CANAL EXTENSIONS

IN IRELAND,

RECOMMENDED

TO THE IMPERIAL LEGISLATURE,

AS

THE BEST MEANS OF

Promoting the Agriculture—Draining the Bogs—and Employing the Poor,

OF

IRELAND;

AND ALSO,

AS THE SUREST MEANS OF

SUPPLYING THE BRITISH MARKETS WITH CORN,

REDUCING THE RATES OF FOREIGN EXCHANGES,

AND

FACILITATING THE GENERAL RESUMPTION OF CASH PAYMENTS.

BY JAMES DAWSON, ESQ.

Dublin:

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1819.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

PREFACE.

THE following Letters originally appeared in CARRICK'S MORNING POST, in the months of January, February and March last: they were the amusements of the leisure hours of a writer, who had no other object in view but the application of whatever knowledge he possessed of Irish Canal concerns, to the general Benefit of the Empire. The very flattering approbation of the Public has caused the publication of them in the form of this Pamphlet—to give facility to their circulation, and to stimulate the Landed Proprietors of Ireland to exert themselves for obtaining such *Legislative Measures* as are best calculated *to promote Canal Extensions on a systematic plan*—and thereby effect, cheaply and effectually, the Drainage of Bogs—afford Employment to the Labouring Poor—extinguish for ever the Internal Disturbances of Ireland—and provide an inexhaustible Granary for Great Britain.

GEORGE'S-PLACE, DUBLIN,
May, 1819.

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CANAL EXTENSIONS,

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

To the Editor of Carrick's Morning Post.

SIR,

THE superabundant and increasing population of Ireland and Scotland, is a subject which, from its great importance, has justly engaged the attention of the Government and Legislature of the Empire. It is obvious that the demand for labour excites to industry, and industry produces affluence and content. To create this demand for labour, our Parliament in its wisdom and benevolence, has lately passed several acts, expresly intended for the encouragement of fisheries, the working of collieries, the making of canals, and the erection of useful public works throughout Scotland and Ireland, by giving certain commissioners appointed by government, the power of issuing, for those purposes, very large sums of money out of the consolidated fund, independent of particular grants, to an immense amount, for the Caledonian, and other canals in Scotland, and for the making of roads through the Highlands.

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One of these most salutary and important acts of parliament, which relates to Ireland, the present Irish administration seems determined not to suffer to remain a useless incumbrance on the statute book. Measures are now in train, as the public prints inform us, to encourage the formation of fishery companies, under proper regulations; and we understand that inquiries have very recently been made into the state and situation of our principal canals and collieries, with a view to the formation of new or the extension of the old lines of inland navigation, and thereby providing immediate employment for our numerous and necessitous labouring poor, and eventually placing the agriculture, collieries, and manufactures of Ireland, upon an imperishable basis.

Having had, from peculiar circumstances, frequent opportunities of observing the comparative benefits likely to arise from the cutting of new lines of canal, and the extension of old ones, I take the liberty of submitting these observations to the public, and to persons in power, through the medium of your excellent paper, from no other motive than my sincere desire to promote the cause of inland navigation, which, I am convinced, will materially contribute to the present employment and future support and civilization of our labouring poor.

If a new line of canal should be commenced where stones, timber, iron, and machinery are easily procured, its difficulties, and the expense of carriage, will every hour increase with the advance of the work, nor will these inconveniencies cease until it arrives at another sufficient depot of materials, or at the summit level, or other sufficient source of water supplies for the working of boats upon the first levels; and if a new line of canal should be commenced in a place distant from quar-

ries, and a depot of materials for locks, tunnels, bridges, and machinery, then, although the difficulties are constantly diminishing as the work proceeds towards the quarries and depot, yet the first expenses are enormous and discouraging, and likely to prove fatal to the infant undertaking; while on the contrary, if a branch of canal is shot forth from the trunk of an old canal, all kinds of materials are chiefly conveyed by the old canal for the formation of the first level of the new branch; and as that level can be immediately supplied with water, the necessary materials can be boated for the formation of the second level; and thus the work of extension from an old canal will proceed with uniform steadiness, dispatch and cheapness, until the last level is completed.

Another important advantage attending the extension of an old canal is this—a superintendant establishment in all its necessary gradations, from directors and engineers, down to clerks and lock-keepers, for the regulation of trade and passage boats, is already constructed, the unavoidable defects and errors of every new undertaking have been seen and remedied, and the extension is conducted and managed from its very commencement, with all the advantages of past experience, and with the important saving, under the head of management, of at least five thousand pounds a year, as contrasted with the expenditure of a new canal. The former will require but a few additional lock-keepers, the latter must be conducted by a distinct and burthensome establishment, which could not cost less for a line of from fifty to one hundred miles in length, than the sum already mentioned. In proof of this position, it is well known, that the same establishment which manages the main trunk of the Grand Canal from Dublin to the Shannon, a space of sixty-three miles, is fully competent, with the addition of a few lock-keepers and local

collectors, to regulate and superintend the off-branches from Lowtown to Athy, about four and twenty miles in length, and from Sallins to Naas and Corbally, which is about six miles, and would no doubt be also competent to conduct any new branches which might be made from Monastereven to Roscrea, Cashel and Clonmel, or from Philipstown to Athlone or Limerick, or from Shannon Harbour to Banagher or Ballinasloe, which extensions have been much spoken of, and are said to have been in the serious contemplation of the Directors General.

The principal objection which may be made to extensions, in preference to new canals, is, that the supply of water on the summit levels, or on the level from which the extension should be made, might fail, and prove insufficient for the use of the old canal and the new extensions, but I can speak confidently from my own knowledge as to the Grand Canal, and from information on which I can rely as to the Royal Canal, that the supplies of water from the summit level of these canals, would be amply sufficient for the old canals, and the new extensions, however numerons or prolonged they might be.

It is a fact beyond doubt or controversy, that the waters which now flow into the upper levels of the Grand Canal, would furnish a supply quite abundant enough for any possible encrease of trade on the old canal, or on any present or future off-branches, *independent* of the practicability, at any time, of lowering the summit level, which measure would introduce, absolutely inexhaustible streams of water, particularly the Philipstown river, which at present flows across the canal, and it could be effected at an expense of less than eighty thousand pounds.—The present summit level is about six miles long, and by sinking it sixteen feet, there would be got rid, of two descending locks on the Athy branch, and

of two ascending and two descending locks on the main branch to the Shannon; besides securing, as I have already mentioned, a supply of unlimited quantities of water flowing into a grand summit level, upwards of twenty-seven miles in length, without a lock.

Thus the summit levels of our two great canals, could be made the main trunks of off branches, extending in all directions through the north, south, and west of Ireland, at a much cheaper rate, and with vastly superior advantages, to the cutting of separate canals from the metropolis to the principal towns of Ireland, or from one town to another, or even joining one great lake with another.

If you should deem these observations, upon the comparative merit of extensions and of new canals, worthy of insertion, I shall take an opportunity, at a future time, to consider what specific extensions could be made with advantage to the public, and a reasonable profit to the undertakers, and likely to meet the views of our government; who are, I believe, sincerely desirous to promote the civilization and improvement of the interior of Ireland, to supply the increasing agricultural wants of Great Britain, and provide employment for our superabundant population.

Your's, &c.

J. D.

12th January, 1819.

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LETTER II.

To the Editor of Carrick's Morning Post.

SIR,

HAVING in my former letter, of the 12th instant, detailed strong reasons for preferring extensions of the old to the formation of new canals, I shall now enter into a consideration of those proposed extensions which have been regularly surveyed and estimated, and the comparative advantages of each, with a view to the avowed objects of the Irish government, viz. the employment of the poor, the supply of Great Britain, and the general civilization and improvement of the country.

I shall first lay before you the principal proposed lines of extension from the Grand and Royal Canals, and I shall afterwards enter into the most important, because it is the financial part of the subject, and shall shew in what manner the money may be raised for the accomplishment of these extensions, with very little further assistance from the public than the customary grant of one-third of the estimate, and with very considerable profit to the undertakers, and benefit to the empire.

