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GUATIMOZIN'S LETTERS
 ON THE
 PRESENT STATE
 OF
 IRELAND,
 AND THE
 RIGHT of BINDING it by BRITISH ACTS
 OF PARLIAMENT, &c.

The present alarming Disposition of the Irish Nation demands your most serious Attention. The Writings which daily appear on that Subject, particularly the excellent Letters of GUATIMOZIN, not only give a true Picture of their Distresses, but, what is much more alarming, the dangerous Doctrine of the Independence of that Kingdom to the British Parliament.

Duke of Richmond in the Debates on the Spanish Rescript.

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXIX.

THE HISTORY OF THE
 GUATIMOZIN'S LETTERS
 TO THE
 PEOPLE OF IRELAND IN GENERAL,
 AND OF THE
 CITY OF DUBLIN IN PARTICULAR.
 BY
 JOHN JOHNSON, ESQ.
 OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.
 LONDON, AND ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD, IN GREAT BRITAIN,
 PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD, IN GREAT BRITAIN,
 1793.

GUATIMOZIN'S LETTERS
 TO THE
 PEOPLE of IRELAND in general,
 AND OF THE
 CITY of DUBLIN in particular.

LETTER I.

Countrymen and Fellow-citizens,

THERE is in the affairs of nations, as of individuals, a tide, or current, which sometimes sets in towards the harbour of good fortune, and the occasion of which, being once missed, is never perhaps recalled. Such, with regard to Ireland, do I conceive the present moment to be. During a space of nearly six hundred

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hundred years that she hath been united to an unnatural sister, she has experienced nothing but adversity and opposition; insomuch that the measure of her misfortunes will not now contain another. The rapacity of England over Ireland hath received its limits in the poverty of this country; there is not left wherewithal to gratify the avarice of another Englishman, ruined at home by the luxury and dissipation of his own country. The weight of that establishment which British wantonness has increased without necessity, in this ill-fated country, must now be supported by *British resources*; for an exhausted treasury, and an universally-failing revenue, have proclaimed us unequal to the burden.

A trade limited to the exportation of a single manufacture, whilst it forbids us to profit of the most unbounded advantages, which nature, perhaps, ever bestowed on any country, binds us likewise in the necessity of consuming, even for our own use, the manufactures of our tyrants, to whom knack and universal markets have given a general superiority. It is thus that England, in the extravagance of her oppression of this kingdom, not only precludes us from the opportunities of gathering sustenance, with the other nations

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tions of Europe, from the common harvest of commerce, but she compels us, miserable as we are, to contribute largely to her profusion.

If any man shall say that this slight sketch of our condition is a *caracature*, let the thousands of starving manufacturers in our streets bear witness that the *drawing* is after nature. The misfortunes of Ireland are lamented by all her children; how comes it then that there is none will point out a remedy? Is the spirit of the nation so broken by adversity, that our feelings suggest nothing but despair? I hope not, and it is in confidence of this hope, that I mean to dedicate some hours *weekly* to this subject. If the Conductors of the Free Press will give me a corner, I intend (God willing) every Saturday to publish an essay, until I shall have roused my countrymen, universally, to a sense of their condition, or convinced myself that the expectation is vain. I will not apply the *match* to the *tinder*, which I hope lies concealed in the breast of every virtuous Irishman, before I shall have convinced his reason. My first appeal shall be to the judgment.

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That I may proceed with method, and be therefore the more easily understood by my fellow-citizens of every class, I will in this essay lay down, as ground-work, the general principles on which I mean to take up the subject; and I request that each essay may be preserved as links of the same chain.

First, I will enquire by what means any one nation may become intitled to a controul over another. Secondly, by what right England claims this authority over Ireland. Thirdly, I will endeavour to do away some objections, raised by prejudice and ignorance of the true interests of Ireland, against the expediency of our emancipation; and lastly, I will demonstrate that the present moment is the most favourable that probably we shall ever experience for doing ourselves justice.

And first, the *imperial sovereignty* of any one kingdom over another, *de jure*, is DIRECT NONSENSE. The government of a country can only be transferred two ways; by the consent of its inhabitants, or by conquest. If a nation consents to be governed, it must be under terms *stipulated*; and in this case the municipal constitution of such country

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country will be *precisely* regulated by the terms of agreement. Here it is necessary to recollect certain principles in the nature of all government—first, that no race of men can alienate, by any act of theirs, the liberty of their posterity; and again, that the delegation or transfer of power must be for the advantages of the *governed*, else it is *ipso facto* void. Thus we see that no sacrifice of the interests of one nation to those of another can exist, even by its own consent. Let us now examine the right of subordination obtained by conquest.

If the conquerors of a nation invade it *unjustly*, surely they have no claim to authority over the conquered. If a ruffian violently, with a pistol at a man's head, shall obtain a conveyance of his estate, doth such usurpation constitute right? Such exactly is the title of those who conquer *unjustly*; and it is the duty of the injured to recover their rights when they can. But the conquerors of a country have invaded it, we will suppose, to recover their violated rights; and their opposers are in the wrong; how far does this constitute a right in the *conquerors* over the liberty and property of the *conquered*? I apprehend not at all. The lives of such persons, taking up arms against
rightful

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rightful authority, may, no doubt, be fairly taken way; but their crime will not forfeit the liberty of their posterity, *which is unalienable*; nor their property, which nature appointed to sustain their unoffending children. These distinctions we shall find very necessary, when I shall in my next enquire by what right England claims controul over Ireland.

For the present, my dear countrymen, I will bid you adieu. Permit me to request that you will carefully peruse these papers. Continue the connection of reasoning from one essay to the next, and decide at last upon your own rights. If I shall be able to bring my fellow-citizens to unite in one common interest, and to pursue one scheme of obtaining redress, I shall hope that the nation will derive some advantage from the labours of

GUATIMOZIN.

16th April.

LETTER

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LETTER II.

Countrymen and Fellow-citizens,

I FIND that my letter, published last Saturday, has raised an host of opponents; who, alarmed at the consequences of investigating our *independent national rights*, as IRISHMEN, would willingly stop all enquiry, by the interposition of the single *cabalistical* word REBELLION.

The immediate effect of the discovery of the Art of Printing in Europe was the emancipation of the laity from ecclesiastical *ipse dixit*-ism, and a more remote, though not less substantial, benefit to society arose from the diffusion of political knowledge, which enabled all men of reasonable capacity to understand their civil rights; and qualified the inhabitants of *these countries in particular*, to vindicate the title of every citizen to expound the constitution;—a privilege exclusively exercised before by lawyers, who had too frequently the temptation of *leaning towards the prerogative*. Thus the circulation of knowledge produced civil and religious liberty; and hence,

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to reason inversely, may ignorance be said to be the parent of slavery.

I find that a certain Judge, for whose opinions in general I have very great respect, did yesterday, from the judgment-seat, deliver something like a declaration, that there was an *illegal tendency* in our *present efforts*;—throwing some blame on grand juries for the extent of their enquiries; and circumscribing within bounds limited by *his own explanation* of the grand jurors duty, the objects of their public attention and care.

Authorities in constitutional questions, I think, in general are dangerous; and where an authority is unsupported by *reasoning* and *facts*, I am always for rejecting it.

Grand Juries being composed of the principal men of the county, assembled twice a year for public inquest, I cannot comprehend any misfortune of the country, of a public nature, which will not constitutionally come within their investigation.—Clear I am that a *constitutional Judge* will always wish to enlarge the scene of their vigilancy.—Much mischief may arise from limiting their

their enquiry :—none, that I can see, from extending it. The bulk of the people are generally right, and particularly when they discover abuses—But these associations, it seems, in favour of our own manufactures, and in exclusion of those of Great Britain, are *illegal* combinations; and the news-papers are *seditions* for recommending and spreading them.—I will not be bound to the belief of this doctrine by the *authority of any man*.—It is the privilege of a subject, living under the British constitution, to act, to speak, and to publish every thing that is not forbidden by law; and till the illegality of combining, in favour of our own manufactures, shall be unquestionably demonstrated, I will take the liberty to reject all *assertional* doctrine upon this head, and to put my fellow-citizens on their guard against the ill-tendency of such.—Whenever any man shall be disposed to discuss the question publicly, I will enter the lists with him; nor do I think it will, in the smallest degree, lessen the dignity of any person amongst us, to defend publicly a doctrine which is intended to have a public operation. We have known a lawyer raise himself in this country to the judgment seat by the means of a *prerogative pamphlet* only:—a news-paper essay is a shorter kind of pamphlet,

phlet, and is, in my opinion, full as respectable authority for the conveyance of any doctrine.

