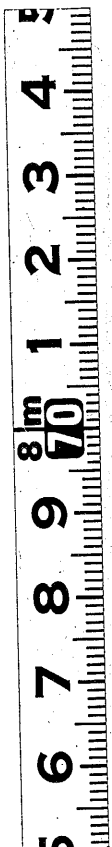


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TO THE  
LANDLORDS AND TENANTS  
OF  
SCOTLAND.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

THE elegant author of *The Consequences of the Irish Resolutions* having, by his address, just now roused you from your icy beds, I do myself the honour of attending your levee. I congratulate you on your narrow escape from the *thaw*, and on the *new* and important information you must have picked up from his address.

I beg leave, however, to caution you from being lulled too soon again to sleep. Your addresser, after terrifying you with the immediate completion of the treaty with Ireland, again soothes you to rest, as if he had awaked you untimeously, and to serve no purpose; for, with the same breath (p. 13.), he assures you, that, from the *open and manly conduct of the English*, in remonstrating against the treaty, "the Minister dropt some of his favourite taxes last summer, and he will drop the articles of his treaty this summer." All this, however, may have been "without design, for he has genius; and without deceit, because he has honour." Or, again, he may verily possess the ear of the Minister, and so know fully what he means to do this summer. In which case, the obvious meaning of his address was, not so much to rouse you from your beds to stare at danger, as to hold up to your admiring eyes his highly finished picture of those favours of their country, "the Independent Friends, who are now to watch over the liberties and interests of Scotland," for the benevolent purpose of allowing you to sleep in security.

Though I have a proper dependence on the watch set over you, yet I differ a little from your addresser. I wish you not to sleep. I hate sleep. The sleeping fox catches no poultry; and, as poor Richard says, "there will be sleeping enough in the grave." Besides, Mr Pitt does not sleep; and I doubt much if he shall drop the articles of his treaty this summer, his ideas differing so widely from the views of your addresser. It is true, indeed, he is more open to conviction than most of his predecessors; and that he has sometimes deemed it highly just and honourable to drop or alter schemes of taxation, in which, after full enquiry, and the clearest light thrown upon the subject, he has discovered any impropriety. It is also true, that he attends to the Irish business with the like openness and candour, and wishes to hear in-

one part, but to every individual portion of the British empire. — Such were the vagaries of his father, whose wish ever was, that even America, though much further off than Ireland, should taste of the sweets of justice and reciprocity with Britain. Put therefore no trust in the son; he will mislead you; he will go on with his treaty; and you may rest assured, that, however it may be founded upon liberal and just principles, and however well any general loss therefrom may be artfully guarded against, still all this is nothing, if your "corn lands will fall one-half in their value." This is the test, Gentlemen; *et hinc ille lachrymæ*. Here you must acknowledge you will be materially hurt. Charity begins at home; or, in the more elegant phrase of the addresser, "Do you think the Prince will believe you loyal to his family, who are not loyal to your own families?" The giving reciprocal liberty of importation to and from either country, however liberal, and free of narrow contracted principles, is by no means liberal to us: It will narrow and contract our rents;—yes, the very rents which you landlords have already strained every nerve in raising above those of your neighbours, whether of England or Ireland.

It may be true, Gentlemen, that, if the prices of your grain should fall, this might operate as an encouragement to manufactures; the prices of labour would fall also, and so our manufactories be put upon a nearer footing to Ireland. But what is all this to you, if your rents are to sink? You must look to yourselves alone. And, again, Gentlemen, consider, that, if the treaty takes place, we shall be deluged with Irish spirits, as the addresser very properly notices. This will ruin you distilleries. Now your distilleries, as well as a non-importation, keep up the markets, and prevent the poor labourer and manufacturer from purchasing bread for their families too easily, which, you know, is all so much in your pockets.

You have the answers of the corn-factors in the former address, and you'll again consider what they say—"The Irish having prohibited the importation of flour and ground-corn from all countries but Great Britain, for the encouragement of their mills, it might be a just return to them to

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one part, but to every individual portion of the British empire.—Such were the vagaries of his father, whose wish ever was, that even America, though much further off than Ireland, should taste of the sweets of justice and reciprocity with Britain. Put therefore no trust in the son; he will mislead you; he will go on with his treaty; and you may rest assured, that, however it may be founded upon liberal and just principles, and however well any general loss therefrom may be artfully guarded against, still all this is nothing, if your "corn lands will fall one-half in their value." This is the test, Gentlemen; *et hinc ille lachrymæ*. Here you must acknowledge you will be materially hurt. Charity begins at home; or, in the more elegant phrase of the addresser, "Do you think the Prince will believe you loyal to his family, who are not loyal to *your own families*?" The giving reciprocal liberty of importation to and from either country, however liberal, and free of narrow contracted principles, is by no means liberal to *us*. It will narrow and contract our rents;—yes, the very rents which you landlords have already strained every nerve in raising above those of your neighbours, whether of England or Ireland.

