone, belonged the final decision upon this momentous business. Nevertheless my principal business, during the time in question, was to enforce, by every means in my power, and with all sorts of persons, and every where, the necessity of those checks or restraints upon the regal interference, (an interference that, as I have said, I considered as already
virtually

virtually granted,) which, I was satisfied, your prelates would, upon mature reflection, find indispensibly necessary for the independency of your Church; though I was not aware they had heretofore sufficiently prescribed them, and without which, be assured, I would not have been agent in the business to save my life. Here then, my brethren, is my sole crime, if I was guilty of any, namely, that having reason to believe your prelates were disposed to grant a negative interference to the Crown, I devised the most effectual limitations of which it was susceptible, for preventing your hierarchy from being enslaved or injured by it. This is the only act and deed, throughout the whole business, which, properly speaking, belongs to Dr. Milner.

Having now been counsel in my own cause, let me also be cryer in it.—How say you, my Jury: GUILTY or NOT GUILTY?—Take notice, I do not call for your verdict upon the impeachment of Mr. Attorney General Sarsfield, and Mr. Solicitor General Laicus, before the Parliament of Pimlico, namely, that “Dr. Milner, not having the fear of God before his eyes, but being moved by the instigation of the devil, under the form of thirty pieces of silver, has conspired to adopt certain resolutions—subversive of the faith, he was sworn to protect.” No, my brethren, I do not ask for your decision upon this charge, as I

am already perfectly sure upon whose head, your verdict of GUILTY, in this case, would fall. But I call upon you to pronounce upon the two first counts or charges in the former indictment against me, relative to my conduct, previously to the meeting of the bishops. First—Have I *devised, or conspired with other persons to devise a veto, or other plan,* for admitting of the royal interference in the election of your bishops? Secondly, have I *granted, or engaged that the bishops should grant any veto, or other interference of the Crown in this business?*—I am sure what your verdict is on both these points; and therefore, I now proceed to ask you further, whether, upon the whole of the case, I appear to have acted any other part than that of a faithful agent to your prelates, anxious to learn and express their sentiments and transact their business, with the ultimate view of serving you, but still more anxious to preserve from subjection, and every other danger, one of the most venerable and important portions of that Catholic Church, of which I myself am a prelate?

I shall now be asked, why I did not publish the explanation six months ago, when I was called upon to do so, in the newspapers, and thereby “save myself and the nation an immensity of trouble and anxiety?”* I answer, that I published sufficient reasons at the time, but that

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13.

that I had a still more powerful motive, in my own breast, for not obeying the requisition then made to me. I was satisfied by private letters, as well as by those published in the Herald, * that the writers who are now employed in executing their denunciation against me, were then desirous of sparing † my character to the utmost of their power, and of turning their vengeance on the prelates, particularly upon one of them, whose virtues I revere and love, and who, at all times, labours under more than his full share of obloquy and persecution. In these circumstances, my brethren, I judged, as I always shall judge in similar circumstances, that it was better the flock should think ill of, and be incensed against a stranger than against their own pastors; and however anxious I may be in taking this leave of you, to regain your esteem and affection, I give you my honest word, I would not publish this Appeal to you on any account, if I did not think that, in the existing circumstances, I can do so, without any risk of occasioning the slightest jealousy between you and your native prelates.

I come now to the third head of accusation against me, that which regards my conduct since the decision of the bishops. It is this charge, as I understand, from private letters, which chiefly indisposes the generality of you,

F 2

even

* Evening Herald, Aug. 5. Sept. 2. † Sept. 2.

even the pious and edifying part of you, even my warm friends, as well as my bitter foes against me. This part of my indictment stands as follows: "that Dr. Milner is enthusiastically
 " attached to the plan of the *veto*, against which
 " the bishops have unanimously decided; and
 " that he has written a letter in the Morning
 " Chronicle, which has filled the nation with
 " astonishment, and excited loud and general
 " censure on his wanton and impolitic renewal
 " of hostilities."—I can refute this accusation, my brethren, in three words: but, for your more complete satisfaction, I will previously enter into some explanation regarding it.