But to come to the subject of the connection of this kingdom with England, from the investigation of which no authority shall affright me. I proved, generally, in my last letter, that no country can, *de jure*, exercise *imperial sovereignty* over another. I will now examine the *justice* of the claim of ENGLAND in particular over THIS country.

If a title to INDEPENDENCE may be derived from *antiquity*, we have the clearest preference in favour of this country, by an historical anecdote of a dispute for *precedence* at the Council of Constance, 1417, between the legates of Charles VI. of France, and those of Henry V. of England. The legates of Henry prevailed on account of the antiquity of the kingdom of Ireland, of which their master was *sovereign*. But, at this day, people require clearer proofs of independence; and those shall be established on the nature of the two kingdoms.

That the title of the King of England to the crown of Ireland is not derived from *conquest* is a question of little or no doubt. It stands, thank

thank God, upon a much *firmer basis*, THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND. But if Henry II's title had originated in *conquest*, how far does this constitute the right of jurisdiction in the British Parliament? Not at all. The Parliament of Ireland is as complete in its own jurisdiction, as is the Parliament of England; and the King of Ireland may be the King of England, King of France, or Emperor of Germany, without any prejudice to the separate jurisdiction of the Irish Parliament.

The power of conquerors is limited by certain laws, drawn from the nature of civil rights, and digested into a system called the *law of nations*; and, from the whole spirit of these it appears, that PRESERVATION, not *servitude*, is the end of conquest. A conquest may destroy *national injustice*, and lay the *conquered* under a *better* genius of government: but the law of nations, which limits the authority of conquerors, forbids that a nation be made *worse* by conquest. The definition of the right of conquest, by one of the greatest authorities extant, may not be amiss here: "It is," says Montesquieu, "a necessary, lawful, but unhappy power, which leaves the conqueror under an heavy obligation of repairing

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“ing injuries done to humanity.” In short, conquest can rightfully give a King no other advantages but an addition of subjects, whom it is his duty to protect, and who should be governed according to the principles of their own laws, or by better, with their consent. And thus were the words *superior* and *inferior*, with regard to countries connected under the same government, understood by those universal conquerors the Romans, in their virtuous days. CICERO says, lib. ii. cap. viii. de Officiis, “*Nostris autem magistratus imperatoresque ex hac unâ re maximam laudem capere studebant, si provincias, si socios æquitate et fide defendissent. Itaque illud PATROCINIUM orbis terræ verius, quam imperium, poterat nominari.*” And so the Carthaginians understood conquest; as we find in TIT. LIV. lib. xxi. cap. v. speaking of the *Olcadians*, a people of Spain reduced by Carthage, “*Ultra Iberum ea gens in PARTE magis, quam in DITIONE Carthaginensium erat.*”

If the peaceful reception of STRONGBOW into this kingdom, and the subsequent acquisition of regal authority here by Henry II. may be called conquest, we see, however, that the power of the King in Ireland cannot exceed the bounds of
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his power in England. And we shall find that the claim of the British Parliament over this country is a novel usurpation, not justified, as we see above, by any right of a conquering people, if *they* even came under this description, nor authorized, as we shall see further, by the conditions of union stipulated by the Irish, and granted to them by the first Norman Kings of Ireland. MATH. PARIS, Vit. Hen. II. informs us, that Henry, before he left Ireland, met a council of the Irish at Lismore, where, having settled the constitution of Ireland, the Irish received and swore to be governed by the laws of England. This seems to be the true cause why Henry received no opposition in Ireland. The Irish received a better government, and retained their independency; and therefore PARIS uses the expression *gratanter receptæ*, speaking of the English laws. *Giraldus Cambrensis*, who was with Henry in Ireland, informs us, that by the terms stipulated at submission, the people of Ireland were to enjoy the like liberties and immunities, and be governed by the same mild laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, as the people of England. Here is the only voluntary original compact between King and people, truly and formally authenticated, of which our history
gives

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gives an instance. We do not find that the British Parliament, or its authority, was concerned or consulted in this agreement. There was nothing but the Regiæ Sublimitatis Auctoritas on the one part, and the good-will of the people on the other; as the Irish statute the 11th Eliz. c. 1. expresses it.

Very soon after this agreement between Henry II. and the people of Ireland, he transmitted to them the *Modus tenendi parliamentum*, which Modus is said to have been a copy of that given by William the Conqueror to the English. The original of the Irish Modus was extant at the Revolution; and its authenticity cannot be questioned, for it was exemplified by an *inspeximus* under the Great Seal of Ireland, in the reign of Henry IV. Regulated by this Modus, were Parliaments held in Ireland under Henry II.—and in about five years afterwards, in a Parliament held at Oxford, Henry created his youngest son John, King of Ireland. This makes a remarkable Epoch in the history of Irish independence. For this alienation of the crown of Ireland, from the person of the King of England, rendered Ireland as completely independent of England, supposing all the rights of conquest, &c. to be then
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in force, as if the two kingdoms had never been connected.

John, then very young, took immediate possession, exercising all regal powers, amongst which are divers grants and charters, by which alone at this day the corporation of the city of Dublin enjoys franchises and privileges. He remained King of this country separately during a space of twenty-two years, in which time there does not appear a single instance of the interference of the crown of England. After the deaths of his father and of his elder brother Richard I. who died without issue, the crown of England devolved upon John by accidental inheritance. But if Richard had left issue, who would have inherited the crown of England, surely the crown of Ireland had remained in the issue of John, and Ireland would be at this day a kingdom separated from England, in every respect whatsoever.

Henry III. who succeeded his father John in the government of both kingdoms, granted to Ireland a Magna Charta, which is preserved in the *Red Book* of the Exchequer, in the first year of his reign, eight years before he granted the Magna Charta of England, and the one is a copy
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of the other. In February following he granted by another Charter, to the Irish, all the liberties granted by him and his father to the English.

What are the liberties of Englishmen? To be governed by LAWS to which they have given consent, either by themselves, or their representatives in Parliament. Have the Irish consented to the several British acts by which they are now restrained? If the Kings of England had retained their dominion of France, would the English submit to be bound by laws made at Paris? I should be glad to have this last question answered by the British Parliament. But in short we are to understand that liberty means one thing in England, and in Ireland another.

The Parliamentary independency of Ireland, confirmed by three several establishments in the reign of the three first Kings of Ireland of the Norman race, remained pure and chaste down to the year 1641, when the exceeding confusion of the government in Ireland, and the impossibility of holding a Parliament there, laid the foundation of a precedent, which was monstrously built upon in the reign of Charles II. The act of navigation, and the act against ex-
portation,

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portation of wool, save only to England, are usurpations upon this country, not founded in justice or reason; and for which I never heard an Englishman offer any other justification, than that which will as well fit an highwayman; viz. —*the law of force imposed by a strong hand.*

I should never have done, if I were to quote the infinite examples, during a space of five hundred years, drawn from our own and the English statutes, of the separate and independent jurisdiction of the Irish Parliament. The common law of England became, by the stipulations between Henry II. and the Irish people, the law of Ireland. Whensoever a new law was enacted in England (for, take notice, they have no statute law before the time of Henry III.) if it was found expedient for Ireland, it became immediately the object of the Irish Parliament, and then, but not before it was passed by them, became a law here. I defy the most enthusiastic stickler for the supremacy of the British Parliament to shew a single instance contradictory of this assertion. The mode of appeal, by writ of error, to the King's Bench in England, from the King's Bench here, is no exception. When an Irish subject appeals from an erroneous judgment

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here, although he goes into the Court of King's Bench in England, he does not apply to any part of the political government of England for redress. He applies to the King of Ireland in *Curia Domini Regis*; and if the King, with whom the court always travels, were resident here, appeals would equally come from England. The same may be said of Chancery, because the Chancellor did always follow the King, as the King's Bench did. The appeal to the Lords of England, in the last resort, was established by a British Act of Parliament (6th Geo. I.) and is justified only by the law of force.

