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Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin.
VOLUME X.

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Seasonable advice to the grand-jury concerning the bill preparing against the printer of the preceding letter

An extract from the debates of the house of commons at Westminster, Oct. 21, 1680

The presentment of the grand-jury of the county of the city of Dublin

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PROPOSAL \( [a] \)

FOR THE

UNIVERSAL USE

OF

IRISH MANUFACTURE, etc.

Written in the Year 1721.

IT is the peculiar felicity and prudence of the people in this kingdom, that whatever commodities or productions lie under the greatest discouragements from England, those are what they are sure to be most industrious in cultivating and

\( [a] \) This treatise spread very fast; upon which a person, in great office, sent in haste for the chief justice (Whitsed), and informed him of a seditious, fractious, and virulent pamphlet lately published, with a design of setting the two kingdoms at variance; directing, at the same time, that the printer should be prosecuted with the utmost rigour.—The chief justice had so quick an understanding, that he resolved, if possible, to out-do his orders.—The printer was seized, and forced to give great bail;—the jury brought him in not guilty, although they had beenmulled with the utmost industry: the chief justice sent them back nine times, and kept them eleven hours, until, being tired out, they were forced to leave the matter to the mercy of the judge, by what they call a special verdict. During the trial, the chief justice, among other singularities, laid his hand on his breast, and protested solemnly, that the author’s design was to bring in the pretender: but the cause being so very odious and impopular, the trial of the verdict was deferred from one term to another, until, upon the (D. of G-st-n) the lord lieutenant’s arrival, his grace, after ma-
Agriculture, which hath been the principal care of all wise nations, and for the encouragement whereof there are so many statute-laws in England, we countenance so well, that the landlords are every where, by penal clauses, absolutely prohibiting their tenants from ploughing, not satisfied to confine them within certain limitations, as is the practice of the English; one effect of which is already seen in the prodigious dearness of corn, and the importation of it from London, as the cheaper market. And because people are the riches of a country, and that our neighbours have done, and are doing, all that in them lies to make our wool a drug to us, and a monopoly to them; therefore the politic gentlemen of Ireland have depopulated vast tracts of the best land, for the feeding of sheep.

I could fill a volume, as large as the History of the wise men of Gotham, with a catalogue only of some wonderful laws and customs we have observed within thirty years past. It is true, indeed, our beneficial traffick of wool with France hath been our only support for several years past, furnishing true advice and permission from England, was pleased to grant a noli prosequi. Pope's works, vol. ix. letter 5.

This piece first turned the tide of popularity in the author's favour. Orrery.

[6] It was the practice of Irish farmers to wear out their ground with ploughing, neither manuring nor letting it lie fallow; and when their leaves were near expired, they ploughed even the meadows, and made such havoc, that the landlords, by their zeal to prevent it, were betrayed into this pernicious measure.
us with all the little money we have to pay our rents, and go to market. But our merchants assure me, *This trade hath received a great damp by the present fluctuating condition of the coin in France: that most of their wine is paid for in specie, without carrying thither any commodity from hence.*

However, since we are so universally bent upon enlarging our flocks, it may be worth inquiring, what we shall do with our wool, in case Barnstable [c] should be over-stocked, and our French commerce should fail?

I could wish the parliament had thought fit to have suspended their regulation of church matters, and enlargements of the prerogative, until a more convenient time, because they did not appear very pressing, at least to the persons principally concerned; and, instead of these great refinements in polities and divinity, had amused themselves and their committees a little with the state of the nation. For example: What if the house of commons had thought fit to make a resolution, *nemine contradicente*, against wearing any cloth or stuff in their families, which were not of the growth and manufacture of this kingdom? What if they had extended it so far as utterly to exclude all silks, velvets, callicoes, and the whole lexicon of female fopperies; and declared, that whoever acted otherwise, should be deemed and reputed an enemy to

[c] A sea-port in Devonshire, at that time the principal market in England for Irish wool.
PROPOSAL FOR THE USE

the nation? What if they had sent up such a resolution to be agreed to by the house of lords: and, by their own practice and encouragement, spread the execution of it in their several countries? What if we should agree to make burying in woollen a fashion, as our neighbours have made it a law? What, if the ladies would be content with Irish stuffs for the furniture of their houses, for gowns and petticoats for themselves and their daughters? Upon the whole, and to crown all the rest, let a firm resolution be taken, by male and female, never to appear with one single shred, that comes from England; and let all the people say, AMEN.

I hope, and believe, nothing could please his majesty better than to hear, that his loyal subjects of both sexes, in this kingdom, celebrated [d] his birth-day (now approaching) universally clad in their own manufacture. Is there virtue enough left in this deluded people to save them from the brink of ruin? If the men's opinions may be taken, the ladies will look as handsome in stuffs as in brocades; and, since all will be equal, there may be room enough to employ their wit and fancy in chusing and matching patterns and colours. I heard the late archbishop of Tuam mention a pleasant observation of some body's; that Ireland would never be happy until a law were made for burning

[d] Her grace the duchess of Dorset, the lord lieutenant's lady, is said to have appeared at the Castle in Dublin wholly clad in the manufacture of Ireland on his majesty's birth-day 1753.
every thing, that came from England, except their people and their coals. I must confess, that as to the former, I should not be sorry if they would stay at home; and for the latter, I hope, in a little time, we shall have no occasion for them:

Non tanti mitra est, non tanti judicis ostrum.
But I should rejoice to see a tay-lace from England be thought scandalous, and become a topick for censure at visits and tea-tables.

If the unthinking shop-keepers, in this town, had not been utterly destitute of common sense, they would have made some proposal to the parliament, with a petition to the purpose I have mentioned; promising to improve the cloths and stuffs of the nation into all possible degrees of fineness and colours, and engaging not to play the knave, according to their custom, by exacting and imposing upon the nobility and gentry either as to the prices or the goodness. For I remember, in London, upon a general mourning, the rascally mercers and woollen drapers would, in four and twenty hours, raise their cloths and silks to above a double price; and, if the mourning continued long, then come whining with petitions to the court, that they were ready to starve, and their fineries lay upon their hands.

I could wish, our shop-keepers would immediately think on this proposal, addressing it to all persons of quality and others; but first be sure to get some body who can write sense to put it into form.
I think it needless to exhort the clergy to follow this good example; because, in a little time those among them, who are so unfortunate to have had their birth and education in this country, will think themselves abundantly happy, when they can afford Irish crape and an Athlone hat; and as to the others, I shall not presume to direct them. I have indeed seen the present archbishop of Dublin clad from head to foot in our own manufacture; and yet, under the rose be it spoken, his grace deserveth as good a gown, as if he had not been born among us [e].

I have not courage enough to offer one syllable on this subject to their honours of the army: neither have I sufficiently considered the great importance of scarlet and gold lace.

The fable in Ovid of Arachne and Pallas is to this purpose. The goddess had heard of one Arachne, a young virgin very famous for spinning and weaving; they both met upon a trial of skill; and Pallas finding herself almost equalled in her own art, stung with rage and envy, knockt her rival down, and turned her into a spider; enjoining her to spin and weave for ever out of her own bowels, and in a very narrow compass. I confess, that from a boy I always pitied poor Arachne, and could never heartily love the goddess on account of so cruel and unjust a sentence; which however is fully executed upon us, by England, with further

[•] Doctor King.
OF IRISH MANUFACTURE.

additions of rigour and severity, for the greatest part of our bowels and vitals is extracted without allowing us \([f]\) the liberty of spinning and weaving them.

The scripture tells us, that oppression maketh a wise man mad, therefore, consequently speaking, the reason, why some men are not mad, is, because they are not wise: however, it were to be wished, that oppression would, in time, teach a little wisdom to fools.

I was much delighted with a person, who had a great estate in this kingdom, upon his complaints to me, how grievously poor England suffers by impositions from Ireland: that we convey our own wool to France, in spite of all the harpies at the custom-house: that Mr. Shuttleworth, and others, on the Cheshire coasts, are such fools as to sell us their bark at a good price for tanning our own hides into leather: with other enormities of the like weight and kind. To which I will venture to add more: that the mayoralty of this city is always executed by an inhabitant, and often by a native, which might as well be done by a deputy with a moderate salary, whereby poor England loseth at least one thousand pounds a year upon the balance: that the governing of this kingdom

\([f]\) In the spring 1752, the parliament of England passed an act for permitting the exportation of wool, and woollen or bay yarn, from any port in Ireland to any port in England: which was before prohibited. And,

In the winter 1753, the Irish parliament prohibited the importation of gold and silver lace, except of the manufacture of England.
A PROPOSAL FOR THE USE
costs the lord lieutenant three thousand six hundred
pounds a year; so much net loss to poor England:
that the people of Ireland presume to dig for coals in
their own grounds; and the farmers, in the county
of Wicklow, send their turf to the very market of
Dublin, to the great discouragement of the coal trade
of Moystyn [g] and Whitehaven: that the revenues
of the Post-office here, so rightly belonging to the
English treasury, as arising chiefly from our own com-
erce with each other, should be remitted to London
clogged with that grievous burthen of exchange; and
the pensions paid out of the Irish revenues to Eng-
lish favourites should lie under the same disadvantage,
to the great loss of the grantees. When a divine is
sent over to a bishoprick here with the hopes of five
and twenty hundred pounds a year; and upon his ar-
rival he finds, alas! a dreadful discount of ten or
twelve per cent: a judge or a commissioner of the re-
venue has the same cause of complaint. Lastly, The
ballad upon Cotter is vehemently suspected to be Irish
manufacture; and yet is allowed to be sung in our open
streets, under the very nose of the government.
These are a few, among the many hardships,
we put upon that poor kingdom of England; for
which, I am confident, every honest man with-
eth a remedy: and I hear, there is a project on foot
for transporting our best wheaten straw by sea
and land carriage to Dunstable; and obliging us, by
a law, to take off yearly so many tun of straw hats

[g] Moystyn in Flintshire, and Whitehaven in Cumberland.
for the use of our women; which will be a great encouragement to the manufacture of that industrious town.

I would be glad to learn among the divines, whether a law to bind men without their own consent be obligatory, in foro conscientiae; because I find, Scripture, Sanderson, and Suarez, are wholly silent on the matter. The oracle of reason, the great law of nature, and general opinion of civilians, wherever they treat of limited governments, are indeed decisive enough.

It is wonderful to observe the byas among our people in favour of things, persons, and wares of all kinds, that come from England. The printer tells his hawkers, that he has got an excellent new song just brought from London. I have somewhat of a tendency that way myself; and upon hearing a cocomb from thence displaying himself with great volubility upon the park, the play-house, the opera, the gaming ordinaries, it was apt to beget in me a kind of veneration for his parts and accomplishments. It is not many years since I remember a person, who, by his style and literature, seems to have been the corrector of a hedge-press in some blind-alley about Little-Britain, proceeded gradually to be an author, at least a [b] translator of a lower rate, although somewhat of a larger bulk, than any that now flourishes in Grub-Street; and upon the strength of this foundation come over here, erect

[b] Supposed to be Caesar’s Commentaries, dedicated to the duke of Marlborough, by col. Bladen.
himself up into an orator and politician, and lead a kingdom after him. This, I am told, was the very motive, that prevailed on the [i] author of a play called, Love in a hollow tree, to do us the honour of a visit; presuming, with very good reason, that he was a writer of a superior class. I know another, who, for thirty years past, hath been the common standard of stupidity in England, where he was never heard a minute in any assembly, or by any party, with common christian treatment; yet, upon his arrival hither, could put on a face of importance and authority, talk more than six, without either gracefulness, propriety, or meaning; and, at the same time, be admired and followed as the pattern of eloquence and wisdom.

Nothing hath humbled me so much, or shewn a greater disposition to a contemptusus treatment of Ireland in some chief governors, than that high style of several speeches from the throne, delivered as usual after the royal assent, in some periods of the two last reigns. Such exaggerations of the prodigious condescensions in the prince to pass those good laws, would have but an odd found at Westminster: neither do I apprehend, how any good law can pass, wherein the king's interest is not as much concerned as that of the people. I remember, after a speech on the like occasion, delivered by my lord [k] Wharton (I think it was his last), he desired Mr. Addison to ask my opinion on it: my answer was, That his excellency had very honestly forfeited his head

[i] Lord Grimston. [k] Lord lieutenant.
on account of one paragraph: wherein he asserted, by plain consequence, a dispensing power in the queen. His lordship owned it was true, but swore the words were put into his mouth by direct orders from court. From whence it is clear, that some ministers, in those times, were apt, from their high elevation, to look down upon this kingdom, as if it had been one of their colonies of outcasts in America. And I observed a little of the same turn of spirit in some great men, from whom I expected better; although, to do them justice, it proved no point of difficulty to make them correct their idea, whereof the whole nation quickly found the benefit.—But that is forgotten. How the style hath since run, I am wholly a stranger; having never seen a speech since the last of the queen.

I would now expostulate a little with our country landlords; who, by unmeasurable screwing and racking their tenants all over the kingdom, have already reduced the miserable people to a worse condition than the peasants in France, or the vassals in Germany and Poland; so that the whole species of what we call substantial farmers, will, in a very few years, be utterly at an end. It was pleasant to observe these gentlemen, labouring with all their might for preventing the bishops from letting their revenues at a moderate half value (whereby the whole order would, in an age, have been reduced

[1] Whereby, that is, by preventing the bishops revenues from being let at half value. See this position explained and proved in the tract called, *Arguments against enlarging the power of bishops*, vol. ix.
A PROPOSAL FOR THE USE

reduced to manifest beggary) at the very instant, when they were every where canting [m] their own land upon short leaves, and sacrificing their oldest tenants for a penny an acre advance. I know not how it comes to pass (and yet, perhaps, I know well enough) that slaves have a natural disposition to be tyrants, and that, when my betters give me a kick, I am apt to revenge it with six upon my footmen; although, perhaps, he may be an honest and diligent fellow. I have heard great divines affirm, that nothing is so likely to call down an universal judgment from heaven upon a nation, as universal oppression; and whether this be not already verified in part, their worships the landlords are now at full leisure to consider. Whoever travels this country, and observes the face of nature, or the faces and habits, and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land, where law, religion, or common humanity is professed.

I cannot forbear saying one word upon a thing they call a bank, which I hear is projecting in this town [n]. I never saw the proposals, nor understand any one particular of their scheme: what I wish for at present is only a sufficient provision of hemp, and caps and bells, to distribute according to the several degrees of honesty and prudence.

[m] Canting their land is letting it to the highest bidder----cant signifies the same as auction.

[n] This project for a bank in Ireland was soon afterwards brought into parliament, and rejected.
in some persons. I hear only of a monstrous sum already named; and if others do not soon hear of it too, and hear with a vengeance, then am I a gentleman of less sagacity than myself and a very few besides take me to be. And the jest will be still the better, if it be true, as judicious persons have assured me, that one half is altogether imaginary. The matter will be likewise much mended, if the merchants continue to carry off our gold, and our goldsmiths to melt down our heavy silver.
A LETTER TO THE Shopkeepers, Tradesmen, Farmers, and Common People OF IRELAND, CONCERNING THE BRASS-HALF-PENCE Coined by one WILLIAM WOOD, HARDWARE-MAN, With a Design to have them pass in this Kingdom.

Wherein is shewn The Power of his Patent, the Value of his Half-pence, and how far every Person may be obliged to take the same in Payments, and how to behave himself, in case such an Attempt should be made by Wood, or any other Person.

(Very proper to be kept in every Family.)

By: M. B. DRAPIER.

Written in the Year 1724.
About the year 1722, when Charles duke of Grafton was lord lieutenant of Ireland, one William Wood, an hard-ware-man and a bankrupt, alleging the great want of copper money in that kingdom, procured a patent for coining 108,000l. to pass there as current money. The dean, believing this measure to be a vile job from the beginning to the end, and that the chief procurers of the patent were to be sharers in the profits which would arise from the ruin of a kingdom, assumed the character of a Draper, which for some reason he chose to write Drapier; and in the following Letters warned the people not to receive the coin which was then sent over.
LETTER I.
TO THE
Tradesmen, Shopkeepers, Farmers, and Country People in General,
OF THE
KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

Brethren, Friends, Countrymen, and Fellow-Subjects.

WHAT I intend now to say to you, is, next to your duty to God, and the care of your salvation, of the greatest concern to yourselves and your children; your bread and clothing, and every common necessary of life, entirely depend upon it. Therefore I do most earnestly exhort you, as men, as christians, as parents, and as lovers of your country, to read this paper with the utmost attention, or get it read to you by others; which that you may do at the less expence, I have ordered the printer to sell it at the lowest rate.

It is a great fault among you, that, when a person writes with no other intention than to do you good, you will not be at the pains to read his advices. One copy of this paper may serve a dozen of you, which will be less than a farthing a-piece. It is your folly, that you have no common or general interest in your view, not even the wisest among you;
you; neither do you know, or enquire, or care, who are your friends, or who are your enemies.

About four years ago, a little book was written to advise all people to wear the manufacture of this our own dear [0] country. It had no other design, said nothing against the king or parliament, or any person whatsoever; yet the poor printer was prosecuted two years with the utmost violence, and even some weavers themselves (for whose sake it was written) being upon the JURY, found him guilty. This would be enough to discourage any man from endeavouring to do you good, when you will either neglect him, or fly in his face for his pains; and when he must expect only danger to himself, and to be fined and imprisoned, perhaps to his ruin.

However, I cannot but warn you once more of the manifest destruction before your eyes, if you do not behave yourselves as you ought.

I will therefore first tell you the plain story of the fact; and then I will lay before you how you ought to act, in common prudence, according to the laws of your country.

The fact is this: It having been many years since COPPER HALF-PENCE or FARthings were last coined in this kingdom, they have been, for some time, very scarce, and many counterfeits passed about under the name of raps: several applications were made to England, that we might have

[0] A proposal for the use of Irish manufactures.
liberty to coin new ones, as in former times we did: but they did not succeed. At last one Mr. Wood, a mean ordinary man, a hard-ware-dealer, procured a patent under his majesty's broad seal to coin 108,000l. in copper for this kingdom; which patent, however, did not oblige any one here to take them, unless they pleased. Now you must know, that the halfpence and farthings in England pass for very little more than they are worth; and, if you should beat them to pieces, and sell them to the brazier, you would not lose much above a penny in a shilling. But Mr. Wood made his half-pence of such base-metal, and so much smaller than the English ones, that the brazier would hardly give you above a penny of good money for a shilling of his; so that this sum of 108,000l. in good gold and silver must be given for trash, that will not be worth above eight or nine thousand pounds real value. But this is not the worst; for Mr. Wood, when he pleases, may, by stealth, send over another 108,000l. and buy all our goods for eleven parts in twelve under the value. For example, if a hatter sells a dozen of hats for five shillings a-piece, which amounts to three pounds, and receives the payment in Wood's coin, he really receives only the value of five shillings.

Perhaps, you will wonder how such an ordinary fellow, as this Mr. Wood, could have so much interest as to get his Majesty's broad seal for so great a sum of bad money to be sent to this poor country; and that all the nobility and gentry here could
could not obtain the same favour, and let us make our own *half-pence* as we used to do. Now I will make that matter very plain; we are at a great distance from the king's court, and have no body there to solicit for us, although a great number of *lords* and 'squires, whose estates are here, and are our countrymen, spend all their *lives* and *fortunes* there: but this same Mr. *Wood* was able to attend constantly for his own interest; he is an *English*man, and had great friends, and it seems knew very well *where to give money* to those, that would speak to others, that could speak to the *king*, and tell a *fair story*. And *his majesty*, and, perhaps, the great lord or lords who advised him, might think it was for our *country's good*; and so, as the lawyers express it, the *king* was deceived in his *grant*, which often happens in all reigns. And I am sure if *his majesty* knew that such a patent, if it should take effect according to the desire of Mr. *Wood*, would utterly ruin this kingdom, which hath given such great proofs of its *loyalty*, he would immediately recall it, and, perhaps, shewed his displeasure to *some body or other*: but a *word to the wise* is enough. Most of you must have heard with what anger our *honourable house of commons* received an account of this *Wood's patent*. There were several *fine speeches* made upon it, and plain proofs, that it was all a *wicked cheat* from the *bottom* to the *top*; and several *smart votes* were printed, which that same *Wood* had the assurance to answer like-
wife in print; and in as confident a way, as if he were a better man than our whole parliament put together.

This Wood, as soon as his patent was passed, or soon after, sends over a great many barrels of those half-pence to Cork, and other sea-port towns; and to get them off, offered an hundred pounds in his coin for seventy or eighty in silver; but the collectors of the king’s customs very honestly refused to take them, and so did almost every body else. And since the parliament hath condemned them, and desired the king that they might be stopped, all the kingdom do abominate them.

But Wood is still working underhand to force his half-pence upon us; and, if he can, by the help of his friends in England, prevail so far as to get an order, that the commissioners and collectors of the king’s money shall receive them, and that the army is to be paid with them; then he thinks his work shall be done. And this is the difficulty you will be under in such a case; for the common soldier, when he goes to the market, or ale-house, will offer this money; and, if it be refused, perhaps he will swagger and bestor, and threaten to beat the butcher, or ale-wife, or take the goods by force, and throw them the bad half-pence. In this, and the like cases, the shopkeeper, or victualler, or any other tradesman, has no more to do, than to demand ten times the price of his goods, if it is to be paid in Wood’s money; for example, twenty pence of that money for a quart of ale, and

C 3
so in all things else, and not part with his goods till he gets the money.

For suppose you go to an ale-house with that base money, and the landlord gives you a quart for four of those half-pence, what must the victualler do? his brewer will not be paid in that coin; or, if the brewer should be such a fool, the farmers will not take it from them for their rent; because they are bound, by their leases, to pay their rents in good and lawful money of England, which this is not, nor of Ireland neither, and the squire, their landlord, will never be so bewitched to take such trash for his land; so that it must certainly stop somewhere or other, and, wherever it stops, it is the same thing, and we are all undone.

The common weight of these half-pence is between four and five to an ounce, suppose five; then three shillings and four-pence will weigh a pound, and consequently twenty shillings will weigh six pounds, butter-weight. Now there are many hundred farmers, who pay two hundred pounds a year rent; therefore when one of these farmers comes with his half year's rent, which is one hundred pounds, it will be at least six hundred pound weight, which is three horses load.

If a squire has a mind to come to town to buy cloaths, and wine, and spices for himself and family, or perhaps, to pass the winter here, he must bring with him five or six horses loaden with sacks,

as the farmers bring their corn; and, when his lady comes in her coach to our shops, it must be followed by a car loaded with Mr. Wood's money. And, I hope, we shall have the grace to take it for no more than it is worth.

They say 'squire Conelly [q] hath sixteen thousand pounds a year: now, if he sends for his rent to town, as it is likely he doth, he must have two hundred and fifty horses to bring up his half-year's rent, and two or three great cellars in his house for stowage. But what the bankers will do, I cannot tell: for I am assured, that some great bankers keep by them forty thousand pounds in ready cash to answer all payments: which sum, in Mr. Wood's money, would require twelve hundred horses to carry it.

For my own part, I am already resolved what to do: I have a pretty good shop of Irish stuffs and silks, and, instead of taking Mr. Wood's bad copper, I intend to truck with my neighbours, the butchers, and bakers, and brewers, and the rest, goods for goods; and the little gold and silver I have, I will keep by me, like my heart's blood, till better times, or until I am just ready to starve, and then I will buy Mr. Wood's money, as my father did the brass money in king James's time, who could buy ten pounds of it with a guinea: and, I hope, to get as much for a pistle, and to purchase bread from those who will be such fools as to sell it me.

These half-pence, if they once pass, will soon be counterfeited, because it may be cheaply done, the stuff is so base. The Dutch likewise will probably do the same thing, and send them over to us to pay for our goods; and Mr. Wood will never be at rest, but coin on; so that, in some years, we shall have at least five times \(108,000\) of this lumber. Now the current money of this kingdom is not reckoned to be above four hundred thousand pounds in all; and while there is a silver six-pence left, these blood-suckers will never be quiet.

When once the kingdom is reduced to such a condition, I will tell you what must be the end: the gentlemen of estates will all turn off their tenants for want of payments, because, as I told you before, the tenants are obliged by their leases to pay Sterling, which is lawful current money of England: then they will turn their own farmers, as too many of them do already; run all into sheep, where they can, keeping only such other cattle as are necessary; then they will be their own merchants, and send their wool, and butter, and hides, and linen beyond sea for ready money, and wine, and spices, and silks. They will keep only a few miserable cottagers: the farmers must rob, or beg, or leave their country; the shopkeepers, in this and every other town, must break and starve; for it is the landed man that maintains the merchant, and shopkeeper, and handicraftsman.

But when the squire turns farmer and merchant himself, all the good money he gets from abroad,
he will hoard up to send for England, and keep some poor taylor or weaver, and the like, in his own house, who will be glad to get bread at any rate.

I shall never have done, if I were to tell you all the miseries that we shall undergo, if we be so foolish and wicked as to take this cursed coin. It would be very hard, if all Ireland should be put into one scale, and this sorry fellow Wood into the other, that Mr. Wood should weigh down this whole kingdom, by which England gets above a million of good money every year clear into their pockets: and that is more than the English do by all the world besides.

But your great comfort is, that as his majesty's patent doth not oblige you to take this money, so the laws have not given the crown a power of forcing the subject to take what money the king pleases; for then, by the same reason, we might be bound to take pebble-stones, or cockle-shells, or stamped-leather, for current-coin, if ever we should happen to live under an ill prince, who might likewise, by the same power, make a guinea pass for ten pounds, a shilling for twenty shillings, and so on; by which he would, in a short time, get all the silver and gold of the kingdom into his own hands, and leave us nothing but brass or leather, or what he pleased. Neither is any thing reckoned more cruel and oppressive in the French government, than their common practice of calling in all their money, after they have sunk it very low, and then coining
it a-new at a much higher value; which, however, is not the thousandth part so wicked as this abominable project of Mr. Wood. For the French give their subjects silver for silver, and gold for gold; but this fellow will not so much as give us brass or copper for our gold and silver, nor even a twelfth part of their worth.

Having said this much, I will now go on to tell you the judgment of some great lawyers in this matter; whom I see'd on purpose for your sakes, and got their opinions under their hands, that I might be sure I went upon good grounds.

A famous law-book, called the Mirrour of justice, discoursing of the charters (or laws) ordained by our ancient kings, declares the law to be as follows: it was ordained, that no king of this realm should change or impair the money, or make any other money than of gold or silver, without the assent of all the counties; that is, as my lord Coke [(r)] says, without the assent of parliament.

This book is very ancient, and of great authority for the time in which it was written, and with that character is often quoted by that great lawyer my lord Coke [(s)]. By the laws of England, several metals are divided into lawful or true metal, and unlawful or false metal; the former comprehends silver or gold, the latter all baser metals; that the former is only to pass in payments, appears by an act of parliament [(t)] made the twentieth year of Ed-

[(r)] 2 Inst. 576.  
[(s)] 2 Inst. 575, 7.  
[(t)] 2 Inst. 577.
ward the first, called, The statute concerning the passing of pence; which I give you here as I got it translated into English; for some of our laws, at that time, were, as I am told, written in Latin: Whoever in buying or selling presumes to refuse an half-penny or farthing of lawful money, bearing the stamp which it ought to have, let him be seized on as a contemner of the king's majesty, and cast into prison.

By this statute, no person is to be reckoned a contemner of the king's majesty, and for that crime to be committed to prison, but he who refuseth to accept the king's coin made of lawful metal; by which, as I observed before, silver and gold only are intended.

That this is the true construction of the act, appears not only from the plain meaning of the words, but from my lord Coke's [u] observation upon it. By this act (says he) it appears, that no subject can be forced to take, in buying or selling, or other payment, any money made but of lawful metal; that is, of silver or gold.

The law of England gives the king all mines of gold and silver; but not the mines of other metals; the reason of which prerogative or power, as it is given by lord Coke [x], is, because money can be made of gold and silver, but not of other metals.

Pursuant to this opinion, half-pence and farthings were anciently made of silver, which is evident from the act of parliament of Henry the fourth, chap. 4, whereby it is enacted as follows: Item, for the great scarcity that is at present within the realm

[u] 2 Inst. 577.  [x] 2 Inst. 577.
of England of half-pence and farthings of silver, it is ordained and established, that the third part of all the money of silver plate, which shall be brought to the bullion, shall be made into half-pence and farthings. This shews, that by the words half-pence and farthings of lawful money in that statute concerning the passing of pence, is meant a small coin in half-pence and farthings of silver.

This is further manifest from the statute of ninth year of Edward the third, chap. 3. which enacts, that no sterling half-penny or farthing be molten for to make vessels, or any other thing by the goldsmiths, nor others, upon the forfeiture of the money so molten (or melted).

By another act in this king’s reign, black money was not to be current in England. And, by an act made in the eleventh year of his reign, chap. 5. galley half-pence were not to pass: what kind of coin these were, I do not know; but I presume they were made of base metal. And these acts were no new laws, but further declarations of the old laws relating to the coin.

Thus the laws stand in relation to coin. Nor is there any example to the contrary, except one in Davis’s Reports, who tells us, that, in the time of Tyrone’s rebellion, queen Elizabeth ordered money of mixed metal to be coined in the Tower of London, and sent over hither for the payment of the army, obliging all people to receive it; and commanding, that all silver money should be taken only as bullion; that is, for as much as it weighed.
Davis tells us several particulars in this matter, too long here to trouble you with; and that the privy council of this kingdom obliged a merchant in England to receive this mixt money for goods transmitted hither.

But this proceeding is rejected by all the best lawyers, as contrary to law, the privy council here having no such legal power. And, besides, it is to be considered, that the Queen was then under great difficulties by a rebellion in this kingdom assisted from Spain; and whatever is done, in great exigences and dangerous times, should never be an example to proceed by in seasons of peace and quietness.

I will now, my dear friends, to save you the trouble, set before you in short, what the law obliges you to do, and what it does not oblige you to.

First, you are obliged to take all money in payments which is coined by the king, and is of the English standard or weight, provided it be of gold or silver.

Secondly, you are not obliged to take any money which is not of gold or silver; not only the half-pence or farthings of England, but of any other country. And it is merely for convenience, or ease, that you are content to take them; because the custom of coining silver half-pence and farthings hath long been left off; I suppose, on account of their being subject to be lost.

Thirdly, much less are we obliged to take those vile half-pence of that same Wood, by which you
you must lose almost eleven pence in every shilling.

Therefore, my friends, stand to it one in all: refuse this filthy trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His majesty, in his patent, obliges no body to take these half-pence: our gracious prince hath no such ill advisers about him; or, if he had, yet you see, the laws have not left it in the king's power to force us to take any coin but what is lawful, of right standard, gold and silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear.

And let me, in the next place, apply myself particularly to you, who are the poorer sort of tradesmen. Perhaps you may think, you will not be so great losers as the rich, if these half-pence should pass; because you seldom see any silver, and your customers come to your shops or stalls with nothing but brass, which you likewise find hard to be got: But you may take my word, whenever this money gains footing among you, you will be utterly undone. If you carry these half-pence to a shop for tobacco, or brandy, or any other thing that you want; the shopkeeper will advance his goods accordingly, or else he must break, and leave the key under the door. Do you think I will sell you a yard of ten-penny stuff for twenty of Mr. Wood's half-pence? No, not under two hundred at least; neither will I be at the trouble of counting, but weigh them in a lump. I will tell you one thing further; that, if Mr. Wood's project should take, it would ruin even
even our beggars; for when I give a beggar a half-penny, it will quench his thirst, or go a good way to fill his belly; but the twelfth part of a half-penny will do him no more service, than if I should give him three pins out of my sleeve.

In short, these half-pence are like the accursed thing, which, as the scripture tells us, the children of Israel was forbidden to touch. They will run about like the plague, and destroy every one who lays his hands upon them. I have heard scholars talk of a man, who told the king, that he had invented a way to torment people by putting them into a bull of brass with fire under it: but the prince put the projector first into his brazen bull to make the experiment. This very much resembles the project of Mr. Wood; and the like of this may possibly be Mr. Wood's fate; that the brass he contrived to torment this kingdom with, may prove his own torment, and his destruction at last.

N.B. The author of this paper is informed by persons, who have made it their business to be exact in their observations on the true value of these half-pence, that any person may expect to get a quart of two-penny ale for thirty-six of them. I desire that all families may keep this paper carefully by them to refresh their memories, whenever they shall have farther notice of Mr. Wood's half-pence, or any other the like imposture.
LETTER II.

A LETTER to Mr. Harding the Printer.

UPON OCCASION OF

A Paragraph in his News-Paper of August the First, 1724.

RELATING TO

Mr. Wood's Half-Pence.

In your news-letter of the first instant there is a paragraph, dated from London, July 25th, relating to Wood's half-pence; whereby it is plain, what I foretold in my letter to the shopkeepers, etc. that this vile fellow would never be at rest; and that the danger of our ruin approaches nearer; and, therefore, the kingdom requires new and fresh warning. However, I take this paragraph to be, in a great measure, an imposition upon the publick; at least I hope so, because I am informed that Wood is generally his own news-writer; I cannot but observe from that paragraph, that this public enemy of ours, not satisfied to ruin us with his trash, takes every occasion to treat this kingdom with the utmost contempt. He represents several of our merchants and traders, upon examination before a committee of council, agreeing, that there was the utmost necessity of copper money here, be-
fore his patent; so that several gentlemen have been forced to tally with their workmen, and give them bits of cards sealed and subscribed with their names. What then? If a physician prescribe to a patient a dram of physic, shall a rascal-apothecary cram him with a pound, and mix it up with poison? and is not a landlord's hand and seal to his own labourers a better security for five or ten shillings than Wood's brigs, ten times below the real value, can be to the kingdom for an hundred and eight thousands?

But who are these merchants and traders of Ireland that made this report of the utmost necessity we are under for copper money? they are only a few traitors of their country, confederates with Wood, from whom they are to purchase a great quantity of his coin, perhaps at half the price that we are to take it, and vend it among us, to the ruin of the public, and their own private advantages. Are not these excellent witnesses, upon whose integrity the fate of the kingdom must depend, evidences in their own cause, and sharers in this work of iniquity?

If we could have deserved the liberty of coining for ourselves, as we formerly did (and why we have it not, is every body's wonder, as well as mine), ten thousand pounds might have been coined here in Dublin of only one fifth below the intrinsic value, and this sum, with the stock of half-pence we then had, would have been sufficient; but Wood, by his emissaries, enemies to God and this kingdom,
kingdom, hath taken care to buy up as many of our old half-pence as he could; and from thence the present want of change arises; to remove which by Mr. Wood's remedy, would be to cure a scratch on the finger by cutting off the arm. But supposing there were not one farthing of change in the whole nation, I will maintain, that five and twenty thousand pounds would be a sum fully sufficient to answer all our occasions. I am no inconsiderable shopkeeper in this town; I have discoursed with several of my own and other trades, with many gentlemen both of city and country, and also with great numbers of farmers, cottagers, and labourers, who all agree, that two shillings in change for every family would be more than necessary in all dealings. Now, by the largest computation (even before that grievous discouragement of agriculture [y], which hath so much lessened our numbers) the souls in this kingdom are computed to be one million and an half; which, allowing six to a family, makes two hundred and fifty thousand families; and, consequently, two shillings to each family will amount to only five and twenty thousand pounds; whereas this honest, liberal, hard-ware-man, Wood, would impose upon us above four times that sum.

Your paragraph relates further, that Sir Isaac Newton reported an assay, taken at the Tower, of Wood's metal; by which it appears, that Wood had,

[y] Perhaps the prohibition from ploughing; see above, p. 2.
in all respects, performed his contract. His contract! with whom? was it with the parliament or people of Ireland? are not they to be the purchasers? but they detest, abhor, and reject it as corrupt, fraudulent, mingled with dirth and trash. Upon which he grows angry, goes to law, and will impose his goods upon us by force.

But your news-letter says, than an assay was made of the coin. How impudent and insupportable is this! Wood takes care to coin a dozen or two half-pence of good metal, sends them to the Tower, and they are approved; and these must answer all that he hath already coined; or shall coin for the future. It is true; indeed, that a gentleman often sends to my shop for a pattern of stuff; I cut it fairly off, and, if he likes it, he comes, or sends, and compares the pattern with the whole piece, and, probably, we come to a bargain. But, if I were to buy an hundred sheep, and the grazier should bring me one single wether fat and well fleeced, by way of pattern, and expect the same price round for the whole hundred, without suffering me to see them before he was paid, or giving me good security to restore my money for those that were lean, or shorn, or scabby, I would be none of his customer. I have heard of a man, who had a mind to sell his house, and therefore carried a piece of brick in his pocket, which he shewed as a pattern to encourage purchasers; and this is directly the case in point with Mr. Wood's assay.
The next part of the paragraph contains Mr. Wood's voluntary proposals for preventing any further objections or apprehensions.

His first proposal is, *That whereas he hath already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and has copper prepared to make it up forty thousand pounds, he will be content to coin no more, unless the exigences of trade require it,* although his patent impowers him to coin a far greater quantity.

To which if I were to answer, it should be thus: let Mr. Wood and his crew of founders and tinkers coin on, till there is not an old kettle left in the kingdom; let them coin old leather, tobacco-pipe clay, or the dirt in the street, and call their trumpery by what name they please, from a guinea to a farthing; we are not under any concern to know how he and his tribe of accomplices think fit to employ themselves. But I hope, and trust, that we are all to a man fully determined to have nothing to do with him or his ware.

The king has given him a patent to coin halfpence, but hath not obliged us to take them; and I have already shewn in my letter to the shopkeepers, etc. that the law hath not left it in the power of the prerogative to compel the subject to take any money, besides gold and silver of the right sterling and standard.

Wood further proposes (if I understand him right, for his expressions are dubious) that he will not coin above forty thousand pounds, unless the exigences of trade require it. First, I observe that this sum of
LEITER II.

Forty thousand pounds is almost double to what I proved to be sufficient for the whole kingdom, although we had not one of our old half-pence left. Again, I ask, who is to be judge, when the exigences of trade require it? Without doubt, he means himself; for as to us of this poor kingdom, who must be utterly ruined if this project should succeed, we were never once consulted till the matter was over, and he will judge of our exigences by his own; neither will these be ever at an end, till he and his accomplices shall think they have enough: and it now appears, that he will not be content with all our gold and silver, but intends to buy up our goods and manufactures with the same coin.

I shall not enter into an examination of the prices, for which he now proposes to sell his half-pence, or what he calls his copper, by the pound; I have said enough of it in my former letter, and it hath likewise been considered by others. It is certain, that, by his own first computation, we were to pay three shillings for what was intrinsically worth but one, although it had been of the true weight and standard for which he pretended to have contracted; but there is so great a difference both in weight and badness in several of his coins, that some of them have been nine in ten below the intrinsic value, and most of them six or seven.

His last proposal, being of a peculiar strain and nature, deserves to be very particularly considered, both on account of the matter and the style. It is as follows:

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Lastly,
Lastly, In consideration of the direful apprehensions which prevail in Ireland, that Mr. Wood will, by such coinage, drain them of their gold and silver; he proposes to take their manufactures in exchange, and that no person be obliged to receive more than five-pence half-penny at one payment.

First, observe this little impudent hard-ware-man turning into ridicule the direful apprehensions of a whole kingdom, priding himself as the cause of them, and daring to prescribe (what no king of England ever attempted) how far a whole nation shall be obliged to take his brass coin. And he has reason to insult: for sure there was never an example in history of a great kingdom kept in awe for above a year, in daily dread of utter destruction, not by a powerful invader at the head of twenty thousand men, not by a plague or a famine, not by a tyrannical prince (for we never had one more gracious) or a corrupt administration, but by one single, diminutive, insignificant mechanic.

But to go on: to remove our direful apprehensions, that he will drain us of our gold and silver by his coinage, this little arbitrary mock-monarch most graciously offers to take our manufactures in exchange. Are our Irish understandings indeed so low in his opinion? Is not this the very misery we complain of; that his cursed project will put us under the necessity of selling our goods for what is equal to nothing? How would such a proposal found from France or Spain, or any other country with which we traffic, if they should offer to deal with us only
only upon this condition, that we should take their money at ten times higher than the intrinsic value? Does Mr. Wood think, for instance, that we will sell him a stone of wool for a parcel of his counters not worth six-pence, when we can send it to England, and receive as many shillings in gold and silver? Surely there was never heard such a compound of impudence, villainy, and folly.

His proposals conclude with perfect high treason. He promises, that no person shall be obliged to receive more than five-pence half-penny of his coin in one payment. By which it is plain, that he pretends to oblige every subject, in this kingdom, to take so much in every payment, if it be offered; whereas his patent obliges no man, nor can the prerogative by law claim such a power, as I have often observed; so that here Mr. Wood takes upon him the entire legislature, and an absolute dominion over the properties of the whole nation.