It is clear to me, by all my letters from Ireland, that my friends there, fancy *all the public reside in Dublin*. In the agitation occasioned by their detestation of this *veto*, so called, they forget that in my situation I have various relations with the English, no less than I have with the Irish: they seem insensible that there is an imperial parliament about to meet in this island, which is sure to agitate the question of the *veto*, though I were to observe the most profound silence concerning it, and that without explanation from some quarter or other, the honour and character of those personages, to whose interests I cannot be indifferent, I mean the Catholic bishops, are liable to be grievously misrepresented, to the great detriment of religion itself.

self. I must add that there are certain distinguished members of this parliament to whom we are all infinitely indebted, and who therefore have a right to demand justice at one hand.—To speak of these first: it is well known that these parliamentary friends, who have not only exerted their unrivalled, but have also sacrificed their high situations and ample emoluments *twice over* in our cause, and who, if they have not succeeded in it, have at least prepared the way for success, and who have actually restored our good name, at the expense of their own popularity; it is well known, I say, that they had, for a long time previously to the appearance of my letter, in the Morning Chronicle, been traduced by their political adversaries, in the ministerial papers, as a set of impostors, who had deceived parliament and the public, by pretending to have held conferences with me, relative to the disposition of your bishops, while no such thing had taken place. In proof of this allegation, they cited my words published in the Evening Herald of July 29; “that I would
 “ sooner lose my life than be instrumental in a
 “ Catholic king’s obtaining any power or influence over any part of the Catholic Church.”
 Now, my brethren, it was very easy to shew that this declaration no way militated against the existence of those conferences; in as much as the negative interference, as I have always explained

explained it, did not go to confer any such power or influence on his Majesty. This being so, I appeal to your hearts, whether I ought to have refused that easy reparation, in my power, to the character of friends, who have done so much to raise yours?

It is notorious, that the English public, whose ideas, of course, were not more accurate than those of ministerial writers, were astounded and indignant at the whole of the business in question, and were led to believe and report the most extravagant and injurious stories concerning all the Catholics, who had been mentioned or alluded to in it. You will easily believe this, when I inform you that many of our most dignified and best informed Catholics, as well as very many Protestants, have, to my certain knowledge, maintained and published, that I “ requested Lord F. to introduce me to certain
 “ great men, whom I persuaded to propose the
 “ plan in question, on the part of the bishops,
 “ and that then I went over to Ireland to in-
 “ duce these bishops to reject it.” Again, it is certain that a great number of our most pious English Catholics, and even those of my own flock, were scandalized at my conduct, supposing me to have acknowledged a branch of the royal ecclesiastical supremacy; whilst other well disposed Protestants were offended at my alleged punctiliousness in insisting upon the above men-
 tioned

tioned checks or restraints upon the negative power: at the same time that they admitted, we had a right to provide for the security of our Church. Now, my friends, it appeared to me that all these objections might be answered, and all this mischief be removed by one plain and candid explanation of the whole matter in the newspapers; nor have I found reason, since the publication of it, to alter my opinion, in these respects, at least as far as England is concerned. Lastly, I know for certain, from different quarters, that the motives by which the bishops were actuated in forming the resolutions were grossly misapprehended by persons of consequence. The bishops were even suspected of having been tampered with by ministers; in the same manner as your Herald writers have charged me with that baseness. Violent threats of censure, at the meeting of parliament, if not something worse, were thrown out against them, and I was particularly cautioned not to unite my cause with theirs. In a word, still worst of consequences to our holy religion were seriously apprehended by me. Now it appeared to me, my brethren, that if I could not wholly disperse this storm, I might at least mitigate its violence, and prevent some of its bad consequences, by shewing that the prelates had acted upon good and laudable motives in forming their resolutions; being the same motive, in substance,

to

to the best of my memory, which I had heard them, and one venerable metropolitan, in particular, allege as the grounds of their decision. One of the Herald writers terms these reasons "unanswerable,"* while another accuses me of a "breach of confidence" in denying at the same time their authenticity, and calling them inadequate, or impertinent, or false or malicious.† I will not enter into a controversy with this writer, about the authenticity or the superior propriety and strength of the motives which we respectively assign; but this I will do; if any three of the bishops will disavow the motives, or any of them, which I, in the sincerity of my zeal for them and for our common religion, God knows, attributed to them, I will publish my retraction in the newspapers, or in any other way that may be prescribed.

To be brief, the letter which has been so complained of by so many, upright and pious Catholics, in Ireland, has been more applauded, as I can easily prove, by the same description of Catholics in England, than any other publication of mine which has appeared for a long time past. It has also given great satisfaction to many impartial, independent Protestants, and I trust has been productive, in a great measure, of the good effects which I had in
view

* Evening Herald, Dec. 5.