Thus, my countrymen, have I proved the violence offered to your most sacred right, *of living under laws, enacted or consented to by yourselves*. Rights of which you have been in possession for above five hundred years after your connection with England, and without the enjoyment of which your constitution is politically dead. The age of your tyranny does not greatly exceed a century — that it may not live to be much older, is the sincere wish of

GUATIMOZIN.

22d April.

LETTER

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LETTER III.

Countrymen and Fellow-citizens,

WHENCE comes it that in comparisons which call forth the exertions of human pride, a rank is settled in Europe for an Englishman above that of an Irishman? And why is it that the men of this country seem to admit, at least by a negative consent, the justice of the decision? Is the superiority conceded upon a fair comparison of their relative qualities? Doth the man born on the east of the Irish channel inherit from this climate a better constitution of mind or of body? Stands his frame upon two more gracefully useful columns? And has Providence ornamented him with a more beautiful tincture of skin, or a more commanding form of countenance? Is an Irishman less patient of the infirmities of climate? Or finds he in his breast a heart less susceptible of love, or of courage?

Habits of thinking, my dear countrymen! have more than realized these distinctions.—Political inferiority hath for a length of time so sunk our spirit, that we find in us no inclination to
examine

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examine our own value, or to question the power which holds us in enchantment. The same spirit of forcery which hath fitted the *descendants of the ancient SPARTANS* to become the *mutilated* guardians of the pleasures of a despot in a *feraglio*, and which makes the *offspring of the DECI and HORATII* at this day content with the fame of being the first fiddlers in Europe, is operating fatally upon the inhabitants of IRELAND.

If men *will* think themselves inferior, they will certainly become so; and usurpations upon their various rights will certainly follow. The people of England improve all the advantages of superiority, which our folly, of *admitting the fact*, makes easy to them. Our very pronunciation of their language becomes an object of their reproach, and, by comparison, of our inferiority; a language which, considering its complex nature, and its migration, could not be supposed to keep exact pace with its progress in the native country, except by a *Babylonish miracle*.

It is the peculiar misfortune of this country that all the inhabitants of it do not agree in the means of making it better. Views of separate interest, diligently held up to different parties by
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our political neighbours, divide the people of this kingdom into factions. If upon the present occasion men will not give up their narrow prejudices, and co-operate universally *for the one thing needful*, my labours, and the wishes of the most virtuous patriots among us, will nothing avail. But if the spirit which has lately gone abroad shall operate generally, and if men of all denominations in the kingdom shall unite against the common oppressor, no doubt can be entertained of success.

Fortunately our condition exempts us from the necessity of doing such things for our deliverance as our tyrants would call REBELLION. We have only to unite in the plain system of *consuming, EXCLUSIVELY, the manufactures of this country*, and the work is done. It is time to exhibit one public act of national wisdom; and I hope we shall not forego the gratification of public revenge, merely because the means of obtaining it are *nationally wise*.

In my former letters I established, upon a rock firm as the foundation of the earth, the imperality of this kingdom, and the usurpation of the Parliament of Great Britain upon the rights of our own, by a strong and lawless hand. My
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present attention will be confined to the prejudices which prevail with regard to the expediency of OUR EMANCIPATION.

I know that there are amongst us many well-meaning people who entertain apprehensions on account of the comparative power of England—and I know that there are likewise amongst us many Scotchmen, Englishmen, revenue officers, &c. &c. who fail not to improve those fears to the prejudice of our cause—It is, therefore, to people labouring under such terrors my present letter is directed.

The whole of the arguments against our emancipation turns upon three points. The ability of England to crush us in an active way; the danger of immediate ruin to Ireland, should the people of England confine their retaliation to a resolution not to take our *linens*; and the danger we incur of being swallowed up by other nations of Europe, should England withdraw her protection. As to the power of England, I cannot comprehend why it should be directed against us on account of our intention of consuming only our own manufactures. The king, who is the executive authority in England, by which alone
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the sword of war is unsheathed, will surely recollect that the kingdom of Ireland is entitled to his protection as much as England; and his Majesty is too just to make war even upon strangers without cause. But what have we to dread from the power of England if it were let loose upon us? The English are not yet as cruel as the New-Zealanders; they will not devour Irishmen. But they will surround our coasts with fleets, and cut off our trade. E'en let them do so. A shot from a ship will not kill a man half a mile from the coast. This kingdom abounds in all the necessaries of life within itself; and as to trade, there is nothing we can part with more easily,—for they have taken care to teach us to live without it. I fancy, my dear countrymen, the English have got very few ships or men to spare for an Irish war. The Scotch fencibles seem to have, at present, very little appetite for foreign expeditions; and if the English have not learned some prudence from their Trans-Atlantic misfortunes, they are more perverse and less wise than I believed they were. England has too great a stake to risk upon the event of a war with Ireland. I think the most moderate calculations state the advantages she has by this country at two millions annually, which, I believe, is more
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than she makes by the remainder of the globe. Can she now afford to lose so much? A wise agent would advise her to compromise the suit, rather than abide the issue. Besides, will the powers of Europe have no interest in breaking down the strength of England by setting Ireland free? the answer to this question should make England tremble. The idea of compelling Ireland to submit to England by force of arms is wicked nonsense. Ruin to the empire would inevitably follow the first effort of hostility, and this alone, I hope, is sufficient to quiet the alarms of people on this score.

As to the danger we incur of being swallowed up by some neighbouring state, in case England should withdraw her protection, it is a foolish *bugbear*. We run infinitely more risk of being invaded by the enemies of Great Britain in the time of her wars, from which we derive perpetual loss, but no advantage, than we should do upon our own account, if we led peaceably a separate life. Were we removed from English influence, we should grow rich as Holland has done, and we should be as much secured from the effects of general malice, as the inhabitants of that country were when they shook off the Spanish

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Spanish yoke. The balance of Europe would preserve this country free, if it were once set loose. The influence of each particular state would keep it out of the attraction of any one in particular; and the whole would be highly gratified in the downfall of PROUD ENGLAND.

The enquiry, my dear countrymen, into the probable danger to our linen manufacture from our present associations, I shall reserve for my next, as I find it would trespass too much on your patience, as well as upon the toleration of the Committee of the Free Press, to prosecute the subject this day.

I confess that, as an Irishman, I feel considerable gratification in the checks which the progress of England's usurpations hath received in America. There was a period in the Roman intoxication, when the citizens of Rome paid no taxes whatsoever. After the conquest of Macedonia, the whole burden of the state was imposed upon the conquered countries, and then it was that the provinces looked upon the loss of the liberty of Rome, as the epoch of their own freedom.

GUATIMOZIN.

30th April.

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LETTER

LETTER IV.

Countrymen and Fellow-citizens,

A PERIODICAL author, whose intention in writing is to benefit the society he lives amongst, by opening their eyes upon the true objects of their prosperity and happiness, will find perpetual advantage from the concealment of his name: the public judgment concerning his productions will receive no influence from the peculiar infirmities or advantages of his personal character, and the freedom of the general opinion will direct his future attention to the removal of such prejudices as operate against the conviction of the people.

I find that the authority of great names, among us, still keep alive a kind of apprehension that our associations in favour of our own manufactures are not strictly justifiable. In general answer to which, I beg leave to ask, if the whole policy of the English commerce be not founded upon the same principle? Is there a single manufacture of Great Britain which is not doubly entrenched in *prohibitory importation* laws?—And shall the same

same act be illegal in the people of Ireland, which is constitutional in those of England? Is blundering so powerfully operative in our climate, that a measure which, in England, is wise and legal, shall in our hands become wicked and inexpedient?