To make a canal or an extension productive of profit to the undertakers, and give it a decided advantage over land carriage by drays, it should be of very considerable length, and should connect the metropolis with one or more considerable market towns, situated in fertile and populous districts; or near collieries, iron mines, or ponderous material for manufactures. It is obvious, therefore, that the most productive extensions for the Grand Canal, would be from *Monastereven* to the towns

of Portarlington, Mountmellick, (adding a short off-branch to Maryborough) Mountrath, Burris-in-Ossory, Roscrea, Cashel, Caher, Clonmel, and *Carrick*-on-Suir, which river is navigable from thence to Waterford; and from this line to make two principal off-branches, one setting out from near Mountrath, and terminating in the heart of the *Colliery District at Castlecomer*, in Kilkenny; and the other setting out from Roscrea, and terminating near the opulent and commercial *City of Limerick.*

Other extensions have been also surveyed and estimated, particularly from Athy to Kilkenny, from Shannon Harbour to Banagher, and from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe; which lines would no doubt produce a surplus of profit, after defraying the interest of the money expended, *provided the expenses of management were saved*, by their being made and conducted by the Grand Canal Company, or by the Directors General, or any other pre-existing board. But as *the great southern extension above described*, from Monastereven to Carrick-on-Suir, with its ramifications, would pass through all the exuberantly fertile districts of the south of Ireland, touch at the extensive coal and culm districts of Doonane and Castlecomer, in Kilkenny, and of Slieve Ardagh, Killenaule and Cashel, in Tipperary, and terminate at Limerick, near the immense quarries of slate, and mines of silver, lead and copper, it merits a very decided preference. The corn of Limerick and Clonmel, and of the intervening counties, would be transported through Dublin *to Liverpool*, and the manufactures and hardware of Scotland and the north and centre of England, would be sent in return cargoes to *Limerick* and the south of Ireland, without the circuity and uncertainty of a long sea voyage.

It is the great misfortune of the main trunk of the Grand Canal, that it passes through districts for the most part

boggy and barren, and the traders and passengers would be dreadfully disappointed upon finding themselves and their cargoes at the termination of the Grand Canal, *in the wretched village of Shannon Harbour*, without decent accommodation or entertainment of any kind, and without regular or well-appointed means of further conveyance for themselves or their merchandize, with the exception of a stage-coach to Ballinasloe, which was set up by the Grand Canal Company, and until lately supported by their bounty. The sterility of the greatest part of the adjacent country, is an evil which perhaps can never be effectually mitigated, unless by manure to be obtained by extensions; but useful terminations of the canal, with abundance of all necessary accommodations, might be easily obtained by an off-branch of two miles to Banagher, and of ten miles to Ballinasloe.

On the other hand, it is the extraordinary good fortune of that main trunk, to cross the centre of Ireland, and to pass through a well-watered country, with such an unparalleled command of supplies for its summit level, that it seems as if it was purposely laid out with an ulterior view to the making of extensions to the south and west.

The great southern extension I have above-mentioned, is not a visionary speculation, arising from a transient glance over the map of Ireland, it is a project which has engaged the attention of very able men, and appears to have been approved of by a committee of the house of commons, in 1813, after a deliberate and careful examination of plans and estimates, prepared by an eminent engineer, employed by the Directors-General, and perfectly acquainted with the course of the country and the details of the execution of Irish canals. The particulars are stated in Mr. Killaly's report to the Directors-General, dated the 31st of August, 1811; but I mean *to confine myself for the present to the extension from Monas-*

terevan to Roscrea, and from Roscrea to Cashel, because this extension is recommended by so many powerful considerations; and promises not only final but *immediate* results, of the most decidedly beneficial nature.

As it may be of considerable service to the cause of Inland Navigation at the present period, to lay before the Public, through the medium of your extensively circulating Paper, the leading details of that extension, I beg leave to conclude my present letter with the plan, opinions and estimate, of Mr. Killaly, upon that subject:

" The proposed Southern extension departs from the head of the 25th Lock, at Monasterevan, and crosses the Barrow at that place, with an aqueduct of five 30 feet arches, it proceeds with favourable cutting from thence towards *Portarlington*, and passes near the south end of that town, with an ascent of two locks from Monasterevan; from thence to *Mountmellick* there are two more ascending locks, and the Treeogue river is crossed about one mile short of that town, with a small aqueduct and embankment.

" From Mountmelick the line proceeds to Clonsaughey, where it crosses the new road from Mountmellick to Maryborough, with the ninth ascending lock, distant eleven miles and a quarter from Monasterevan. From Clonsaughey the line keeps near the high road to the lands of Clourehur, from which an off branch may be cut on the same level to the town of *Maryborough*, of one mile and a half in length.

" The line proceeds from Clourehur, crossing the mail-coach road near Clonenagh Church, and re-crosses that road in its course to Mountrath, and passes the river at the north end of that town with a moderate sized aqueduct and embankment, and proceeds to the cross roads of Mundrehid, a little beyond which, in the lands of Clononan, the line approaches within three quarters of a mile of the town of *Burros-in-Ossory;* it proceeds thence, without difficulty, to the bog of Monahinch, and passes by the loughs in that bog to the County bounds, from whence an off branch may be

cut on the same level to the town of *Roscrea*, distant one mile and three quarters.

" From the County bounds, the line runs to the high road at Derrymore, where the sixteenth ascending lock is to be placed, *terminating a level from the sixteenth lock of near seventeen miles;* the country from thence to Gurtnagowna rises so quickly as to require an ascent of five more locks in the distance of three miles, making twenty-one locks in all from Monasterevan.

" The *summit level* now commences, and proceeds through Gurtnagowna, with three-fourths of a mile of sinking from six to thirty-three feet in depth, a large portion of which is bog, and its excavation consequently cheap. This ridge separates the waters of the Nore from the Suir, and the extra sinking through it is amply compensated by the saving of locks, and the facility with which supplies of water (that would otherwise be too low) may be conveyed into the summit level. After passing Gurtnagowna, the line proceeds without difficulty through the lands and bog of Dromard, runs near to Mr. Lidwell's house, and from thence through Long Orchard to Crana, where it is distant two miles and a half from the town of *Templemore*. From Crana it proceeds on until it crosses the mail-coach road in the lands of Leagh, passes close to the old Church on those lands, and across the bog to the road from Thurles to Killenaul—*at Killenaul, the line is but two miles distant from Slieve Ardagh colliery*, towards which an off branch of one mile and a quarter may be carried at a small expense, particularly as a supply drain should be made in this direction, in order to bring in a considerable stream of water from Lanespark and Killeen. A little short of the road already mentioned, the line approaches within a mile of the town of *Littleton*, and is five miles distant from the town of *Thurles*, in the lands of Lisheen; it then passes on to the bog of Gralla, *where the summit level, twenty-four miles in length, terminates.*

" The line then proceeds through the lands of Gralla, and thenceforward until it crosses the mail-coach road, with the twenty-seventh lock, near the Castle of Gurtnakellis—from thence it proceeds through the lands of Ballypadeen and

Dean's Grove to the twenty-ninth lock, distant about 80 perches from the Charter School of *Cashel.*"

Mr. Killaly annexed to his Report the following short but important observations:—

" From Monasterevan to Roscrea, though the line runs through or near *a well cultivated country*, I conceive a material increase on tillage would take place, *from the facility and cheapness with which lime and other manures suitable to the soil might be transported, and the produce conveyed to Market,* besides it would open a very desirable intercourse between the Metropolis and the following populous towns, viz. Portarlington, Mountmellick, Maryborough, Montrath, Burros-in-Ossory, and Roscrea. *A branch of this last town is very inviting, as forming part of a practicable line of Navigation to Nenagh and Limerick.* I should observe that the cotton business is carried on extensively at Montrath and Mountmellick, and potteries on a small scale are established in the neighbourhood of the latter.

" From Roscrea to Cashel, the line approaches within a moderate distance of Templemore, Thurles, Killenaul, and Urlingford, and though it runs chiefly through bog and moor, its neighbourhood holds out strong inducements for navigation, as *on the west lies a country abounding in grain,* and a short distance *to the eastward are the Slieve Ardagh Collieries,* where I am informed, there is an inexhaustible vein of coal and culm; the trade in which, particularly the latter, would be immense, as the passion for liming the ground is so prevalent, that in parts of the country remote from the Colliery, *where nothing but culm is used in burning lime,* I understand it is by no means unfrequent to put from one hundred to one hundred and sixty barrels of lime to an acre, and to repeat this every fourth year.