Good God! who are this wretch's advisers? who are his supporters, abettors, encouragers, or sharers? Mr. Wood will oblige me to take five-pence half-penny of his brass in every payment. And I will shoot Mr. Wood, and his deputies, through the head, like highwaymen or house-breakers, if they dare to force one farthing of their coin on me in the payment of an hundred pounds. It is no loss of honour to submit to the lion; but who, with the figure of a man, can think, with patience, of being devoured alive by a rat? He has laid a tax,
upon the people of Ireland, of seventeen shillings at least in the pound: a tax, I say, not only upon lands, but interest-money, goods, manufactures, the hire of handicraftsmen, labourers, and servants. Shopkeepers, look to yourselves! Wood will oblige and force you to take five-pence half-penny of his trash in every payment; and many of you receive twenty, thirty, forty payments in one day, or else you can hardly find bread: and pray consider how much that will amount to in a year; twenty times five-pence half-penny is nine shillings and two-pence, which is above an hundred and sixty pounds a year, wherein you will be losers of at least one hundred and forty pounds by taking your payments in his money. If any of you be content to deal with Mr. Wood on such conditions, they may; but for my own particular, let his money perish with him. If the famous Mr. Hampden rather chose to go to prison, than pay a few shillings to king Charles the first, without authority of parliament; I will rather chuse to be hanged, than have all my substance taxed at seventeen shillings in the pound, at the arbitrary will and pleasure of the venerable Mr. Wood.

The paragraph concludes thus: N. B. (that is, to say, nota bene, or mark well) No evidence appeared from Ireland, or elsewhere, to prove the mischiefs complained of, or any abuses whatsoever committed in the execution of the said grant.

The impudence of this remark exceeds all that went before. First, the house of commons in Ireland,
land, which represents the whole people of the kingdom, and secondly the privy-council, addressed his majesty against these half-pence: what could be done more to express the universal sense of the nation? If his copper were diamonds, and the kingdom were entirely against it, would not that be sufficient to reject it? Must a committee of the whole house of commons, and our whole privy-council, go over to argue pro and con with Mr. Wood? To what end did the king give his patent for coining half-pence in Ireland? Was it not because it was represented to his sacred majesty, that such a coinage would be of advantage to the good of this kingdom, and of all his subjects here? It is to the patentee's peril, if his representation be false, and the execution of his patent be fraudulent and corrupt. Is he so wicked and foolish to think, that his patent was given him to ruin a million and a half of people, that he might be a gainer of three or fourscore thousand pounds to himself? Before he was at the charge of passing a patent, much more of raking up so much filthy dross, and stamping it with his majesty's image and superscription, should he not first, in common sense, in common equity, and common manners, have consulted the principal party concerned; that is to say, the people of the kingdom, the house of lords or commons, or the privy-council? If any foreigner should ask us, whose image and superscription there is on Wood's coin? we should be ashamed to tell him, it was Cæsar's.
Caesar's. In that great want of copper half-pence which he alleged we were, our city set up our Caesar's [x] statue in excellent copper at an expense that is equal in value to thirty thousand pound of his coin; and we will not receive his image in worse metal.

I observe many of our people putting a melancholy case on this subject. It is true, say they, we are all undone if Wood's half-pence must pass; but what shall we do, if his majesty puts out a proclamation commanding us to take them? This hath often been dinned in my ears. But I desire my countrymen to be assured, that there is nothing in it. The king never issues out a proclamation but to enjoin what the law permits him. He will not issue out a proclamation against law; or, if such a thing should happen by a mistake, we are no more obliged to obey it than to run our heads into the fire. Besides, his majesty will never command us by a proclamation, what he does not offer to command us in the patent itself. There he leaves it to our discretion; so that our destruction must be entirely owing to ourselves. Therefore let no man be afraid of a proclamation, which will never be granted; and if it should, yet, upon this occasion, will be of no force. The king's revenues here are near four hundred thousand pounds a year. Can you think his ministers will advise him to take them in Wood's brads, which will reduce the value

to fifty thousand pounds? England gets a million sterling by this nation; which, if this project goes on, will be almost reduced to nothing: and do you think those who live in England upon Irish estates will be content to take an eighth or tenth part, by being paid in Wood's dross?

If Wood and his confederates were not convinced of our stupidity, they never would have attempted so audacious an enterprise. He now sees a spirit hath been raised against him, and he only watches till it begins to flag: he goes about watching when to devour us. He hopes we shall be weary of contending with him; and at last, out of ignorance or fear, or of being perfectly tired with opposition, we shall be forced to yield: and therefore, I confess, it is my chief endeavour to keep up your spirits and resentments. If I tell you there is a precipice under you, and that, if you go forwards, you will certainly break your necks; if I point to it before your eyes, must I be at the trouble of repeating it every morning? Are our people's hearts waxed gross? are their ears dull of hearing? and have they closed their eyes? I fear there are some few vipers among us, who, for ten or twenty pounds gain, would fell their souls and their country; although at last, it should end in their own ruin, as well as ours. Be not like the deaf adder, who refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

Although my letter be directed to you, Mr. Harding, yet I intend it for all my countrymen. I have
have no interest in this affair; but what is common to the public; I can live better than many others: I have some gold and silver by me, and a shop well furnished; and shall be able to make a shift, when many of my betters are starving. But I am grieved to see the coldness and indifference of many people, with whom I discourse. Some are afraid of a proclamation; others shrug up their shoulders, and cry, What would you have us to do? Some give out, there is no danger at all: others are comforted, that it will be a common calamity, and they shall fare no worse than their neighbours. Will a man, who hears midnight robbers at his door, get out of bed and raise his family for a common defence; and shall a whole kingdom lie in a lethargy, while Mr. Wood comes, at the head of his confederates, to rob them of all they have, to ruin us and our posterity for ever? If a highway-man meets you on the road, you give him your money to save your life; but, God be thanked, Mr. Wood cannot touch a hair of your heads. You have all the laws of God and man on your side: when he or his accomplices offer you his dross, it is but saying No, and you are safe. If a mad man should come into my shop with a handful of dirt raked out of the kennel, and offer it in payment for ten yards of stuff, I would pity, or laugh at him; or, if his behaviour deserved it, kick him out of my doors. And if Mr. Wood comes to demand my gold and silver, or commodities
dities for which I have paid my gold and silver, in exchange for his trash, can he deserve or expect better treatment?

When the evil day is come (if it must come) let us mark and observe those, who presume to offer these half-pence in payment. Let their names, and trades, and places of abode, be made public, that every one may be aware of them, as betrayers of their country, and confederates with Mr. Wood. Let them be watched at markets and fairs; and let the first honest discoverer give the word about, that Mr. Wood’s half-pence have been offered, and caution the poor innocent people not to receive them.

Perhaps I have been too tedious; but there would never be an end, if I attempted to say all that this melancholy subject will bear. I will conclude with humbly offering one proposal; which, if it were put into practice, would blow up this destructive project at once. Let some skilful, judicious pen draw up an advertisement to the following purpose:

Whereas one William Wood, hardware-man, now or lately sojourning in the city of London, hath, by many misrepresentations, procured a patent for coining an hundred and eight thousand pounds in copper half-pence for this kingdom; which is a sum five times greater than our occasions require: And whereas it is notorious, that the said Wood hath coined his half-pence of such base metal, and false weight, that they are at least six parts in seven below the real value:
And whereas we have reason to apprehend, that the said Wood may, at any time hereafter, clandestinely coin as many more half-pence as he pleases: And whereas the said patent neither doth nor can oblige his majesty's subjects to receive the said half-pence in any payment, but leaves it to their voluntary choice; because, by law, the subject cannot be obliged to take any money, except gold or silver: And whereas, contrary to the letter and meaning of the said patent, the said Wood hath declared, that every person shall be obliged to take five-pence half-penny of his coin in every payment: And whereas the house of commons, and privy-council, have severally addressed his most sacred majesty, representing the ill consequences which the said coinage may have upon this kingdom: And, lastly, whereas it is universally agreed, that the whole nation to a man (except Mr. Wood, and his confederates) are in the utmost apprehensions of the ruinous consequences that must follow from the said coinage; Therefore we, whose names are underwritten, being persons of considerable estates in this kingdom, and residents therein, do unanimously resolve and declare, that we will never receive one farthing or half-penny of the said Wood's coining; and that we will direct all our tenants to refuse the said coin from any person whatsoever; of which that they may not be ignorant, we have sent them a copy of this advertisement to be read to them by our stewards, receivers, etc.

I could
LETTER II.

I could wish, that a paper of this nature might be drawn up, and signed by two or three hundred principal gentlemen of this kingdom; and printed copies thereof sent to their several tenants. I am deceived if any thing could sooner defeat this execrable design of Wood, and his accomplices. This would immediately give the alarm, and set the kingdom on their guard; this would give courage to the meanest tenant and cottager. *How long, O Lord, righteous and true, etc.*

I must tell you in particular, Mr. Harding, that you are much to blame. Several hundred persons have enquired at your house for my *Letter to the shopkeepers*, etc. and you had none to sell them. Pray keep yourself provided with that Letter; and with this: you have got very well by the former; but I did not then write for your sake, any more than I do now. Pray advertise both in every newspaper; and let it not be your fault or mine, if our countrymen will not take warning. I desire you likewise to sell them as cheap as you can.

_I am your servant,_

Aug. 4, 1724.

M. B.
LETTER III.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

Upon a Paper, called
The Report of the Committee
of the
Most Honourable the Privy Council in
ENGLAND,
Relating to WOOD's HALF-PENCE.

to the

NOBILITY and GENTRY of the Kingdom of
IRELAND.

HAVING already written two letters to the people of my own level and condition, and having now very pressing occasion for writing a third; I thought I could not more properly address it than to your lordships and worships.

The occasion is this: a printed paper was sent to me on the 18th instant, entitled, A report of the committee of the lords of his majesty's most honourable privy-council in England, relating to Mr. Wood's half-pence and farthings. There is no mention made where the paper was printed; but I suppose
suppose it to have been in Dublin: and I have been told, that the copy did not come over in the Gazette, but in the London journal, or some other print of no authority or consequence. And, for any thing that legally appears to the contrary, it may be a contrivance to fright us; or a project of some printer, who hath a mind to make a penny by publishing something upon a subject, which now employs all our thoughts in this kingdom. Mr. Wood, in publishing this paper, would insinuate to the world, as if the committee had a greater concern for his credit and private emolument, than for the honour of the privy-council and both houses of parliament here, and for the quiet and welfare of this whole kingdom; for it seems intended as a vindication of Mr. Wood, not without several severe reflections on the houses of lords and commons of Ireland.

The whole is, indeed, written with the turn and air of a pamphlet; as if it were a dispute between William Wood on the one part, and the lords justices, privy-council, and both houses of parliament on the other: the design of it being to clear William Wood, and to charge the other side with casting rash and groundless aspersions upon him.

But, if it be really what the title imports, Mr. Wood hath treated the committee with great rudeness, by publishing an act of theirs in so unbecoming a manner, without their leave, and before it was communicated to the government and privy-council of Ireland; to whom the committee advised that
that it should be transmitted. But, with all deference be it spoken, I do not conceive that a report of a committee of the council in England is hitherto a law in either kingdom; and until any point is determined to be a law, it remains disputable by every subject.

This (may it please your lordships and worship) may seem a strange way of discoursing in an illiterate shopkeeper. I have endeavoured (although without the help of books) to improve that small portion of reason God hath been pleased to give me; and when reason plainly appears before me, I cannot turn away my head from it. Thus, for instance, if any lawyer should tell me that such a point were law, from which many gross palpable absurdities must follow; I would not, I could not believe him. If Sir Edward Coke should positively assert (which he nowhere does, but the direct contrary) that a limited prince, could by his prerogative, oblige his subjects to take half an ounce of lead, stamped with his image, for twenty shillings in gold, I should swear he was deceived, or a deceiver; because a power like that would leave the whole lives and fortunes of the people entirely at the mercy of the monarch; yet this, in effect, is what Wood hath advanced in some of his papers; and what suspicious people may possibly apprehend from some passages in that, which is called The Report.

That paper mentions such persons to have been examined, who were desirous and willing to be heard upon
upon this subject. I am told they were four in all: Coleby, B——, Mr. Finley the banker, and one more, whose name I know not. The first of these was tried for robbing the treasury in Ireland: and, though he was acquitted for want of legal proof, yet every person in the court believed him to be guilty.

But, since I have gone so far as to mention particular persons, it may be some satisfaction to know who is this Wood himself, that has the honour to have a whole kingdom at his mercy for almost two years together. I find he is in the patent entitled esquire, although he were understood to be only a hard-ware-man; and so I have been bold to call him in my former letters; however, a 'squire he is, not only by virtue of his patent, but by having been a collector in Shropshire; where, pretending to have been robbed, and suing the county, he was caft, and, for the infamy of the fact, lost his employment.

I have heard another story of this 'squire Wood from a very honourable lady, that one Hamilton told her. Hamilton was sent for six years ago, by Sir Isaac Newton, to try the coinage of four men, who then solicited a patent for coining half-pence for Ireland; their names were Wood, Coflor, Elliotton, and Parker. Parker made the fairest offer, and Wood the worst; for his coin were three half-pence in a pound weight less value than the other. By which it is plain, with what intentions he solici-
cited his patent; but not so plain how he obtained it.

It is alleged, in the said paper called *The Report*, that, upon repeated orders from a secretary of state for sending over such papers and witnesses, as should be thought proper to support the objections made against the patent (by both houses of parliament), the lord lieutenant represented the great difficulty he found himself in, to comply with these orders: that none of the principal members of both houses, who were in the king's service, or council, would take upon them to advise, how any material person, or papers, might be sent over on this occasion, etc. And this is often repeated, and represented as a proceeding that seems very extraordinary, and that in a matter, which had raised so great a clamour in Ireland, no one person could be prevailed upon to come over from Ireland in support of the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland; especially, that the chief difficulty should arise from a general apprehension of a miscarriage, in an enquiry before his majesty, or in a proceeding by due course of law, in a case where both houses of parliament had declared themselves so fully convinced, and satisfied upon evidence, and examinations taken in the most solemn manner.

How shall I, a poor ignorant shopkeeper, utterly unskilled in law, be able to answer so weighty an objection? I will try what can be done by plain reason, unsatisfied by art, cunning, or eloquence.

In my humble opinion, the committee of council hath already prejudged the whole case, by calling the
the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland an universal clamour. Here the addresses of the lords and commons of Ireland against a ruinous, destructive project of an obscure, single undertaker, is called a clamour. I desire to know, how such a style would be resented in England from a committee of council there to a parliament; and how many impeachments would follow upon it? But, supposing the appellation to be proper, I never heard of a wise minister, who despised the universal clamour of a people; and, if that clamour can be quieted by disappointing the fraudulent practice of a single person, the purchase is not exorbitant.

But in answer to this objection: first it is manifest, that if this coinage had been in Ireland, with such limitations as have been formerly specified in other patents, and granted to persons of this kingdom, or even of England, able to give sufficient security, few or no inconveniences could have happened. As to Mr. Knox's patent mentioned in the report, security was given into the Exchequer, that the patentee should, upon all demands, be obliged to receive his half-pence back, and pay gold or silver in exchange for them. And Mr. More (to whom I suppose that patent was made over) was, in 1694, forced to leave off coinage before the end of that year, by the great crowds of people continually offering to return his coinage upon him. In 1698, he coined again, and was forced to give over for the same reason. This entirely alters the case; for there is no such condition
in Wood’s patent; which condition was worth a hundred times all other limitations whatsoever.

Put the case, that the two houses of lords and commons of England, and the privy-council there, should address his majesty to recall a patent, from whence they apprehended the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom; and, to make it stronger, if possible, that the whole nation, almost to a man, should thereupon discover the most dismal apprehensions (as Mr. Wood styles them); would his majesty debate half an hour what he had to do? would any minister dare advise him against recalling such a patent? or would the matter be referred to the privy-council, or to Westminster-hall; the two houses of parliament plaintiffs, and William Wood defendant? and is there even the smallest difference between the two cases?

Were not the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? how have they forfeited their freedom? is not their parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? and hath not their privy-council as great, or a greater share in the administration of public affairs? are not they subjects of the same king? does not the same sun shine upon them? and have they not the same God for their protector? am I a freeman in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the channel? No wonder then if the boldest persons were cautious to interpose in a matter already determined by the whole voice of the nation; or to presume to represent the representa-
tives of the kingdom; and were justly apprehensive of meeting such a treatment as they would deserve at the next session. It would seem very extraordinary, if an inferior court in England should take a matter out of the hands of a high court of parliament during a prorogation, and decide it against the opinion of both houses.

It happens however, that, although no persons were so bold as to go over as evidences to prove the truth of the objections made against this patent by the high court of parliament here, yet these objections stand good, notwithstanding the answers made by Mr. Wood and his council.

The report says, that, upon an assay made of the fineness, weight, and value of this copper, it exceeded in every article. This is possible enough in the pieces upon which the assay was made; but Wood must have failed very much in point of dexterity, if he had not taken care to provide a sufficient quantity of such half-pence as would bear the trial; which he was well able to do, although they were taken out of several parcels; since it is now plain, that the bias of favour hath been wholly on his side.

But what need is there of disputing, when we have a positive demonstration of Wood's fraudulent practices in this point. I have seen a large quantity of these half-pence weighed by a very skilful person, which were of four different kinds, three of them considerably under weight. I have now before me an exact computation of the difference of weight between these four sorts; by which it appears,
pears, that the fourth fort, or the lightest, differs from the first to a degree, that in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper the patentee will be a gainer, only by that difference, of twenty-four thousand four hundred and ninety-four pounds; and, in the whole, the public will be a loser of eighty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings, even supposing the metal, in point of goodness, to answer Wood’s contract and the assay that hath been made, which it infallibly doth not. For this point hath likewise been enquired into by very experienced men; who, upon several trials on many of these half-pence, have found them to be at least one fourth part below the real value, not including the raps or counterfeits that he, or his accomplices, have already made of his own coin, and scattered about. Now the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, coined by the weight of the fourth or lightest fort of his half-pence, will amount to one hundred twenty-two thousand four hundred eighty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings; and, if we subtract a fourth part of the real value by the base mixture in the metal, we must add to the public loss one fourth part to be subtracted from the intrinsic value of the copper; which in three hundred and sixty tons amounts to ten thousand and eighty pounds; and this, added to the former sum of eighty-two thousand one hundred sixty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings, will make in all ninety-two thousand two hundred forty-eight pounds loss to
to the public; besides the 

raps or counterfeits that he may at any time hereafter think fit to coin. Nor do I know whether he reckons the 

dress exclusive or inclusive with his three hundred and sixty tons of copper; which, however, will make a considerable difference in the account.

You will here please to observe, that the profit allowed to Wood, by the patent, is twelve pence out of every pound of copper valued at 1s. 6d. whereas 5d. only is allowed for coinage of a pound weight for the English half-pence; and this difference is almost 25 per cent. which is double to the highest exchange of money, even under all the additional pressures and obstructions to trade that this unhappy kingdom lies at present. This one circumstance, in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, makes a difference of twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds between English and Irish half-pence, even allowing those of Wood to be all of the heaviest sort.

It is likewise to be considered, that for every half-penny in a pound weight, exceeding the number directed by the patent, Wood will be a gainer, in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, sixteen hundred and eighty pounds profit more than the patent allows him; out of which he may afford to make his comptrollers easy upon that article.

As to what is alleged, that these half-pence far exceed the like coinage for Ireland in the reigns of his majesty's...
majesty's predecessors: there cannot well be a more exceptionable way of arguing, although the fact were true; which, however, is altogether mistaken, not by any fault in the committee, but by the fraud and imposition of Wood, who certainly produced the worst patterns he could find; such as were coined in small numbers by permission to private men, as butchers, half-pence, black-dogs, and others the like; or, perhaps, the small St. Patrick's coin, which passes now for a farthing, or at best some of the smallest raps of the latest kind. For I have now by me half-pence coined, in the year 1680, by virtue of the patent granted to my lord Dartmouth, which was renewed to Knox, and they are heavier by a ninth part than those of Wood, and of much better metal; and the great St. Patrick's half-pence are yet larger than either.

But what is all this to the present debate? If, under the various exigences of former times, by wars, rebellions, and insurrections, the kings of England were sometimes forced to pay their armies here with mixt or base money; God forbid that the necessities of turbulent times should be a precedent for times of peace, and order, and settlement.

In the patent abovementioned, granted to lord Dartmouth, in the reign of king Charles the second, and renewed to Knox, the securities given into the Exchequer, obliging the patentee to receive his money back upon every demand, were an effectual remedy against all inconveniences; and the copper was
was coined in our kingdom; so that we were in no danger to purchase it with the loss of all our silver and gold carried over to another, nor to be at the trouble of going to England for the redressing any abuse.

That the kings of England have exercised their prerogative of coining copper for Ireland and for England, is not the present question: but, to speak in the style of the report, it would seem a little extraordinary, supposing a king should think fit to exercise his prerogative by coining copper in Ireland to be current in England, without referring it to his officers in that kingdom to be informed, whether the grant were reasonable, and whether the people desired it or no, and without regard to the addresses of his parliament against it. God forbid, that so mean a man as I should meddle with the king's prerogative: but I have heard very wise men say, that the king's prerogative is bounded and limited by the good and welfare of his people. I desire to know whether it be not understood and avowed, that the good of Ireland was intended by this patent? But Ireland is not consulted at all in the matter; and, as soon as Ireland is informed of it, they declared against it: the two houses of parliament and the privy council address his majesty upon the mischiefs apprehended by such a patent; the privy-council in England take the matter out of the parliament's cognizance; the good of the kingdom is dropt; and it is now determined, that Mr. Wood
Wood shall have the power of ruining a whole nation for his private advantage.

I never can suppose, that such patents as these were originally granted with a view of being a jobb for the interest of a particular person to the damage of the public. Whatever profit must arise to the patentee, was surely meant at best but as a secondary motive; and since somebody must be a gainer, the choice of the person was made either by favour or something else, or by the pretence of merit and honesty: this argument returns so often and strongly into my head, that I cannot forbear frequently repeating it. Surely his majesty, when he consented to the passing of this patent, conceived he was doing an act of grace to his most loyal subjects of Ireland, without any regard to Mr. Wood, farther than as an instrument: but the people of Ireland think this patent (intended, no doubt, for their good) to be a most intolerable grievance; and therefore Mr. Wood can never succeed without an open avowal, that his profit is preferred, not only before the interest, but the very safety and being of a great kingdom; and a kingdom distinguished for its loyalty, perhaps, above all others upon earth; nor turned from its duty by the jurisdiction of the house of lords abolished at a stroke, by the hardships of the act of navigation newly enforced, by all possible obstructions in trade, and by a hundred other instances enough to fill this paper; nor was there ever among us the least attempt towards an insurrection in favour of the pretender. Therefore, whatever justice
justice a free people can claim, we have at least an equal title to it with our brethren in England; and whatever grace a good prince can bestow on the most loyal subjects, we have reason to expect it; neither has this kingdom any way deserved to be sacrificed to one single, rapacious, obscure, ignominious projector.

Among other clauses mentioned in this patent to shew how advantageous it is to Ireland, there is one which seems to be of a singular nature: that the patentee shall be obliged, during his term, to pay eight hundred pounds a year to the crown, and two hundred pounds a year to the comptroller. I have heard indeed, that the king's council do always consider, in the passing of a patent, whether it will be of advantage to the crown; but I have likewise heard, that it is, at the same time, considered, whether the passing of it may be injurious to any other persons or bodies politic? However, although the attorney and solicitor be servants to the king, and therefore bound to consult his majesty's interest; yet I am under some doubt, whether eight hundred pounds a year to the crown will be equivalent to the ruin of a kingdom. It would be far better for us to have paid eight thousand pounds a year into his majesty's coffers in the midst of all our taxes (which in proportion are greater in this kingdom than ever they were in England, even during the war) than purchase such an addition to the revenue at the price of our utter undoing.

But
But here it is plain, that fourteen thousand pounds are to be paid by Wood only as a small, circumstantial charge for the purchase of his patent: what were his other visible costs I know not, and what were his latent, is variously conjectured; but he must be surely a man of some wonderful merit. Hath he saved any other kingdom at his own expense, to give him a title of re-imburseing himself by the destruction of ours? Hath he discovered the longitude or the universal medicine? No; but he hath found the philosopher's stone after a new manner, by the debasing of copper, and resolving to force it upon us for gold.

When the two houses represented to his majesty, that this patent to Wood was obtained in a clandestine manner, surely the committee could not think the parliament would insinuate that it had not passed in the common forms, and run through every office where fees and perquisites were due. They knew very well, that persons in places were no enemies to grants; and that the officers of the crown could not be kept in the dark. But the late [a] lord lieutenant of Ireland affirmed, it was a secret to him; and who will doubt of his veracity, especially when he swore to a person of quality, from whom I had it, that Ireland should never be troubled with these half-pence? It was a secret to the people of Ireland, who were to be the only sufferers; and those who best know the state of the kingdom, and were

most able to advise in such an affair, were wholly strangers to it.

It is allowed by the report, that this patent was passed without the knowledge of the chief governor, or officers of Ireland: and it is there elaborately shewn, that former patents have passed in the same manner, and are good in law. I shall not dispute the legality of patents, but am ready to suppose it in his majesty’s power to grant a patent for stamping round bits of copper to every subject he hath. Therefore, to lay aside the point of law, I would only put the question, whether in reason and justice it would not have been proper, in an affair upon which the welfare of the kingdom depends, that the said kingdom should have received timely notice; and the matter not be carried on between the patentee and the officers of the crown, who were to be the only gainers by it.

The parliament, who in matters of this nature are the most able and faithful counsellors, did represent this grant to be destructive of trade, and dangerous to the properties of the people: to which the only answer is, that the king hath a prerogative to make such a grant.

It is asserted, that, in the patent to Knox, his half-pence were made and declared the current coin of the kingdom; whereas, in this to Wood, there is only a power given to issue them to such as will receive them. The authors of the report, I think, do not affirm, that the king can, by law, declare any thing to be current money by his letters patents. I dare say
say they will not affirm it; and if Knox's patent contained in it powers contrary to law, why is it mentioned as a precedent in his majesty's just and merciful reign? But although that clause be not in Wood's patent, yet possibly there are others, the legality whereof may be equally doubted, and particularly that, whereby a power is given to William Wood to break into houses in search of any coin made in imitation of his. This may, perhaps, be affirmed to be illegal and dangerous to the liberty of the subject; yet this is a precedent taken from Knox's patent, where the same power is granted; and is a strong instance, what uses may be sometimes made of precedents.

But although, before the passing of this patent, it was not thought necessary to consult any persons of this kingdom, or make the least enquiry, whether copper money were wanting among us; yet now at length, when the matter is over, when the patent hath long passed, when Wood hath already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and hath his tools and implements prepared to coin fix times as much more, the committee hath been pleased to make this affair the subject of enquiry; Wood is permitted to produce his evidences, which consist, as I have already observed, of four in number, whereof Coleby, E——, and Mr. Finley the banker are three. And these were to prove, that copper money had been extremely wanted in Ireland. The first had been out of the kingdom, almost twenty years, from the time that he was tried for robbing
rebbling the treasury; and therefore his knowledge and credibility are equal. Mr. Finley, one of the other witnesses, honestly confessed, that he was ignorant whether Ireland wanted copper money or no; but his whole intention was to buy a certain quantity from Wood at a large discount, and sell them as well as he could; by which he hoped to get two or three thousand pounds for himself.

But suppose there were not one single half-penny of copper coin in this whole kingdom (which Mr. Wood seems to intend, unless we come to his terms, as appears by employing his emissaries to buy up our old ones at a penny in the shilling more than they pass for) it could not be any real evil to us, although it might be some inconvenience. We have many sorts of small silver coins, to which they are strangers in England; such as the French three-pences, four-pence half-pennies, and eight-pence farthings, the Scotch five-pences and ten-pences, besides their twenty-pences and three and four-pences, by which we are able to make change to a half-penny of almost any piece of gold or silver; and, if we are driven to the expedient of a sealed card, with the little gold and silver still remaining, it will, I suppose, be somewhat better than to have nothing left but Wood's adulterated copper, which he is neither obliged by his patent, nor hitherto able by his estate, to make good.

The report farther tells us, it must be admitted, that letters patent, under the great seal of Great Britain, for coining copper-money for Ireland, are legal
and obligatory, a just and reasonable exercise of his majesty's royal prerogative, and in no manner derogatory, or invasive, of any liberty or privilege of his subjects of Ireland. First, we desire to know, why his majesty's prerogative might not have been as well asserted by passing this patent in Ireland, and subjecting the several conditions of the contract to the inspection of those who are only concerned, as was formerly done in the only precedents for patents granted for coining in this kingdom, since the mixt money in queen Elizabeth's time during the difficulties of a rebellion: whereas now, upon the greatest imposition that can possibly be practised, we must go to England with our complaints; where it hath been, for some time, the fashion to think, and to affirm, that we cannot be too hardly used. Again, the report says, that such patents are obligatory. After long thinking, I am not able to find out, what can possibly be meant here by this word obligatory. The patent of Wood neither obligeth him to utter his coin, nor us to take it; or, if it did the latter, it would be so far void, because no patent can oblige the subject against law; unless an illegal patent, passed in one kingdom, can bind another, and not itself.

Lastly, it is added, that such patents are in no manner derogatory, or invasive, of any liberty or privilege of the king's subjects of Ireland. If this proposition be true, as it is here laid down, without any limitation either expressed or implied, it must follow, that a king of England may, at any time, coin
coin copper money for Ireland, and oblige his subjects here to take a piece of copper under the value of half a farthing for half a crown, as was practised by the late king James; and even without that arbitrary prince's excuse from the necessity and exigencies of his affairs. If this be in no manner derogatory, nor invasive, of any liberties or privileges of the subjects of Ireland, it ought to have been expressed what our liberties and privileges are, and whether we have any at all; for in specifying the word Ireland, instead of saying his majesty's subjects, it would seem to insinuate, that we are not upon the same foot with our fellow subjects in England; which, however the practice may have been, I hope will never be directly asserted; for I do not understand that Poining's act deprived us of our liberty, but only changed the manner of passing laws here (which however was a power most indirectly obtained) by leaving the negative to the two houses of parliament. But, waving all controversies relating to the legislature, no person, I believe, was ever yet so bold as to affirm, that the people of Ireland have not the same title to the benefits of the common law with the rest of his majesty's subjects; and therefore, whatever liberties or privileges the people of England enjoy by common law, we of Ireland have the same; so that, in my humble opinion, the word Ireland standing in that proposition was, in the mildest interpretation, a lapse of the pen.
The report farther afferts, that the precedents are many, wherein cases of great importance to Ireland, and which immediately affected the interests of that kingdom, such as warrants, orders, and directions by the authority of the king and his predecessors, have been issued under the royal sign manual, without any previous reference or advice of his majesty's officers of Ireland, which have always had their due force, and have been punctually complied with and obeyed. It may be so, and I am heartily sorry for it; because it may prove an eternal source of discontent. However, among all these precedents, there is not one of a patent for coining money for Ireland.

There is nothing hath perplexed me more than this doctrine of precedents. If a jobb is to be done, and upon searching records you find it hath been done before, there will not want a lawyer to justify the legality of it by producing his precedents; without ever considering the motives and circumstances that first introduced them; the necessity, or turbulence, or iniquity of times; the corruptions of ministers, or the arbitrary disposition of the prince then reigning. And I have been told, by persons eminent in the law, that the worst actions, which human nature is capable of, may be justified by the same doctrine. How the first precedents began of determining cases of the highest importance to Ireland, and immediately affecting its interests, without any previous reference or advice to the king's officers here, may soon be accounted for. Before this kingdom was entirely reduced by the
the submission of Tyrone in the last year of queen Elizabeth's reign, there was a period of four hundred years, which was a various scene of war and peace between the English pale and the Irish natives; and the government of that part of this island, which lay in the English hands, was, in many things, under the immediate administration of the king: silver and copper were often coined here among us; and once at least, upon great necessity, a mixt or base metal was sent from England. The reign of king James I, was employed in settling the kingdom after Tyrone's rebellion; and this nation flourished extremely till the time of the massacre, 1641. In that difficult juncture of affairs, the nobility and gentry coined their own plate here in Dublin.

By all that I can discover, the copper coin of Ireland, for three hundred years past, consisted of small pence and half-pence; which particular men had licence to coin, and were current only within certain towns and districts, according to the personal credit of the owner who uttered them, and was bound to receive them again; whereof I have seen many sorts: neither have I heard of any patent granted for coining copper money for Ireland, till the reign of king Charles the second, which was in the year 1680, to George Legge, lord Dartmouth; and renewed by king James the second, in the first year of his reign (1685) to John Knox. Both patents were passed in Ireland; and, in both, the patentees were bound to receive their coin again
again from any that would offer them twenty shillings of it, for which they were obliged to pay gold or silver.

The patents both of lord Dartmouth and Knox were referred to the attorney-general here, and a report made accordingly; and both, as I have already said, were passed in this kingdom. Knox had only a patent for the remainder of the term granted to lord Dartmouth; the patent expired in 1701, and, upon a petition by Roger Moor, to have it renewed, that matter was referred hither; and, upon the report of the attorney and solicitor, that it was not for his majesty's service, or the interest of the nation, to have it renewed, it was rejected by king William. It should therefore seem very extraordinary, that a patent for coining copper half pence, intended and professed for the good of the kingdom, should be passed without once consulting that kingdom for the good of which it is declared to be intended; and this upon the application of a poor, private, obscure mechanic; and a patent of such a nature, that, as soon as ever the kingdom is informed of its being passed, they cry out unanimously against it as ruinous and destructive. The representatives of the nation in parliament, and the privy-council, address the king to have it recalled; yet the patentee, such a one as I have described, shall prevail to have this patent approved; and his private interest shall weigh down the application of a whole kingdom. St. Paul says, All things are lawful, but all things are not
not expedient. We are answered, that this patent is lawful: but is it expedient? We read, that the high priest said, It was expedient that one man should die for the people; and this was a most wicked proposition; but that a whole nation should die for one man, was never heard of before.

But because much weight is laid on the precedents of other patents for coining copper for Ireland, I will set this matter in as clear a light as I can. Whoever hath read the report, will be apt to think, that a dozen precedents at least could be produced of copper coined for Ireland by virtue of patents passed in England; and that the coinage was there too; whereas I am confident, there cannot be one precedent shewn of a patent passed in England for coining copper for Ireland for above an hundred years past; and if there were any before, it must be in times of confusion. The only patents I could ever hear of, are those already mentioned to lord Dartmouth and Knox, the former in 1680, and the latter in 1685. Now let us compare these patents with that granted to Wood. First, the patent to Knox, which was under the same conditions as that granted to lord Dartmouth, was passed in Ireland; the government and the attorney and solicitor general making report, that it would be useful to this kingdom.

The patent was passed with the advice of the king's council here; the patentee was obliged to receive his coin from those who thought themselves

F 4 surcharged,
furcharged, and to give gold and silver for it. Lastly, the patentee was to pay only £6l. 13s. 4d. per annum to the crown. Then, as to the execution of the patent; first, I find the half-pence were milled, which, as it is of great use to prevent counterfeits (and therefore industriously avoided by Wood) so it was an addition to the charge of coinage. And as for the weight and goodness of the metal, I have several half-pence now by me, many of which weigh a ninth part more than those coined by Wood; and bear the fire and hammer a great deal better, and, which is no trifle, the impression is fairer and deeper. I grant indeed, that many of the latter coinage yield in weight to some of Wood's, by a fraud natural to such patentees; but not so immediately after the grant, and before the coin grew current; for in this circumstance Mr. Wood must serve for a precedent in future times.

Let us now examine this new patent granted to William Wood. It passed upon very false suggestions of his own, and of a few confederates: it passed in England without the least reference hither; it passed unknown to the very lord lieutenant, then in England. Wood is impowered to coin one hundred and eight thousand pounds, and all the officers in the kingdom (civil and military) are commanded, in the report, to countenance and assist him. Knox had only power to utter what he would take, and was obliged to receive his coin back again at our demand, and to enter into security for so doing. Wood's half-pence are not milled, and therefore more
more easily counterfeited by *himself*, as well as by others. *Wood* pays a thousand pounds *per annum* for fourteen years; *Knox* paid only sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence *per annum* for twenty-one years.

It was the *report*, that set me the example of making a comparison between those two patents, wherein the *committee* was grossly misled by the false representation of *William Wood*; as it was by another assertion, that seven hundred tons of copper were coined during the twenty-one years of lord *Dartmouth's* and *Knox's* patents. Such a quantity of copper, at the rate of two shillings and eight pence *per* pound, would amount to about an hundred and ninety thousand pounds; which was very near as much as the current cash of the kingdom in those days; yet, during that period, *Ireland* was never known to have too much copper coin; and for several years there was no coining at all: besides, I am assured, that, upon enquiring in the *custom-house books*, all the copper imported into this kingdom from 1683 to 1692, which includes eight years of the twenty-one (besides one year allowed for the troubles), did not exceed forty-seven tons. And we cannot suppose even that small quantity to have been wholly applied to coinage: so that, I believe, there was never any comparison more unluckily made, or so destructive of the design for which it was produced.

The *psalmist* reckons it an *effect of God's anger*, when he *selleth his people for nought, and taketh no money*.
money for them. That we have greatly offended God by the wickedness of our lives, is not to be disputed: but our king we have not offended in word or deed; and although he be God's vice-gerent upon earth, he will not punish us for any offences, except those we shall commit against his legal authority, his sacred person (which God preserve), or the laws of the land.

The report is very profuse in arguments, that Ireland is in great want of copper money: who were the witnesses to prove it, hath been shewn already: but, in the name of God, who are to be judges? Does not the nation best know its own wants? Both houses of parliament, the privy-council, and the whole body of the people, declare the contrary. Or, let the wants be what they will, we desire they may not be supplied by Mr. Wood: we know our own wants but too well; they are many, and grievous to be borne, but quite of another kind. Let England be satisfied; as things go, they will, in a short time, have all our gold and silver, and may keep their adulterate copper at home; for we are determined not to purchase it with our manufactures, which Wood hath graciously offered to accept. Our wants are not so bad by an hundredth part as the method he hath taken to supply them. He hath already tried his faculty in New-England; and, I hope, he will meet at least with an equal reception here; what that was, I leave to public intelligence. I am supposing a wild case; that, if there should be any person already receiving
receiving a monstrous pension out of this kingdom, who was instrumental in procuring the patent, they have either not well consulted their own interests, or Wood must put more dross into his copper, and still diminish its weight.

Upon Wood's complaint, that the officers of the king's revenue here had already given orders to all the inferior officers not to receive any of his coin; the report says, that this cannot but be looked upon as a very extraordinary proceeding, and contrary to the powers given in the patent. The committee say, they cannot advise his majesty to give directions to the officers of the revenue here, not to receive or utter any of the said coin, as hath been desired in the addresses of both houses; but, on the contrary, they think it both just and reasonable, that the king should immediately give orders to the commissioners of the revenue, etc. to revoke all orders, etc. that may have been given by them to hinder or obstruct the receiving the said coin. And accordingly, we are told, such orders are arrived. Now this was a cast of Wood's politicks; for his information was wholly false and groundless, which he knew very well; and that the commissioners of the revenue here were all, except one, sent us from England, and love their employments too well to have taken such a step: but Wood was wise enough to consider, that such orders of revocation would be an open declaration of the crown in his favour; would put the government here under a difficulty; would make a noise, and
and possibly create some terror in the poor people of Ireland. And one great point he hath gained, that although any orders of revocation will be needless, yet a new order is to be sent (and, perhaps, is already here) to the commissioners of the revenue, and all the king's officers in Ireland, that Wood's half-pence be suffered and permitted, without any let, suit, trouble, molestation, or denial, of any of the king's officers or ministers whatsoever, to pass, and be received, as current money, by such as shall be willing to receive them. In this order, there is no exception; and therefore, as far as I can judge, it includes all officers, both civil and military, from the lord high chancellor to a justice of peace, and from the general to an ensign; so that Wood's project is not likely to fail for want of managers enough. For my own part, as things stand, I have but little regret to find myself out of the number; and therefore I shall continue, in all humility, to exhort and warn my fellow-subjects never to receive or utter this coin, which will reduce the kingdom to beggary by much quicker and larger steps than have hitherto been taken.

But it is needless to argue any longer. The matter is come to an issue. His majesty, pursuant to the law, hath left the field open between Wood and the kingdom of Ireland. Wood hath liberty to offer his coin, and we have law, reason, liberty, and necessity to refuse it. A knavish jockey may ride an old foundered jade about the market, but none are obliged to buy it. I hope the words voluntary, and
and willing to receive it, will be understood and applied to their true natural meaning, as commonly understood by protestants. For if a fierce captain comes to my shop to buy six yards of scarlet cloth, followed by a porter laden with a sack of Wood's coin upon his shoulders; if we are agreed about the price, and my scarlet lies ready out upon the counter; if he then gives me the word of command to receive my money in Wood's coin, and calls me a disaffected, jacobite dog, for refusing it (although I am as loyal a subject as himself, and without hire) and thereupon seizes my cloth, leaving me the price in this odious copper, and bids me take my remedy: in this case, I shall hardly be brought to think, that I am left to my own will. I shall therefore, on such occasions, first order the porter aforesaid to go off with his pack; and then see the money in silver and gold in my possession, before I cut or measure my cloth. But if a common soldier drinks his pot first, and then offers payment in Wood's half-pence, the landlady may be under some difficulty; for if she complains to his captain or ensign, they are likewise officers included in this general order for encouraging these half-pence to pass as current money. If she goes to a justice of peace, he is also an officer, to whom this general order is directed. I do therefore advise her to follow my practice, which I have already begun, and be paid for her goods before she parts with them. However, I should have been content for some reasons, that the military gentlemen had been excepted.
cepted by name; because I have heard it said, that their discipline is best confined within their own district.

