

Third Edition,

AN

U N I O N

NEITHER

NECESSARY NOR EXPEDIENT

FOR

IRELAND:

BEING AN

A N S W E R

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST AN *UNION*,
BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND, CONSIDERED.

BY CHARLES BALL, ESQ.

MOTOS PRÆSTAT COMPONERE FLUCTUS.

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TO THE
AUTHOR
OF
ARGUMENTS, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

WHEN *an enterprising adventurer in the trade of politics*, under the shield of darkness and secrecy, has basely insulted the people and parliament of Ireland, and has attempted to commit an act of deliberate treason, *by disuniting for ever the realm of Ireland from the British crown*—a few hours employed in endeavouring to detect his fallacies, expose his arrogance, and refute his conclusions, will not be considered as thrown away by those to whom the interests of the British empire, the security of Ireland, and the tranquillity of her people, are objects of affection. Under that sentiment, I proceed to address to the nation some observations which have occurred to me from the perusal of your pamphlet.

In the first page of this extraordinary production, you state the question as “ applying to all the *feelings, prejudices, and passions* of the human mind,” and express your “ *only fear*” to be, “ that the subject will not be properly debated.”—How far you have been able to handle the subject *free from prejudice, and in a way likely to appease the feelings and passions* of those to whom your discourse is addressed, and *to debate the subject properly*, it is my present intention to enquire.

Before that first page is concluded, you give a gentle hint to the People of Ireland, “ that the subject *may come* to be decided by force,” and concisely add a warning of the “ *mischief*” which we may incur, in case it shall be found necessary to resort to *that mode of debating the question*; promising at the same time, that “ to determine it on its own merits cannot fail to be useful.”—What are then the *merits* of the question as stated by you?

You propose (a) “ to view the question in the abstract,” and you begin by assuming, “ that two independent states, finding their separate existence mutually inconvenient, propose to form themselves into one state, for their mutual benefit.”—Is there in this assertion any thing to be found in the most remote degree applicable to Ireland? When did Ireland *feel her separate existence inconvenient*? And when did she *propose to form, &c. &c.*? There

(a) Page 2.

never has been any given topic of a political nature so abhorrent from the feelings and opinions of the people and parliament of Ireland, as a Union with England. It has often been mentioned as a project desirable to England, or rather to the minister of England; but there never was found in the Irish parliament, or the whole Irish nation, a man who could be brought to say, that he believed a Union would be beneficial to Ireland. Nay, when Ireland had a great and valuable object to gain from England—*no less than a free constitution, and an unshackled commerce*—no Irishman ever conceived that *those benefits, great as they were, ought to be purchased at so high, so extravagant a price.* And even now, when it has become, I trust without foundation, the boast of the English minister, or his partizans, that he has secured the concurrence of our two houses of parliament, it appears he has only been able to debauch them in their parliamentary capacity, for he cannot find a single Irishman, that will give him more than his vote. When he wants an advocate to come forward in print, he is obliged to have recourse to an Englishman.

As an encouragement to Ireland to unite with England, and to subject herself to the controul of the British nation, you call our attention to the “*(b) cruel oppression exercised by the Spanish government over the provinces of Holland,*” and indeed you might have carried the example to every in-

(b) Page 3.

B 2

stance

stance where a *weaker nation* was *subject to the power of a stronger*; you might have swelled your pamphlet with instances of the tyranny of Rome over her provinces—of that very Spain over Portugal—of Genoa over Corfica—of England over her colonies, and even over Ireland, while she had the power to inflict it. But, for the happiness of the world, the Roman Empire has for ages been dissolved—the provinces of Lower Germany soon threw off the yoke of Spain—Portugal has become independent of its proud and domineering neighbour—America is free—and Ireland is no longer a slave.—Corfica, it is true, enjoys but the melancholy satisfaction of beholding her contemptible despot bound with her in one common chain.

Do you seriously expect that the bold and desperate achievement which led to the subversion of the Sabines, and (c) “laid the foundation of Roman greatness,” or the successful ambition of “that prince, who added to his hereditary Canton the territories of those Toparchs, whom his *policy could circumvent, or his arms subdue,*” can furnish arguments to Ireland to forego her pride, her independence, and her national interests?—Is the *courage of Rome, and the enterprize of Edgar, to teach meanness and servile apathy to Ireland?* or do you wish to remind us of the miserable, plundered, and abject situation of the Sabines, “*when they found they could no longer maintain themselves against the Ro-*

(c) *Ibidem.*

mans,”

mans?" and do you dare thus to imply, that *we have no alternative but voluntary submission, or rapacious conquest?*—I trust you are doubly mistaken, and that if the latter be attempted, *we shall be able for ever to maintain ourselves*—But surely so base an attempt is not in contemplation.

How profound is your conclusion, that the extinction of the Sabines, (a name extant in history, only as necessary to record the triumph of Rome) and the reduction of all England by the king of the East Angles can (*d*) “form a complete answer to all topics of national dignity and national pride”!!—Be not solicitous, oh, Ireland, for *your national dignity* or *your national pride*—submit them to the will of the English Minister—take the advice of the agent for England; the *Princes* of the Heph-tarchy were reduced to the rank of *galley slaves*, and *exchanged the sceptre for the oar*; the *Sabines* (whose numbers perhaps would have peopled a single street of your metropolis) three thousand years ago, *submitted to the Romans*, from whom they had received the deepest injury that man can offer man, *after they could no longer maintain themselves* against those violators of every law, divine and human.—Of those prudent homagers nothing remains but the memory of their disgrace and their defeat, while the little infant rapine of the conquerors is overlooked in the stupendous contemplation of their more mature and wide-spread domination.

Ibidem.

YOU

You hint (*e*) “that you might extend your reasoning, as you call it, to Wales and Scotland.” Perhaps you wish to remind us of the *fortunate pretext* that introduced an English army into Wales, and the *honourable use* that was made of it—But I despise the impotent and insidious threat, and I rely upon the humanity and integrity of our virtuous Sovereign.—Of the Union with Scotland, I shall speak hereafter.

After comparing your project to a (*f*) “partnership in trade,” and affecting to suppose that in that partnership Ireland may have a chance of a fair “proportion, &c. &c.” you proceed to apply your abstract argument to the case before you. And here I am led to ask this question *in limine*—Is Ireland not only to be subject to the nod and fiat of England, as a nation, but has every individual Englishman, let his general pretensions be never so humble, a right merely as an Englishman, to insult, vilify, and calumniate our People? You have my free consent to extol (*g*) “your civilization, your agriculture, your commerce, your manufactures, your morals, your manners, your establishments, and your constitution,” as much as the low system of prejudice and national presumption, which you have adopted, may require; but in *courting* Ireland to a closer connection with England, (if, indeed, you mean to *court*, and not to *dragoon*) do you hope to conciliate us, by telling us that we are a *savage*,

(*e*) Page 4. (*f*) Page 5. (*g*) Page 6.

immoral

immoral, irrational, ill-mannered race, with almost every other degrading and contemptuous insinuation—I well know, such are the sentiments which the *low and vulgar* of your country entertain of the people of Ireland, but in a long intercourse with that country, I declare I never had the misfortune of meeting a *single gentleman* so *weak and illiberal* as to avow those prejudices ; but I will speak to the fact—I will admit that the cruel and rapacious tyranny of the English parliament, while it exercised over Ireland a despotism as fatal as that to which you would again enthrall us, did, by selfish and unjust restraints, impede our commerce, and cripple the manufactures of this country ; and did *beguile us with a Counterfeit* resembling the British Constitution ; —by which the progress of civilization, agriculture, establishments, were interrupted amongst us, and our morals and manners in a considerable degree affected, as our national prosperity was depressed and humbled ; but, thank Heaven, the picture is now reversed, and you yourself, in the progress of your work, confess enough to prove that this boasted superiority of England in those particulars, is in a great measure but the phantom of national arrogance.—With the *(b)* “ best agriculture” in the world, you state, *(i)* “ that England does not produce corn sufficient for her own consumption,” and with *(k)* “ an agriculture by no means perfect” you admit “ that Ireland can afford a supply of that article to Great Britain,” and think that

