

CLAREMONT,

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DUBLIN.

A

H I S T O R Y  
O F  
I R E L A N D.

FROM THE

EARLIEST PERIOD,

TO THE

PRESENT TIME.

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS,

ADDRESSED TO

WILLIAM HAMILTON, Esq.

By WILLIAM CRAWFORD, A. M.

One of the Chaplains of the FIRST TYRONE REGIMENT.

VOL. I.

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STRABANE:

Printed by JOHN BELLEW.

M.DCC.LXXXIII.

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To

*General the Earl of Charlemont.*

My LORD,

TO your kind Indulgence I owe the Gratification of being permitted to cast the following Letters on your Lordship's Protection. During the Course of the Subscription, they have been supported by some of the first Characters in the Kingdom; that the Design was not only patronised but considerably promoted by your Lordship, is a Circumstance highly flattering to the Author, and has been, in a particular Manner, conducive to his Interest.

To trace out and vindicate our national Rights is a principal Intention of the present Work. These, during the late glorious Struggle, have been aided by your Lordship with an affectionate, a persevering and animated Zeal, that has excited the Admiration of your Fellow-Citizens, and which they and their Posterity will ever feel with all the Warmth



of grateful Sensibility. It is one of the first and most anxious Wishes in the Heart of every Irishman, that you may long live to enjoy the exquisite Pleasure resulting from the Reflection that you have been a chief Instrument in emancipating your Country, to cherish by your Example and your Influence the noble Spirit which has regained her Freedom, to see her rising in Prosperity and in Consequence, from the Advantages she has obtained, and her Prospects enlarged by those Improvements necessary to perfect her Constitution.

THE Obligations which I owe your Lordship, and the personal Civilities, I had almost presumed to say, Marks of Friendship with which you have honored me I feel and will ever feel with conscious Pride. With the most perfect Respect, and with every Sentiment of Gratitude,

I have the Honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble

And most obedient Servant,

W. CRAWFORD.

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# P R E F A C E.

**T**HERE was scarcely an individual so absorbed by selfish views as not to participate of the spirit of national freedom with which the late fortunate concurrence of circumstances animated the people of this country. The hope that this admirable principle might in some measure be invigorated by tracing out to them the origin, the nature and the progress of our constitution, and the various encroachments which it has suffered by the unjust interference of the British legislature, was the motive which first induced me to engage in this undertaking. Though to ascertain and to vindicate our rights has been my chief object, as necessary to this design, and to render the work more generally acceptable, I have given a comprehensive view of the most important and interesting facts in the history of Ireland, from the earliest period to the present time. The immediate wishes of Irishmen have been gratified in the revolution which has terminated, most honourably for their country, the contest in which they have been engaged with their fellow subjects of Britain. This glorious event will not however, it is presumed, render the work here offered to the public unnecessary with respect to it's principal design. To the unprejudiced, it will justify the late exertions of the people in behalf of their privileges, will point out, that in regaining  
A 3 those



those rights which have been violated, the safety, the prosperity and the happiness of the nation were deeply interested, and shew the indispensable necessity of guarding them in future with a steady and an attentive eye.

IN the slight sketch which the reader will here find of the more remote period of our history, Sir James Ware, the collection relative to the affairs of Ireland published by Colonel Vallancey, Warner, the dissertations of the ingenious Mr. O'Connor, and, more particularly, the last work of Mr. O'Halloran, have been my authorities.

MATERIALS for what I have written of the period from the invasion of the English to the revolution are taken from Stanihurst, Ware, Cox, Sir John Davis's Historical Relations, Harris, Morrison, Sir George Carew's *Pacata Hibernia*, the *Disiderata Curiosa Hibernica*, Essex's Letters, Prynne, the Letters of Lord Strafford, Borlace, Castlehaven's *Clanricard's*, Ludlow's *Memoirs*, and Carte's *Life of the Duke of Ormond*. Through the whole of this part of the work I have been very much indebted to Doctor Leland, who, in his *History of Ireland*, has, with great industry, selected information from these authors, and from other sources to which I have not had access. This gentleman has besides, in a variety of respects, assisted me in my enquiries with a cheerfulness and liberality of sentiment which has laid me under particular obligations. From the revolution, the authors consulted are Harris's *Life of King William*, Dalrymple's *Memoirs*, Burnet, Boyer's *Life of Queen Anne*, Boulter's Letters, the addresses of Lucas to the free citizens of Dublin  
and



and the records of the lords and commons both of the Irish and the British parliament. The information derived from them and from the statutes at large was not confined to this period. Mr. O'Halloran was so kind as to give me a particular account of the causes and other circumstances attending the commotion of the white boys. I have had recourse to other lights besides these mentioned, especially those which relate to the privileges of the constitution.

NOTHING in the course of the narration will give so much pain to the benevolent reader as the series of inhuman treatment to which the natives were exposed from the rapacity of the English adventurers. The manner in which the reformation was conducted and subsequent hardships they endured on account of their religion, gave them still greater reason to complain. The light in which the designs, the actions and the distresses of the Roman Catholics, from the time of Queen Elizabeth, are here viewed, differs essentially from that in which they have been placed by the generality of Protestant historians. In the mind of the author, it is the fruit of conviction and of sentiment arising from facts which he does not hesitate to affirm are indubitably authentic. He trusts that in these days not more gloriously distinguished by efforts of patriotism than by the genuine spirit of toleration which has begun in this kingdom and is likely universally to prevail, he will, in this matter, be approved by his fellow Protestants. It would give him exquisite pleasure, if in doing justice to truth and to his own feelings he were to be instrumental in promoting the

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the interest of a set of men who, both in respect to their religious and civil rights, have, until of late, laboured under intolerable oppression.

BEING quite uncertain with respect to the success of these letters which could not be printed but at a considerable expence, prudence obliged me to endeavour to secure the sale of such a number of copies as would indemnify me. In speaking of the encouragement I have been honoured with so far exceeding my most sanguine expectations, I find myself quite at a loss to express my gratitude. Every individual of the annexed very numerous and respectable list, especially those who were so kind as to distribute my proposals and take in subscriptions, is entitled to my thanks. The returns of some of my friends were so remarkable as to call for my particular acknowledgements. Of this number are Lord Charlemont, Colonel James Stewart, Thomas Hamilton Esq; Colonel Pedder, Mr. Luke Teeling, the Rev. Mr. Christie and the Rev. Mr. Hamilton of Waterford. The names contained in their lists alone amount to nearly six hundred. It is impossible for me ever to forget the unremitting offices of kindness done me by Colonel Stewart. To acknowledge thus publicly my obligations to a gentleman so distinguished by his private and by his public virtues, is not more highly pleasing to my sense of gratitude than to my ambition.

IN proportion to the countenance with which this work has been hitherto favoured by the public, I am anxious for it's success. If it is received with approbation, I may flatter myself with the hope that it will not be quite unprofitable. With silent, but respectful

spectful solicitude I wait for the judgment of my countrymen. Should it be favourable, I shall be highly gratified, if it is against me, there is a source of satisfaction of which nothing can deprive me, a consciousness of the rectitude of my intentions.

Strabane,  
May 23, 1783.



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A

H I S T O R Y

O F

*I R E L A N D.*

L E T T E R I.

APRIL 29, 1782.

**A** CCEPT of the warm congratulations of one of the most affectionate of your friends. As an Irishman, you will now command from foreigners that respect which they have withheld from us for centuries. The God of Nature has distinguished our country with a variety of his choicest blessings: A fruitful soil, a happy temperature of climate, and advantages most favourable to extensive commerce. In the virtues of her inhabitants his kindness has been as eminently displayed. But the hand of power has deeply injured us in respect to a good which is one of the first constituents of human happiness. Our best inheritance, our dearest rights have been violated. You will rejoice in the favourable change which has lately taken place in our

VOL. I.

C

situation.

situation. The Genius of Liberty has dispersed the darkness that covered our political horizon, and opened to us the brightest prospect that can be presented to a free people.

IN the history of the world, numerous instances have occurred wherein the lives of multitudes of the human race have been the price of freedom. The heroic patriots of antiquity who sealed the cause of Liberty with their blood, purchased this inestimable blessing, not for themselves but their posterity. Irishmen amidst the blessings of peace are to obtain the glorious object of their wishes, and live to enjoy the reward of their virtues. Scarcely do the annals of any country present us with a concurrence of circumstances so favourable to Liberty as those which lately combined to rescue us from usurped domination and establish our constitutional rights. The people seized the fortunate moment. Animated by a glorious impulse, which the corruption of a degenerate age could not resist, they spoke aloud their injuries and determined to be free. Their united voice and that of their representatives commanded the attention of England; taught wisdom by dear-bought experience, she must relinquish her unrighteous claims upon Ireland; by pursuing a different conduct three millions of subjects were severed from her empire on the other side of the Atlantic. But I anticipate.

AT your desire, I have, for some time past, turned my attention to the History of Ireland with a view to give you a sketch of it in a series of letters. I shall now proceed to gratify you with relation to this important subject. Most willingly would I have



have undertaken it sooner, but my enquiries were retarded by a variety of avocations in which I am necessarily engaged. In the execution of this design, I will omit no facts the knowledge of which may contribute to your instruction. These however you are not to expect in detail. The limits of my plan will only permit me to lay them before you in a comprehensive point of view. But my great object will be to trace out, ascertain and vindicate our constitutional rights. With these every Irishman, whose situation will admit of it, should be perfectly acquainted. This will heighten them in his esteem, and be a security against future encroachments. Experience should teach us wisdom. A distinct knowledge of our privileges and of the particulars in which we have been injured, as a free and independent nation, will prompt us to watch with a jealous eye every effort of foreign power which may lead to an invasion of our rights. The period which relates to this most interesting subject begins with the invasion of Ireland by the English in the year of Christ; eleven hundred and sixty-six, and ends at the present time. But as you probably wish to know something of what happened prior to that period, I will carry you back to the landing of the Milesians, and give you a few outlines of the antiquities of our country.

THE origin and early transactions of every nation are involved in much obscurity. As the historian descends darkness gradually disappears. The light begins to dawn; it encreases until the facts which he relates are placed in the clearest point of view. With respect to the History of Ireland,

it is much to be regretted that materials are very deficient for a long series of years. The missionaries employed to convert the natives to Christianity in the fifth century, blinded by superstition, committed as profane all the monuments of druidical learning they met with to the flames. In this pious work the druids themselves, who received the doctrines of the gospel, assisted with enthusiastic zeal.

\* THE Danes invaded this country in the eighth century which they miserably harassed until their power was extinguished by the victory at Clontarf. Sunk in the grossest ignorance, they destroyed all the marks of literature they any where found with a savage undistinguishing ferocity. Nor, at a later period, were the English ashamed to imitate an example so disgraceful to a people that pretended to civilization and polished manners.

THESE invaders were not more hostile to the inhabitants than to the writings of the bards which animated their countrymen to vindicate their rights, and at the same time were monuments of their usurpation. With the same illiberal spirit, Edward the First destroyed the historical records of Scotland. Those of the Carthaginians were treated in the same manner by the conquerors of the world.

BUT all the historical records of Ireland were not destroyed. Some escaped the fury of their enemies and the devastations of time. In those of a remote antiquity, like the early accounts of every nation, truth is deeply involved in fable. They are mostly the composition of bards, who, agreeably to the genius of poetry, represent facts in the lively,  
but



but often deceitful colourings of imagination. The antiquities of Ireland have been disgraced by the very improper use made of these materials. Historians, even of our own times, by not separating the true, or at least the probable, from the productions of fancy, have induced a belief that the whole is a fiction.

IN the slight sketch I will give you of this part of the subject, I design to select those particulars, which, at least in respect to internal evidence, bear the strongest marks of authenticity. But, before we enter on the narrative, there are some things with which you may wish to be acquainted. The knowledge of them will enable you more clearly to understand what follows.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R II.

**U**PON the same principle that age in an individual commands respect, every nation in the world has been at pains to trace back its origin to a remote antiquity. Of this, among other examples, the contest upon that point betwixt the Scythians and Egyptians, recorded by Justin, is a celebrated instance. From this source of honor Ireland fairly claims, at least an adequate portion. The title of Lord of Ireland gave precedence to Henry the Fifth at the Council of Constance in preference to the Ambassador of France. Our records unanimously agree that the Irish derive their origin from the Phenicians, a colony of whom, they assert, landed

## 6 THE HISTORY

in Ireland a thousand years before the birth of Christ.

THERE are still remaining large pillars of rude stones placed erect, on the top of which there are fixed others in an inclined and horizontal position, resembling the altars raised by the Phenicians in honor of their God Belus. In several parts of the kingdom there are to be seen other monuments, and even to this day, certain customs are retained among the native Irish, which seem to point out pretty clearly our antient connection with this nation. The opinion of our annalists concerning this point is powerfully strengthened by Sir Isaac Newton, who informs us in his Chronology, that a nation of Iberians from the borders of the Euxine and Caspian Sea settled antiently in Spain; that the Phenicians, who first introduced arts and letters into Europe, had an early intercourse with the Iberian Spaniards, a colony of whom, by the name of Scots, settled in Ireland in the fourth age of the world. The period here mentioned co-incides remarkably with that assigned by our antiquarians to the arrival of the Milesians in this country.

To Ireland, Scotland was indebted for it's first inhabitants. Of the latter kingdom, Edward the First, as has been mentioned, destroyed the historical records. This shameful act of tyranny, which scarcely any remains of their antient literature survived, obliged the Scotch antiquaries to have recourse to the records of this country, which taught them to acknowledge it as their parent state. At an early period, Ireland, from the Iberian Scots, was called Scotia.



IN the eleventh century, the government of the Picts in Scotland was destroyed. The Picts a colony from us, were reunited to Ireland. Then it was that Scotland, formerly called Albania, first received the denomination of Scotia Minor, to distinguish it from which, this kingdom was called Scotia Major. King James the first, in one of his speeches to the parliament, boasts of the Scottish dynasty being derived from that of Ireland.

SOME have asserted that the use of letters was not known in Ireland until the times of Saint Patrick. This opinion is unsupported by any convincing evidence. The Irish is altogether different from the Roman alphabet, with respect to the powers, the number, and the structure of it's letters. It claims for it's origin the Celtæ, from whom, as we are told by Aristotle, the Greeks borrowed their alphabet. Doctor Raymond, our celebrated antiquarian, asserts, that it is exactly the same with the antient Celtic. He has given a specimen of the Lord's Prayer in both, where even a superficial observer must perceive a striking similarity. The same thing may be said of the specimens of the Phenician, which is a dialect of the Celtic, and the antient Irish language published by Lieut. Col. Charles Vallancey, to whose distinguished knowlege of our native tongue, and laborious researches into the antiquities of this country, the curious in such matters are so much indebted. Sir William Temple says, that the Celtic dialect used by the natives of Ireland, is the most original and unmixt language that yet remains in any part of Europe.

FROM

FROM the rudest state arts advance forwards by progressive steps to perfection. At the period when the Irish nation were acquainted with the use of letters, which it is probable was coeval with the landing of the Milesians, they could not have been quite uncivilized.

NOTHING can be said with certainty in respect to their earliest writings, as no traces of them remain, except in monumental inscriptions.