His majesty, in the conclusion of his answer to the address of the house of lords against Wood's coin, is pleased to say, that he will do every thing in his power to the satisfaction of his people. It should seem therefore, that the recalling the patent is not to be understood as a thing in his power. But however, since the law doth not oblige us to receive this coin, and, consequently, the patent leaves it to our voluntary choice, there is nothing remaining to preserve us from ruin, but that the whole kingdom should continue in a firm, determinate resolution never to receive or utter this fatal coin. After which, let the officers, to whom these orders are directed (I would willingly except the military), come with their exhortations, their arguments, and their eloquence, to persuade us to find our interest in our undoing. Let Wood and his accomplices travel about the country with cart loads of their ware, and see who will take it off their hands; there will be no fear of his being robbed; for a highwayman would scorn to touch it.

I am only in pain how the commissioners of the revenue will proceed in this juncture; because, I am told, they are obliged, by act of parliament, to take nothing but gold and silver in payment for his majesty's customs: and, I think, they cannot justly offer this coinage of Mr. Wood to others, unless they will be content to receive it themselves.

The
LETTER III.

The sum of the whole is this: The committee advises the king to send immediate orders to all his officers here, that Wood's coin be suffered and permitted, without any let, suit, trouble, etc. to pass, and to be received, as current money, by such as shall be willing to receive the same. It is probable, that the first willing receivers may be those, who must receive it whether they will or no, at least under the penalty of losing an office. But the landed undependent men, the merchants, the shopkeepers, and bulk of the people, I hope, and am almost confident, will never receive it. What must the consequence be? The owners will sell it for as much as they can get. Wood's half-pence will come to be offered for six a penny (yet then he will be a sufficient gainer) and the necessary receivers will be losers of two thirds in their salaries or pay.

This puts me in mind of a passage I was told many years ago in England. At a quarter-sessioin in Leicester, the justices had wisely decreed to take off a half-penny in a quart from the price of ale. One of them, who came in after the thing was determined, being informed of what had passed, said thus: Gentlemen, you have made an order, that ale should be sold, in our county, for three half-pence a quart; I desire you will now make another to appoint who must drink it; for by G—I will not.

I must beg leave to caution your lordships and worships in one particular. Wood hath graciously promised to load us, at present, only with forty thousand pounds of his coin, until the exigencies of
the kingdom require the rest. I intreat you will suffer Mr. Wood to be a judge of your exigencies. He will double his present quantum, by stealth, as soon as he can; he will pour his own raps and counterfeits upon us; France and Holland will do the same; nor will our own coiners, at home, be behind them: to confirm which, I have now, in my pocket, a rap, or counterfeit half-penny, in imitation of his; but so ill performed, that, in my conscience, I believe it is not of his coining.

I must now desire your lordships and worship, that you will give great allowance for this long undigested paper. I find myself to have gone into several repetitions, which were the effects of haste, while new thoughts fell in to add something to what I have said before. I think I may affirm, that I have fully answered every paragraph in the report; which, although it be not unartfully drawn, and is perfectly in the spirit of a pleader, who can find the most plausible topics in behalf of his client, yet there was no great skill required to detect the many mistakes contained in it; which however are, by no means, to be charged upon the right honourable committee, but upon the most false, impudent, and fraudulent representations of Wood and his accomplices. I desire one particular may dwell upon your minds, although I have mentioned it more than once; that, after all the weight laid upon precedents, there is not one produced in the whole report, of a patent, for coining
coining copper in *England*, to pass in *Ireland*; and only two patents referred to (for indeed there were no more) which were both passed in *Ireland*, by references to the king's council here, both less advantageous to the coiner than this of *Wood*; and in both, securities given to receive the coin at every call, and give gold and silver in lieu of it. This demonstrates the most flagrant falsehood and impudence of *Wood*, by which he would endeavour to make the right honourable committee his instruments (for his own illegal and exorbitant gain) to ruin a kingdom, which has deserved *quite different treatment*.

I am very sensible, that such a work as I have undertaken might have worthily employed a much better pen: but when a house is attempted to be robbed, it often happens that the weakest in the family runs first to stop the door. All the assistance I had, were some informations from an eminent person; whereof I am afraid I have spoiled a few by endeavouring to make them of a piece with my own productions, and the rest I am not able to manage: I was in the case of *David*, who could not move in the armour of *Saul*; and therefore I rather chose to attack this uncircumcised Philistine (*Wood* I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say, for *Wood*'s honour as well as my own, that he resembles *Goliath*, in many circumstances, very applicable to the present purpose: for *Goliath* had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with *Vol. X. G* a coat
a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. In short, he was, like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of the living God. Goliath's conditions of combat were likewise the same with those of Wood: if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants. But if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition; he shall never be a servant of mine; for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop.

I will conclude with my humble desire and request, which I made in my second letter, that your lordships and worship would please to order a declaration to be drawn up, expressing, in the strongest terms, your resolutions never to receive or utter any of Wood's half-pence, or farthings; and forbidding your tenants to receive them: that the said declaration may be signed by as many persons as possible [b], who have estates in this kingdom, and be sent down to your several tenants aforesaid.

And if the dread of Wood's half-pence should continue until next quarter-sessions, which I hope

[b] A declaration, pursuant to this request, was signed soon after by the most considerable persons of the kingdom, which was universally spread, and of great use.
it will not, the gentlemen of every county will then have a fair opportunity of declaring against them with unanimity and zeal.

I am, with the greatest respect,

(may it please your lordships and worship)

your most dutiful and

Aug. 25, 1724. obedient servant,

M. B.
Letter IV.

To the whole People of

IRELAND.

My dear countrymen,

HAVING already written three letters upon so disagreeable a subject as Mr. Wood and his half-pence, I conceived my task was at an end; but I find that cordials must be frequently applied to weak constitutions, political as well as natural. A people long used to hardships lose, by degrees, the very notions of liberty; they look upon themselves as creatures at mercy; and that all impositions laid on them by a stronger hand are, in the phrase of the Report, legal and obligatory. Hence proceed that poverty and lowness of spirit, to which a kingdom may be subject, as well as a particular person. And when Esau came fainting from the field at the point to die, it is no wonder that he sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage.

I thought I had sufficiently shewn, to all who could want instruction, by what methods they might easily proceed, whenever this coin should be offered
offered to them: and, I believe, there hath not been, for many ages, an example of any kingdom so firmly united in a point of great importance, as this of ours is, at present, against that detestable fraud. But however, it so happens, that some weak people begin to be alarmed anew by rumours industriously spread. Wood prescribes to the news-mongers, in London, what they are to write. In one of their papers published here by some obscure printer (and certainly with a bad design) we are told, that the papists in Ireland have entered into an association against his coin; although it be notoriously known, that they never once offered to stir in the matter; so that the two houses of parliament, the privy-council, the great numbers of corporations, the lord-mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand-juries, and principal gentlemen of several counties, are stigmatized in a lump under the name of papists.

This impostor and his crew do likewise give out, that, by refusing to receive his dross for sterling, we dispute the king's prerogative, are grown ripe for rebellion, and ready to shake off the dependency of Ireland upon the crown of England. To countenance which reports, he hath published a paragraph, in another news paper, to let us know, that the lord lieutenant is ordered to come over immediately to settle his half-pence.

I intreat you, my dear countrymen, not to be under the least concern upon these, and the like rumours, which are no more than the last howls
of a dog dissected alive, as I hope he hath sufficiently been. These calumnies are the only reserve that is left him. For surely our continued and (almost) unexampled loyalty will never be called in question for not suffering ourselves to be robbed of all that we have by one obscure ironmonger.

As to disputing the king's prerogative, give me leave to explain, to those who are ignorant, what the meaning of that word, prerogative, is.

The kings of these realms enjoy several powers, wherein the laws have not interposed; so they can make war and peace without the consent of parliament, and this is a very great prerogative: but, if the parliament doth not approve of the war, the king must bear the charge of it out of his own purse; and this is a great check on the crown. So the king hath a prerogative to coin money without consent of parliament; but he cannot compel the subject to take that money, except it be sterling, gold or silver; because herein he is limited by law. Some princes have, indeed, extended their prerogative farther than the law allowed them: wherein, however, the lawyers of succeeding ages, as fond as they are of precedents, have never dared to justify them. But, to say the truth, it is only of late times, that prerogative hath been fixed and ascertained. For whoever reads the history of England will find, that some former kings, and those none of the worst, have, upon several occasions, ventured to control the laws, with very little ceremony or scruple, even later than
than the days of queen Elizabeth. In her reign, that pernicious counsel of sending base money hither very narrowly failed of losing the kingdom; being complained of by the lord deputy, the council, and the whole body of the English here: so that, soon after her death, it was recalled by her successor, and lawful money paid in exchange.

Having thus given you some notion of what is meant by the king's prerogative, as far as a tradesman can be thought capable of explaining it, I will only add the opinion of the great lord Bacon, that, as God governs the world by the settled laws of nature, which he hath made, and never transcends those laws but upon high, important occasions; so, among earthly princes, those are the wisest and the best, who govern by the known laws of the country, and seldomst make use of their prerogative.

Now here you may see, that the vile accusation of Wood and his accomplices, charging us with disputing the king's prerogative by refusing his brases, can have no place; because, compelling the subject to take any coin, which is not sterling, is no part of the king's prerogative; and I am very confident, if it were so, we should be the last of his people to dispute it, as well from that inviolable loyalty we have always paid to his majesty, as from the treatment we might, in such a case, justly expect from some, who seem to think we have neither common sense nor common senses. But, God be thanked, the best of them are only our fellow-subjects, and not our masters. One great merit I am sure
sure we have, which those of English birth can have no pretence to, that our ancestors reduced this kingdom to the obedience of England; for which we have been rewarded with a worse climate, the privilege of being governed by laws to which we do not consent, a ruined trade, a house of peers without jurisdiction, almost an incapacity for all employments, and the dread of Wood's half-pence.

But we are so far from disputing the king's prerogative in coining, that we own he hath power to give a patent to any man for setting his royal image and superscription upon whatever materials he pleases; and liberty to the patentee to offer them in any country from England to Japan, only attended with one small limitation, that nobody alive is obliged to take them.

Upon these considerations, I was ever against all recourse to England for a remedy against the present impending evil; especially when I observed, that the addresses of both houses, after long expectation, produced nothing but a report altogether in favour of Wood; upon which I made some observations in a former letter, and might at least have made as many more; for it is a paper of as singular a nature as I ever beheld.

But I mistake; for, before this report was made, his majesty's most gracious answer to the house of lords was sent over, and printed; wherein are these words, granting the patent for coining half-pence and farthings, agreeable to the practice of his royal...
That king Charles the second, and king James the second (and they only), did grant patents for this purpose, is indisputable, and I have shewn it at large. Their patents were passed under the great seal of Ireland, by references to Ireland, the copper to be coined in Ireland; the patentee was bound on demand to receive his coin back in Ireland, and pay silver and gold in return. Wood's patent was made under the great seal of England, the brass coined in England, not the least reference made to Ireland; the sum immense, and the patentee under no obligation to receive it again, and give good money for it. This I only mention, because, in my private thoughts, I have sometimes made a query, whether the penner of those words in his majesty's most gracious answer, agreeable to the practice of his royal predecessors, had maturely considered the several circumstances, which, in my poor opinion, seem to make a difference [c].

Let me now say something concerning the other great cause of some people's fear, as Wood has taught the London news-writer to express it, that his excellency the lord lieutenant is coming over to settle Wood's half-pence.

We know very well, that the lords lieutenants for several years past have not thought this kingdom worthy the honour of their residence, longer than was absolutely necessary for the king's business; which consequently wanted no speed in the dispatch. And

[c] See the note at the end of this letter.
therefore it naturally fell into most men's thoughts that a new governor, coming at an unusual time, must portend some unusual business to be done; especially if the common report be true, that the parliament, prorogued to I know not what time, is, by a new summons revoking that prorogation, to assemble soon after his arrival; for which extraordinary proceeding the lawyers on t'other side the water have by great good fortune found two precedents.

All this being granted, it can never enter into my head, that so little a creature as Wood could find credit enough with the king and his ministers to have the lord lieutenant of Ireland sent hither in a hurry upon his errand.

For, let us take the whole matter nakedly, as it lies before us, without the refinements of some people, with which we have nothing to do. Here is a patent granted under the great seal of England, upon false suggestions, to one William Wood, for coining copper half-pence for Ireland: the parliament here, upon apprehensions of the worst consequences from the said patent, address the king to have it recalled: this is refused, and a committee of the privy-council report to his majesty, that Wood has performed the conditions of his patent. He then is left to do the best he can with his half-pence, no man being obliged to receive them; the people here, being likewise left to themselves, unite as one man, resolving they will have nothing to do with his ware. By this plain account of the fact,
fact, it is manifest, that the king and his ministry
are wholly out of the case, and the matter is left
to be disputed between him and us. Will any
man therefore attempt to persuade me, that a lord
lieutenant is to be dispatched over in great haste
before the ordinary time, and a parliament sum-
moned by anticipating a prorogation, merely to
put an hundred thousand pounds into the pocket
of a sharper by the ruin of a most loyal kingdom?

But supposing all this to be true: by what ar-
guments could a lord lieutenant prevail on the
same parliament, which addressed with so much
zeal and earnestness against this evil, to pass it into
a law? I am sure, their opinion of Wood and his
project are not mended since their last prorogation:
and, supposing those methods should be used, which
detractors tell us have been sometimes put in prac-
tice for gaining votes, it is well known, that in this
kingdom there are few employments to be given;
and, if there were more, it is as well known to
whose share they must fall.

But, because great numbers of you are altoget-
er than ignorant of the affairs of your country, I will
tell you some reasons, why there are so few em-
ployments to be disposed of in this kingdom. All
considerable offices for life here are possessed by
those, to whom the reversions were granted; and
these have been generally followers of the chief
governors, or persons who had interest in the court
of England: so the lord Berkeley of Stratton Holds
that great office of master of the rolls; the lord
Palmer-
Palmerstown is first remembrancer, worth near 2000l. per annum. One Dodington, secretary to the earl of Pembroke, begged the reversion of clerk of the pells, worth 2500l. a year, which he now enjoys by the death of the lord Newtown. Mr. Southwell is secretary of state, and the earl of Burlington lord high treasurer of Ireland by inheritance. These are only a few, among many others, which I have been told of, but cannot remember. Nay, the reversion of several employments during pleasure is granted the same way. This, among many others, is a circumstance, whereby the kingdom of Ireland is distinguished from all other nations upon earth, and makes it so difficult an affair to get into a civil employ, that Mr. Addison was forced to purchase an old obscure place, called keeper of the records in Bermingham's tower, of ten pounds a year, and to get a salary of 400l. annexed to it, though all the records there are not worth half-a-crown either for curiosity or use. And we lately saw [d] a favourite secretary descend to be master of the revels, which, by his credit and extortion, he hath made pretty considerable. I say nothing of the under-treasurership, worth about 9000l. a year, nor of the commissioners of the revenue, four of whom generally live in England; for, I think, none of these are granted in reversion. But the jest is, that I have known upon occasion some of these absent officers as keen against the interest of Ireland, as if

[d] Mr. Hopkins, secretary to the duke of Grafton.
they had never been indebted to her for a single groat.

I confess, I have been sometimes attempted to wish, that this project of Wood might succeed; because I reflected with some pleasure, what a jolly crew it would bring over among us of lords and squires, and pensioners of both sexes, and officers civil and military, where we should live together as merry and sociable as beggars; only with this one abatement, that we should neither have meat to feed, nor manufactures to cloath us, unless we could be content to prance about in coats of mail, or eat brass as ostridges do iron.

I return from this digression to that which gave me the occasion of making it: and, I believe, you are now convinced, that if the parliament of Ireland were as temptable as any other assembly within a mile of Christendom (which God forbid) yet the managers must of necessity fail for want of tools to work with. But I will yet go one step further by supposing, that a hundred new employments were erected on purpose to gratify compilers; yet still an insuperable difficulty would remain. For it happens, I know not how, that money is neither whig nor tory, neither of town nor country party; and it is not improbable, that a gentleman would rather chuse to live upon his own estate, which brings him gold and silver, than with the addition of an employment, when his rents and salary must both be paid in Wood's brass at above eighty per cent. discount.

For
For these, and many other reasons, I am confident, you need not be under the least apprehensions from the sudden expectation of the lord lieutenant [c], while we continue in our present hearty disposition; to alter which, no suitable temptation can possibly be offered. And if, as I have often asserted from the best authority, the law hath not left a power in the crown to force any money, except sterling, upon the subject; much less can the crown devolve such a power upon another.

This I speak with the utmost respect to the person and dignity of his excellency the lord Carteret, whose character was lately given me by a gentleman, that hath known him from his first appearance in the world: that gentleman describes him as a young man of great accomplishments, excellent learning, regular in his life, and of much spirit and vivacity. He hath since, as I have heard, been employed abroad; was principal secretary of state; and is now, about the thirty-seventh year of his age, appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. From such a governor, this kingdom may reasonably hope for as much prosperity as, under so many discouragements, it can be capable of receiving.

It is true indeed, that, within the memory of man, there have been governors of so much dexterity, as to carry points of terrible consequence to this kingdom by their power with those who are

[c] Lord Carteret, afterwards lord Granville.
in office; and by their arts in managing or deluding others with oaths, affability, and even with dinners. If Wood's brass had in those times been upon the anvil, it is obvious enough to conceive what methods could have been taken. Depending persons have been told in plain terms, that it was a service expected from them, under the pain of the public business being put into more complying hands. Others would be allured by promises. To the country gentlemen, besides good words, burgundy, and closetting, it might, perhaps, have been hinted, how kindly it would be taken to comply with a royal patent, although it were not compulsory: that, if any inconveniences ensued, it might be made up with other graces or favours hereafter; that gentlemen ought to consider, whether it were prudent or safe to disgust England; they would be desired to think of some good bills for the encouraging of trade, and setting the poor to work; some further acts against popery, and for uniting protestants. There would be solemn engagements, that we should never be troubled with above forty thousand pounds in his coin, and all of the best and weightiest sort, for which we should only give our manufacture in exchange, and keep our gold and silver at home. Perhaps a seasonable report of some invasion would have been spread in the most proper juncture; which is a great smoother of rubs in public proceedings: and we should have been told, that this was no time to create differences, when the kingdom was in danger.

These,
THE DRAPIER's LETTERS.

These, I say, and the like methods, would, in corrupt times, have been taken to let in this deluge of brass among us. And, I am confident, even then would not have succeeded; much less under the administration of so excellent a person as the lord Carteret; and in a country where the people of all ranks, parties, and denominations, are convinced, to a man, that the utter undoing of themselves and their posterity for ever will be dated from the admission of that execrable coin: that, if it once enters, it can be no more confined to a small or moderate quantity, than a plague can be confined to a few families; and that no equivalent can be given by any earthly power, any more than a dead carcasse can be recovered to life by a cordial.

There is one comfortable circumstance in this universal opposition to Mr. Wood, that the people sent over hither from England to fill up our vacancies, ecclesiastical, civil, and military, are all on our side. Money, the great divider of the world, hath, by a strange revolution, been the great uniter of a most divided people. Who would leave a hundred pounds a year in England (a country of freedom) to be paid a thousand in Ireland out of Wood's exchequer? The gentleman they have lately made [f] primate, would never quit his seat in an English house of lords, and his preferments at Oxford and Bristol worth twelve hundred pounds a year, for

[f] Doctor Hugh Boulter.
four times the denomination here, but not half the value; therefore I expect to hear he will be as good an Irishman at least upon this one article as any of his brethren, or even of us, who have had the misfortune to be born in this island. For those who, in the common phrase, do not come hither to learn the language, would never change a better country for a worse to receive brasses instead of gold.

Another slander spread by Wood and his emissaries, is, that, by opposing him, we discover an inclination to shake off our dependance upon the crown of England. Pray observe how important a person is this same William Wood; and how the public weal of two kingdoms is involved in his private interest. First, all those who refuse to take his coin are papists; for he tells us, that none but papists are associated against him. Secondly, they dispute the king's prerogative. Thirdly, they are ripe for rebellion. And, fourthly, they are going to shake off their dependance upon the crown of England; that is to say, they are going to change another king; for there can be no other meaning in this expression, however some may pretend to strain it.

And this gives me an opportunity of explaining to those who are ignorant of another point, which hath often swelled in my breast. Those who come over hither to us from England, and some weak people among ourselves, whenever in discourse we make mention of liberty and property, shake their heads, and tell us, that Ireland [g] is a depending

[g] See the note at the end of this letter.
kingdom; as if they would seem, by this phrase, to intend, that the people of Ireland are, in some state of slavery or dependence, different from those of England: whereas a depending kingdom is a modern term of art, unknown, as I have heard, to all ancient civilians, and writers upon government; and Ireland is, on the contrary, called in some statutes, an imperial crown, as held only from God; which, is as high a style as any kingdom is capable of receiving. Therefore by this expression, a depending kingdom, there is no more to be understood than that, by a statute made here in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII. the king, and his successors, are to be kings imperial of this realm, as united and knit to the imperial crown of England. I have looked over all the English and Irish statutes without finding any law, that makes Ireland depend upon England, any more than England doth upon Ireland. We have, indeed, obliged ourselves to have the same king with them; and, consequently, they are obliged to have the same king with us. For the law was made by our own parliament; and our ancestors then were not such fools (whatever they were in the preceding reign) to bring themselves under I know not what dependence, which is now talked of, without any ground of law, reason, or common sense.

Let whoever think otherwise, I, M. B. drapier, desire to be excepted: for I declare, next under God, I depend only on the king my sovereign, and on the laws of my own country. And I am so far from
from depending upon the people of England, that, if they should ever rebel against my sovereign (which God forbid), I would be ready, at the first command from his majesty, to take up arms against them, as some of my countrymen did against theirs at Preston. And, if such a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the pretender on the throne of England, I would venture to transgress that statute so far, as to lose every drop of my blood to hinder him from being king of Ireland [b].

It is true indeed, that, within the memory of man, the parliaments of England have sometimes assumed the power of binding this kingdom by laws enacted there; wherein they were at first openly opposed (as far as truth, reason, and justice are capable of opposing) by the famous Mr. Molineux, an English gentleman born here, as well as by several of the greatest patriots and best whigs in England; but the love and torrent of power prevailed. Indeed the arguments on both sides were invincible. For in reason, all government, without the consent of the governed, is the very definition of slavery: but, in fact, eleven men well armed will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt. But I have done: for those who have used power to cramp liberty, have gone so far as to resent even the liberty of complaining; although a man, upon the rack, was never known to be refused the liberty of roaring as loud as he thought fit.

[b] This paragraph gave great offence. See Letter V.
And as we are apt to sink too much under unreasonable fears, so we are too soon inclined to be raised by groundless hopes, according to the nature of all consumptive bodies like ours. Thus it hath been given about for several days past, that somebody in England empowered a second somebody to write to a third somebody here to assure us, that we should no more be troubled with these half-pence. And this is reported to have been done by the [i] same person, who is said to have sworn some months ago, that he would ram them down their throats (though I doubt they would stick in our stomachs): but whichever of these reports be true or false, it is no concern of ours. For, in this point, we have nothing to do with English ministers: and I should be sorry to leave it in their power to redress this grievance, or to enforce it; for the report of the committee hath given me a surfeit. The remedy is wholly in your own hands; and therefore I have digressed a little in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised amongst you; and to let you see, that by the laws of God, of Nature, of Nations, and of your Country, you are, and ought to be, as free a people as your brethren in England.

If the pamphlets published at London, by Wood and his journeymen, in defence of his cause, were reprinted here, and our countrymen could be persuaded to read them, they would convince you

[i] Mr. Walpole, afterwards earl of Orford.
of his wicked design, more than all I shall ever be able to say. In short, I make him a perfect saint in comparison of what he appears to be from the writings of those, whom he hires to justify his project. But he is so far master of the field (let others guess the reason) that no London printer dare publish any paper written in favour of Ireland: and here nobody hath yet been so bold as to publish any thing in favour of him.

There was, a few days ago, a pamphlet sent me of near fifty pages written in favour of Mr. Wood and his coinage, printed in London: it is not worth answering, because, probably, it will never be published here. But it gave me occasion to reflect upon an unhappiness we lie under, that the people of England are utterly ignorant of our case; which, however, is no wonder, since it is a point they do not in the least concern themselves about, farther than, perhaps, as a subject of discourse in a coffee-house when they have nothing else to talk of. For I have reason to believe, that no minister ever gave himself the trouble of reading any papers written in our defence, because I suppose their opinions are already determined, and are formed wholly upon the reports of Wood and his accomplices; else it would be impossible, that any man could have the impudence to write such a pamphlet as I have mentioned.

Our neighbours, whose understandings are just upon a level with ours (which, perhaps, are none of the brightest), have a strong contempt for most nations, but
THE DRAPIER's LETTERS.

but especially Ireland. They look upon us as a sort of savage Irish, whom our ancestors conquered several hundred years ago. And, if I should describe the Britons to you as they were in Cæsar's time, when they painted their bodies, or clothed themselves with the skins of beasts, I should act full as reasonably as they do. However, they are so far to be excused in relation to the present subject, that, hearing only one side of the cause, and having neither opportunity nor curiosity to examine the other, they believe a lie merely for their ease; and conclude, because Mr. Wood pretends to have power, he hath also reason on his side.

Therefore, to let you see how this case is represented, in England, by Wood and his adherents, I have thought it proper to extract out of that pamphlet a few of those notorious falsehoods in point of fact and reasoning contained therein, the knowledge whereof will confirm my countrymen in their own right sentiments, when they will see, by comparing both, how much their enemies are in the wrong.

First, the writer positively asserts, that Wood's half-pence were current among us for several months, with the universal approbation of all, people, without one single gainstayer; and we all, to a man, thought ourselves happy in having them.

Secondly, he affirms, that we were drawn into a dislike of them only by some cunning, evil-designing men among us, who opposed this patent of Wood to get another for themselves.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, that those, who most declared at first against Wood's patent, were the very men who intend to get another for their own advantage.

Fourthly, that our parliament and privy-council, the lord-mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand juries and merchants, and, in short, the whole kingdom, nay, the very dogs (as he expresseth it), were fond of those half-pence, till they were inflamed by those few designing persons aforesaid.

Fifthly, he says directly, that all those who opposèd the half-pence, were papists, and enemies to king George.

Thus far, I am confident, the most ignorant among you can safely swear from your own knowledge, that the author is a most notorious liar in every article; the direct contrary being so manifest to the whole kingdom, that, if occasion required, we might get it confirmed under five hundred thousand hands.

Sixthly, he would persuade us, that if we sell five shillings worth of our goods or manufactures for two shillings and four-pence worth of copper, although the copper were melted down, and that we could get five shillings in gold and silver for the said goods; yet to take the said two shillings and four-pence in copper would be greatly for our advantage.

And, lastly, he makes us a very fair offer, as empowered by Wood, that if we will take off two hundred thousand pounds in his half-pence for our goods, and likewise pay him three per cent. interest, for thirty years, for an hundred and twenty thousand pounds
(at which he computes the coinage above the intrinsic value of the copper) for the loan of his coin, he will, after that time, give us good money for what half-pence will be then left.

Let me place this offer in as clear a light as I can, to shew the insupportable villainy and impudence of that incorrigible wretch. First (says he) I will send two hundred thousand pounds of my coin into your country: the copper I compute to be, in real value, eighty thousand pounds, and I charge you with an hundred and twenty thousand pounds for the coinage; so that you see, I lend you an hundred and twenty thousand pounds for thirty years; for which you shall pay me three per cent. that is to say, three thousand six hundred pounds per annum, which, in thirty years, will amount to an hundred and eighty thousand pounds. And when these thirty years are expired, return me my copper, and I will give you good money for it.

This is the proposal made to us by Wood in that pamphlet written by one of his commissioners: and the author is supposed to be the same infamous Coleby, one of his under-swearers at the committee of council, who was tried for robbing the treasury here, where he was an under-clerk.

By this proposal he will first receive two hundred thousand pounds, in goods or sterling, for as much copper as he values at eighty thousand pounds, but, in reality, not worth thirty thousand pounds. Secondly, he will receive for interest an hundred and eight thousand pounds: and when our children come thirty years hence to return his half-pence upon his executors
executors (for before that time he will be, probably, gone to his own place), those executors will very reasonably reject them as raps and counterfeits, which they will be, and millions of them of his own coinage.

Methinks, I am fond of such a dealer as this, who mends every day upon our hands like a Dutch reckoning, wherein, if you dispute the unreasonableness and exorbitance of the bill, the landlord shall bring it up every time with new additions.

Although these and the like pamphlets, published by Wood in London, are altogether unknown here, where nobody could read them without as much indignation as contempt would allow; yet I thought it proper to give you a specimen how the man employs his time, where he rides alone without any creature to contradict him; while our few friends there wonder at our silence: and the English in general, if they think of this matter at all, impute our refusal to wilfulness or disaffection, just as Wood and his hirelings are pleased to represent.

But although our arguments are not suffered to be printed in England, yet the consequence will be of little moment. Let Wood endeavour to persuade the people there, that we ought to receive his coin; and let me convince our people here, that they ought to reject it under pain of our utter undoing; and then let him do his best and his worst.

Before I conclude, I must beg leave, in all humility, to tell Mr. Wood, that he is guilty of great indiscrétion, by causing so honourable a name as
that of Mr. Walpole to be mentioned so often, and in such a manner, upon this occasion. A short paper printed at Bristol, and reprinted here, reports Mr. Wood to say, that he wonders at the impudence and insolence of the Irish in refusing his coin, and what he will do when Mr. Walpole comes to town. Where, by the way, he is mistaken; for it is the true English people of Ireland who refuse it, although we take it for granted, that the Irish will do so too whenever they are asked. In another printed paper of his contriving, it is roundly expressed, that Mr. Walpole will cram his brass down our throats. Sometimes it is given out, that we must either take these half-pence, or eat our brogues: and in another news-letter, but of yesterday, we read, that the same great man hath sworn to make us swallow his coin in fire-balls.

This brings to my mind the known story of a Scotchman, who, receiving the sentence of death with all the circumstances of hanging, beheading, quartering, embowelling, and the like, cried out, What need all this cookery? And, I think, we have reason to ask the same question; for, if we believe Wood, here is a dinner getting ready for us; and you see the bill of fare; and I am sorry the drink was forgot, which might easily be supplied with melted lead and flaming pitch.

What vile words are these to put into the mouth of a great counsellor, in high trust with his majesty, and looked upon as a prime minister! If
Mr. Wood hath no better a manner of representing his patrons, when I come to be a great man, he shall never be suffered to attend at my levee. This is not the style of a great minister; it favours too much of the kettle and the furnace, and came entirely out of Wood’s forge.

As for the threat of making us eat our brogues, we need not be in pain; for if his coin should pass, that unpolite covering for the feet would no longer be a national reproach; because then we should have neither shoe nor brogue left in the kingdom. But here the falsehood of Mr. Wood is fairly detected; for I am confident Mr. Walpole never heard of a brogue in his whole life.

As to swallowing these half-pence in fire-balls, it is a story equally improbable. For, to execute this operation, the whole stock of Mr. Wood’s coin and metal must be melted down, and moulded into hollow balls with wild-fire, no bigger than a reasonable throat may be able to swallow. Now, the metal he hath prepared, and already coined, will amount to at least fifty millions of half-pence, to be swallowed by a million and an half of people; so that, allowing two half-pence to each ball, there will be about seventeen balls of wild-fire a-piece to be swallowed by every person in the kingdom; and, to administer this dose, there cannot be conveniently fewer than fifty thousand operators, allowing one operator to every thirty; which, considering the squeamishness of some stomachs and the peevishness of young children, is but reasonable. Now, under
under the correction of better judgments, I think the trouble and charge of such an experiment would exceed the profit; and therefore I take this report to be spurious, or, at least, only a new scheme of Mr. Wood himself; which, to make it pass the better in Ireland, he would father upon a minister of state.

But I will now demonstrate, beyond all contradiction, that Mr. Walpole is against this project of Mr. Wood, and is an entire friend to Ireland, only by this one invincible argument, that he has the universal opinion of being a wise man, an able minister, and in all his proceedings pursuing the true interest of the king his master: and that as his integrity is above all corruption, so is his fortune above all temptation. I reckon, therefore, we are perfectly safe from that corner, and shall never be under the necessity of contending with so formidable a power, but be left to possess our brogues and potatoes in peace, as [k] remote from thunder as we are from Jupiter.

I am, my dear countrymen,

your loving fellow-subject,

fellow-sufferer, and

Oct. 13, 1724. humble servant,

M. B.


Upon
Upon the arrival of lord Carteret, soon after the publication of this letter, the passages from which this note is referred to were selected as sufficient ground for prosecution, and a proclamation was published by his excellency and council, offering a reward of three hundred pounds for discovering the author. Harding the printer was imprisoned, and a bill of indictment was ordered to be prepared against him: which gave occasion to the following paper.

SEASONABLE
SEASONABLE

ADVICE

TO THE

GRAND-JURY,

CONCERNING THE

Bill preparing against the Printer of the preceding Letter.

SINCE a bill is preparing for the grand-jury to find against the printer of the Drapier's last letter, there are several things maturely to be considered by those gentlemen before they determine upon it.

First, They are to consider, that the author of the said pamphlet did write three other discourses on the same subject, which, instead of being censured, were universally approved by the whole nation, and were allowed to have raised and continued that spirit among us, which hath hitherto kept out Wood's coin; for all men will grant, that, if those pamphlets had not been written, his coin must have over-run the nation some months ago.

Secondly,
Secondly, It is to be considered, that this pamphlet, against which a proclamation hath been issued, is written by the same author: that nobody ever doubted the innocence and goodness of his design; that he appears, through the whole tenor of it, to be a loyal subject to his majesty, and devoted to the house of Hanover; and declares himself, in a manner, peculiarly zealous against the pretender. And if such a writer, in four several treatises on so nice a subject, where a royal patent is concerned, and where it was necessary to speak of England and of liberty, should, in one or two places, happen to let fall an inadvertent expression, it would be hard to condemn him, after all the good he hath done, especially when we consider, that he could have no possible design in view, either of honour or profit, but purely the Good of his Country.

Thirdly, It ought to be well considered, whether any one expression in the said pamphlet be really liable to a just exception, much less to be found wicked, malicious, seditious, reflecting upon his majesty and his ministry, etc.

The two points in that pamphlet, which it is said the prosecutors intend chiefly to fix on, are, first, where the author mentions the penner of the king's answer. First, It is well known his majesty is not master of the English tongue; and therefore it is necessary that some other person should be employed to pen what he hath to say, or write in that language. Secondly, His majesty's answer is not in the first person, but in the third. It is not
not said, We are concerned, or Our royal predecessors; but His majesty is concerned, and his royal predecessors. By which it is plain, these are properly not the words of his majesty; but supposed to be taken from him, and transmitted hither by one of his ministers. Thirdly, It will be easily seen, that the author of the pamphlet delivers his sentiments, upon this particular, with the utmost caution and respect, as any impartial reader will observe.

The second paragraph, which it is said will be taken notice of as a motive to find the bill, is what the author says of Ireland's being a dependent kingdom: he explains all the dependence he knows of, which is a law made in Ireland, whereby it is enacted, that whoever is king of England, shall be king of Ireland. Before this explanation be condemned, and the bill found upon it, it would be proper that some lawyer should fully inform the jury what other law there is, either statute or common, for this dependency; and if there be no law, there is no transgression.

The fourth thing very maturely to be considered by the jury, is, what influence their finding the bill may have upon the kingdom: the people, in general, find no fault in the Drapier's last book, any more than in the three former; and therefore, when they hear it is condemned by a grand-jury of Dublin, they will conclude it is done in favour of Wood's coin; they will think, we of this town have
have changed our minds, and intend to take those half-pence, and therefore that it will be in vain for them to stand out: so that the question comes to this. Which will be of the worst consequence? to let pass one or two expressions, at the worst only unwary, in a book written for the public service; or to leave a free open passage for Wood's brasses to over-run us, by which we shall be undone for ever?

The fifth thing to be considered is, that the members of the grand-jury, being merchants and principal shopkeepers, can have no suitable temptation offered them, as a recompence for the mischief they will do, and suffer by letting in this coin; nor can be at any loss or danger by rejecting the bill. They do not expect any employments in the state, to make up their own private advantages by the destruction of their country; whereas those, who go about to advise, entice, or threaten them to find that bill, have great employments, which they have a mind to keep, or to get greater; as it was likewise the case of all those who signed the proclamation to have the author prosecuted. And therefore it is known, that his grace the lord archbishop of Dublin, so renowned for his piety, and wisdom, and love of his country, absolutely refused to condemn the book or the author.

Lastly, It ought to be considered, what consequence the finding the bill may have upon a poor man, perfectly innocent; I mean the printer. A lawyer may pick out expressions, and make them liable
liable to exception, where no other man is able to find any. But how can it be supposed, that an ignorant printer can be such a critic? He knew the author's design was honest, and approved by the whole kingdom: he advised with friends, who told him there was no harm in the book, and he could see none himself: it was sent him in an unknown hand; but the same, in which he received the three former. He and his wife have offered to take their oaths, that they knew not the author. And therefore to find a bill, that may bring punishment upon the innocent, will appear very hard, to say no worse. For it will be impossible to find the author, unless he will please to discover himself; although I wonder he ever concealed his name: but I suppose, what he did at first out of modesty, he continues to do out of prudence. God protect us and him.

I will conclude all with a fable ascribed to Demosthenes; he had served the people of Athens with great fidelity in the station of an orator; when, upon a certain occasion, apprehending to be delivered over to his enemies, he told the Athenians, his countrymen, the following story: Once upon a time, the wolves desired a league with the sheep upon this condition; that the cause of strife might be taken away, which was the shepherds and mastiffs: this being granted, the wolves, without all fear, made havock of the sheep.

Nov. 11, 1724.
Copies of this paper were distributed to every person of the grand-jury the evening before the bill was to be exhibited, who, probably for the reasons contained in it, refused to find the bill, upon which the lord chief justice Whitshed, who had presided at a former prosecution of the dean’s printer [1], discharged them in a rage. The following extract was soon after published to shew the illegality of this proceeding, and the next grand-jury that impannelled made the subsequent presentment against all the abettors of Wood’s project. See Letter to lord Molesworth, p. 123. of this vol.


SEVERAL persons being examined about the dismissing a grand-jury in Middlesex, the house came to the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the discharging of a grand-jury by any judge, before the end of the term, assizes,

[1] See the note prefixed to the Proposal for the sole use of Irish manufactures.
or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented, is arbitrary, illegal, destructive to the public justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and is a means to subvert the fundamental laws of this kingdom.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to examine the proceedings of the judges in Westminster-hall; and report the same, with their opinion herein, to this house.

The PRESENTMENT of the Grand-Jury of the County of the City of Dublin.

WHEREAS several great quantities of base metal coined, commonly called Wood's half-pence, have been brought into the port of Dublin, and lodged in several houses of this city, with an intention to make them pass clandestinely among his majesty's subjects of this kingdom; notwithstanding the addresses of both houses of parliament, and the privy-council, and the declarations of most of the corporations of this city against the said coin: And whereas his majesty has been graciously pleased to leave his loyal subjects of this kingdom at liberty to take or refuse the said half-pence:

We the grand-jury of the county of the city of Dublin, this Michaelmas term 1724, having entirely at heart his majesty's interest, and the welfare of our country, and being thoroughly sensible of the great
great discouragements which trade hath suffered by the apprehensions of the said coin, whereof we have already felt the dismal effects: and that the currency thereof will inevitably tend to the great diminution of his majesty's revenue, and the ruin of us and our posterity, do present all such persons as have attempted, or shall endeavour by fraud, or otherwise, to impose the said half-pence upon us, contrary to his majesty's most gracious intentions, as enemies to his majesty's government, and to the safety, peace, and welfare of all his majesty's subjects of this kingdom; whose affections have been so eminently distinguished by their zeal to his illustrious family before his happy accession to the throne, and by their continued loyalty ever since.

As we do, with all just gratitude, acknowledge the services of all such patriots as have been eminently zealous for the interest of his majesty and this country, in detecting the fraudulent imposition of the said Wood, and preventing the passing of his base coin: so we do, at the same time declare our abhorrence and detestation of all reflections on his majesty and his government; and that we are ready with our lives and fortunes to defend his most sacred majesty against the pretender, and all his majesty's open and secret enemies both at home and abroad.

Given
THE PRESENTMENT, etc.