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You have the answers of the corn-factors in the former address, and you'll again consider what they say—"The Irish having prohibited the importation of flour and ground-corn from all countries but Great Britain, for the encouragement of their mills, it might be a *just return* to them to prohibit, in like manner, the importation of flour and ground-corn from any country but Ireland; and this would operate as an encouragement to our mills." Now, although, in vulgar language, it may be a *just return* for Britain to prohibit,

\* Dr Franklin.

§ Address to the Landlords and Tenants of Scotland, by the author of the Consequences of Irish Resolutions, page 8.

in like manner, the importation of flour and ground corn from any country but Ireland, for the encouragement of our mills,—yet, will this put any thing in your pockets? If the Irish have been fools in passing such an act, must we be fools too, and follow their example?—No—by no means;—avoid the mistakes of Ireland, and thereby keep up your rents.—Import none of their victual, but let them import yours, provided they pay high enough for it, that so you may be able to keep up your markets, and put what price you please upon your grain. By this you may live in the true spirit of *Reguli*, or Heads of Clans, *i. e.* *luxuriously and despotically*.—Belides, as the addresser puts in the mouth of a plain man, we cannot understand “how importing flour and ground corn from any country but Ireland should operate as an encouragement either to their or our mills.”

But, now we come to a full pause.—You will ask me, as you asked your last addresser, What shall you do? I shall make the same answer as he has done; “Do what all the manufacturing part of England is now doing—what the 13,000 weavers of Glasgow—the 11,000 weavers of Paisley and Dunfermline—and all the traders and master manufacturers are doing—and, with leave of the addresser, let me add, what the 85 Societies of Glasgow—all the weavers of Paisley—and other great and important societies throughout Scotland—as well as Lord George Gordon (formerly did) petition Parliament: And, in case you Lairds are so feeble in understanding and spirit, as not to dare to do so, least it should offend men in power, do you, Tenants, take their place; and, I may add, you ought to do it, as I shall answer for it, that, should the prices of grain fall from an Irish treaty, your Lairds will have other ideas of justice than to lower your rents on that account. They will not diminish their rent-rolls for any reciprocity whatever, at least, until you, the present tenants, are first ruined.”

But I am now hurrying, Gentlemen, to the very kernel and soul of the former address, and indeed, perhaps, to all that was seriously meant by it, that is, To hold up to your view the Society called *The Independent Friends*.—A Society far above any mentioned in the last paragraph.—This is the Society to which your attention is so much called by your late addresser, and to which you are to look up as to the *vis medicatrix* of the state.—You have an elegant, and what is more, a just eulogium upon its founder, the late Lord Advocate of Scotland; and the author of the address has been very happy in introducing it so fully, not only to make him amends for having traduced him, along with the whole Scots bar, † but, as you have long known his predecessor and successor, and their high abilities, it was equally proper you should be made acquainted with him. But to return to our Society—† “The first objects of that Society are to watch over the liberties and interests of Scotland, in order to preserve them alike from the oppression and violence of *faction*, and to make the press free; and, through the medium of it, to animate you to what is politically right, and to warn you against what is politically wrong.” For you are to know that none can distinguish political right and wrong, except the Society of Independent Friends.—The publishers of the newspapers shall now be no longer hampered in their politics, as “This Society, with the influence it possesses, will convince those publishers, that they are to give light to their countrymen, not to keep them in the dark, and that their