(b) Page 7. *(i)* Page 38. *(k)* Page 7.

trade

trade of such magnitude and benefit to Ireland, that “to secure the preference in the British market” is one of the *douceurs* you offer as the price of a Union. Exalted as England is, and humble as you represent Ireland in commerce, you confess (l) “Cork to be already the emporium of provision for the British navy,” you extol almost beyond the limits of belief the (m) “export of linens from the North of Ireland”—again you admit in a general way, (n) “that the commerce of Ireland has encreased;” nay, you go the length of saying, (o) “that in the last twenty years no country in the world ever made such rapid advances as Ireland has done, in population, in agriculture, in manufactures, in wealth, and prosperity.”—True, indeed, you couple to these admissions, so contradictory of your general argument, a boastful display of the bounty of England, in having suffered us to acquire and enjoy such advantages, and you kindly suggest the risk we run of being robbed of them (p) “by the power of England, by the bravery and good order of the British army, and by her naval greatness.” In short, the *degrading sentiments* you profess to feel towards Ireland, and the *complete subjection* to which England may reduce her in case of non-compliance, seems throughout to be the whole foundation of your argument.—Is not the following the true substance of your address?—Mean, beggarly, vicious, and contemptible nation, come forward to this treaty with your elevated, wealthy, august, and

(l) Page 41. (m) Page 42. (n) Page 51. (o) Page 52. (p) *Passim*.

powerful neighbour. Rely upon it, you shall enjoy equal advantage in the arrangement of the terms, for *she knows your worthlessness and her own merit*; and feels for you precisely as I, an Englishman, have professed to do; and this sentiment coupled with the *great power of England, her brave and orderly soldiery, and her naval greatness*, which are now able to rob you of all your present advantages, will insure you not only *fair and equal terms* in the treaty, but a *liberal and honorable construction* of it at all future times. In fact, you are so much in the power of Great Britain already, that you ought more effectually to seal your dependence and degradation; and you may safely rely on the proportion of strength which I propose to you (q), (“the proportion of one to five”) as a complete protection in all cases where new or unforeseen discordances of interest may arise, or where disputed applications of the principles of confederation may occur.

(r) The example of that rapacity with which France has aggrandized her power, is made another argument in favour of an Union. If France by her tyrannical usurpation of the territory of “Geneva, of Savoy, of Flanders, of the German states, &c. &c.” while she has debased, enslaved, and cruelly oppressed those nations, *has added to her own happiness and her own power*; go in the name of rapine, and preach up to *other powerful countries* that may be ready to sacrifice their moral to their political feel-

(q) Page 46. (r) Page 8.

ings, go preach to them the example of France, If England is willing, either by fraud or violence, to possess, in effect, the fruits of that superiority over Ireland, the theory of which you contemplate with so much complacency and pride, let the example of France become her inducement ; and, if it can let it form her justification ; but while Spain and Holland and Lombardy are degraded, while Switzerland bleeds, and while the nations of the Rhine lie bound beneath the sword of France, do not hope to excite in us a desire *to rank in the same line and predicament* with those, *miserable nations*.

Whether it be with a view farther to reconcile Ireland to her present *secondary* situation, or to induce her to change that secondary state to one of *actual and complete subjection*, your argument to prove the *inevitable inconvenience* of *even the present connection*, appears to my humble capacity the most absurd that ever issued from the pen of a maniac ; and, at the present moment, the most dangerous and inflammatory (s). “ The kingdom where the monarch does not reside, you say, not having the origination of all councils and measures, and having much of its rents carried away by absentees, would be in a perpetual state of jealousy and discontent.” Thus you say to Ireland,—inasmuch as you are dissatisfied at the absence of *one* branch of your legislature, the only remedy I can suggest, is to send away the other *two*. As you regret that you have not the

(s) Page 10

originating of *all* measures and councils, you will of course be fully reconciled to that inconvenience, by enjoying the origination of *none*. And whereas you are already impoverished by the rents of the kingdom being carried away by absentees, the method to correct the evil, and to *diminish* the amount of the rents so carried away, is to *increase* the numbers of those very absentees.—Are the Irish a nation of idiots!!

You suppose the people to whom you address yourself, no doubt, to be as ignorant of ordinary historical facts, as deficient in every moral and intellectual faculty; for you assert (t), “that the Scotch having become entitled to the privileges of British subjects, *have enjoyed internal tranquillity, &c.*” Is this intended as a barefaced misrepresentation, or are we seriously to understand that *two rebellions* set on foot by the first men in Scotland, who had for their object the *overthrow of the British constitution, the disunion of the legislatures, the dethronement of the King, and the substitution of a Pretender*, (and which actually went well nigh to accomplish their objects) are not of equal importance, as national events, with the late *convulsion of two months continuance* in this country, in which, with very few exceptions indeed, *none but the lowest and most ignorant of the mob* were engaged, and which was *completely suppressed by the loyal yeomanry of Ireland*, before the arrival of the English reinforcements?

(t) Page 11.

You affirm, "that Ireland stands in the same situation that Scotland did previous to the Union," qualifying however the assertion with *one exception*; but unluckily this one exception appears, from your own shewing, to comprehend *the whole of the case*. You state, "that the alternative of a Union or a separation between Scotland and England became inevitable, *because the Scots parliament was taking measures to separate the two crowns.*" "Ireland, you say, is in the *same situation* as Scotland was in, except that *the only* fact which rendered a Union with Scotland necessary, namely, *the danger of the two crowns being separated*, does not exist as to Ireland," because, as you fully and truly state it, "the crown of Ireland is by express statutes *perpetually annexed to* and dependant upon the crown of England, so that whoever is King of England is in right of that title, and ipso facto, King of Ireland."—What a close and critical analogy!!!

How solicitous do you appear for the tranquillity of Ireland, but how effectually (on your own principles) do you sow the seeds of eternal discord! (u) "With a parliament in its institution independent," you represent (on what you have (w) before stated to be, *inevitable* grounds of discontent) many great jealousies to exist in the minds of the Irish nation; and that the imputed subservience of the legislature of Ireland to the councils of Great Britain, will have in future (as you say it has already had)

(u) Page 12.

(w) Page 10.

a prejudicial influence on the public mind, leading the people to distrust and to disparage their legislature." So that because a legislature, *in its institution independent*, cannot avoid sometimes occasioning (no matter whether from real or imputed subservience to Britain) dissatisfaction to the people, you suppose that very people, so jealous of British influence over an independent parliament, will be perfectly satisfied, when the *will of Great Britain* shall become avowedly and inevitably (as according to your proportion of five British to one Irish member, it necessarily must be) the *law of Ireland*. I speak not here of the danger there may be that some of the *five* British members, not satisfied with out-voting the *one* Irish member, may follow your liberal example, and accompany his vote with calumny and insult, because that is only matter of private and individual concern; and it is an evil that may be *corrected*.

But truly you have discovered a notable expedient for rendering the cabals of (*) "British opposition inoperative in Ireland,"—by making that very opposition a part of the legislature of Ireland! as if this nation is to become wholly insensible to the parties and factions of Great Britain, the moment she becomes a part of that kingdom; and to lose her sensibilities towards British concerns, merely by becoming more closely and inseparably connected with Britain! and you hope to remove from the opposition in the British parliament all pretext for interfering in

(*) Page 15.

the affairs and party cabals of Ireland, by subjecting Ireland to that very parliament!!! Admirable reasoner!!