Given under our hands, at the grand-jury chamber, this 28th of November, 1724.


A LETTER
TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE
Lord Viscount MOLESWORTH.

Written in the Year 1724.

"They compassed me about also with words of deceit, and fought against me without a cause.

"For my love, they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer.

"And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love." Psalm cxix. 3, 4, 5.

"Seek not to be judge, being not able to take away iniquity; left at any time thou fear the person of the mighty, and lay a stumbling block in the way of thy uprightness.

"Offend not against the multitude of a city, and then thou shalt not cast thyself down among the people.

"Bind not one sin upon another, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished." Ecclus. vii, 6, 7, 8.

Non jam prima peto, Maestheus, neque vincere certo:
Quanquam O! Sed superent quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti.
DIRECTIONS

TO THE

PRINTER.

Mr. Harding,

When I sent you my former papers, I cannot say I intended you either good or hurt; and yet you have happened, through my means, to receive both. I pray God deliver you from any more of the latter, and increase the former. Your trade, particularly in this kingdom, is of all others, the most unfortunately circumstanced; for as you deal in the most worthless kind of trash, the penny productions of pennyless scriblers; so you often venture your liberty, and sometimes your lives, for the purchase of half a crown; and, by your own ignorance, are punished for other men's actions.

I am afraid, you, in particular, think you have reason to complain of me, for your own and your wife's confinement in prison, to your great expence, as well as hardship; and for a prosecution still impending. But I will tell you, Mr. Harding, how that matter stands. Since the press hath lain under so strict an inspection, those
those who have a mind to inform the world, are become so cautious as to keep themselves, if possible, out of the way of danger. My custom therefore is to dictate to a prentice, who can write in a feigned hand; and what is written, we send to your house by a black-guard boy. But, at the same time, I do assure you, upon my reputation, that I never did send you anything for which I thought you could possibly be called to an account. And you will be my witness, that I always desired you, by a letter, to take some good advice before you ventured to print; because I knew the dexterity of dealers in the law at finding out something to fasten on, where no evil is meant. I am told indeed, that you did accordingly consult several very able persons; and even some, who afterwards appeared against you: to which I can only answer; that you must either change your advisers, or determine to print nothing that comes from the drapier.

I desire you will send the inclosed letter directed to my lord viscount Molesworth, at his house at Brackdenstown, near Swords: but I would have it sent printed for the convenience of his lordship's reading; because this counterfeit hand of my prentice is not very legible. And, if you think fit to publish it, I would have you first get it read over by some notable lawyer: I am assured, you will find enough of them, who are friends to the drapier, and will do it without a fee;
Directions to the Printer.

a fee; which, I am afraid, you can ill afford after all your expences. For although I have taken so much care, that I think it impossible to find a topic out of the following papers for sending you again to prison, yet I will not venture to be your guarantee.

This ensuing letter contains only a short account of myself, and an humble apology for my former pamphlets, especially the last; with little mention of Mr. Wood, or his half-pence; because I have already said enough upon that subject, until occasion shall be given for new fears; and, in that case, you may, perhaps, hear from me again.

I am

From my shop in St. Francis street, Dec. 14, 1724. your friend and servant,

M. B.

P. S. For want of intercourse between you and me, which I never will suffer [m], your people are apt to make very gross errors in the press, which I desire you will provide against.

[m] The copies were always sent to the press by some obscure messenger, who never knew the person from whom he received them, but gave them in at a window. The amanuensis only was trusted, to whom, about two years after, the author gave an employment of 40l. a year as a reward for his fidelity.
To the Right Honourable the

Lord Viscount MOLESWORTH

At his house at Brackdenstown near Swords.

My Lord,

I reflect too late on the maxim of common observers, that those, who meddle in matters out of their calling, will have reason to repent: which is now verified in me: for, by engaging in the trade of a writer, I have drawn upon myself the displeasure of the government, signified by a proclamation promising a reward of three hundred pounds to the first faithful subject, who shall be able and inclined to inform against me; to which I may add, the laudable zeal and industry of my lord chief-justice Whitshed, in his endeavours to discover so dangerous a person. Therefore, whether I repent or no, I have certainly cause to do; and the common observation still stands good.

It will sometimes happen, I know not how, in the course of human affairs, that a man shall be made liable to legal animadversions, where he hath nothing to answer for either to God or his country; and condemned at Westminster-hall, for what he will never be charged with at the day of judgment.

After strictly examining my own heart, and consulting some divines of great reputation, I cannot accuse
accuse myself of any [n] malice or wickedness against the public; of any designs to sow sedition; of reflecting on the king and his ministers; or of endeavouring to alienate the affections of the people of this kingdom from those of England. All I can charge myself with, is, a weak attempt to serve a nation in danger of destruction, by a most wicked and malicious projector, without waiting until I were called to its assistance. Which attempt, however it may, perhaps, give me the title of pragmatical and overweening, will never lie a burthen upon my conscience. God knows whether I may not, with all my caution, have already run myself into a second danger, by offering thus much in my own vindication. For I have heard of a judge, who, upon the criminal's appeal to the dreadful day of judgment, told him, he had incurred a premunire for appealing to a foreign jurisdiction; and of another in Wales, who severely checked the prisoner for offering the same plea; taxing him with reflecting on the court by such a comparison; because comparisons were odious.

But, in order to make some excuse for being more speculative than others of my condition, I desire your lordship's pardon, while I am doing a very foolish thing; which is to give you some little account of myself.

I was bred at a free-school, where I acquired some little knowledge in the latin tongue. I served

[n] Articles mentioned in the indictment and proclamation.
my apprenticeship in London, and there set up for myself with good success; until, by the death of some friends, and misfortunes of others, I returned into this kingdom; and began to employ my thoughts in cultivating the woollen manufacture through all its branches; wherein I met with great discouragement, and powerful opposers, whose objections appeared to me very strange and singular. They argued, that the people of England would be offended, if our manufactures were brought to equal theirs: and even some of the weaving trade were my enemies; which I could not but look upon as absurd and unnatural. I remember your lordship, at that time, did me the honour to come into my shop, where I shewed you [o] a piece of black and white stuff just sent from the dyer; which you were pleased to approve of, and be my customer for.

However, I was so mortified, that I resolved, for the future, to sit quietly in my shop, and deal in common goods, like the rest of my brethren; until it happened some months ago, considering with myself, that the lower sort of people wanted a plain, strong coarse stuff to defend them against cold easterly winds, which then blew very fierce and blasting for a long time together; I contrived one on purpose, which sold very well all over the kingdom, and preserved many thousands from agues. I then made

[o] By this is meant, the Proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures.
a second and a third kind of stuffs for the gentry; with the same success; insomuch, that an ague hath hardly been heard of for some time.

This incited me so far, that I ventured upon a fourth piece made of the best Irish wool I could get; and I thought it grave and rich enough to be worn by the best lord or judge of the land. But, of late, some great folks complain, as I hear, that when they had it on, they felt a shuddering in their limbs, and have thrown it off in a rage; cursing to hell the poor drapier, who invented it: so that I am determined never to work for persons of quality again; except for your lordship and a very few more.

I assure your lordship, upon the word of an honest citizen, that I am not richer, by the value of one of Mr. Wood's half-pence, with the sale of all the several stuffs I have contrived: for I give the whole profit to the dyers and pressers. And therefore I hope you will please to believe, that no other motive, besides the love of my country, could engage me to busy my head and hands, to the loss of my time, and the gain of nothing but vexation and ill will.

I have now in hand one piece of stuff to be woven on purpose for your lordship; although I might be ashamed to offer it to you, after I have confessed, that it will be made only from the shreds

[p] The Drapier's three first letters.
[q] The fourth letter, against which the proclamation was issued.
[r] Printers.
[s] Meaning the present letter.
and remnants of the wool employed in the former. However, I shall work it up as well as I can; and at worst, you need only give it among your tenants.

I am very sensible, how ill your lordship is like to be entertained with the pedantry of a drapier in the terms of his own trade. How will the matter be mended, when you find me entering again, although very sparingly, into an affair of state? for such is now grown the controversy with Mr. Wood, if some great lawyers are to be credited. And as it often happens at play, that men begin with farthings, and go on to gold, till some of them lose their estates, and die in jail; so it may, possibly, fall out in my case, that, by playing too long with Mr. Wood's half-pence, I may be drawn in to pay a fine double to the reward for betraying me; be sent to prison, and not to be delivered thence until I shall have paid the uttermost farthing.

There are, my lord, three sorts of persons, with whom I am resolved never to dispute: a highwayman with a pistol at my breast; a troop of dragoons, who come to plunder my house; and a man of the law, who can make a merit of accusing me. In each of these cases, which are almost the same, the best method is to keep out of the way; and the next best is to deliver your money, surrender your houses, and confess nothing.

I am told, that the two points in my last letter, from which an occasion of offence hath been taken, are, where I mention his majesty's answer to the addres
address of the house of lords upon Mr. Wood's patent; and where I discourse upon Ireland's being a dependent kingdom. As to the former, I can only say, that I have treated it with the utmost respect and caution; and I thought it necessary to shew where Wood's patent differed in many essential parts from others, that ever had been granted; because the contrary had, for want of due information, been so strongly and so largely asserted. As to the other, of Ireland's dependency; I confess to have often heard it mentioned, but was never able to understand what it meant. This gave me the curiosity to enquire among several eminent lawyers, who professed they knew nothing of the matter. I then turned over all the statutes of both kingdoms without the least information, further than an Irish act, that I quoted, of the 33d of Henry VIII. uniting Ireland to England under one king. I cannot say, I was sorry to be disappointed in my search, because it is certain, I could be contented to depend only upon God and my prince, and the laws of my own country, after the manner of other nations. But since my betters are of a different opinion, and desire further dependencies, I shall outwardly submit; yet still insisting in my own heart upon the exception I made of M. B. drapier. Indeed that hint was borrowed from an idle story I had heard in England, which, perhaps, may be common and beaten; but because it insinuates neither treason nor sedition, I will just barely relate it.
Some hundred years ago, when the peers were so great, that the commons were looked upon as little better than their dependents, a bill was brought in for making some new additions to the power and privileges of the peerage. After it was read, one Mr. Drue, a member of the house, stood up, and said, he very much approved the bill, and would give his vote to have it pass; but however, for some reasons best known to himself, he desired that a clause might be inserted for excepting the family of the Drues. The oddness of the proposition taught others to reflect a little; and the bill was thrown out.

Whether I were mistaken, or went too far in examining the dependency, must be left to the impartial judgment of the world, as well as to the courts of judicature; although, indeed, not in so effectual and decisive a manner. But to affirm, as I hear some do, in order to countenance a fearful and servile spirit, that this point did not belong to my subject, is a false and foolish objection. There were several scandalous reports industriously spread by Wood and his accomplices, to discourage all opposition against his infamous project. They gave it out, that we were prepared for a rebellion; that we disputed the king's prerogative, and were shaking off our dependency. The first went so far, and obtained so much belief against the most visible demonstrations to the contrary, that a great person of this kingdom, now in England, sent over such an account of it to his friends, as would make any
good subject both grieve and tremble. I thought it therefore necessary to treat that calumny as it deserved. Then I proved, by an invincible argument, that we could have no intention to dispute his majesty's prerogative; because the prerogative was not concerned in the question; the civilians and lawyers of all nations agreeing, that copper is not money. And lastly, to clear us from the imputation of shaking off our dependency, I shewed wherein I thought, and shall ever think, this dependence consisted; and cited the statute above mentioned to be made in Ireland; by which it is enacted, that whoever is king of England, shall be king of Ireland; and that the two kingdoms shall be for ever knit together under one king. This, as I conceived, did wholly acquit us of intending to break our dependency; because it was altogether out of our power: for surely no king of England will ever consent to the repeal of this statute.

But upon this article I am charged with a heavier accusation. It is said I went too far, when I declared, that if ever the Pretender should come to be fixed upon the throne of England (which God forbid) I would so far venture to transgress this statute, that I would lose the last drop of my blood, before I would submit to him as king of Ireland.

This, I hear on all sides, is the strongest and weightiest objection against me; and which hath given the most offence; that I should be so bold to declare against a direct statute; and that any motive,
motive, how strong soever, could make me reject a king, whom England should receive. Now, if, in defending myself from this accusation, I should freely confess, that I went too far; that the expression was very indiscreet, although occasioned by my zeal for his present majesty, and his protestant line in the house of Hanover; that I shall be careful never to offend again in the like kind; and that I hope this free acknowledgment and sorrow for my error will be some atonement, and a little soften the hearts of my powerful adversaries: I say, if I should offer such a defence as this, I do not doubt but some people would wrest it to an ill meaning by a spiteful interpretation. And therefore, since I cannot think of any other answer, which that paragraph can admit, I will leave it to the mercy of every candid reader; but still without recanting my own opinion.

I will now venture to tell your lordship a secret, wherein, I fear, you are too deeply concerned. You will therefore please to know, that this habit of writing and discoursing, wherein I unfortunately differ from almost the whole kingdom, and am apt to grate the ears of more than I could wish, was acquired during my apprenticeship in London, and a long residence there after I had set up for myself. Upon my return and settlement here, I thought I had only changed one country of freedom for another. I had been long conversing with the writings of your lordship, Mr. Locke, Mr. Molineux,
colonel Sidney [t], and other dangerous authors, who talk of liberty as a blessing, to which the whole race of mankind hath an original title; whereof nothing but unlawful force can divest them. I knew a great deal of the several Gothic institutions in Europe; and by what incidents and events they came to be destroyed: and I ever thought it the most uncontrold and universally agreed maxim, that freedom consists in a people's being governed by laws made with their own consent; and slavery in the contrary. I have been likewise told, and believe it to be true, that liberty and property are words of known use and signification in this kingdom; and the very lawyers pretend to understand, and have them often in their mouths. These were the errors which have misled me; and to which alone I must impute the severe treatment I have received. But I shall, in time, grow wiser, and learn to consider my driver, the road I am in, and with whom I am yoked. This I will venture to say; that the boldest and most obnoxious words I ever delivered, would, in England, have only exposed me as a stupid fool, who went to prove, that the sun shone in a clear summer's day: and I have witnesses ready to depose, that your lordship hath said and writ fifty times worse; and, what is still an aggravation, with infinitely more wit and learning, and stronger arguments: so that, as politicks run, I do not know a person of more exceptionable prin-

[t] He published a book in the reign of king William III. entitled, the State of Denmark, with a large preface.
ciples than yourself: and, if ever I shall be discovered, I think you will be bound in honour to pay my fine, and support me in prison; or else I may chance to inform against you by way of reparation.

In the mean time, I beg your lordship to receive my confession; that, if there be any such thing as a dependency of Ireland upon England, otherwise than as I have explained it, either by the law of God, of nature, of reason, of nations, or of the land (which I shall die rather than grant), then was the proclamation against me, the most merciful that ever was put out; and, instead of accusing me as malicious, wicked, and seditious, it might have been directly as guilty of high treason.

All I desire is, that the cause of my country, against Mr. Wood, may not suffer by any inadvertency of mine. Whether Ireland depends upon England, or only upon God, the king, and the law; I hope no man will assert, that it depends upon Mr. Wood. I should be heartily sorry, that this commendable spirit against me should accidentally (and what, I hope, was never intended) strike a damp upon that spirit, in all ranks and corporations of men, against the desperate and ruinous design of Mr. Wood. Let my countrymen blot out those parts, in my last letter, which they dislike; and let no rust remain on my sword to cure the wounds I have given to our most mortal enemy. When Sir Charles Sidney was taking the oaths, where several things were to be renounced, he said, he loved renouncing;
renouncing; asked if any more were to be renounced; for he was ready to renounce as much as they pleased. Although I am not so thorough a renouncer, yet let me have but good city security against this pestilent coinage, and I shall be ready not only to renounce every syllable in all my four letters, but to deliver them cheerfully with my own hands into those of the common hangman, to be burnt with no better company than the coiner’s effigies, if any part of it hath escaped out of the secular hands of my faithful friends, the common people.

But, whatever the sentiments of some people may be, I think it is agreed, that many of those, who subscribed against me, are on the side of a vast majority in the kingdom, who opposed Mr. Wood: and it was with great satisfaction, that I observed some right honourable names very amicably joined with my own at the bottom of a strong declaration against him and his coin. But, if the admission of it among us be already determined, the worthy person, who is to betray me, ought, in prudence, to do it with all convenient speed; or else it may be difficult to find three hundred pounds sterling for

[u] As the Drapier’s letters were written expressly against Wood’s half-pence, it might be imagined that a proclamation against the author would produce an opinion, that to oppose Wood’s half-pence was illegal, and subjected the party to pains and penalties: to prevent so fatal a mistake, it is here remarked, that many of those, who subscribed the proclamation, were yet strenuous opposers of Wood’s project. This distinction is yet more explicit in the letter to lord Middleton, which was written soon after the fourth letter, and intended to be the fifth, though for some reasons deferred. — See the letter to lord Middleton, and the note prefixed.
the discharge of his hire, when the public shall have lost five hundred thousand, if there be so much in the nation; besides our fifths of its annual income for ever.

I am told by lawyers, that, in quarrels between man and man, it is of much weight, which of them gave the first provocation, or struck the first blow. It is manifest, that Mr. Wood hath done both: and therefore I should humbly propose to have him first hanged, and his dress thrown into the sea: after which the drapier will be ready to stand his trial. It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto him by whom the offence cometh. If Mr. Wood had held his hand, every body else would have held their tongues: and then there would have been little need of pamphlets, juries, or proclamations upon this occasion. The provocation must needs have been very great, which could stir up an obscure, indolent drapier to become an author. One would almost think, the very stones in the street would rise up in such a cause: and I am not sure they will not do so against Mr. Wood, if ever he comes within their reach. It is a known story of the dumb boy, whose tongue forced a passage for speech by the horror of seeing a dagger at his father's throat. This may lessen the wonder, that a tradesman hid in privacy and silence should cry out, when the life and being of his political mother are attempted before his face, and by so infamous a wretch.

But
But in the mean time Mr. Wood, the destroyer of a kingdom, walks about in triumph (unless it be true, that he is in jail for debt); while he, who endeavours to assert the liberty of his country, is forced to hide his head for occasionally dealing in a matter of controversy. However, I am not the first, who hath been condemned to death for gaining a great victory over a powerful enemy by disobeying, for once, the strict orders of military discipline.

I am now resolved to follow (after the usual proceeding of mankind, because it is too late) the advice given me by a certain dear [w]. He shewed the mistake I was in, of trusting to the general good will of the people; that I had succeeded hitherto better than could be expected; but that some unfortunate circumstantial lapse would, probably, bring me within the reach of power: that my good intentions would be no security against those, who watched every motion of my pen in the bitterness of my soul. He produced an instance of a person as innocent, as disinterested, and as well meaning as myself; who had written [x] a very reasonable and inoffensive treatise, exhorting the people of this kingdom, to wear their own manufactures; for which, however, the printer was prosecuted with the utmost virulence; the jury sent back nine times; and the man given up to the mercy of the court. The dean further observed,

[w] The author is supposed to mean himself.

[x] The author means himself again; in the discourse advising the people of Ireland to wear their own manufactures.
that I was, in a manner, left alone to stand the battle; while others, who had ten thousand times better talents than a drapier, were so prudent as to lie still; and, perhaps, thought it no unpleasant amusement to look on with safety, while another was giving them diversion at the hazard of his liberty and fortune; and thought they made a sufficient recompence by a little applause: whereupon he concluded with a short story of a Jew at Madrid; who, being condemned to the fire on account of his religion, a crowd of school-boys followed him to the stake, and apprehending they might lose their sport if he should happen to recant, would often clap him on the back and cry, Sta firme, Mosse (Moses, continue steadfast).

I allow this gentleman's advice to have been very good, and his observations just; and, in one respect, my condition is worse than that of the Jew: for no recantation will save me. However, it should seem by some late proceedings, that my state is not altogether deplorable. This I can impute to nothing but the steadiness of two impartial grand-juries; which hath confirmed in me an opinion I have long entertained; that, as philosophers say, virtue is seated in the middle; so in another sense, the little virtue left in the world is chiefly to be found among the middle rank of mankind, who are neither allured out of her paths by ambition, nor driven by poverty.

Since the proclamation occasioned by my last letter, and a due preparation for proceeding against me
me in a court of justice, there have been two printed papers clandestinely spread about; whereof no man is able to trace the original, further than by conjecture; which, with its usual charity, lays them to my account. The former is entitled, Seasonable advice, and appears to have been intended for the information of the grand-jury, upon the supposition of a bill to be prepared against that letter. The other is an extract from a printed book of parliamentary proceedings, in the year 1680; containing an angry resolution of the house of commons in England against dissolving grand-juries. As to the former, your lordship will find it to be the work of a more artful hand, than that of a common drapier. It hath been censured for endeavouring to influence the minds of a jury, which ought to be wholly free and unbiased; and for that reason it is manifest, that no judge was ever known, either upon or off the bench, either by himself or his dependents, to use the least insinuation, that might possibly affect the passions or interests of any one single jury-man, much less of a whole jury; whereof every man must be convinced, who will just give himself the trouble to dip into the common printed trials: so that it is amazing to think, what a number of upright judges there have been in both kingdoms for above sixty years past; which, considering how long they held their offices during pleasure, as they still do among us [y], I account next to a miracle.

[y] Perhaps this may account for Whitfield's conduct. See the
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As to the other paper, I must confess it is a sharp censure from an English house of commons against dissolving grand-juries by any judge before the end of the term, assizes, or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented, as arbitrary, illegal, destructive to public justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and as a means to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom.

However, the publisher seems to have been mistaken in what he aimed at. For whatever dependence there may be of Ireland upon England, I hope he would not insinuate, that the proceedings of a lord chief-justice in Ireland must depend upon a resolution of an English house of commons. Besides that resolution, although it were levelled against a particular lord chief-justice, Sir William Scroggs, yet the occasion was directly contrary. For Scroggs dissolved the grand-juries of London for fear they should present; but ours in Dublin was dissolved because they would not present; which wonderfully alters the case. And therefore a second grand-jury supplied that defect by making a presentment [z] that pleased the whole kingdom. However, I think it is agreed by all parties, that both the one and the other jury behaved themselves in such a manner, as ought to be remembered to their honour,

notes prefixed to the Proposal for the sole use of Irish manufacturers, and superadded to the Seasonable advice to the grand-jury.

[z] See the presentment immediately preceding this letter.
while there shall be any regard left among us for virtue or public spirit.

I am confident, your lordship will be of my sentiments in one thing; that some short plain authentic tract might be published for the information both of petty and grand-juries, how far their power reacheth, and where it is limited; and that a printed copy of such a treatise might be deposited in every court, to be consulted by the jurymen before they consider of their verdict; by which abundance of inconveniences would be avoided, whereof innumerable instances might be produced from former times; because I will say nothing of the present.

I have read somewhere of an Eastern king, who put a judge to death for an iniquitous sentence; and ordered his hide to be stuffed into a cushion, and placed upon the tribunal for the son to sit on, who was preferred to his father's office. I fancy, such a memorial might not have been unuseful to a son of Sir William Scroggs; and that both he and his successors would often wriggle in their seats, as long as the cushion lasted: I wish the relator had told us what number of such cushions there might be in that country.

I cannot but observe to your lordship, how nice and dangerous a point it is grown, for a private person to inform the people, even in an affair where the public interest and safety are so highly concerned as that of Mr. Wood; and this, in a country where loyalty is woven into the very hearts of
of the people, seems a little extraordinary. Sir William Scroggs was the first, who introduced that commendable acuteness into the courts of judicature; but how far this practice hath been imitated by his successors, or strained upon occasion, is out of my knowledge. When pamphlets, unpleasing to the ministry, were presented as libels, he would order the offensive paragraphs to be read before him; and said it was strange, that the judges and lawyers of the king's-bench should be dullest than all the people of England: and he was often so very happy in applying the initial letters of names and expounding dubious hints (the two common expedients among writers of that clafs for escaping the law), that he discovered much more than ever the authors intended; as many of them, or their printers, found to their cost. If such methods are to be followed in examining what I have already written, or may write hereafter, upon the subject of Mr. Wood, I defy any man, of fifty times my understanding and caution, to avoid being entrapped: unless he will be content to write what none will read, by repeating over the old arguments and computations, whereof the world is already grown weary. So that my good friend Harding lies under this dilemma; either to let my learned works hang for ever a drying upon his lines; or venture to publish them at the hazard of being laid by the heels.

I need not tell your lordship where the difficulty lies: it is true, that the king and the laws permit
us to refuse this coin of Mr. Wood; but, at the same time, it is equally true, that the king and the laws permit us to receive it. Now, it is barely possible, that the ministers, in England, may not suppose the consequences of uttering that brass among us to be so ruinous as we apprehend; because, perhaps, if they understood it in that light, they would, in common humanity, use their credit with his majesty for saving a most loyal kingdom from destruction. But as long as it shall please those great persons to think that coin will not be so very pernicious to us, we lie under the disadvantage of being censured as obstinate in not complying with a royal patent. Therefore nothing remains but to make use of that liberty, which the king and the laws have left us, by continuing to refuse this coin; and, by frequent remembrances, to keep up that spirit raised against it, which otherwise may be apt to flag, and, perhaps, in time to sink altogether. For any public order against receiving or uttering Mr. Wood's half-pence is not reasonably to be expected in this kingdom without directions from England; which, I think, nobody presumes, or is so sanguine to hope.

But to confess the truth, my lord, I begin to grow weary of my office as a writer; and could heartily wish it were devolved upon my brethren, the makers of songs and ballads, who, perhaps, are the best qualified, at present, to gather up the gleanings of this controversy. As to myself, it hath been
been my misfortune to begin and pursue it upon a wrong foundation. For, having detected the frauds and falsehoods of this vile impostor Wood in every part, I foolishly disdained to have recourse to whining, lamenting, and crying for mercy; but rather chose to appeal to law and liberty, and the common rights of mankind, without considering the climate I was in.

Since your last residence in Ireland, I frequently have taken my nag to ride about your grounds; where I fancied myself to feel an air of freedom breathing round me; and I am glad the low condition of a tradesman did not qualify me to wait on you at your house; for then, I am afraid, my writings would not have escaped severer censures. But I have lately sold my nag, and honestly told his greatest fault, which was that of snuffing up the air about Brackdenstown; whereby he became such a lover of liberty, that I could scarce hold him in. I have likewise buried at the bottom of a strong chest your lordship's writings under a heap of others, that treat of liberty; and spread over a layer or two of Hobbs, Filmer, Bodin, and many more authors of that stamp, to be readiest at hand, whenever I shall be disposed to take up a new sett of principles in government. In the mean time, I design quietly to look to my shop, and keep as far out of your lordship's influence as possible: and, if you ever see any more of my writings on this subject, I promise you shall find them as innocent, as insipid, and without a sting, as what I have now
now offered you. But, if your lordship will please to give me an easy lease of some part of your estate in Yorkshire, thither will I carry my chest: and, turning it upside down, resume my political reading where I left off; feed on plain homely fare, and live and die a free honest English farmer; but not without regret for leaving my countrymen under the dread of the brazen talons of Mr. Wood; my most loyal and innocent countrymen; to whom I owe so much for their good opinion of me, and my poor endeavours to serve them. I am, with the greatest respect,

I am

your lordship's

most obedient

and most humble servant,

M. B.

These papers (for the sixth and seventh letters were not published till long afterwards) prevailed, notwithstanding threats, prosecutions, and imprisonment, against all the influence of power, and all the artifices of cunning: persons of every rank and every sect united with the drapier in the common cause; his health was a perpetual toast, and his effigies was displayed in every street; Wood was compelled to withdraw his patent, and his half-pence were totally suppressed.
By many passages in the following letter, and by the date of Oct. 6, 1724, it appears to have been written soon after the proclamation against the drapier for his fourth letter, and before the jury had thrown out the bill of indictment. At this crisis, perhaps, the dean did not choose to resume a character which was become obnoxious, and therefore wrote in his own: the original was signed with his name, though it appeared to have been obliterated by another hand: for some reason the publication of it was delayed, and it was first printed in an edition of the dean's works published at Dublin in 1735. This however is not the only reason why it is placed after the fifth letter; for the fifth letter appears to have been substituted in its stead, and not intended to follow it. The fourth letter, both in this and in the fifth, is called the last, which could not have happened if both had been parts of the same series.

The reader will now easily account for those passages in the sixth, by which the prosecution against Harding appears to be depending, though in the fifth it is mentioned as past.
A

LETTER

to the

LORD CHANCELLOR

MIDDLETON [a].

Written in the Year 1724.

My Lord,

I Desire you will consider me as a member, who comes in at the latter end of a debate; or as a lawyer, who speaks to a cause, when the matter hath been almost exhausted by those who spoke before.

I remember some months ago I was at your house upon a commission, where I am one of the governors; but I went thither not so much on account of the commission, as to ask you some questions concerning Mr. Wood's patent to coin half-pence for Ireland; where you very freely told me, in a mixt company, how much you had been always against that wicked project [b]; which raised in me an esteem for you so far, that I went, in a

[a] He signed the proclamation against the drapier.
[b] Lord Middleton, though he signed the proclamation against the drapier, was yet an enemy to Wood's project, as appears by several passages in this letter.
few days, to make you a visit after many years intermission. I am likewise told, that your son wrote two letters from London (one of which I have seen) empowering those, to whom they were directed, to assure his friends, that whereas there was a malicious report spread of his engaging himself to Mr. Walpole for forty thousand pounds of Wood's coin to be received in Ireland, the said report was false and groundless; and he had never discoursed with that minister on this subject, nor would ever give his consent to have one farthing of the said coin current here. And although it be long, since I have given myself the trouble of conversing with people of titles or stations; yet I have been told by those, who can take up with such amusements, that there is not a considerable person of the kingdom scrupulous in any sort to declare his opinion. But all this is needless to allude, when we consider, that the ruinous consequences of Wood's patent have been so strongly represented by both houses of parliament; by the privy-council; the lord-mayor and aldermen of Dublin; by so many corporations; and the concurrence of the principal gentlemen in most counties, at their quarter-sessions, without any regard to party, religion, or nation.

I conclude from hence, that the currency of these half-pence would, in the universal opinion of our people, be utterly destructive to this kingdom; and, consequently, that it is every man's duty not only to refuse this coin himself, but, as far as in
him lies, to persuade others to do the like: and whether this be done in private or in print, is all a case; as no layman is forbidden to write, or to discourse upon religious or moral subjects, although he may not do it in a pulpit (at least in our church). Neither is this an affair of state, until authority shall think fit to declare it so: or, if you should understand it in that sense, yet you will please to consider, that I am not now preaching.

Therefore I do think it my duty, since the draper will, probably, be no more heard of, so far to supply his place, as not to incur his fortune: for I have learnt from old experience, that there are times wherein a man ought to be cautious, as well as innocent. I therefore hope, that, preserving both these characters, I may be allowed, by offering new arguments, or enforcing old ones, to refresh the memory of my fellow-subjects, and keep up that good spirit raised among them to preserve themselves from utter ruin by lawful means, and such as are permitted by his majesty.

I believe you will please to allow me two propositions: First, that we are a most loyal people; and secondly, that we are a free people, in the common acceptation of that word applied to a subject under a limited monarch. I know very well, that you and I did, many years ago, in discourse, differ much, in the presence of lord Wharton, about the meaning of that word liberty with relation to Ireland. But if you will not allow us to be a free people, there is only another appellation left, which,
which, I doubt, my lord chief justice Whipted would call me to account for, if I venture to be-
flow: for I observed (and I shall never forget upon what occasion) the device upon his coach to be
Libertas & natale solum, at the very point of time when he was sitting in his court, and perjuring
himself to betray both [c].

Now, as for our loyalty to his present majesty; if it hath ever been equalled in any other part of
his dominions, I am sure it hath never been ex-
ceeded: and I am confident he hath not a minister
in England, who could ever call it once in questi-
on; but that some hard rumours at least have been
transmitted from the other side the water, I sup-
pose you will not doubt: and rumours of the se-
vereft kind; which many good people have imput-
ed to the indirect proceeding of Mr. Wood and his
emissaries; as if he endeavoured it should be
thought, that our loyalty depended upon the test
of refusing or taking his copper. Now, as I am
sure you will admit us to be a loyal people; so you
will think it pardonable in us to hope for all proper
marks of favour and protection from so gracious a
king, that a loyal and free people can expect:
among which, we all agree in reckoning this to
be one; that Wood's half-pence may never have
entrance into this kingdom. And this we shall
continue to wish, when we dare no longer express

[c] See The address to both houses of parliament, by M. B. drapier.
our wishes; although there were no such mortal as a drapier in the world.

I am heartily sorry, that any writer should, in a cause so generally approved, give occasion to the government and council to charge him with [d] paragraphs "highly reflecting upon his majesty " and his ministers; tending to alienate the affec-
"tions of his good subjects, in England and Ire-
"land, from each other; and to promote sedition " among the people." I must confess, that with many others I thought he meant well; although he might have the failing of better writers, to be not always fortunate in the manner of expressing himself.

However, since the drapier is but one man, I shall think I do a public service by ascertaining, that the rest of my countrymen are wholly free from learning out of his pamphlets to reflect on the king or his ministers, and to breed sedition.

I solemnly declare, that I never once heard the least reflection cast upon the king on the subject of Mr. Wood's coin: for, in many discourses on this matter, I do not remember his majesty's name to be so much as mentioned. As to the ministry in England, the only two persons hinted at were the duke of Grafton and Mr. Walpole: the former, as I have heard you and a hundred others affirm, declared, that he never saw the patent in favour of

[d] In the Drapier's fourth letter.
Mr. Wood, before it was passed, although he was then lord lieutenant: and therefore, I suppose, every body believes, that his grace hath been wholly unconcerned in it ever since.

Mr. Walpole was, indeed, supposed to be understood by the letter IV. in several news papers; where it is said, that some expressions fell from him not very favourable to the people of Ireland; for the truth of which the kingdom is not to answer, any more than for the discretion of the publishers. You observe, the drapier wholly clears Mr. Walpole of this charge by very strong arguments; and speaks of him with civility. I cannot deny myself to have been often present, where the company gave their opinion that Mr. Walpole favoured Mr. Wood's projects, which I always contradicted; and, for my own part, never once opened my lips against that minister either in mixed or particular meetings: and my reason for this reservedness was, because it pleased him, in the queen's time (I mean queen Anne of ever blessed memory) to make a speech directly against me by name in the house of commons, as I was told a very few minutes after in the court of request by more than fifty members.

But you, who are in a great station here (if any thing here may be called great), cannot be ignorant, that whoever is understood by public voice to be chief minister, will, among the general talkers, share the blame, whether justly or no, of every thing that is disliked; which I could easily make appear
appear in many instances from my own knowledge, while I was in the world; and particularly in the case of the [e] greatest, the wisest, and the most uncorrupt minister I ever conversed with.

But, whatever unpleasing opinion some people might conceive of Mr. Walpole on account of those half-pence, I dare boldly affirm it was entirely owing to Mr. Wood. Many persons of credit come from England have affirmed to me and others, that they have seen letters under his hand full of arrogance and insolence towards Ireland, and boasting of his favour with Mr. Walpole; which is highly probable; because he reasonably thought it for his interest to spread such a report, and because it is the known talent of low and little spirits, to have a great man's name perpetually in their mouths.

Thus I have sufficiently justified the people of Ireland from learning any bad lesson out of the drapier's pamphlets with regard to his majesty and his ministers: and therefore, if those papers were intended to sow sedition among us, God be thanked, the seeds have fallen upon a very improper soil.

As to alienating the affections of the people of England and Ireland from each other; I believe the drapier, whatever his intentions were, hath left that matter just as he found it.

[e] Supposed to be the lord treasurer Oxford.
I have lived long in both kingdoms, as well in country as in town; and therefore take myself to be as well informed as most men in the dispositions of each people towards the other. By the people I understand here, only the bulk of the common people; and I desire no lawyer may distort or extend my meaning.

There is a vein of industry and parsimony, that runs through the whole people of *England*, which, added to the easiness of their rents, makes them rich and sturdy. As to *Ireland*, they know little more of it than they do of *Mexico*: farther than that it is a country subject to the king of *England*, full of boggs, inhabited by wild *Irish papists*, who are kept in awe by mercenary troops sent from thence: and their general opinion is, that it were better for *England*, if this whole island were sunk into the sea: for they have a tradition, that every forty years there must be a rebellion in *Ireland*. I have seen the grossest suppositions past upon them: that the *wild Irish* were taken in toyls; but that, in some time, they would grow so tame, as to eat out of your hands: I have been asked by hundreds, and particularly by my neighbours, your tenants, at *Pepperhara*, whether I had come from *Ireland* by sea: and upon the arrival of an *Irishman* to a country town, I have known crowds coming about him, and wondering to see him look so much better than themselves.

A gentleman now in *Dublin* affirms, that, passing some months ago through *Northampton*, and finding
the whole town in a hurry, with bells, bonfires, and illuminations; upon asking the cause, he was told, it was for joy, that the Irish had submitted to receive Wood's half-pence. This, I think, plainly shews what sentiments that large town hath of us; and how little they made it their own case; although they lie directly in our way to London, and therefore cannot but be frequently convinced that we have human shapes.

As to the people of this kingdom, they consist either of Irish papists, who are as inconsiderable in point of power, as the women and children; or of English protestants, who love their brethren of that kingdom, although they may, possibly, sometimes complain when they think they are hardly used: however, I confess, I do not see that it is of any great consequence, how their personal affections stand to each other, while the sea divides them, and while they continue in their loyalty to the same prince. And yet I will appeal to you, whether those from England have reason to complain, when they come hither in pursuit of their fortunes? or, whether the people of Ireland have reason to boast, when they go to England upon the same design?

My second proposition was, that we of Ireland are a free people: this, I suppose, you will allow, at least with certain limitations remaining in your own breast. However, I am sure it is not criminal to affirm; because the words liberty and property, as applied to the subject, are often mentioned in both houses of parliament, as well as in yours and other
other courts below: from whence it must follow, that the people of Ireland do, or ought to enjoy all the benefits of the common and statute law; such as to be tried by juries, to pay no money without their own consent, as represented in parliament, and the like. If this be so, and if it be universally agreed, that a free people cannot, by law, be compelled to take any money in payment, except gold and silver; I do not see any man should be hindered from cautioning his countrymen against this coin of William Wood; who is endeavouring, by fraud, to rob us of that property, which the laws have secured. If I am mistaken, and this copper can be obtruded on us, I would put the drapier's case in another light by supposing, that a person going into his shop should agree for thirty shillings worth of goods, and force the seller to take his payment in a parcel of copper-pieces intrinsically not worth above a crown: I desire to know whether the drapier would not be actually robbed of five and twenty shillings; and how far he could be said to be master of his property? The same question may be applied to rents and debts on bond or mortgage, and to all kind of commerce whatsoever.

Give me leave to do what the drapier hath done more than once before me; which is, to relate the naked fact, as it stands in the view of the world.

One William Wood, Esq; and hard-ware-man, obtains, by fraud, a patent in England, to coin 108,000l. in copper to pass in Ireland, leaving us liberty
TO LORD MIDDLETON.

Liberty to take or to refuse. The people here, in all sorts of bodies and representatives, do openly and heartily declare, that they will not accept this coin: to justify these declarations, they generally offer two reasons; first, because by the words of the patent they are left to their own choice; and secondly, because they are not obliged by law: so that you see there is, Bellum atque virum, a kingdom on one side, and William Wood on the other. And if Mr. Wood gets the victory, at the expense of Ireland's ruin, and the profit of one or two hundred thousand pounds (I mean by continuing, and counterfeiting as long as he lives) for himself; I doubt, both present and future ages will, at least, think it a very singular scheme.

If this fact be truly stated, I must confess, I look upon it as my duty, so far as God hath enabled me, and as long as I keep within the bounds of truth, of duty, and of decency, to warn my fellow-subjects, as they value their king, their country, and all that ought or can be dear to them, never to admit this pernicious coin; no, not so much as one single half-penny. For if one single thief forces the door, it is in vain to talk of keeping out the whole crew behind.

And while I shall be thus employed, I will never give myself leave to suppose that what I say can either offend my [f] lord lieutenant, whose

[f] Lord Carteret, now earl Granville.
person and great qualities I have always highly respected (as I am sure his excellency will be my witness) or the ministers in England, with whom I have nothing to do, or they with me; much less the privy-council here; who, as I am informed, did send an address to his majesty against Mr. Wood’s coin; which, if it be a mistake, I desire I may not be accused for a spreader of false news: but I confess, I am so great a stranger to affairs, that, for anything I know, the whole body of the council may since have been changed: and although I observed some of the very same names in a late declaration against that coin, which I saw subscribed to the proclamation against the drapier, yet, possibly, they may be different persons: for they are utterly unknown to me, and are like to continue so.