A FEW centuries after the Christian Æra when the ravages of the Goths and Vandals had extinguished, elsewhere, the means of knowledge, and involved the other nations of Europe in the thickest darkness, Ireland, like Athens of old, was resorted to by foreigners as the only surviving repository of learning. At that period, seminaries of knowledge were erected in several parts of the kingdom. Learning was encouraged and cultivated, more especially by the clergy, with a zeal almost approaching to enthusiasm. The salutary effects of this were experienced beyond the limits of our own country. Our missionaries passed over to the continent, where they were received with grateful approbation, and their labours in the honorable work of communicating information, crowned with success.

HENRICK of Saint Germaine, who flourished in the reign of Charles the Bald, writing on this subject, gives this flattering testimony, “Why, asks he, should I mention Ireland? Almost the whole nation, despising the dangers of the sea, resort to our coasts, with a numerous train of philosophers”. We have the authority of Bede, that Oswald, the Anglo-Saxon king, applied to Ireland for  
learned



learned men to teach his people the principles of Christianity. In the seventh century, the learning of the Irish was celebrated so highly in Europe, that the Emperor Charles the Great honored them, very particularly, with his alliance and friendship, a memorial of which is preserved to this day in the paintings of the Royal Palace at Versailles.

BUT it must be acknowledged, that the learning of which we are speaking, had degenerated greatly from the elegance and dignity of philosophy; it was of that kind for which the monks of those days were distinguished. The principal part of it consisted in the study of the scholastic philosophy. In these modern times our improvements in the several branches of literature have risen to a much higher degree of perfection. Independent of their intrinsic worth, the excellence of things is valued by comparison. Even a faint light, if surrounded by darkness, appears in a conspicuous point of view.

Farewell.

### LETTER III.

**I**F, notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, we have difficulty in forming a clear idea of the celebrated constitutions of Athens and Sparta, it is not surprising that we have not conveyed to us a distinct knowledge of the old Irish government. We are by no means, however, without light sufficient to give us a general idea of it.

WHEN colonies emigrate they naturally introduce into their new settlements the form of government to which they had been accustomed in the parent state.

ACCORD-

ACCORDINGLY, the government established by the Milesians upon their arrival in Ireland, was monarchical. It was a pentarchy corresponding to the principalities into which they originally divided the kingdom.

AT the head of the provincial kings was placed a supreme monarch, to whom they paid tribute as a mark of subjection; in all other respects they were perfectly independent. They governed their subjects, made peace and war, and entered into treaties, without control.

THE throne, and all the subordinate offices of state were elective. By an original law of the constitution the successor to the throne, to prevent the evils of anarchy, was elected during the life of the reigning prince, and could be taken from no other family but that of Milesius. In their choice of a sovereign they had great respect for seniority; but on such occasions, a regard to those qualifications necessary for government, and still more for commanding in war, was their leading principle.

IF the elder branch of the royal family had not arrived at his twenty fifth year, which, with them, was the age of maturity, if he laboured under any bodily infirmity or mental weakness, if he was chargeable with injustice or cruelty, they rejected him and chose a younger, perhaps a collateral branch, not disqualified by any of these imperfections.

As the will of the people was the source of power, and there was no intermediate order to assist by it's authority in restraining them within the proper limits of obedience to their prince, his influence, in  
times



times of peace was not sufficient for preserving the public tranquility. Ollam Fodlah, one of the wisest of our Irish kings, in order to support the interest of his family and advance the welfare of his country, endeavoured to rectify this evil. He instituted a senatorial order, consisting chiefly of the druids most distinguished for learning, who were to be elected in succession every seventh year, and to assemble every third year at Teamor to enact laws and to regulate the public affairs in such a manner as to balance with an equal hand the power of the king and that of their constituents. But civil authority, added to the influence which their profession as litterati commanded in the state, rendered them too powerful for answering the salutary purpose of their institution. From the time of their appointment, the privilege of choosing the prince elect or Roydamna was vested in them. Similar to this were the institutions of the provincial sovereignties, but, in matters of general concern, they were subject to the control of the parliament of Teamor. The commands of this great council were designed to be absolute over the whole nation, but, through the ambition of the kings and inferior chieftains, they were frequently disobeyed. It continued, without interruption, until the year five hundred and sixty. Having become subject to undue influence, it was then superseded, and did not meet until the council of Dromkeat, in which the Irish and the colonies of Picts which had settled in Scotland were represented. The time of it's first institution and that of it's final extinction include eleven centuries.

EACH

EACH king, in his own territories, was possessed of the supreme executive power. By his authority, a civil officer, to whom they gave the name of Brehon, administered justice. The brehons did not determine arbitrarily the causes which they adjudged; there were certain fixed rules handed down by tradition, as the English common law, and afterwards committed to writing by which they were guided in their decisions.

COLLECTIONS of these, in the Irish language, are still extant, but as very few of them have yet been translated, I can say nothing satisfactory in relation to them. We know however, that violations of the law were punished by the imposition of fines, proportioned to the kind and degree of the offence, a portion of which was paid to the judge and the remainder to the party aggrieved. In the same period of civil society, a similar mode of compensation for crimes has been adopted by other nations of Asia and Europe. The most complete subjection to government is necessary before the members of society will give up so large a portion of their natural rights as to permit even more flagrant acts of injustice to be punished with the forfeiture of life. There are various transgressions of law, more especially murder, for which a fine, either to individuals more immediately injured, or the community, is by no means an adequate compensation. Our modern codes of criminal law are chargeable with the contrary extreme. To punish the unfortunate wretch with death who steals a few shillings for the supply of his immediate necessities, is a flagrant violation



olation of justice and the common feelings of humanity.

Adieu.

#### LETTER IV.

**T**HERE is a circumstance which points out in a striking light, how tenacious the antient Irish were of their political rights. Upon the election of a prince, one of the first acts of his administration was to make a present to his people, as a mark of his generosity and magnificence. They received it as an obligation, and consented to pay him a yearly tribute as a continued expression of their gratitude.

THE sense of dignity contained in this refined and delicate idea, of which perhaps no political transaction in the world affords a similar instance, must excite our admiration. One kind of tribute consisted of provisions, and was designed for the support of the king's household. The quantity was exactly ascertained. From this tribute all the septs connected by consanguinity with the family of the prince, were exempted. Termon lands, or those which were set apart for the support of the church, enjoyed the same privilege. Besides the king's demesne, which contributed to supply the exigence of government, and the general tax above-mentioned, there were certain lands called Mensal, exempted from all common charges, the possessors of which were obliged to provide necessaries for his table. It was usual for the kings of Ireland to take a tour among the chieftains subject to their authority, to each

each of whom they made presents, in return for which, they entertained him and his retinue for a certain time.

UPON this custom, which might in the beginning have been considered by the chieftains as a mark of honor, were probably founded exactions most grievous to the people. The example of superiors, if there be any thing in it which even remotely may lead to evil, is ever attended with pernicious effects. The coshering of the chieftain on his followers, who by this custom, were compelled at a great expence, to entertain him and his attendants, his horses and his dogs, was exceedingly distressing. Nothing could be more tyrannical than the tax called Bonnaught, which the Lord, at discretion, imposed on his dependants for maintaining a certain number of horsemen and light armed foot. It was afterwards adopted by the English and distinguished by the name of Coigne and Livery. Besides this demand, which was occasional, four times a year the people were subject to an exaction of a similar kind.

IN early times, ever favourable to Liberty, the prince retained no soldiers; the number of fighting men, with which he was provided by his subjects as the occasion might require, was the sole force on which he relied, either for the purpose of making war upon others, or the defence of his territories. But, in default of this service, their lands were not forfeited to the crown, which was the case in those countries where the feudal constitutions were established. They did not hold them as military tenures. Penalties to excite the Irish to war were unnecessary.



necessary. Their kings were passionately fond of glory. Very few instances are recorded of their surviving the disgrace of being conquered in the field of battle. To be crowned with the laurels of victory was the darling object of their ambition. The same love of war which animated the Irish princes, inspired the chieftains, and was diffused through every order of the people. To this object the education of their children was principally directed. From infancy, they were trained up to abstinence, and employed in such exercises as tended to invigorate their bodily powers and the faculties of the mind. Nothing was omitted necessary to perfect them in the art of war. Very early, their names were entered in the military list, and those of them entitled to such a distinction were invested with the honours of knighthood, to animate them to glorious achievements.

THE Irish, like their neighbours of Britain and Gaul, used no fortifications; they considered them as a coat of mail for cowards. If, on particular occasions, they secured their camps, it was done in the slightest manner, not as a substitute for courage, but to prevent the enemy from surprising them by a sudden attack.

WITH a martial cry, to intimidate the enemy and rouse in their own breasts a quick and violent impulse of courage, they began the onset in battle with the utmost impetuosity; if repulsed in the attack, which is a very remarkable circumstance, they rallied with coolness and dexterity.

THEY made use of chariots in early times. These gave place to infantry, which they found to be  
be

be more serviceable, and on whom they placed their chief dependance. It consisted of two sorts, heavy and light armed. The former, called Gallowglass, fought with a helmet, a coat of mail and a battle-axe. Each of them, when he entered his corps, was obliged to swear that he would not desert his standard. The second class, or Kearns, were lightly armed with missile weapons and a sword. The Kearns were fond of their sword even to enthusiasm.

ONE of these, after a battle, in which he received four wounds, expressed his gratitude to heaven that the wounds had been inflicted on himself, and not upon his sword, the edge of which, to his great joy, was uninjured.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R V.

**D**RUIDS were an order of men highly distinguished in the state. You have seen that they were priests, poets, lawgivers, judges and philosophers. From Cæsar and Tacitus we learn that they were not peculiar to this country. There were persons in whom the same professions were united, in Germany and Gaul, and probably, indeed, among all the Celtic nations.

THEIR respective offices in this country are accurately distinguished by Mr. Beauford. They were divided into two classes, sacred and civil. It was the office of the first to study and explain the doctrines of religion, as well as to prescribe the rites and ceremonies belonging to it. They like-  
wise



wise studied the more sublime sciences of philosophy. These were properly called Druids. With respect to the second order, those who confined themselves to poetry obtained the title of Bards, from whom were taken the civil officers, who acted in the capacity of brehons, or judges. The Fileas were those whose poetic compositions entirely related to common life and manners. Such as made genealogy the particular subject of their studies were, in latter times, called Senachies. But these several classes were generally included in the common appellation of bards.

BESIDES the other duties of their profession, the bards acted as heralds. Cloathed in white flowing robes, and accompanied by the musicians, they marched with the chiefs at the head of their armies to battle, which they animated by martial strains, sung to the music of the harp. They sung also the panegyric of their heroes who were slain in the field. This tribute of honor and the performance of their funeral rites was thought necessary, in order that their souls might be admitted into the abodes of happiness.

THE spirit of their poetry was simple, affecting and animated. Gradually it's excellence was corrupted by false ornaments. Even in it's degenerate state and of a specimen which he had seen of it in a translation, Spencer says, "that it favoured of "sweet wit and good invention." The bards were the composers not only of poetry but of music. Cambrensis declares that of all nations, the Irish excel, beyond all comparison, in musical compositions. Their power over the different passions of

the human mind confirm this account of their merit. When the musicians, in general the attendants of the bards, played upon the harp their martial strains, they nerved with courage the arm of the hero and animated him to battle; when they touched their affecting notes, they filled the heart with sympathetic sorrow, and when they played their milder strains, they banished care from the soul and lulled it into a state of peaceful tranquility. Some Irish tunes of the present time are acknowledged to have great merit by those who have a musical ear and are judges of harmony.

THE letters made use of by our antient bards were of two kinds. The one was intelligible which they used in their compositions on the common occurrences of life. The other was mixed with hieroglyphics. In this, they treated of the laws, philosophy and religion. There were certain sublime truths or mysteries in these subjects which they thought it necessary to conceal from the people. None were to be acquainted with them but such as were initiated into the secrets of their order. The poems, laws and learning of the bards were not committed to writing until the second century.

As they were the repository of all the branches of knowledge then understood, as they filled important departments in the state, and to their learning and authority, added the charms of poetry and of music, it is not surprising that their influence with the people was very considerable. To their immortal honor, this influence was uniformly exerted in opposition to tyranny and in support of the privileges of their country. Certain portions of

land



land were, by order of the state, set apart for the subsistence of the bards, and, in all civil commotions, their persons and property were sacred.

Farewell.

## LETTER VI.

**T**HERE were two laws of the old Irish, of great importance in their political system, that of Tanistry and Gavel-kine. These must be explained. In respect to the first, you will recollect, that during the life of the reigning prince, a person was always chosen, who, at his decease, succeeded to the throne. Roydamna was his title of distinction.

In the same manner and with the same powers, in an inferiour degree, a successor was appointed to each chieftain. His title was that of Tanist. If qualified for the office, the eldest son, or senior of the family was elected, but not otherwise. The Tanist commanded the sept, in time of war, and administered justice, in time of peace, by a substitute or brehon. This law prevailed among the Celtic nations, and those who were subject to the government of the feudal institutions.

**GAVEL-KINE** respected the distribution of land among the several branches of each Sept. If a father, who was the head of any of these branches, during life, divided his property, he gave to each son an equal share, reserving to himself the mansion house and demesne, with a small chief rent, to command respect and preserve the advantages to which he was entitled in reversion.

SHOULD the division not be made until after his death, the head of the sept distributed his land among the family in the same manner as he would have done, had he made the partition during his life.

BUT the kind of gavel generally observed was, when the proprietor of a part of a divided inheritance, derived from any branch of a Sept, held it only whilst all his co-partners survived; upon the death of any of them, he was obliged to cast his share into the common stock, out of which he received back again a new portion.

WOMEN, at first, were not permitted to inherit, as, in the proprietors of land, the government had a particular regard to the qualifications requisite in war. When the male issue failed, in one branch of a sept, the lands belonging to it reverted to another, or to the common chief of the whole tribe. Women were allowed to inherit when kings no longer commanded their armies in person, but discharged that duty by substitutes.

A STRICT observance of the law of primogeniture, by raising up to power one part of a family and depressing another, is most unfriendly to Liberty. The custom of gavel kine, the opposite extreme, was attended also with the worst consequences. It multiplied the divisions of land, and increased, in proportion, the branches of each tribe, which, in consequence of their number, and of course, the interference of their interests and their passions, were perpetually disturbing, by their quarrels, the public tranquility. Besides, it was an enemy to the improvement of the country, for who

would



would be at pains to cultivate land which his children might not be permitted to inherit, and that a person might possess after him, to whom, perhaps he was an utter stranger.

In each tribe, the individuals retained the name of the principal chieftain of the sept. The surname of the sept separated from the Christian name, as O'Neil, O'Donnel, O'Brien, was his title of honor.

THE lower class of the people being in a state of villainage had no property. They belonged to the soil which they cultivated, and were transferred with it, at the pleasure of their masters.