" To Cashel the line would be peculiarly beneficial, *both in respect to water and fuel, the first of which the town is nearly destitute of, and the great price of the latter amounts nearly to a prohibition of its use with the lower order of the inhabitants.*

" The whole of the country, with very little exception, through which the line would pass, abounds in limestone and manuring gravel.

" In addition to the benefits I have stated as likely to result from the proposed line, I beg leave to add, the service it would render the Kingdom in general, by affording a safe and speedy conveyance for troops, military stores, &c. &c. and a cheap and comfortable mode of travelling in its passage boats. *The employment given to the labouring poor in the execution of the works, would increase their comforts, diffuse a spirit of industry among them, and tend strongly to turn their thoughts from vicious pursuits;* besides, this line would scarcely interfere with any existing navigation.

" An ample supply of water may be obtained for the summit of the extension, from the variety of the streams now floating into the Nore and Suir, and the small falls of the upper locks are suited to make the draught on the summit as light as possible. The Maryborough river will afford sufficient water for the line below it to Monasterevan, and the Deltom and Tonet rivers will be found ample for opening a navigation to Roscrea.

GENERAL ESTIMATE.

15 Locks from Monasterevan to near Roscrea, twenty-nine miles, ...	£181,124 0 1
13 —— from near Roscrea to near Cashel, thirty-two miles, ...	187,876 11 10
	£369,000 11 11

OFF BRANCHES.

To Maryborough, one mile and a half, ...	£7,200 0 0	
To Roscrea, one mile and three quarters, ...	7,800 0 0	—15,000 0 0
The entire expense of a line of Navigation from Monastereven to Cashel, a distance of 64¼ miles (including the off branches) with 28 locks, would amount to about		384,000 11 11"

After this dry, but I hope not unnecessary detail, I again must request your particular attention to the words of Mr. Killaly: "The employment given to the labouring poor, "in the execution of the works, would increase their com- "forts, diffuse a spirit of industry amongst them, and "tend strongly to turn their thoughts from vicious pur- "suits."

Such were the sentiments of an honest and intelligent servant of the government, deliberately, but delicately, reporting his opinion upon the merits of the extension from Monasterevan to Cashel, in the year 1810: he considered the extension as a remedy for illicit distillation, because it provided new and distant markets for the surplus corn of the country—and as a remedy for illegal combinations against tithes, rents, and the administration of justice, because it increased and secured a demand for yearly labourers, comfortably housed, clothed and fed; and substituted the peaceful and settled pursuits of agriculturists, for the lawless habits of roving, ragged, and half-employed day labourers.

Have any circumstances occurred since that period to weaken his opinion? How many have occurred to confirm it? *Let the events of* 1815 *and* 1816 *answer these serious questions.* Illicit distillations; illegal combinations on the part of an ignorant, idle, turbulent, and starving peasantry; Insurrection and Police Acts; detachments of military thickly scattered through these valuable and fertile districts; still fines and distresses, on the part of the Government and the Revenue—all prove the necessity of a change of system, and enforce the policy of the extension I beg leave to recommend.

Yours, &c.

J. D.

January 23, 1819.

LETTER III.

To the Editor of Carrick's Morning Post.

SIR,

IN my letter of the 23d instant, I laid before you a detail of the first part of the southern extension, namely, from Monasterevan to Roscrea, and from thence to Cashel, running a course of 64¼ miles, furnishing the means of a most beneficial interchange of the culm of one district for the limestone of another; requiring but twenty-eight locks; possessing a fine level of seventeen miles in length, and an inexhaustible summit level, twenty-four miles long; and recommended by those powerful reasons of a public nature, which I have given in the words of that eminent man, who was specially entrusted by the Directors General with an inquiry into its merits, practicability, and expense.

Mr. Killaly does not, however, mention the time which this extension would require, but if I am to judge by the celerity with which the extension of the Grand Canal from Tullamore to Shannon Harbour was completed, I should apprehend, that by the employment of different parties of workmen at different places, it could be readily finished to Roscrea, in two years and a half; and to Cashel in two years more.

While I give this extension the preference and priority to all others, I am fully sensible of the immediate advantages to the public, and return of profit to the undertakers, which would be derived from an extension from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe, and from Shannon Harbour to Banagher.

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In December, 1808, Mr. Killaly made an estimate of a canal from the river Shannon, opposite Shannon Harbour, to Ballinasloe, distance ten miles, with two locks, for £46,415, to which should be added about £3,585, for a narrow track-way bridge across the Shannon, making in all about £50,000. He also made a plan and estimate of a water communication with but one lock, between Ballinasloe and Shannon Harbour, partly by a canal from Ballinasloe to Tolrushford, and partly by the rivers Suck and Shannon, which would cost but £12,489. The latter plan, however, has been justly abandoned, as the experience of the Barrow and Shannon navigations has proved, that it is "wasteful economy" to prefer a river to a still-water navigation.

The expense of making canals (including locks) has generally averaged five thousand pounds a mile, it is therefore evident that the Ballinasloe extension of ten miles is not an expensive one; it proceeds principally through bog, consequently the cutting, though with considerable depths, is easy and cheap, and it would require but two locks, one of which would be principally serviceable to protect the strong natural embankments of the canal, from occasional floods of the Shannon; and a short but very useful cut of communication between the canal and the Suck, at its confluence with the Shannon, would enable the Shannon trade-boats, by passing into this canal and through the cut, to evade the stony and dangerous parts of the Shannon, between Shannon Harbour and Shannon-bridge.

It was apprehended by some, that the Shannon would, by its wintry floods, injure the banks of the proposed canals, but these fears are without foundation, because the canal is cut with a continued deep sinking of twelve feet at an average; and the bottom of the canal is two feet above the ordinary surface level of the Shannon, and of course, the banks are fourteen feet above that level,

and eight feet above the highest inundation level of the Shannon.

This extension to Ballinasloe, which is in the heart of Connaught, would give a finish to the Grand Canal, by providing it with a handsome, respectable, and commodious termination, and would operate as a permanent tap-drain and means of improvement, to above 7000 acres of bog, as detailed in the Report of the Committee for the drainage of bogs in Ireland. Roads branching in every direction through Connaught, would bring crowds of passengers to and from the Ballinasloe Canal, and the Stores and Hotels of that town would furnish traders with every desirable accommodation.

The country directly between the Shannon and Ballinasloe, is certainly of little present productive value; but the country beyond and round the town, is abundantly fertile, and could send large quantities of corn, linen-yarn, and wool, and numerous boat loads of live cattle to the metropolis, for home consumption, and for export to Great Britain. Employment would be given to a distressed but inoffensive and meritorious peasantry; a large distillery would soon be established in Ballinasloe, and perhaps provision stores, for slaughtering and salting beef for the British Navy; with cooperages, tan-yards, &c. &c. a demand for corn would increase, rents would be paid, taxes would be collected, *illicit distillation* would be checked by legitimate demands for corn; and that province, hitherto so much neglected, would receive a strong and sudden impulse, spreading from its heart to its extremities with the speed of electricity, and alike favourable to its moral health and its political prosperity.

The short line of two miles from Shannon Harbour to Banagher at an expence of eight thousand pounds, with two locks, would be attended with advantages similar in their nature, but unequal in their extent to those which would result from the extension to Ballinasloe.

If the Irish Government should decline to adopt these important and inviting lines " to Cashel and to Ballinasloe, or one of them," it is in vain to expect that any other line will be attempted; I shall, therefore, neither trespass on your time, nor waste my own, in entering upon the details of the ramifications of the Cashel extensions to Kilkenny, to Cahir and Clonmel, to Tipperary and Limerick—and the fineness and great extent of their levels—but conclude for the present, with a short view of such extensions as have been contemplated from the Royal Canal into the North of Ireland, holding steadily in view the principle laid down in my first Letter, " that no extension can be now frugally and advantageously conducted, unless the expenses of superintendant management be saved by a connection with the establishment of a pre-existing Canal.

