

A CONGRATULATORY
A D D R E S S

T O

H I S M A J E S T Y,

F R O M T H E

P E A S A N T R Y O F I R E L A N D,

V U L G A R L Y D E N O M I N A T E D

W H I T E B O Y S,

O R,

R I G H T B O Y S.

D U B L I N:

P R I N T E D B Y P. B Y R N E, N o. 108, G R A F T O N - S T R E E T.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Editor of the following pages having perused, in a public print an imperfect sketch of their contents, made enquiries about the composition. An anonymous hand gratified his curiosity, by transmitting to him a copy of the Address itself. If the reader thinks with him, he will call it a finished composition; the diction has a spirit, an energy, and an elegance rare to be met with since the writings of JUNIUS. The stile is captivating, and the conclusions enforce conviction. The benevolence and liberality which pervade the whole, can only be equalled by the spirit of loyalty which so warmly animates the patriotic bosom, and which every good subject should be emulous to encourage. The facts stated in it are deduced from history, or evident by actual experience. It is incumbent on every good citizen to obviate the grievances of his fellow-subjects. Content amongst individuals is the cement of public unanimity; without unanimity the strength of a nation must decay; respectability abroad is sacrificed to disunion at home.

IF the Editor's endeavours have contributed to remove one discontent, by speaking truth, he thinks he has only done his duty. Wretched is that patient's lot, into whose frame the bungling surgeon repels the *colluvies* of an abscess! The nobler parts of a robust constitution may for a while resist the injury; but malignant matter not only engenders itself, but assimilates the wholesome juices to

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its own species; the operating causes of delay, latent in all natural bodies, are thus prematurely excited, and dissolution is painfully anticipated.

THE politics of Europe are not bent on the extension of dominion by the *barbarous trade of war*. When has the victorious nation sheathed the sword without having paid more for conquest than the object of contest was worth? Population and industry are the true sources of national wealth and prosperity. A reflection made on the licensed butcheries of armies by a French writer is a just one:—*Oh! que les hommes n'ont pas encore atteint l'art d'être heureux, sans nuire!* “What a pity that man has not yet attained the art of being happy without doing an injury!”

FANATISM at this day rests only amongst the dregs of mankind; philosophy and sound policy have chased it to the recesses of ignorance and artifice; even amongst the multitude of those from whom this Address proceeds, who are the lower order of the people, there appears a spirit of discrimination that rescues the human mind from the imputation of vulgarity.

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

GEORGE, Lord Viscount TOWNSHEND.

MY LORD,

THE world is the vehicle of the following Address: it appeared at first incomplete; pains were since that taken by the Editor to enquire into its authenticity; and as far as proof of authenticity can be collected, it appears to have some claim to that title. However, the facts stated in the body of it are so far consistent with truth, that calumny itself cannot impeach the reality of them. They are assertions drawn from experience, the only moral test by which men can decide. Fame has characterized the nation from whence this address proceeds as hospitable. What is loyalty amongst men but the perfection of hospitality? Reason progressively; logarithmical progression is not more responsible to itself, than the fruits of benevolence between man and man are to that person to whom they have confided the management of their

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community; and whilst the responsibility exists, the progression in either proceeds *ad infinitum*.

BUT laying aside similes, permit me to appeal to your Lordship's own experience. You resided amongst these people; you were frank and popular; and what was a most unministerial principle in your conduct, merit was a recommendation to you. Whilst you conversed with these people, the dignity of the Viceroy was maintained, at the same time the attraction of a private gentleman gained their affections and esteem. Let not this humble page record it; the parliamentary journals of that kingdom testify the fact. When it was mentioned in the Senate that they were sitting on your birth-day, public business was suspended on that occasion, by an unanimous vote of the House. It has never been, my Lord, in the least questioned, but that the people at large and their representatives concurred on this head.