## LETTER VII.

THE antient political institutions of this country were very imperfect and all endeavours to improve them were insufficient. The members of a state should always consider themselves as more intimately related to it and be more solicitous to promote it's interest than that of any partial connection. It was most unfortunate for Ireland, that the nation was divided into a number of septs whose views and affections were almost entirely confined within the circle of their own private concerns. The distinction of tribes, so natural in the early periods of society, was perpetuated in this country and in many others, by the laws of tanistry and of gavel kine. Gossipred and the custom of giving out their children to be nursed by fosterers, which prevailed among the Irish, strengthened considerably the personal attachment by which the members of the tribes were united. In proportion to the intimate

imate connection that subsisted among the individuals of each sept, it was alienated in affection from the other septs, and indifferent with regard to the general welfare. The several tribes were exceedingly jealous of their independance. Most tenacious of their rights, and strongly addicted to the passions of pride and resentment, they were almost perpetually at variance. The injury of an individual enflamed the passions of his relatives and friends. The whole tribe, of which he was a member, caught the flame, entered into his resentment, and, flying to arms, retaliated upon the offender and all his connections. The lives of thousands were the victims of a single transgression. Love of glory, which animated the breast of the monarch, was diffused through the several ranks into the heart of the inferiour chieftain. This passion was highly gratified by the renown acquired in military achievements. Hence were multiplied the calamities of war. Frequently, when the successor to the throne was elected, the elder branch of the royal family was rejected because not of sufficient age.

It often happened, that when arrived at maturity he took up arms to exclude the possessor from the throne, which he considered as his natural right. Many of the wars recorded in the annals of Ireland flowed from this cause. In a variety of other instances. the rules of election prescribed for the choice of the monarch and provincial kings, were violated. Resentment or ambition, supported by power, despised legal restraints and trampled on the principles of the constitution. The exact balance of power, in the different members of the state, which is their  
great



great bond of union, was wanting. Even in times of common danger, it was extremely difficult to prevail with the tribes to act in concert, though their disunion was highly prejudicial to the public safety. The endeavours of the great assembly of Teamor to establish order were feeble, frequently ineffectual. Government was unable to control the rage of contending chieftains, who, insensible to honor and the love of their country, on many occasions, assisted a foreign enemy, for the sake of gratifying their private passions.

Farewell

#### L E T T E R VIII.

**T**HE druids were the ministers of religion. The sacred truths in which they instructed the people were those of the Celtæ, whose religious sentiments, as appears from the concurring testimony of antient authors, were derived from the patriarchs. The Greeks and Romans worshipped in magnificent temples; our Irish ancestors, less ostentatious in their pious exercises, presented their devotions to the One Supreme God, in consecrated groves. They adopted the opinion of Pythagoras, with respect to the transmigration of the soul, and believed that virtue and vice would receive hereafter their merited recompense. All their rites and ceremonies were simple and unadorned. We are told, that about a hundred years after the arrival of the colony from Spain, their religion was corrupted with idolatry. From that period, the knowledge and reverence of the Supreme Being were insensibly  
lost

lost in the multiplicity of imaginary divinities who became the objects of their worship. The sylvan Gods presided over the woods; every hill, mountain and valley, every fountain and stream was furnished with it's presiding deity. They offered their devotions even to rude stones. This is not surprising when we consider the gods that were worshipped by the most polished nations of antiquity. Apollo, or the Sun was their favourite divinity. Grineus was an antient classical name of their God: It is remarkable that Grian is one of his appellations in the Irish language. He was recognised also under the name of Bel, who, very probably, was the same with Belus the celebrated God of the Phenicians.

When the Irish committed the seed to the earth, in spring, they sacrificed to the Sun, as he then dispels the dreary colds of winter, beautifies the face of nature, and with his enlivening rays is the great principle of life to the vegetable creation. They sacrificed to him, at midsummer, that he might bring to maturity the fruits of the earth; and, at November, when they were safely got in, they presented to him a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Of these, the sacrifice at midsummer is preserved in the fires which, at that season, are still regularly lighted up by the natives. The druids, whose influence with the people was almost irresistible, are said to have been the corrupters of religion. Cormac, so famous in Irish story, saw with much concern the idolatrous practices of the nation. He laboured to reform them. But in vain. The druids conspired against him. He was sacrificed to their resentment for endeavouring



vouring to impress the people with a persuasion of the unity and perfections of God.

ABOUT four hundred and thirty years after the birth of Christ, his religion was preached with remarkable success in Ireland. It made such considerable progress among the people that in a short time, it's pure and sublime doctrines were completely established upon the ruins of ignorance, idolatry and superstition.

### LETTER IX.

THE antient Irish had a law which appears to have been peculiar to them, to the Egyptians and to the Indians. All the learned professions and the different arts were among them hereditary. As it frequently happens that the son does not like the employment of his father and has not the same mental powers, this rule was a violation of nature and tended to obstruct the improvement of science as well as of useful occupations. This law however admitted of exceptions. Uncommon genius broke through this restraint and was permitted to choose the profession in which nature designed it should be distinguished.

SOME pretend that the arts flourished in Ireland, even from the earliest period. This Idea has just the same probability as the polished manners ascribed to the antient Calidonians, in the poems of Ossian. The colony which arrived from Spain brought with them the use of letters; they could not therefore be quite uncultivated, but they were by no means in a polished state. The polish of society and the progress

gress of the arts keep equal pace. There could have been but little knowledge of the arts when tools and instruments were made of stone, and arrows of flint. Such instruments have been frequently discovered in this country.

THE houses of the Irish were first made of wood or the branches of trees; afterwards, necessity pointed out the addition of green turf, or of clay wrought into mortar, with a roof covered with straw or rushes; and in this rude state did they continue for many ages. The church of Saint Kianan, built in the sixth century, was the first structure of stone erected in the kingdom. Much has been said of the magnificence of the palace of Tarah, the ancient residence of our Irish kings. The author of the Philosophical Survey, who examined the ruins of it, asserts, that it never could have been a building of much consequence. A regard to safety obliged the Irish early to collect themselves into villages. These, consisted of huts irregularly disposed, and placed at a convenient distance for the sake of subsistence. Our ancestors were plain in their dress; a long beard was a great ornament. But the highest object of their vanity or ambition was the privilege of wearing a variety of colours, as that was a principal mark of dignity. Next to the supreme monarch, those who were entitled to display six colours possessed the first place of honor. This distinction produced greater emulation, and commanded more respect than our modern stars and garters, and all the splendid trappings of Eastern magnificence. The manners of the Irish were simple. They were frank, open-hearted, amorous, proud, much given



to resentment: Their passions were quick and violent. No people in the world were more distinguished by warmth of affection. They were extremely hospitable. A Brehon law expressly forbids, that any sept should break up suddenly, lest the traveller might be disappointed of his expected entertainment.

THOSE among them of a lower class, claimed hospitality, almost as a perfect right. Their social temper frequently produced convivial entertainments, which were accompanied by sports and pastimes. These, we are told, were enlivened by concerts of music, in which they sung the glories of patriotism, and the praises of their distinguished heroes. But often, on such occasions, the benevolent feelings which promoted these friendly meetings were forgotten. Excess gave rise to disputes, and disputes to quarrels, that generally ended in blood.

POLYGAMY, in the opinions of several of our authors, was in use with the antient Irish. The learned and ingenious Mr. O'Connor is of a different opinion. Many of the nations of antiquity burned; the old inhabitants of Ireland, buried their dead. Agreeably to the custom of the Greeks and Romans, public mourners attended the celebration of their funerals, to heighten the solemnity by expressions of sorrow. The Irish cry remains to this day.

THEY were, in general, of a tall stature, well made, of a robust constitution, and patient of cold and hunger. Two creaghts travelling, when the fields were covered with snow, were overtaken by the night: Upon going to sleep, one of them made a roll of  
snow

snore for his pillow: “for shame says his companion, are you grown effeminate!” Few nations retained their peculiar customs and manners so long as the Irish. Four centuries, they continued, in this respect, pretty much the same. Their insular situation exempted them from invasion and an intercourse with strangers. Until the invasion of the Danes, which did not happen for more than seven hundred years after the birth of Christ, they had seldom seen the face of a foreign enemy. Ireland remained safe from the conquering sword of the Romans, whilst the other kingdoms of Europe were subdued by their arms.

It was necessary to give you this general Idea of the customs and manners of the Irish, by way of introduction. They will be more particularly explained in the course of the History.

#### LETTER X.

**S**O very remote a period as that prior to the arrival of our Milesian ancestors must be involved in darkness; however, the most probable account of the first inhabitants of this country, is, that a colony of the Celtæ having emigrated from Gaul to Britain and not finding that situation agreeable to their wishes, passed over to Ireland, in hopes of a more favourable settlement. Here they lived undisturbed until about the year of the world nineteen hundred and fifty, when Partholan, expelled from Greece, on account of his ambition, arrived in this country with a thousand followers. A battle was fought betwixt the two rival powers, in which the

Partholans



Partholans obtained a compleat victory. The same good fortune attended their arms in an engagement with the Femorians, the next invaders of the island. Great numbers of the enemy were killed, who were permitted to lie in the field of battle unburied; a dreadful pestilence ensued that swept off, it is said, every human creature in the kingdom which thus became once more uninhabited.

NONE of the accounts of this period can be relied upon with certainty. Thirty years after the extinction of the Partholans, as we are informed, Nemedius, of the same country and descended from the same original, with a thousand and twenty men, made a descent upon Ireland, but his followers were obliged to desert the kingdom, in consequence of a quarrel that arose betwixt them and certain pirates which he had unfortunately brought in his train. Accounts say, that in the year two thousand five hundred and three their descendants, called Firbolgs, to the number of five thousand, under five leaders, landed in this country, where they were securely established. The government of these people lasted about forty years, and was then overturned by another colony known by the name of Damnonii, or Tuatha de Danans, who were supposed to be sprung likewise from the same family with Nemedius. These, it seems, brought with them the celebrated Stone of Destiny on which so many of our Irish kings were crowned. Our historians inform us, that in the time of Edward the First it was, by his order, removed to London and placed under the inauguration chair in Westminster Abbey. The Damnonians, on landing, determined either to conquer

quer or to die, set fire to their ships, attacked the Fir-bolgs, or, as they were likewise called, on account of their supposed original, the Belgæ, whom they routed with great slaughter. Breas was the first king of the Danaan race. He reigned, we are told, but twenty years, when he was dethroned by his brother Nuad, to whom, as the chief of the colony, the sovereignty of right belonged. Among others to whom Breas applied for assistance, on the present occasion, were the Belgæ, who had been banished from the kingdom. In conjunction with them, an obstinate battle was fought by these competitors for royalty. Breas was killed, the Danaans were victorious, and Nuad reigned without a rival.

We are now arrived at a period when light begins to break in upon the Irish historian, but he must proceed with caution; the accounts on which he depends for information, are, for a series of years, involved in fable. If he does not most carefully discriminate, his reader can receive no instruction.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R XI.

**A** COLONY from Phenicia, say the Irish records, which had emigrated to Spain, desirous of a better settlement, having heard favourable accounts of Ireland, sent Ith, one of their leaders, to obtain more certain information. Upon landing, he found the country occupied by the Damnonians, and that three brothers of that nation, jointly possessed the throne. A difference at that time subsisted

among



among these princes. Ith was introduced to them. They chose him for umpire and he decided the contest to their mutual satisfaction. Struck with the fruitful appearance of the country, he spoke of it in terms of praise. This excited the suspicion of the brothers that he might conceive against it some unfavourable designs. They resolved to avert the danger. Upon the departure of Ith, one of them pursued him with a superiour force. An engagement ensued, in which Ith was mortally wounded. His followers made good their retreat and escaped to their ships. When intelligence of this transaction reached their countrymen in Galicia, they resolved to invade Ireland with a force sufficient not only for gratifying their resentment, but affecting a secure establishment in the kingdom. Accordingly, they landed here with a considerable number of men, about the year of the world two thousand seven hundred and thirty six. They are called Milesians, as the principal leaders, in this expedition, were the sons of Milesius. Betwixt them and the present possessors of the island, an obstinate engagement followed. A decisive victory, in favour of the invaders, gave them the sovereignty of Ireland. The dates relating to so remote a period, must be very uncertain; but we are told that the government of the Damnonians had lasted a hundred and ninety five years. The surviving sons of Milesius were Heber, Heremon and Amergin. In the two former of these, seperately, the sovereignty of the nation was vested. With respect to the manner in which the kingdom was divided betwixt them, authors are of different sentiments. Mr. O'Halloran

O'Halloran supposes that Leinster and Munster were the portion assigned to Heber, the eldest son of Milesius, and that Heremon had, for his division, the provinces of Ulster and Connaught. The former, it is thought, had the title of Supreme Monarch. A distribution of the lands, agreeably to their respective stations, was made among the followers of these princes, to whose descendants the choice of the principal sovereign was confined, by an exclusive law of the constitution. The appointment of Amergin was that of Arch-Druid, or, presiding minister, in the respective departments of Poetry, Law, Philosophy and Religion.

MATTERS, in the beginning, were thus amicably adjusted. But the public tranquility was soon interrupted. A dispute arose betwixt the two royal brothers. There was a beautiful valley in one of the territories of Heremon. The wife of Heber, who appears to have been a very ambitious woman, made a point of it with her husband that he would demand it from his brother. He complied, but, as he might have expected, was not gratified in his desire. This produced a quarrel, which was decided on the plains of Geisol, where Heber lost his life, and left Heremon sole monarch of the kingdom. But, for some time, his government was very much disturbed by the adherents of the deceased prince, who had recourse to arms, in vindication of the rights of his family. Several battles were fought, in one of which, the monarch lost Amergin, his only surviving brother. In some time, the public tranquility was restored. The first interruption to it was occasioned by an invasion of the Picts,  
emigrants



emigrants from Thrace, who, in search of a new habitation, landed with some troops on the eastern coast of Ireland. Heremon exerted himself with vigour. Unable to contend with his superiour power, the Picts, instead of procuring an establishment, were compelled to sue to him for peace.

THEIR request was complied with upon the condition that they should evacuate the kingdom, and look for a settlement elsewhere. They wanted wives. Heremon permitted them to marry a number of Irish females with whom they removed to the Hebrides and the Northern parts of Scotland. Here they were established and encreased considerably. By their warlike exploits, in which they received assistance from their Irish auxiliaries, they afterwards made a distinguished figure in the History of Britain.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R XII.

UPON the death of Heremon, the first Irish monarch of the Milesian race, his three sons ascended the throne. To prevent contention, they agreed to reign a year each, alternately. At the end of three years, one of them died a natural death; the other two were slain in the battle of Ard by the sons of Heber who reigned but a year, at the expiration of that time they were slain by Irial of the Heremonian line. Victory placed the crown upon his head, which, for ten years, he wore with distinguished honor. The country being in a very uncultivated state, we are told that he paid great attention, to it's improvement. I shall not trouble

you with any thing concerning those of our ancient kings, of whom, separate from the delusions of fable, nothing is recorded except their names, some trifling circumstances of their reign and the manner of their death. The third in succession to Irial, was Tighermas. All our antiquaries agree, that it was in the reign of this prince, that idolatry was first substituted in place of the amiable simplicity of the ancient worship, which had for it's object the unity and perfections of the Great First Cause.

IN this shameful abuse of the powers of the understanding, in a matter of such infinite importance to human happiness, Tighermas appears to have been an active instrument. We are told, that he commanded altars to be erected in honor of these fictitious divinities, by which religion was disgraced in the heathen world.

THE government of Achy, the immediate successor of Tighermas, was distinguished by a singular institution before mentioned. It related to those honours connected with the distinction of colours. By this law, soldiers and those of a lower class were commanded to wear but a single colour. Military officers of a lower order were permitted to wear two colours; commanders of battalions three; a gentleman four; the nobility and military knights five; the bards, and those distinguished for learning, six, which number the king himself could not exceed.