The proposed extension of the Royal Canal to Lough Erne, and from Lough Erne to Lough Neagh, and the adjacent coal districts, sets out from Thomastown, a little beyond the 20th ascending lock, about thirty miles from Dublin, and proceeds by Killough, through a level of near eleven miles, to Dirnegarrah, it then passes through five descending locks to near Castle Pollard, and thence to Culdony, which is 21½ miles from Thomastown; it then passes within two miles of Granard to Purtanure, eight miles, with one descending lock, and from thence to Killishandra about eleven miles, with five descending locks, and from thence by Belturbet to the 14th lock, which opens into Lough Erne.

ESTIMATE.

Miles.				
21½	From Thomastown to Culdony,	£128,000	0	0
8	From Culdony to Purtanure,	72,000	0	0
18	From Purtanure to Lough Erne,	110,000	0	0
47½	Miles, with 14 Locks, will cost	£310,000	0	0

This extension passes through an improving and well watered country, to the extensive and fertile banks of Lough Erne, and would materially facilitate the carriage of corn and yarn to Dublin, and the sale of British manufactures in return.

From Lough Erne it has been proposed to insulate the North and North West of Ireland, by prolonging this extension from Lough Erne, at Belturbet, to the old Tyrone navigation, which communicates by the river Black Water with Lough Neagh. This prolongation would be about 45 miles long, and cost about £225,000, passing a little to the Northward of Clones, Monaghan, and Armagh, through manufacturing districts, for the most part fertile and populous. From the Tyrone navigation at present, boats may pass through part of Lough Neagh, and proceed either by the Bann Canal to Newry, or by the Lagan Canal to Belfast. Not having seen the plan and estimate of this prolongation, I am unable to be as exact in my details as I could wish.

If these extensions were complete, the Royal Canal would be the medium of conveying the iron and coals of Leitrim, as well as the coals of Dungannon, to the Dublin market; and all the general and well-known advantages of Inland Navigation would be powerfully felt in all these districts, and would soon display themselves in industry, wealth, comfort, and subordination: and further extensions might be progressively made across the upper part of Connaught, from Tarmonbarry to the improving town of Westport, on the shores of the Atlantic.

The summit level of the Royal Canal being 322 feet above the level of the sea, and 43 feet 9 inches above the summit level of the Grand Canal, is not so favourably circumstanced as the latter for receiving the streams of the adjacent country, but fortunately Lough Owel, from its high elevation, and capacious basin, will always furnish a sufficient supply to the Royal Canal for the present, and probable future demand of its trade and passage

boats, and even for the proposed extension from Thomastown to Lough Erne.

In common with the Grand Canal, it is the misfortune of the Royal Canal, to have a most unsuitable and incommodious termination: it enters the Shannon near the junction of the Camlin with the Shannon, and before a trader or passenger can get to a place of refreshment or accommodation, he must proceed near a mile along the Shannon, and cross the bridge of Tarmonbarry, to arrive at that inconsiderable little village, which is situate on the western bank of the river.

These inconveniencies however, will no doubt be gradually lessened, by the activity and talents of the new Board of Directors of the Royal Canal Company, who will feel the expediency of encouraging the establishment of a commodious hotel, and of chaises and stages to the interior of Connaught, but as yet, I have not seen any well digested plan and estimate for an extension of their Canal across that Province, to Westport or Sligo.

To the extensions I have proposed, it may perhaps be objected—"You avow one of your ultimate objects is Limerick, and would it not be more prudent to expend money in improving the Shannon Navigation, than in an extension to Roscrea and Cashel?" With great respect, I shall submit a few observations in answer to that objection.

It was the original error of Irish Canal Projectors about 50 years ago, to suppose that a Canal from Dublin to any point of the Shannon, secured, beyond a possibility of failure, a great and immediate trade with the upper and lower part of that river: They professed themselves confident, that as soon as the fortunate moment should arrive, when a Grand Canal Boat entered the Shannon at Shannon Harbour, it would float down the current to Limerick with ease and safety: or if its destination was to the North, it would be wafted against the stream, by the prevalent South western breezes, to Lough Allen and

the mines of Arigna. But painful experience has dissipated these flattering visions—the much wished for junction with the Shannon was hardly accomplished, before it was felt that the navigation of that river and its lakes, was in the highest degree difficult and unsafe; attempts which have proved nearly abortive were then made by the Directors' General to improve it: it was found that to excavate shoals, produced shallows; that the removal of rocks, produced eddies; that artificial piers and embanked trackways, were only made in summer, to be swept away in winter; that the gentle stream of the river, was in fact at O'Brien's Bridge and other places, an impetuous torrent; that the Southern breezes, so much boasted of, were squalls of the most terrific kind; and that the artificial banks of short Canals to avoid the rapids of the river, were exposed to destruction by every flood.

Above £150,000 have been expended on the Shannon, since the year 1800, "and the Shannon is yet to be subdued." The canal which winds round the Falls of Killaloe, and the Doonass canal, which communicates immediately with Limerick, after an expenditure of much more than £50,000 do not produce tolls sufficient for their maintenance and repairs, and occasion a yearly loss of above £1000 to the Directors' General. These are strong discouragements to any further large expenditures on the Shannon, in preference to the extension from Monasterevan to Roscrea and Cashel, which is easy in its execution, and certain in its profitable results.

However, many sensible men expect, that the introduction of Steam Boats on the Lakes and Currents of the Shannon, may obviate these difficulties; and a successful trial has been made by the running of a Steam Boat for passengers and parcels, between Limerick and the mouth of the Shannon at Kilrush; but the circumstances of the Shannon *above* Limerick are essentially different, and these circumstances are principally the nar-

rowness of the locks, the lowness of the bridges, and the difficulty of passing either up or down through the arches of the bridges. A Steam Boat of approved construction, with outside wheels, cannot be less than twelve feet wide in the beam, and six feet more for the two wheels, besides two feet for clearage room, (to prevent accidents to the wheels) making in all a width of twenty feet, necessary for a lock or an arch, suitable to the passage of an ordinary Steam Boat; but of the eighteen locks on the Lower Shannon, there is but one of twenty feet, two of eighteen feet, and the rest do not exceed sixteen, and some are but fifteen feet and an half; the arches of the bridge at Banagher, and of the bridge near Limerick, are too low, and the current at O'Brien's bridge, too strong for Steam Boat wheels; besides the providing of coals for the use of the steam-engine, would be a very serious drawback on the profits of the trade.

I have, however, seen the model of a boat impelled by subaquatic levers, which were projected only while in action; and could be shut close in a moment to the sides of the vessel; these impellers could be worked either by men, or machinery acted upon by steam or any other power, and I think would be adapted in every other respect to the navigation of the Shannon; but some liberal recompense would be necessary to encourage the inventor to bring his model into practical application; and there is an aversion in public boards to apply their trust funds, upon the faith of models only, and where there is not a formal guarantee, for certain and complete success.

From the reports of various committees of the house of commons on the Scotch canals and military roads, and on Irish inland navigation, within the last ten years, this extraordinary and important gradation is established beyond doubt or controversy: Scotland cannot provide local funds to pay for the making and maintaining of

its military roads and bridges, much less for the Caledonian and Lough Crinan canals. Ireland is able to provide local funds for its roads and not for its canals; but England, alone, is every where able, without any public pecuniary aid, to make and maintain all its roads and canals in a flourishing and well-appointed state; and to surmount great local difficulties from want of durable materials and sufficient supplies of water for summit levels.

This observation naturally leads me to treat of the necessity which the Irish government will feel for giving pecuniary assistance from the public purse to the extensions I have mentioned, or such of them as may appear the most expedient to adopt; and I shall enter upon that subject in my next letter, with such suggestions for providing the funds necessary for such undertakings, as appear to me to be just, simple, and effectual, and consonant to the principles which appear to have hitherto governed the Irish and Imperial legislatures.

Your's, &c.

J. D.

January 23, 1819.

Houses of the Oireachtas

LETTER IV.

To the Editor of Carrick's Morning Post.

SIR,

AT the conclusion of my letter of the 23d of January, I stated "*the disability of Ireland, from local funds,*" (whether arising from tolls, county presentments, or private subscriptious) "to provide for the making and maintaining of lines of inland navigation." This principle of our political economy, *so srange to an English statesman,* has been uniformly recognized in various reports of committees, and of the Directors General, recommending parliamentary aid; and has been repeatedly sanctioned by acts of the Irish, and even of the Imperial legislature, so late as in 1813; by which grants, equally liberal and wise, were afforded to the support of the Grand Canal Company, and the extension of the Royal Canal to the Shannon; and the 40th Geo. III. c. 51, which appointed the present board of Directors General, and allowed £500,000 to be applied, under their superintendance, to inland navigation, irresistibly proves the recognition of the above-mentioned principle.