THE Editor who sends forth this Address in its present form, knew that the public voice

was to be its medium; and, as it stands, every man is authorized to reject or countenance its merits; but as it breathes peace, benevolence, and good-will, so far every man is interested in it, more particularly the subjects of the Imperial British Crown. Naked and unfriended on its first partial appearance, when a second was sought for, could it be well introduced without a sponsor? Benevolence, candour, and justice, have not deserted this empire. Men, conspicuous for these qualities, are not strangers in Britain; any of them were proper persons for giving protection; but how to chuse was the question. The address itself decided that point; when the name of TOWNSHEND was respectfully incorporated with it, it naturally attached itself to your patronage: addressed in the most respectful terms to our Sovereign, could any person be sought for to patronize it with more propriety than his own former representative, to whose experience an appeal was made? They assert a truth, when they say that your Lordship's administration broke the shackles which fettered the Government, and re-invested

vested the people with a degree of liberty, *mislaid* for a long time. It is not then to be wondered at, if you have since that period maintained a title to their esteem. Once the instrument of liberty, founded in justice, you are now addressed as a patron of justice, founded in liberty; and so far as this production of an unhappy, oppressed description of men, is founded on the principles of both united, it is humbly recommended to your Lordship's patronage.

I have the honour, my Lord, with all due respect, to subscribe myself

Your Lordship's

most obedient,

humble servant,

THE EDITOR.

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T O
H I S M A J E S T Y,
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P E A S A N T R Y O F I R E L A N D.

“ **W**E, your Majesty’s affectionate, oppressed subjects, the Peasantry of the southern and western counties of your kingdom of Ireland, beg leave to lay before your Majesty our heart-felt congratulations for the happy and providential escape of your sacred person from the attack lately made on your life by a maniac.

“ We feel in common with your Majesty’s other loyal subjects, who come forward with their congratulations, a sensible joy on this occasion ; as we have, notwithstanding the many impediments thrown in our way, looked up to the equity and mildness which have characterized your Majesty’s

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Government, as auspicious to our hopes that the grievances under which we have for a long time groaned, will be seen in their true light, which, we are convinced, is all that is wanting to induce your gracious benevolence to interfere and redress them.

“ We are fully persuaded that your paternal concern for the general welfare of all your subjects cannot but extend to us, when your own discernment shall comprehend the true state of our complaints, which have hitherto been obstructed by the false medium through which interested persons have represented us to your Majesty ; and we are the more encouraged to think so, when we recollect, that the glorious work of breaking the cabals and juntas, which governed both your Majesty’s predecessors and the people of this country, was left for your Majesty to begin. All our former Sovereigns, in order to have the administration of the kingdom managed for the purposes of Government, were obliged to compound with three leading families, by whom the Government was, we may say, formed upon their own terms, until the ever-to-be-revered administration of Lord Townshend. At this period a degree of liberality was infused into the nation, as the people began to approach nearer to the spirit of the constitution, by having an option

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in the delegation of some Representatives to Parliament, that were formerly forced upon the Crown as well as themselves, whereby some controul was had over the rigorous selfish views of an oppressive aristocratic-oligarchy that shackled the hands of Government, and emasculated the energy of the people.

“ That firm and unshaken loyalty which brought on the troubles of our forefathers, by a disinterested attachment to a family who knew not how to shew gratitude for the support they met, nor value the friendship of those who gave them that support, glows with equal ardor in our bosoms for your Majesty’s person and family ; and we, their descendants, convinced of your Majesty’s indefeasible right to the sceptre of this kingdom, are animated with the same loyalty and attachment to your government and person as distinguished them a century ago. We do not offer bare words or assertions ; we appeal to facts. When the Crown tottered on the head of his late Majesty, your glorious grandsire, the demeanor of our forefathers was dutiful, loyal, and peaceable : and in your Majesty’s own reign, when a combined host of foes cherished a rebellion in your dominions, the sons of Ireland served cheerfully along with the British youth in repelling your enemies : laying aside all distinction of country or

religion, we had no other object than an emulation with your Majesty's other loyal subjects, to spill our blood in your service, or win laurels to lay them at your royal feet. Our youths were withdrawn from foreign standards, where their conduct was an honour and a reproach to the country that proscribed their merit; and, instead of imitating their ancestors within the walls of Cremona, or on the plains of the continent, there are thousands existing amongst us, who have in the course of the last war braved every danger, and defied every vicissitude of climate, whether in the sultry and sickly plains, where fort Onoa yielded to our arms in the west, or when, incorporated under the British standard, we encountered, in an alien climate, the scorching rage of the Torrid Zone, and the hostile natives of the Carnatic. A name familiar to glory, a name which the annals of this empire will transmit, in the list of her heroes, to posterity — *Macbride* — a name not uninteresting to the nation, nor a stranger to the royal ear, was followed by thousands; he was not deputed to scrutinize our creed, nor did your Majesty make any enquiry on that head when he reported to you the promiscuous numbers that followed him into your service. Ah! Sire, our loyalty and courage were his objects, and we embraced the occasion with transport that enabled us to put them to the proof.