† Evening Herald, Dec. 2.

view in writing it. It is not considered in England, as "a perseverance in, and a still pressing of a measure" which the bishops have rejected, but quite the contrary. In proof of this I may refer to the *Monthly Review* (no contemptible authority, like the *Anti-jacobin Review*) for November last, published soon after my letter in the *Morning Chronicle* appeared. I have not the number before me, but the sense of the passage I allude to I believe is this; that "since " Dr. Milner and his episcopal friends in Ireland " do not approve of the Veto, the Reviewers " hope Parliament will not insist upon it as " a condition of the emancipation."

Having made these observations, I now come to the short, the satisfactory refutation of the charge on which you ground your present animosity against me; and I thus declare before the world, that, as I never was attached to, and never should have thought of the plan of the Crown obtaining a negative interference, called by you a veto, in the nomination of your bishops, had I not been persuaded, upon sufficient grounds, that it had been previously approved of by your bishops; so, from the moment of its being rejected and condemned by them, at their late meeting, I have never said, done, or imagined any thing by way of reviving or encouraging it, in any shape or degree whatsoever. If this does not satisfy you, and you

G

require

require me to give my vote upon a question on which I never yet have voted, and on which I have no claim to vote; I declare, that, since those venerable personages, who are the proper and authorized judges of the matter, find his Majesty's interference in any shape, or in any degree whatever, in the choice of your bishops, to be inexpedient, *I, Dr. Milner, also do declare it to be inexpedient.*

But, take notice, my Catholic brethren, that in making this declaration, I have, I hope in God, been swayed by motives of conscience only; not by the desire of disengaging myself from that hornet's nest in the Evening Herald, which has been annoying me for these six months past; not by the desire of regaining what is certainly very dear to me, but which is an inadequate motive of action for a minister of him, who was *the outcast of men, and the reproach of the people*, to be guided by; I mean your favour and confidence. Hence I would not on this, or any other account, advance one step beyond the truth. In declaring the plan, as checked and limited by me, to be still *inexpedient*, I will not allow it to be "contrary
 "to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic
 "Church, or to any practice or usage essen-
 "tially and indispensibly connected with the
 "Roman Catholic religion." Much less will I give into the many extravagant, scandalous and erroneous propositions of the anonymous writers
 in

in the newspapers, who take upon themselves to contradict your venerable, learned, and intelligent Primate, and to correct the resolution of the whole prelacy itself. I am struck with horror at the language of one of these writers, who, professing to imitate the Emperor Constantine in covering the scandalizing bishop, with his own cloak, nevertheless describes the metropolitans and other senior bishops, the glory and defence of pure faith and virtue in Ireland, as having for a long time "their slumbers broken by the torturing
 "visions of an affrighted conscience, and as
 "weeping for the lost blessings of innocent
 "repose."* I will not permit my pious correspondents to institute a comparison between them and the great Fenelon, revoking a real and dangerous error, which had been condemned by the Church. Nor shall any writer, under his own name, who is certified to me as being a gentleman, and a canonist, tell me without refutation, that I have countenanced a plan which is contrary to the faith, or to the essential discipline of the Catholic Church. Should such a controversy take place, it will then be seen whether I have yet "ransacked history and
 "the canon law for those numberless forcible precedents,"† and arguments, which they
 G 2 are

* Inimicus Veto, p. 24. † Evening Herald, Dec. 5.

are capable of furnishing for the purpose in question; and whether I cannot answer the several objections which certain friends of mine, persons of distinguished genius and learning, have adduced against it. But I do not so much as hint at the nature of these materials at present, lest I should again be accused of "furnishing arguments," in favour of a plan which, however *lawful* in itself, I have condemned as *inexpedient*. One remark only I shall add, by way of shewing that the persons who describe the plan as being "a dereliction of the Catholic faith, an apostacy," &c. do, in fact, pretend to correct, and do virtually contradict the resolution of the assembled prelates; namely, that the latter have contented themselves with pronouncing the measure *inexpedient*. Would they employ this word in censuring a measure which they judged to be in itself *irreligious* or *immoral*? Would they solemnly declare, that it is *inexpedient to abolish the Seven Sacraments, or the Ten Commandments*?