WE have certain external marks of honor of this kind. It would perhaps be conducive to the public good, if the different stations were better distinguished by the outward appearance, and, particularly, if the dress designed to command respect were connected



ned with real merit and not the gratification of vanity and pride

AFTER several princes, who reigned in succession to Achy, all of whom, through the ambition of the times, died a violent death, the celebrated Ollam Fodlah, a descendant of Ir, was elected monarch. His reign, unlike those which preceded, was peaceful and happy. To establish order and pay attention to the welfare of his subjects, was the great object of his ambition and his distinguished glory. At a period, when the more violent passions were little subject to control, when private injuries were so extensive in their influence, and each inferiour chieftain thought himself privileged to make war upon his sovereign at pleasure, courage was a quality absolutely necessary to preserve the rights of individuals and of society. Therefore Ollam, to excite this virtue and cherish in his officers and in persons of distinction a spirit of emulation, instituted a set of heralds, whose office it was to assign to each of them a coat of arms. This being emblazoned on his banner, displayed in the field of battle and on all great occasions which were a test of his magnanimity, served to distinguish him from others and to place him in the most conspicuous point of view. The merit or demerit of his actions being thus publickly known, they were a subject of praise or dispraise to the bards, whose particular office it was to transmit them, in their proper colours, to posterity.

BUT that which chiefly signalized the reign of Ollam was an improvement of government, which has been already briefly explained. To limit the power of the king, who in war was absolute, and to curb the licentiousness of the people, which in peace

required restraint, this wise prince instituted an order of senators, who, as it appears, were their representatives. By royal summons, this assembly attended by the nobility the judges and learned of the land, met every third year at Teamor, or Tarah, in the county of Meath, where the monarch, in general resided. We are told that when this great council was convened, previous to their entering upon business, they sat down to a sumptuous entertainment, which, for the purpose of promoting civility and mutual affection, was continued six days. When this ended, the object of the meeting engaged their attention. The monarch ascended the throne surrounded by the provincial kings, the nobles, senators and all others who composed the assembly. The laws were then revised. Improper laws were repealed, others enacted as the state required; public offenders were punished, and quarrels composed which tended to affect the public tranquility. Here also alliances were formed and every thing settled relating to peace and war. Whatever respected the interest of the kingdom at large, was a particular object of attention. It is said that the public records of the kingdom were carefully revised on this occasion. The king had power of appointing the officers both civil and military and of pardoning criminals, but the disposal of the national militia was in the hands of the parliament of Tarah. To maintain their dignity and to prevent their deliberations from being interrupted, acts of violence done to any of the members whilst the meeting continued could not be pardoned. We see that this council exercised not only legislative but executive power. These should be always vested in different orders



orders of the state; but, had the spirit of the times admitted of subordination, and the decisions of the assembly or parliament of Tarah been regularly obeyed, it would have been productive to the nation of excellent effects.

WE have already mentioned, that the offices of heralds, practitioners in physic, bards and musicians were hereditary among the ancient Irish. Ollam assigned them lands for their support; but he confined these employments to respectable families, nor would he permit the eldest son to succeed to them, unless he was also the most accomplished. He likewise established a famous seminary at Tarah, for the education of youth. This prince descended with honor to the grave having governed Ireland twenty years.

### LETTER XIII.

**T**O secure the crown to his family was one great object of the policy of Ollam. In this innovation upon the constitution there was an improper mixture of private views, but, with respect to the constitution, it was certainly an improvement. A competition for the throne, amidst a variety of contending rivals, was a perpetual source of contention extremely prejudicial to the public tranquility. Political institutions in an age of violence were of little avail. Short was the continuance of the government in the house of Ollam and transient the effect of his labours to instruct his subjects in the arts of justice and political wisdom. Only two of his sons succeeded him.

FIVE monarchs of the house of Ir having ascended the throne, Siorna, of the house of Here-mon was invested with the kingly power. The

hand of violence consigned him and his two following successors to the grave. Art of the family of Heber, was the next prince. He was the first of the Irish kings who cut trenches and threw up breast works of earth for the security of his troops.

IRELAND was, at this time, infested by a plague, which was brought to it, as supposed, by certain pirates, who had, for a considerable time, harassed the coasts. An old Irish poem speaks of them as Africans, who had emigrated from Phenicia. In the opinion of Mr. O'Halloran, they were Carthaginians. These are his reasons:—We read in Diodorus, that the Phenicians, having built Gades, near the Pillars of Hercules, extended their discoveries along the coasts of Africa: That one of their ships was driven by a storm to an island in the Atlantic ocean, very fertile and temperate. Aristotle says, that it was discovered, and Strabo, that it was partly possessed by the Carthaginians, who, prior to their falling under the Roman yoke, were distinguished for their knowledge of navigation and maritime affairs. Swords of this nation, discovered near the plains of Cannæ, have been found, on the strictest examination, to be exactly the same, in size and texture, with swords discovered in the bogs of Ireland. Whatever may have been the country of the pirates above mentioned, we collect from hence a strong presumptive evidence, that Ireland, formerly, was not unknown to the Carthaginians.

SEADNA the Second, an Hiberian, fifth in succession from Art, is remarkable, in our annals, for having introduced into the army a form of discipline, which had not before been subject to military regulations. Not only what related to good order,

but



but their pay, their cloaths and food, were objects of his attention.

IN the year of the world, as it is supposed, three thousand five hundred and thirty nine, we find Kimbath on the throne. During a period of more than two hundred and sixty years which had elapsed since the death of Ollam Fodlah, scarcely any benefit had resulted to the nation from the wisdom of his political institutions. Kimbath revived them, convinced that were it possible to give them efficacy they would be productive of excellent effects. But the spirit of the times continued to be restless and turbulent. The ambition of competitors for power, supported in their pretensions by a military force, despised the effects of the legislator. It was Kimbath who built in the vicinity of Armagh, the palace of Emania, the celebrated residence, for almost seven hundred years, of the kings of Ulster. Of a much later date are the remains of an ancient building still to be seen near Armagh. These are stone which was not made use of in buildings until a period very remote from that of which we now speak.

AT Emania, councils, were held subordinate to that of Tarah, the subjects of whose debates were those which related to the national police and the mechanical arts. Of the most skilful artificers, sixty were chosen to whom the power was committed of superintending the artificers in the kingdom, for the purpose of correcting abuses, rejecting the unskilful and encouraging such as had a competent knowledge of their profession, an institution admirably calculated for the civilization and embellishment of the kingdom. Kimbath reigned but seven years.

Ireland had never seen a female on the throne; but, on the death of her husband, Macha, the queen of Kimbath, a woman whose bold and intrepid genius soared above the timidity of her sex, refused to give up to the sons of Dithorba the honor of the crown. Determined to support their claim, they placed themselves at the head of a powerful army. The heroine Macha scorned the apprehensions of danger. She also collected her forces, led them to the field and routed the army of her competitors. A second battle was fought, in which she obtained a compleat victory which placed her on the throne. We have seen that Kimbath wore the crown seven years, the same period finished to his queen the honours of royalty. She was slain by a prince of the line of Heber.

Adieu,

#### L E T T E R XIV.

**I**T was Reachta wo slew Macha. He perished by the hand of Hugony, who, in the year three thousand five hundred and eighty, was raised to the throne.

NONE of the preceding kings was more distinguished by ambition than Hugony. For a considerable time, the council of Tarah had been suspended. By the command of this prince, it was assembled, not for any of the virtuous purposes of it's original institution, but to corrupt it's principles, and convert it into an instrument of gratifying his inordinate love of power. It grieves the friends of liberty and of mankind, that this is so much the policy of modern times. By the influence of Hugony with  
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the states, the pentarchy was abolished, the provincial kings deprived of their power by a law, and a solemn obligation exacted from them to continue the crown in his family in exclusion of the other branches of Milesius. The succession in the family of Hugony was interrupted in less than a hundred years. It was three hundred years before the provincial kings recovered their power, Ulster indeed refused to obey the authority of the states; they continued under the dominion of their own princes, agreeably to their ancient form of government.

PLUTARCH relates, that about this period, the Carthaginians, assisted by Greek mercenaries, laid siege to Syracuse, and that, in the time of a truce, a Corinthian of Syracuse reproached his countrymen, in the opposite army, with joining the Carthaginians, who had come to destroy Syracuse, assisted with an army from the Pillars of Hercules and the Atlantic Sea. Our annalists suppose, that the auxiliaries of the Carthaginians, here said to have been sent to them from the Atlantic Sea, were Irish, carried over to their aid, upon this occasion, by Hugony. Besides the figure which he is said to have made in this expedition, we are told that he subdued the Picts, and compelled them to pay a tribute which had been imposed upon them by the Irish kings, when, by their assistance, they procured a settlement in Albany. For the magnanimity he displayed in these exploits, he received the appellation of Great, and was distinguished by the honourable titles of "The Monarch of Ireland and Albany and of all the Western isles of Europe." Notwithstanding, he did not, in the end, escape the fate of his predecessors

fors. After a long and prosperous reign, he was killed by his brother.

THE life of the fratricide was the forfeit of this violation of the ties of nature. The punishment was inflicted by his nephew Logaire, the second son of Hugony, whose magnanimity raised him to the throne. This excited the indignation of Cobthach, the elder brother. He resolved to destroy Logaire and take possession of the crown. Unable to accomplish his wicked design by force, he had recourse to a most iniquitous device. Being confined by indisposition, either real or pretended, Logaire, who loved him with all the tenderness of a brother, paid him a visit, attended, as usual, by his guards. Cobthach pretended to be displeas'd with this circumstance; it was a proof, he alledged, of want of confidence in his fidelity. The unsuspecting monarch, unwilling to give him pain, visited him, a second time, without his attendants. Cobthach seized the favourable opportunity, and treacherously slew him. The crown was the reward of his villainy, having previously put to death a nephew, the son of the deceased king, who might have prevented his wishes from being gratified. But Logaire had also an infant grandson. Fortunately, to be the avenger of the wrongs of his family, he escaped the cruelty of the tyrant. Maon, for that was the name of the child, was conveyed privately away, and placed under the protection of the king of Munster, and from thence, as a more secure retreat, he was removed to France, where, by his military exploits, he was highly distinguished. We are told that, when in Munster, Maon had inspired with love the breast of the beautiful Moriat, the daughter of his



his protector. The passion had been mutual. Moriat regretted the absence of Maon; the fame of his valour and accomplishments, had heightened her affection. Craftine, a musician of her father, assisted her in the gratification of her wishes. He carried a letter from her to Maon, the contents of which may be easily supposed; to strengthen the feelings which this would naturally excite, in concert with the music of his harp, he sung the praises of his valour, pointing out in his song, as it's proper object, the assassin of his father and grandfather seated for so many years, on the Irish throne. The cruelty of Cobthach, must, previous to this, have made a deep impression on the heart of Maon. Love and a sense of the wrongs of his family were now rekindled in his breast. He made the necessary preparations; led over to Ireland an army with which he was furnished by the king of France; attacked the infamous Cobthach whom he slew with a number of his followers, married his beloved Moriat and ascended the throne of his ancestors.

## L E T T E R XV.

**M**AON, it is recorded, signalized his courage once more in France and performed military achievements in Britain by which he obtained considerable reputation. After an honourable reign of nineteen years, he died in battle.

We may pass through the succeeding reigns until we come to the year of the world three thousand nine hundred and thirty eight, when, as our annals relate, Eochais the ninth was elected king. Several partitions had been made of Ireland in the preceding

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ing periods. Eochais divided it into the provinces of Munster, Leinster, Connaught, Ulster and Meath. Meath was set apart for the monarch's domain. In Connaught, he built a large structure called after his name. It was more central than that of Tarah and therefore more convenient for the residence of the monarch, as likewise for keeping Connaught in a proper state of subjection, which continued still to be governed by the ancient princes of the Damnonian line.

THE reign of his brother, of the same name, was very much disturbed by domestic convulsions. In his time lived Connor king of Ulster and Cuchullain the most famous captain of his age. Their warlike achievements make a shining figure in the records of Ireland. Connor was not only celebrated for his abilities in war but for political wisdom. The bards, whose office and whose consequence in the state has been already explained, had become too numerous and grown insolent and ambitious. In their judicial capacity, instead of being the guardians, they invaded the property of others. Impatient of such injuries, the people determined to vindicate their rights, and to make the bards feel the severest effects of their resentment: No terms of accommodation would be heard; they banished them without distinction. In this distress, they fled for refuge to the king of Ulster. Connor not only took them under his protection, but, sensible that the extinction of their order would be prejudicial to the state, re-established them. This was effected with proper restrictions. The number of the bards was reduced, and regulations made, to prevent them from abusing their office. In particular, to regulate their decisions, the laws were



laws were collected and formed into a simple comprehensive code, which, on account of their superiour excellence, were called celestial judgments.

OUR annals relate that certain rules were formed by the present monarch with respect to funerals. When a person to be interred, was of station particularly of the knightly order, the materials of his sepulchre were more expensive, if otherwise, they were of common earth. With respect to the former, his remains being committed to the grave, the senachy or antiquary traced out his pedigree and the bard sung his distinguished actions. If the dead was of a lower class, each of the attendants, as he passed by, cast a stone upon his grave. Hence, the cairns raised over the graves of the ancient Irish, some of which are to be seen to this day. The lamentations of the mourners employed on such occasions has been mentioned. Much in the same manner did the Greeks bury their dead.

I HAVE said that knights were particularly distinguished by the honours of the grave. Mr. O'Halloran pleads that the institution of knighthood was known in Ireland from time immemorial. He traces out five distinct orders. It is said that a regular course of education was necessary to qualify for being admitted to this honor. When the provincial kings of Ireland waited upon Richard the Second, on his arrival in Dublin, he would have knighted them, "No, said they, our fathers, at seven years of age, invested us with this dignity."

Farewell

L E T-

## LETTER XVI.

**T**WO princes having succeeded Eochaish, Conary the Great was elected monarch. The reign of Conary was extended to a very unusual length. He sat upon the throne sixty years which he filled with the glory, not which results from ambition and warlike enterprize, but from the amiable and uniform attention which he paid to the happiness of his subjects. We are not made acquainted with the particulars of his government, but it is said to have been the best administered of any recorded in the History of Ireland. The circumstance which most remarkably distinguishes the reign of this prince is, that at this period our Saviour made his appearance in the world. We are therefore henceforth to date our accounts from the Christian Æra. It seems Conary was obliged to banish from the kingdom a number of his subjects, who had been guilty of insolence and sedition. They fled to Wales, placed themselves under the command of a son of the king of that country, returned privately to Ireland, and set fire to the palace of Tarah. Conary perished in the flames.

THE third prince from Conary was Crimthan Niadnar. Upon his decease, Carbry, of the posterity of the Danaans, usurped the throne which had been possessed by the descendants of Milesius for more than a thousand years. This is said to have been occasioned by the Heremonians, whose ambition provoked the Danaans and gave rise to what is called the first Plebeian War.



IN a few years, the royal line was restored in the election of Feredach, a son of Crimthan. The public tranquillity had of late been greatly disturbed. Feredach laboured to restore it. He endeavoured to support the laws with a firmness tempered by good nature, and rendered respectable by a strict regard to integrity. Peace and good order began to succeed to anarchy and confusion. His honourable reign closed in peace twenty years after he had ascended the throne. His successor reigned but three years.