You attempt to argue from (y) “the overthrow of Poland,” from “the subjugation of the seven United Provinces,” and “the present security of America;”—But the weakness of Poland, which left it a prey to the rapacity of its neighbours, proceeded from causes not known in Ireland. You state it to originate in *this*, “that in Poland every senator was a sovereign.” Why do you so uniformly build on inapplicable examples? Let us see whether the United Netherlands and America furnish more direct analogies.—In neither of those countries, was *one* small and inferior nation called upon to submit her concerns to the management of *another*—superior and powerful;—and to trust to a *smaller number of representatives* for a fair, just, and impartial dispensation of sovereign and legislative protection: Each was an association of *equal and independent* sovereignties, agreeing to act in all *joint* concerns by their *joint* will, but retaining all matters of *internal and separate* interest, every one under its own *individual* controul. It was from no apparent nor even alledged *imperfections in the form and principles of their connection*, that Holland and her co-estates suffered by the successful invasion of France, with which a disposition to revolt and to try new fortunes, strongly co-operated;—and certainly the Union of the American States is as

(y) Page 16.

widely

widely different from the Union proposed to Ireland, as any two political arrangements that were ever found to subsist in the world. The principal difference as applicable to the present question is, that in the *Congress of America*, each state has its single vote, let its number of representatives be what it may, and no one state (as would be the case in the instance under discussion) can by a plurality of voices bear down the interests of another, or of all the rest. In all cases where they are bound by a majority, it is by a majority of states, and such cases only relate to concerns purely of an *imperial or external nature*, the Union in no instance interfering in the *internal and separate œconomy of any individual state*.

That for *imperial and external* purposes, there ought to be a strict and *inseparable Union* between these two islands, every friend to both will readily admit, but *that Union already exists* in the *unity and identity of the crown*; the only imperial and external organ known to our constitution.

At length you affect (z) “to examine the arguments which result from the particular situation of Ireland,” and first, “as to the state of its property.”—On this topic I confess you are tolerably successful;—you advise the Protestant proprietors descended from British families, to look for further security for their possessions in a Union; and, in order to make *further security necessary*, you take

(z) Page 19.

care to remind the native Catholics *how they were formerly dispossessed*, and to disclose all the real and imaginary defects of title in the present possessors. You then undertake to consider the situation of Ireland (a) “as to religion;” and here indeed, I am utterly at a loss in attempting to keep pace with or follow you through the maze of desultory and chaotic matter, which you have heaped together on this subject—Whether you mean to represent that a Union would secure to the Established Religion that monopoly and predominance which it now enjoys, or to suggest that the Catholic church might reasonably build thereon a prospect of emerging from its present state of depression; whether you intend to threaten the Protestant faith with overthrow in case of rejection, or to hold out hopes of establishment to the Catholics as the reward of compliance; or in short, whether knowing the religious divisions of Ireland, to be a subject not be over-looked, but which yet could afford no argument in support of your conclusion, you thought the safest mode was to say as *much* as you could upon the topic, taking care that *that much* should be but *little understood*—I confess I am at a loss to determine.—In one point however, you are sufficiently and *dreadfully explicit*—you plainly tell the Catholics (b) “that the Protestants state that while *they* (the Catholics) *were restrained, the kingdom continued in tranquillity for a century*, but that as soon as national confidence induced a repeal of those restrictions, the Catholics

(a) Page 20.

(b) Page 21.

demanded such a change in the Constitution, as would transfer to them all the power of the State.

Now, Sir, as the *benefit* you promise Ireland from a Union is *tranquillity*, and as your general argument in its favour is, that in the present state of the country, *the discontents and jealousies* between opposite sects *are inveterate and incurable*, it is not extraordinary to find an Englishman who avows so much contempt and abhorrence for Ireland, and such enthusiastic love and admiration for England, *endeavouring to encrease and foment those jealousies*, which he conceives will lead to the *benefit of his favourite country, at the expence of the other*.—But I will endeavour to extinguish this firebrand which you have thrown upon the public mind; I will assert, *that the Protestants of Ireland never made so false and so ungenerous a charge against the Catholics*.—That projects to change the Constitution were formed, I do admit, but it is notorious, and none but a *determined incendiary* can deny it, that the Catholics, *as a body*, had no concern in originating these plans—Individuals of that as well as other religions were, no doubt, included in the number of the conspirators; but the conspiracy was founded on the example of France, where all religions were alike objects of contempt and derision; and, in fact, the Catholic members of the revolutionary party (*c*) *would as soon consent to the Establishment of the Mahometan as of the Popish Religion*.

(c) See Dr. M'Nevin's Evidence.

The French principle of overthrowing all distinctions to gratify plebeian envy, and excite the rapacity of the mob, by the spoil and degradation of the gentry; of levelling the throne, and annihilating all judicial and executive power, that property and order might be no longer protected, nor outrage restrained, was the grand cementing principle of the conspiracy in Ireland. Some leaders, no doubt, looked to their own individual aggrandisement, and preposterously hoped that a new and usurped authority would be able to retain in subjection that mob, whom they had so sedulously instructed to believe that authority, law, restraint, and subordination, were the worst of injuries; and that rank, office, wealth, and power, were crimes only to be expiated by assassination. It is equally true, that, under the banners of this conspiracy, multitudes of Catholics were enrolled, but they came not as Catholics, but as forming the great mass of the lower orders of the people, whom the leaders affected to make the first objects of their benevolence and care.

Among the multitudes of this description, some, no doubt, there were, who, uniting the extremes of moral depravity and religious bigotry, appeared to perpetrate all the crimes that attended the progress of the rebellion, with a strange desire of exalting their Church, and propagating their Faith-- But is the case of those *comparatively few individuals*, to be extended to, and comprehend *the whole body of the Catholics of Ireland*? And because, while
the

the kingdom was swarming with directories, with sects, with committees of Catholic, Presbyterian, and Protestant traitors, a few profligate Priests, (many of them too, degraded by their Church) contrived in a nook of the kingdom, to kindle the flame of religious fury, are you for this reason to include in one general calumny, the whole Catholic body? Or are you, without foundation, to impute to the Protestants of Ireland, the fabrication of the slander? Their Protestant brethren and fellow-citizens will never forget the persevering loyalty of the Catholics of Munster, nearly unstained by a single exception; nor the peaceful demeanor of Connaught, (almost universally Catholic) where, though a foreign standard was displayed, affecting to espouse their cause, a very insignificant number voluntarily joined the invaders.

You seem to look forward with something more than common malignity to the prospects of future Catholic Emancipation, and you endeavour to lay the grounds of unceasing discord, provisionally, in case of that event. You take care to inform the Catholics, that their total emancipation ought not to be their *ultimatum*, for that a *necessary consequence* of that emancipation would be (d) “that the Protestant Church Establishment would become a public wrong”—and you farther most dangerously and insidiously affirm, that they would have an indisputable right “to have the frame of the House of Commons reformed, and altered in their favor!!!

(d) Page 25.

D 2

Good

Good God! how long will you suffer this ill-fated land to be the sport and victim of wickedness and folly!

You propose (*e*) “to consider what would be the natural effects of a favorable legislative Union.”

1st. You say “the empire would have but one legislative—one organ of the public will, &c. &c.” granted,—but *that will* would be *the will of Great Britain enforced*; and, *in every possible instance, secured by the proportion of FIVE British to ONE Irish member.*

2d. “Ireland would be in a *natural* situation”—I dare say she would; but I admit I do not understand you, unless you mean to tell the Catholics that the Protestant religion is perfectly *natural to a united kingdom*, but *unnatural to one that is separate*; and by that means to reconcile them to a Union, in hopes thereby to naturalize the Protestant church.