The proportion of *Parliamentary Aid* has indeed varied. In some cases of inland navigation (such as making the Newry canal and Shannon navigation) the whole expense was defrayed by the public; in others, the one-half (as in the case of aid to the Barrow navigation); in others, (as in the case of aid to the Royal Canal in 1813) two-thirds; in others, (as in the case of aid to the Grand Canal, also in 1813) three-fourths. But the proportion

generally observed in new lines of canal, and distinctly stated so long ago as in the 29th Geo. III ch. 33, is, "*that Government shall defray one-third of the expense of making Canals, in case the Tolls be fixed upon a reduced and moderate scale.*"

A limited maximum may with propriety be adopted, but as to "*the reduction of tolls,*" it was at one time conceived, that the lower they were rated, the better for the public; and acting upon this principle, the Directors General, in the infancy of their board, recommended the reduction of the tolls, upon the Royal Canal, to so small a sum as one penny a ton per mile, and the company entered into an agreement with the Directors General to that effect. However, subsequent experience has fully proved that the excessive lowness of tolls may prevent, or at least discourage, the maintenance of a canal in a well-appointed state; and that the rates should be left to be adjusted "by the competition of rival canals, and of land carriage by drays," and in conformity to the wise and well supported suggestions of the Commissioners of Inquiry, (in their excellent thirteenth report, pages 22, 23, and 24) upon this subject. The legislature has, by the 58th of the king, chap. 35, allowed the Royal Canal Company to raise their tolls to three halfpence per ton per mile; a sum in general thought to be inadequate to the probable expense of maintaining the canal, and to a fair remuneration to the company for the care of superintendance.

The surprise which "*an English Statesman*" will feel at the principle I have before stated, recognizing the necessity of parliamentary assistance in all Irish canal concerns, will gradually cease, if he examines the peculiar state and extent of the floating capital of Ireland, applicable to canal and other mercantile speculations, and among what classes of society subscriptions could be obtained.

It cannot be expected, that "*the monied men*" resident in our cities and towns, will contribute to the making of new canals, and the extension of the old, however inviting in perspective, while the miserable failures of our two great canal speculations are fresh in their recollection, or present to their observation; and while six per cent. annual income can be safely and regularly got on mortgages, and four per cent. on government securities.

As to our "*landed proprietors,*" some of the most extensive and affluent are resident in England, or upon the Continent; forgetful of every incident connected with their country, but the punctual remittance of the expected rents: and the remainder who are resident on their native soil, are almost universally tenants for life, or in tail under wills and settlements; their expenses at least equal to their incomes, their younger children provided for by charges on their lands, and their minds, anxious, not for the future aggrandizement of the family estates, which a distant posterity may possess, but to enjoy the gratifications, and revel in the luxuries, of the present hour.

Mr. Wellesley Pole, a minister of more than ordinary talents, when he was Chief Secretary in 1812, from an early and perfect knowledge of these peculiar circumstances of his native country, readily agreed on the part of Government (pursuant to a report of the Directors General) to relieve the difficulties of the Grand Canal Company, by an aid of public money, to the amouut of £150,000; but before that agreement was sanctioned by Parliament, Mr. Peel, another very superior Statesman, became his successor in office, and guided by the opinions relative to Canals, which are prevalent in the manufacturing districts of England where his family resided, at first refused to act upon this agreement; and accustomed as he must have been, to hear and to know, of the

hundred pound shares of English Canals selling at extraordinary prices: such as those of the Grand Junction Canal selling for two hundred and fifty-three pounds; those of the Birmingham Canal for £1000; those of the Coventry for £970; those of the Leeds and Liverpool, for £325; and those of the Trent and Mersey for £1600; which are the prices we find quoted in the last London Monthly Magazine, and were probably much the same in 1813, when the high rate of Insurance gave a preference to Inland communications—he could not conceive how it was possible that Parliamentary assistance, so unnecessary in England, was indispensible to the maintenance of an Irish Canal, or why Parliament should interfere at all with what he considered a local or private mercantile concern. However, his erroneous impressions were removed, by the evidence given before the Committee of Inland Navigation, and the representations of the Irish Members of the Committee, and his judgment being convinced, "that the Public were deeply interested in the state of both the Canal Companies," he at last consented to the grant of £150,000 to the Grand Canal, upon the conditions which are mentioned in the 53d of the King, chap. 143, and which are the same in substance as those before prescribed by Mr. Pole in his letter to the Grand Canal Company, dated the 13th of April, 1812.

Having established, by my reference to the very able report of the Commissioners of Enquiry, "the folly and inefficacy of reducing Tolls beyond a certain limit," and by my reference to Parliamentary proceedings, and the actual circumstances of Irish landed and personal property, "the sound policy and established practice of giving a Parliamentary aid *of at least one-third* of the estimate, to the formation of all new Canals," and, of course, to my proposed lines from Monasterevan to Roscrea and Cashel, and from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe, I

will proceed to consider, in my next Letter, what is the readiest mode of raising "the remaining two-thirds," and of securing their repayment with interest, at 4 per cent. which is about the present interest derivable from Government securities.

Yours, &c.

J. D.

February 17, 1819.

House of the Oireachtas

LETTER V.

To the Editor of Carrick's Morning Post.

SIR,

I HAVE already stated, that an able and honest engineer has estimated the expense of a Canal Extension from Monasterevan to Roscrea, and from Roscrea to Cashel, in round numbers, at £384,000, and from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe, at £50,000, in all, £434,000; and I have proved, that pursuant to the 29th of Geo. 3. ch. 33, (without entering into the obvious motives of public policy, which dictated this salutary encouragement,) the Irish Government is pledged to defray, at least, one third of that estimate—namely, £144,666; and presuming that the question of public policy, as to the absolute payment of one-third, is set at rest by that Act of Parliament which is expressly entitled "an Act for the promotion and encouragement of Inland Navigation," it only remains for me to shew, first, that if Government, after engaging to contribute the established bounty of one-third, could be induced to make a further advance of the remaining two-thirds, viz. £289,333 6s. 8d. as a Loan upon the credit of the future tolls and profits, to be produced by the new extension, with a collateral and ultimate security of Grand Jury Cesses, to be raised in the counties through which the extensions pass, there would be ample securities for the repayment of the principal of such advance of two-thirds, within a reasonable period, with interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, the rate at which money is now raised by Government.

And secondly, that it is the policy and the interest of

the Irish Government to make such a Loan of the remaining two-thirds, viz. £289,333 upon the like terms, and in the same manner as advances are made by Government for various county local purposes of great public benefit no doubt, but still of much inferior importance to that of the proposed extensions; and it is obviously just, that the Grand Juries should furnish such collateral security as I have proposed, because the counties through which the extensions pass are not only directly benefited by the cheap conveyance of their produce, and of coals and lime, but also indirectly, by lessening County Cesses, for roads and the repair of roads.

I feel great diffidence in entering upon ground hitherto untrodden; but I am encouraged by a conviction of the strong, and, I conceive, the unanswerable arguments, which shew that the advance of the remaining two-thirds would be amply secured, and finally repaid.

No doubt I cannot furnish upon this topic, such mathematical certainty as demonstrates, that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones, nor such physical certainty as satisfies mankind, that the sun which rose every morning, for centuries past, will rise on to-morrow; but I will furnish such moral certainty as has regulated, and always will govern, statesmen and individuals, in the ordinary speculations of public and private life, and as is clearly sufficient to authorise the advance and loan on the part of Government, of the £289,333 upon the probable profits of the proposed extension of 64 miles to Cashel, and 10 miles to Ballinasloe, strengthened with the collateral security of Grand Jury Cesses, in the very remote contingency of an inadequacy of surplus profits to pay the interest and reduce the principal of such loan.