Upon another point also I must feel myself obliged to protest against the extravagance of these writers, and indeed against the errors of many persons of all the three following descriptions: the statesmen, the Catholic minority, who are impatient to recover their civil rights, and the Catholic majority, who consider the hierarchy as a monument of their national grandeur.

grandeur. All these argue that, because they are, one way or other, *interested* in the state of the *hierarchy*, therefore they have an undoubted natural *right* to be *consulted* about it.* Why, my brethren, there is not a poor peasant amongst you who is not as much interested in the decision of every article of Catholic faith and discipline, as are the bishops and the Pope himself; because his soul is as dear to him as their souls are to them; but it does not thence follow that he has an equal right to deliberate and to vote upon these matters with them, who are the judges of faith and legislators of discipline, either in synod or out of it: and I will undertake to demonstrate, if necessary, that all the numberless changes of discipline, which have taken place in different ages and countries, (including those which have taken place in your own country) have been made by the bishops or the Pope, without ever once consulting the people. No doubt, these pastors pay a proper degree of attention, on all such occasions, to the wishes as well as to the welfare of their flocks, but this is a very different thing from acknowledging them to have a *natural indefeasible right* to judge, and pronounce on such matters. How absurd then, as well as erroneous, is the language of a late writer, who describes

* Evening Herald, Sept. 12, Dec. 2, &c.

describes your four metropolitans and six other prelates as "guilty of robbery and sacrilege!" who talks of "the birthright of our baptism, "and the prerogatives of our faith" in the jargon of whiggism! and who asserts, that the "Pope "would more easily be deposed for attempting "to compel, than would the Catholics of Ireland "be condemned for resisting the penal innovation!"* This is a language, my brethren, which, as every divine knows, nearly borders upon schism. But, instead of stopping to confute it, I will place before your eyes the luminous and energetical address of the great Bossuet, relative to the pretended natural rights of Christians in the Church of God. "Thus speaks "the Catholic Church to her christian children. "You are a people, a state, and a society: but "Jesus Christ, who is your king, *holds nothing "from you: his authority is of a higher origin; "you have no better natural right, as to the "appointment of his ministers, than you have "to appoint Christ himself to be your king."*†

The remaining observations which I have here to make shall be contracted within as few words as possible. It is then a shameful falsehood, and an outrage upon the Holy See, as well as upon me, to publish, that "the head "of the Church, whom I had consulted, about "the

* Evening Herald, Dec. 2.

† Variat. B. xv.

“ the interference of the Crown, had declared
 “ to me, in the words of Benedict XIV. that
 “ were he to attempt to give effect to such a
 “ power, he should deserve the execration of
 “ the christian world.”* The original letter, from
 which this passage is said to be taken, now
 lies before me, and I do positively assure you
 that it distinctly refers to a *positive power of
 nomination in the Crown; whereas a negative
 interference* is spoken of in very different terms.
 It is an equally glaring falsehood, that “ in
 “ all my speeches and essays it has escaped me,
 “ that if the Pope, from certain knowledge,
 “ were to judge a candidate unfit, he must even
 “ keep his faculties at home, &c.” in consequence
 of which supposed blunder on my part, the
 writer proceeds to insult me in his usual style.
 Ask any of your prelates, my brethren, for a
 sight of my first printed paper, dated May 26;
 you will there see that the rights of the Holy
 See were not forgotten by me, nor passed
 over in my communications with members of
 parliament. But when the phantom called
Detector is itself *detected* in issuing lying oracles,
 Mr. A. or Mr. B. will walk the streets with the
 same confidence as usual. My meaning, in
 using the epithets *factious* and *seditious* in my
 letter to the English public, has been *enlarged* by
 the

* Evening Herald, Dec: 2. Nov. 30.

the same writer within the compass of a few lines, to "the whole Catholic population of the country," and has been contracted to "one distinguished gentleman."* The shortest way with these terms, under such circumstances, is to retract them, without further explanation, as I now publicly do. With respect to the gentleman alluded to, the most I have heard of him from my friends in Dublin is, that the Catholics of Ireland are indebted to him for the constitutional privilege, which has chiefly contributed to raise them to their present national consequence. "Palmarum qui meruit ferat:" I do not envy him his fair praise: praise ought to be no object to me. Were I to interfere again in the affairs of Ireland, and were I possessed of any influence among you, my brethren, all my efforts would be directed to the uniting of all the talents, yes, ALL THE TALENTS of Ireland as well as England, in the common cause. The only persons among you against whom I would declare war, are those who try to divide you, and to animate one class against another. But God in his mercy prevent that I should ever oppose, as I am accused, or despise or neglect *the poor*, of all others; the poor, to whom I have been a willing slave all my life!—The same method of retracting