3d. “The Catholics would lose the advantage of the argument of numbers, &c. &c.” The whole of your work proves this to be a gross fallacy. You first tell the Protestants that they have no right to the church establishment, being inferior in number to the Catholics; and yet you say they may acquire a complete right by their own act, an act which they are at least as little competent to, as they are to dis-

pose of the church establishment, namely—to *dispose of the whole kingdom.*

4th. You state, “ that in the present situation of the two countries, Great Britain has no interest in supporting one sect in Ireland more than another ;” and (f) “ that you do not know by what tie she is debarred from assisting the Catholics.” Indeed, Sir, I know of no such tie neither ; for, *as yet, thank God, Great Britain has no more duties to perform in Ireland than the people of Jersey ;* but if Great Britain were to take up the whim of *propagating the Popish religion in Ireland,* I presume his Majesty is not so unmindful of the *duties he owes to his Protestant subjects here,* or of the obligations of *his coronation oath,* as not to interfere, and *put a stop to the croisade.*

You mention an objection that has been stated to your project, namely, “ that it would increase absentee proprietors ; and that as most absentees are Protestants, Protestant influence would decrease.”

Before I observe upon the notice which you have thought proper to take of this objection, give me leave to congratulate you on the *practical proficiency* you have made *in the modern philosophy ;* where a subject of mixed concern, partly religious, and

(f) Page 27.

partly

partly political, comes before you, no French reformer ever shewed a more liberal contempt for every thing affecting religion. Of this I have shewn one instance already; another occurs here;—without thinking that part of the objection, that applies to religion, at all intitled to an answer, you proceed to that alone which has a political object; and here you do not attempt to dispute the fact, but barely content yourself with saying, “that it does not appear that the absentees from Scotland increased after the Union.” However, notwithstanding this notorious misrepresentation, you are on the whole modest enough on this subject, for even in a political view you seem inclined to give up the question; and indeed in many places you admit in terms (g) “that absentee proprietors would increase.” But then you observe, that the solid advantages of a Union (and how well you have been able to point out those advantages, I leave every reader to determine) would compensate for the increase of absentees. *If the evils of a Union are certain and inevitable, and the good no farther probable than you have been able to represent it,* I trust we shall have the courage and the prudence to endure whatever may be inconvenient in our present situation, for some time longer, and endeavour to apply lenient and gradual remedies, instead of *running to every quack that offers his nostrum;* and that we shall never stoop to the miserable resource of cowards, *voluntary suicide, and self-destruction.*

(g) Page 15.

You

You proceed to shew (b) “ that a Union may be so shaped as to be favourable to the Protestants, without being unfavourable to the Catholics ;”—as thus—

First. “ Free toleration will be secured to their religion (meaning the religion of the Catholics) their power of electing representatives will be perpetuated, &c. &c.” Have you no argument to convince *one description of the people* of Ireland, that must not excite their animosities or suspicion *against some other* ? But I trust the Catholics will give no credit to the insinuation here so broadly implied, that the toleration and elective power and civil capacities they now enjoy, *are not already effectually and irrevocably ensured to them.*

Secondly. You tell us “ that it may be necessary to connect with a Union a proper support for their clergy, and some regulation for their church, &c. &c.” Why do you not offer some reason to shew that a provision for the Catholic clergy will be more necessary *after* a Union, than it *is at present* ? I suspect you mean nothing more nor less than to promise the Catholics a bribe—and I assure all those that feel inclined to believe you, that you have no idea of keeping your word with them.

Thirdly. “ Protestant and Catholic interest in county elections, and parish jealousies will cease, &c.

(b) Page 29.

&c.”

&c.” I wish you had given us any good reason to suppose, that the election of a member to serve in Britain will not be as warmly disputed as that of a member to our own present parliament.

Fourthly. “ If the Protestant interest be secure, there will be an end of state partiality towards Protestants.” This is an admirable way of *securing interest*, namely, by a *deprivation of state partiality*.

Fifthly. “ Catholics will feel more confident under a legislature, where the majority of members will not be influenced against them by local prejudices and antipathies.” I entreat my Catholic countrymen to cultivate in their minds a principle of conciliation, forgiveness, and amity towards their Protestant neighbours, and to *suspect the views of every man to be dishonest*, who attempts to persuade them that the Protestant members of the Irish parliament *are influenced against them by local prejudices and antipathies*.

Sixthly. (i) “ Sectarian struggle will terminate !!!” Let us look a few lines further !

Seventhly. “ An opening may be left in any plan of Union for the future admission of Catholics to additional privileges, and Protestants can never object to such an opening, as they may rest assured,

(i) Page 30.

that the British Protestant parliament will not imprudently admit Catholic pretensions, as the test-laws could not be partially repealed—and it is evident, that the Catholics could not force their claims with hostility against the whole power of Great Britain and Ireland!!”—I have read your own words several times over, and find, with increasing astonishment, at every perusal, that they are literally as I have stated them. I believe to *leave an opening* to a sect for future admission, but at the same time to *block up* that opening with *unrepealable test-laws*, and with *masses of power*, is in politics an exact parallel to that grand mechanical *desideratum*, a perpetual motion—and is precisely the way not only to *set* SECTARIAN STRUGGLE *at work*, but to *provide for its unceasing continuance*; and so far, I am also bound to believe, that the author of those two propositions is either blind to the most obvious deductions from principles and facts himself, or that he feels as if he addressed a nation of drivellers, and treats them accordingly. But I cannot dismiss this part of the subject without some comment on the *unprincipled deceit* which appears here, united with so much *intellectual weakness*. It will be no excuse to say, that the obvious and glaring folly prevents the mischief, by betraying, at the first blush, the base and uncandid imposition intended to be practised—neither is it worth enquiring which sect you intend to deceive and mislead—but I affirm, that in the beginning of the last quoted paragraph, you propose to *give hopes and expectations to the Catholics*,

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which

which in the remainder of it you assure the Protestants *shall never be realised.*

Eighthly. “ The Catholics are more numerous in the South and West of Ireland ; and it is conceived, that those parts of the kingdom would be most benefited by an Union, as to agriculture and commercial advantages.” No miserable sophist ever advanced a more palpable *petitio principii* than this ; but you have refuted your own assertion, for you endeavour to shew, a few pages further on, “ *that in point of agriculture and the commerce depending upon it, the parts adjacent to Dublin will be most benefited ; you there state, “ (k) that Dublin will probably monopolize the corn trade between Great Britain and Ireland ; that its commerce for all English goods with Liverpool will greatly encrease, and that in proportion as canals from Dublin are carried to different parts of the kingdom, (and by the bye Connaught is the most direct and immediate object of those canals) it will be the DEPÔT for their consumption in all articles of British manufactures and imports ;”* so that without any share of the corn trade with England, and receiving all articles of British manufactures and imports through Dublin, still Munster and Connaught are to be more benefited in agriculture and commerce than any other parts of Ireland.

Ninthly. You still follow your favourite system, and assuming, without proof or argument, that a

(k) Page 39.

Union will insure the Catholics many political, and all civil advantages, you dismiss them with a short advice, to “(m) become satisfied with their situation.”—I most heartily join in the same advice; with this difference, that the sentiment which you recommend to them to feel in the event of a Union, I do most earnestly exhort them to cultivate in the present situation of the country.

You have shewn as little knowledge of common arithmetic as of political reasoning or history. Having repeatedly mentioned the Protestants of the established church, as *one-fourth* part of the population of Ireland, you afterwards state the Dissenters as a ratio of about *one-seventh* to the whole kingdom, and of *one-sixth* to the Catholics. For God’s sake, in this last calculation, where have you left room for the one-fourth which you allow the Protestants?—Perhaps the solution may be found in the science of algebra or logarithms—it certainly does not belong to *common arithmetic*; but it would be to no purpose to discover your meaning; the calculation seems to have been introduced merely to enliven the subject with a *numerical conundrum*, for you draw from it no conclusion; *your assertion, that the importance of the Presbyterians would rise in the empire in consequence of a Union, would be equally unfounded, whether their comparative numbers were great or small.*

You appear to have introduced this sect, merely to afford you an opportunity “(n) of charging them with views and conduct hostile to the establish-

(m) Page 31.

(n) Page 32.