I reason thus—the Grand Canal, from Dublin to Shannon Harbour, is sixty-one miles and a half, and its great off-branch to Athy is twenty-two miles and a half, making in all a length of eighty-four miles: and upon inspecting the printed and attested accounts of that well-con-

ducted establishment, it appears that on an average of the last four years, (which are far from being the most favourable) ending the 31st day of August, 1818;—

The net produce from Tolls on Trade Boats, and the net profits from Passage Boats, amounted to the annual sum of				£46,171	0 0
From which deducting the ordinary average expenditure for repairing and preserving the Canal, which is about £50 per mile, ...	£4,200	0	0		
And the expenditure to Collectors & Lock-keepers amounting to about £25 a mile, ...	2,100	0	0		
				6,300	0 0
There will remain (exclusive of the expense of central management in Dublin) an average annual profit upon eighty-four miles of Canal, of				39,871	0 0

And such profit would now afford a handsome remuneration to the proprietors, but for large improvident expenditures, upon splendid but unproductive floating docks, the circular line about Dublin, &c. &c. which have loaded their establishment with a debt difficult to discharge.

Now, as the expense of management will be saved on the proposed extensions to Cashel and Ballinasloe, which will pass through districts, certainly not inferior in fertility, passengers, or minerals, to the existing lines to Athy and Shannon Harbour, it is as certain as the rule of three can make any numerical proposition—that if eighty-four miles of canal to Athy and Shannon Harbour, produce a gross profit of £46,171, the proposed extension of sixty-four miles from Monasterevan to Cashel, (when completed) will produce £35,177 13s. 4d. and that of ten miles from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe (when completed) will produce £5,496 14s. 0d.

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Making a total income from both, of ...		£40,674	7 4
From which deducting expenditure for repairs, and collectors, and lock-keepers, £75 per mile for seventy-four miles, ...	5,550	0	0
There will remain a surplus profit of about		£35,124	7 4

It has been already stated, that the estimated cost of both these extensions will be £434,000, from which deducting the established parliamentary bounty, under the 29th of the King, of £144,666 13s. 4d. there will remain the proposed loan from government of £289,333 6s. 8d.—for the payment of the interest of which loan, at 4 per cent. (the present rate of government securities) and the repayment of the principal by a sinking fund, the surplus profits of the respective extensions are to be applied,

And as these profits will amount, after the completion of the works, as has been already shewn, to the sum of		£35,124	7 4
And the 4 per cent. interest on £289,333 6s. 8d. is		11,573	0 0
There should be a balance of profit of ...		£23,551	7 4
But deducting as an ample annual allowance for the superiority of river terminations over those at towns, ...	£,2000 0 0		
And for the utmost possible annual average deficiency of profits, during the making and the first years of the extensions, ...	5,551 7 4		
		11,551	7 4
There will arise a progressively encreasing sinking fund of at least		£12,000	0 0

Which sinking fund would amount to more than the annual interest of the loan, and would in twen-

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ty years, not only make good the deficit of interest during the formation of the extensions, but completely discharge the principal of the loan, and after such discharge, become applicable to the other proposed new extensions, upon a similar systematic plan.

Upon the most careful examination of the subject, I cannot perceive any fallacy or error in this account, as I have made ample allowances for the only two material objections which might be raised to my calculations, namely, the great superiority in point of trade which the very valuable assistance of the Barrow, and the small but increasing assistance of the Shannon, give to the Grand Canal, as compared with the proposed extensions terminating in towns; and secondly, the possible deficiency of profits which might arise on those new extensions, while their trade was advancing to maturity and vigour.

It must be observed, that while I propose the payment of £144,666 as a bounty, and the advance of £289,333 as a loan, it is by no means necessary, that the payment of either, should be made at the commencement of the extensions; no extraordinary hurry need be used; the embankments would be firmer, in proportion to the slowness of their formations; about £60,000 advanced in each year, would, on an average, be quite sufficient to complete the canal to Ballinasloe in one year, and that to Cashel in seven years and a quarter; and government, in advancing the £60,000 would, in fact, have only to provide for an absolute advance of one-third, viz £20,000, and the temporary advance of four per cent. interest on the two-thirds, viz. £1,600—*that is to say, only* £21,600 0s. 0d. *in each year, for seven years and a quarter.*

The first extension, to Roscrea or to Ballinasloe, would be scarcely finished before it would be in a state of most productive activity, and contribute fully to the payment of the interest on the two-thirds expended; the boats

and opulent traders of the Grand Canal would immediately enter upon the extensions; the old trading establishments of the Grand Canal would soon diffuse animation amongst the markets connected with the new line; and the immense surplus products of Galway, or of Tipperary and Limerick, above home consumption, would be transported at a cheap rate, and, in a few days, to the port of Liverpool.

For many years previous to the Union, the Irish government were led to the encouragement of canals, *for the supply of Dublin, and getting rid of the old corn bounties*; but since the Union, still stronger and more extended motives of policy dictated their encouragement, *for the supply of Great Britain, and getting rid of foreign importations.*—If the expenditure of £144,666, as a bounty upon a canal navigation of sixty-four miles to Cashel, and ten miles to Ballinasloe, (I talk not now of the two-thirds, for they will be repaid) should stimulate the tillage of Ireland to the additional production of a million's worth of corn; and facilitate the transport of that corn from Ireland to England, which would otherwise be imported from the Continent; it is evident, that the empire would gain two milions—one million in point of saving, and one in point of additional production. The Imperial legislature is, therefore, more forcibly called upon to contribute one-third of a new canal, in 1819, than the Irish legislature was in 1789.

By vesting the management of the proposed extension, (subject of course to the controul of the Directors-General, and the Commissioners of Imprest Accounts) in the Board of Directors of the Grand Canal, a saving of a superintendant establishment, which would cost £5000 a year, (as stated in my first letter) would be made, and that board would be compensated for their trouble, by the increase of trade upon their original canal, and cheerfully undertake this task, to which their

knowledge and long experience make them fully competent.

As soon as the principal and interest of the loan from government shall have been discharged by the surplus profits, they should be applied, upon such terms as should be consistent with the 29th of the King, the report of the Commissioners of Enquiry, and the leading principles I have mentioned, to prolong extensions from Cashel to Cahir and Carrick-on-Suir, and from Cashel to Tipperary and Limerick, and thus at a comparatively inconsiderable expense to the government, the products of all the fertile districts of Munster would be brought into the western districts of England, and the manufacturers of Great Britain be rendered for ever independent of the Continent, for the primary articles of subsistence.

The *American farmer*, as we are informed by a popular writer, whose testimony on such a subject is indisputable, cannot in any way make, or gather manure sufficient for his extensive tracts of arable land—he feels little want of inland navigation, for he can send by water conveyance, the corn of Pittsburgh, and the remote countries bordering on the Missouri, Ohio, and Mississippi, to any part of Europe.

The *Continental farmer*, supplies the depots of factors at the mouths of the Vistula, the Elbe, the Rhine, and the Scheldt. His soil is fertile, and sufficiently manured —he feels no anxiety, but about the state of the corn market at London, Lisbon, and Cadiz.

The report of the Committee upon our Corn Laws in 1814, presents us with the following very interesting facts upon this important subject:—

" France, in common years, produces wheat fully adequate to her consumption, but Great Britain, on the contrary, has been for many years habitually and extensively dependent on a foreign supply, and her demand has borne so large a proportion to that of other countries, that the

Baltic prices are principally governed by those of the British market."

It further states, in the following very guarded terms, a fact, which no doubt is true, and if true should rouse the indignation of the British people, and make the encouragement of Irish Canals, and domestic agriculture, a measure, not only of national policy, but of national pride:—" A considerable duty appears to be levied on all corn exported from the Baltic, and this duty has been greatly increased on some occasions, when the wants of Great Britain were most pressing."

How long is this humiliating state of things to continue? How long is Great Britain not only to send her specie for the purchase of foreign corn, and the emolument of foreign farmers, but suffer herself to be made tributary to the Governments of foreign countries, for their great kindness in permitting her to receive her subsistence at prices proportioned, not to the value of the corn in the hands of the Continental grower, but to the degree of British necessity and distress?

The *English farmer* creates a superabundance of manure, by the artificial feeding of his live stock, and the numerous expedients which his attention, industry, and skill, incessantly furnish. He is sure of a ready market, and by coasting and inland navigation, finds it easy to supply the wants of the manufacturers who live in the more populous, but less productive parts of the kingdom. His only complaints are, that the taxes are heavy, the prices of labour high, and that the influx of foreign corn, when permitted by the law, will always keep his profits within a fixed, and perhaps too low a standard.