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“ The dregs of that Aristocratic-oligarchy which shackled the Government of your Majesty’s predecessors in this country, exist still, and continue to oppress us. Formerly there was an excuse for exercising some restraint, whilst the effects of an attachment to the House of Stuart rendered our principles dubious; but when we recur to that interesting period of our history, we justify the necessity of tying up the hands of persons who opposed the measures that eventually placed your illustrious family on the throne; that Prince who won the diadem was mild and benignant, even in his proscriptions. Your royal ancestors tempered, by their own natural clemency, the rigour of those laws which William’s successor enacted against the adherents of her own father and brother.—We suffered for one Stuart, and we were punished by another. But we trust that the testimonies which the people of our religion have given to your Majesty’s person and Government, by not only swearing allegiance to you, but by having an interest in the land wherein they live, is a security for the sincerity of our principles. Many persons professing what is called the Romish religion are become, by their own industry, purchasers of several of those estates that were forfeited at the Revolution. They have no title to their own security but the support and maintenance of your Majesty’s Government,

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by the laws of which they were permitted to be seized of these lands. Our allegiance has been accepted by your Majesty, on condition of abjuring all temporal supremacy of the Bishop of Rome in your Majesty's dominions. This we have cheerfully and unanimously done. The wisdom of Europe is a lesson to all Governments in curtailing that monster—universal temporal power in an ecclesiastical.—It is now but a shadow in the German empire and almost all other Catholic countries. We have begun that useful and salutary work amongst ourselves, and it is with glory we reflect that our conduct in that point is directed by the *Vox Populi*. We oppose the ignorance and prejudices of our clergy with success; we check their rapacious principles; we regulate their usurpations on the rights and free-will of men; we teach them reason instead of bending to their anathemas; our actions are not those of fanatic, bigotted men; we are actuated by conviction: we at the same time are not contemners of religion; we only wish to see the ministers of God act worthy of themselves. The *Magna Charta* of England was obtained by men of our principles; the laws of *Præmunire* were passed against the encroachments of the Pope by a legislature in England that thought as we do. We have imbibed no foreign prejudices, we know no constitution more excellent than our own, even though

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we are denied the privilege of sending members to represent us in Parliament; we wish to have less communication with foreign prejudices; we wish that our clergy were bred at home, where they would conceive a reverence for the glorious fabric of our constitution, and that they were not to be sent abroad to subsist on the benevolence of foreign establishments, where their gratitude almost perverts their principles of patriotism. We wish them to receive an enlightened and liberal education at home, instead of the contracted, useless modes they pursue abroad in idle discussions of school divinity. We want men of real science, and not pedants; we wish for men of enlarged understandings and tolerating principles, unwarped by the delusive sophisms of theological controversy; men animated with the peaceful spirit of universal benevolence. In a word, we should be happy to see true patriotism and religion constantly united in our spiritual rulers—to find them the conciliating friend, the kind instructor, the upright arbitrator, and the pious, the unbigotted divine; men who can by example as well as precept inculcate religious benevolence into our youth, and who are not beginning to study the world at the period when they set out to be teachers in it. In fine, let us have such as are modelled after the head and heart of an O'Leary. We disavow the guilty and unreasonable principle
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of confining the mercies of our common Father to one sectary ; we must have a mode of religion, and we wish the mercies of the Most High to establish peace and union between us and all mankind.

“ Entertaining no principles incompatible with loyalty to your Majesty, and the welfare of our fellow-subjects, we humbly assert that we have grievances. Nature has made us susceptible of all the feelings incident to humanity. Deprivation of instruction leaves a people no alternative to arrive at being civilized but by insurrection. We have been aspersed with barbarity by those who had been habituated to oppress us ; those who trampled upon us, and goaded us, insinuated that our complaints arose from disaffection ; but this became at length too gross an imposition for credulity itself. The avarice of those who ought to be the harbingers of peace, the ministers of the gospel, is the main source of our evils. 'Tis true that we hold the land, out of which we torture a wretched existence, often in the fourth, fifth, or sixth degree from its owner ; the intermediate emoluments are made by the sweat of our brows* ; but it is not of this