FIACHAD, who was next raised to the throne, alarmed by the progress of Julius Agricola, whose successful arms were then advancing towards the Northern parts of Britain, sent auxiliaries to the Picts, under the command of Cormac, his general, to assist them in opposing the progress of the Romans; They engaged the enemy on the Grampian hills, but had the misfortune to be conquered. The time was critical for Ireland. It was in imminent danger of being invaded by the Roman arms. Tacitus informs us, that Agricola designed to transport his army to our island, but was prevented from executing his design by Domitian, who, jealous of the success of his arms, recalled him from Britain.

WHAT the particular reasons were of their dissatisfaction are not recorded, but the people were discontented with the government of Fiachad. They rebelled, dethroned him, and substituted in his place Elim, king of Ulster. This is called, the Second Plebeian War. When Elim had enjoyed the crown a few years, he was obliged to relinquish it in favour of the more fortunate Teuthal, son of the late monarch.

TEUTHAL

TEUTHAL being securely established on the throne, according to the custom of his predecessors, assembled the states at Tarah, pointed out the dreadful consequences of a perpetual competition for the crown among a number of ambitious rivals, and prevailed with them solemnly to engage that they would confine the succession to his family. This, to please them, that assembly had done, on more occasions than one, at the desire of their princes. But the engagement to Teuthal was broken, as it had been to his predecessors, being considered as a restraint inconsistent with Liberty, and a violation of the original form of the constitution. The states likewise gratified him in making an addition to the royal domain, which was necessary, as, with the progress of society, the expences of government encrease in proportion. This king revived the institutions of Ollam Fodlah, whose conduct he proposed to himself as the perfect model of a prince and legislator. He was particularly attentive to the institutions of religion, and established among the druids a just and regular subordination. For the entertainment of his people, and to improve their strength and activity, he renewed certain sports and military exercises which had been formerly celebrated on the plains of Tiltean.

THE Milesians, vain of their origin, and of their consequence, as the proprietors of the kingdom, had refused to be employed in any of the mechanic arts. These they left to be exercised by the remains of the Belgæ. Teuthal laboured to remove this absurd prejudice by addressing himself to the principle from which it was derived. He instituted societies to bestow marks of honor upon such as were distinguished



guished in the mechanical occupations, and to disgrace the insufficient. But the domestic peace of Teuthal was interrupted by a pungent misfortune. He had married his daughter to Eochaid, king of Leinster. Eochaid corrupted her sister. The Queen, not able to bear such shocking treatment, died of anguish. This event was fatal to her sister; she died also. Such detestable conduct roused the indignation of Teuthal. He raised a formidable army, with which he invaded the territories of Eochaid. The adulterer was unable to resist the arms of Teuthal. To escape the punishment due to his villainy, he, and his people, solemnly engaged that the province of Leinster would pay to the Monarch of Ireland, every second year, a very heavy tribute. Whatever ambition may prompt, or the example of conquerors, in such instances, pretend to vindicate, justice and humanity conspire in distinguishing innocence from guilt. It is reproachful to the memory of Teuthal, that he involved the unoffending subjects of Eochaid, in the punishment of his crime. Freemen can never submit patiently to such a violation of their rights. For a long series of years, the Baromean Tribute, as it is called, was a source of bitter calamities, not only to the province of Leinster, but to the kingdom. Mal, a branch of the house of Ir, sacrificed Eochaid to his ambition, after he had reigned thirty years.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R XVII.

**F**EIDLIM, the grandson of Teuthal, slew Mal, after he had swayed the Irish sceptre four years,

and ascended the throne. He had the same laudable desire to improve the constitution which distinguished his grandfather. There was, in particular, a defect in the administration of justice which he laboured to correct. In Ireland, as in the early period of many other nations, all offences were punished by a fine. To more heinous crimes, as we before observed, this was inadequate. Instead of a fine, Feidlim, by his influence with the states, introduced the law of retaliation. By it, the aggressor, if the case admitted, suffered a punishment from the injured person, or his friends, of the same nature with the offence committed. If an injury was done which did not admit of a proper and strict retaliation, an adequate punishment was substituted in its place. This was an improvement of their criminal law which coincides with our strictest ideas of justice. But this wise institution of the virtuous Feidlim had not a permanent effect. Nothing is more difficult than to change national customs established by long prescription. This prince died at Tarah, in peace, the year of Christ, one hundred and fifty.

CON, having taken off by the sword his predecessor, of whom we know nothing but that he reigned three years and was very rich, was placed upon the throne. The courage of few of our princes is represented in more striking terms by the annalists of Ireland. He reigned thirty five years, almost the whole of which period was filled up with the operations of war. The particular enterprizes recorded of him, reflect but little honor upon his justice. The first relates to the baromean tribute which he demanded of the king of Leinster. It was refused, upon which Con led his forces



forces into that province. His first efforts were unsuccessful being defeated in two engagements and expelled from Tarah. But he was not intimidated by misfortune or compelled to relinquish his design. He redoubled his exertions, collected a powerful army with which he vanquished his opponent and exacted the regular payment of the stipulated tribute. The next war in which he engaged, had, as it deserved, a more disgraceful conclusion. Eugene the Great, of the line of Heber, who was also known by the name of Mogha Nuadat, displeased that he had been deprived of the Province of Munster by the descendants of Degad, collected an army, with which he engaged in battle Angus who then sat upon the Munster throne. Eugene obtained a complete victory and recovered the territory of which he had been dispossessed. Having reinforced his army with fifteen thousand men, he placed himself at their head and fought, once more, the troops of Eugene. He was now entirely vanquished. Con, the relation, and the friend of Angus, now became a principal in the quarrel and declared war against Eugene. Many battles were fought with various success; but, in the end, the valour of Con was forced to yield to the magnanimity of his more fortunate rival. He was compelled to give up a part of his territory and to submit to a new partition of the kingdom. A line was drawn from North to South to distinguish, in future, the rights of the two families. This division was known afterwards by the names of Leath Con and Leath Mogha. Ambition can never be at rest. A new contest arose betwixt the two rival princes. Con, having experienced the superiour good fortune of the

prince of the South had recourse to stratagem. At night, he attacked the army of Eugene by surprise, which, notwithstanding this disadvantage, fought long with obstinate valour; but Eugene was killed and the battle ended. The adherents of Eugene, determined to support the rights of his family, prepared to prosecute the war with renewed ardour. Con foresaw the probable consequence; he demanded a cessation of arms. To purchase peace, he paid a considerable fine and acknowledged the independence of the territories lately marked out as the exclusive right of the family of the house of Heber. A war with the king of Ulster, the cause of which is not explained, ended the life of this turbulent descendant of Heremon.

It was in the reign of Art, the son of Con, that Riada, the chieftain, led forth a number of followers who settled in Albany. This was the first regular colony from Ireland established in that country. From it the Dalraidias of Argyleshire derive their original.

LUGHAD, of the race of Ith, and Fergus, of that of Heremon, having, in succession to Art, filled the throne, the next king of Ireland was Cormac, an Heremonian, who was chosen monarch, in the year of Christ, two hundred and fifty four. Our annals have handed down his reputation in shining colours. The good effects of the civil institutions of Cormac are said to have been felt in Ireland for many years. In those days of turbulence, peace, even during the government of the wisest princes, was but of short continuance. Many were the battles which Cormac fought with the king of Munster. In the beginning, he was victorious, but,  
towards



towards the conclusion of the war, fortune stripped him of the laurels he had won, and bestowed them on his competitor. Upon another occasion, the event was more favourable to his wishes. Either from a just cause, or, to gratify his ambition, he almost entirely extinguished the power of the Damnonians, who had governed the kingdom almost two hundred years, and given princes to Connaught for many centuries. But, in one of his military expeditions, he was so unfortunate as to lose an eye. By the Irish constitution, no person maimed in any respect, could be elected or permitted to sit on the throne. Cormac, obedient to the laws of his country, freely relinquished the crown which was placed on the head of Eochad, grandson of Fergus. It is highly probable that this prince did not consider this change of situation as a mortifying or a painful circumstance. He had experienced that the honours of royalty receive a bitter tincture from the evils of civil commotion and the calamities of war. Less elevated in the eye of ambition, but more consonant to reason and humanity are the pleasures of the calm and peaceful retreat.

CORMAC had a taste for learning and philosophy. We are informed that in his retirement, besides other works which he composed, he wrote a tract, for the benefit of a son who had a prospect of being one day raised to the throne of his ancestors, entitled "advice to a king," in which he instructed him in the duties of a soldier, a legislator and a statesman. This performance is said to have been extant in the seventeenth century. There are some reasons to suppose that Cormac before his death, renounced

Paganism and embraced the pure and rational doctrines of the Christian religion.

Adieu.

### LETTER XVIII.

**S**HORTLY after the death of Cormac, his son Carbry, was invested with the sovereign power. Profited by the wise instructions of his father and in imitation of his example, he framed wholesome institutions, with a view to bring order from confusion, by laying restraints on those violent passions, which, operating without control in the breasts of his subjects, produced effects highly destructive to the state. These ordinances of Carbry are spoken of by our historians in warm terms of approbation. But when the manners of a people are of a complexion quite different from their laws, the latter can have but little influence on their conduct. How forcibly are we led to this conclusion when, from the same cause, we see the legislator himself contradict in practise his own principles. Carbry, who, as monarch of Ireland should have been disposed to promote the happiness of all his subjects and with that view formed the political regulations we have mentioned, led an army into Leinster to enforce the payment of that most iniquitous tax, the baromean tribute. Several instances of the like inconsistency occur in the History of Ireland.

WE are told that in the reign of Carbry, the militia of Ireland whose exploits are so highly emblazoned in the songs of the Bards, were disbanded. The cause is not explained. It was originally established to preserve internal peace, to defend the  
coasts



coasts from piratical depredations, and to assist, when occasion required, the foreign allies of the state. Very particular attention was paid to the qualifications of those who were admitted into it, and great pains taken to instruct them in the art of war and to inspire them with generosity, fidelity and courage. This military corps consisted, in time of peace, of nine, and, in war, of twenty one thousand men. They were divided into three battalions, to each of which regular officers were appointed, from their commander in chief, the celebrated Fin Mac Comhal, to the lowest department. In summer, they encamped in the open fields. Their principal support was procured by hunting and fishing. From November to May, they were quartered upon the inhabitants, and, to prevent them from being burdensome, received pay from the monarch. Had this body of men, who were trained to subordination, and might, in a great measure, be considered as regular troops, been employed in discharging the duties of their original institution, they would have contributed greatly to restrain those civil commotions by which the kingdom was so miserably harassed. Instead of this, there is reason to suppose that they were frequently made use of as the instruments of ambition.

FIACHA, of the house of Heremon elected successor to Carbry, began to reign in the year two hundred and ninety seven. Muredach his son was animated by the love of glory. The genius which he discovered, at an early period, for military achievements, engaged, in a very particular manner, the affections of his father. Fond partiality prevailed with Fiacha to place him at the head of his troops, and by his influence in the province to get him

him chosen sovereign of Connaught. In consequence of the honours by which Muredach was distinguished, he became an object of envy. The Collas took up arms, determined to prevent him from succeeding to the monarchy and to sacrifice to their resentment the too indulgent father. Fiacha engaged them in battle and was numbred with the slain. One of the Collas seized the crown, but, in four years, he was deprived of his usurped honours. Muredach, at the end of that period, drove him from the throne, on which he himself was placed, as the reward of his valour.

THE Collas were banished from the kingdom and compelled to fly for protection to Albany. In three years, they returned to Ireland. They were now in the power of Muredach, but the marks of repentance which they discovered, induced him not only to pardon their crime, but to distinguish them with his confidence. He did more. He gave them seven thousand men to enable them to procure a settlement in Ulster, which they determined to invade, in consequence of a pretended affront which some of their ancestors should have received from the king of that province. These adventurers succeeded in their design, but Muredach, during the absence of so considerable a part of his forces, was attacked by Colbach, one of his chieftains, by whom he was deprived not only of his kingdom but his life.

NOT longer than a year did Colbach enjoy the crown purchased by this act of villainy. He was slain by Eochaid the son of Muredach who succeeded to the throne. The Picts and Saxons being at this time engaged in war with the Romans and their  
British



Brittish auxiliaries, received assistance from Eochaid. The event was unfortunate. This expedition and the bad success with which it was attended are pointed out by Claudian and Ammianus Marcellinus.

CRIMTHAN is the next monarch recorded in the list of our Irish kings. His reign commenced in the year three hundred and sixty seven. He likewise, we are informed, sent over an army to the aid of the Piets. Hence, we may reasonably suppose, they became so troublesome to their neighbours. That they were considered in a formidable light, the great wall of separation built by the Romans to restrain their incursions into Britain, is a convincing proof. Tacitus expressly says that the Romans could never depend upon the secure possession of Britain until they had conquered Ireland.

Farewell.

## LETTER XIX.

**N**IALL, surnamed the Great, the successor of Crimthan was a prince highly distinguished. The Piets had long been settled in Albany, and, on account of the assistance which they at first received from this country and their marriage with it's females, were esteemed an Irish colony. We have seen that formerly a colony had emigrated to that country who, from their leader, took the name of the Dalraidas. Notwithstanding the common ties by which they were united, they quarrelled. Niall re-established peace betwixt these sister colonies, and as a standing memorial that the districts which they possessed were peopled from this kingdom, Albany was from that time called Scotia Minor and Ireland, as  
the

the parent state, was distinguished by the name of Scotia Major. Prompted by ambition, Niall took this opportunity of breaking through the Roman wall. He attacked the Britons, desolated their country and returned home laden with plunder. Encouraged by this success, he carried an army to Gaul, and, in conjunction with the Saxons, ravaged the coasts of Brittany. Our historians say, that some time after having engaged the assistance of the general of the Dalraidias, he made a second expedition to the same country which had the misfortune, once more, to be wasted by his depredations. The inhabitants fled from his approach, leaving their houses and their all to the mercy of the conqueror. But short-lived was the triumph of Niall over justice and humanity. A son of the king of Leinster with whom he had a quarrel before he left Ireland, to gratify his resentment, followed him to Gaul, concealed himself in a grove, and, as he was sitting carelessly on the banks of the Loire, pierced him with an arrow to the heart. Upon the death of Niall, the progress of the invaders, instantly stopt. To the great joy of the natives, they ceased from their depredations and returned to their several countries. This prince died in the year four hundred and six and was succeeded by his nephew Dathy.

It was in the reign of Dathy that a number of Gauls and Britons, driven by civil commotions from their native country, fled for protection to Ireland where they were kindly received and places assigned for their habitation, which, even to this day, are distinguished by their name.

THE Romans, at this time, being distressed on the continent were obliged to withdraw their forces from



from Britain. Dathy and his friends the Picts who seem to have acted in concert with the Saxons, seized the favourable opportunity and invaded that country where their arms made rapid progress. More than once, they renewed their invasions. The Romans employed in other quarters and tired by opposing enemies whose obstinate perseverance they were unable to subdue, left the Britons to defend themselves and renounced all connexion with their country for ever. This haughty people, who had extended their conquests to almost every nation of the globe, being shortly after deprived of their power, have afforded a striking example of the instability of human greatness, many instances of which occur in the revolutions of the world,

Farewell,

## L E T T E R XX.

**D**A THY, who, on his return from Britain, led an army into Gaul, where, as it is said, he perished by a stroke of lightning at the foot of the Alps, concludes the list of our pagan monarchs. Our critics have also pronounced that his death closed the period of our history which is intermixed with fable. There is no doubt but we may now look for more satisfactory information. Still however we must guard against imposition. The monks have handed down to us a variety of accounts, respecting the transactions of their times, which can be considered in no other light, than as legendary tales.