In this controversy, where the reasoners on each side are divided by St. George’s channel, his majesty’s prerogative, perhaps, would not have been mentioned, if Mr. Wood and his advocates had not made it necessary, by giving out, that the currency of his coin should be enforced by a proclamation. The traders and common people of the kingdom were heartily willing to refuse this coin; but the fear of a proclamation brought along with it most dreadful apprehensions. It was therefore absolutely necessary for the drapier to remove this difficulty; and, accordingly in one of his former pamphlets, he produced invincible arguments (wherever he picked them up) that the king’s prerogative
prerogative was not at all concerned in the matter; since the law had sufficiently provided against any coin to be imposed on the subject, except gold and silver; and that copper is not money, but, as it hath been properly called, *nummorum famulus*.

The three former letters from the *drapier* having not received any public censure, I look upon them to be without exception; and that the good people of the kingdom ought to read them often in order to keep up that spirit raised against this destructive coin of Mr. *Wood*. As for this last letter, against which a proclamation is issued; I shall only say, that I could wish it were stripped of all that can be any way exceptionable; which I would not think it below me to undertake, if my abilities were equal; but being naturally somewhat flow of comprehension, no lawyer, and apt to believe the best of those, who profess good designs without any visible motive either of profit or honour; I might pore for ever, without distinguishing the cockle from the corn.

That which I am told gives the greatest offence in this last letter [g] is, where the *drapier* affirms, that, if a rebellion should prove so successful, as to fix the *pretender* on the throne of *England*, he would venture so far to transgress the *Irish* statute, which unites *Ireland* to *England* under one king, as to lose every drop of his blood to hinder him from being king of *Ireland*.

[g] Letter IV. See the note prefixed to this letter.
I shall not presume to vindicate any man, who openly declares he would transgress a statute; and a statute of such importance: but, with the most humble submission and desire of pardon for a very innocent mistake, I should be apt to think, that the loyal intention of the writer might be, at least, some small extenuation of his crime: for, in this, I confess myself to think with the drapier.

I have not been hitherto told of any other objections against that pamphlet: but I suppose, they will all appear at the prosecution of the drapier. And, I think, whoever in his own conscience believes the said pamphlet to be wicked and malicious, seditious and scandalous, highly reflecting upon his majesty and his ministers, &c. would do well to discover the author (as little a friend as I am to the trade of informers) although the reward of 300l. had not been tacked to the discovery. I own, it would be a great satisfaction to me to hear the arguments not only of judges, but of lawyers, upon this case. Because you cannot but know, there often happens occasions, wherein it would be very convenient, that the bulk of the people should be informed how they ought to conduct themselves; and therefore it hath been the wisdom of English parliaments to be very reserved in limiting the press. When a bill is debating in either house of parliament there; nothing is more usual, than to have the controversy handled by pamphlets on both sides, without the least animadversion upon the authors.
TO LORD MIDDLETON.

So here, in the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; since the two houses gave their opinion by addresses, how dangerous the currency of that copper would be to Ireland, it was, without all question, both lawful and convenient, that the bulk of the people should be let more particularly into the nature of the danger they were in, and of the remedies that were in their own power, if they would have the sense to apply them; and this cannot be more conveniently done, than by particular persons, to whom God hath given zeal and understanding sufficient for such an undertaking. Thus it happened in the case of that destructive project for a bank in Ireland, which was brought into parliament a few years ago; and it was allowed, that the arguments and writings of some without doors contributed very much to reject it.

Now, I should be heartily glad, if some able lawyers would prescribe the limits, how far a private man may venture in delivering his thoughts upon public matters: because a true lover of his country may think it hard to be a quiet stander-by, and an indolent looker-on, while a public error prevails, by which a whole nation may be ruined. Every man who enjoys property, hath some share in the public; and therefore the care of the public is, in some degree, every such man's concern.

To come to particulars; I could wish to know, whether it be utterly unlawful in any writer so much as to mention the prerogative; at least so far as to bring it into doubt upon any point whatsoever:
ever: I know it is often debated in Westminster-hall; and Sir Edward Coke, as well as other eminent lawyers, do frequently handle that subject in their books.

Secondly, How far the prerogative extends to force coin upon this subject, which is not sterling; such as lead, brass, copper, mixt metal, shells, leather, or any other material; and fix upon it whatever denomination the crown shall think fit?

Thirdly, What is really and truly meant by that phrase of a depending kingdom, as applied to Ireland, and wherein that dependency consisteth?

Lastly, In what points relating to liberty and property the people of Ireland differ, or at least ought to differ, from those of England?

If these particulars were made so clear, that none could mistake them, it would be of infinite ease and use to the kingdom; and either prevent or silence all discontents.

My lord Sommers, the greatest man I ever knew of your robe, and whose thoughts of Ireland differed, as far as heaven and earth, from those of some others among his brethren here, lamented to me, that the prerogative of the crown, or the privileges of parliament, should ever be liable to dispute in any single branch of either; by which means, he said, the public often suffered great inconveniences, whereof he gave me several instances. I produce the authority of so eminent a person to justify my desires, that some high points might be cleared.
TO LORD MIDDLETON.

For want of such known ascertaining how far a writer may proceed in expressing his good wishes for his country, a person of the most innocent intentions may possibly, by the oratory and comments of lawyers, be charged with many crimes, which, from his very soul, he abhors; and, consequently, may be ruined in his fortunes, and left to rot among thieves in some stinking jail, merely for mistaking the purlicus of the law. I have known, in my life-time, a printer prosecuted and convicted for publishing a [b] pamphlet, where the author's intentions, I am confident, were as good and innocent as those of a martyr at his last prayers. I did very lately, as I thought it my duty, preach to the people, under my inspection, upon the subject of Mr. Wood's coin; and although I never heard that my sermon gave the least offence, as I am sure none was intended, yet, if it were now printed and published, I cannot say, I would insure it from the hands of the common hangman, or my own person from those of a messenger.

I have heard the late chief justice Holt affirm, that, in all criminal cases, the most favourable interpretation should be put upon words, that they can possibly bear. You meet the same position asserted in many trials for the greatest crimes; tho' often very ill practised by the perpetual corruption of judges. And I remember at a trial in Kent where Sir George Rooke was indicted for calling a gentleman knave and villain, the lawyer, for the defen-

[b] Supposed to be, A proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures, written by the author.
dant, brought off his client by alleging, that the words were not injurious: for knave, in the old and true signification, imported only a servant; and villain in Latin, is *villicus*, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a baily.

If Sir John Holt's opinion were a standard maxim for all times and circumstances, any writer, with a very small measure of discretion, might easily be safe; but I doubt, in practice, it hath been frequently controverted, at least before his time: for I take it to be an old rule in law.

I have read, or heard, a passage of Signor Leti, an Italian; who, being in London, busying himself with writing the history of England, told king Charles the second, that he endeavoured as much as he could to avoid giving offence, but found it a thing impossible, although he should have been as wise as Solomon. The king answered, that, if this were the case, he had better employ his time in writing proverbs as Solomon did; but Leti lay under no public necessity of writing; neither would England have been one half-penny the better or the worse, whether he writ or no.

This I mention, because I know it will readily be objected; what have private men to do with the public? what call had a *drapier* to turn politician, to meddle in matters of state? would not his time have been better employed in looking to his shop; or his pen in writing proverbs, elegies, ballads, garlands, and wonders? He would then have been
been out of all danger of proclamations and prosecutions. Have we not able magistrates and counsellors hourly watching over the public-weal? All this may be true: and yet when the addresses from both houses of parliament against Mr. Wood's halfpence failed of success, if some pen had not been employed to inform the people how far they might legally proceed in refusing that coin, to detect the fraud, the artifice, and insolence of the coiner, and to lay open the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom, which would inevitably follow from the currency of the said coin, I might appeal to many hundred thousand people, whether any one of them would ever had the courage or sagacity to refuse it.

If this copper should begin to make its way among the common ignorant people, we are inevitably undone. It is they who give us the greatest apprehension, being easily frightened, and greedy to swallow mis-informations: for, if every man were wise enough to understand his own interest, which is every man's principal study, there would be no need of pamphlets upon this occasion: but, as things stand, I have thought it absolutely necessary, from my duty to God, my king, and my country, to inform the people, that the proclamation lately issued against the drapier doth not in the least affect the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; but only refers to certain paragraphs in the drapier's last pamphlet [i] (not immediately relating to his

[i] The fourth Letter.
LETTER VI.

subject, nor at all to the merits of the cause) which the government was pleased to dislike; so that any man has the same liberty to reject, to write, and to declare against this coin, which he had before: neither is any man obliged to believe that those honourable persons (whereof you are the first), who signed that memorable proclamation against the drapier, have at all changed their opinions with regard to Mr. Wood, or his coin.

Therefore, concluding myself to be thus far upon a safe and sure foot, I shall continue, upon any proper occasion, as God enables me, to revive and preserve that spirit raised in the nation (whether the real author were a real drapier or no, is little to the purpose) against this horrid design of Mr. Wood; at the same time carefully watching every stroke of my pen, and venturing only to incur the public censure of the world as a writer, not of my lord chief justice Whitshed as a criminal. Whenever an order shall come out by authority, forbidding all men, upon the highest penalties, to offer any thing in writing or discourse against Mr. Wood's half-pence, I shall certainly submit. However, if that should happen, I am determined to be somewhat more than the last man in the kingdom to receive them; because I will never receive them at all: for, although I know how to be silent, I have not yet learned to pay active obedience against my conscience, and the public safety.

I desire to put a case, which, I think, the drapier in some of his books hath put before me; although not so fully as it requires.
You know the copper half-pence in England are coined by the public; and every piece worth pretty near the value of the copper. Now suppose, that, instead of the public coinage, a patent had been granted to some private, obscure person for coining a proportionable quantity of copper in that kingdom, to what Mr. Wood is preparing in this; and all of it at least five times below the intrinsic value: the current money of England is reckoned to be twenty millions; and ours under \(^k\) five hundred thousand pounds: by this computation, as Mr. Wood hath power to give us \(108,000\) pounds, so the patentee in England, by the same proportion might circulate four millions three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; besides as much more by stealth and counterfeits. I desire to know from you, whether the parliament might not have addressed upon such an occasion; what success they probably would have had; and how many drapers would have risen to pester the world with pamphlets: yet that kingdom would not be so great a sufferer as ours in the like case; because, their cash would not be conveyed into foreign countries, but lie hid in the chests of cautious thrifty men until better times. Then I desire, for the satisfaction of the public, that you will please to inform me, why this country is treated in so very different a manner, in a point of such high importance; whether it be on account of Pointing’s act; of subordination; dependence; or any other term

\(^k\) It is since sunk to 200,000/.
of art, which I shall not contest, but am too dull to understand.

I am very sensible, that the good or ill success of Mr. Wood will affect you less than any person of consequence in this kingdom; because I hear you are so prudent as to make all your purchases in England; and truly so would I, if I had money, although I were to pay a hundred years purchase; because I should be glad to possess a freehold, that could not be taken from me by any law, to which I did not give my own consent: and where I should never be in danger of receiving my rents in mixt copper at the loss of sixteen shillings in the pound. You can live in ease and plenty at Pepper-hara in Surry; and therefore I thought it extremely generous and public spirited in you, to be of the kingdom's side in this dispute, by shewing, without reserve, your disapprobation of Mr. Wood's design; at least if you have been so frank to others as you were to me; which, indeed, I could not but wonder at, considering how much we differ in other points; and therefore I could get but few believers, when I attempted to justify you in this article from your own words.

I would humbly offer another thought, which I do not remember to have fallen under the draper's observation. If these half-pence should once gain admittance, it is agreed, that in no long space of time, what by the clandestine practices of the coiner, what by his own counterfeits, and those of others either from abroad or at home, his limited
quantity would be tripled upon us, until there
would not be a grain of gold or silver visible in the
nation. This, in my opinion, would lay a heavy
charge upon the crown, by creating a necessity of
transmitting money from England to pay the salar-
ies at least of the principal civil officers: for I do
not conceive how a judge (for instance) could sup-
port his dignity with a thousand pounds a year in
Wood's coin; which would not intrinsically be
worth near two hundred. To argue that these
half-pence, if no other coin were current, would
answer the general ends of commerce among our-
selves, is a great mistake; and the drapier hath
made that matter too clear to admit an answer, by
shewing us what every owner of land must be forced
to do with the products of it in such a distress.
You may read his remarks at large in his second or
third letter; to which I refer you.

Before I conclude, I cannot but observe, that,
for several months past, there have more papers
been written in this town, such as they are, all
upon the best public principle, the love of our
country, than, perhaps, hath been known in any
other nation in so short a time: I speak in general
from the drapier down to the maker of ballads;
and all without any regard to the common motives
of writers; which are profit, favour, and reputa-
tion. As to profit, I am assured by persons of
credit, that the best ballad upon Mr. Wood will
not yield above a groat to the author; and the
unfor-
unfortunate adventurer Harding [1] declares he never made the drapier any present, except one pair of scissors. And as to reputation, certainly no man of worth and learning would employ his pen upon so transitory a subject, and in so obscure a corner of the world, to distinguish himself as an author. So that I look upon myself, the drapier, and my numerous brethren, to be all true patriots in our several degrees.

All that the public can expect for the future is, only to be sometimes warned to beware of Mr. Wood's half-pence; and to be referred for conviction to the drapier's reasons. For a man of the most superior understanding will find it impossible to make the best use of it, while he writes in constraint; perpetually softening, correcting, or blotting out expressions, for fear of bringing his printer, or himself, under a prosecution from my lord chief justice Whitsby. It calls to my remembrance the madman in don Quixote, who, being soundly beaten by a weaver for letting a stone (which he always carried on his shoulder) fall upon a spaniel, apprehended that every cur he met was of the same species.

For these reasons I am convinced, that what I have now written will appear low and insipid; but, if it contributes in the least to preserve that union among us for opposing this fatal project of Mr. Wood, my pains will not be altogether lost.

LETTER VII.

I sent these papers to an eminent lawyer (and yet a man of virtue and learning into the bargain), who, after many alterations, returned them back with assuring me that they are perfectly innocent; without the least mixture of treason, rebellion, sedition, malice, disaffection, reflection, or wicked insinuation whatsoever.

If the bell-man of each parish, as he goes his circuit, would cry out every night, Past twelve o'clock; Beware of Wood's half-pence; it would probably, cut off the occasion for publishing any more pamphlets; provided that in country towns it were done upon market-days. For my own part, as soon as it shall be determined, that it is not against law, I will begin the experiment in the liberty of St. Patrick's; and hope my example may be followed in the whole city. But, if authority shall think fit to forbid all writings, or discourses upon this subject, except such as are in favour of Mr. Wood, I will obey as it becomes me; only, when I am in danger of bursting, I will go and whisper among the reeds, not any reflection upon the wisdom of my countrymen; but only these few words, BEWARE OF WOOD's HALF-PENCE.

I am,

with due respect,

Deanry-house, your most obedient,

Oct. 26, 1724. humble servant,

J. S.

AN
AN HUMBLE
ADDRESS [m]
TO
Both Houses of Parliament.

By M. B. Drapier.

Multa gemens plagasque superbi
Victoris.

I HAVE been told, that petitions and addresses, to either king or parliament, are the right of every subject; provided they consist with that respect, which is due to princes and great assemblies. Neither do I remember, that the modest proposals or opinions of private men have been ill received, when they have not been delivered in the style of advice; which is a presumption far from my thoughts. However, if proposals should be looked upon as too assuming; yet I hope, every man may be suffered to declare his own and the nation's

[m] This address is without a date; but it appears to have been written during the first session of parliament in lord Carteret's government, though it did not appear till it was inserted with the preceding letter in the Dublin edition of 1735.

Among other accuracies in the Irish edition, two dates are assigned to the following tract; in the advertisement prefixed, it is said to have been written the first session of Carteret's government, and in the title page to be written before his arrival.

wishes.
wishes. For instance; I may be allowed to wish, that some further laws were enacted for the advancement of trade, for the improvement of agriculture, now strangely neglected against the maxims of all wise nations; for supplying the manifest defects in the acts concerning the plantation of trees; for setting the poor to work; and many others.

Upon this principle I may venture to affirm, it is the hearty wish of the whole nation, very few excepted, that the parliament in this session would begin by strictly examining into the detestable fraud of one William Wood, now or late of London, hardware-man; who illegally and clandestinely, as appears by your own votes and addresses, procured a patent in England for coining half-pence in that kingdom to be current here. This, I say, is the wish of the whole nation, very few excepted; and, upon account of those few, is more strongly and justly the wish of the rest: those few consisting either of Wood's confederates, some obscure tradesmen, or certain bold undertakers of weak judgment and strong ambition, who think to find their accounts in the ruin of the nation, by securing or advancing themselves. And because such men proceed upon a system of politics, to which I would fain hope you will be always utter strangers, I shall humbly lay it before you.

Be pleased to suppose me in a station of fifteen hundred pounds a year, salary and perquisites; and likewise possessed of 800l. a year real estate. Then
Then suppose a destructive project to be on foot; such, for instance, as this of Wood; which, if it succeed, in all the consequences naturally to be expected from it, must sink the rents and wealth of the kingdom one half (although I am confident, it would have done so five sixths). Suppose, I conceive that the countenancing, or privately supporting this project, will please those by whom I expect to be preserved, or higher exalted: nothing then remains, but to compute and balance my gain and my loss, and sum up the whole. I suppose that I shall keep my employment ten years, not to mention the fair chance of a better. This, at 1500l. a year, amounts, in ten years, to 15,000l. My estate, by the success of the said project, sinks 400l. a year; which, at twenty years purchase, is but 8000l. so that I am clear gainer of 7000l. upon the balance. And during all that period, I am possessed of power and credit, can gratify my favourites, and take vengeance on my enemies. And, if the project miscarry, my private merit is still entire. This arithmetick, as horrible as it appears, I knowingly affirm to have been practised, and applied in conjunctures, whereon depended the ruin or safety of a nation: although, probably, the charity and virtue of a senate will hardly be induced to believe, that there can be such monsters among mankind. And yet the wise lord Bacon mentions a sort of people (I doubt the race is not yet extinct) who would set a house on fire for the convenience
convenience of roasting their own eggs at the flame.

But whoever is old enough to remember, and hath turned his thoughts to observe, the course of public affairs in this kingdom from the time of the revolution, must acknowledge, that the highest points of interest and liberty have been often sacrificed to the avarice and ambition of particular persons, upon the very principles and arithmetick, that I have supposed: the only wonder is, how these artists were able to prevail upon numbers, and influence even public assemblies to become instruments for effecting their execrable designs.

It is, I think, in all conscience latitude enough for vice, if a man in station be allowed to act injustice upon the usual principles of getting a bribe, wreaking his malice, serving his party, or consulting his preferment, while his wickedness terminates in the ruin only of particular persons. But to deliver up our whole country, and every living soul who inhabits it, to certain destruction, hath not, as I remember, been permitted by the most favourable casuists on the side of corruption. It were far better, that all who have had the misfortune to be born in this kingdom, should be rendered incapable of holding any employment whatsoever above the degree of a constable (according to the scheme and intention of a [n] great minister gone to his own place), than to live under the daily apprehension

[n] The late earl of Sunderland.
of a few false brethren among ourselves. Because, in the former case, we should be wholly free from the danger of being betrayed; since none could then have impudence enough to pretend any public good.

It is true, that, in this desperate affair of the new half-pence, I have not heard of any man, above my own degree of a shopkeeper, to have been hitherto so bold, as in direct terms to vindicate the fatal project; although I have been told of some very mollifying expressions which were used, and very gentle expedients proposed and handed about, when it first came under debate: but since the eyes of the people have been so far opened, that the most ignorant can plainly see their own ruin in the success of Wood's attempt, these grand compounders have been more cautious.

But that the same spirit still subsists, hath manifestly appeared (among other instances of great compliance) from certain circumstances, that have attended some late proceedings [o] in a court of judicature. There is not any common-place more frequently insisted on by those, who treat of our constitution, than the great happiness and excellency of trials by juries; yet, if this blessed part of our law be eludible at pleasure by the force of power, frowns, and artifice, we shall have little reason to boast of our advantage in this particular

[o] By lord chief justice Whitsed, whose method, with a jury, may be seen in the note which follows the Proposal for the use of Irish manufactures, and that at the end of Seasonable advice to the grand jury.
over other states or kingdoms in Europe. And surely these high proceedings, exercised in a point that so nearly concerned the life-blood of the people, their necessary subsistence, their very food and raiment, and even the public peace, will not allow any favourable appearance; because it was obvious, that so much super-abundant zeal could have no other design, or produce any other effect, than to damp that spirit raised in the nation against this accursed scheme of William Wood and his abettors; to which spirit alone we owe, and for ever must owe, our being hitherto preserved, and our hopes of being preserved for the future, if it can be kept up, and strongly countenanced by your wise assemblies. I wish I could account for such a demeanor upon a more charitable foundation, than that of putting our interest in over-balance with the ruin of our country.

I remember some months ago, when this affair was fresh in discourse, a person nearly allied to somebody, or (as the hawkers called him) nobody, who was thought deeply concerned, went about very diligently among his acquaintance to shew the bad consequences that might follow from any public resentment to the disadvantage of his ally, Mr. Wood; principally alleging the danger of all employments being disposed of from England. One of these emissaries came to me, and urged the same topic: I answered naturally, that I knew there was no office of any kind, which a man from
from England might not have, if he thought it worth his asking; and that I looked upon all who had the disadvantage of being born here, as only in the condition of leafers and gleaners. Neither could I forbear mentioning the known fable of the countryman, who entreated his afs to fly for fear of being taken by the enemy; but the afs refused to give himself that trouble, and upon a very wise reason; because he could not possibly change his present master for a worse: the enemy could not make him fare harder, beat him more cruelly, or load him with heavier burthens.

Upon these and many other considerations, I may affirm it to be the wish of the whole nation, that the power and privileges of juries were declared, ascertained, and confirmed by the legislature; and that whoever hath been manifestly known to violate them, might be stigmatized by public censure; not from any hope that such a censure will amend their practices, or hurt their interest (for it may probably operate quite contrary in both), but that the nation may know their enemies from their friends.

I say not this with any regard or view to myself; for I write in great security; and am resolved that none shall merit at my expence, further than by shewing their zeal to discover, prosecute, and condemn me for endeavouring to do my duty in serving my country: and yet I am conscious to myself, that I never had the least intention to reflect on his majesty's ministers, nor on any other person, except William Wood, whom I neither did, nor do yet conceive
conceive to be of that number. However, some would have it, that I went too far; but I suppose they will now allow themselves mistaken. I am sure, I might easily have gone further, and I think I could not easily have fared worse. And therefore I was no further affected with their proclamation, and subsequent proceedings, than a good clergyman is with the sins of the people. And as to the poor printer, he is now gone to appear before a higher, and before a righteous tribunal.

As my intention is only to lay before your great assemblies the general wishes of the nation; and as I have already declared it our principal wish, that your first proceeding would be to examine into the pernicious fraud of William Wood; so I must add, as the universal opinion, that all schemes of commutation, composition, and the like expedients, either avowed or implied, will be of the most pernicious consequence to the public; against the dignity of a free kingdom; and prove an encouragement to future adventurers in the same destructive projects. For it is a maxim, which no man at present disputes, that even a connivance to admit one thousand pounds in these half-pence, will produce, in time, the same ruinous effects, as if we openly consented to admit a million. It were therefore infinitely more safe and eligible to leave things in the doubtful, melancholy state they are at present (which however God forbid), and trust entirely to the general aversion of our people against this coin, using all honest endeavours to preserve, continue,
continue, and increase that aversion, than submit to apply those palliatives, which weak, perfidious, or abject politicians are, upon all occasions, and in all diseases, so ready to administer.

In the small compass of my reading (which however hath been more extensive than is usual to men of my inferior calling), I have observed that grievances have always preceded supplies, and if ever grievances had a title to such a pre-eminence, it must be this of Wood: because it is not only the greatest grievance that any country could suffer, but a grievance of such a kind, that, if it should take effect, would make it impossible for us to give any supplies at all, except in adulterate copper; unless a tax were laid for paying the civil and military lifts, and the large pensions, with real commodities instead of money; which however might be liable to some few objections, as well as difficulties: for although the common soldiers might be content with beef and mutton, and wool, and malt and leather; yet I am in some doubt as to the generals, the colonels, the numerous pensioners, the civil officers, and others, who all live in England upon Irish pay, as well as those few who reside among us only because they cannot help it.

There is one particular, which, although I have mentioned more than once in some of my former papers, yet I cannot forbear to repeat, and a little enlarge upon it; because I do not remember to have read or heard of the like in the history of
any age or country; neither do I ever reflect upon it without the utmost astonishment.

After the unanimous addresses to his sacred majesty against this patent of Wood from both houses of parliament, which are the three estates of the kingdom; and likewise an address from the privy council, to whom, under the chief governors, the whole administration is intrusted; the matter is referred to a committee of council in London. Wood, and his adherents, are heard on one side; and a few volunteers, without any trust or direction from hence, on the other. The question (as I remember) chiefly turned upon the want of halfpence in Ireland: witnesses are called on the behalf of Wood (of what credit I have formerly shewn [p]); upon the issue, the patent is found good and legal; all his majesty's officers here (not excepting the military) commanded to be aiding and assisting to make it effectual; the addresses of both houses of parliament, of the privy council, and of the city of Dublin, the declarations of most counties and corporations through the kingdom, are altogether laid aside, as of no weight, consequence, or consideration whatsoever; and the whole kingdom of Ireland nonsuited in default of appearance; as if it were a private cause, between John Dow, plaintiff, and William Row, defendant.

With great respect to those honourable persons, the committee of council in London, I have not

[p] In Letter III.
UNDERSTOOD THEM TO BE OUR GOVERNORS, COUNSELLORS, OR JUDGES. NEITHER DID OUR CASE TURN AT ALL UPON THE QUESTION, WHETHER IRELAND WANTED HALF-PENCE. FOR THERE IS NO DOUBT, BUT WE DO WANT BOTH HALF-PENCE, GOLD, AND SILVER; AND WE HAVE NUMBERLESS OTHER WANTS, AND SOME THAT WE ARE NOT SO MUCH AS ALLOWED TO NAME, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE PECULIAR TO THIS NATION: TO WHICH NO OTHER IS SUBJECT, WHOM GOD HATH BLESSED WITH RELIGION AND LAWS, OR ANY DEGREE OF SOIL AND SUNSHINE: BUT FOR WHAT DEMERIT ON OUR SIDE I AM ALTOGETHER IN THE DARK.

BUT I DO NOT REMEMBER, THAT OUR WANT OF HALF-PENCE WAS EITHER AFFIRMED OR DENIED IN ANY OF OUR ADDRESSES OR DECLARATIONS AGAINST THOSE OF WOOD. WE ALLEGED THE FRAUDULENT OBTAINING AND EXECUTING HIS PATENT, THE BASENESS OF HIS METAL, AND THE PRODIGIOUS SUM HE COINED, WHICH MIGHT BE INCREASED BY STEALTH, FROM FOREIGN IMPORTATION, AND HIS OWN COUNTERFEITS, AS WELL AS THOSE AT HOME; WHEREBY WE MUST INFALLIBLY LOSE ALL OUR LITTLE GOLD AND SILVER, AND ALL OUR POOR REMAINDER OF A VERY LIMITED AND DISCOURAGED TRADE. WE URGED, THAT THE PATENT WAS PASSED WITHOUT THE LEAST REFERENCE HITHER; AND WITHOUT MENTION OF ANY SECURITY GIVEN BY WOOD TO RECEIVE HIS OWN HALF-PENCE UPON DEMAND; BOTH WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO ALL FORMER PROCEEDINGS IN THE LIKE CASES. THESE, AND MANY OTHER ARGUMENTS WERE OFFERED; BUT STILL THE PATENT WENT ON, AND, AT THIS DAY, OUR RUIN WOULD HAVE BEEN HALF COMPLETED, IF GOD, IN HIS MERCY, HAD NOT RAISED AN UNIVERSEAL DETESTATION OF THESE HALF-PENCE IN THE WHOLE

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KINGDOM,
kingdom, with a firm resolution never to receive
them, since we are not under obligations to do so
by any law either human or divine.

But, in the name of God and of all justice and
piety, when the king's majesty was pleased that
this patent should pass, is it not to be understood,
that he conceived, believed, and intended it as a gra-
cious act, for the good and benefit of his subjects;
for the advantage of a great and fruitful kingdom;
of the most loyal kingdom upon earth, where no
hand or voice was ever lifted up against him; a
kingdom, where the passage is not of three hours
from Britain, and a kingdom where papists have
less power, and less land than in England? Can it
be denied, or doubted, that his majesty's ministers
understood and proposed the same end, the good of
this nation, when they advised the passing this pa-
tent? Can the person of Wood be otherwise regard-
ed, than as the instrument, the mechanic, the head-
workman, to prepare his furnace, his fuel, his me-
tal, and his stamps? If I employ a shoe-boy, is it
in view to his advantage, or to my own conveni-
ence? I mention the person of William Wood alone;
because no other appears, and we are not to reason
upon surmises; neither would it avail, if they had
a real foundation.

Allowing therefore (for we cannot do less) that
this patent for the coining of half-pence was whol-
ly intended by a gracious king, and a wise public-
spirited ministry, for the advantage of Ireland; yet
yet when the whole kingdom, to a man, for whose good the patent was designed, do, upon maturest consideration, universally join in openly declaring, protesting, addressing, petitioning against these half-pence, as the most ruinous project that ever was set on foot to complete the slavery and destruction of a poor innocent country: is it, was it, can it, or will it ever be a question, not whether such a kingdom, or William Wood, should be a gainer; but whether such a kingdom should be wholly undone, destroyed, sunk, depopulated, made a scene of misery and desolation, for the sake of William Wood? God, of his infinite mercy, avert this dreadful judgment; and it is our universal wish, that God would put it into your hearts to be his instruments for so good a work.

For my own part, who am but one man, of obscure condition, I do solemnly declare, in the presence of almighty God, that I will suffer the most ignominious and torturing death, rather than submit to receive this accursed coin, or any other that shall be liable to the same objections, until they shall be forced upon me by a law of my own country; and, if that shall ever happen, I will transport myself into some foreign land, and eat the bread of poverty among a free people.

Am I legally punishable for these expressions? Shall another proclamation issue against me, because I presume to take my country's part against William Wood, where her final destruction is intended? But whenever you shall please to impose
impose silence upon me, I will submit; because I look upon your unanimous voice to be the voice of the nation; and this I have been taught, and do believe, to be in some manner the voice of God.

The great ignominy of a whole kingdom lying so long at mercy under so vile an adversary, is such a deplorable aggravation, that the utmost expressions of shame and rage are too low to set it forth: and therefore I shall leave it to receive such a resentment, as is worthy of a parliament.

It is likewise our universal wish, that his majesty should grant liberty to coin half-pence in this kingdom for our own use, under such restriction as a parliament here shall advise: since the power of coining even gold and silver is possessed by every petty prince abroad; and was always practised by Scotland to the very time of the union; yet surely Scotland, as to soil, climate, and extent, is not in itself a fourth part the value of Ireland (for bishop Burnet says, it is not above the fortieth part in value to the rest of Britain); and with respect to the profit that England gains from hence, not the forty thousandth part. Although I must confess, that a mote in the eye, or a thorn in the side, is more dangerous and painful than a beam or a spike at a distance.

The histories of England, and of most other countries, abound in relating the miserable, and sometimes the most tragical effects from the abuses of coin, by debasing the metal, by lessening or enhancing the value upon occasions, to the public loss;
lofs; of which we have an example within our own memory in England, and another very lately in France. It is the tenderest point of government, affecting every individual in the highest degree. When the value of money is arbitrary or unsettled, no man can well be said to have any property at all; nor is any wound so suddenly felt, so hardly cured, or that leaves such deep and lasting fears behind it.

I conceive this poor unhappy island to have a title to some indulgence from England; not only upon the score of Christianity, natural equity, and the general rights of mankind, but chiefly on account of that immense profit they receive from us; without which that kingdom would make a very different figure in Europe, from what it doth at present.

The rents of land in Ireland, since they have been of late so enormously raised and screwed up, may be computed to about two millions; whereof one third part, at least, is directly transmitted to those, who are perpetual absentees in England; as I find by a computation made with the assistance of several skilful gentlemen.

The other articles, by which we are altogether losers, and England a gainer, we found to amount to almost as much more.

I will only set down as many heads of them as I can remember, and leave them to the consideration of those, who understand accounts better than I pretend to do.

The
The occasional absentees, for business, health, or diversion.

Three fourths of the revenue of the chief governor, during his absence; which is usually four fifths of his government.

The whole revenue of the post-office.

The numerous pensions paid to persons in England.

The pay of the chief officers of the army absent in England, which is a great sum.

Four commissioners of the revenue, always absent.

Civil employments very numerous, and of great income.

The vast charge of appeals to the house of lords, and to the court of delegates.

Students at the inns of court, and the two universities.

Eighty thousand pounds sent yearly to England for coals; whereof the prime cost is nothing, and therefore the profit wholly theirs.

One hundred thousand pounds paid several years past for corn sent over hither from England; the effects of our own great wisdom in discouraging agriculture.

The kind liberty granted us of wearing Indian stuffs, and callicoes, to gratify the vanity and folly of our women; which, besides the profit to England [q], is an inconceivable loss to us, forcing the

[q] From whence these commodities were exported to Ireland, the East-India company only having a right to import them from the country in which they are manufactured.
the weavers to beg in our streets, or transport themselves to foreign countries.

The prodigious loss to us, and gain to England, by selling them all our wool at their own rates; whereof the manufacture exceeds above ten times the prime cost: a proceeding without example in the christian or heathen world.

Our own wool returned upon us in English manufactures, to our infinite shame and damage, and the great advantage of England.

The full profit of all our mines accruing to England; an effect of great negligence and stupidity.

An affectation among us of liking all kind of goods made in England [r].

These and many other articles, which I cannot recollect at present, are agreed by judicious men to amount to near seven hundred thousand pounds per annum. clear profit to England. And upon the whole, let any man look into those authors who write upon the subject of commerce, he shall find, that there is not one single article in the essentials or circumstances of trade, whereby a country can be a loser, which we do not possess in the highest perfection; somewhat in every particular, that bears a kind of analogy to William Wood; and now the branches are all cut off, he stands ready with his ax at the root.

Upon this subject of perpetual absentees, I have spent some time in very insignificant reflexions;

[r] Many of the above articles have been since particularly computed by another writer, to whose treatise the reader is referred.
and, considering the usual motives of human actions, which are pleasure, profit, and ambition, I cannot yet comprehend how those persons find their account in any of the three. I speak not of those English peers or gentlemen, who, besides their estates at home, have possessions here, for in that case the matter is desperate; but I mean those lords, and wealthy knights, or squires, whose birth, and partly their education, and all their fortune (except some trifle, and that in a very few instances), are in this kingdom. I knew many of them well enough during several years, when I resided in England; and truly I could not discover, that the figure they made was by any means a subject for envy, at least it gave me two very different passions. For, excepting the advantage of going now and then to an opera, or sometimes appearing behind a crowd at court, or adding to the ring of coaches in Hide-Park, or losing their money at the chocolate-house, or getting news, votes, and minutes about five days before us in Dublin; I say, besides these, and a few other privileges of less importance, their temptations to live in London were beyond my knowledge or conception. And I used to wonder, how a man of birth and spirit could endure to be wholly insignificant and obscure in a foreign country, when he might live with lustre in his own; and even at less than half that expense, which he strains himself to make without obtaining any one end, except that which happened to the frog, when he would needs contend for size with the ox. I
have been told by scholars, that *Caesar* said he would rather be the *first* man in I know not what village, than the *second* in *Rome*. This, perhaps, was a thought only fit for *Caesar*: but to be preceded by thousands, and neglected by millions; to be wholly without power, figure, influence, honour, credit, or distinction, is not, in my poor opinion, a very amiable situation of life to a person of title or wealth, who can so cheaply and easily shine in his native country.

But, besides the depopulating of the kingdom, the leaving so many parts of it wild and uncultivated, the ruin of so many country seats and plantations, the cutting down all the woods to supply expences in *England*; the absence of so many noble and wealthy persons hath been the cause of another fatal consequence, which few perhaps have been aware of. For if that *very considerable* number of lords, who possess the ablest fortunes here, had been content to *live at home*, and attend the affairs of their country in *parliament*; the weight, reputation, and dignity thereby added to that noble house would, in all human probability, have prevented certain proceedings, which are now ever to be lamented, because they never can be remedied: and we might have then *decided our own properties among ourselves*, without being forced to travel five hundred miles by sea and land to another kingdom for justice, to our infinite expence, vexation, and trouble; which is a mark of *servitude* without example,
ample, from the practice of any age or nation in the world.

I have sometimes wondered, upon what motives the peerage of England were so desirous to determine our controversies; because I have been assured, and partly know, that the frequent appeals from hence have been very irksome to that illustrious body: and whoever hath frequented the painted chamber and courts of requests must have observed, that they are never so nobly filled, as when an Irish appeal is under debate.

The peers of Scotland, who are very numerous, were content to reside in their castles and houses in that bleak and barren climate; and although some of them made frequent journeys to London, yet I do not remember any of their greatest families, till very lately, to have made England their constant habituation before the union: or if they did, I am sure, it was generally to their own advantage; and whatever they got was employed to cultivate and increase their own estates; and, by that means, enrich themselves and their country.

As to the great number of rich absentees under the degree of peers; what particular ill effects their absence may have upon this kingdom, besides those already mentioned, may, perhaps, be too tender a point for me to touch. But whether those, who live in another kingdom upon great estates here, and have lost all regard to their own country, further than upon account of the revenues they receive from it; I say, whether such persons may not be prevailed
prevailed on to recommend others to \textit{vacant seats}, who have no interest here except a precarious employment, and, consequently, can have no views, but to preserve what they have got, or to be higher advanced: this, I am sure, is a very melancholy question, \textit{if it be a question at all}.

But, besides the prodigious profit which \textit{England} receives by the transmittal thither of two thirds of the revenues of this whole kingdom, it hath another mighty advantage by making our country a \textit{receptacle}, wherein to \textit{disburthen} themselves of their \textit{supernumerary} pretenders to offices; persons of second-rate merit in their own country; who, \textit{like birds of passage}, most of them thrive and fatten here, and fly off when their \textit{credit} and \textit{employments} are at an end. So that \textit{Ireland} may justly say, what \textit{Luther} said of himself, \textit{POOR} \textit{Ireland maketh many rich}.

If amidst all our difficulties I should venture to assert, that we have one great advantage, provided we could improve it as we ought, I believe most of my readers would be long in conjecturing, what \textit{possible} advantage could ever fall to our share. However, it is certain, that all the \textit{regular seeds of party} and \textit{faction} among us are entirely rooted out, and, if any new ones shall spring up, they must be of \textit{equivocal} generation, without any seed at all; and will justly be imputed to a degree of \textit{stupidity} beyond even what we have been ever charged with upon the score of our \textit{birth-place} and climate.

The
The parties in this kingdom (including those of modern date) are, first, of those who have been charged or suspected to favour the pretender; and those, who were zealous opposers of him. Secondly, of those who were for and against a toleration of dissenters by law. Thirdly, of high or low church; or (to speak in the cant of the times) of whig and tory. And fourthly, of court and country. If there be any more, they are beyond my observation or politics: for as to subaltern or occasional parties, they have all been derivations from the same originals.

Now it is manifest, that all these incitements to faction, party, and division, are wholly removed from among us. For as to the pretender, his cause is both desperate and obsolete: there are very few now alive, who were men in his father’s time, and in that prince’s interest; and in all others the obligation of conscience hath no place: even the papists in general of any substance or estates, and their priests almost universally, are what we call whigs, in the sense which by that word is generally understood. They feel the smart, and see the scars of their former wounds; and very well know, that they must be made a sacrifice to the least attempts towards a change; although it cannot be doubted, that they would be glad to have their superstition restored under any prince whatsoever.

Secondly, The dissenters are now tolerated by law; neither do we observe any murmurs at present.

[s] The obligation arising from their having sworn allegiance.
from that quarter, except those reasonable complaints they make of persecution, because they are excluded from civil employments; but, their number being very small in either house of parliament, they are not yet in a situation to erect a party: because, however indifferent men may be with regard to religion, they are now grown wise enough to know, that, if such a latitude were allowed to dissenters, the few small employments left us in cities and corporations would find other hands to lay hold on them.

Thirdly, The dispute between high and low church is now at an end; two thirds of the bishops having been promoted in this reign, and most of them from England, who have bestowed all preferments in their gift to those they could well confide in: The deanrics all, except three, and many principal church livings, are in the donation of the crown: so that we already possess such a body of clergy, as will never engage in controversy upon that antiquated and exploded subject.

Lastly, as to court and country parties, so famous and avowed under most reigns in English parliaments: this kingdom hath not, for several years past, been a proper scene, whereon to exercise such contentions; and is now less proper than ever; many great employments for life being in distant hands, and the reversions diligently watched and secured; the temporary ones of any inviting value are all bestowed elsewhere as fast as they drop, and the few remaining are of too low consideration to create
create contests about them, except among younger brothers, or tradesmen like myself. And therefore, to institute a court and country party without materials, would be a very new system in politics, and what, I believe, was never thought on before; nor unless in a nation of idiots can ever succeed, for the most ignorant Irish cottager will not sell his cow for a great.