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* The rates paid by the cottagers in Ireland, particularly in the southern and western counties, for rents, dues, &c. will surprize the reader ; they must appear almost improbable. The following

following

we complain. Self-interest may one day influence the judgment or humanity of our landlords to remove the evil; then a contented peasantry, the wealth and strength of their country, may spring up in the place of these petty tyrants, the *Iron-bound Gentry* †. The relentless rigidity of Proctors, the agents

following statement was made on an average amongst several thousands of these people :

£.	s.	d.	
2	5	6	Each cottager is allowed 5d. per day, which amounts to 5s. less than he pays - £.7 12 6
0	18	0	But not being employed more than a certain time in summer and winter,
2	0	0	Wages in summer 3 4 9
0	11	4½	In winter - 2 11 10
0	15	0	<hr/>
0	10	0	5 16 7
0	2	0	Deficiency in earning below his expenses - - 2 0 6
0	3	3	
0	1	7½	This deficiency he is left to his own industry to make good at the time the iron-bound Squire does not want his service.
0	3	3	
0	0	8	
0	5	5	
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† An Iron-bound gentleman is an upstart farmer, who, after serving some man of fortune as p—p, or having fought for him, swore with him, got drunk with him, was tolerated to mix in company that would not associate with his father, whom he of course learned to despise; he goes to county meetings or races, and having seized the unguarded moments of some Squire Gawky,

agents of un pitying Ecclesiastics, who frequently farm the tythes through as many degrees as the lands themselves pass through hands, is the accumulation of our sorrows; these are demands exorbitant in themselves, and extorted with minute rapacity; demands which, if moderated, we will pay without reluctance; but sanctioned by the legislature or prescription, we cannot retrench them. We have some influence over our own Clergy; and even here, Sire, we meet with difficulty; here we have convincing proofs that, however the priesthood differ amongst themselves, yet they all agree in this one point, of taking care of their own interests. But we will not importune your royal ear with a detail of what is notorious; we do not wish that the Sovereign of a free people should be the *speculum* of a despotic Monarch. The peasantry of France have tasted the effect of their Prince's benevolence; but your Majesty only acts consistent with yourself, when you continue to extend to us the rights of men in particular, after the redress of our constitution has met at your hands in our days. Suffer us to appeal for our sincerity to that Noble-

whose secrets he must keep, he gets a bargain of a farm, the tenants of which he racks to death to maintain his extravagance; being like his patron, too ignorant to improve by art, some of the first opportunities in nature by which he could aggrandize himself and his family.

man who was your true Representative amongst us : Lord Townshend was your faithful representative in our hearts ; his discernment is unquestionable ; all the world is convinced that, however divided in particulars the people of this country may be, yet they have ever been found true to one characteristic feature, which is, that wherever merit appears, they are unanimous in paying it the tribute justly due to it. In that Nobleman they found an object worthy of proving the consistency of their general character. We now call upon the humanity of a Legislature competent to give us relief, with whose wisdom we humbly implore your Majesty's benevolence will be our advocate. Being at present unrepresented, and standing like an ex-constitutional body, whom can we supplicate, or to whom look up, but to the common father of his people ? Confiding in the graciousness of your royal disposition, we rely that our dutiful entreaties may not be ineffectual. Happy, Sire, in your prosperity, we offer up our fervent and unfeigned supplications to the Almighty to preserve your royal person, and that of our amiable Queen, that pattern of domestic excellence, to live long to enjoy the conscious happiness of reviewing her own good actions ; and may your royal offspring, when it pleases Providence to recompence your virtues with a heavenly diadem, look back to the conduct of their Sire,

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and bleſs poſterity by an emulation of their parents worth. This Addreſs comes from a ſet of men, united and firm ; it is not extorted by flattery or influence ; it is the effuſion of their own feelings : it contains the ſentiments of thoſe who think loyalty and the name of IRISHMAN inſeparable. Unable to preſent it in the uſual forms of Addreſſes to your Maſteſty, as we have not a *friend* at Court, nor one about your perſon, as we believe, but ſuch as miſrepresents or calumniates us, we take this method of communicating it to the world, through the medium of which we hope it will not fail to reach your Maſteſty.”

Ruins of Kilmarnock,
Sept. 16, 1786.

F I N I S.