THE year four hundred and twenty eight was the period when Laogary, the successor of Dathy, and the son of Niall the Great, ascended the Irish throne.

The

The first remarkable action which he performed was to invade Britain, where we are told, his arms were so successful that the Britons were compelled to pay him a considerable tribute. The baromean tribute was the next object of his attention. He demanded the payment of it. The people of Leinster refused; in consequence of which, Laogary entered that province with an army. Crimthan, king of Leinster, had both spirit and force to support the rights of his people. He met the monarch in the field, vanquished his troops and took himself prisoner. Laogary bound himself by an oath, that he would exonerate the Leinstrians from the payment of the tribute, and regained his liberty. But, absolved by the druids, he broke his engagement and pursued his iniquitous claim. Long before this period, the druids had corrupted the principles of religion, a flagrant proof that their practise was consonant. The period was now come when the goodness of Providence was to dispel in that country the darkness of Paganism and to enlighten it with the divine truths of the Christian religion. Prior to this, some feeble efforts had been made to introduce among us the doctrines of the Gospel. By the preaching of four missionaries, a few converts had been made, some time after the reign of Cormac, who, as we have observed, is supposed to have died in the belief of Christianity.

In the year four hundred and thirty one, Palladius, with twelve assistants, was sent from Rome, by Pope Celestine, to plant the Faith in this kingdom. But he had little success. The conversion of the Irish to Christianity was reserved for Saint Patrick, who had more zeal and perseverance in this glorious cause. This celebrated man, to whose pious labours



our country is so much indebted, was the son of Calphurnius, a person of a respectable family, who resided at Kirkpatrick in Scotland, a place situated betwixt Dunbarton and the city of Glasgow. Being, as we are informed, on a visit to some of his relations in Brittany, he was, at his sixteenth year, taken prisoner by O'Niall, then engaged in the expedition to that country mentioned before, and brought over to Ireland, where he was sold for a slave. After being a captive six years, he recovered his liberty, and returned to his parents. Having devoted himself to the ministry, he travelled into foreign parts, to acquire those improvements necessary to qualify him for discharging with propriety the duties of that important office. At Rome, it is supposed, he was consecrated bishop. With a view to propagate the Faith, accompanied by some assistants, who, as we are told, were, like himself, distinguished by piety and learning, he arrived in Ireland, in his sixtieth year, and in the fourth of the reign of Laogary. His first attempts were unsuccessful. But he determined to persevere. The violence of opposition began to subside, and, in some time, his labours were crowned with considerable success. In our records, the effects of his preaching, and zealous efforts to propagate the Gospel, are magnified beyond credibility, but there is not the least doubt of his having converted such numbers to the Faith as shook the foundations of idolatry, and produced the entire change which afterwards took place in the kingdom, in favour of Christianity. The churches and the seminaries of Christian knowledge which he founded, kept alive, in the minds of his followers, the truths they had learned, and had a

lasting

lasting influence in diffusing the Gospel throughout the nation.

ONE institution of his was remarkably politic. You know that certain hereditary honours were annexed to the druidical order. In conformity to this idea, he appointed that the pastors of the respective churches should be confined to certain families, and that the lands set apart for their support should descend regularly by inheritance. Thus, the druids, whose power in the nation was extensive, and who were most averse to a change in religion, became inclined to embrace Christianity, when they found that, in professing it, so much of their ancient customs were preserved, and that their interest was not affected by it. The particular privileges of the lands set apart for the support of the druids are plainly recognised in the termon, or church lands, all such being so called by the Irish. These were free from all manner of impositions; they had the immunity of sanctuaries, into which no civil officer might enter to execute any arrest, the bishop's officers, only, excepted.

To suppose that St. Patrick assumed the power of a metropolitan, which would, in a great measure, have confined his residence and his attention to a particular place, is quite inconsistent with the duties of the office in which he was engaged. A variety of places required successively his presence and superintending care. He neither pretended to have derived any power from the Pope, nor attempted to impose it on others. The idea of a supreme infallible head of the church was then unknown in any part of Christendom. This venerable apostle, whom we must ever remember with gratitude, after hav-

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ing exerted himself, for many years, in promoting the best of causes, and lived to see very promising fruits of his labour, descended to the grave in a good old age.

AMONG other persons of station who at this time embraced Christianity was Laogary the monarch. We have seen that this prince had invaded Britain; he once more, in conjunction with the Picts, led over an army to that country, which continued to be harassed by their irruptions, until the battle of Stamford, in Lincolnshire, when the Britons were finally delivered from them; but the Saxons, by whose aid they had obtained the victory, instead of acting the part of friendly auxiliaries, took possession of the kingdom.

LAOGARY died in the year four hundred and fifty eight, and was succeeded by Olliol Molt of the house of Heremon. The preceding monarch had suffered deeply, by attempting to exact the baromean tribute. This example, so recent, did not prevent Olliol from pursuing the same object. He led an army into Leinster to enforce the payment of the tax by his arms. A battle was fought betwixt the two contending parties. The event is not related.

OLLIOL was soon engaged in a contest of a very different nature, but which, from the want of due subordination and the confusion of the times which followed, in consequence of it, was too frequent. The son of Laogary was a minor when Olliol ascended the throne. He had now arrived at his twenty fifth year, the period in which he was eligible to the crown. As the right of his family, he determined to claim it. Olliol prepared for the contest. The fortune of the young Luighaid prevailed. In  
the

the plains of Ocha he slew his competitor and was crowned monarch. There cannot be a greater misfortune to a nation than to be subject to the calamities incident to a disputed succession.

LUGHAD descended from Heremon and of the house of Niall, strengthened, very considerably, the influence of his family. The pentarchy continued, but much diminished in it's power. From this period, the provincial kings, make no longer a respectable figure in the history of this country.

WE are told that in this year the Dalraidias being expelled from North Britain, by the Picts, were obliged to have recourse for assistance to Ireland their parent state. By the aid which they received from thence, they regained their possessions in Scotland and extended their settlements more widely into the northern parts of that country. Affairs there were now about to assume a more favourable aspect.

FREQUENT contests betwixt the families of Heremon and Heber had arisen, concerning the succession to the Irish throne. Ulster, more contiguous to Scotland, was possessed by the house of Heremon, which, of consequence, was more frequently assisted by the Picts. To lessen the strength of the Heremonians, by weakening that of their allies, princes of the line of Heber, had frequently invaded Scotland, but from the time that England was invaded by the Romans, the Irish dreading the power of that ambitious people, united themselves, without distinction, to the Picts, against the common enemy, for the sake of mutual safety. Hence the number of Irish, resident in Scotland, daily encreased. But their settlements were detached, connected by no common bond of union. Each particular clan or sept knew



no dependance, except the subordinate ties by which it was attached to it's own leader. The sons of Erc had been encouraged by the monarch to pass over for an establishment to Scotland; shortly after which, Fergus, the younger brother, was proclaimed king of the Albanian Scots, all of whom he united under his government.

Farewell.

### LETTER XXI.

**T**HE account transmitted of the succeeding reigns are quite unimportant until we descend to Baoden, who, in the year five hundred and sixty six, was chosen monarch. He was of the line of Here-mon. An incident which happened in the beginning of his reign, has led me to mention him. Shortly after his election, Baoden was defeated in a battle, probably fought with one of the provincial kings. Pressed by the enemy, he fled for refuge to a monastery, but no respect was paid to his asylum; he was torn from it and put to death. The monastery belonged to the famous Saint Columba. Irritated by the profanation, he exerted all his influence to avenge it. He raised the standard of war to which his partizans flocked in numbers, animated by religious zeal. A battle was the consequence. Columba, though a minister of the religion of peace, took but little pains to control his passions, which, it appears, were uncommonly violent. Upon a former occasion, he had disturbed the public peace. This, with the excesses now mentioned, provoked his countrymen who determined to submit no longer to his turbulence. Driven from the kingdom, he

fled for an asylum to North Britain. Columba had filled a distinguished place in the eminent school of Saint Finian at Clonard. Here he cultivated the several branches of knowledge, then in vogue, with particular attention, by which he acquired proportional reputation and influence. Taught wisdom by the consequence of his folly, he determined to atone, in the place of his exile, for his past misconduct. Many of the North Britons were ignorant of the Gospel; Columba laboured to instruct them in the knowledge of it's sublime doctrines with indefatigable zeal. His efforts in this noble cause, his endeavours to do good, his exemplary conversation in future life, bore witness to the sincerity of his repentance.

IN the year five hundred and sixty seven, Hugh, the son of Ainmer, was chosen successor to Baoden. The acts of a national assembly convened in his time, are highly celebrated. One of them particularly taken notice of, relates to the public schools. The masters of these schools, like the bards and those of the clergy substituted in their place, enjoyed particular immunities. In every revolution, their persons and their property were secure from injury. Students, and those connected with them, were subject neither to taxes nor military duties. These privileges were abused. Numbers of youth, indisposed to discharge the duties of active life, crowded to those seminaries, where they gratified their indolent temper, to the disgrace of learning and the prejudice of society. In satirical rhimes, they exposed, with wanton licentiousness, those who were the objects of their dislike. The national assembly above mentioned, took this abuse into consideration. In each school, the number



bet of scholars was restricted, their petulance corrected, and those subjects forbidden, which were prejudicial to religion or injurious to the character of individuals. It is said that until this meeting of the states, the Albanian Scots had paid tribute to the Irish monarchs. They were now exempted, from this mark of subjection, and raised to the honourable distinction of being considered as their friends and allies.

### LETTER XXII.

**W**E must pass over in silence a number of the succeeding reigns. In the year, six hundred and seventy eight, the crown was placed on the head of Fionachta. To compel the payment of the usual tax, he invaded Leinster, in imitation of his predecessor. In a pitched battle, his forces obtained the victory over the people of that province. Mr. O'Halloran, to whom, for his assistance in this part of the subject I have been much indebted, relates here a striking incident. The archbishop of Ferns touched with the miseries of his country, at the head of his clergy, represented to the triumphant monarch in lively colours, the hardships to which the baromean, tribute had subjected the people of Leinster, for six hundred years: that the imposition was iniquitous; that it was oppressive and displeasing to God. He beseeched him to alleviate the sufferings of his countrymen. The mind of Fionachta was noble and generous: being struck with the solemnity of the train that accompanied this distinguished prelate and with his affecting description of the calamities of his country, both for himself and his successors, he engaged to exempt the Leinstrians from the payment of the tribute.

tribute. This act of justice did him more honor than the splendor of a thousand victories.

THE remainder of the reign of this monarch was much disturbed, particularly by irruptions from Britain. In the end, the invaders were overthrown and compelled to evacuate the kingdom. Fionachta reigned twenty years. The hand of violence consigned him to the grave.

WITH respect to learning, we are informed that in the fourth century the monks began to be distinguished for piety and knowledge. Though strangers to the true principles of science, there is no doubt but they were much better instructed than the neighbouring nations, all of whom, at this period, were involved in great darkness. For scholastic philosophy and divinity, they were famous over Europe. Among these, Saint Bridget was more particularly distinguished. At an early period, she devoted herself to the monastic life, for the duties of which she was well qualified being equally remarkable for piety, benevolence and austerity. Several writings are ascribed to her. This female Saint was highly honoured in her own country. Her fame, it is said, even extended to the continent. At her death, she was canonized. The province of Leinster, in particular, considered her as it's patroness and tutelary Saint.

DURING the seventh century, schools and seminaries in the different parts of the kingdom multiplied. In the school at Armagh we are told there were seven thousand scholars; in that of Clonard, three thousand. Lismore was in this respect still more eminently distinguished. This was the period when foreigners, the Britons, the Germans, the Teutones,  
the



the Swifs, the Sicambri and other nations of the North, reforted to Ireland for improvement. Then it was that this country received the honourable appellation of, “the island of the holy and the learned.” Then it was, more particularly, that missionaries were sent from us to different places of the continent, to propagare the Christian religion and scholastic philosophy, the fashionable learning of the times. Mezeray the historian testifies, in respect to France, that crowds of religious flocked from Ireland to that country and were useful, even in temporal matters. They were not indolent; they laboured with their hands; they tilled the ground, they built, they planted, and this with a view to feed and cherish the poor. Their labours were most successful. Heaven seemed to smile upon them. “I shall say nothing, he farther observes, of their having preserved almost all the remains of the history of these times.” Amidst such scenes of darkness and confusion, how pleasing is this description, how honourable to our countrymen, and to the peculiar genius of their learned institutions!

Farewell.

### LETTER XXIII.

**Y**OU have seen that Fionachta exonerated the Leinstrians from the baromean tribute. He kept his engagement; but, it was violated by his successor. Feargal, who ascended the throne in seven hundred and thirteen, paid no regard to it. He led twenty one thousand men to Leinster, in support of this claim. Murrough, King of Leinster, met him in the field with nine thousand men to defend

the rights of his country. He encountered him at Almuin. Feargal was slain and his army entirely vanquished.

AN invasion of the Picts and intestine dissensions fill up the scene, from the death of this monarch to the second year of the reign of Aod who was advanced to the throne in the year seven hundred and ninety seven. The peace of Ireland was now about to be disturbed from a new and unexpected quarter.

THE irruption of the barbarous nations into the Roman empire, with the rapid destruction of that mighty fabric, for many centuries the terror and admiration of the world, is one of the most remarkable events recorded in the history of mankind. How it was possible for the cold and uncultivated regions of the North, to produce the multitudes by which it was accomplished, has been, to the curious, a matter of much speculation. Countries, which at present, though much better improved, are by no means populous, must, at so remote a period, have been still more thinly inhabited. Had it been otherwise, these emigrants would never have conceived a design of changing their situation. Populousness is the consequence of a fruitful soil. A fruitful soil can scarcely be overstocked with inhabitants. The people of the North, pinched by the want of subsistence were forced to desert their country and look elsewhere for a more comfortable settlement. The number of emigrants was supplied in a continued succession. Those who dwelt to the South of these vast dreary regions first deserted their habitations, whose place was occupied by their neighbours. Pressed upon by the more remote and encouraged by the success of their countrymen, they removed, in their turn,



turn, to make way for new commers, ready to take up, in their room, the same temporary abode. The countries, whose inhabitants, from the first emigration, thus moved forwards, in a regular course, were so extensive as to occupy a very considerable part of Europe. Of those invaders, such as possessed the maritime parts of Denmark, Sweden Livonia and the neighbouring countries, being rendered from their situation, skilful in naval affairs, were naturally led to make their expeditions by sea in quest of new habitations.

At the period above mentioned, a very considerable number of those foreigners, whom our authors have distinguished by the common appellation of Danes, landed in Ireland. They continued for some time, to ravage the coast. But Aod having collected an army defeated them. Those who survived reached with difficulty their ships. Some time after, they made another attempt on the Province of Ulster, which was equally unsuccessful. But, before they were repulsed, they committed great destruction in the country. Barbarous in their manners and sunk in the grossest ignorance, nothing sacred or profane escaped their indiscriminating fury. Among other depredations, they burned to the ground Lismore with it's school, so highly celebrated by our Irish annalists.