But, say those very cautious authorities, you may buy and consume Irish manufactures if you choose, it is the declaration of combining which is found fault with. In the first place, there can be no *illegality* in combining to do that which, from its own nature, may *legally* be done. But this act of *moderation* is intended to break down our whole scheme; for every man in Ireland has long known, and individually lamented, the phrenzy of consuming foreign manufactures to the discouragement of our own; yet should we have gone on in the same course to the end, if the inevitable ruin, consequent of the evil, and the insulting neglect of England at this time, had not drove us to the present spirit of GENERAL ASSOCIATION as the only means of relief for our own people, and of punishment to our oppressors. Happy that the same peaceable tenor of conduct shall encompass two great purposes, so different in their kind, and so desirable in their end! As long as this patriotic flame shall be kept alive,

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success is indubitable; but if by any sophistry the enemies of our national prosperity shall be able to extinguish it, we will be found to relapse into our ancient lethargic malady, rendered more obstinate by having been in vain attempted to be cured. The FIRMNESS of the CONFEDERACY only can SAVE us, and that will very much depend on the warmth of our zeal.

Great offence I find, my dear countrymen, has been affected to be taken on account of a declaration in my last letter, that *I rejoiced in the checks which England had received in America*. I am far from retracting the sentiment; I cannot see any cause of joy to this country in the extension of British aggrandizement. If there were no hopes left us of successful resistance to the controul exercised over this kingdom by the usurpation of the Parliament of Great Britain; and if we had evidence that it was the fixed decree of fate that we should always remain in our present slavery—I say, it is the duty of a virtuous Irishman to wish to see the British constitution destroyed, and the King of England absolute; because the condition of an Irishman would be bettered by the change.

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Let us summarily consider what is the present form of constitution in Ireland: like that of our sister kingdom, it consists, generally, of a legislative power, and an executive one. They are severally absolute in their operation in each kingdom, and should be so in order to render them effectual. The legislative power in England consists of the two orders of the inhabitants, and every thing intended to pass into a law must originate either from the Lords or Commons of England, so that the PEOPLE suggest the legislative rules under which they are content to live; and the rigorous exercise of the executive authority with regard to those laws, seems but to invigorate and give operation to their commands. Such likewise was the constitution of Ireland from the time of its submission to the crown of England, till it became altered and debased in the reign of Henry VII. by the effect of Poyning's law. Since that period the legislative authority in Ireland remains despoiled of its most inestimable attribute, the ORIGINATION OF LAWS; it is now the inverse of the British legislation, and, in effect, resembles much more the French Parliament, into which the King's edicts come down to be registered before they become laws.

Such

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Such is our legislative power in Ireland—But, behold, what is our executive power! It is a MONSTER, consisting of the *King of Ireland* and the *Parliament of Great Britain*! Can any Irishman hesitate in a choice between being a colonist of an absolute King of England, and remaining a subject of such a perverted government as is described above? A government always the more intolerable by comparing it with one to which we are equally entitled with our fellow-subjects of England. A people subject to the will of an absolute prince have nothing to gratify but the passions of *one man*; and colonies at a distance from such government are, in general, mildly administered. But who can undertake to please *so many masters* as we have got in the Parliament of Great Britain, whose interest consists in the means of our poverty and distress!

But I will withdraw from a scene which exhibits nothing to us but confusion and reproach; and I will endeavour to dispatch the subject I promised for this day, namely, *the probable danger to our linen manufacture from our present association*. Say the advocates for the imperiality of the British Parliament, “If you shall continue to refuse the manufactures of Great Britain,
you

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you will compel the people of Great Britain to retaliate, and you will lose the *only* market you have for the *only* commodity you can manufacture.” This subject deserves consideration; and enveloped as it is in obscurity and difficulty, I will endeavour to throw some light upon it, which, though it may not clearly shew all the parts of it, may yet serve to direct others of my countrymen in the true line of enquiry.

By the accounts laid before the British Parliament within a few years, I find that the quantity of all the linen brought into England annually, amounted in value to about three millions sterling, of which a million and a half was paid for foreign linen, about a million for Irish, and about half a million for that which came from Scotland. I think it is pretty generally understood that England herself manufactures between checks, huckabacks, &c. &c. for about the value of as much as she imports. Now let us just consider the proportion which *the great linen manufacture of Ireland* bears to the whole of this; it makes about one-sixth part. I dare say there are many very sensible people in this country, who having never enquired into the fact, imagined their obligations to Great Britain, upon this head, much greater

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than they really are; and who did not doubt but the people of England were supplied principally from Ireland with all articles of linen, denying themselves the advantages of going into the manufacture, or of dealing with strangers for it, *merely to benefit us.*

Two questions arise now naturally out of the subject.—First, Why does not Ireland, exclusively, supply the whole, to the advantages of which she seems entitled by the condition of her agreement with England, when she gave up her woollen manufacture? And, 2dly, Is there not great apprehension that England will contrive to supply herself with our sixth part of the manufacture, from the source whence she obtains the other five? To the first, I answer, that undoubtedly Ireland should be at this day, if she had been honourably dealt by, in possession of the exclusive trade to England, and its appendages, in all articles of linen. But the want of due encouragement to the Irish manufacture, on the part of Great Britain, has limited it almost to one province in the kingdom; whilst a fostering hand has cherished it in Great Britain, and having suffered the duty upon foreign linens to come down to almost nothing, has given a preference
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to the Germans in the English market. By explaining simply the last part of this assertion I shall nearly clear up the whole.

When Ireland accepted of the linen trade, with which she was totally unacquainted, in exchange for a woollen manufacture in which she had made great progress, the Parliament of England agreed to load the foreign linens at importation with a duty of nearly 30 per cent. and to grant a bounty upon the exportation from England of our Irish linens, from one halfpenny to three halfpence per yard. The Dutch were at that day possessed of the linen manufacture, and the duty was laid upon their linens of every kind. The Germans and the Russians manufactured at the same time a very inconsiderable portion of a mean linen; and a duty as inconsiderable, proportioned to what the Dutch paid, was laid upon those goods. Behold how things are now changed! From the operation of this heavy duty in the English market (the principal one, I apprehend, the Dutch had) the manufacture languished in Holland, and is now nearly extinct; but the German and Russian manufactures having laboured under no such burden, took place of the Dutch; and our *humane masters*, the *British*

tish Parliament, encourage their success, by leaving the duties as they had been at the time they were laid on; so that instead of 30 per cent. which, by stipulation, the foreign manufacture should pay, I understand the duties in general do not exceed from eight to ten per cent. and there is a draw-back of the whole duty upon exportation. The consequence is, that the Germans and Russians are our rivals in England upon equal terms; because the duty they pay is more than compensated in the cheapness of the raw materials at home; and in our colonies, and other markets, to which the English export, the German and Russian linens find a bounty in the draw-back received at exportation. The bounty paid at exportation upon our linens is confined to those under eighteen pence a yard; so that we see even this small encouragement is limited.

Thus it appears, without going further into causes, of which they are many, that the want of the stipulated advantage, by the heavy duty on foreign linens, operates towards limiting the progress of the manufacture universally in Ireland; and it accounts for the small proportion which Irish linens make of those brought into England.

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Let us now consider the second thing proposed; that is, whether England might not be able to obtain *our sixth part* of all she wants where she gets the remainder? and we shall find in this investigation, that a perfect security remains to us in the peculiar nature of the manufacture.

The usual errors, in thinking and talking on this subject, are,—First, that it is generally conceived that most of the linens which go to the English market are Irish; in short, that Ireland is the only linen country:—And, secondly, it is never considered that there is infinite variety in the manufacture of linen; so that nothing is more true than that two countries may live by exporting linen to the same market without cause of jealousy. Every body acquainted with the manufacture knows, that the Irish fine linens are superior to those of all the world; whilst our coarse linens are miserably bad. The fact is, that we have improved the manufacture to a degree of refinement that injures its quality. Our spinners are of the first knack, and our bleachers in the same rank. The excellence of our first manufacture destroys the second.—Our coarse linens are manufactured of a part of the plant called *tow*, which
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is the residuum after drawing away all the fine parts for the first manufacture. This is what gives a preference to the Russian and German linens in market. They have no superior kind; and they work up all the flax into a coarse cloth, which is durable in the proportion of the quality of the stuff of which it is composed;—it resembles the household bread, from which neither the fine flour has been taken, nor the bran; and they are both the object of artizans and hard-working people, who look for duration principally in the commodity they buy. Hence it is, that so much German and Russian linen comes to England; and I find, by examining the public accounts, for the amount of the draw-backs, that a very small quantity, comparatively, is exported of those linens; so that they are principally consumed in England.