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ment.”

ment." Thus, following up your plan of embroiling all denominations of Irishmen in irreconcilable enmities, as a means of *driving them not from motives of reason and sound policy, but with a view to their separate interests and the depression of other sects*, into your favourite measure; but give me leave to assure my countrymen, that if England shall find herself successful in procuring an object, (which appears to be so dear to her) at the expence of the mutual concord of the different sects in Ireland, she will always find it her interest to keep alive those rancours, with a view to perpetuate her enjoyment of that object; well knowing that empire is only to be preserved by those means by which it has been acquired—and that if she shall atchieve a Union by the discords of Irishmen, she should inevitably suffer a separation as soon as Irishmen should be reconciled.

You promise the Catholics and Presbyterians, (o) "that if they will consent to a Union, a modus for tithes will accompany the measure, and that both sects shall be essentially relieved and benefited by that part of a new system." As you intend to *relieve the Catholics and Dissenters from the payment of tithes*, I am sorry you have pledged yourself to the spiritual peers, that they shall have (p) "security for their diocesan estates," because I think if the *working clergy* are to be stript of their provision, there is no fund out of which some *little*

(o) Page 32.

(p) Page 33.

pittance might be so equitably afforded them as the estates of the bishops; and particularly as those persons, being no longer lords of parliament, will not require so large an income to support their dignity.—By the bye, after having proposed to give away the tithes, I wish you had explained what you mean by the words “security to the general interest and establishment of the church” in the very next page.—You have a strange notion of Presbyterian obduracy; (q) “when the *stumbling block of tithes is removed*, they may probably fall in with the Protestant church,” by which I suppose you mean that as soon as he ceases to *pay* for the prayers of the Established Church, a *Presbyterian will see their value*.

I give no answer to your (r) paragraph respecting the peers; *first*, because it amounts only to a begging of the question throughout—contains nothing applicable to the subject,—and appears to be only introduced in compliment to the dignity of the persons to whom it relates,—and, with a view to make a parade of taking up the whole subject in due order—But *secondly* and *principally*, because I rather suspect that the *real argument*, by which you *hope to persuade* these exalted personages, is to be found in a different part of your work, namely, under the head of “*private interests to be managed and compensated*.”

You say, “The same reasoning (I confess I see nothing like reasoning) will apply

(q) Page 32.

(r) Page 33.

to the House of Commons, and you ask can it be doubted “that a reasonable representation may be selected.”—Whether a reasonable representation may be selected or not, it seems is not the question, for you have already fixed the proportion at five British to one Irish member, and therefore, the question you have given us to consider is whether *five to one*, be not a reasonable proportion.—For my part, in a case where the interests or feelings of England and Ireland may appear to cross each other, I would as readily consent to have *no* member for Ireland as *one* against *five*; and to know the *worst* that could befall us in that case, we have only to *look as far back as before the year 1780*, when the *British parliament conceived it to be necessary for the benefit of the empire*, to shut up the harbours of Ireland by the Navigation and other Acts, and generally to restrict, or (as they called it) to regulate the trade of this country.

To your observations respecting the Bar, I shall perhaps say less than the importance of that body, and the figure they make in your work, would appear to intitle them to. Much of what you have said stands refuted in the face of the public by well known and undisputed facts. To some of your opinions, I in a great degree subscribe my assent. Certainly with the views you entertain, and the knowledge you must have acquired of the state of Ireland, by your long residence among us, there was some address and cunning in your attempt to deprive the Bar of Ireland, of that confidence

confidence which the nation has hitherto placed in them as a body;—their honour and integrity as individuals, their learning and abilities as a profession, their repeated and meritorious exertions in behalf of their country, have impressed upon the public mind a serious reliance on their opinion, in all matters of high and momentous concern. To no set of men was the nation more indebted for the benefits attending the volunteer associations, and they may be called the very spring and life of the yeomanry institutions. You know their wisdom too well *not to anticipate what would be their testimony,* and it was desirable, if possible, *to undermine their credit.*

I admit that some men of no pretensions, save from their fortunes and connections, do, without learning or capacity, obtrude themselves into that profession; hoping, by borough interest and family intrigue, to raise themselves to honours which they do not deserve; that others, vainly arrogating to themselves the character of politicians and orators, avail themselves of the forms of our representation to acquire seats in Parliament, with a view to force themselves into office—But besides, that the case is precisely similar in England, the nation suffers no injury from that circumstance—In the subordinate offices of the Bar, and sometimes in other departments of the State, those gentlemen may “earn a humiliating reward;” but a single instance has not occurred since Ireland acquired her independence, of a lawyer being promoted to the Bench merely

merely by parliamentary interest, or from an empty talent for political declamation.—Before that fortunate and glorious æra, indeed, political cabal was the *only road* by which the judgment seat was accessible, (and, no doubt, the case will be as formerly if we return to our old situation)—But at this moment, there is not a single Judge upon the Bench, who did not acquire his situation by well and long tried ability at the Bar; and when you tell the people of Ireland, that *after the Union they shall have able Judges*, I suppose you mean that they shall be favoured *with Judges from England*, who, as Englishmen, no doubt, must be superior to every thing Irish; for *abler men*, in every true sense of the word, *than we now have in those situations*, or men who more sedulously attended to the duties of their profession while at the Bar, I am sure do not exist in the profession either here or in England.—To their integrity, the unanimous voice of their country bears witness—and you yourself hardly seem to dispute it.

The Bar, you say, (*s*) “*may be injured* (though not materially) by the arrangement”—and from thence, you take occasion to anticipate a few words of praise in favour of that disinterested virtue that is to induce the placemen and expectants of the Bar to vote for this measure in the House of Commons, and to support it abroad; but for my part, Sir, I shall more readily rely upon the (*t*) “*virtuous ardency of youth*” than on the wisdom of age and experience, when *that age* has been spent, and *that experience* acquired, in the midst of (*u*) “*political*

(*s*) Page 36.

(*t*) Ibidem.

(*u*) Ibidem.

temptations”

temptations" in ascertaining the *modes* and the *proportions* in which "private interests may be *managed and compensated*" for public wrong—and how far *the general evils of a country may conduce to the individual benefit of their authors.*

I cannot conceive a more accurate barometer to ascertain the state of the political atmosphere, than the profession of the law; their prosperity must be in proportion to the prosperity of the public, and their fortune must rise and fall with the wealth of the nation—conversant as they are in the arrangement, security, and defence of the property of individuals, and above all, of that property which arises from commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, the *extent* of that property *must fix the limits* of forensic emolument.—If, then, the Bar be, as you insinuate, composed of *selfish persons*, studiously regarding only *their own interest*; if they are at least *as wise as the ordinary classes of mankind*, (which I conceive will not be denied) if it be as you say, even *too much* their habit to cultivate *political enquiry*; and if the *advantages of the profession be commensurate to the national welfare*—can a stronger argument be opposed to a public measure, than their voice and opinion against it?

(*) "To demonstrate (I suppose you mean to endeavour to demonstrate) to the Clergy the advantages of a Union, would be lost labour indeed."—

(*) Page 37.

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I entirely

I entirely agree with you—the kind and affectionate intercourse they might hope to enjoy with their Catholic and Presbyterian neighbours, after those sects should be *relieved* by the part of your new system relating to tithes, which I have already mentioned, could not fail to operate as a full compensation to them for any *worldly loss* they might sustain by the arrangement.