But the *Irish farmer*, whose taxes are low, and farming expenditures comparatively inconsiderable, is placed in circumstances far more fortunate than those of the *American*, *Continental*, or *English farmer*; his only want is to obtain the English market, and the distribution of his superabundant manures, by inland navigation; all he

requires is, that his Government would assist, by the proposed lines of Canal, the interchange of culm and limestone from one part of the country to another, and the conveyance of corn from every part to Dublin: these articles lie in different, but not very distant places. There is no manure so powerful and durable for low situated lands as that of lime, and limestone is never so cheaply calcined as by a fire of culm. The small bogs of Ireland are generally abundant in marl, which is known to be a manure very useful for high situated grounds; and in cases where marl does not answer the soil, nothing can be better than the refuse or upper surface of the bogs. All these articles, except the bog stuff, are extremely ponderous, and require the facility of inland navigation to make them a manure sufficiently cheap for a prudent farmer to use.

Let the British Government only furnish the very moderate assistance required for the extensions recommended, and in ten years Ireland will be the inexhaustible granary of Great Britain, and the prices of Corn in London will be regulated, not by the markets of Dantzic or Hamburgh, but by those of Liverpool and Bristol, which would then become the great emporiums of Irish Corn.

It is obvious, that these importations of Foreign Corn, always considerable, but sometimes immense, which in 1817, amounted to £6,403,893, and in 1818, to £10,908,140, must have deeply affected in those years the foreign rates of Exchange, and the market price of bullion—and it is indisputable, that in other years, such as 1815, when the importation was but £793,245, and in 1816, when it was but £942,497, Foreign Exchange was low and the price of gold below the standard; but in 1817, and 1818, when the importation was vastly greater, Foreign Exchange and the price of bullion, both rose in proportion to the imports of Corn; if this connection be satisfactorily established, and the above facts tend strongly to prove it, the British Financier will see in the depres-

sion of Irish Agriculture, the latent, but powerful cause, of the present alarming triumph of Gold over Paper, and that the general resumption of Cash payments, a subject so vitally important to the commercial and political interests of Great Britain, is intimately connected with these Canal extensions into Munster and Connaught; which would necessarily at no distant period supersede the introduction of Foreign Corn, stop the exportation of our Specie, and give stability to our Paper system, by furnishing for its basis a firm foundation of solid gold.—(See Appendix No. 2.)

Having thus shewn that the proposed bounty of one-third is a matter of legal right as well as a measure of commercial expediency; that the proposed Loan of two-thirds will be amply secured; and that great commercial benefits will arise from these extensions—it only remains to add a few observations, to shew that vast political benefits must follow, in the present circumstances of the interior of Ireland, from the introduction of those habits of industry, sobriety, and subordination to the laws, which are as surely the attendants on agricultural prosperity, as that agricultural prosperity is the certain result of inland navigation.

Arabia and Tartary, which are countries adapted for pasture and not for tillage, have, in every age, been inhabited by men fond of idleness and prone to rapine, and the want of inland navigation has always prevented their civilization and moral improvement; but the Governments of Chaldea and Egypt in ancient, and of Holland and England in modern times, by promoting inland navigation, multiplied agricultural productions, stimulated the industry, and secured the tranquillity of their people, and advanced them to the highest rank of scientific excellence and social order. China also, that singularly industrious and peaceful nation, has, for ages beyond the records of authentic chronology, been able to provide for the immense population of some hundreds of millions of inhabi-

tants, by the attention and honour which a long succession of Emperors invariably bestowed on the labours of the plough, and the steady encouragement which they gave to a vast system of inland navigation.

The husbandman, who has been fatigued during the day at his plough or his spade, feels neither ability nor inclination for nocturnal outrages or illegal combinations; and it will be found, that the White Boys, who, with savage barbarity, houghed cattle and tortured Tithe Proctors in 1776; and the Threshers, Carders, and Ribbonmen, and the other denominations who have since disturbed by their brutal atrocities so many parts of Ireland, are not the yearly labourers of the farmer, but the servants of the grazier; the half employed day-labourers, and the idle weavers; for all of whom, the progress of agriculture, and the diffusion of wealth amongst the middle orders of society, would find either constant employment, or ready means of coercion.

As to the public policy of such advances of two-thirds of the estimate, the writer deeply feels the appearance of presumption, in advancing an opinion; but at the same time he is conviuced, that the present rulers of the Empire are anxious to promote the public welfare, and willing to hear any well-intended suggestions, however warmly expressed, which an humble individual may offer for their consideration. He feels no apprehension but that, in the hurry of official business, your respectable Paper may not meet their eye; and he is unwilling to make direct communications, lest the imputation of self-interested motives, so often well, and, sometimes, so ill-founded, should throw a shade of suspicion over the system he recommends.

The Queen's County, and the Counties of Kilkenny, Tipperary, and Limerick, have for a century past, been more or less, in a state of disturbance, and insubordination to the law. The White-Boy Act of 1776, was intended to suppress disturbances which prevailed in these Counties and the districts adjacent to them. Coercive

laws, and Civil and Military power, have had so little effect, that a high official Character (whose eloquence, however transcendant, is far surpassed by his wisdom and practical good sense) publicly declared, that Tipperary had constantly been in a kind of permanent insurrection against the legitimate authority of the State; and it has, for some years past, been found necessary to enforce in large portions of these fertile districts, and at an enormous expense, far, very far exceeding the costs of a Canal, the Peace Preservation and Insurrection Acts, for the protection of the lives of Magistrates, and the habitations and properties of the loyal and well disposed inhabitants of the country.

The long sanguinary list of capital convictions at the Assizes, the yet more numerous, and perhaps more melancholy lists of sentences of transportation at the Sessions, with the acknowledged continuance of illegal practices, prove the *little efficacy* of the "Coercive System."

The heavy expenses to government, of crown prosecutions, and of having barracks and military detachments scattered throughout the country; and to the baronies, of having magistrates, and numerous officers of police; and the serious loss to the revenue, from the decreased consumption of malt and spirituous liquors; prove the *financial impolicy* of that system, unless in temporary cases of the most imperative necessity.

The hindrance to the ordinary out-business, and concerns of the farming classes of the community, after night-fall, and the suspension of the trial by jury, prove the *unconstitutional nature* of this system.

No doubt, when Mr. Peel entered into office, and the last convulsive struggles of French ambition were to be encountered and overcome upon the Continent, it was necessary to extinguish, with promptitude and energy, the combustible materials which were scattered, in mischievous profusion, through these districts; and the Insurrection Acts were measures of vital importance, and

strong, but indispensable remedies for the safety of the body politic—but that crisis, so pregnant with imminent danger to Great Britain, and of utter destruction to this ill-harmonized country, is past, and the reins of the Irish Government are now held by persons who have come into Office under happier auspices.

And here, I may be permitted to observe, that the enlightened Rulers of a Nation, so distinguished in Arts and Arms as Great Britain, never yet made a declaration so disgraceful to themselves and their system of Government, as that the population of any part of the Empire *was excessive*, and that what was a proof the health of a Nation, and ought to constitute its strength, was a disease of no common magnitude.

In such circumstances Colonization abroad, and employment at home, are, and in all ages have been, the simple and effectual remedies. When emigrations commenced in Scotland, public highways and extensive Canals were immediately projected; nearly a million of money has already been applied in making little more than the half of the Caledonian Canal, and more than a million has been applied to improve the Roads of Scotland, and encourage its Fisheries. But as to Ireland, she is still to remain a Country for which, as wise and good men have often said, "Nature has done so much, and man so little"—her active and spirited population is still to be suffered to overflow for the benefit of the American Republic, and no measure is to be adopted for her relief, but a well meant, yet very ill-considered expedient, of allowing Commissioners to lend money upon conditions and rates of interest, and sinking funds, and securities, too complex for enterprising men to understand, and too rigorous for them to accept; and, however amended and recommended by more liberal enactments, is still not sufficiently inviting to induce any man, or any Company, to prefer a loan of money from the Commissioners at five,

which Government borrows at four, and individuals would lend at six per cent; and accordingly, if report speaks truth, this measure has afforded very little relief, and will never be productive of any marked or considerable public benefit, unless it be still further amended as in the Appendix to these Letters (No. 1) is respectfully suggested, or in some other more eligible mode.