By what I have said, my dear countrymen, you see that our manufacture stands very clear of the German. Our fine linens will stand alone, and must be bought, as long as luxury shall remain. A century will not bring any other country to the perfection of rivalship; and if we sold our linens to Dutch, French, or Spaniards, the English people of fashion must have them, even
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charged with a profit. As to our coarse linens, fortunately for us, they are fitted to a purpose which no other coarse linens will answer as well; I mean for STAMPING—a branch of trade so profitable to England, and for which the very infirmities of this manufacture give it such a preference, that they would likewise be obliged to buy it from strangers at any price, or give up their stamping business, should they think fit to break with us. The soft spongy texture of our coarse linen makes it receive the stamp most successfully; and its lightness, flexibility, and thinness fit it for women's use, and for hot climates.

The inattention of the English to our interest is very observable in a circumstance relative to this branch. The Irish linens, if stamped, forfeit their bounty at exportation, although German linen, if stamped, receives the draw-back. From this observation,—from the comparatively small quantity of our linens they buy,—from the consideration that they cannot get any where else the same linen, whether coarse or fine,—and from their inattention to altering the heavy duty from the Dutch to the German and Russian linens,—I think it is pretty clear that we owe them no obligation on the score of the linen manufacture;
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that they would not buy a single yard from us if it were not their advantage; and that we are morally certain of their custom, whether we quarrel with them or not. There are too many of their people who live by retailing our fine linens, as there are who live by the stamping business, to make it a safe matter for them to combine against our commodity, with which they cannot be supplied elsewhere. Our security is neither in their humanity nor in their love of justice.—It is in their self-interest, the first principle of an Englishman.

I apprehend they will not go to extremities. They might to be sure distress this country as they have done the colonies, and they would afterwards desire reconciliation, as they have done by those; but they would, in the experiment, certainly destroy themselves; for though they should succeed in a struggle with this country, they would gain what would yield very little profit for many years.

I should never have done if I were to go through all the arguments which concur to convince me of their inability to injure us. Stand firm, *my friends*, in the bond of union. The question

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question is, Will you depend for ever on the sole support arising from one precarious, inconsiderable manufacture, or will you make an effort to obtain the advantages of many? The prize is worth contending for.

GUATIMOZIN.

6th May.

P. S. I find by the enquiry before the Lords into the affairs of Greenwich Hospital, that all the sheeting is of Russian linen. Hence may you form a judgment of the encouragement extended by Ministry themselves to the manufacture of Ireland.

F LETTER

L E T T E R V.

Countrymen and Fellow-citizens,

THE degree of attention with which my poor endeavours in the public cause have been lately honoured by you, exhibits a proof, that the accumulated oppressions of a powerful and merciless sister kingdom, although exercised in the extent of tyranny for more than a century, have not yet so completely broken down the spirit of this country as to leave us content with our miserable condition. The last symptom of national abjection, *the apathy of the people*, is yet remote; and, perhaps, when the causes which have impaired a constitution naturally robust and vigorous shall be universally explored, our malady may find some means of relief.

The spirit of indignation, which at first incited me to labour in the public service, I confess, I considered somewhat allied to Knight-errantry, wherein the desire of succouring the oppressed is infinitely disproportioned to the means of accomplishing it; but, like the ancient professors of chivalry,

chivalry, I had sworn to persevere, although my mission should be attended with no other advantage than that of entitling me to be rewarded for my services by the thanks of *the lady in captivity*—the fate of many a courteous Knight.

Tarda sunt quæ in commune expostulantur, says Tacitus. The success however of the enterprize here is highly encouraging: the people are earnest in pursuit of the knowledge of their rights; and the means of accomplishing national justice appear at once effectual and mild. Passive resistance is completely suited to our condition; and I make no doubt that a very short period of time will demonstrate the wisdom of consuming, exclusively, our own manufactures, by the ease and comfort which employment will speedily give to our own people, and by the ruin our association will bring upon the staple commodity of our oppressors.

I have in my former letters nearly gone over the extent of ground laid down in my chart;—the present shall be employed in a review of the subject, and in the recollection of some materials which have escaped the first enquiry.

The right of Ireland to the advantages of her own legislation, and the injustice of binding her by the rules of any other, I believe, are demonstrated; but, what is much more substantial, it appears that the accomplishment of our relief from the usurpations of the English legislature is practicable and safe. I say it is fortunate for us that the means of our emancipation are easy and in our power; because it appears evidently that we have nothing to expect either from the justice or the mercy of England.

The sources of wealth in every country are derived from the advantages of soil (in which is comprehended the quality of the surface of the earth, with what is contained in its bowels) the manufactures of the country, with the conveniences of exporting them, and the fisheries belonging to the coasts of the country. From these materials only can human industry draw forth national wealth. It may not be unworthy of our attention to consider them with regard to Ireland. The enquiry may lead to discover the causes which have hitherto obstructed our prosperity.

Experience shews that the greatest advantages of soil, climate, and situation, and the most inexhaustible

exhaustible prolification in the fishing coasts of a country, will not accomplish the purposes of national prosperity without manufactures. We need not travel from Ireland to be *practically* acquainted with the fact, but the examples in aid of proof are numerous. The reason theoretically is clear and demonstrable. Soil and climate are only advantageous inasmuch as they facilitate agriculture, the first source of wealth; but to what purpose will the farmer till the ground, if there are not mouths to consume the produce? The abundance of his crop will frequently prove the very source of his misfortune. The idea of a nation of farmers is completely absurd; no country ever did nor ever can exist as a granary for other countries; and although the export of corn may be a great source of wealth in a country advanced, yet it is certain that no people can arrive at such perfection in agriculture as to export considerably, but by the encouragement progressively afforded to the peasant in a ready and certain market at home for his grain. This source is ever found in manufactures; those require the mutual aid of a number of persons in concert with each other, and they must be fed. The farmer labours with alacrity, on account of the security of his market; and the communication with other countries,

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tries, by the means of the manufactures, opens the way to a foreign market to take off the redundancy of corn.

So delicate is the connection between agriculture and manufactures, that even the success of a country arising from the latter is insecure, where the former is neglected. This has been exemplified in the case of some great manufacturing cities, as Antwerp and Genoa, whose fall from the highest exaltation of commercial grandeur was occasioned by the insecurity in the article of bread, which the inhabitants found in the want of a peasantry. In short, it is a fact not to be questioned, that agriculture and manufactures depend mutually upon each other for support. As to mines, minerals, &c. which a country contains within its bowels, every body knows that the cultivation of those will not take place till manufactures shall have considerably advanced in a country. I speak not of mines of gold and silver—the source of national ruin, not of prosperity.

The very same connection which binds agriculture and manufactures in one common interest, will be found to apply between the fisheries and

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and manufactures. The Dutch derive infinite wealth from the industry with which they explore the ocean in search of fish, but they abound above all nations in manufactures. Miserable indeed were the condition of a people reduced to this expedient alone for their prosperity!

From what I have advanced, my dear countrymen, it is clear that two of the three great sources of national wealth, *agriculture and the fisheries*, are totally cut off where the *third* is wanting. So that a country, the most fertile in its soil, with every advantage which can be derived from an equal climate and commodious situation, its coasts blessed with an inexhaustible variety of fish, and its inhabitants endued with the advantages of natural acuteness, may yet experience all the miseries of national distress, and be exposed to the frequent apprehension of Famine itself, for want of due application to manufactures. And, without changing the course of reasoning, it is also clear that a country having the advantages of fertility, of benign climate, and of fishing coasts, may establish her manufactures without any difficulty at all; because the natural allies of manufactures are there already; and from the whole chain it is deducible, that

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it required a *malicious industry* on the part of Great Britain, by wicked management to preclude Ireland from her natural claim to prosperity in *agriculture, manufactures, and fisheries*; the GREAT AND ONLY SOURCE OF NATIONAL WEALTH.

Let us examine the progress of this scheme against the prosperity of Ireland, and we shall see that the means by which it has been accomplished are worthy of the end proposed.