Therefore I conclude, that all party and faction, with regard to public proceedings, are now extinguished in this kingdom [r]; neither doth it appear in view how they can possibly revive; unless some new causes be administered; which cannot be done without crossing the interests of those, who are the greatest gainers by continuing the same measures. And general calamities, without hope of redress, are allowed to be the great uniters of mankind.

However we may dislike the causes, yet this effect of begetting an universal concord among us in all national debates, as well as in cities, corporations, and country neighbourhoods, may keep us, at least, alive, and in a condition to eat the little bread allowed us in peace and amity. I have heard of a quarrel in a tavern, where all were at daggers-drawing, till one of the company cried out, desiring to know the subject of the quarrel; which, when none of them could tell, they put up their swords, sat down, and passed the rest of the evening in quiet. The former part hath been our case, I hope

[r] Since this discourse was written, it hath appeared by experience, that the author was much mistaken in his conjectures.
the latter will be so too; that we shall sit down amicably together, at least until we have something that may give us a title to fall out, since nature hath instructed even a brood of goslings to flock together, while the kite is hovering over their heads.

It is certain, that a firm union in any country, where every man wishes the same thing with relation to the public, may, in several points of the greatest importance, in some measure supply the defect of power, and even of those rights, which are the natural and undoubted inheritance of mankind. If the universal wish of the nation, upon any point, were declared by the unanimous vote of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of lords, I should think myself obliged in conscience to act in my sphere according to that vote; because, in all free nations, I take the proper definition of law to be, the will of the majority of those who have the property in land; which, if there be a monarchy, is to be confirmed by the royal assent. And although such votes or declarations have not received such a confirmation for certain accidental reasons, yet, I think, they ought to be of much weight with the subject, provided they neither oppose the king's prerogative, endanger the peace of the nation, nor infringe any law already in force; none of which, however, can reasonably be supposed. Thus, for instance, if nine in ten of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of native temporal peers, should declare, that whoever received or uttered brass coin, except under certain limitati-
ons and securities, should be deemed as enemies to the king and the nation; I should think it a heinous sin in myself to act contrary to such a vote: and, if the same power should declare the same censure against those, who wore Indian stuffs and callicocs, or woollen manufactures imported from abroad, whereby this nation is reduced to the lowest ebb of misery, I should readily, heartily, and cheerfully pay obedience; and to my utmost power persuade others to do the like: because there is no law of this land obliging us either to receive such coin, or to wear such foreign manufactures.

Upon this last article [u] I could humbly wish, that the reverend the clergy would set us an example, by contenting themselves with wearing gowns and other habiliments of Irish drapery; which, as it would be some incitement to the laity, and set many hands to work, so they would find their advantage in the cheapness, which is a circumstance not to be neglected by too many among that venerable body. And in order to this [w] I could heartily desire, that the most ingenious artists of the weaving trade would contrive some decent stuffs and silks for clergymen at reasonable rates.

I have pressed several of our most substantial brethren, that the whole corporation of weavers in

[u] This hath since been put in practice by the persuasions and influence of the supposed author; but much defeated by the most infamous fraud of shop-keepers.

[w] This scheme was likewise often urged to the weavers by the supposed author; but he could never prevail on them to put it in practice.
filk and woollen would publish some proposals (I wish they would do it to both houses of parliament) inviting persons of all degrees, and of both sexes, to wear the woollen and silk manufactures of our own country; entering into solemn, mutual engagements, that the buyer shall have good, substantial, merchantable ware for his money, and at a certain rate, without the trouble of cheapening. So that if I sent a child for a piece of stuff of a particular colour and fineness, I should be sure not to be deceived; or, if I had reason to complain, the corporation should give me immediate satisfaction, and the name of the tradesman, who did me the wrong, should be published; and warning given not to deal with him for the future; unless the matter plainly appeared to be a mistake: for, beside the trouble of going from shop to shop, an ignorant customer runs the hazard of being cheated in the price and goodness of what he buys, being forced to an unequal combat with a dextrous and dishonest man in his own calling. Thus our goods fall under a general disreputation; and the gentry call for English cloth, or filk, from an opinion they have (and often too justly by our own faults) that the goodness more than makes up for the difference of price.

Besides, it hath been the sottish and ruinous practice of us tradesmen, upon any great demand of goods, either at home or from abroad, to raise the prices immediately, and manufacture the said goods more slightly and fraudulently than before.
Of these foul and foolish proceedings too many instances might be produced; and I cannot forbear mentioning one, whereby this poor kingdom hath received such a fatal blow in the only article of trade allowed us of any importance, that nothing but the success of Wood's project could outdo it. During the late plague in France, the Spaniards, who buy their linen cloths in that kingdom, not daring to venture thither for fear of infection, a very great demand was made here for that commodity, and exported to Spain: but, whether by the ignorance of the merchants, or dishonesty of the Northern weavers, or the collusion of both, the ware was so bad, and the price so excessive, that, except some small quantity which was sold below the prime cost, the greatest part was returned: and I have been told by very intelligent persons, that, if we had been fair dealers, the whole current of the linen trade to Spain would have taken its course from hence.

If any punishment were to be inflicted on numbers of men, surely there could none be thought too great for such a race of traitors, and enemies to God and their country; who, for the prospect of a little present gain, do not only ruin themselves (for that alone would be an example to the rest, and a blessing to the nation), but sell their souls to hell, and their country to destruction. And if the plague could have been confined only to those who were partakers in the guilt, had it travelled hither from Marseille, 5
MarfellleS] thole wretches would have died with less title to pity, than a highwayman going to the gallows.

But it happens very unluckily, that, for some time past, all endeavours or proposals from private persons to advance the public service, however honestly and innocently designed, have been called flying in the king's face; and this, to my knowledge, hath been the style of some persons, whose ancestors (I mean those among them who had any) and themselves have been flying in princes faces these fourscore years; and, from their own inclinations, would do so still, if their interest did not lead them rather to fly in the face of a kingdom, which hath given them wings to enable them for such a flight.

Thus, about four years ago, when a discourse [*] was published endeavouring to persuade our people to wear their own woollen manufactures, full of the most dutiful expressions to the king, and without the least party hint, it was termed, flying in the king's face; the printer was prosecuted in the manner we all remember, and, I hope, it will somewhere be remembered further, the jury kept eleven hours, and sent back nine times, till they were under the necessity of leaving the prisoner to the mercy of the court, by a special verdict; the judge [y] on the bench invoking God for his witness, when he asserted, that the author's design was to bring in the pretender.

[*] The Proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures.
[y] Judge Whigfield.
AND thus also my own poor endeavours to prevent the ruin of my country by the admission of Wood's coin were called, by the same persons, flying in the king's face; which I directly deny; for I cannot allow that vile representation of the royal countenance in William Wood's adulterate copper to be his sacred majesty's face; or if it were, my flying was not against the impression, but the baseness of the metal; because I well remembered, that the image which Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be set up for all men to fall down and worship it, was not of Copper, but pure Gold. And I am heartily sorry, we have so few royal images of that metal among us; the sight whereof, although it could hardly increase our veneration for his majesty, which is already so great, yet would very much enliven it with the mixture of comfort and satisfaction.

Alexander the great would suffer no statuary, except Phidias, to carve his image in stone or metal. How must he have treated such an operator as Wood, who goes about with jack-fulls of dross, odiously misrepresenting his prince's countenance; and would force them, by thousands, upon every one of us at above six times the value.

But, notwithstanding all that hath been objected by William Wood himself, together with his favourers, abettors, supporters, either public or private; by those who connive at his project, or discourage and discountenance his opposers for fear of lessening their favour, or hazarding their employments; by those,
those, who endeavour to damp the spirit of the people raised against this coin, or check the honest zeal of such as by their writings or discourses do all they can to keep it up; by those softners, sweetners, compounders, and expedient-mongers, who shake their heads so strongly that we can hear their pockets jingle; I did never imagine, that in detecting the practices of such enemies to the kingdom, I was flying in the king's face; or thought they were better representers of his majesty, than that very coin, for which they are secret or open advocates.

If I were allowed to recite only those wishes of the nation, which may be in our power to attain; I think they might be summed up in these few following.

First, That an end might be put to our apprehensions of Wood's half-pence, and to any danger of the like destructive scheme for the future.

Secondly, That half-pence might be coined in this kingdom by a public mint with due limitations.

Thirdly, That the sense of both houses of parliament, at least of the house of commons, were declared by some unanimous and hearty votes, against wearing any silk or woollen manufactures imported from abroad; as likewise against wearing Indian silks or callicoes, which are forbidden, under the highest penalties, in England: and it behoves us to take example from so wise a nation; because we are under a greater necessity to do so, since we are
are not allowed to export any woollen manufactures of our own; which is the principal branch of foreign trade in England.

Fourthly, That some effectual methods may be taken to civilization the poorer sort of our natives in all those parts of this kingdom, where the Irish abound, by introducing among them our language and customs; for want of which they live in the utmost ignorance, barbarity, and poverty, giving themselves wholly up to idleness, nastiness, and thievery, to the very great and just reproach of too many landlords. And, if I had in me the least spirit of a projector, I would engage, that this might be effected in a few years at a very inconsiderable charge.

Fifthly, That due encouragement should be given to agriculture; and a stop put to that pernicious practice of graziers engrossing vast quantities of land, sometimes at great distance; whereby the country is extremely depopulated.

Sixthly, That the defects in those acts for planting forest trees might be fully supplied, since they have hitherto been wholly ineffectual; except about the demesnes of a few gentlemen: and even there, in general, very unskilfully made, and thriving accordingly. Neither hath there yet been due care taken to preserve what is planted, or to enclose grounds; not one hedge in a hundred coming to maturity, for want of skill and industry. The neglect of copsing woods cut down hath likewise been of very evil consequences. And if men were
were restrained from that unlimited liberty of cutting down their own woods, before the proper times, as they are in some other countries, it would be a mighty benefit to the kingdom. For, I believe, there is not another example in Europe, of such a prodigious quantity of excellent timber cut down in so short a time, with so little advantage to the country either in shipping or building.

I may add, that absurd practice of getting turf without any regularity; whereby great quantities of restorable land are made utterly desperate, many thousands of cattle destroyed, the turf more difficult to come at and carry home, and less fit for burning; the air made unwholesome by stagnating pools and marshes; and the very sight of such places offensive to those who ride by. Neither should that odious custom be allowed of cutting scraws (as they call them), which is slaying off the green surface of the ground to cover their cabins, or make up their ditches; sometimes in shallow soils, where all is gravel within a few inches; and sometimes in low ground, with a thin green sward, and sloughy underneath; which last turns all into bog by this mismanagement. And I have heard, from very skilful countrymen; that, by these two practices in turf and scraws, the kingdom loseth some hundreds of acres of profitable land every year; besides the irreparable loss of many skirts of bogs, which have a green coat of grass, and yet are mangled for turf; and besides the want of canals by regular cutting, which would not only
only be a great convenience for bringing their turf home at an easy rate, but likewise render even the larger bogs more dry and safe for summer pasture.

These, and some other speculations of the like kind, I had intended to publish in a particular discourse against this session of parliament; because, in some periods of my life, I had opportunity and curiosity to observe, from what causes those great errors in every branch of country management have arisen; of which I have now ventured to relate but few out of very many; whereof some, perhaps, would not be mentioned without giving offence, which I have endeavoured, by all possible means, to avoid. And, for the same reason, I chose to add here the little I thought proper to say on this subject.

But, as to the lands of those who are perpetual absentees, I do not see any probability of their being ever improved. In former times, their tenants sat at easy rents; but, for some years past, they have been, generally speaking, more terribly racked by the dexterity of merciless agents from England, than even those who held under the severest landlords here. I was assured upon the place, by great numbers of credible people, that a prodigious estate in the county of Cork, being let upon leases for lives, and great fines paid, the rent was so high, that the tenants begged leave to surrender their leases, and were content to lose their fines.
The cultivating and improvement of land is certainly a subject worthy of the highest enquiry in any country, but especially in ours; where we are so strangely limited in every branch of trade, that can be of advantage to us, and utterly deprived of those, which are of the greatest importance; whereof I defy the most learned man in Europe, to produce me an example from any other kingdom in the world: for we are denied the benefit which God and nature intended to us; as manifestly appears by our happy situation for commerce, and the great number of our excellent ports. So that, I think, little is left us besides the cultivating our own soil, encouraging agriculture, and making great plantations of trees, that we might not be under the necessity of sending for corn and bark from England, and timber from other countries. This would increase the number of our inhabitants, and help to consume our natural products, as well as manufactures at home. And I shall never forget what I once ventured to say to a great man in England: that few politicians, with all their schemes, are half so useful members of a common wealth, as an honest farmer; who, by skilfully draining, fencing, manuring, and planting, hath increased the intrinsic value of a piece of land; and thereby done a perpetual service to his country; which it is a great controversy whether any of the former ever did, since the creation of the world; but no controversy at all, that ninety-nine in a hundred have done abundance of mischief.

A FULL
A FULL AND TRUE
ACCOUNT
OF THE

Written in the Year 1724.

SOME time ago, upon a report spread, that William Wood, hard-ware-man, was concealed in his brother-in-law's house here in Dublin, a great number of people of different conditions, and of both sexes, crowded about the door, determinately bent to take revenge upon him, as a coiner and a counterfeit. Among the rest, a certain curious person standing in a corner observed, that they all discovered their resentment in the proper terms and expressions of their several trades and callings; whereof he wrote down as many as he could remember; and was pleased to communicate them to me, with leave to publish them for the use of those, who, at any time hereafter, may be at a loss for proper words wherein to express their good dispositions towards the said William Wood.

[zz] One Molyneux, an ironmonger.
WOOD's EXECUTION.

The people cried out to have him delivered into their hands.

Says the parliament man, expel him the house.
2d Parliament man, I second that motion.
Cook. I'll baste him.
2d Cook. I'll give him his belly-full.
3d Cook. I'll give him a lick in the chops.
4th Cook. I'll scourge him.
Drunken man. I'll beat him as long as I can stand.

Bookseller. I'll turn over a new leaf with him.
Sadler. I'll pummel him.
Glazier. I'll make the light shine through him.
Grocer. I'll pepper him.
Groom. I'll curry his hide.
'Pothecary. I'll pound him.
2d 'Pothecary. I'll beat him to mummy.
School-master. I'll make him an example.
Rabbet-catcher. I'll ferret him.
Paviour. I'll thump him.
Coiner. I'll give him a rap.
WHIG. Down with him.
TORY. Up with him.
Miller. I'll dash out his grinders.
2d Miller. Dam him.
Boat-man. Sink him.
Scavenger. Throw him in the kennel.
Dyer. I'll beat him black and blue.
Bagnio-man. I'll make the house too hot for him.
Whore.
WOOD'S EXECUTION.

Whore. Pox rot him.
2d Whore. Let me alone with him.
3d Whore. Clap him up.
Mustard-maker. I'll have him by the nose.
Curate. I'll make the devil come out of him.
Popish-priest. I'll send him to the devil.
Dancing-master. I'll teach him better manners.
2d Dancing-master. I'll make him cut a caper three story high.
Farmer. I'll thrash him.
Taylor. I'll sit on his skirts.
2d Taylor. Hell is too good for him.
3d Taylor. I'll pink his doublet.
4th Taylor. I'll make his a—— make Buttons.
Basket-maker. I'll hamper him.
Fidler. I'll have him by the ears.
2d Fidler. I'll bang him to some tune.
Barber. I'll have him by the beard.
2d Barber. I'll pull his whiskers.
3d Barber. I'll make his hair stand on end.
4th Barber. I'll comb his locks.
Tinker. I'll try what metal he's made of.
Cobler. I'll make an end of him.
Tobacconist. I'll make him smoak.
2d Tobacconist. I'll make him set up his pipes.
Gold-finder. I'll make him stink.
Hackney-coachman. I'll make him know his driver.
2d Hackney-coachman. I'll drive him to the devil.

Butcher.
Butcher. I'll have a limb of him.
2d Butcher. Let us blow him up.
3d Butcher. My knife in him.
Nurse. I'll swaddle him.
Anabaptist. We'll dip the rogue in the pond.
Ostler. I'll rub him down.
Shoe-maker. Set him in the stocks.
Banker. I'll kick him to half crowns.
2d Banker. I'll pay him off.
Bowler. I'll have a rubber with him.
Gamelster. I'll make his bones rattle.
Boddice-maker. I'll lace his sides.
Gardener. I'll make him water his plants.
Ale-wife. I'll reckon with him.
Cuckold. I'll make him pull in his horns.
Old Woman. I'll mumble him.
Hangman. I'll throttle him.

But at last the people, having received assurances, that William Wood was neither in the house nor kingdom, appointed certain commissioners to hang him in effigie; whereof the whole ceremony and procession deserve to be transmitted to posterity.

First, the way was cleared by a detachment of the black-guards, with short sticks in their hands, and cockades of paper in their hats.

Then appeared William Wood, Esq; represented to the life by an old piece of carved timber, taken from the keel of a ship. Upon his face, which

Vol. X. P looked
looked very dismal, were fixed at proper distances several pieces of his own coin, to denote who he was, and to signify his calling and his crime. He wore on his head a periuke, very artfully composed of four old mops; a halter about his neck served him for a cravat. His cloaths were, indeed, not so neat and elegant as is usual with persons in his condition (which some censorious people imputed to affectation), for he was covered with a large rugg of several colours in patchwork: he was borne upon the shoulers of an able-bodied porter. In his march by St. Stephen's-green, he often bowed on both sides to show his respects to the company; his deportment was grave; and his countenance, though somewhat pensive, was very composed.

Behind him followed his father alone, in a long mourning cloak, with his hat over his nose, and a handkerchief in his left hand to wipe the tears from his face.

Next in order marched the executioner himself in person; whose venerable aspect drew the eyes of the whole assembly upon him; but he was further distinguished by a halter, which he bore upon his left shouder as the badge of his office.

Then followed two persons hand in hand; the one represented William Wood's brother-in-law; the other a certain saddler, his intimate friend, whose name I forget. Each had a small kettle in his hand, wherein was a reasonable quantity of the new half-pence. At proper periods, they shook their
their kettles, which made a melancholy sound, like the ringing of a knell for their partner and confe-derate.

After these followed several officers, whose assistance was necessary for the more decent performance of the great work in hand.

The procession was closed with an innumerable crowd of people, who frequently sent out loud huzza's; which were censured, by wiser heads, as a mark of inhumanity, and an ungenerous triumph over the unfortunate, without duly considering the various vicissitudes of human life. However, as it becomes an impartial historian, I will not conceal one observation, that Mr. Wood himself appeared wholly unmoved, without the least alteration in his countenance; only when he came within sight of the fatal tree, which happened to be of the same species of timber with his own person, he seemed to be somewhat pensive.

At the place of execution he appeared undaunted, nor was seen to shed a tear. He made no resistance; but submitted himself, with great resignation, to the hangman, who was, indeed, thought to use him with too much roughness, neither kissing him, nor asking him pardon. His dying speech was printed, and deserves to be written in letters of gold. Being asked whether it were his own true genuine speech, he did not deny it.

P 2

Those
Those of the softer sex, who attended the ceremony, lamented that so comely and well-timbered a man should come to so untimely an end. He hung but a short time; for upon feeling his breast, they found it cold and stiff.

It is strange to think, how this melancholy spectacle turned the hearts of the people to compassion. When he was cut down, the body was carried through the whole city, to gather contributions for his wake; and all sorts of people shewed their liberality according as they were able. The ceremony was performed in an ale-house of distinction, and in a manner suitable to the quality of the deceased. While the attendants were discoursing about his funeral, a worthy member of the assembly stood up and proposed, that the body should be carried out the next day, and burned with the same pomp and formalities used at his execution; which would prevent the malice of his enemies, and all indignities that might be done to his remains. This was agreed to; and about nine o'clock on the following morning there appeared a second procession. But, burning not having been any part of the sentence, authority thought fit to interpose, and the corpse was rescued by the civil power.

We hear, the body is not yet interred; which occasions many speculations. But what is more wonderful, it is positively affirmed, by many who pretend to have been eye-witnesses, that there does not appear the least alteration in any one lineament
ment - feature of his countenance; no visible decay in his whole frame, further than what had been made by worms long before his execution. The solution of which difficulty, I shall leave among naturalists.
A SHORT

VIEW

OF THE

STATE OF IRELAND.

Written in the Year 1727.

I am assured, that it hath, for some time, been practised as a method of making men's court, when they are asked about the rate of lands, the abilities of tenants, the state of trade and manufacture in this kingdom, and how their rents are paid, to answer, that in their neighbourhood all things are in a flourishing condition, the rent and purchase of land every day increasing. And if a gentleman happen to be a little more sincere in his representations, besides being looked on as not well affected, he is sure to have a dozen contradictors at his elbow. I think it is no manner of secret, why these questions are so cordially asked, or so obligingly answered.

But since, with regard to the affairs of this kingdom, I have been using all endeavours to subdue my indignation; to which, indeed, I am not provoked by any personal interest, not being the owner of one spot of ground in the whole island; I shall only enumerate, by rules generally known,
A SHORT VIEW, etc.

and never contradicted, what are the true causes of any country's flourishing and growing rich; and then examine what effects arise from those causes in the kingdom of Ireland.

The first cause of a kingdom's thriving is, the fruitfulness of the soil to produce the necessaries and conveniencies of life; not only sufficient for the inhabitants, but for exportation into other countries.

The second is, the industry of the people, in working up all their native commodities to the last degree of manufacture.

The third is, the convenience of safe ports and havens, to carry out their own goods as much manufactured, and bring in those of others as little manufactured, as the nature of mutual commerce will allow.

The fourth is, that the natives should, as much as possible, export and import their goods in vessels of their own timber, made in their own country.

The fifth is, the privilege of a free trade in all foreign countries, which will permit them, except those who are in war with their own prince or state.

The sixth is, by being governed only by laws made with their own consent; for otherwise they are not a free people. And therefore all appeals for justice, or applications for favour or preferment, to another country, are so many grievous impoverishments.
The seventh is, by improvement of land, encouragement of agriculture, and thereby increasing the number of their people; without which any country, however blessed by nature, must continue poor.

The eighth is, the residence of the prince, or chief administrator of the civil power.

The ninth is, the concourse of foreigners for education, curiosity, or pleasure: or as to a general mart of trade.

The tenth is, by disposing all offices of honour, profit, or trust only to the natives; or at least with very few exceptions, where strangers have long inhabited the country, and are supposed to understand and regard the interest of it as their own.

The eleventh is, when the rents of lands, and profits of employments, are spent in the country which produced them, and not in another; the former of which will certainly happen, where the love of our native country prevails.

The twelfth is, by the public revenues being all spent and employed at home, except on the occasions of a foreign war.

The thirteenth is, where the people are not obliged, unless they find it for their own interest or convenience, to receive any monies, except of their own coinage by a public mint after the manner of all civilized nations.

The fourteenth is, a disposition of the people of a country to wear their own manufactures, and import as few incitements to luxury either in cloaths, furniture,
furniture, food, or drink, as they possibly can live conveniently without.

There are many other causes of a nation's thriving, which I, at present, cannot recollect: but, without advantage from at least some of these, after turning my thoughts a long time, I am not able to discover from whence our wealth proceeds, and therefore would gladly be better informed. In the mean time I will here examine, what share falls to Ireland of these causes, or of the effects and consequences.

It is not my intention to complain, but barely to relate facts; and the matter is not of small importance. For it is allowed, that a man who lives in a solitary house, far from help, is not wise in endeavouring to acquire in the neighbourhood the reputation of being rich; because those, who come for gold, will go off with pewter and brass, rather than return empty: and, in the common practice of the world, those who possess most wealth, make the least parade; which they leave to others, who have nothing else to bear them out in shewing their faces on the exchange.

As to the first cause of a nation's riches, being the fertility of the soil, as well as temperature of climate, we have no reason to complain; for, although the quantity of unprofitable land in this kingdom, reckoning bogg and rock and barren mountain, be double in proportion to what it is in England; yet the native productions, which both kingdoms deal in, are very near an equality in
A SHORT VIEW OF THE

In point of goodness, and might, with the same encouragement, be as well manufactured. I except mines and minerals; in some of which however we are only defective in point of skill and industry.

In the second, which is the industry of the people, our misfortune is not altogether owing to our own fault, but to a million of discouragements.

The conveniency of ports and havens, which nature hath bestowed so liberally on this kingdom, is of no more use to us, than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon.

As to shipping of its own, Ireland is so utterly unprovided, that of all the excellent timber cut down within these fifty or sixty years, it can hardly be said, that the nation hath received the benefit of one valuable house to dwell in, or one ship to trade with.

Ireland is the only kingdom I ever heard or read of, either in ancient or modern story, which was denied the liberty of exporting their native commodities and manufactures wherever they pleased, except to countries at war with their own prince or state: yet this privilege, by the superiority of mere power, is refused us in the most momentous parts of commerce; besides an act of navigation, to which we never consented, pinned down upon us, and rigorously executed; and a thousand other unexampled circumstances, as grievous as they are invidious to mention. To go on to the rest.
It is too well known, that we are forced to obey some laws we never consented to; which is a condition I must not call by its true uncontroverted name for fear of lord chief-justice Whitshed's ghost, with his [a] libertas et natale solum, written for a motto on his coach, as it stood at the door of the court, while he was perjuring himself to betray both. Thus we are in the condition of patients, who have physic sent them by doctors at a distance, strangers to their constitution and the nature of their disease: and thus we are forced to pay five hundred per cent. to decide our properties: in all which we have likewise the honour to be distinguished from the whole race of mankind.

As to the improvement of land; those few, who attempt that or planting, through covetousness or want of skill, generally leave things worse than they were; neither succeeding in trees nor hedges; and by running into the fancy of grazing, after the manner of the Scythians, are every day depopulating the country.

We are so far from having a king to reside among us, that even the viceroy is generally absent four fifths of his time in the government.

No strangers from other countries make this a part of their travels; where they can expect to see nothing but scenes of misery and desolation.

Those who have the misfortune to be born here, have the least title to any considerable employ-

[a] Liberty and my native country.
ment; to which they are seldom preferred, but upon a political consideration.

One third part of the rents of Ireland is spent in England; which, with the profit of employments, pensions, appeals, journeys of pleasure or health, education at the inns of court and both universities, remittances at pleasure, the pay of all superior officers in the army, and other incidents, will amount to a full half of the income of the whole kingdom, all clear profit to England.

We are denied the liberty of coining gold, silver, or even copper. In the isle of Man, they coin their own silver; every petty prince, vassal to the emperor, can coin what money he pleaseth. And in this, as in most of the articles already mentioned, we are an exception to all other states or monarchies, that were ever known in the world.

As to the last, or fourteenth article, we take special care to act diametrically contrary to it in the whole course of our lives. Both sexes, but especially the women, despise and abhor to wear any of their own manufactures, even those which are better made than in other countries; particularly a sort of silk plaid, through which the workmen are forced to run a kind of gold thread, that it may pass for Indian. Even ale and potatoes are imported from England, as well as corn; and our foreign trade is little more than importation of French wine, for which I am told we pay ready money.

Now,
Now, if all this be true (upon which I could easily enlarge), I would be glad to know, by what secret method it is, that we grow a rich and flourishing people, without liberty, trade, manufactures, inhabitants, money, or the privilege of coining; without industry, labour, or improvement of land; and with more than half the rent and profits of the whole kingdom annually exported, for which we receive not a single farthing: and to make up all this, nothing worth mentioning, except the linen of the North, a trade casual, corrupted, and at mercy; and some butter from Cork. If we do flourish, it must be against every law of nature and reason; like the thorn at Glastonbury, that blossoms in the midst of winter.

Let the worthy commissioners, who come from England, ride round the kingdom, and observe the face of nature, or the face of the natives; the improvement of the land; the thriving numerous plantations; the noble woods; the abundance and vicinity of country seats; the commodious farmer's houses and barns; the towns and villages, where every body is busy, and thriving with all kind of manufactures; the shops full of goods wrought to perfection, and filled with customers; the comfortable diet and dress, and dwellings of the people; the vast numbers of ships in our harbours and docks, and shipwrights in our sea-port towns; the roads crouded with carriers, laden with rich manufactures; the perpetual concourse to and fro of pompous equipages!

With
With what envy and admiration would those gentlemen return from so delightful a progress! what glorious reports would they make, when they went back to England!

But my heart is too heavy to continue this irony longer; for it is manifest, that whatever stranger took such a journey, would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland, or Yylland, rather than in a country so favoured by nature as ours, both in fruitfulness of soil, and temperature of climate. The miserable dress, and diet, and dwelling of the people; the general desolation in most parts of the kingdom; the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins, and no new ones in their stead; the families of farmers, who pay great rents, living in filth and nastiness upon buttermilk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hogsfly to receive them. These indeed may be comfortable sights to an English spectator: who comes for a short time, only to learn the language, and returns back to his own country, whither he finds all our wealth transmitted.

Nostra miseria magna est.

There is not one argument used to prove the riches of Ireland, which is not a logical demonstration of its poverty. The rise of our rents is squeezed out of the very blood, and vitals, and cloaths, and dwellings of the tenants, who live worse than English beggars. The lowness of interest, in all other countries a sign of wealth, is
in us a proof of misery; there being no trade to employ any borrower. Hence alone comes the dearness of land, since the savers have no other way to lay out their money: hence the dearness of necessaries for life: because the tenants cannot afford to pay such extravagant rates for land (which they must take or go a begging) without raising the price of cattle, and of corn, although themselves should live upon chaff. Hence our increase of buildings in this city; because workmen have nothing to do but to employ one another, and one half of them are infallibly undone. Hence the daily increase of bankers, who may be a necessary evil in a trading country, but so ruinous in ours; who, for their private advantage, have sent away all our silver, and one third of our gold; so that within three years past, the running cash of the nation, which was about five hundred thousand pounds, is now less than two, and must daily diminish, unless we have liberty to coin, as well as that important kingdom, the isle of Man, and the meanest principality in the German empire, as I before observed.

I have sometimes thought, that this paradox, of the kingdom growing rich, is chiefly owing to those worthy gentlemen the bankers; who, except some custom-house officers, birds of passage, oppressive thrifty squires, and a few others who shall be nameless, are the only thriving people among us: and I have often wished, that a law were enacted to hang up half a dozen bankers every year,
year, and thereby interpose at least some short delay to the further ruin of Ireland.

Ye are idle, ye are idle, answered Pharaoh to the Israelites, when they complained to his majesty, that they were forced to make bricks without straw.

England enjoys every one of those advantages for enriching a nation, which I have above enumerated; and into the bargain, a good million returned to them every year without labour or hazard, or one farthing value received on our side: but how long we shall be able to continue the payment, I am not under the least concern. One thing I know, that when the hen is starved to death, there will be no more golden eggs.

I think it a little unhospitable, and others may call it a subtile piece of malice, that because there may be a dozen families in this town, able to entertain their English friends in a generous manner at their tables, their guests, upon their return to England, shall report that we wallow in riches and luxury.

Yet, I confess, I have known an hospital, where all the household officers grew rich; while the poor, for whose sake it was built, were almost starving for want of food and raiment.

To conclude, if Ireland be a rich and flourishing kingdom, its wealth and prosperity must be owing to certain causes, that are yet concealed from the whole race of mankind; and the effects are
are equally invisible. We need not wonder at strangers, when they deliver such paradoxes; but a native and inhabitant of this kingdom, who gives the same verdict, must be either ignorant to stupidity, or a man-pleaser at the expense of all honour, conscience, and truth [b].

[b] The present state of Ireland* is, in general, as flourishing as possible. Agriculture is cultivated: arts and sciences are encouraged: and, in the space of eighteen years, which is almost the full time that I have known it, no kingdom can be more improved.

* 1752.
AN
ANSWER
TO A
PAPER
CALLED,
A Memorial of the poor Inhabitants, Tradesmen, and Labourers of the Kingdom of Ireland.

Written in the Year 1728.

I received a paper from you, whoever you are, printed without any name of author or printer; and sent, I suppose, to me among others, without any particular distinction. It contains a complaint of the dearness of corn; and some schemes for making it cheaper, which I cannot approve of.

But, pray, permit me, before I go further, to give you a short history of the steps, by which we arrived at this hopeful situation.

It was indeed the shameful practice of too many Irish farmers to wear out their ground with ploughing; while, either through poverty, laziness, or ignorance, they neither took care to manure it as they ought, nor gave time to any part of
of the land to recover itself; and when their leaves were near expiring, being assured that their landlords would not renew, they ploughed even the meadows, and made such havoc, that many landlords were considerable sufferers by it [c].

This gave birth to that abominable race of graziers, who, upon expiration of the farmers leaves, were ready to engross great quantities of land; and the gentlemen having been before often ill paid, and their land worn out of heart, were too easily tempted, when a rich grazier made an offer to take all their land, and give them security for payment. Thus, a vast tract of land, where twenty or thirty farmers lived, together with their cottagers and labourers, in their several cabins, became all desolate, and easily managed by one or two herdsmen and their boys; whereby the master-grazier, with little trouble, feized to himself the livelihood of a hundred people.

It must be confessed, that the farmers were justly punished for their knavery, brutality, and folly. But neither are the squires and landlords to be excused; for to them is owing the depopulating of the country, the vast number of beggars, and the ruin of those few sorry improvements we had.

That farmers should be limited in ploughing, is very reasonable, and practised in England; and

[c] This practice, probably, produced the penal clauses to prohibit ploughing, mentioned in the Proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures.
might have easily been done here by penal clauses in their leases: but to deprive them in a manner altogether from tilling their lands, was a most stupid want of thinking.

Had the farmers been confined to plough a certain quantity of land, with a penalty of ten pounds an acre for whatever they exceeded, and farther limited for the three or four last years of their leases, all this evil had been prevented; the nation would have saved a million of money; and been more populous by above two hundred thousand souls.

For a people, denied the benefit of trade, to manage their lands in such a manner as to produce nothing, but what they are forbidden to trade with, or only such things as they can neither export nor manufacture to advantage, is an absurdity that a wild Indian would be ashamed of; especially when we add, that we are content to purchase this hopeful commerce by sending to foreign markets for our daily bread.

The grazier's employment is to feed great flocks of sheep, or black cattle, or both. With regard to sheep, as folly is usually accompanied with perspicacity, so it is here. There is something so monstrous to deal in a commodity (further than for our own use) which we are not allowed to export manufactured; nor even unmanufactured, but to one certain country, and only to some few ports in that country; there is, I say, something so foolish, that it wants a name in our language to express it by: and the good of it is, that the more
more sheep we have, the fewer human creatures are left to wear the wool, or eat the flesh. Ajax was mad, when he mistook a flock of sheep for his enemies; but we shall never be sober, until we have the same way of thinking.

The other part of the grazier's business is what we call black cattle, producing hides, tallow, and beef for exportation: all which are good and useful commodities, if rightly managed. But it seems, the greatest part of the hides are sent out raw for want of bark to tan them; and that want will daily grow stronger: for, I doubt, the new project, of tanning without it, is at an end. Our beef, I am afraid, still continues scandalous in foreign markets for the old reasons. But our tallow, for any thing I know, may be good. However, to bestow the whole kingdom on beef and mutton, and thereby drive out half the people, who should eat their share, and force the rest to send sometimes as far as Egypt for bread to eat with it, is a most peculiar and distinguished piece of public economy, of which I have no comprehension.

I know very well that our ancestors the Scythians, and their posterity our kinsmen the Tartars, lived upon the blood, and milk, and raw flesh of their cattle, without one grain of corn: but I confess myself so degenerate, that I am not easy without bread to my vi\textuals.

What amazed me for a week or two, was to see, in this prodigious plenty of cattle, dearth of human creatures, and want of bread, as well as mo-
ney to buy it, that all kind of flesh-meat should be monstrously dear, beyond what was ever known in this kingdom. I thought it a defect in the laws, that there was not some regulation in the price of flesh, as well as bread: but I imagine myself to have guessed out the reason: in short, I am apt to think, that the whole kingdom is over-stocked with cattle, both black and white. And as it is observed, that the poor Irish have a vanity to be rather owners of two lean cows, than one fat, although with double the charge of grazing, and but half the quantity of milk; so I conceive it much more difficult, at present, to find a fat bullock or weather, than it would be, if half of them were fairly knocked on the head: for I am assured, that in the district in the several markets, called carrion-row, it is as reasonable as the poor can desire; only the circumstance of money to purchase it, and of trade, or labour, to purchase that money, are indeed wholly wanting.

Now, Sir, to return more particularly to you, and your memorial.

A hundred thousand barrels of wheat, you say, should be imported hither; and ten thousand pounds premium to the importers. Have you looked into the purse of the nation? I am no commissioner of the treasury; but am well assured, that the whole running cash would not supply you with a sum to purchase so much corn, which, only at twenty shillings a barrel, will be a hundred thousand
thousand pounds; and ten thousand more for the præmium. But you will traffic for your corn with other goods: and where are those goods? If you had them, they are all engaged to pay the rents of absentees, and other occasions in London, besides a huge balance of trade this year against us. Will foreigners take our bankers paper? I suppose, they will value it at little more than so much a quire. Where are these rich farmers and engrossers of corn, in so bad a year, and so little sowing? You are in pain for two shillings præmium, and forget the twenty shillings for the price; find me out the latter, and I will engage for the former.

Your scheme for a tax for raising such a sum is all visionary, and owing to a great want of knowledge in the miserable state of this nation. Tea, coffee, sugar, spices, wine, and foreign cloaths, are the particulars you mention, upon which this tax should be raised. I will allow the two first, because they are unwholesome; and the last, because I should be glad if they were all burned; but I beg you will leave us our wine to make us a while forget our misery; or give your tenants leave to plough for barley. But I will tell you a secret, which I learned many years ago from the commissioners of the customs in London: they said, when any commodity appeared to be taxed above a moderate rate, the consequence was, to lessen that branch of the revenue by one half; and one of those gentlemen pleasanty told me, that the mis-
take of parliaments on such occasions was owing to an error of computing two and two to make four; whereas, in the business of laying heavy impositions, two and two never made more than one; which happens by lessening the import, and the strong temptation of running such goods as paid high duties, at least in this kingdom. Although the women are as vain and extravagant as their lovers or their husbands can deserve, and the men are fond enough of wine, yet the number of both, who can afford such expenses, is so small, that the major part must refuse gratifying themselves, and the duties will rather be lessened than encreased. But, allowing no force in this argument; yet so preternatural a sum, as one hundred and ten thousand pounds, raised all on a sudden (for there is no dallying with hunger) is just in proportion with raising a million and a half in England; which, as things now stand, would, probably, bring that opulent kingdom under some difficulties.

You are concerned how strange and surprizing it would be in foreign parts to hear, that the poor were starving in a rich country, etc. Are you in earnest? is Ireland the rich country you mean? or are you insulting our poverty? were you ever out of Ireland? or were you ever in it till of late? You may, probably, have a good employment, and are saving all you can to purchase a good estate in England. But, by talking so familiarly of
one hundred and ten thousand pounds by a tax upon a few commodities, it is plain, you are either naturally or affectedly ignorant of our present condition; or else you would know and allow, that such a sum is not to be raised here, without a general excise; since, in proportion to our wealth, we pay already, in taxes, more than England ever did in the height of the war. And when you have brought over your corn, who will be the buyers? Most certainly, not the poor, who will not be able to purchase the twentieth part of it.

Sir, upon the whole, your paper is a very crude piece, liable to more objections than there are lines; but, I think, your meaning is good, and so far you are pardonable.

If you will propose a general contribution for supporting the poor in potatoes and buttermilk, till the new corn comes in, perhaps you may succeed better; because the thing at least is possible: and, I think, if our brethren, in England, would contribute, upon this emergency, out of the million they gain from us every year, they would do a piece of justice, as well as charity. In the mean time, go and preach to your own tenants to fall to the plough as fast as they can; and prevail with your neighbouring squires to do the same with theirs; or else die with the guilt of having driven away half the inhabitants, and starving the rest. For as to your scheme of raising one hundred and ten thousand pounds, it is as vain as that of Rabelais; which
which was to squeeze out wind from the posteriors of a dead ass.

But, why all this concern for the poor? We want them not as the country is now managed: they may follow thousands of their leaders, and seek their bread abroad. Where the plough has no work, one family can do the business of fifty, and you may send away the other forty-nine. An admirable piece of husbandry, never known or practised by the wisest nations, who erroneously thought people to be the riches of a country.

If so wretched a state of things would allow it, methinks I could have a malicious pleasure, after all the warning I have, in vain, given the public at my own peril for several years past, to see the consequences and events answering in every particular. I pretend to no sagacity: what I wrote was little more than what I had discoursed to several persons, who were generally of my opinion: and it was obvious to every common understanding, that such effects must needs follow from such causes. A fair issue of things began upon party rage, while some sacrificed the public to fury, and others to ambition: while a spirit of faction and oppression reigned in every part of the country, where gentlemen, instead of consulting the ease of their tenants, or cultivating their lands, were worrying one another upon points of whig and tory, of high church and low church; which no more concerned them, than the long and famous contro-
controversy of *strops* [*d*] for razors: while agriculture was wholly discouraged, and consequently half the farmers and labourers, and poorer tradesmen, forced to beggary or banishment. *Wisdom crieth in the streets; because I have called on you; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.*

I have now done with your memorial, and freely excuse your mistakes, since you appear to write as a stranger, and as of a country, which is left at liberty to enjoy the benefits of nature, and to make the best of those advantages which God hath given it in soil, climate, and situation.