* Evening Herald, Dec. 5.

ing is the best and most congenial to my feelings with respect to the unfortunate epithet of *wrong-headed*, which has been incessantly hurled back at my head, for several months past, both in print and in manuscript. Now I solemnly declare, that neither in my meaning nor in the context of my paper, does the term apply to any other clergymen except the very limited number, perhaps three or four, who were the subject of my correspondence with the parish priest. However, as the word has been so much enlarged beyond my meaning and its own, I revoke it, and beg the Catholic Clergy of Ireland to accept of this public apology for my having made use of it. At the same time, however, I have one request to make them, that if they know of any writer or other person who has travelled farther, put himself to more expense, or taken greater pains to vindicate and raise their character for natural and acquired talents, as well as for virtue and piety, than the author of the letters from Ireland, some one of them will have the goodness to transmit to me the name of that person.

I cannot bring myself to make any apology to my honoured friends, your prelates, because I am perfectly sure there is neither a substantive nor an adjective, nor any other part of speech, in all my writings, that can even be tortured into a meaning disrespectful to them, or to any

one of them. One of the Herald writers, after caricaturing, in the most indecent manner, the persons of three or four of your most dignified and amiable prelates, tries to press me into his service on account of my *looks!* He says that, on some occasion or other, I “surveyed the prelates with a sarcastic leer, shewing that I knew them well.”* Others, who, again and again, have denied the competency of the bishops to decide upon the late question,† and have threatened to abandon them‡ and the Pope too,§ if it were settled contrary to their wishes; who have talked of suspending the prelates, like Mohammed’s tomb, in the air,|| and have tauntingly advised them to “recant their religion, rather than improve upon apostacy, like bishop Judas;”¶ finally, who have tried to spirit up the second order of the clergy to take the important business, then pending, out of the hands of the prelates into their own: “*Exper-*
“*gescemini aliquando et capescite rempubli-*
“*cam;*”** these Herald writers, I say, now reproach me with “addressing the Irish prelates” (namely, when I was addressing the English public) “like a bullying dictator, prophesying what I am determined to do myself, namely, to overwhelm them with public censure in the course of two months”†† from the
date

* Evening Herald, Sept. 23. † Aug. 5, Dec. 2, &c.

‡ Sept. 26. § Dec. 2. || Sept. 23. ¶ Sept. 26.

** Sept. 12. †† Dec. 5.

date of my letter. Such, my fellow-Christians, is the charitable construction which these boasted good Catholics (oh! the malice of the bitterest Orangeman is charity compared with theirs) put upon the intimation I gave of my apprehension of the prelates being severely treated in parliament; in consequence of which I openly, before the meeting of parliament, made common cause with them, in opposition to my own interest and the advice of all my friends, by publishing, in the English newspapers, certain arguments on their behalf, which these very writers, on the self-same occasion, allow to be "unanswerable."*

I have said, that I cannot bring myself to apologize to your bishops, because my heart revolts at the very idea of ever having offended them. But I will bring the matter to as short and decisive an issue as if I were to apologize. In case then you, my brethren, in reading over any book or paper which I have published, or may hereafter publish, should, from your own judgment, and without the comments of any anonymous writer, find one sentence or one innuendo which you conscientiously believe to be injurious to authority, or disrespectful to the character of your prelates; do not, indeed, burn or hang me in effigy, according to the sentence of these writers, † because this would be a breach of the peace; nor vent your indignation "in
H 2 " the

* Evening Herald, Dec. 5.

† Sept. 26.