In 1698, when these countries were beginning to wear a new face, and when the advantages of manufactures were not as well understood as they are now; at a period too when Ireland had in an extraordinary degree suffered calamities by two recently successive civil wars, the English adventurers in both of which were not unfrequently *reprised* at the expence of the inhabitants of Ireland, to the no small insecurity of property here. Let us consider what was the condition of manufactures in both countries! That the manufactures of Ireland were not behind those of England, is pretty evident from the preamble of the English act, the 10th of William III. quoted by your ingenious correspondent *Causidicus*, and appears

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appears also plainly from the answer of King William to the requisition of the British Parliament upon that head.

“ *Sabbati 2 die Julii, Decimo Gulielmi III.*

“ *Gentlemen,*

“ I shall do all in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and to promote the trade of England.”

Now if the manufactures of linen and woollen were so considerable then in Ireland, and that of the latter particularly, so far advanced as to rouse the jealousy of England, and to create fears lest their own should be overwhelmed by it, what may we reasonably suppose the condition of Ireland would be at this day, if it had experienced fair play? The answer is easy to any man who considers the superiority of her natural advantages; but mark what followed this *cold-blooded Dutch declaration*: effectual means were taken in the Parliament of Ireland to blazon out the mutual advantages of a compact, whereby Ireland should enjoy “ all the advantages and profit which this kingdom can be capable of from the linen and hempen manufacture,” and in consideration

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deration whereof she agreed to give up her wool-
len manufacture. Iniquitous as the imposition of
this bargain was, for which Ireland gave up
every thing, and England exchanged nothing
but words; let us see how far England has even
kept her word. They set themselves immedi-
ately to turning the whole bargain to their own
advantage; they encouraged their own linen
manufacture; it is true they laid a duty on fo-
reign linens, which operates against the foreigner,
but they provided a draw-back of the whole duty
on exportation; that is, whensoever this very
foreign linen should become an article of com-
merce in the hands of an Englishman, he should
immediately and individually, at exportation,
have a profit of the whole amount of the tax paid
to the state by the foreigner at importation.
They got deeply into a most profitable manu-
facture of checks, and in order to secure to
themselves the exportation from Ireland of the
yarn for this manufacture (although nothing is so
ruinous to a country as to export its raw mate-
rials) they forbid by a law the exportation of
checks from Ireland. The same they did by
printed and stained linens. When the weight
of the foreign linen manufacture was transferred
from Holland to the Baltic, they neglected to
make

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make a new valuation for the foreign linens,
which has nearly ruined our linen trade. The
bounty on exportation of our linen from Eng-
land is only equal to that of the English and
Scotch, whereby their manufacture has an ad-
vantage over ours in a foreign market, by the
expence of freight, factorage, risk, &c. &c.
from this to England. They have besides taken
care to reserve a profit upon us passing through
their hands; for a man living in Dublin cannot
carry his linens to England, export them thence
himself, and receive the draw-back there; an act
of parliament particularly says, that no person
shall be entitled to the draw-back, but a person
resident in England.

They have a bounty of one halfpenny per
yard on the export of their checks, amounting
to about 15 per cent. upon the value of the Irish
linen yarn of which it is made; now this may
fairly be said to operate as a bounty of 15 per
cent. upon the exportation from Ireland of the
raw materials of our staple manufacture. The
effects which that will produce in time may be
easily conceived; and they talk of increasing this
bounty up to three times the amount.

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But all this is nothing, in bare-facedness, compared to act 23 Geo. II. whereby they have annihilated, at one blow, a flourishing hempen manufacture in Ireland, which had been progressively improving for half a century, and the enjoyment of which to Ireland had been specially stipulated in the compact of 1698.

Thus has Great Britain in the first instance cajoled this country out of the benefit of universal manufactures, by holding out to her the exclusive advantages of the linen manufacture; and in the second place she has broken every part of her agreement with Ireland concerning this very linen manufacture. But there is another mischief entailed upon us in consequence of this infernal compact of 1698: the union with Scotland has given the people of that country a right equal to that of the English, to live by the plunder of Ireland. The immense quantities of kentings and gauzes poured into this country annually from Scotland, and shamefully worn by the women of this country, are a part of our national reproach; and lest an Irishman should profit any thing by them, they send their own shopkeepers, who open warehouses here and vend Scotch articles of the linen manufacture in every
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part of this city. I hope when they shall return home they will teach their *mobs* moderation from the example of the mobs of this city, who suffer them to carry on this ruinous commerce against the faith of England solemnly pledged in Parliament, and do not carry fire and desolation into their dwellings.

It is a ridiculous question to ask why they are able to underfell us in our own market? A country confined to a single manufacture, and to which that manufacture is dealt out experimentally, partially, and in detail, cannot succeed in any thing against a country possessed of the advantages of universal trade. But in truth kentings and gauzes are not the most pernicious commodity imported from Scotland into this country. The men of Scotland, who are over-running us universally, are infinitely more dangerous. I am an enemy to national reflections; but when the people of an entire country are all marked with the same distinguishing features of character, the observation on them ceases to be called national reflection. These men have a propensity to emigration, and they carry with them into every country the vices of their own; religious hypocrisy, servility of manners, and political depravity

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vity distinguish them from all the nations of the earth. The only satisfaction we have is, that the principles of these Scotchmen in England have contributed very much to the ruin of the British empire. England has pledged us in the bitter draught.

But I perceive my paper swelling along with my indignation—I shall now dismiss the subject of the linen manufacture, over which the means of my information have been exceedingly limited. I take this opportunity of returning public thanks for the assistance I have received from some patriotic gentlemen, of whose persons I am as ignorant as they are of mine; particularly to a gentleman who left a packet directed for me yesterday, at the house of the publisher of the Freeman's Journal.

I have likewise acknowledgments to make to some persons who have made honourable mention of me in published essays. One gentleman, under the signature of *Causidicus*, has twice favoured me with his company abroad; I should be proud of such a companion, if I did not entertain some suspicion, that by appearing in the modest guise of a *satellite*, he harbours the malicious

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cious design of eclipsing the primary planet; by primary I mean literally the order of time. The public, in my opinion, owes him much obligation; the acuteness of his judgment, and the closeness of his argumentation, leave no void space in the conviction of his readers.

And now, my dear countrymen, will you universally embrace the present occasion of a non-import agreement, or will you wait until your oppressors, having accommodated matters with the French, and having given up the Americans, shall have leisure to force you to wear what cloaths they choose? Their moderate treatment of America you may consider as an earnest of their future humanity towards you—*proximus ardet*.—I once knew a drunken bully, who in his intoxication would frequently provoke his neighbours to thresh him, but who never failed to retaliate the blows upon his wife when he got home.

GUATIMOZIN.

14th May.

Sir

Sir CECIL WRAY to GUATIMOZIN.

HAVING received by the post your letter of April 22, I am perfectly at a loss to know either from whom or for what intent it was sent me; but conceiving that it is meant in some measure to glance at my public conduct in respect to the propositions made in the course of the last and present Sessions of Parliament for the relief of Ireland, and as I should wish to stand well in the opinion of the world, as well as of the gentleman from whom I received the paper, shall esteem it as a favour if you will give this letter a place in your paper. The initials of my name will be sufficient to satisfy the person to whom it is chiefly addressed; and the public principles it contains, will shew the sentiments of the independent country gentlemen respecting our *sister kingdom*.

When Lord N——h made his propositions to Parliament, it was so late as some time in April 1778—Their extent and magnitude gave an immediate alarm to the whole kingdom—scarce a manu-

manufacture that was not involved in them—the impossibility from the late period of the Sessions, of a thorough investigation, increased the apprehensions—and on being informed by the Minister, that he was determined to pass them immediately, it became necessary to make the most spirited opposition; perhaps in the idea of the trading towns, to put an entire stop to the propositions ever taking place, but in that of the country gentlemen, only to give a further time for considering the consequences of such an universal overthrow of the trade laws of the kingdom.

It was in consequence of such an idea, that we moved to put off the further proceeding till next Sessions; at the same time proposing that a committee should be immediately appointed to take into consideration the whole of the trade laws subsisting betwixt the two kingdoms, which should in a future Sessions be the ground-work of a lasting and equal new regulation, which should then be drawn for the mutual benefit of both.

This proposition was rejected by the Irish gentlemen in the House with great contempt—I dare

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say their reason was a jealousy that nothing was meant by it but Parliamentary craft, to get rid of the business by a side measure, which we could not do by open force, and that they had not any intention of taking advantage of our fears, or compassion, by hurrying us into measures, of which we neither knew the extent, consequence, or propriety.