But having lately sent out a paper, entitled, *A short view of the state of Ireland*; and hearing of an objection, that some people think I have treated the memory of the late lord chief-justice *Whitshed with an appearance of severity*: since I may not, probably, have another opportunity of explaining myself in that particular, I choose to do it here: laying it therefore down for a *postulatum*, which, I suppose, will be universally granted, that no little creature, of so mean a birth and genius, had ever the honour to be a greater enemy to his country, and to all kinds of virtue than he. I answer thus; whether there be two different goddef-

[*d*] A piece of leather pasted on wood to be used with a certain powder, for the property and excellence of which several competitors eagerly contended.
ses called *Fame*, as some authors contend, or only one goddess sounding two different trumpets, it is certain, that people distinguished for their *villainy* have as good a title to a blast from the *proper trumpet*, as those who are most renowned for their *virtues* have from the other; and have equal reason to complain if it be refused them. And accordingly the names of the most *celebrated* *profligates* have been faithfully transmitted down to posterity. And although the person here understood acted his part in an obscure corner of the world; yet his talents might have shone with lustre enough in the noblest scene.

As to my naming a person dead, the plain honest reason is the best. He was armed with power and will to do mischief, even where he was not provoked, as appeared by his prosecuting two *printers*, one to death, and both to ruin, who had neither offended God, nor the king, nor him, nor the public.

What an encouragement to vice is this? If an ill man be alive, and in power, we dare not attack him; and if he be weary of the world, or of his own villainies, he has nothing to do but die, and then his reputation is safe. For these excellent casuists know just *latin* enough to have heard a most foolish precept, that *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*; so that if *Socrates*, and *Anytus* his accuser [*e*], had happened to die together, the charity of

*e* *Anytus*, one of the wretches who accused *Socrates* of contemning the gods, and endeavouring to subvert the religion of his country.
survivors must either have obliged them to hold their peace, or to fix the same character on both. The only crime of charging the dead is, when the least doubt remains whether the accusation be true; but when men are openly abandoned, and lost to all shame, they have no reason to think it hard, if their memory be reproached. Whoever reports, or otherwise publisheth any thing, which it is possible may be false, that man is a flanderer; **Hic niger est, bunc tu, Romane, caveto.** Even the least misrepresentation, or aggravation of facts, deserves the same censure in some degree: but, in this case, I am quite deceived, if my error hath not been on the side of extenuation.

I have now present before me the idea of some persons (I know not in what part of the world) who spend every moment of their lives, and every turn of their thoughts while they are awake (and probably of their dreams while they sleep), in the most detestable actions and designs; who delight in mischief, scandal, and obloquy, with the hatred and contempt of all mankind against them; but chiefly of those among their own party, and their own family; such, whose odious qualities rival each other for perfection; avarice, brutality, faction, pride, malice, treachery, noise, impudence, dulness, ignorance, vanity, and revenge, contending every moment for superiority in their breasts. Such creatures are not to be reformed; neither is it prudent, or safe to attempt a reformation. Yet, although
although their memories will rot, there may be some benefit for their survivors, to smell it where it is rotting.

I am,

SIR,

Dublin, March 25, 1728.

Your humble servant,

A. B.
VINDICATION

Of His Excellency

JOHN LORD CARTERET,

FROM THE

CHARGE of favouring none but Tories, High-church-men, and Jacobites [f].

Written in the Year 1730.

In order to treat this important subject with the greatest fairness and impartiality, perhaps it may be convenient to give some account of his excellency; in whose life and character there are certain particulars, which might give a very just suspicion of some truth in the accusation he lies under.

He is descended from two noble, ancient and most loyal families, the Carterets, and the Granvilles: too much distinguished, I confess, for what they acted, and what they suffered, in defending the former constitution in church and state under King Charles the martyr; I mean that very prince,

[f] The view of this piece seems to be to recommend moderation, and laugh political bigotry out of countenance.
on account of whose martyrdom a form of prayer, with fasting, was enjoined by act of parliament to be used on the 30th day of January every year, to implore the mercies of God, that the guilt of that sacred and innocent blood might not be visited on us or our posterity; as we may read at large in our common-prayer-book; which day hath been solemnly kept, even within the memory of many men now alive.

His excellency the present lord was educated in the university of Oxford; from whence, with a singularity scarce to be justified, he carried away more greek, latin, and philosophy, than properly became a person of his rank; indeed much more of each than most of those who are forced to live by their learning will be at the unnecessary pains to load their heads with.

This was the rock he split on upon his first appearance in the world, and having just got clear of his guardians. For as soon as he came to town, some bishops, and clergymen, and other persons most eminent for learning and parts, got him among them; from whom although he were fortunately dragged by a lady and the court, yet he could never wipe off the stain, nor wash out the tincture of his university acquirements and dispositions.

To this another misfortune was added, that it pleased God to endow him with great natural talents, memory, judgment, comprehension, eloquence, and wit: and, to finish the work, all these were fortified even in his youth with the advantages
advantages received by such employments, as are best fitted both to exercise and polish the gifts of nature and education; having been ambassador in several courts, when his age would hardly allow him to take a degree; and made principal secretary of state at a period, when, according to custom, he ought to have been busied in losing his money at the chocolate-house; or in other amusements equally laudable and epidemic among persons of honour.

I cannot omit another weak side in his excellency. For it is known, and can be proved upon him, that Greek and Latin books might be found every day in his dressing-room, if it were carefully searched; and there is reason to suspect, that some of the said books have been privately conveyed to him by Tory hands: I am likewise assured, that he hath been taken in the very fact of reading the said books, even in the midst of a session, to the great neglect of public affairs.

I own, there may be some grounds for this charge; because I have it from good hands, that when his excellency is at dinner with one or two scholars at his elbows, he grows a most unsupportable and unintelligible companion to all the fine gentlemen round the table.

I cannot deny, that his excellency lies under another very great disadvantage. For with all the accomplishments above-mentioned, adding that of a most comely and graceful person, and during the prime of youth, spirits, and vigour, he hath, in a...
A VINDICATION OF

most unexemplary manner, led a regular domestic life; discovers a great esteem, and friendship, and love for his lady; as well as true affection for his children; and when he is disposed to admit an entertaining evening-companion, he doth not always enough reflect, whether the person may possibly, in former days, have lain under the imputation of a tory; nor at such times do the natural or affected fears of popery and the pretender make any part of the conversation: I presume, because neither Homer, Plato, Aristotle, nor Cicero, have made any mention of them.

These I freely acknowledge to be his excellency's failings: yet, I think it is agreed by philosophers and divines, that some allowance ought to be given to human infirmity, and to the prejudices of a wrong education.

I am well aware, how much my sentiments differ from the orthodox opinions of one or two principal patriots, at the head of whom I name with honour Pisolrides. For these have decided the matter directly against me, by declaring, that no person, who was ever known to lie under the suspicion of one single tory principle, or who had been once seen at a great man's levee in the worst of times [g], should be allowed to come within the verge of the castle; much less to bow in the antechamber, appear at the assemblies, or dance at a birth-night. However, I dare assert, that this

[g] The three last years of queen Anne, when lord Oxford was minister, were so called by the whigs.
maxim hath been often controlled; and that, on the contrary, a considerable number of early peni-
tents have been received into grace, who are now an ornament, happiness, and support to the nation.

Neither do I find any murmuring on some other points of greater importance, where this favourite maxim is not so strictly observed.

To instance only in one. I have not heard, that any care hath hitherto been taken to discover whether madam Violante [b] be a whig or tory in her principles; or even that she hath ever been offered the oaths to the government: on the contrary, I am told, that she openly professeth herself to be a high-flyer; and it is not improbable, by her out-
landish name, she may also be a papist in her heart; yet we see this illustrious and dangerous female openly cared for by principal persons of both par-
ties; who contribute to support her in a splendid manner, without the least apprehensions from a grand-jury, or even from 'squire Hartley Hutcheson himself, that zealous prosecutor of hawkers and libels. And, as Hobbes wisely observes, so much money being equivalent to so much power, it may deserve consid-
ering, with what safety such an instrument of power ought to be trusted in the hands of an alien, who hath not given any legal security for her good affection to the government.

I confess, there is one evil which I could wish our friends would think proper to redress. There

[b] A famous Italian rope-dancer.
are many whigs in this kingdom of the old-fashioned stamp, of whom we might make very good use; they bear the same loyalty with us to the Hanoverian family in the person of king George the second; the same abhorrence of the pretender, with the consequences of popery and slavery, and the same indulgence to tender consciences: but, having nothing to ask for themselves, and therefore the more leisure to think for the public, they are often apt to entertain fears and melancholy prospects, concerning the state of their country, the decay of trade, the want of money, the miserable condition of the people, with other topics of the like nature; all which do equally concern both whig and tory; who, if they have anything to lose, must be equally sufferers. Perhaps, one or two of these melancholy gentlemen will sometimes venture to publish their thoughts in print: now I can by no means approve our usual custom of cursing and railing at this species of thinkers, under the names of tories, jacobites, papists, libellers, rebels, and the like.

This was the utter ruin of that poor, angry, bustling, well-meaning mortal Pistorides; who lies equally under the contempt of both parties; with no other difference, than a mixture of pity on one side, and of aversion on the other.

How hath he been pelted, pestered, and pounded by one single wag, who promiseth never to forsake him, living or dead?

I was
I was much pleased with the humour of a surgeon in this town; who having, in his own apprehension, received some great injustice from the earl of Galway, and despairing of revenge, as well as relief, declared to all his friends, that he had set a-part one hundred guineas to purchase the earl’s carcase from the sexton, whenever it should dye, to make a skeleton of the bones, stuff the hide, and show them for three-pence; and thus get vengeance for the injuries he had suffered by its owner.

Of the like spirit too often is that implacable race of wits; against whom there is no defence but innocence and philosophy; neither of which is likely to be at hand; and therefore the wounded have no where to fly for a cure, but to down-right stupidity, a crazed head, or a profligate contempt of guilt and shame.

I am therefore sorry for that other miserable creature Tranlus; who, although of somewhat a different species, yet seems very far to outdo even the genius of Pistorides in that miscarrying talent of railing without consistency or discretion against the most innocent persons, according to the present situation of his gall and spleen. I do not blame an honest gentleman for the bitterest invectives against one, to whom he professeth the greatest friendship; provided he acts in the dark, so as not to be discovered: but, in the midst of cares, visits, and invitations, to run into the streets, or to as public a place, and, without the least pretended incite-
incitement, sputter out the basest and falsest accusations; then to wipe his mouth, come up smiling to his friend, shake him by the hand, and tell him in a whisper, it was all for his service: This proceeding, I am bold to think a great failure in prudence. And I am afraid left such a practitioner, with a body so open, so foul, and so full of sores, may fall under the resentment of an incensed political surgeon, who is not in much renown for his mercy upon great provocation: who, without waiting for his death, will flay and disse77 him alive; and to the view of mankind lay open all the disordered cells of his brain, the venom of his tongue, the corruption of his heart, and spots andflatus's of his spleen; and all this for threepence.

In such a case, what a scene would be laid open! and, to drop my metaphor, what a character of our mistaking friend might an angry enemy draw and expose! particularizing that unnatural conjunction of vices and follies so inconsistent with each other in the same breast: furious and fawning, scurrilous and flattering, cowardly and provoking, insolent and abject; most profligately false, with the strongest professions of sincerity; positive and variable, tyrannical and slavish.

I apprehend, that if all this should be set out to the world by an angry whig of the old stamp, the unavoidable consequence must be a confinement of our friend for some months more to his garret; and thereby depriving the public, for so long
long a time, and in so important a juncture, of his useful talents in their service, while he is fed like a wild beast through a hole; but, I hope, with a special regard to the quantity and quality of his nourishment.

In vain would his excusers endeavour to palliate his enormities by imputing them to madness; because it is well known, that madness only operates by inflaming and enlarging the good or evil dispositions of the mind. For the curators of Bedlam assure us, that some lunatics are persons of honour, truth, benevolence, and many other virtues, which appear in their highest ravings, although after a wild incoherent manner; while others, on the contrary, discover, in every word and action, the utmost baseness and depravity of human minds; which infallibly they possessed in the same degree, although, perhaps, under a better regulation, before their entrance into that academy.

But it may be objected, that there is an argument of much force to excuse the overflowings of that zeal, which our friend shews or means for our cause. And it must be confessed, that the easy and smooth fluency of his elocution, bestowed on him by nature, and cultivated by continual practice, added to the comeliness of his person, the harmony of his voice, the gracefulfulness of his manner, and the decency of his dress, are temptations too strong for such a genius to resist upon any public occasion of making them appear with universal applause. And if good men are sometimes accused of loving their
just better than their friend; surely, to gain the reputation of the first orator in the kingdom, no man of spirit would scruple to lose all the friends he had in the world.

It is usual for masters to make their boys declaim on both sides of an argument; and as some kinds of assemblies are called the schools of politics, I confess nothing can better improve political school-boys, than the art of making plausible or implausible harangues against the very opinion, for which they resolve to determine.

So cardinal Perron, after having spoke for an hour, to the admiration of all his hearers, to prove the existence of God, told some of his intimates, that he could have spoken another hour, and much better, to prove the contrary.

I have placed this reasoning in the strongest light, that I think it will bear; and have nothing to answer, but that, allowing it as much weight as the reader shall please, it hath constantly met with ill success in the mouth of our friend; but whether for want of good luck, or good management, I suspend my judgment.

To return from this long digression; if persons in high stations have been allowed to chuse wenches without regard even to difference in religion, yet never incurred the least reflexion on their loyalty, or their protestantism; shall the chief governor of a great kingdom be censured for chusing a companion, who may formerly have been suspected for differing from the orthodox in some speculative opinions

A V I N D I C A T I O N O F
nions of persons and things, which cannot affect the fundamental principles of a sound whig?

But let me suppose a very possible case. Here is a person sent to govern Ireland, whose unfortunate weak side it happens to be, for several reasons above-mentioned, that he hath encouraged the attendance of one or two gentlemen distinguished for their taste, their wit, and their learning; who have taken the oaths to his majesty, and pray heartily for him: yet, because they may perhaps be stigmatized as quondam tories by Pistorides and his gang, his excellency must be forced to banish them under the pain and peril of displeasing the zealots of his own party; and thereby be put into a worse condition than every common good fellow, who may be a sincere protestant and a loyal subject, and yet rather chuse to drink fine ale at the pope's head, than muddy at the king's.

Let me then return to my suppositions. It is certain, the high-flown loyalists, in the present sense of the word, have their thoughts, and studies, and tongues, so entirely diverted by political schemes, that that the zeal of their principles hath eaten up their understandings; neither have they time, from their employments, their hopes, and their hourly labours, for acquiring new additions of merit, to amuse themselves with philological converse or speculations, which are utterly ruinous to all schemes of rising in the world. What then must a great man do, whose ill stars have fatally perverted
perverted him to a love and taste and possession of literature, politeness, and good sense? Our thorough-sped republic of whigs, which contains the bulk of all hoppers, pretenders, expecters, and professors, are, beyond all doubt, most highly useful to princes, to governors, to great ministers, and to the country; but, at the same time, and by necessary consequence, the most disagreeable companions to all who have that unfortunate turn of mind peculiar to his excellency, and, perhaps, to five or six more in a nation.

I do not deny it possible, that an original or profelyte favourite of the times might have been born to those useless talents, which, in former ages, qualified a man to be a poet, or a philosopher. All I contend for is, that, where the true genius of party once enters, it sweeps the house clean, and leaves room for many other spirits to take joint possession, until the last state of that man is exceedingly better than the first.

I allow it a great error in his excellency, that he adheres so obstinately to his old unfashionable academic education; yet so perverse is human nature, that the usual remedies for this evil in others have produced a contrary effect in him; to a degree, that, I am credibly informed, he will, as I have already hinted, in the middle of a session, quote passages out of Plato and Pindar, at his own table, to some book-learned companion, without blushing, even when persons of great stations are by.

I will
I will venture one step further; which is, freely to confess, that this mistaken method of educating youth in the knowledge of ancient learning and language is too apt to spoil their politics and principles; because the doctrine and examples of the books they read, teach them lessons directly contrary, in every point, to the present practice of the world: and accordingly Hobbes most judiciously observes, that the writings of the Greeks and Romans made young men imbibe opinions against absolute power in a prince, or even in a first minister; and to embrace notions of liberty and property.

It hath been therefore a great felicity in these kingdoms, that the heirs to titles and large estates have a weakness in their eyes, a tenderneff in their constitutions, are not able to bear the pain and indignity of whipping; and, as the mother rightly expresses it, could never take to their books, yet are well enough qualified to sign a receipt for half a year's rent, to put their names (rightly spelt) to a warrant, and to read pamphlets against religion and high-flying; whereby they fill their niches, and carry themselves through the world with that dignity, which best becomes a senator and a squire.

I could heartily wish his excellency would be more condescending to the genius of the kingdom he governs; to the condition of the times, and to the nature of the station he fills. Yet, if it be true, what I have read in old English story-books, that one Agesilaus (no matter to the bulk of my readers
readers whether I spell the name right or wrong) was caught, by the parson of the parish, riding on a hobby-horse with his children; that Socrates, a heathen philosopher, was found dancing by himself at fourscore; that a king, called Cæsar Augustus (or some such name) used to play with boys, whereof some might possibly be sons of tories; and that two great men, called Scipio and Laelius (I forget their christian names, and whether they were poets or generals) often played at duck and drake with smooth stones on a river. Now, I say, if these facts be true (and the book where I found them is in print), I cannot imagine, why our most zealous patriots may not a little indulge his excellency in an infirmity, which is not morally evil; provided he gives no public scandal; which is, by all means, to be avoided: I say, why he may not be indulged twice a week to converse with one or two particular persons; and let him and them conn over their old exploded readings together, after mornings spent in hearing and prescribing ways and means from and to his most obedient politicians for the welfare of the kingdom; although the said particular person, or persons, may not have made so public a declaration of their political faith in all its parts, as the business of the nation requires: still submitting my opinion to that happy majority, which I am confident is always in the right; by whom the liberty of the subject hath been so frequently, so strenuously, and so successfully asserted; who, by their wife coun-
fels, have made *commerce* to *flourish*, *money* to abound, inhabitants to *encrease*, the value of lands and rents to *rise*, and the whole island put on a new face of *plenty* and *prosperity*.

But, in order to *clear* his excellency more fully from this accusation of *shewing* his *favours* to *high-flyers*, *tories*, and *jacobites*, it will be necessary to come to particulars.

The first person of a *tory* denomination, to whom his excellency gave any marks of his favour, was *doctor* Thomas Sheridan. It is to be observed, that this happened so early in his excellency's government, that it may be justly supposed he had not been informed of that gentleman's character upon so *dangerous* an article. The doctor being well known, and distinguished for his skill and success in the education of youth beyond most of his profession for many years past, was recommended to his excellency on the score of his learning, and particularly for his knowledge in the *Greek* tongue; whereof, it seems, his excellency is a great admirer, although for what reasons I could never imagine. However, it is agreed on all hands, that his lordship was too easily prevailed on by the doctor's request, or indeed rather from the bias of his own nature, to hear a tragedy acted in that unknown language by the doctor's lads, which was written by some heathen author; but whether it contained any *tory* or *high-church* principles, must be left to the consciences of the boys, the *doctor*, and
and his excellency; the only witnesses in this case, whose testimonies can be depended upon.

It seems, his excellency (a thing never to be sufficiently wondered at) was so pleased with his entertainment, that some time after he gave the doctor a church-living to the value of almost one hundred pounds a year, and made him one of his chaplains; from an antiquated notion, that good school-masters ought to be encouraged in every nation professing civility and religion. Yet his excellency did not venture to make this bold step without strong recommendations from persons of undoubted principles fitted to the times; who thought themselves bound, in justice, honour, and gratitude, to do the doctor a good office, in return for the care he had taken of their children, or of those of their friends. Yet the catastrophe was terrible; for the doctor, in the height of his felicity and gratitude (going down to take possession of his parish, and furnished with a few old sermons, whereof, as it is to be supposed, the number was very small, having never served a cure in the church), stopped at Cork to attend on his bishop; and going to church on the Sunday following, was, according to the usual civility of country clergymen, invited by the minister of the parish to supply the pulpit. It happened to be the first of August; and the first of August happened that year to light upon a Sunday; and it happened that the doctor's text was in these words; *Sufficient unto the day*
is the evil thereof [i] : and lastly, it happened that some one person of the congregation, whose loyalty made him watchful upon every appearance of danger to his majesty's person and government, when service was over, gave the alarm. Notice was immediately sent up to town; and, by the zeal of one man of no large dimensions of body or mind, such a clamour was raised, that we in Dublin could apprehend no less than an invasion by the pretender, who must be landed in the south. The result was, that the doctor must be struck out of the chaplain's list, and appear no more at the castle; yet whether he were then, or be at this day, a whig or a tory, I think is a secret; only it is manifest, that he is a zealous Hanoverian, at least in poetry, and a great admirer of the present royal family through all its branches. His friends likewise assert, that he had preached this sermon often under the same text; that, not having observed the words, till he was in the pulpit, and had opened his notes, as he is a person a little abstracted, he wanted presence of mind to change them: and that, in the whole sermon, there was not a syllable relating to government or party, or to the subject of the day.

In this incident, there seems to have been an union of events, that will probably never happen again to the end of the world; or is, at least,

[i] The first of August is the anniversary of the Hanoverian family's accession to the crown of Great-Britain.
like the grand conjunction in the heavens; which, I think, they say, can arrive but once in twenty thousand years.

The second gentleman (if I am right in my chronology) who, under the suspicion of a tory, received some favour from his excellency, is Mr. James Stopford; very strongly recommended by the most eminent whig in England on the account of his learning, and virtue, and other accomplishments. He had passed the greatest part of his youth in close study, or in travelling: and was either not at home, or not at leisure to trouble his thoughts about party; which I allow to be a great omission, although I cannot honestly place him in the list of tories: and therefore think his excellency may be fairly acquitted for making him vicar of Finglas, worth about one hundred pounds a year.

The third is doctor Patrick Delany. This divine lies under some disadvantage; having, in his youth, received many civilities from a certain person, then in a very high station here; for which reason, I doubt, the doctor never drank his confusion since, and, what makes the matter desperate, it is now too late; unless our inquisitors will be content with drinking confusion to his memory. The aforesaid eminent person, who was a judge of all merit, except that of party, distinguished the doctor among other juniors in our university for his learn-
ing, virtue, discretion, and good sense. But the doctor was then in too good a situation at his college to hope or endeavour at a better establishment from one, who had no power to give it him.

Upon the present lord lieutenant's coming over, the doctor was named to his excellency by a friend among other clergy of distinction, as persons whose characters it was proper his excellency should know; and by the truth of which the giver would be content to stand or fall in his excellency's opinion; since not one of those persons were in particular friendship with the gentleman who gave in their names. By this, and some other incidents, particularly the recommendation of the late archbishop of Dublin, the doctor became known to his excellency, whose fatal turn of mind towards heathenish and outlandish books and languages, finding, as I conceive, a like disposition in the doctor, was the cause of his becoming so domestic, as we are told he is, at the castle of Dublin.

Three or four years ago the doctor, grown weary of an academic life, for some reason best known to the managers of the discipline in that learned society (which it may not be for their honour to mention), resolved to leave it; although, by the benefit of the pupils, and his senior fellowship, with all its perquisites, he received every year between nine hundred and a thousand pounds. And a small northern living, in the university's

[?] The author,
A VINDICATION OF
donation, of somewhat better than one hundred pounds a year, falling at the same time with the chancellorship of Christ-Church, to about equal the value, in the gift of his excellency; the doctor ventured into the world in a very scanty condition; having squandered away all his annual income in a manner, which, although perhaps proper enough for a clergyman without a family, will not be for the advantage of his character to discover either on the exchange, or at a banker's shop.

About two months ago, his excellency gave the doctor a prebend in St. Patrick's cathedral; which, being of near the same value with either of the two former, will add a third part to his revenues, after he shall have paid the great incumbrances upon it: so that he may now be said to possess of church preferments in scattered tithes three hundred pounds a year; instead of the like sum of infallible rents from a senior fellowship, with the offices annexed; beside the advantage of a free lodging, a great number of pupils, and some other easements.

But since the doctor hath not, in any of his writings, his sermons, his actions, his discourse, or his company, discovered one single principle of either whig or tory; and that the lord lieutenant still continues to admit him; I shall boldly pronounce him ONE OF US: but like a new free-mason, who hath not yet learned all the dialect of the mystery. Neither can he justly be accused of any tory doctrines; except perhaps some among those
those few, with which that wicked party was charged during the height of their power, but have been since transferred, for the most solid reasons, to the whole body of our firmest friends.

I have now done with the clergy: and, upon the strictest examination, have not been able to find above one of that order, against whom any party suspicion can lie; I mean the unfortunate gentleman doctor Sheridan, who, by mere chance-medley, shot his own fortune dead with a single text.

As to the laity, I can hear of but one person of the tory stamp, who, since the beginning of his excellency's government, did ever receive any solid mark of his favour: I mean Sir Arthur Acheson, reported to be an acknowledged tory; and, what is almost as bad, a scholar into the bargain. It is whispered about, as a certain truth, that this gentleman is to have a grant of a certain barrack [m] upon his estate within two miles of his own house; for which the crown is to be his tenant, at the rent of sixty pounds per annum; he being only at the expense of about five hundred pounds to put the house in repair, build stables, and other necessaries, I will place this invidious mark of beneficence conferred on a tory in a fair light, by computing the costs and necessary defalcations: after which it may be seen how much Sir Arthur will be annually a clear gainer by the public; notwithstanding his unfortunate principles, and his knowledge in Greek and Latin.

[m] See a poem upon this incident, called Hamilton's Bacon, vol. vii.
For repairs, etc. 5½ col. the interest whereof per ann. 30 " 0
For all manner of poultry to furnish the troopers, but which the said troopers must be at the labour of catching, valued per ann. 5 " 0
For straggling sheep 8 " 0
For game destroyed five miles round 6 " 0

Rent paid to Sir Arthur 60 " 0
Deduct 49 " 0

Remains clear 11 " 0

Thus, if Sir Arthur Acheson shall have the good fortune to obtain a grant of this barrack, he will receive net profit annually from the crown eleven pounds sterling, to help him in entertaining the officers, and making provisions for his younger children.

It is true, there is another advantage to be expected, which may fully compensate the loss of cattle and poultry; by multiplying the breed of mankind, and particularly that of good protestants, in a part of the kingdom half depopulated by the wild humour among the farmers there of leaving their country. But I am not so skilful in arithmetic, as to compute the value.

I have
I have reckoned one per cent. below the legal interest for the money that Sir Arthur must expend; and valued the damage in the other articles very moderately. However, I am confident he may, with good management, be a favor at least; which is a prodigious instance of moderation in our friends towards a professed tory; whatever merit he may pretend by the unwillingness he hath shewn to make his excellency uneasy in his administration.

Thus I have, with the utmost impartiality, collected every single favour (further than personal civilities) conferred by his excellency on tories, and reputed tories, since his first arrival hither to this 30th day of April, in the year of our Lord 1730, giving all allowance possible to the arguments on the other side of the question: and the account will stand thus:

Disposed of preferments and employments to tories, or reputed tories, by his excellency John lord Carteret, lord lieutenant of Ireland, in about the space of six years,

To doctor Thomas Sheridan, in a rectory near Kinsale, per ann. 
100 0 0

To Sir Arthur Acheson, baronet, a barrack, per ann. 
11 0 0

S 3
It is to be remembered, that, although his excellency cannot be properly said to bestow bishopricks, commands in the army, the place of a judge, or commissioner in the revenue, and some others; yet they are for the most part disposed upon his recommendation, except where the persons are immediately sent from England by their interest at court; for which I have allowed great defalcations in the following accounts. And it is remarkable, that the only considerable station conferred on a tory since his present excellency's government was of this latter kind.

And indeed it is but too notorious, that, in a neighbouring nation (where this dangerous denomination of men is incomparably more numerous, more powerful, and of consequence more formidable) real tories can often, with much less difficulty, obtain very high favours from the government, than their reputed brethren can arrive to the lowest in ours. I observe this, with all possible submission to the wisdom of their policy; which however will not, I believe, dispute the praise of vigilance with ours.

**W H I G Account.**

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<td>To persons promoted to bishopricks, or removed to more beneficial ones,</td>
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<td>27,516 0 0</td>
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**TORY**
To TORY Account.

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I shall conclude with this observation, that, as I think the tories have sufficient reason to be fully satisfied with the share of trust, power, and employments, which they possess under the lenity of the present government; so, I do not find how his excellency can be justly censured for favouring none but high-church, high-flyers, termagants, laudiats, facheverellians, tip-top-gallant-men, jacobites, tantivyys, anti-hanoverians, friends to popery and the pretender, and to arbitrary power, disobligers of England, breakers of dependency, inflamers of quarrels between the two nations, public incendiaries, enemies to the king and kingdoms, haters of true protestants, laurel-men, annifs, complainers of the nation's poverty, ormondiains, iconoclasts, anti-glorious-memorists, anti-revolutioners, white-rosalists, tenth-a-junians, and the like, when, by a fair state of the account, the balance, I conceive, seems to lie on the other side.
CONSIDERATIONS
UPON TWO
BILLS

Sent down from the Right Honourable the House of Lords to the Honourable the House of Commons in Ireland, relating to the Clergy.

Written in the Year 1731.

I HAVE often, for above a month past, desired some few clergymen, who are pleased to visit me, that they would procure an extract of two bills brought into the council by some of the bishops, and both of them since passed in the house of lords: but I could never obtain what I desired, whether by the forgetfulness or negligence of those whom I employed, or the difficulty of the thing itself. Therefore, if I shall happen to mistake in any fact of consequence, I desire my remarks upon it may pass for nothing; for my information is no better, than what I received in words from several divines, who seemed to agree with each other. I have not the honour to be acquainted with any one single prelate of the kingdom; and am a stranger to their characters, further
CONSIDERATIONS, etc. 265

ger than as common fame reports them, which is not to be depended on: therefore I cannot be supposed to act upon a principle of resentment. I esteem their functions (if I may be allowed to say so without offence) as truly apostolical, absolutely necessary to the perfection of a christian church.

There are no qualities more incident to the frailty and corruptions of human kind, than an indifference or insensibility for other men's sufferings, and a sudden forgetfulness of their own former humble state, when they rise in the world. These two dispositions have not, I think, any where so strongly exerted themselves, as in the order of bishops with regard to the inferior clergy; for which I can find no reasons, but such as naturally should seem to operate a quite contrary way.

The maintenance of the clergy throughout the kingdom is precarious and uncertain, collected from a most miserable race of beggarly farmers; at whose mercy every minister lies to be defrauded. His office as rector, or vicar, if it be duly executed, is very laborious. As soon as he is promoted to a bishoprick, the scene is entirely and happily changed; his revenues are large, and as surely paid as those of the king; his whole business is once a year to receive the attendance, the submission, and the proxy-money of all his clergy, in whatever part of the diocese he shall please to think most convenient for himself. Neither is his personal presence necessary, for the business may be done
done by a vicar-general. The fatigue of ordination is just what the bishops please to make it; and, as matters have been for some time, and may probably remain, the fewer ordinations the better. The rest of their visible office consists in the honour of attending parliaments and councils, and bestowing preferments in their own gift; in which last employment, and in their spiritual and temporal courts, the labour falls to their vice-general, secretaries, proctors, apparitors, seneschals, and the like. Now, I say, in so quick a change, whereby their brethren, in a few days, are become their subjects, it would be reasonable at least to hope that the labour, confinement, and subjection, from which they have so lately escaped, like a bird out of the snare of the fowler, might a little incline them to remember the condition of those who were but last week their equals, probably their companions or their friends, and possibly as reasonable expectants. There is a known story of colonel Tidcomb, who, while he continued a subaltern officer, was every day complaining against the pride, oppression, and hard treatment of colonels towards their officers; yet, in a very few minutes after he had received his commission for a regiment, walking with a friend on the mall, he confessed that the spirit of colonel-ship was coming fast upon him, which spirit is said to have daily increased to the hour of his death.

It is true, the clergy of this kingdom, who are promoted to bishopricks, have always some great advan-
advantages; either that of rich deanries, opulent and multiplied rectories and dignities, strong alliances by birth or marriage, fortified by a superlative degree of zeal and loyalty: but however, they were all at first no more than young beginners; and, before their great promotion, were known by their plain christian names among their old companions, the middling rate of clergymen; nor could therefore be strangers to their condition, or with any good grace forget it so soon, as it hath too often happened.

I confess, I do not remember to have observed any body of men acting with so little concert, as our clergy have done in a point, where their opinions appeared to be unanimous: a point wherein their whole temporal support was concerned, as well as their power of serving God and his church in their spiritual functions. This hath been imputed to their fear of disobliging, or hopes of further favours upon compliance; because it was observed, that some, who appeared at first with the greatest zeal, thought fit suddenly to absent themselves from the usual meetings: yet we know, what expert solicitors the quakers, the dissenters, and even the papists have sometimes found to drive a point of advantage, or prevent an impending evil.

I have not seen any extract from the two bills introduced, by the bishops, into the privy council; where the clergy, upon some failure in fav
CONSIDERATIONS UPON

The particulars, as they have been imperfectly reported to me, are as follow:

By one of the bills, the bishops have power to oblige the country clergy to build a mansion-house upon whatever part of their glebes their lordships shall command; and, if the living be above 50l. a year, the minister is bound to build, after three years, a house that shall cost one year and a half's rent of his income. For instance, if a clergyman, with a wife and seven children, gets a living of 55l. per annum, he must, after three years, build a house that shall cost 77l. 10s. and must support his family, during the time the bishop shall appoint for the building of it, with the remainder. But, if the living be under 50l. a year, the minister shall be allowed 100l. out of the first fruits.

But there is said to be one circumstance a little extraordinary; that, if there be a single spot in the glebe more barren, more marshy, more exposed to the winds, more distant from the church or skeleton of a church, or from any convenience of building, the rector or vicar may be obliged, by the caprice or pique of the bishop, to build, under
pain of sequestration (an office, which ever falls into the most knavish hands), upon whatever point his lordship shall command; although the farmers have not paid one quarter of his dues.

I believe, under the present distresses of the kingdom (which inevitably without a miracle must increase for ever) there are not ten country clergymen in Ireland, reputed to possess a parish of 100l. per annum, who, for some years past, have actually received 60l. and that with the utmost difficulty and vexation. I am therefore at a loss, what kind of valuators the bishops will make use of; and whether the starving vicar will be forced to build his house with the money he never received.

The other bill, which passed in two days after the former, is said to concern the division of parishes into as many parcels as the bishop shall think fit, only leaving 300l. a year to the mother church; which 300l. by another act passed some years ago, they can divide likewise, and crumble as low as their will and pleasure will dispose them. So, that instead of six hundred clergymen, which, I think, is the usual computation, we may have, in a small compass of years, almost as many thousands, to live with decency and comfort, provide for their children, be charitable to the poor, and maintain hospitality.

But it is very reasonable to hope, and heartily to be wished by all those, who have the least regard to our holy religion as hitherto established, or
to a learned, pious, diligent, conversable clergyman, or even to common humanity, that the honourable house of commons will, in their great wisdom, justice, and tenderness to innocent men, consider these bills in another light. It is said, they well know this kingdom not to be so overstocked with neighbouring gentry, but a discreet learned clergyman, with a competency fit for one of his education, may be an entertaining, an useful, and sometimes a necessary companion. That, although such a clergyman may not be able constantly to find beef and wine for his own family, yet he may be allowed sometimes to afford both to a neighbour without distressing himself; and the rather, because he may expect at least as good a return. It will probably be considered, that in many defolate parts there may not be always a sufficient number of persons considerable enough to be trusted with commissions of the peace, which several of the clergy now supply much better, than a little, hedge, contemptible, illiterate vicar from twenty to fifty pounds a year, the son of a weaver, pedlar, taylor, or miller, can be presumed to do.

The landlords and farmers, by this scheme, can find no profit, but will certainly be losers. For instance, if the large northern livings be split into a dozen parishes or more, it will be very necessary for the little thread-bare gownman, with his wife, his proctor, and every child who can crawl, to watch the fields at harvest time for fear of losing a single sheaf, which he could not afford under
under peril of a day's starving: for, according to the Scotch proverb, a hungry louse bites sore. This would of necessity breed an infinite number of wrangles and litigious suits in the spiritual courts; and put the wretched pastor at perpetual variance with his whole parish. But, as they have hitherto stood, a clergyman established in a competent living is not under the necessity of being so sharp, vigilant, and exacting. On the contrary, it is well known and allowed, that the clergy round the kingdom think themselves well treated, if they lose only one single third of their legal demands.

The honourable house may, perhaps, be inclined to conceive, that my lords the bishops enjoy as ample a power, both spiritual and temporal, as will fully suffice to answer every branch of their office; that they want no laws to regulate the conduct of those clergy, over whom they preside; that, if non-residence be a grievance, it is the patron's fault, who makes not a better choice, or caused the plurality. That, if the general impartial character of persons chosen into the church had been more regarded, and the motive of party, alliance, kindred, flatterers, ill-judgment, or personal favour regarded less, there would be fewer complaints of non-residence, want of care, blameable behaviour, or any other part of misconduct; not to mention ignorance and stupidity.

I could name certain gentlemen of the gown, whose awkward, spruce, prim, sneering, and smirk ing countenances, the very tone of their voices,
and an ungainly strut in their walk, without one single talent for any one office, have contrived to get good preferment by the mere force of flattery and cringing: for which two virtues (the only two virtues they pretend to) they were, however, utterly unqualified: and whom, if I were in power, although they were my nephews, or had married my nieces, I could never, in point of good conscience or honour, have recommended to a curacy in Connaught.

The honourable house of commons may likewise perhaps consider, that the gentry of this kingdom differ from all others upon earth, being less capable of employments in their own country, than any others who come from abroad; and, that most of them have little expectation of providing for their younger children otherwise than by the church, in which there might be some hopes of getting a tolerable maintenance. For after the patrons should have settled their sons, their nephews, their nieces, their dependents and their followers invited over from the other side, there would still remain an overplus of smaller church-preferments to be given to such clergy of the nation, who shall have their quantum of whatever merit may be then in fashion. But by these bills they will be all as absolutely excluded, as if they had passed under the denomination of tories; unless they can be contented at the utmost with 50l. a year; which, by the difficulties of collecting tythes in Ireland,
Ireland, and the daily increasing miseries of the people, will hardly rise to half that sum.

It is observed, that the *divines* sent over hither to govern this church, have not seemed to consider the difference between both kingdoms with respect to the inferior *clergy*. As to themselves indeed, they find a large revenue in lands let at one quarter value, which, consequently, must be paid while there is a penny left among us; and the public distress so little affects their interests, that their fines are now higher than ever: they content themselves to suppose, that whatever a parish is said to be worth, comes all into the *parson's* pocket.

The poverty of great numbers among the clergy of England hath been the continual complaint of all men, who wish well to the church, and many schemes have been thought on to redress it; yet an *English vicar*, of 40l. a year, lives much more comfortably than one of double the value in Ireland. His farmers, generally speaking, are able and willing to pay him his full dues: he hath a decent church of ancient standing, filled every *Lord's-day* with a large congregation of plain people, well clad, and behaving themselves as if they believed in *God* and *Christ*. He hath a house and barn in repair, a field or two to graze his cows, with a garden and orchard. No guest expects more from him than a pot of ale: he lives like an honest plain farmer, as his wife is dressed but little better than *goody*. He is sometimes gra-

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considerably invited by the 'squire, where he sits at an humble distance: if he gets the love of his people, they often make him little useful presents: he is happy by being born to no higher expectation; for he is usually the son of some ordinary tradesmen, or middling farmer. His learning is much of a size with his birth and education; no more of either, than what a poor hungry servant can be expected to bring with him from his college. It would be tedious to shew the reverse of all this in our distant poorer parishes through most parts of Ireland, wherein every reader may make the comparison.

Lastly, The honourable house of commons may consider, whether the scheme of multiplying beggarly clergymen through the whole kingdom, who must all have votes for choosing parliament men (provided they can prove their freeholds to be worth 40s. per annum, ultra reprisas), may not, by their numbers, have great influence upon elections: being entirely under the dependence of their bishops. For, by a moderate computation, after all the divisions and subdivisions of parishes, that my lords and bishops have power to make by their new laws, there will, as soon as the present set of clergy goes off, be raised an army of ecclesiastical militants able enough for any kind of service, except that of the altar.

I am indeed in some concern about a fund for building a thousand or two churches, wherein these probationers may read their wall lectures; and begin
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begin to doubt they must be contented with barns; which barns will be one great advancing step towards an accommodation with our true protestant brethren, the dissenters.