I admire the caution you suggest to the gentlemen of landed property, to disregard the opinions and arguments of “enterprising adventurers.”—Pray, Sir, are *you* totally devoid of political enterprise? Is your fortune, whatever it may be, the *gift* of your ancestors, or the *fruit* of your own toil in *trade*, or in a *profession*? Have you never *adventured in the field of politics*? Did you never engage in the *contests and struggles of party*? And since this character of an enterprising, politician, and party adventurer, be so contemptible and dangerous, for heaven’s sake inform us *how* and *where* you have looked for the “harvest of your hopes.” You tell the country gentlemen, “that if a Union would *put an end to discords and insurrections*, it would benefit their estates, &c. &c.”; but if by *threats* of impending force and irresistible power—by *fallacious argument*—by *gross misrepresentations*—by exciting and fomenting *party feuds* and *religious acrimony*—by holding out *contradictory and incompatible hopes and expectations* to all descriptions of persons—by seizing the moment of *public calamity* and of *universal terror*—and finally, by *managing and compensating private interests*,

you

you are able to accomplish a measure which every *unbought Irishman* will feel it his interest to recall and do away—and if this last can only be done by a more dreadful and unanimous insurrection than ever occurred here before, what becomes of your proposition in favor of the landed gentlemen, and the increased value of their estates? I confess there is as yet only *my* hypothesis against *yours*; but, when we look over the world to every parallel instance that can be found in history; when we contemplate the present discontents in Norway, only suppressed by the powerful army of Denmark, and the insignificance of the country which has prevented it from becoming an object of interference with other nations—the revolt of Sweden from the same power—of the Netherlands and Portugal from Spain—of Corsica from Genoa—of Brabant and Flanders, lately from the Emperor—of America, from the King of Great Britain—of Ireland, from England as a nation—and, in short, to every case in which an *unnatural* and *inequitable* Union of the *powerful* with the *weak*, has been formed, without check or protecting principle,—where, “state partiality,” was uniformly and of necessity in favor of the former; and where political injury was on all occasions accompanied with personal indignity and insult to the latter;—when we see the avidity with which *one* state has always embraced every opportunity of dismembering *another*—how England assisted the Low Countries, and France the American provinces—when all this is considered, and the opposite suppositions which you and I have hazarded, come to be examined by this

touchstone of experience and common sense—whatever may be the public opinion of *your* enterprise and adventure—however *your* boldness in political contests and party struggles may be admitted, to *me* at least will belong the humble merit of a *faithful chronicler of past transactions*, and I hope of *no unprofitable forewarner of events to come*.

You affirm (y) “that a Union will place the Irish merchant upon an equality with the British, and he will be certain to enjoy for ever, &c. &c.” Pray, Sir, was it with a view to the *general benefit* of the empire or to the *separate interests of Great Britain*, that till within those eighteen years past the British parliament *restrained and ruined the commerce of Ireland*? If the true object were the interest of Britain, and the pretext only the benefit of the empire, will not the *same pretext* for ever cover and justify the *same object*, whenever similar power shall exist? Or have you given us, *even your own assertion*, that England is now *more just and more disinterested* than she was before; and that she will *now* make a *good use* of the *same power* of which she *made a bad use then*? Or, perhaps, you are of opinion that there was *nothing inequitable in the oppression of Ireland*, when the *aggrandising of your own country* was to be the consequence. But if it ever *has* been, or ever *may* be possible, that the interests of the empire shall require a sacrifice from Ireland, let her retain the power to *judge of the necessity* in her own hands, and not leave it to the decision of a nation that is to *gain* whatever she is to *lose*.—At

the security of *one* member to *five*, I could laugh! But that the subject compels me to be grave!

In your answer to that objection against a Union, which arises from the consequent (z) ruin of the metropolis, as you refer us to the example of Edinburgh, I take this opportunity of shortly applying myself to the general argument of analogy between Scotland and Ireland.—That the Union did not secure tranquillity to North Britain I have already shewn; on the contrary, in the first thirty years she was disturbed by *two* dreadful and wide-spread rebellions, of *both* of which *probably*, but *certainly of the first*, the Union was one strongly operating cause. But we are told again “that Scotland has found the benefit of a Union in increased commerce, wealth and population.” That her commerce, her wealth, and her population, have increased since the Union, I will allow; but I will maintain that there *is evidence*, and evidence which those who argue from analogy must admit to be *conclusive* and *convincing*, to prove not only that she *did not acquire that increase* by means of the Union, but, that on the contrary, *the Union was injurious to her, and prevented her greater and farther improvement* in every one of those particulars.

In the same period of time *Ireland has increased* in wealth, population, and commerce, in a *ratio*, (I speak within very strict bounds) of at *least two to one*

more than Scotland, although for sixty years of that period Ireland was *cruelly oppressed by the British parliament*; and, although Scotland during that whole time, enjoyed her proportion, as a part of Great Britain, of Irish plunder—and had also the advantage of her share in the East India trade, from which Ireland has been wholly excluded; so that *the whole force of the analogy is against a Union*, tending to shew, *not that Ireland will be a gainer*, because Scotland has benefited by it, but that Ireland ought to reject it, *because it has injured Scotland*—similar views of the comparative states of Dublin and Edinburgh at the time of the Union, and at the present time would warrant (but in a greater degree) a similar conclusion.

But let us examine the remaining part of your argument in answer to this objection. You tell us not to dread the desertion of the capital, the bankruptcy of its shopkeepers, or the ruin of its proprietors; because, “that Dublin must still be the residence of a viceroy and his court—*that sciences, arts, and amusements may be cultivated in proportion as there will be less attention to politics*; that it will be the seat of justice, the chief seat of revenue, and the head-quarters of the army. It will monopolize the corn trade between Great Britain and Ireland with (I do not know what) advantages from canals, &c. &c.” Perhaps no subject of equal consequence was ever treated with more *sang-froid* than you have handled this.—The disparagement and ruin of estates—the dilapidation of whole streets and

and squares of almost palatial magnificence—the disappointment of many a well-founded speculation, encouraged by the view of unexampled prosperity around, and a protecting government, and promising large and well-merited fortunes to the undertakers—the overthrow of every trade that ministered to the calls of taste, of fashion, or of wealth—the ruin of the retailer, and the total destruction of a host of artizans in almost every department of labour and ingenuity; all those heart-rending reflections are to be silenced *by a quaint unmeaning illusory repartee*.—Why, what have you to fear? Surely as you have *now* no concern with politics, *as we have sent every man connected with the politics of the country to England*, what have you to do but to cultivate the sciences, arts, and amusements!!! I wish, Sir, when you speak of *private interests to be compensated*, you would think of some compensation for those innocent individuals, who are to be the wanton victims of your barbarous and unfeeling policy;—when those whom numerous and opulent customers, whom the annual and periodical resort of temporary residents, and whom a uniformly certain and profitable trade have enabled to pay *rents of unexampled magnitude*, shall see their shops and apartments deserted, and their slowly lingering stock at length seized to satisfy their landlord—*have you provided compensation for them?*

Have you provided compensation for him who has bound himself to pay rents for large tracts of ground
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by the foot, which he must now let by the acre, and who has laid out his whole fortune in buildings that never must be finished? Do you think no compensation due to him, who has devoted his life to the rational gratifications of a splendid and generous nobility, to the ornament of a great and proud metropolis, to the ease, accommodation, taste, and comfort of an opulent gentry, and a princely body of merchants; and who, when those merchants shall be reduced, that gentry impoverished, the metropolis humbled, and his noble employers expatriated, will have no resource but the charity of his equally distressed fellow-citizens?