“ the most violent imprecations and maledictions” on my head, and “ on the heads of some of your bishops and the whole body of the clergy,” as these men scandalously assert you did not long ago,* because this would be a sin against God, which would render your faith of no avail to your salvation: but burn all my books which you can lay your hands upon: never read any of my publications in future, and rank my name with the Duigenans and the Musgraves. In a word, to prevent the mischiefs complained of, in future insist upon these mens’ publishing their names, in order that they and I may hereafter, and to the end of our lives, contend together, not by words, but by our conduct, in a contempt of money, and all worldly advantages, in respect and obedience to all ecclesiastical superiors, and in uniformly supporting the spiritual rights and freedom of the Catholic Church against all encroachments, whether regal or democratical. One more word, and I have done. These writers boast of having “ put me down in argument,” at the same time that they allow I have “ put down all my former antagonists:”† insist upon it then, for your credit, and that of our religion, that they keep these antagonists down, now they are down, as my studies must necessarily take a different course from that which they have for some time held.

If

* Evening Herald, Nov. 13. † Nov. 13.

If these writers, who are so much my superiors in genius and literature, do but exert half the spirit and industry against your worst enemies, which they have long been exerting against your honest, zealous, and disinterested advocate, the Musgraves will no more blast your character with forgeries, nor the Ledwiches rob you of your apostle and ancient faith. I am and ever shall remain, your faithful and affectionate friend and fellow Catholic,

JOHN MILNER, D. D.

Wolverhampton, Jan. 9, 1809.

P. S. Just as I have concluded this Appeal, I have received two different works from Dublin, published within these few days, by clergymen of the established Church, in which I am severely handled, as well as the Church to which I have the happiness to belong. Of the author of one of them, * I know no more than that, according to what he tells us of himself, in his title page and at the beginning of his book, he is "*such a one as Paul the aged,*" that is to say, *such a one as St. Paul the apostle.* Of course the Catholics of Ireland will know him, by his *hungering, thirsting, nakedness, stripes,* &c. in

* An Address to the Clergy of the United Church in Ireland on the present Crisis, 1809. Watson.

&c. in short, by his apostolical labours and sanctity in general; and they will have felt the effects of all this, in the innumerable multitude he must have reclaimed from their *antichristian apostacy*: for his principal aim is to prove that such is the ancient religion of Ireland, and that I am “amongst his most acrimoniously active “enemies,” in supporting his apostacy, and the “soul of the league formed to rob the established clergy of their property, to vilify the “character of their priesthood, and to assert “a superiority in the clergy of another denomination over them in every qualification and “endowment that can render ministers of the “gospel worthy of their sacred function, and “useful to God’s people,” p. 5, 6.—The other work, which is interesting for its very title, * is written by my former very entertaining opponent, Dr. Ryan, and is well worth being regarded by those Catholics, who can afford to buy it. It is almost all levelled at me, as the capital enemy of that *conciliatory plan*, which he so strongly recommends to the Catholics. What he proposes is to make peace with the Catholics, and to allow of their *superstition, immorality*, and even their *idolatry*, provided they

* *Strictures on Dr. Milner’s Tour, and on Mr. Clinch’s Enquiry, with a New Plan for obtaining Emancipation, &c. a Conciliatory Tract, by Edward Ryan, D. D. 1809.* Watson.

they will only give up their doctrine concerning *heresy* and the *Pope's spiritual supremacy*, and *unite with him*, who is a Milesian like themselves, *against me*, a foreigner, and a vicar of that usurper, who deprived him of his inheritance 700 years ago. In addition to this general motive, he is extremely angry with me for not taking notice of his *Answer to Ward's Errata*. On this head, I hope to make my peace with him, as soon as the work, which is now almost printed off in London, shall reach Dublin. But the most interesting parts of his book, in my regard, are those in which he maintains that *I was the person who prevented the bishops* from consenting to the negative; that I went to Ireland for that express purpose, &c. &c.—He wrote this, with my letter to the parish priest, and that to the Morning Chronicle, lying before him. Now I would appeal even to the writers of the Herald, whether it is not extremely hard, that I should be accused and formally condemned upon opposite and *contradictory* charges, as I am in other instances, no less than in this? However, these men, who have “put me down in argument,” will set all these matters to rights, when they come to “put “down” the Ryans and the Elringtons, &c. as well as to keep down the Musgraves and the Ledwiches; which task is known to be now transferred into their hands.

I finish

I finish with one remark, which I hope will be seriously weighed, and not forgotten. However disastrous the late dispute concerning the admission of the *negative interference* of the Crown may have been in many respects, it has been infinitely less so, than a dispute about admitting its *positive interference* would have been. Now that the latter would have taken place, but for the existence of the former, clearly follows from certain circumstances stated above.

FINIS.