A systematical opposition was now formed, and Parliamentary forms and delays were called in to our assistance (a measure I never approve of, when proper opportunity has been given of investigation, and which nothing but the precipitancy of the attempt would justify). After some time a sort of compromise was made, in which I need not say, that part of the propositions were granted, part put off till a future Session.—As to my own share, as I did not quite approve the *kind* of opposition, I did not attend, nor assist any further than the first step, viz. of proposing the committee.

Sir, I will venture to assert, that the principles of the opposition to the propositions were not either *unjust* or *illiberal*—Scarce a gentleman who did not avow a desire, nay a conviction of the

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the necessity of giving every aid, every indulgence in his power to the inhabitants of Ireland, consistent with that policy which ought by investigation to be the rule of the actions of a representative of the people.

But, Sir, I must at the same time declare that we were not equally convinced that the ruinous state of Ireland was to be attributed to the oppressions she laboured under from England. Was it not rather to be attributed to its own internal bad policy?—Exhausted of its wealth by its absentees, of that wealth which, by a judicious expenditure at home, would have increased its means—promoted cultivation—doubled its manufactures—and enabled it to have traded with England to an infinite greater extent than in its late most affluent state.

Perhaps it may be said that Ireland had great merit in providing pensions and sinecures for so many Englishmen, and assisting in us the American war.

In both these particulars I deny the claim of Ireland to any merit at all. In the first, it has only added means to that system of corruption,

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which,

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which, like a canker-worm, has gnawed the very vitals of the English constitution, for which we have no obligations. In the second, it has interfered in a quarrel where it not only had no business, but where true policy, from a similarity of circumstances in which America and Ireland stand, have made her rather a mediatrix of peace, than a party in war. Your present associations for non-importation are the truest comment on my assertion.

I might demand on Ireland, on what principles those associations are formed? America entered into them, because England violated all her just rights by an open avowal of taxing or binding her by laws to which she gave no consent.—Ireland has entered into them, because England would not blindfoldly give up her clear undisputed rights to her own colonies, her own estates in the West Indies, to which Ireland had no claim.

When the propositions were made in this Session of Parliament, I will freely own that I think the kingdom of Ireland was not used with that candour it ought to have been—when the broad ground was rejected for a specific proposal.

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The specific proposal should have been accepted, or at least fully investigated: but as Lord North had the *merit* of rejecting this proposal, I am not bound to say more of it than that it had my concurrence, from the circumstances in which it was introduced, though not quite convinced of its propriety.

To conclude, I am (and I believe I speak the language of the country gentlemen) perfectly a friend to the kingdom of Ireland, as a perfectly INDEPENDENT—but CONNECTED BY ALLIANCE, kingdom; and wish for that kind of union which should say, one interest, one law, one King.

C. W.

To Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. a Representative of the Borough of East Retford, in the British Parliament.

IT will not, I hope, Sir, be considered as any violation of those forms, to the observance of which gentlemen are bound by delicacy and decorum, that I presume to address you in this public

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public manner by your name, and at full length. The necessity of the occasion which prompts me will not be bound in the limitations of etiquette, and the dignity of sentiment which distinguishes your present public appearance amongst us, sets you, in my opinion, very high above the level of ordinary ceremony.

An English country gentleman, the Representative in Parliament of a free people, and the political guardian of a glorious constitution, finds that he cannot patiently bear the implication of a charge, that he whose duty binds him to the preservation of the liberties of his own country, should wantonly, or what is worse, from motives of partiality and self-interest, annihilate the freedom of another country, equally entitled with his own to the advantages which God and Nature have scattered upon the face of the earth, and over which country he can rationally claim no right of controul, that may not with equal justice be exercised over his own whensoever the unerring progression of vicissitude shall arm a stronger ruffian hand against it.

Impatience under so heavy a charge is natural to a noble disposition; and somewhat under the influ-

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influence of this sentiment I presume you felt yourself, when you wrote, and sent into this kingdom for publication, an essay, which appeared in the Freeman's Journal on Saturday last; in which you defend yourself against the imputation of ILLIBERALITY and INJUSTICE in the vigorous Parliamentary opposition given by you to some late attempts towards lessening the number of restrictions imposed and continued upon the trade of Ireland by laws of the British legislature.

Your condescension in pleading to your indictment at the bar of our tribunal, is an effort of that national spirit of equality, which has ornamented the history of England with so many illustrious names; and your professions are so honourable and kind towards this country, as to entitle you, independent of other considerations, to the best information in our power relative to it; the more especially as you profess to speak the sentiments of the *independent country gentlemen of England* upon this subject.

The foundation upon which England claims a right to bind this kingdom by laws of her legislature, unfortunately for us, has never been laid open.

Judge

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Judge Blackstone says, " The original and
 " true ground of this superiority is what
 " we usually call, *though somewhat impro-*
 " *perly*, the right of conquest; a right al-
 " lowed by the law of nations, if not by
 " that of Nature; but which in reason and
 " civil policy can mean nothing more than
 " that, in order to put an end to hostilities,
 " a compact is either *expressly* or *tacitly* made
 " between the conqueror and the conquered,
 " that if they will acknowledge the victor
 " for their *master*, he will treat them for
 " the future as subjects, and not as ene-
 " mies."

Let us put this indefinite jargon into precise language, and examine the extent and meaning of it.

Ireland, under a right of conquest (*which fact, as to conquest, is nearly given up in the sentence, " though somewhat improperly"*) is become the property of England to do with as she shall think fit; for by a compact, *expressly* or *tacitly*, Ireland has purchased peace by submitting to slavery. It is not a straining either of sense or of language to translate his term " subjects" into the

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the word slaves; for his own conception of the relation between the *conqueror* and *conquered*, when applied to nations, and the example of what has happened between the two kingdoms, for which his theory is formed, justify the construction. The learned judge, after having laid this liberal foundation, goes on to build upon it a superstructure solid as the base; for he tells you in the next passage, that, lest any doubt should arise upon this matter, it was declared, 6th Geo. I. C. 5. *in the British legislature*, that " Ire-
 " land ought to be subordinate to, and de-
 " pendent upon, the crown of Great Britain,
 " and that the King's Majesty, with the con-
 " sent of the Lords and Commons of Great
 " Britain in Parliament, hath power to make
 " laws to bind the people of Ireland." Here is a very extensive and valuable, but disputed right, decided by the authority and declaration *solely* of one of the parties; and the decision must be *just*, considering that the whole benefit of the decree, in which is involved the ruin of the other party, goes to the use and benefit of the judge. And behold how magically and suddenly the crown of Great Britain is here changed into a multifarious body, consisting of the King's Majesty and of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain!

I

But

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But when once the slavery of Ireland is secured by a British Act of Parliament, Sir William Blackstone is too good a lawyer to question the legality of the act, or the competency of the enacting authority. What a prostitution of honour, of principles, and of talents! Yet this, in fact, contains the whole foundation of his "Sovereign Legislative power" of the British Parliament over Ireland. It were curious to know the source whence Sir William has drawn his legislative ethics. To you, Sir, it is plain this reasoning has lost its weight; for in the end of your essay you confess that Ireland is a "perfectly independent, but connected by alliance, kingdom." It remains then only for your consideration to enquire how far a British senator, at this day, is exempt from the imputation of "illiberality and injustice," when he uses his Parliamentary endeavours to continue restrictions, which deprive Ireland, as a nation, of every attribute of independency; and I am convinced, to a man of your good sense, it will require very little pains to prove, that when the legislature of Great Britain, by a strong hand, imposed legislative rules of conduct upon the people of Ireland, who were not represented in their Parliament, but who had at the same time a Parli-

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ment of their own, whose legislative rules, however incompatible with those of Great Britain, they were constitutionally bound to obey, it was an act suggested by ILLIBERALITY, and executed with INJUSTICE. I do not manage terms when I speak of the actors in those transactions; for they are all dead. It becomes the duty of their successors to consider whether or no they are not parties in the ILLIBERALITY and INJUSTICE of these acts, to which they not only continue to give operation, but which they refuse to repeal, although the ILLIBERALITY and INJUSTICE of them be made manifest.