The remainder of your answer to this objection is equally absurd and insulting—"that Dublin shall still be the residence of the Lord Lieutenant, the seat of justice, and of the revenue, and the headquarters of the army." Thus, when Dublin complains that you are going to injure her by carrying away her parliament, with all its members, and their connections, you observe, that she can sustain no injury by that, as you will leave her the Castle, the Four Courts, the Custom-house, and Barracks; as if it was a sufficient excuse to the capital for depriving her of most of her advantages, that you did not mean to rob her of all. As to the benefit of the corn trade, and the other advantages you promise her from the canals both in England and Ireland, how are those matters connected with a Union? Is the Union necessary as a means of procuring to Dublin the corn trade with England? And cannot the canals in
England

England and Ireland be brought to perfection without it?—I presume your whole argument may be brought to this plain statement—your *present advantages are so many*, and your *future prospects so promising*, that you may very well afford to *give up a great share of both*, in order to *indulge the minister*, and to *aggrandise the kingdom of Great Britain!*

You are pleased to affirm, (a) “that the adversaries of a Union admit that it will be beneficial to trade and manufactures.” Those courtly disputants, who differ in opinion in order to compliment a great statesman, by being convinced after a little gentle argument, may possibly have made some such admission; but I deny that men of common sense can entertain such an opinion, or that any man to whom the welfare of Ireland is dear, ever made the concession.—I would stake the whole question on this short issue—*If you can point out a single regulation by which the trade and manufactures of Ireland can be benefited, that may not as easily and as effectually be adopted in our present situation as after a Union*, I will withdraw my weak opposition—But if England shall hold out *tempting baits* of commercial indulgence as *the price of a Union*—though they appear to *promise Ireland the riches of the Indies*, I would reject the bargain; because it cannot be, nor is it consistent with human nature, that any nation would *pay a high price as the purchase of power*, without after-

(a) Page 41.

wards making that power *an instrument to reimburse and indemnify* herself.—Besides, we all know that Great Britain will in *no* case make concessions *in favour of Ireland*, and to *her own prejudice*—and if there be any commercial advantage which Great Britain *can extend to Ireland without injury to herself*, and has hitherto *withheld it*, or *shall continue to withhold it*, till Ireland shall *submit to a Union*; such a disposition manifested on the part of England, ought to *convince Ireland that she never can be safe under the power of that country*.

This last observation applies to the argument which you address to Cork (*b*)—If Cork be an improper situation for a marine station and a dock-yard, it has been wise in the British minister to withhold what would be a dangerous indulgence to that city, and the adoption or rejection of a Union can never make any alteration as to the propriety or impropriety of establishing a naval arsenal there. But if the “present dock-yards of England be inadequate to the extent of the navy, and that a new station be wanted,” and if Cork be the best situation to be found in those dominions for such an establishment, it then ought to be immediately selected whether a Union shall take place or not; and if the minister of England attempts making it *a part of a bargain* for a Union, it ought to be a further inducement to this country to *put herself on her guard*—because, (not to mention the unfriendly dif-

(*b*) *Ibid.*

position

position it would imply towards Ireland) it would evince such a mean, peddling, and jobbing policy as would leave good grounds to suspect the integrity of the whole proposal;—besides, if Cork is to have a *specific bribe*, why ought not *some indemnity* to be given to *Dublin*, which you admit will be *so much more injured*.

As to the mode in which you propose to (c) “obviate the common and general objections to a Union,” it is perfectly consistent with the whole of your plan; for it is a mass of misrepresentation, of unfounded assertion, and of delusive argument; you even misrepresent the objections themselves!—Your play upon the word *extinguish*, in your first objection, is puerile and ridiculous; if any man ever complained that *Ireland would be extinguished* by a Union, he meant that her *rank among nations*, her *pride*, her *dignity*, her *independence*, and her *wealth*, would be destroyed. In your answer to the second objection, you barely recapitulate your former assertions, mingled with a little of the geography of other countries, to shew that Dublin is not more remote from London than other towns from the capitals on which they depend—as if it was not the loss of her parliament, that Ireland would have to lament, but the fatigue the members might endure from the journey.—The third objection you state to be, “shall we tamely resign that legislature whose independence was so glo-

(c) Page 42,

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riously asserted and established by the arms of the volunteers," and then, as if it was only by way of compliment to the volunteers that Ireland was to wish for a continuance of her liberty, you proceed to argue, that *although the volunteers (d) "meant well,"* by asserting the independence of their country, yet that in fact they "*mistook the business entirely,*" and that in your opinion it would have been *better for Ireland to have remained in her former situation of servile dependence.*—Why, Sir, even in that state of servile dependence, she yet rejected a Union, and she did so, not merely because she felt that it would for ever prevent her rising in wealth and prosperity, but because she well knew, from every principle of political reasoning, and from every instance of political analogy, *that it would for ever rivet her chains.*

You state as a fourth objection, (e) Must it not be the height of folly to part with the management of our own concerns for ever? To this you say the answer is obvious, namely, that we shall retain the management of our concerns *as far as is necessary!*—I wish you had honoured us with your opinion on this abstract question—*How far it may be necessary for a nation to retain the management of its own concerns.* How would such a proposition be received at Westminster or at Whitehall—That there were or *might be national concerns of which it was not necessary for the nation to retain the management!!!*

(d) Page 44.

(e) Page 45.

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You are obliged as a further answer to this objection, to go again into the proportion of power to be given to Ireland in England.—Indeed, Sir, if the Irish Members in the British Parliament, or the British Cabinet, could be relied upon—if we had any security to expect that they would but feel *one half of that love and preference for their country* which an Englishman never loses in Ireland, *let the rewards of his services here be never so unbounded*—if that preference for his own country were fortified with such a contempt for England as you and many of your country profess and feel for us—perhaps with equal numbers Ireland might have a fair chance of equal measures in executive and legislative dispensations.—But as past experience affords no such prospect—as the *wealth and power* of Great Britain, her abundant *sources of pleasure and amusement*, her *civilization*, her *commerce*, her *manufactures*, her *morals*, her *manners*, her *establishments*, and her *constitution*, are, as you state, so transcendantly superior to every thing that belongs to Ireland; and as it has been *so much the fashion* for our nobility and gentry to affect to be considered (in inclination at least) as *Englishmen*—and as England will always be able to hold out to them such substantial temptations to *act as if they were Englishmen*—I confess, even with equal numbers in the Cabinet and the Parliament, *I should utterly despair for my country*—But when we know that the arrangement of the Cabinet cannot be subject to regulations by act of Parliament without overturning the Constitution; that if there could be a law for such a purpose, no Irishman would
ever

ever be introduced there who had not first *done away the original sin of Irish birth* by a full and practical recantation of every principle of attachment to Ireland. When we are told that we shall have a proportion of only *one to five* in the Parliament of the United Kingdom; and above all when we consider, *that the measure can never be accomplished but at the price of a specific bribe, or as you call it, compensation* for every vote that shall be given to support it—and that the measure which is to *leave no hope* for Ireland, but in the steady, incorruptible (I had almost said) romantic patriotism of her representatives, is to carry with it a practical demonstration *that we have no integrity or virtue* among us—When all these matters are considered, I will ask in your own words—*Whether it can be less than the height of folly to part with the management of our own concerns for ever?*

To the fifth supposed objection (*f*) “that a kingdom which subjects itself to the will of another, becomes its slave”—you are obliged to give an answer founded on the following unmeaning assertion: “that while any part of the Union remains free, the whole must be free”—And you ask, “who would desire to have better security for his liberty than an Englishman possesses? And how will the liberties of either country be endangered, when a common body of representatives shall be formed, &c. &c.”—To your first position, that freedom in one part of the empire will secure the freedom of the rest, I offer as an answer and contradiction, the situation of

(*f*) Page 46.

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England and all her dependencies, until America separated, and Ireland threw off the yoke—During that time, England was as free as she is now, and yet Ireland and America were in a state of slavery.—You will say, neither America nor Ireland had representatives in the British Parliament—to which I reply, that the *small* proportion of *one* representative to *five* cannot *secure* either the actual or theoretical liberty of Ireland, for that our representatives will, at best, be no more than so many agents and advocates for their country, and not a true representation of the people, possessing an insurmountable *veto* in all questions affecting the interests of Ireland; but on the contrary, a measure of the United Parliament directly acting upon Ireland, might be carried by a majority of five to one with *every Irish member's voice against it*.—Has England then no better security for her freedom than Ireland will have, or has Ireland at present any security for her freedom whatsoever, when she shall be told that she is so far in the power of Parliament, that that Parliament can annihilate its own voice, and put her in a situation to be governed, *not by a majority of her own representatives*, but by an assembly, *in which even their unanimous voice would appear but a trifling insignificant minority*—And I ask you, Sir, does not England now enjoy this proud superiority over Ireland, that if any man were to presume to hold out such doctrines of the omnipotence of the Parliament, and make similar proposals respecting England, accompanied with allusions to *force*, and military and naval superiority, as you have done with regard to Ireland, he would by the House of Commons of Great Britain, be

be voted an enemy to his country, and prosecuted accordingly—And as for the liberties of Ireland after a Union, they may be *endangered*, nay, *completely overthrown*, whenever the representatives of the People of Great Britain shall think *such a measure would conduce to the general interests of the empire*—a sentiment not *new* in England.