I trust I have now proved the practicability and general policy of the extension from Monasterevan to Cashel, and from Shannon Harbour to Ballinasloe, and it is obvious that all the considerations I have mentioned, apply in a greater or less degree to the other extensions which have been proposed; and I trust I have also shewn the probable inefficacy of the act for permitting the issue of £250.000 out of the Consolidated Fund; I therefore entertain an humble hope that the Irish government may refer the subject of these proposed extensions to the board of Directors General, and (if their report be favourable, as I have no doubt it will, from their known ability, and perfect knowledge of Irish Canal concerns) that such specific measures may be recommended to the Imperial Legislature, during the present session, as may be best calculated to carry these extensions progressively and systematically into full effect, and thereby give employment to the poor of Ireland, provide for ever for the supply of Great Britain, keep down foreign rates of exchange, and contribute to the general resumption of cash payments.

With many thanks to you, Sir, for your indulgence in permitting those long, and perhaps tedious Letters to appear in your very respectable paper,

I remain, your's, &c.

J. D.

March 11, 1819.

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APPENDIX—No. I.

THE financial difficulties of the country are so great, as to damp in some degree, a sanguine hope of obtaining from the public purse, even the advance of the comparatively small sum required for the principal canal extensions recommended in the preceding Letters; but as there is about £100,000 now lying undisposed of, by the Commissioners for the issue of £250,000 out of the consolidated fund for the employment of the poor, the writer, with great humility and respect, begs leave to submit to consideration, the following draft, as outlines of a bill, to amend the act appointing these Commissioners, by giving them such additional powers, as would enable them, with the concurrence of the Lord Lieutenant, to grant a part or the whole, of *that undisposed of residue*, in making the whole or part of these extensions.

An Act, to amend an Act made in the 57th year of the reign of his present Majesty, entitled, "An Act to authorise the issue of Exchequer Bills, and the advance of Money out of the Consolidated Fund, to a limited amount, for the carrying on Public Works and Fisheries in the United Kingdom, and the employment of the Poor in Great Britain in manner therein mentioned," and also to amend an Act made in the last Session of Parliament to amend the said recited Act, by further extending the powers of the Commissioners appointed for carrying the said Acts into execution in Ireland.

Whereas, an Act was made in the 57th year of his present Majesty, "to authorise the issue of Exchequer Bills, and the advance of money out of the Consolidated

Fund to a limited amount, for the carrying on Public Works and Fisheries in the United Kingdom, and the employment of the Poor in Great Britain, in manner therein mentioned," and the said Act was amended by several subsequent Acts, and particularly by an Act made in the last Session of Parliament, entitled an Act to amend two Acts, made in the last Session of Parliament, for authorising the issue of Exchequer Bills, and the advance of money for carrying on Public Works and Fisheries, and employment of the Poor, and to extend the powers of the Commissioners appointed for carrying the said Acts into execution in Ireland. And it is expedient, for the better affording employment to the labouring Poor in Ireland, that the said recited Acts shall be further amended, and the powers of the Commissioners further extended in manner herein after mentioned. Be it therefore enacted, by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that it shall and may be lawful, to and for the Commissioners, for the time being, for the execution of the said recited Acts in Ireland, by and with the approbation of the Lord Lieutenant, or other Chief Governor or Governors of Ireland for the time being, to issue grants and make any advances of money under the said recited Acts, and this Act, to make, carry on, and extend, any Inland Navigation in any part of Ireland, to be begun, made, or carried on, under the direction of any Corporation in Ireland, (or Commissioners appointed by Parliament, or by the Lord Lieutenant, or other Chief Governor or Governors of Ireland, for the time being) upon the credit and security of any surplus Rates, Rents, Tolls or Profits, after defraying the necessary expenses for repairing and maintaining such Inland Navigation, which shall or may arise, be levied, paid, and applied under the autho-

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rity or controul of any such Corporation or Commissioners so appointed, without requiring any personal or other security for the same, save as aforesaid, subject however to such rate of Interest, and such Sinking Fund, and to the furnishing of such accounts, from time to time, after the completion of such Inland Navigation, and to such provisoes and conditions as are in any of said recited Acts mentioned, save as the same are altered, amended, or repealed by the present Act.

And that from and after the issuing such grants, it shall and may be lawful, for any Corporation in Ireland, by and with such consent and approbation as aforesaid, to commence, make, and carry on, any Inland Navigation or Canal extension in any part of Ireland, for the purposes, and pursuant to the provisions of this Act; and that every such Corporation shall, from and after the issuing of such grant of any part of said Fund by the said Commissioners, be invested with all and singular such powers, privileges, advantages, and authorities, as to the valuing purchasing and holding of lands, tenements, and hereditaments, and generally as to all matters and things necessary or expedient for the purpose of making, carrying on, and maintaining such Inland Navigation, or Canal extension, as are now vested in any Canal Company, by virtue of any Act or Acts now in force in Ireland.

Houses of the Oireachtas

An account of the total Import of Foreign and Colonial Corn, Grain, Meal, and Flour, in real value, in each year, into Great Britain: Value calculated at the Average Market Prices in England and Wales.		An account of the total Value of Corn, Grain, Meal, and Flour, imported into Great Britain from Ireland, and the Isle of Man.		Aggregate Value of Grain, Imported into Great Britain.		Average Price of Wheat.	
YEARS.	AMOUNT.	YEARS.	AMOUNT.	YEARS.	AMOUNT.	YEARS.	
1813	£2,192,592 3 6	1813	£2,783,015 18 8	1813	£4,975,608 2 2	1813	£108 9 0
1814	2,815,319 4 0	1814	1,662,812 0 0	1814	4,478,131 4 0	1814	73 11 0
1815	793,243 8 11	1815	1,399,439 12 1	1815	2,192,685 1 0	1815	64 4 0
1816	942,497 19 7	1816	1,401,393 0 11	1816	2,343,891 0 6	1816	75 10 0
1817	6,403,893 10 6	1817	1,360,001 9 10	1817	7,763,895 0 4	1817	94 9 0
1818	10,908,140 2 2	1818	2,363,489 2 10	1818	13,271,629 3 0	1818	84 1 0

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Let any intelligent person compare the amount of the Imports of Corn in each quarter of the year, with the course of Foreign Exchange, the price of Bullion, and the issue of Bank notes in the next corresponding quarter of the year when the Corn was to be paid for, and he will find such a proportion established between them, as is sufficient to shew a strong and necessary connection between large imports of Corn on the one hand, and the scarcity of Specie, and the increased issue of Bank Notes on the other.

The following extracts from the second Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons upon Bank payments, (just published, viz. May 1819) throw a strong light upon this subject:—

"During the interval between July 1816, and July 1817, the market price of Gold did not exceed £3 19s. per ounce, the Exchanges with the Continent, for a very considerable portion of that period, were in favour of this Country, and there is reason to believe that Gold would have fallen to Mint price, (£3. 17s. 10½d.) had not the Bank fixed the rate at which they were willing to purchase at £3. 18s. 6d. per ounce."

"In July 1817, the Foreign Exchanges became unfavourable, and have continued so; since that period a profit has been realized on the exportation of Gold Coin, and the Bank has been subject to a constant demand for Cash payment on their Notes."

"The price of Gold has risen from £3. 18s. 6d. to £4 an ounce."

"There was, in fact, in the half year between July and December 1817, a considerable increase in the amount of Notes issued by the Bank."

In the year 1818, the gross Exports of England amounted to fifty-six millions; and her Gross Imports of Corn to more than thirteen millions; of course the imports of Corn alone, were in that year, to the whole exports, as about one to four, and must have materially affected the

balance of Trade in that year; and it is therefore clear, that of all the important subjects which engage the attention of the British Cabinet, the most pre-eminently important is, the encouragement of Tillage throughout the United Empire, but particularly in Ireland; and upon a careful examination of the subject, it cannot but also appear clear to the enlightened Statesmen of England, that the best, the surest, and even the most economical means of promoting the tillage of Ireland, providing for the various wants of its population, and supplying the corn markets of Great Britain with home produce, to the exclusion of Foreign competition, are, the proposed

CANAL EXTENSIONS IN IRELAND.

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