The scheme of encouraging clergymen to build houses, by dividing a living of 50cl. a year into ten parts, is a contrivance, the meaning whereof hath got on the wrong side of my comprehension; unless it may be argued, that bishops build no houses, because they are so rich; and therefore the inferior clergy will certainly build, if you reduce them to beggary. But I knew a very rich man of quality in England, who could never be persuaded to keep a servant out of livery; because servants would be expensive, and apt, in time, to look like gentlemen; whereas the others were ready to submit to the basest offices, and, at a cheaper pennyworth, might increase his retinue.

I hear it is the opinion of many wise men, that, before these bills pass both houses, they should be sent back to England with the following clauses inserted.

First, That whereas there may be about a dozen double bishopricks in Ireland, those bishopricks should be split and given to different persons; and those of a single denomination be also divided into two, three, or four parts, as occasion shall require; otherwise there may be a question started, whether twenty-two prelates can effectually extend their paternal care, and unlimited power, for the protection and correction of so great a number of
CONSIDERATIONS UPON spiritual subjects. But this proposal will meet with such furious objections, that I shall not insist upon it: for I well remember to have read, what a terrible fright the frogs were in, upon a report, that the sun was going to marry.

Another clause should be, that none of these twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty pounders may be suffered to marry, under the penalty of immediate deprivation; their marriages declared null, and their children bastards: for some desponding people take the kingdom to be in no condition of encouraging so numerous a breed of beggars.

A third clause will be necessary; that these humble gentry should be absolutely disqualified for giving votes in elections for parliament men.

Others add a fourth; which is a clause of indulgence, that these reduced divines may be permitted to follow any lawful ways of living, which will not call them too often or too far from their spiritual offices (for, unless I misapprehend, they are supposed to have episcopal ordination). For example; they may be lappers of linen, bailiffs of the manor; they may let blood, or apply plasters, for three miles round: they may get a dispensation to hold the clerkship and sextonship of their own parish in commendam. Their wives and daughters may make shirts for the neighbourhood; or, if a barrack be near, for the soldiers: in linen countries, they may card and spin, and keep a few looms in the house: they may let lodgings, and sell a pot of ale without doors, but not at home, unless
to sober company, and at regular hours. It is by some thought a little hard, that, in an affair of the last consequence to the very being of the clergy, in the points of liberty and property, as well as in their abilities to perform their duty, this whole reverend body, who are the established instructors of the nation in Christianity and moral virtues, and are the only persons concerned, should be the sole persons not consulted. Let any scholar shew the like precedent, in Christendom, for twelve hundred years past. An act of parliament for setting or selling an estate in a private family is never passed, until all parties give consent. But in the present case the whole body of the clergy is, as themselves apprehend, determined to utter ruin, without once expecting or asking their opinion; and this by a scheme contrived only by one part of the convocation, while the other part, which hath been chosen in the usual forms, wants only the regal permission to assemble, and consult about the affairs of the church, as their predecessors have always done in former ages: where it is presumed, the lower house hath a power of proposing canons and a negative voice, as well as the upper. And God forbid (say these objectors) that there should be a real separate interest between the bishops and clergy, any more than there is between a man and his wife, a king and his people, or Christ and his church.

It seems there is a provision in the bill, that no parish shall be cut into scraps without the consent
of several persons, who can be no sufferers in the matter; but I cannot find that the clergy lay much weight on this caution; because they argue, that the very persons from whom these bills took their rise, will have the greatest share in the decision.

I do not, by any means, conceive the crying sin of the clergy, in this kingdom, to be that of non-residence. I am sure, it is many degrees less so here than in England; unless the possession of pluralities may pass under that name; and, if this be a fault, it is well known to whom it must be imputed: I believe, upon a fair enquiry (and I hear an enquiry is to be made), they will appear to be most pardonably few; especially, considering how many parishes have not an inch of glebe, and how difficult it is, upon any reasonable terms, to find a place of habitation. And therefore, God knows whether my lords the bishops will be soon able to convince the clergy, or those who have any regard for that venerable body, that the chief motive in their lordships minds by procuring these bills was to prevent the sin of non-residence; while the universal opinion of almost every clergyman in the kingdom, without distinction of party, taking in even those who are not likely to be sufferers, stands directly against them.

If some livings in the north may be justly thought too large a compass of land, which makes it inconvenient for the remotest inhabitants to attend the service of the church, which, in some instances,
instances, may be true, no reasonable clergyman would oppose a proper remedy by particular acts of parliament.

Thus, for instance, the deanry of Down, a country deanry, I think, without a cathedral, depending wholly upon an union of parishes joined together in a time when the land lay waste and thinly inhabited, since those circumstances are so prodigiously changed for the better, may properly be lessenened, leaving a decent competency to the dean, and placing rectories in the remaining churches, which are now served only by stipendiary curates.

The case may be, probably, the same in other parts: and such a proceeding discreetly managed would be truly for the good of the church.

For it is to be observed, that the dean and chapter lands, which, in England, were all seized under the fanatic usurpation, are things unknown in Ireland; having been long ravished from the church by a succession of confusions, and tithes applied in their stead to support that ecclesiastical dignity.

The late [n] archbishop of Dublin had a very different way of encouraging the clergy of his diocese to residence: when a lease had run out seven years or more, he stipulated with the tenant to resign up twenty or thirty acres to the minister of the parish where it lay convenient, without lessenening his former rent; and with no great abatement to the fine: and this he did in the parts near Dublin,

[n] The right reverend Dr, William King.
where land is at the highest rates, leaving a small chiefry for the minister to pay, hardly a sixth part of the value. I doubt not, that almost every bishop, in the kingdom, may do the same generous act, with less damage to their fees than his late grace of Dublin; much of whose lands were out in fee-farms or leases for lives; and I am sorry that the good example of such a prelate hath not been followed.

But a great majority of the clergy's friends cannot hitherto reconcile themselves to this project; which they call a levelling principle, that must inevitably root out the seeds of all honest emulation, the legal parent of the greatest virtues, and most generous actions among men; but which, in the general opinion (for I do not pretend to offer my own), will never more have room to exert itself in the breast of any clergyman, whom this kingdom shall produce.

But, whether the consequences of these bills may, by the virtues and frailties of future bishops sent over hither to rule the church, terminate in good or evil, I shall not presume to determine, since God can work the former out of the latter. However, one thing I can venture to assert; that, from the earliest ages of christianity to the minute I am now writing, there never was a precedent of such a proceeding; much less was it to be feared, hoped, or apprehended from such hands in any christian country: and so it may pass for more than a phoenix; because it hath risen without any assistance from the ashes of its fire.
The appearance of so many dissenters at the hearing of this cause is what, I am told, hath not been charged to the account of their prudence or moderation; because that action hath been censured as a mark of triumph and insult before the victory is complete: since neither of these bills hath yet passed the house of commons, and some are pleased to think it not impossible that they may be [o] rejected. Neither do I hear, that there is an enacting clause in either of the bills to apply any part of the divided or sub-divided tithes towards encreas[ing the stipends of the] sectaries. So that these gentlemen seem to be gratified like him, who, after having been kicked down stairs, took comfort, when he saw his friend kicked down after him.

I have heard many more objections against several particulars of both these bills; but they are of so high a nature, and carry such dreadful innuendoes, that I dare not mention them, resolving to give no offence, because I well know how obnoxious I have long been (although I conceive without any fault of my own) to the zeal and principles of those, who place all difference in opinion concerning public matters to the score of disaffection; whereof I am at least as innocent as the loudest of my detractors.

Dublin, February
24, 1731-2.

[o] They were rejected in the house of commons by a great majority.
A

PROPOSAL

FOR AN

ACT OF PARLIAMENT,

To pay off the Debt of the Nation without Taxing the Subject;

By which the Number of landed Gentry and substantial Farmers will be considerably increased, and no Person will be the poorer, or contribute one Farthing to the Charge [p].

Written in the Year 1732.

The debts contracted some years past for the service and safety of the nation are grown so great, that, under our present distressed condition, by the want of trade, the great remittances to pay absentees, regiments serving abroad, and many other drains of money well enough known and felt, the kingdom seems altogether unable to discharge them by the common methods of payment: and either a poll or land tax would be too odious to think of, especially the latter; because the

[p] The reader will perceive the following treatise to be altogether ironical.
lands, which have been let for these ten or dozen years past, were raised so high, that the owner can at present hardly receive any rent at all. For it is the usual practice of an Irish tenant, rather than want land, to offer more for a farm than he knows he can be ever able to pay; and in that case he grows desperate, and pays nothing at all. So that a land tax, upon a racked estate, would be a burthen wholly insupportable.

The question will then be, how these national debts can be paid: and how I can make good the several particulars of my proposal: which I shall now lay open to the public.

The revenues of their graces and lordships the archbishops and bishops of this kingdom (excluding the fines) do amount, by a moderate computation, to 36,800l. per annum. I mean the rents, which the bishops receive from their tenants. But the real value of those lands, at a full rent, taking the several fees one with another, is reckoned to be at least three fourths more; so that, multiplying 36,800l. by 4, the full rent of all the bishops lands will amount to 147,200l. per annum; from which subtracting the present rent received by their lordships, that is 36,800l, the profits of the lands received by the first and second tenants (who both have great bargains) will rise to the sum of 110,400l. per ann. which lands, if they were to be sold at twenty-two years purchase, would raise a sum of 2,428,800l. reserving to the bishops their present rents, only excluding fines.

Of
A PROPOSAL FOR PAYING

Of this sum I propose that out of the one half, which amounts to 1,214,400l. so much be applied, as will entirely discharge the debts of the nation; and the remainder be laid up in the treasury, to supply contingences, as well as to discharge some of our heavy taxes, until the kingdom shall be in a better condition.

But, whereas the present set of bishops would be great losers by this scheme for want of their fines; which would be hard treatment to such religious, loyal, and deserving personages; I have therefore set apart the other half to supply that defect, which it will more than sufficiently do.

A bishop's lease, for the full term, is reckoned to be worth eleven years purchase; but, if we take the bishops round, I suppose there may be four years of each lease elapsed; and many of the bishops being well stricken in years, I cannot think their lives round to be worth more than seven years purchase; so that the purchasers may very well afford fifteen years purchase for the reversion, especially by one great additional advantage, which I shall soon mention.

This sum of 2,428,800l. must likewise be sunk very considerably; because the lands are to be sold only at fifteen years purchase, and this lessens the sum to about 1,656,000l. of which I propose twelve hundred thousand pounds to be applied, partly for the payment of the national debt, and partly as a fund for future exigences; and the remainder 456,000l. I propose as a fund for paying the
the present sett of bishops their fines; which it will abundantly do, and a great part remain as an addition to the public stock.

Although the bishops round do not, in reality, receive three fines a-piece, which take up twenty-one years, yet I allow it to be so; but then I will suppose them to take but one year's rent, in recompense of giving them so large a term of life; and thus multiplying $36,800$ by $3$, the product will be only $110,400$. so that above three fourths will remain to be applied to public use.

If I have made wrong computations, I hope to be excused, as a stranger to the kingdom; which I never saw till I was called to an employment, and yet where I intend to pass the rest of my days; but I took care to get the best informations I could, and from the most proper persons; however, the mistakes I may have been guilty of will very little affect the main of my proposal; although they should cause a difference of one hundred thousand pounds more or less.

These fines are only to be paid to the bishop during his incumbency in the same fee: if he change it for a better, the purchasers of the vacant fee-lands are to come immediately into possession of the fee he hath left; and both the bishop who is removed, and he who comes into his place, are to have no more fines; for the removed bishop will find his account by a larger revenue; and the other fee will find candidates enough. For the law maxim will here have place: *caveat emptor*; I mean,
I mean, the persons who succeed may choose whether they will accept or no.

As to the purchasers, they will, probably be tenants to the see, who are already in possession, and can afford to give more than any other bidder.

I will further explain myself. If a person already a bishop be removed into a richer see, he must be content with the bare revenues without any fines; and so must he who comes into a bishoprick vacant by death: and this will bring the matter sooner to bear; which, if the crown shall think fit to countenance, will soon change the present sett of bishops; and consequently encourage purchasers of their lands. For example: if a primate should die, and the gradation be wisely made, almost the whole sett of bishops might be changed in a month, each to his great advantage, although no fines were to be got; and thereby save a great part of that sum, which I have appropriated towards supplying the deficiency of fines.

I have valued the bishops lands two years purchase above the usual computed rate; because those lands will have a sanction from the king and council in England, and be confirmed by an act of parliament here: besides, it is well known, that higher prices are given every day for worse lands, at the remotest distances, and at rack-rents, which I take to be occasioned by want of trade: when there are few borrowers, and the little money in private hands lying dead, there is no
no other way to dispose of it, but in buying of land; which, consequently, makes the owners hold it so high.

Besides paying the nation's debts, the sale of these lands would have many other good effects upon the nation. It will considerably increase the number of gentry, where the bishops tenants are not able or willing to purchase; for the lands will afford an hundred gentlemen a good revenue to each: several persons from England will, probably, be glad to come over hither, and be the buyers, rather than give thirty years purchase at home under the loads of taxes for the public and the poor, as well as repairs; by which means much money may be brought among us; and, probably, some of the purchasers themselves may be content to live cheap in a worse country, rather than be at the charge of exchange and agencies; and, perhaps of non-solvencies in absence, if they let their lands too high.

This proposal will also multiply farmers, when the purchasers will have lands in their own power to give long and easy leases to industrious husbandmen.

I have allowed some bishopricks, of equal income, to be of more or less value to the purchaser, according as they are circumstance. For instance: the lands of the primacy and some other fees are let so low, that they hardly pay a fifth penny of the real value to the bishop, and there the fines are the greater. On the contrary, the fees
fees of *Meath* and *Clonfert* consisting, as I am told, much of tithes; those tithes are annually let to the tenants without any fines. So the fee of *Dublin* is said to have many fee-farms, which pay no fines; and some leaves for lives, which pay very little, and not so soon nor so duly.

I cannot but be confident, that their graces my lords the archbishops, and my lords the bishops, will heartily join this proposal, out of gratitude to his late and present majesty, the best of kings, who have bestowed on them such high and opulent stations; as well as in pity to this country, which is now become their own; whereby they will be instrumental towards paying the nation's debts without impoverishing themselves; enrich an hundred gentlemen, as well as free them from dependency; and thus remove that envy, which is apt to fall upon their graces and lordships from considerable persons, whose birth and fortunes rather qualify them to be lords of manors, than servile dependants upon churchmen however dignified or distinguished.

If I do not flatter myself, there could not be any law more popular than this. For the immediate tenants to bishops, being some of them persons of quality and good estates, and more of them grown up to be gentlemen by the profits of these very leaves under a succession of bishops, think it a disgrace to be subject both to rents and fines at the pleasure of their landlords. Then, the bulk of the tenants, especially the *dissenters*, who
are our true loyal protestant brethren, look upon it both as an unnatural and iniquitous thing, that bishops should be owners of land at all (wherein I beg to differ from them), being a point so contrary to the practice of the apostles, whose successors they are deemed to be; and who, although they were contented that land should be sold for the common use of the brethren, yet would not buy it themselves; but had it laid at their feet to be distributed to poor profelytes.

I will add one word more; that by such a wholesome law as the oppressions felt by under-tenants of church leases, which are now laid on the bishops, would entirely be prevented, by their graces and lordships consenting to have their lands sold for payment of the nation's debts; reserving only the present rent for their own plentiful and honourable support.

I beg leave to add one particular; that, when heads of a bill (as I find the style runs in this kingdom) shall be brought in for forming this proposal into a law, I should humbly offer, that there might be a power given to every bishop, except those who reside in Dublin, for applying one hundred acres of profitable land, that lies nearest his palace, as a demesne for the convenience of his family.

I know very well, that this scheme hath been much talked of for some time past, and is in the thoughts of many patriots; neither was it properly
mine, although I fell readily into it, when it was first communicated to me.

Although I am almost a perfect stranger in this kingdom; yet since I have accepted an employment here of some consequence as well as profit, I cannot but think myself in duty bound to consult the interest of people, among whom I have been so well received. And if I can be any way instrumental towards contributing to reduce this excellent proposal into a law (which being not in the least injurious to England will, I am confident, meet with no opposition from that side), my sincere endeavours to serve this church and kingdom will be well rewarded.
AN EXAMINATION

OF

Certain Abuses, Corruptions, and Enormities,
in the City of Dublin.

Written in the Year 1732.

NOTHING is held more commendable in all great cities, especially the metropolis of a kingdom, than what the French call the police: by which word is meant the government thereof, to prevent the many disorders occasioned by great numbers of people and carriages, especially through narrow streets. In this government, our famous city of Dublin is said to be very defective, and universally complained of. Many wholesome laws have been enacted to correct those abuses, but are ill executed; and many more are wanting; which, I hope, the united wisdom of the nation (whereof so many good effects have already appeared this session) will soon take into their profound consideration.

As I have been always watchful over the good of mine own country, and particularly for that of our renowned city, where (absit invidia) I had the honour to draw my first breath; I cannot have a minute's ease or patience to forbear enumerating some
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some of the greatest enormities, abuses, and cor-
rruptions spread almost through every part of Dublin; and proposing such remedies, as, I hope, the legislature will approve of.

The narrow compass, to which I have confined myself in this paper, will allow me only to touch the most important defects; and such as, I think, seem to require the most speedy redress.

And first; perhaps there was never known a wiser institution, than that of allowing certain persons of both sexes, in large and populous cities, to cry through the streets many necessaries of life: it would be endless to recount the conveniencies which our city enjoys by this useful invention; and particularly strangers forced hither by business, who reside here but a short time: for these, having usually but little money, and being wholly ignorant of the town, might, at an easy price, purchase a tolerable dinner, if the several cries would pronounce the names of the goods they have to sell in any tolerable language. And therefore, until our law-makers shall think it proper to interpose so far as to make those traders pronounce their words in such terms, that a plain christian hearer may comprehend what is cried, I would advise all new comers to look out at their garret windows, and there see whether the thing that is cried be tripe or flummery, buttermilk or cow-heels. For as things are now managed, how is it possible for an honest countryman just arrived to find out what is meant, for instance, by the following words,
words, with which his ears are constantly stunned twice a day, muggs, jugs, and porringers, up in the garret, and down in the cellar; I say, how is it possible for any stranger to understand, that this jargon is meant as an invitation to buy a farthing's worth of milk for his breakfast or supper, unless his curiosity draws him to the window, or until his landlady shall inform him? I produce this only as one instance among a hundred much worse, I mean, where the words make a sound wholly inarticulate, which give so much disturbance, and so little information.

The affirmation solemnly made in the cry of herrings is directly against all truth and probability; herrings alive, alive here; the very proverb will convince us of this; for what is more frequent in ordinary speech, than to say of some neighbour for whom the passing bell rings, that he is dead as a herring? And, pray, how is it possible, that a herring, which, as philosophers observe, cannot live longer than one minute, three seconds and a half out of water, should bear a voyage in open boats from Howth to Dublin, be tossed into twenty hands, and preserve its life in sieves for several hours? nay, we have witnesses ready to produce, that many thousands of these herrings, so impudently asserted to be alive, have been a day and a night upon dry land. But this is not the worst. What can we think of those impious wretches, who dare, in the face of the sun,
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fun, vouch the very same affirmative of their *sal-
mon*, and cry *salmon alive, alive*; whereas, if you
call the woman who cries it, she is not ashamed
to turn back her mantle, and shew you this indi-
vidual *salmon* cut into a dozen pieces. I have
given good advice to these infamous disgracers of
their sex and calling, without the least appearance
of remorse, and fully against the conviction of
their own consciences; I have mentioned this
grievance to several of our parish ministers; but
all in vain: so that it must continue, until the
government shall think fit to interpose.

There is another cry, which, from the strictest
observation I can make, appears to be very mo-
dern, and it is that of [p] *sweet hearts*; and is
plainly intended for a reflexion upon the female
sex; as if there were at present so great a dearth
of lovers, that the women, instead of receiving
presents from men, were now forced to offer mo-
ney to purchase *sweet hearts*. Neither am I sure,
that this cry doth not glance at some disaffection
against the government; insinuating, that, while
so many of our troops are engaged in foreign ser-
vice, and such a great number of our gallant of-
ficers constantly reside in England, the ladies were
forced to take up with *parsons* and *attornies*; but
this is a most unjust reflexion, as may soon be
proved by any person who frequents the *castle*, our
public walks, our balls and assemblies; where the

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crowds of [q] toupees were never known to swarm as they do at present.

There is a cry peculiar to this city, which I do not remember to have been used in London; or at least, not in the same terms that it hath been practised by both parties during each of their power, but very unjustly by the tories. While these were at the helm, they grew daily more and more impatient to put all true whigs, and Hanoverians out of employments: to effect which, they hired certain ordinary fellows, with large baskets on their shoulders, to call aloud at every house, Dirt to carry out; giving that denomination to our whole party; as if they would signify, that the kingdom could never be cleansed until we were swept from the earth like rubbish. But since that happy turn of times, when we were so miraculously preferved by just an inch from popery, slavery, massacre, and the pretender, I must own, it is prudence in us still to go on with the same cry; which hath ever since been so effectually observed, that the true political dirt is wholly removed, and thrown on its proper dunghills, there to corrupt and be no more heard of.

But to proceed to other enormities: every person, who walks the streets, must needs observe an immense number of human excrements at the doors and steps of waste houses, and at the sides of

[?] A new name for a modern periwig with a long black tail, and for it's owner; now in fashion, Dec. 1, 1733.
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every dead wall; for which the disaffected party hath assigned a very false and malicious cause: they would have it, that these heaps were laid there privately by British fundaments, to make the world believe, that our Irish vulgar do daily eat and drink; and consequently that the clamour of poverty among us must be false, proceeding only from Jacobites and papists. They would confirm this by pretending to observe, that a British anus being more narrowly perforated than one of our own country, and many of these excrements, upon a strict view, appearing couple-crowned with a point like a cone or pyramid, are easily distinguished from the Hibernian, which lie much flatter and with less continuity. I communicated this conjecture to an eminent physician, who is well versed in such profound speculations; and, at my request, was pleased to make trial with each of his fingers, by thrusting them into the anus of several persons of both nations, and professed he could find no such difference between them as those ill-disposed people allledge. On the contrary, he assured me, that much the greater number of narrow cavities were of Hibernian origin. This I only mention, to shew how ready the Jacobites are to lay hold of any handle to express their malice against the government. I had almost forgot to add, that my friend the physician could, by smelling each finger, distinguish the Hibernian excrement from the British, and was not above twice mistaken.
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mistaken in an hundred experiments; upon which he intends very soon to publish a learned dissertation.

There is a diversion in this city, which usually begins among the butchers; but is often continued by a succession of other people through many streets; it is called the cossing of a dog: and I may justly number it among our corruptions. The ceremony is thus: a strange dog happens to pass through a flesh-market; whereupon an expert butcher immediately cries, in a loud voice and the proper tone, Cofs, cofs, several times. The same word is repeated by the people. The dog, who perfectly understands the terms of art, and, consequently, the danger he is in, immediately flies. The people, and even his own brother animals, pursue: the pursuit and cry attend him perhaps half a mile; he is well worried in his flight; and sometimes hardly escapes. This our ill-wishers of the jacobite kind are pleased to call a persecution; and affirm, that it always falls upon dogs of the tory principles. But we can well defend ourselves by justly alleging, that, when they were uppermost, they treated our dogs full as inhumanely. As to my own part, who have, in former times, often attended these processions, although I can very well distinguish between a whig and tory dog, yet I never carried my resentment very far from a party principle, except it were against certain malicious dogs, who most discovered their enmity against us in
in the worst of times [r]. And I remember too well, that in the wicked ministry of the earl of Oxford a large mastiff of our party, being unmercifully coXed, ran without thinking between my legs, as I was coming up Fishamble-street; and, as I am of low stature with very short legs, bore me riding backwards down the hill for above two hundred yards: and although I made use of his tail for a bridle, holding it fast with both my hands, and clung my legs as close to his sides as I could; yet we both came down together into the middle of the kennel; where, after rowling three or four times over each other, I got up with much ado amidst the shouts and huzzas of a thousand malicious jacobites. I cannot indeed but gratefully acknowledge, that for this and many other services and sufferings [s] I have been since more than overpaid.

This adventure may perhaps have put me out of love with the diversion of coXing, which I confess myself an enemy to, unless we could always be sure of distinguishing tory dogs; whereof great numbers have been seen so prudent, as entirely to change their principles, and are now justly esteemed the best worriers of their former friends.

I am assured, and partly know, that all the chimney-sweepers boys, where members of parliament chiefly lodge, are hired by our enemies, to

[r] A cant word used by the whigs for the four last years of queen Anne's reign, during the earl of Oxford's ministry.
[s] See the apology for the Tale of a Tub.
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feulk in the tops of chimneys with their heads no
higher than will just permit them to look round;
and at the usual hours when members are going to
the house, if they see a coach stand near the lodg-
ing of any loyal member, they call coach, coach, as
loud as they can bawl, just at the instant when
the footman begins to give the same call. And
this is chiefly done on those days, when any point
of importance is to be debated. This practice may
be of very dangerous consequence; for these boys
are all hired by enemies to the government:
and thus, by the absence of a few members for a
few minutes, a question may be carried against the
t r u e i n t e r e s t of the kingdom, and very probably not
without an eye towards the pretender.

I have not observed the wit and fancy of this
town so much employed in any one article, as that
of contriving variety of signs to hang over houses,
where punch is to be sold. The bowl is represent-
ed full of punch, the ladle stands erect in the mid-
dle, supported sometimes by one, and sometimes
by two animals, whose feet rest upon the edge of
the bowl. These animals are sometimes one black
lion, and sometimes a couple; sometimes a single
eagle, and sometimes a spread one; and we often
meet a crow, a swan, a bear, or a cock, in the same
posture.

Now, I cannot find how any of these animals,
either separate or in conjunction, are, properly
speaking, fit emblems or embellishments to ad-
vance the sale of punch. Besides, it is aged among
naturalists,
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naturalists, that no brute can endure the taste of strong liquor, except where he hath been used to it from his infancy; and, consequently, it is against all the rules of hieroglyph to assign those animals as patrons or protectors of punch. For in that case we ought to suppose, that the host keeps always ready the real bird or beast, whereof the picture hangs over his door, to entertain his guests; which however, to my knowledge, is not true in fact; not one of those birds being a proper companion for a Christian, as to aiding and assisting in making in punch. For as they are drawn upon the sign, they are much more likely to mute, or shed their feathers into the liquor. Then as to the bear, he is too terrible, awkward, and slovenly a companion to converse with; neither are any of them all handy enough to fill liquor to the company: I do therefore vehemently suspect a plot intended against the government by these devices. For although the spread-eagle be the arms of Germany, upon which account it may possibly be a lawful protestant sign, yet I, who am very suspicious of fair outsiders, in a matter which so nearly concerns our welfare, cannot but call to mind, that the pretender's wife is said to be of German birth: and that many popish princes, in so vast an extent of land, are reported to excel both at making and drinking punch: besides it is plain, that the spread-eagle exhibits to us the perfect figure of a cross; which is a badge of popery. Then as to the cock, he is well known to represent the French.
French nation, our old and dangerous enemy. The swan, who must of necessity cover the entire bowl with his wings, can be no other than the Spaniard, who endeavours to engross all the treasures of the Indies to himself. The lion is indeed the common emblem of royal power as well as the arms of England; but to paint him black is perfect jacobitism, and a manifest type of those who blacken the actions of the best princes. It is not easy to distinguish whether that other fowl painted over the punch-bowl be a crow or a raven. It is true, they have both been ominous birds; but I rather take it to be the former; because it is the disposition of a crow to pick out the eyes of other creatures; and often even of the christians, after they are dead; and is therefore drawn here with a design to put the jacobites in mind of their old practice, first to lull us asleep (which is an emblem of death) and then to blind our eyes, that we may not see their dangerous practices against the state.

To speak my private opinion; the least offensive picture, in the whole set, seems to be the bear; because he represents urfa major, or the great bear, who presides over the north, where the reformation first began; and which, next to Britain (including Scotland and the north of Ireland), is the great protector of the true protestant religion. But however in those signs, where I observe the bear to be chained, I cannot help surmising a jacobite contrivance; by which these traitors hint an earnest desire of using all true whigs, as their predecessors did
did the primitive christians: I mean, to represent us as bears, and then halloo their tory-dogs to bait us to death.

Thus I have given a fair account of what I dislike in all the signs set over those houses that invite us to punch. I own, it was a matter that did not need explaining, being so very obvious to common understanding; yet I know not how it happens, but methinks, there seems a fatal blindness to overspread our corporeal eyes, as well as our intellectual; and I heartily wish I may be found a false prophet. For these are not bare suspicions, but manifest demonstrations.

Therefore, away with these popish jacobites, and idolatrous gew-gaws. And I heartily wish a law were enacted, under severe penalties, against drinking punch at all; for nothing is easier than to prove it a disaffected liquor: the chief ingredients, which are brandy, oranges, and lemons, are all sent us from popish countries, and nothing remains of protestant growth, but sugar and water. For as to biscuit, which formerly was held a necessary ingredient, and is truly British, we find it entirely rejected.

But I will put the truth of my assertion past all doubt: I mean, that this liquor is, by one important innovation, grown of ill example, and dangerous consequence to the public. It is well known, that, by the true original institution of making punch left us by captain Ratcliff, the sharpness is only occasioned by the juice of lemons; and
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and so continued until after the happy revolution. Oranges, alas! are a mere innovation, and, in a manner, but of yesterday. It was the politics of jacobites to introduce them gradually; and to what intent? the thing speaks itself. It was cunningly to shew their virulence against his sacred majesty William of ever glorious and immortal memory. But of late (to shew how fast disloyalty increaseth) they came from one to two, and then to three oranges; nay, at present, we often find punch made all with oranges, and not one single lemon. For the jacobites before the death of that immortal prince had, by a superflition, formed a private prayer, that as they squeezed the orange, so might that protestant king be squeezed to death; according to the known sorcery described by Virgil;

Limus ut hic duerescit, et haec ut cera liqueascit, etc.

And thus the Romans, when they sacrificed an ox, used this kind of prayer; as I knock down this ox, so mayst thou, O Jupiter! knock down our enemies. In like manner after king William's death, whenever a jacobite squeezed an orange, he had a mental curse upon the glorious memory, and a hearty wish for power to squeeze all his majesty's friends to death, as he squeezed that orange, which bore one of his titles, as he was prince of Orange. This I do affirm for truth, many of that faction having confessed it to me, under an oath of secrecy, which, however, I thought it my duty not to keep, when I saw my dear country in danger. But
what better can be expected from an impious sect of men, who never scruple to drink confusion to all true protestants under the name of whigs? A most unchristian and inhuman practice! which, to our great honour and comfort, was never charged upon us, even by our most malicious detractors.

The sign of two angels hovering in the air, and with their right-hands supporting a crown, is met with in several parts of this city; and hath often given me great offence: for, whether by the unskilfulness, or dangerous principles of the painters (although I have good reasons to suspect the latter), those angels are usually drawn with such horrid, or indeed rather diabolical countenances, that they give great offence to every loyal eye, and equal cause of triumph to the jacobites, being a most infamous reflection upon our able and excellent ministry.

I now return to that great enormity of city cries; most of which have been borrowed from London. I shall consider them only in a political view, as they nearly affect the peace and safety of both kingdoms; and, having been originally contrived by wicked Machiavels, to bring in popery, slavery, and arbitrary power by defeating the protestant succession, and introducing the pretender, ought in justice to be here laid open to the world.

About two or three months after the happy revolution, all persons, who possessed any employment or office, in church or state, were obliged, by an act of parliament, to take the oaths to king William.
William and queen Mary: and a great number of disaffected persons refusing to take the said oaths, from a pretended scruple of conscience, but really from a spirit of popery and rebellion, they contrived a plot to make the swearing to those princes odious in the eyes of the people. To this end, they hired certain women, of ill fame, but loud shrill voices, under pretence of selling fish, to go through the streets with sieves on their heads, and cry, Buy my soul, buy my soul; plainly insinuating, that all those, who swore to king William, were just ready to sell their souls for an employment. This cry was revived at the death of queen Anne, and, I hear, still continues in London, with much offence to all true protestants; but, to our great happiness, seems to be almost dropt in Dublin.

But, because I altogether contemn the displeasure and resentment of high-flyers, tories, and jacobites, whom I look upon to be worse even than profess'd papists, I do here declare, that those evils which I am going to mention were all brought in upon us in the worst of times, under the late earl of Oxford's administration, during the four last years of queen Anne's reign. That wicked minister was universally known to be a papist in his heart. He [1] was of a most avaricious nature, and is said to have died worth four millions sterling, besides his vast expense in building, statues, plate, jewels, and other costly rarities. He was of a mean obscure birth, from

[1] The author's meaning is just contrary to the literal sense in the character of lord Oxf.r.d.
the very dregs of the people; and so illiterate, that the
could hardly read a paper at the council-table. I for-
bear to touch on his open, profane, profligate life;
because I desire not to rake into the ashes of the dead:
and therefore I shall observe this wise maxim; de
mortuis nil nisi bonum.

This flagitious man, in order to compass his
black designs, employed certain wicked instru-
ments (which great statesmen are never without)
to adapt several London cries in such a manner as
would best answer his ends. And, whereas it was
upon good grounds grievously suspected that all
places at court were sold to the highest bidder;
certain women were employed by his emissaries to
carry fish in baskets on their heads, and bawl
through the streets, Buy my fresh places. I must
indeed own that other women used the same cry,
who were innocent of this wicked design, and
really sold fish of that denomination to get an ho-
nest livelihood: but the rest, who were in the
secret, although they carried fish in their sieves, or
baskets, to save appearances, yet they had like-
wise a certain sign, somewhat resembling that of
the free-masons, which the purchasers of places
knew well enough, and were directed by the wo-
men, whither they were to resort and make their
purchase. And I remember very well how oddly
it looked, when we observed many gentlemen
finely drest about the court-end of the town, and
as far as York-buildings, where the lord-treasurer
Oxford dwelt, calling the women who cried Buy
my fresh places, and talking to them in the corner of a street, until they understood each other's sign. But we never could observe that any fish was bought.

Some years before the cries last mentioned, the duke of Savoy was reported to have made certain overtures to the court of England, for admitting his eldest daughter, to succeed to the crown, as next heir, upon the pretender's being rejected; and that his son was immediately to turn Protestant. It was confidently reported, that great numbers of people disaffected to the then illustrious, but now royal, house of Hanover were in those measures. Whereupon another set of women were hired, by the Jacobite leaders, to cry through the whole town, Buy my Savoys, dainty Savoys, curious Savoys. But I cannot directly charge the late earl of Oxford with this conspiracy, because he was not then chief minister. However, this wicked cry still continues in London, and was brought over hither, where it remains to this day; and is, in my humble opinion, a very offensive found to every true Protestant, who is old enough to remember those dangerous times.

During the ministry of that corrupt and Jacobite earl abovementioned, the secret pernicious design of those in power was to sell Flanders to France: the consequence of which must have been the infallible ruin of the States-General, and would have opened the way for France to obtain the universal monarchy, they have so long aimed at; to which the
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the British dominions must next after Holland have been compelled to submit, whereby the protestant religion would be rooted out of the world.

A design of this vast importance, after long consultation among the jacobite grandees with the earl of Oxford at their head, was at last determined to be carried on by the same method with the former: it was therefore again put in practice; but the conduct of it was chiefly left to chosen men, whose voices were louder and stronger than those of the other sex: and upon this occasion was first instituted in London that famous cry of frounders. But the criers were particularly directed to pronounce the word Flaunders, and not flounders. For the country, which we now by corruption call Flanders, is in its true orthography spelt Flaunders, as may be obvious to all who read old English books. I say, from hence begun that thundering cry, which hath ever since stunned the ears of all London, made so many children fall into fits, and women miscarry; *Come, buy my fresh flaunders, curious flaunders, charming flaunders, **alive, alive, ho; which last words can, with no propriety of speech, be applied to fish manifestly dead (as I observed before in herrings and salmon) but very justly to ten provinces containing many millions of living christians. But the application is still closer, when we consider that all the people were to be taken like fishes in a net; and, by assistance of the pope, who sets up to be the universal fisher of men, the whole innocent
cent nation was, according to our common expression, to be laid as flat as a flounder.

I remember, myself, a particular crier of flounders in London, who arrived at so much fame for the loudness of his voice, as to have the honour of being mentioned upon that account in a comedy. He hath disturbed me many a morning, before he came within fifty doors of my lodging: and although I were not in those days so fully apprized of the designs, which our common enemy had then in agitation, yet I know not how, by a secret impulse, young as I was, I could not forbear conceiving a strong dislike against the fellow; and often said to myself, This cry seems to be forged in the jesuits school: alas, poor England! I am grievously mistaken, if there be not some popish plot at the bottom. I communicated my thoughts to an intimate friend, who reproached me with being too visionary in my speculations; but it proved afterwards, that I conjectured right. And I have since reflected, that, if the wicked faction could have procured only a thousand men of as strong lungs as the fellow I mentioned, none can tell how terrible the consequences might have been, not only to these two kingdoms, but over all Europe, by selling Flanders to France. And yet these cries continue unpunished both in London and Dublin; although, I confess, not with equal vehemency or loudness; because the reason for contriving this desperate plot is, to our great felicity, wholly ceased.

X 3
It is well known, that the majority of the British house of commons, in the last years of queen Anne's reign, were in their hearts directly opposite to the earl of Oxford's pernicious measures; which put him under the necessity of bribing them with salaries. Whereupon he had again recourse to his old politicks. And accordingly his emissaries were very busy in employing certain artful women, of no good life and conversation (as it was proved before justice [u] Peyton) to cry that vegetable commonly called felleroy, through the town. These women differ from the common criers of that herb by some private mark, which I could never learn; but the matter was notorious enough, and sufficiently talked of; and about the same period was the cry of felleroy brought over into this kingdom. But since there is not, at this present, the least occasion to suspect the loyalty of our criers upon that article, I am content that it may still be tolerated.

I shall mention but one cry more, which hath any reference to politicks; but is indeed of all others the most insolent, as well as treasonable, under our present happy establishment, I mean that of turnups; not of turnips, according to the best orthography, but absolutely turnups. Although the cry be of an older date than some of the preceding enormities, for it began soon after the Revolution; yet was it never known to arrive at so great a height as during the earl of Oxford's power. Some people (whom I take to be

[u] A famous whig justice in those times. private
private enemies) are indeed as ready as myself, to profess their disapprobation of this cry, on pretence that it began by the contrivance of certain old procureurs, who kept houses of ill fame, where lewd women met to draw young men into vice. And this they pretend to prove by some words in the cry; because, after the crier had bawled out *Turnups, he, buy my dainty turnups,* he would sometimes add the two following verses,

*Turn up the mistress, and turn up the maid,*
*And turn up the daughter, and be not afraid.*

This, say some political sophists, plainly shews, that there can be nothing farther meant in so infamous a cry, than an invitation to lewdness; which, indeed, ought to be severely punished in all well-regulated governments; yet cannot be fairly interpreted as a crime of state. But, I hope, we are not so weak and blind to be deluded at this time of day with such poor evasions. I could, if it were proper, demonstrate the very time when those two verses were composed, and name the author, who was no other than the famous Mr. Swan, so well known for his talent at quibbling, and was as virulent a *jacobite* as any in England. Neither could he deny the fact, when he was taxed for it in my presence by Sir Henry Dutton-Colt, and Colonel Davenport, at the Smyrna coffee-house, on the 10th of June, 1701. Thus it appears to be a demonstration, that those verses were only a blind to conceal the most dangerous designs of the party; who, from the first years after
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after the happy Revolution, used a cant-way of talking in their clubs, after this manner: *we hope to see the cards shuffled once more, and another king turn up trump* : and, *when shall we meet over a dish of turnups?* The same term of art was used in their plots against the government, and in their treasonable letters written in cyphers, and deciphered by the famous Dr. Willes, as you may read in the trials of those times. This I thought fit to set forth at large, and in so clear a light; because the Scotch and French authors have given a very different account of the word turnup; but whether out of ignorance or partiality, I shall not decree; because I am sure the reader is convinced by my discovery. It is to be observed, that this cry was sung in a particular manner by fellows in disguise, to give notice where those traitors were to meet in order to concert their villainous designs.

I have no more to add upon this article, than an humble proposal, that those who cry this root at present in our streets of Dublin may be compelled, by the justices of the peace, to pronounce *turnip*, and not *turnup*; for, I am afraid, we have still too many snakes in our bosom, and it would be well if their cellars were sometimes searched, when the owners least expect it; for I am not out of fear, that *latet anguis in herba.*

Thus we are zealous in matters of small moment, while we neglect those of the highest importance. I have already made it manifest, that
all these cries were contrived in the worst of times, under the ministry of that desperate statesman Robert late earl of Oxford; and for that very reason ought to be rejected with horror, as begun in the reign of jacobites, and may well be numbered among the rags of popery and treason; or, if it be thought proper that these cries must continue, surely they ought to be only trusted in the hands of true protestants, who have given security to the government.

End of Vol. X.