Now, let us stop for a moment, and inquire at your addresser what this Society is.—It consists of near a hundred noblemen and gentlemen of this country, who, from conscientiousness of certain “disadvantages, have been forced to form themselves into a Society called the Independent Friends. Individuals of it have friendships with persons who have been in power, and may be in power, again;” which, probably, may be all they want: But, although none of the Society have any friendships with those presently in power, and so might be deemed to consist all of one party, “yet, that the Society itself is a party one, is false, as fully appears from the address itself. In this Society, and in another less respectable one, hinted at in the address, you must put implicit faith—“They have heads to see what is right,” and you only see with your eyes; “and they have no interests or bad motives to make them lead you to what is wrong;” for it seems they wish not to get into power. They are infallible; and know the true interests of their country much better than all of you put together, or even half a dozen Houses of Parliament. But I now conclude, in the words of the former address, from which you will perceive that the Society of Independent Friends are to supersede the necessity of your thinking any farther for yourselves, and, indeed, the necessity even of a Parliament.—“Follow the views of those two Societies in the affairs of this country, and you will seldom go wrong.—They have heads to see what is right, and no interests or bad motives to make them lead you to what is wrong. When you do so, you will then recover that consequence, which, for many centuries, your ancestors possessed—to which you are entitled—and which you lost only by you or your forefathers losing the sense of it.”

But, Gentlemen, before taking my final adieu, it may be proper to let you into the secret of a conversation which I lately had with a plain man, so as you may be prepared and aware of his questions. Having accidentally met him in my walk, our subject turned upon the Independent Friends, and upon the consequences of an Irish importation: “You tell me, says he, if Ireland shall be at liberty to import corns into Scotland, it will be very prejudicial to the landlords and tenants; and I believe it, as they will no longer be able to monopolize the trade, or fix what price they please upon the grain.—“Now, (adds he), as you are fully acquainted with the interests of this country, be pleased seriously to inform me if you think his Majesty’s lieges, other than landlords and tenants, will be hurt by it.” “Why (says I, very innocently, though I acknowledge rather rashly), “I truly believe the reverse; the importation of Irish corns, &c. must bring down the markets, and provisions of all kinds be had cheaper.—“What may be (rejoins he, slyly), the proportion between the landholders and tenants of Scotland, and the whole other inhabitants, not comprehended under such denomination as younger children of landlords, lawyers, and their concurrents, divines, and instructors of youth, physicians, merchants, persons in the civil, military, and naval lines, printers, manufacturers, money-lenders, fishermen, labourers, &c. &c.?” “Why truly, says I, I reckon landholders and tenants equal to one-fifth, others say one-sixth of the whole other inhabitants.—“In the name of God, then, say he, why should the general benefit and advantage of the nation be hurt or impeded, because a paltry fraction of one-fifth or one-sixth of the whole may be losers by it? Nay the fraction must be less than one-

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\* Address, p. 9.

† Ditto, p. 14.

‡ Ditto, p. 16.

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short while; for, whenever their tacks come to be renewed,

\* Address, page 16.

their

their rents must come down to be on a par with the prices of grain; and, in the long run, it will even be also beneficial to the tenant.

“ But, replies I, as quick as my surprize would allow me, the Independent Friends think very much otherwise, and do you know, they possess or are heirs to 200,000l. a year.” Now mark the rudeness of those plain men.—“ Pshaw, damn your Independent Friends, says he, “ the address you have so much commended, bears, that at an average their estates are presently *dipt one half in debts and taxes*, and at same time avers, that, if the Irish treaty takes place, *their lands will fall the other half*; so that, instead of 200,000l. a year, they will have only just as many cyphers; and yet, these dependent gentlemen, whose *all hang*, by their own acknowledgement, upon the execution of the Irish treaty, *i. e.* whether they shall be cyphers or landholders, oppose it, and at same time the public good; and though entirely *dependent*, assume the title of the *Independent Friends*. But even allowing them to possess 200,000l. and to be only dipt one-third in debt and taxes,

as by the address appears was the case twenty years ago, I can point out a *single* manufacturer, (who, by the bye, so far from being seized with the nervous panic of the addresser, is presently concerned in erecting some manufactories near Lanark, in the west of Scotland,) who last year cleared *near* 80,000l. which is as much free money as the whole fraternity of Independent Friends would draw; and that too besides paying a *higher duty to Government than one-half of the whole landholders of Scotland do*; besides, your society are in part *only* heirs to 200,000l. a year, for I know three brothers among them, who, in law-language, are *all ranked pari passu upon one and the same estate*.” But tired with hearing evil of dignities, I stopped him short, by assuring him, that, in a few days, he should see a pamphlet by a learned and *independent judge*, which should open his eyes, and lead him to view the Irish importation treaty, and the society of *Independent Friends*, in a very different light; and with this I left him abruptly, firmly resolved to have no further correspondence with a plain man.

AN INDEPENDENT FRIEND.

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