In my letter of the 24th of April, to which your's has reference, and in some others, which have since been published here, this subject is so amply treated, and the plain fact itself is so obvious, that I consider it a waste of time and pains to go farther into it; and will therefore confine myself to the matter of your essay. You say, Sir, that when the propositions for the relief of Ireland came before Parliament, "scarce a gentleman who did not avow a desire, nay a conviction of the necessity of giving every aid, every indulgence in his power to the inhabitants of Ireland, *consistent with that polity, which*

ought, by investigation, to be the rule of the actions of a representative of the people."

A man unacquainted with the British system of Irish abjection, would be inclined to ask *what people* is meant here, when there is question of releasing from bondage and misery, three millions of his MAJESTY'S LOYAL IRISH SUBJECTS.

Do you, as a British legislator, avow the influence of that policy, which would reduce to beggary three millions of THE BEST SUBJECTS in the empire, in order that double the number, in another part, shall derive superfluous wealth from their ruin? Let us examine this idea by the principles of Sir William Blackstone's *sovereign legislative power*.

As a sovereign legislator of Great Britain, Sir Cecil Wray takes upon himself the parliamentary care of the people of Ireland. If equal justice make any part of the character of a *British sovereign legislator*, I apprehend that Sir Cecil Wray is bound to be as tenacious of the rights of the people of Ireland, as he is of those of the inhabitants of East Retford.

Other-

Otherwise this *sovereign legislative power* is a power instituted in partiality and injustice; I might add, that it is insidious, treacherous, and ungenerous; inasmuch as this legislative care of Ireland is voluntarily undertaken upon his part, without the requisition of the inhabitants.

In short, we must invert all the ideas hitherto entertained of *legislative* authority, if we suppose that it confers the power of doing mischief, without the *concomitant essential injunction* to do good.

The British legislature, under such a supposition, would hold the same relation to Ireland, as the Devil is said to bear to mankind.

We are bound therefore to suppose, Sir, that when you talk of granting liberties to Ireland, consistent with the rule which should govern the conduct of a representative *of the people*, you mean to include the people of Ireland in your legislative comprehension.

The thing is logically a perfect dilemma: Either you do comprehend them, and then you are bound as above, or you do not comprehend them; in which case the exercise of your *sovereign*

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sovereign legislative power, with regard to them, is UNJUST and ILLIBERAL.

A little lower you will intimate that "you might demand of Ireland upon what principles those associations are formed?" I will answer the question. The associations of the people of Ireland to consume *exclusively* their own manufactures are formed upon the principles which suggested the spirit and letter of the whole code of the trade laws of England; *a spirit of monopoly in favour of ourselves*. Is there a single manufacture of England, linen only excepted, that is not entrenched in prohibitory importation laws? The only difference between your associations and our's is, that your's is sealed by the *sovereign legislative authority*, our's by the consent and acclamation of three millions of people.

Your idea that we are angry because of the refusal of the proposition relative to rum and sugars, is not founded in the fact. There is no man of sense and liberality in this kingdom would have given sixpence to obtain what was demanded upon that score.—I wish the restrictions of England were directed towards the excluding us from all articles of luxury!

And

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And here, Sir, I must remark to you that we have been hitherto very unfortunate in this particular. Scarcely any thing asked for us in your parliament would have been useful. I beg pardon, I had forgotten the *source of wealth we are likely to derive from the culture of tobacco*.

The merit of maintaining English pensioners, and of assisting in prosecuting the American war, you have, Sir, generously given us, without any pretensions on our part to the credit of either. The pension list of Ireland is at once the reproach of British government, and a galling instance of Irish subjection.—The whole catalogue of panders, bawds, spies, and informers, German generals, Scotch pedlars, foreign ambassadors, and Jew brokers, compose the motley crew.

As to the American persecution, I can assure you with great truth, that this whole nation, with a very few exceptions, were averse from it; nor can there be a more solid proof than one that is now universally known, viz. that those armies, which you could not beat in America, consisted chiefly of Irish emigrants.

Addressees

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Addresses I know were procured here; the manner of obtaining which would have disgraced any administration, save only that one which accomplished them. The names of thousands who had never existed, and of many more who had never seen the addresses, were reverberated upon us in the London Gazette; whilst the addresses of those who fought to stop the effusion of kindred blood, were lost in their passage from us.

As to our absentees, with whom you reproach us, we have only to answer, that we should rejoice if you would make a law to oblige them to stay at home; but their spending their money amongst you, seems a very odd argument against granting us the means to enable us to recruit that strength of which we are deprived for your advantage.

Of the mode lately instituted amongst you to enquire into the causes of the present distresses of Ireland, I have an ill opinion—I am satisfied it is done for the purposes of procrastination and deceit only. Three millions of people, whose eyes are newly opened on the abuse of their political rights, and whose distresses are urgent, appear rather formidable at this time to a British minister.

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minister. The see-saw insidious oration of the blasted *Malagrida*, in your House of Peers, is well understood in this country, of which he is known to be the secret enemy.

It is in vain that you affect to seek the proximate causes of the distress of Ireland; those she suffers at present in common with the whole empire; and when you shall have discovered what it is, which now produces temporary distress in England, it will equally apply to us. But it is the remote cause which operates perpetually against this country, and which being removed, will still her complaints, and make her happy; I mean the restrictions upon her trade.

The removal of this cause is within your reach, and the operation will have unerring effect. How can you possibly suppose a great country like this to exist long upon a portion of a *single manufacture*? I will not call to mind how infamously we have been dealt with, even in this one. The national faith solemnly pledged in your *sovereign legislative Parliament*, in 1698, together with the promise of the Crown, were not sufficient to preserve to us, entire and uninvaded, even this poor pittance of support for a whole kingdom.

K

You

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You will ask how we have so long subsisted, and why we are clamorous now? The reasons are obvious. Distress has universally invaded the empire, the consequence of an impolitic civil war, an alienated continent, the former source of much wealth, and an impaired commerce. Money grows scarce, and Ireland is ruined, whilst Great Britain is only distressed, because a small matter is sufficient to ruin Ireland.

If one man, in a given number, has been kept for some time to a strict and spare diet, and if, while he is upon this stinted diet, a general scarcity shall arise amongst the whole number, it requires no great sagacity to foresee that he will famish before the others shall grow weak.

If you would see Irish grievances, turn over your statute book. Look for the word *Ireland*, or the word *penalty*, it is equal which, for where you meet the first, the second inevitably follows; so that you may trace Ireland through the code, as you track a wounded man through a crowd by blood.

I would wish, Sir, in this place, to anticipate an argument very commonly used in favour of the

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the claim of England to uncontrouled power over Ireland. Say they, we protect you at an enormous expence; and pray what would become of you if we did not? I would to God they would try the experiment, and leave us to ourselves. They would soon find that with our *powerful friends* we should lose our *powerful enemies*. It is on account of our connection with England that we are threatened. Her protection of us has been eminent during the course of this war, when the privateers of our enemies insult our very ports.

The protection of England brings upon us the perpetual alarm of invasions, and her wars have carried away those troops, which, having been paid and cloathed by us, should, in justice, have remained here for our defence. England's protection of Ireland is as treacherous as is the shelter of the exalted oak in the thunder storm to the unphilosophic clown who seeks its shade: the tree serves but to conduct more unerringly the lightning's force upon his head.

The policy of England, which keeps us rather in a state of enmity than of friendship, is a narrow policy, and destructive of its own end.

Equal

Equal should it be to the British legislator, whether wealth flowed into the empire through Bristol or Cork, London or Dublin; it would soon diffuse itself, and find universal circulation.

The thorough-paced illiberality of a Scotch pedlar, or the limited views of a Manchester tradesman, confine them to the surface of things; but the man who devises laws for a great empire should look deeper.

As to an union now with England, I confess I am doubtful of its expediency. Time was that it would have been a glorious proposition to Ireland—but to unite ourselves to the vices and the decay of England, when her prosperity has taken flight with her virtues, is an experiment of which no man can promise good consequences.

The sun of England is nearly set, but in its meridian height it was to poor old Ireland a winter sun, the oblique direction of whose rays deprived us of the advantages which we should have derived from its proximity.

GUATIMOZIN.

ad June
F I N I S.