THE Danes had carried to their countrymen such accounts of Ireland as rendered it an object of desire to those who wished to exchange the unpleasantness of severe colds and a barren land for the advantage of a temperate climate and a fertile soil. Hence, a new body of them crossed the sea and made a descent upon Leinster. But the former spirited efforts  
of

of their neighbours, in preservation of their rights and their property against this dangerous enemy, were not imitated by the men of this province on the present occasion. They fled before the Danes and left their possessions to be wasted by their depredations. The enemy encouraged by this shameful timidity, advanced forwards into the country, loading themselves, in their progress, with plunder. By this time, the Leinstrians had recovered from their panic. Ashamed of their misconduct and reinforced by their friends, they attacked the invaders with their usual intrepidity and after an obstinate engagement defeated them. The Danes lost all their booty and seventeen hundred men.

Adieu.

## LETTER XXIV.

**A**LL the attempts made by the Danes upon Ireland had been unsuccessful. But, by this time, they were much better acquainted with the advantages of the country, and, of consequence, animated by stronger desire to procure in it, if possible, a permanent establishment. With a fleet of sixty sail, in the reign of Feidlim, they made a powerful descent on the province of Munster. After committing their usual barbarities, they were repulsed, with slaughter. During the reign of Feidlim, they made several other desultory attacks on different parts of the island.

BUT an invasion of these foreigners, much more formidable and more fatal in its consequences, was made in the year eight hundred and fifteen. Their troops, were commanded by Turgesius, a man not

more



more celebrated for his courage than the barbarous ferocity of his temper. A hundred and twenty ships carried over the enemy from Denmark. Of these, they made two divisions; one of which entered the river Boyne, the other, the Liffey, in order to distract the attention of the Irish. When intelligence of their landing was brought to the several parties of Danes scattered through the country, they exulted in their flattering prospects, united with one consent and arranged themselves under the banner of Turgesius. The invaders now penetrated to the center of the kingdom. Caille who succeeded Aod, does not appear, at this alarming crisis, to have behaved, in defence of his crown and the rights of his people, with the spirit and dignity becoming a monarch. Besides, the chieftains, instead of uniting against the common enemy, suffered themselves to be embroiled in civil commotions, more indifferent to their own safety and the public good than to the gratification of their private passions. The wretched inhabitants were despoiled of their property. Schools, churches; every thing, in particular, connected with religion, became a prey to the impious and merciless cruelty of the conqueror. Wherever he came, military law was established; the rapacity of the soldier extinguished the feelings of compassion and was equally deaf to the voice of justice and humanity. The foreigners were by this time possessed of a considerable part of the kingdom. Malachy, who, it is said, now sat upon the throne, had done as little for the safety of the kingdom, as his predecessor. He had been hitherto but the shadow of a king. But, an event happened which called forth his spirit into action. Turgesius cast his eye on his daughter and demand-

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ed her in marriage. The monarch considered the alliance as inglorious; it would be a disgrace to his family. His sense of honor, his resentment were roused. In consequence of his vigorous exertions, his subjects united and rose universally upon the Danes. The greatest part of them were driven from the kingdom. Turgesius was taken and suffered, by the hand of justice, the merited punishment of his crimes. A national assembly was convened in which an act of amnesty was published and a resolution formed that in future private resentments should be sacrificed to the public good. Had they adhered to this virtuous resolution, Ireland had nothing to fear from a foreign enemy, and it's inhabitants would have been a happy people.

THE Danes had built castles and strong holds for the security of their power. These were demolished. With respect to such of the foreigners as remained in the kingdom, they were permitted to settle in the maritime towns, to carry on, for the public benefit, as was supposed, the several branches of trade with which they were acquainted.

THIS indulgence however, the Irish had cause to repent, for numbers of Danes came to this country, from time to time, and settled, with a view, as they alledged, to trade. These adventurers consoling, as it ever happens, of the most artful and enterprizing of their countrymen, insinuated themselves into the favourable opinion of the princes in whose territories they had taken up their residence. By degrees, their influence increasing, they obtained important privileges in several of the principal towns. Thus did they once more become formidable. Dissentions arose, and new battles were fought, with various  
success,



success, betwixt them and the natives, the latter of whom diminished their own strength, and, in proportion, encreased that of the enemy by the intestine commotions in which they were involved. Whatever evils arose from the dissentions of the Irish, they had not been prejudicial to men of learning or to seminaries of knowledge. These commanded so much respect, from all parties, as to remain uninjured even in the most distracted times. But the invasions of the Danes, were particularly destructive to learning and the Christian religion. Many of our scholars fled to the continent, among whom are reckoned Clement, the celebrated Scotus, commonly called John Erigena and others. The knowlege which they carried from Ireland, they transplanted and cultivated in foreign countries.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R XXV.

**F**LÁN, elected monarch in the year eight hundred and seventy nine, sat upon the throne many years. It was a favourable circumstance to the Danes, who were permitted to encrease their power in the kingdom, at pleasure. The warlike atchievements of Flan did not consist in attempting to expel the enemies of his country. They were directed to a much more inglorious object, the prosecuting with hostilities those of his subjects who had incurred his resentment.

NIALL the fourth, who next sat on the throne, was well disposed to check the progress of the common enemies, but, instead of being able to repress their power, he had the mortification to see it strengthened by

by a very considerable reinforcement. With this, they attacked Dublin, took it by storm and put the inhabitants to the sword. Alarmed by this event, a numerous army crowded to the standard of the monarch, which, on the sixteenth of October, in the year nine hundred and nineteen, engaged the Danes, in the vicinity of Dublin. The conflict was long and violent. At last, the Irish gave way. Niall resolving not to survive the disgrace, rushed into the thickest of the fight and perished. With him fell the prince of Ulster and many others of distinction, besides the numbers that were slain of an inferior rank.

DONACHAD the Second succeeded Niall. In his reign, the Irish defeated the Danes, in more than one engagement. But none of their generals, at this period, was so distinguished as Ceallachan King of Munster. The vigorous exertions of this valiant prince had expelled these foreigners entirely from his province. This led to consequences so important as to merit a more particular detail.

SITRICK, general of the Danes, equally remarkable for his cruelty and valour, finding it impossible to regain, by open force, a re-establishment in Munster, determined to carry his point by treachery. With this view, he assumed the mask of friendship, and proposed, to the king of that province, to enter into a treaty of amity; and, to convince him of his sincerity, offered him his sister in marriage. As the Danes were still powerful in Ireland, it was natural for Ceallachan to wish that an end should be finally put to the distractions of his unhappy country. Besides, the lady was beautiful. She was once his captive, and had made a favourable impression on his heart. For these reasons, he embraced the proposal,



posal, set off for Dublin where Sitrick resided, in order to conclude the treaty, and consummate the marriage. Unsuspecting of any criminal design in the Dane, he took with him only a part of his guards, leaving behind his principal force to protect the province, the care of which he had committed to Kennedy, a faithful relation, on whose vigilance and fidelity he placed the greatest dependance. Ceallachan was now arrived in the vicinity of Dublin. Sitrick had grossly abused the unsuspecting confidence of this generous prince. The object of his scheme was, to get him in his power, with a view to deprive him of a capacity of protecting his country. He had the imprudence to communicate this dishonourable intention to his wife, an Irish lady of distinguished birth; who heard it with indignation, and, as expeditiously as possible, conveyed secretly an account of the whole matter to Ceallachan. Astonished at this intelligence the prince too late saw his fatal error. Every thing pointed out an instant retreat from the snare of his treacherous enemy. He wheeled about with his attendants, but, his efforts to escape were vain. The guards of Sitrick, had been ordered to take possession of the way through which he had passed. Ceallachan, not intimidated by this imminent danger, courageously endeavoured to break through the enemy. But numbers prevailed over valour; after the loss of many of his men, the Munster prince was taken prisoner and led back, in triumph, to Dublin. The Dane having thus executed his ungenerous scheme, resolved to profit by it; he proposed to set his prisoner at liberty, upon condition, that Limerick, Cashel, Waterford, Cork and all the garrisoned towns of Munster

ster should be delivered to him, and a considerable sum of money paid for his ransom. It was impossible that Ceallachan who had been hitherto the magnanimous defender of his country, could listen to terms, so dishonourable and so highly prejudicial to it's interest. By a messenger which he was permitted to send to Munster with these conditions, he entreated his countrymen to pay no regard to them, but to exert themselves with spirit and endeavour to bring Sitrick to reason by force of arms. Kennedy, to whom it has been said the care of the province was entrusted, behaved gloriously on this trying occasion. He raised a numerous army which he led to Armagh where Ceallachan had been conveyed for the greater security of his person. Sitrick was alarmed. Immediately with a proper escort, he removed his prisoner to Dundalk, giving orders that he should be sent to Denmark under convoy of a fleet collected there for the purpose.

MEAN while Kennedy attacked the enemy's forces at Armagh and obtained a compleat victory, upon which, he led his triumphant army to Dundalk, with all possible expedition, for the deliverance of their king. But too late. Before they arrived, he was put on board, and placed beyond the reach of their assistance. Deeply affected by the disappointment, they crouded to the shore lamenting the loss of a prince, whose efforts in behalf of their liberties, had been so glorious to himself and so much endeared him to his country. But whilst they were indulging these feelings, a number of ships, under a brisk gale, appeared in sight bearing down upon the Danes. It was the fleet of Munster collected by the order of Kennedy and commanded to sail round and attack



the ships of the enemy. The two fleets immediately engaged. Before this, our countrymen had made no figure in naval affairs; on the present occasion, courage supplied the place of skill. The Irish entirely routed the enemy. Their victorious fleet entered the harbour of Dundalk. Ceallachan was living and had regained his liberty, a circumstance which exceedingly heightened the transports felt on this happy occasion. The king returned to Munster where he was received by his subjects with similar expressions of affection. His patriotism, and other virtues, had commanded universal love and admiration.

HAVING recruited his forces, Ceallachan determined to use every possible effort to deliver his country from the power of the Danes, whose tyranny, and insidious snares he had so fortunately escaped. The design succeeded to his wishes. His army was repeatedly victorious, and these foreigners reduced to a necessity of evacuating the kingdom.

He did not long survive this happy event. Shortly after, he descended quietly, with honor, to the grave. Colonel Vallancey has called in question the authenticity of these particulars concerning Ceallachan. But I have related them, as there is nothing in them improbable, and they are recorded by all our historians.

Farewell.

## LETTER XXVI.

THE expulsion of the Danes was no security to the Irish that they should be safe in future from their depredations. Ireland, with which they were

were now well acquainted, had temptations sufficient to excite them to procure a settlement in it, even at every risque. In the time of Congal the Second, whom we find upon the throne at the period succeeding the death of Ceallachan, these foreigners again invaded Ireland. Ulster, Leinster, Connaught, every quarter of the kingdom, for the space of twenty five years, experienced the calamitous consequences of their rapacity. Not that the inhabitants were inactive with respect to the preservation of their lives and their property. During that period, the Danes were frequently attacked and even vanquished, but, as their numbers were consumed by war they were recruited by successive emigrations from the continent.

In the year nine hundred and eighty, the states advanced to the throne Malachy the Second, of the race of Heremon. For some time, he opposed the progress of the Danes with becoming spirit. His efforts however were transient, he soon sunk down into a state of shameful inaction. But Ireland did not want, at this period, a strenuous defender of her rights.

BRIAN Boromy King of Munster, by his successful efforts against the invaders of his country, had been eminently distinguished. The virtues of justice, of patriotism and magnanimity, shone forth in none of the princes of Ireland more conspicuously than in him.

THE inglorious Malachy was quite eclipsed by his great and good qualities. Struck by his virtues, the states dethroned their sovereign, and placed the crown upon his head. In this instance, the regular course of succession was disregarded. The Prince of  
Munster



Munster was not of the house of Hy Niall. He was, however, a Milesian of the house of Heber, three of whose ancestors had sat upon the Irish throne. On receiving the crown, the Danes experienced the effects of the additional power with which he was invested. They were not, indeed, extirpated, but they were reduced to a state of perfect obedience in the several towns assigned them for their residence, where they were permitted, once more, to exercise their respective occupations. He obliged them to give security for their good behaviour, and to pay a tribute to government for the protection they enjoyed.

BRIAN now turned his attention to every thing conducive to the internal peace and happiness of his subjects. He took pains to adjust the principles of the political system, to restrain oppressive violence, and to administer justice with strictness and impartiality. To improve the kingdom so miserably wasted by internal dissensions, and, still more, by the depredations of the Danes, was an object of his very particular care. Cities, churches and seminaries of learning, of which nothing for many years, had been seen but the miserable ruins, were rebuilt. Under his wise administration, things began to wear a new face; order was restored and a pleasing prospect opened to view. But the blessings of undisturbed peace, after a continuance of ten years, gave place to the calamities of war. The passions of the Irish, easily enflamed and impatient of control, rendered them incapable of those restraints necessary to the happiness which results from the tranquil enjoyments of society. If at any time, the violence of their feelings subsided, envy, jealousy, a thirst for

VOL. I H rapine,

rapine, or revenge, put an end, as we have seen on numberless occasions, to this desirable state, and involved them in all the miseries of intestine war. This Brian, notwithstanding all his wisdom and prudence, largely experienced. Maolmorda, prince of Leinster, on a visit at court, received offence from the king's eldest son, who, on a former occasion, had expressed his dislike of him for being an associate, and a protector of the Danes. Fired by resentment which would not be pacified, he hastened home to gratify his revenge. Having taken council with his subjects and found his own power insufficient, he resolved to apply for foreign assistance. Messengers, for this purpose, were dispatched to the king of Denmark who sent him, under the command of his sons, twelve thousand men. These were joined by the Danes of Ireland, and by all the forces which the prince of Leinster could collect. When their preparations were completed, war was proclaimed against the monarch. Brian had always acquitted himself like a hero, and his conduct, on the present occasion, was perfectly suitable to his former character. An army was soon raised; for his people, by whom he was universally admired, and who at present were deeply concerned for their common safety, crowded to his standard. Hostilities commenced. The contest hastened to a crisis. On the twenty third of April, one thousand and fourteen, the two armies met in a plain about two miles from Dublin. The heart of Brian was full of courage and animated with the love of victory and of glory. But his arm was enfeebled by age. He was now in his eighty eighth year. Having arranged his troops in battle array, with the utmost reluctance, he resigned the

command



command to his son and retired, in painful solicitude for the issue. The signal was given, on both sides, to begin the charge. At this critical moment Malachy, the dethroned monarch, who had joined the army of Brian as an auxiliary, treacherously drew off his battalion to a distance, hoping that by this revolt, his men would be thrown into confusion and intimidated. But this base unexpected defection did not terrify or disconcert the soldiers of Boromy. They advanced bravely to the combat, led on by their commander and the other princes, in a manner becoming the sons of such a father. On both sides, the onset was furious. Resolved to conquer or die, every man maintained his ground with the most determined firmness. The event continued for some time in suspense. At length, the good fortune of Brian and the glorious cause in which he was engaged triumphed. The Danes gave way; terror seized the men of Leinster. They shrunk from their standards and the rout became universal. Great numbers of them were destroyed. It is said that seventeen thousand perished either in the battle or pursuit. Many likewise fell on the side of the monarch, who himself was unfortunately killed in his tent, at the conclusion of the engagement. Besides him and others of distinction who perished on this occasion, his brave son Murtoogh, who led the battle with such distinguished honor, generously attempting to relieve one of the princes of Denmark whom he saw wounded and in need of assistance, received from him a treacherous blow and was numbered with the slain.