But you attempt to shew the present times, (g) “when the people are in a state of irritation and turbulence, and the kingdom engaged in a war,” a proper one to agitate the question. The argument with which you support this position, is one which is calculated for ever to embroil those two countries in something more than ordinary contentions. You state, that because the volunteers, whom you are pleased in common with the late rebels to stile, (b) “enemies of their country,” took advantage of the embarrassment of Great Britain in the last war, to assert the independence of their country, therefore *we* (here for the first time you have avowed yourself an Englishman) should turn against them their own game, and make use of a time of war to *establish the security of the empire*; thus, according to the old doctrine, arguing *against the independence of Ireland, as injurious to the general interests of the empire*.

But for the peace of that empire, I deprecate all such dangerous topics.—If the consideration that

(g) Page 47.

(b) Page 48.

Ireland acquired her independence by taking advantage of the embarrassment of England, *be a warrant for England now to avail herself of the contentions in Ireland*, to rob her again of that acquisition;—when are we to look for an end of the contest? Instead of living together in terms of amity and kindness, those two countries will be ever on the watch, *each to avail itself of the distress of the other*—England with a *view to power*—Ireland in *pursuit of freedom*; and of course they will contract a mutual desire to involve one another in eternal misfortunes.—But of a system so discordant, there must shortly be an end; for surely, no laws can be framed sufficiently cohesive to hold two countries together, between whom so much avowed hostility, and such incorrigible principles of repulsion, are found to exist.—The narrow limits of a hasty work like this, will not allow me to wander from the subject, or I should here with little difficulty rescue the volunteers from your malice; I trust, however, to the gratitude of their country, that it is unnecessary.

You feel that you are under a necessity of endeavouring to prove, (i) “that a Union is within the power and competence of parliament.”—I will on that subject concede to you thus much—and perhaps with the views you seem to entertain, you will desire no more; an army *might dictate*—a parliament *might vote* such a law—so far is physically

(i) *Ibid.*

H

possible

possible—but *no vote of Parliament*—no *military Power* could ever deprive the People, *so betrayed and conquered*, of their right to *repel* that power, and *repeal* that law, (*k*) *by every means that God and nature might put into their hands.*

You seem dissatisfied, as you advance towards a conclusion, with the mode in which you before boasted of having “obviated the arguments that might be drawn from national dignity and national pride,” and you feel it necessary again to return to the charge; and, indeed, I believe we are on this subject indebted to you for the only sincere, candid, and plain-dealing paragraph in the whole work.—With avowed and malevolent rancour you express, *even in exclamations*, your *disgust at the independence of Ireland*, and you fairly open the views which England entertains in a Union, namely, that Ireland shall contribute her full proportion to the public expence of the Empire, and (*l*) “convert that protection, which she now receives as a favour, into a right.” Thus then the whole is one of the British Minister’s schemes of finance to relieve Great Britain, by sharing her burdens with Ireland, and to extend to Ireland her proportion of four hundred millions of debt, and her quota of the proposed tax on income.—As to the expence of the army now in Ireland, of which

(*k*) Parliamentary Debates in England on the American War.

(*l*) Page 50.

you seem so feelingly to complain, I beg to ask, was the grant of those troops *wholly disinterested* on the part of Great Britain? Was it *merely as a favour* to Ireland that she sent them? Had she *no fears* for her own safety and liberty, when the Loyalists in Ireland were in danger of being crushed by the rebellion, or the whole kingdom likely to be reduced by foreign invasion?—You have here (as far as your weight will go) given credit to one of the most malignant, and, I candidly admit, most unfounded charges that has ever been advanced against the Government of these countries—namely, that for many years past they have been endeavouring to promote discontents and excite dissensions in Ireland, in hopes of occasioning some critical convulsion, that should afford them a pretext to get an army into the country, and enable them to dictate to Ireland such terms, as might recover to Great Britain the power which she formerly enjoyed.

You offer as an inducement to the Protestants of Ireland, to put this country for ever in the power of Great Britain—a strange picture of the fluctuations of British councils!—(m) Of the Protestant Ascendancy you say, “ a party
 “ in England term it by opprobrious names;
 “ great leaders in opposition, possibly the future
 “ ministers of England, condemn it; and

(m) Page 52.

“ some members of the British Parliament are
 “ supposed to be adverse to it.” Its stability,
 you say, “ may rest upon accident, upon the
 “ death of a *single* character, upon the change
 “ of a Minister, or the temper of a Lord Lieu-
 “ tenant, and the policy of the system is much
 “ doubted in England.”—Whatever may be
 the policy or justice of the system of Protestant
 Ascendancy, however the champions of either
 party may be desirous of acquiring partizans,
 wherever they can be found, I think it would
 be but a prudent measure for them at least to
 agree in this—not to look for auxiliaries in Great
 Britain, if no better dependance can be placed
 on the stability and sincerity of the principles
 which operate there upon the subject, than what
 can be expected from your statement.

I have followed you faithfully throughout
 your whole work, with, I confess, no small
 degree of confidence in the answer I have
 given to it in all its points—a confidence not
 founded on any sense of my own capacity, but
 on a feeling that there was no difficulty in the
 task.—In your ostentatious display of force and
 power—your rude and insulting language to-
 wards Ireland—your statesmanlike contempt of
 sincerity and plain dealing, steady and unvary-
 ing, except where your British partialities hur-
 ried you away—your endeavours, further to em-
 broil the contending interests of the kingdom,
 and your flimsy efforts to blind the under-
 standings

standings of them all—in your misstatements and misrepresentations—your puerile examples and disjointed analogies—your futile arguments and unfounded assertions—in your logical and political solecisms—in your *management* and *compensation*—and in the dangerous and suspicious doctrine you openly avow throughout—I have found a host of allies.—

Convinced as I am, that any Union would complete the ruin of Ireland—and that even if it were not seriously detrimental, that it is not necessary for her interests—persuaded that the measure would ultimately involve this country in the *next greatest calamity* that could befall it—a *total separation from England*—I am yet desirous to see your “promised scheme accompanied with calculations and details;”—not indeed expecting to find any thing in that scheme that would reconcile me to your project—but because I entertain a firm conviction that,

“ —As the toad, ugly and venomous,
“ Wears yet a *precious jewel* in its head,”

it will, like your present Essay, carry with it more than its own refutation—

My object was merely to answer whatever you had advanced upon the subject, and not to enter into discussion beyond that limit—I fear I have been too diffuse, and that to go through my tedious and uninteresting pages will consume more of the public time than a name,
unknown

unknown and unvalued, can entitle me to expect—and yet I cannot lay aside my pen without addressing to you a few words in your private capacity as a gentleman.—I am unacquainted with your person—your character I know to be respectable—your talents are certainly of magnitude—your honour and integrity, in concerns detached from politics, has never been impeached—I have been informed that your manners are polished, and that your disposition is amiable in the extreme.—This kingdom owes you obligations as an able and prudent Minister.—Even on the present occasion, I respect the motive which has brought you forward.—Suffer not, I beseech you, a sentiment of anger to enter your mind against me.—Our feelings are congenial—there is between us but a geographical difference—You are the bold champion for England—I am the humble advocate for Ireland.—I conclude nearly in the words of my distinguished countryman, when he addressed an English statesman on a parallel occasion, (may the issues be parallel!)—“*You are toiling to relieve and aggrandise YOUR Country—I labour to preserve the liberties of MINE.*”

CHARLES BALL.

DUBLIN,
Dec. 8th, 1798.