Thus ended the memorable battle of Clontarf, by which the spirit of the Danes, and their schemes

of conquest, with respect to Ireland, which they had been labouring to carry into execution for two hundred and seventy years, were utterly disappointed. The few feeble efforts which they afterwards made, were of no consequence; here, it may be said, ended, effectually, all their attempts upon the liberties of this country.

No character in the History of Ireland is more celebrated than that of Brian Boromy. The virtues of patriotism and magnanimity by which he was distinguished, when king of Munster, raised him to the honours of Supreme Monarch. When he took upon him the office of sovereign authority, he found Ireland still labouring under the oppression of a foreign enemy. The peace, which he purchased for it by the sword, he laboured successfully to secure, by the wisdom, the justice, and moderation of his government. He was not fond of war; the exertions of his courage were the effect of prudent deliberation, which had purely for their end the safety of his country, and the preservation of its liberties. These were ever the objects of his dearest affection.

THE enemy, whilst in arms, felt the spirited efforts of his courage, but when conquered, experienced that his heart was equally susceptible of sentiments of tenderness and compassion; qualities, ever the inseparable attendants of true magnanimity. As this prince was distinguished in the field, and cultivated the arts of peace with singular industry, he omitted no opportunity of expressing his regard for religion. It was in his reign, as we are told, that the Danes were converted to Christianity. In this instance, however, animated by pious zeal, he did not consult the more amiable feelings of his heart.



heart. He published an edict by which they were peremptorily commanded either to embrace the Gospel, or depart from the kingdom. We need not be surpris'd that Brian Boromy, in this particular, violated the rights of conscience, when such numbers, in other respects, distinguished for their virtues, have acted the same part in ages enlightened by philosophy; when the genius of our religion might have been better understood, by which liberality of sentiment is enforced, and principles inculcated that tend to banish contracted ideas and to fill the heart with benevolence.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R XXVII.

**F**ROM the middle of the eighth century when the Danes first invaded Ireland, the learning of this country, which, in the preceding centuries, had made a considerable figure rapidly declined. Wherever these barbarians came, they destroyed, as you have seen, all the repositories of knowledge which they met with, both sacred and prophane. Enemies to Christianity and desirous to obliterate from the minds of the people all remembrance of their ancient laws, customs and origin, that they might be disposed to submit more readily to a foreign domination, religious books and historical records were indiscriminately the objects of their fury. Hence, as a principal cause of our want of information, the antiquities of Ireland have been much less clearly understood.

Of this period, very few writers are mentioned. As the most remarkable, the names of Clement and Albin, Claudius and John Erigena are handed down

to the present times. Nor must we forget Cormac Mac Cuillenan who lived in the tenth century, the famous king of Munster and archbishop of Cashel. He is supposed to have been the author of the Psalter of Cashel which contains an account of the line of Heber or the Munster kings. The fictions with which this is filled as well as other compositions of the same kind still extant, have rendered them much less useful to the Irish historian.

WITH many, this circumstance has destroyed all confidence in their authenticity. But on the same principle, we must reject entirely the testimony of Herodotus and other authors of established reputation. A writer, with respect to a number of his relations, may be perfectly authentic; in regard to others, may intentionally deceive; he may be deceived himself if he is credulous, if he is blinded by partiality, enthusiasm, or addicted to superstition. The authors of our Psalters, were bards, who, in all countries, during the early periods, were the only repositories of history and of every kind of learning. They, besides the causes of error, to which, in common with others, they were subject, considered it as their privilege to intermix the facts which they related with fable, and to enliven them with the colourings of imagination. In consulting such writings, to distinguish what is probable from the contrary, to separate accurately truth from falsehood, is the duty of the sensible and judicious historian. But to return from this digression.

THOUGH the battle of Clontarf broke the power of the Danes in Ireland, it did not put an end to those intestine discords which had been so ruinous to the kingdom. They encreased. By the accession  
of



of Brian to the crown, the order of succession, as has been said, was changed. To this, Malachy was determined not to submit. The throne was now vacant; without a new regular election, he reascended it, solely by his own power and by the influence of the states of Meath. Upon his death, Tieg and Donagh, the two sons of Brian Boromy, claimed the sovereignty. Donagh, the younger, more subtle and ambitious, circumvented his brother, and by force, reduced Munster, Leinster, Connaught and Meath. From this time, ambition, without any regard to justice, was the sole motive which influenced the competitors for the crown. Monarchs of the house of Milesius were no longer exclusively elected by the states, agreeably to the principles of the ancient and established constitution. We may easily conceive what must have been the condition of the kingdom, when this was added to the former causes of contention by which it was so miserably harassed.

TURLOUGH, the nephew of Donagh, envied him the honours of sovereignty. Aided by the kings of Connaught and of Leinster, he overcame the forces of the monarch near the mountains of Ardagh and took possession of the throne.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R XXVIII.

**T**HE princes of Ireland, in general, acknowledged Turlogh for their sovereign and submitted to his authority. His virtues must have been distinguished, if we judge by a letter to him from Lanfranc Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he praises God for his goodness to the Irish nation in  
granting

granting them a prince to rule over them of his piety, moderation and equity, in the administration of government. The address of this letter is pompous, "To the magnificent Turlogh king of Ireland."

ON the death of this prince, his son Mortogh claimed the crown and is considered as the next monarch of Ireland. Mortogh, jealous of the designs of his brother Dermod, banished him from his territories. Dermod, stimulated by ambition and revenge, collected his partizans, and determined, if he could, to possess himself of the crown. Distressing to the people were the effects of this unnatural competition. In the end, the brothers were reconciled. There are different accounts of this transaction. Mr. O'Halloran says that Mortogh, from a thirst of power, having, for years, been engaged in bloody contests with the princes of Connaught and of Ulster, filled with remorse for the miseries in which he had involved the kingdom, resigned the crown to his brother, and laboured by the piety and charity of his future life to atone for his past misconduct.

HISTORIANS, and particularly the author mentioned above, have given us an account of a celebrated ecclesiastical council held in Ireland at this time, which must not be passed over unnoticed.

THE most amiable humanity was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the instructions and the example of the divine author of Christianity. As he taught his apostles to follow his steps, he checked in them every appearance of spiritual pride and ambition, and, when he was taken from the world, left them upon a footing of perfect equality.

But



But the bishop of Rome, the seat of empire, soon began to assume power over the other churches. The conversion of Constantine to the Faith, the irruption of the barbarous nations, and the dark ages which followed, gave him opportunities which he most industriously improved, of erecting a mighty fabrick not only of spiritual but temporal domination over almost the whole of Christendom. Though the church of Ireland had conformed to that of Rome, in some lesser matters, such as the tonsure and the time of celebrating Easter, it did not acknowledge any subjection to it's authority. Briefs and letters from Rome, had been directed to the Irish bishops, but they obeyed them at pleasure. Some bishops were married; nor were there any of that order nominated by the Pope, or did they enjoy the exclusive privileges of the bishops, who, in other countries, were taken under the protection of the Romish hierarchy. The clergy of this country were subject to temporal authority. Contrary to the institution, which was established here in their favour upon the introduction of Christianity, they were taxed; nor were they even exempted from military duties. In their councils and synods, the archbishop of Armagh presided, who took upon him to consecrate bishops, not only for this kingdom but foreign missions. Of this assumed power, he had made a very improper use. Bishops were multiplied in such numbers as to prejudice the state. With a view to reform and to encrease the power of the church, under the sanction of Murtogh, who was very zealous in the cause of religion, a national council was convened at the grove of Aongus in Meath. In this assembly which was very numerous, Gilbert bishop of

of

of Limerick, presided, for the first time, as legate from the Pope. Of the regulations of the council, the principal were, that the clergy should be exempted from the civil power; that all their contributions to the state, should be considered, in future, as free gifts; that the number of bishops should not exceed twenty eight, with a saving in favour of the rights and privileges of the present bishops; that the see of Leth Cuin should exercise superior jurisdiction over the clergy of all Ireland. Besides, the limits were defined, beyond which, each bishop was not to extend his authority. The introduction of the papal power into Ireland, of which, in this council, we discern the beginning, was one cause of new calamities, that embittered the happiness of the nation and lasted for centuries.

#### L E T T E R XXIX.

**T**HE reigns immediately succeeding, those of Turlogh O'Connor and his brother, present nothing but a continued series of turbulence and intestine faction. In the reign of Mortogh O'Niall, who succeeded the latter, was held, the remarkable council of Kells.

WE have seen that the legate of the Pope was permitted to preside in the council of Aongus; that upon this occasion, the influence of the archbishops and bishops was circumscribed and the clergy exempted from the civil power. This was a favourable beginning of the authority which his holiness wished to establish in Ireland on an extensive and permanent foundation. One obstacle more than any other opposed his pretensions. Certain great families in  
Ireland



Ireland hitherto presented to bishopricks, which had been confined to particular septs after the manner of the antient druids. The Pope however, by his address, gained partizans in this kingdom who strenuously withstood this mode of presentation, among whom Saint Bernard and Saint Malachy, were particularly distinguished. The time being thought favourable to the pretensions of the church of Rome, a council, as mentioned above, was assembled at Kells, in which her adherents, supported by the authority of Cardinal Paparo, carried their point. Four archbishops, one for each province, with their suffragans, twelve to Ulster and Munster, nine to Connaught and five to Leinster, were appointed. As a mark of the subjection of this kingdom to his holiness, the Cardinal presented a pall to each of the archbishops who were considered as his representatives in spirituals. At the same time, the archbishop of Armagh was invested with the powers of the primacy. Thus was the church of Ireland deprived of the privileges she had enjoyed for seven hundred years and subjected to the usurped power of a foreign domination. It reflects honor upon the memory of a number of the clergy who composed the concil of Kells that they contended with spirit in support of their antient constitution, but slavish principles had taken possession of the minds of the majority, and the friends of the Irish church and of the privileges of the nation struggled in vain.

## LETTER XXX.

THE period at which we are now arrived, and those which follow, call for a more particular investigation. Every Irishman should be closely attentive to the events they contain, as the knowledge of them, and the impressions which they naturally produce, are of the utmost consequence to his rights, and to the prosperity of his country.

IN the year of Christ eleven hundred and sixty six, Roderic O'Connor, son of Turlogh, the preceding monarch of that name, was, on the death of his predecessor, raised by his adherents to the Irish throne. It is of consequence to remember that he was of the house of Heremon, and therefore, a just claimant of the crown, upon the principles of the ancient constitution. The whole kingdom submitted to his authority. His title to the throne was as good, if not better, than that of any monarch who reigned since the death of Brian Boromy.

RODERIC'S prospect of a happy and a peaceful reign was soon interrupted, by a revolt of several of the petty princes who had so lately sworn allegiance to him. He had scarcely reduced them to obedience when he was called upon by Tighernan O'Rourk, king of Breffney, to assist him in chastising Dermod, king of Leinster, by whom he had been grossly injured. The offence was this. Dermod had been engaged in an intrigue with the wife of O'Rourk, and taking advantage of his absence on a pilgrimage, had carried her off. Tighernan, determined to avenge himself on the invader of his domestic peace, applied for aid, as we have just mentioned



tioned to Roderic. The monarch immediately led to his assistance a considerable force. Dermod, in this emergence, had recourse to his subjects for support. But in vain. He was a tyrant, and met with his just recompense. The chieftains of Leinster not only refused to enlist under his banner, in the prosecution of his iniquitous cause, but openly renounced their allegiance. Enflamed with rage at the disappointment, he was resolved to sacrifice to his resentment, all regard to character, and all affection for the peace and welfare of his country. To leave no means untried of gratifying his infamous passion, he passed over to Britain, and from thence to France, in order to procure assistance from the king of England.

HENRY the Second, son of the Empress Matilda, sat at that time upon the English throne. This prince had been engaged in a tedious and bloody competition with Stephen, who, on the death of his grandfather Henry the First, took possession of the crown. After a variety of efforts, obliged to relinquish his pretensions for the present, he was not, until after the death of Stephen, placed upon the throne. Philosophy would teach, that the previous difficulties which he experienced in the pursuit, and the many troubles in which he was involved after he was invested with sovereign power, made the acquisition a very expensive purchase. From the time, in particular, that he was raised to the throne, betwixt the unnatural ambition of his sons, the dispute in which he was engaged with Thomas a Becket, and the wars he was obliged to carry on, in defence of his possessions on the continent, he scarcely enjoyed an hour of undisturbed peace. Notwithstanding,

standing, prompted by restless ambition, he cast his eye upon Ireland, and only waited for a pretence to add it to his other dominions. The application of Dermod, above mentioned, corresponded with his wishes, but he was so embarrassed at the time, as not to have it in his power, either to engage personally in the business, or assist him with forces. However, he resolved to conduct himself in such a manner as to profit by it whenever the opportunity was more favourable, or his situation would admit of it. Dermod having engaged, by oath, that if he would restore him to his dominions he would hold them of him as his liege lord, the king encouraging him to persevere in his endeavours for the recovery of his province, and promising him aid as soon as possible, gave him, in the mean time, credentials addressed to his subjects, by which he informed them that he had received Dermod, Prince of Leinster, to his favour, and that if any of them would assist him in regaining possession of his territory, they had his licence and approbation.

FURNISHED with this recommendation, the king of Leinster repaired directly to Bristol, communicated the letter from Henry to the principal persons of that city, and offered rewards to such as would enlist under his banner. Richard Earl of Pembroke, surnamed Strongbow, a man of an enterprising spirit and distinguished valour, listened to his proposal, and engaged to carry over to his assistance, in Spring, a band of chosen men, provided that Dermod would give him his daughter in marriage, and assign to him the inheritance of his province, in case he should be restored to it. The king of Leinster consented to these terms and the treaty was ratified. Flattered with



with this encouragement, he set out for Ireland. On his journey through Wales, he also engaged in his service two needy adventurers, Robert Fitzstephen and Maurice Fitzgerald, promising to reward them, for their assistance, with the city of Waterford and two adjoining cantreds. Having thus settled his affairs, he crossed the sea in disguise, and concealed himself in the monastery of Ferns, of which he had been the founder, discovering himself to none but the monks of that place, in whom he entirely confided, and by whose intrigues the number of his friends was encreased. He continued in this retreat through the Winter, during which time he was employed in forming schemes and taking proper measures for the successful accomplishment of his wishes.

In the mean time, Fitzstephen carried on his preparations with all possible industry. But the troops he was able to raise appeared very inadequate to the undertaking. In Spring, he landed upon the coast of Wexford with only thirty knights, fifty gentlemen and three hundred foot. The following day, Maurice de Prendergast, another Welsh adventurer, landed from Milford Haven with ten men at arms and sixty archers. An exaggerated report immediately flew of the succours arrived to assist Dermod, which operated in his favour. Five hundred Irish auxiliaries attached themselves to his cause. These being joined to the forces of Fitzstephen the whole advanced to the attack of Wexford, at that time, with several other of the maritime towns, possessed by the Danes. The inhabitants, after an obstinate resistance, surrendered, upon condition of being preserved from plunder, for which they engaged to pay Dermod an annual tribute. For their service  
upon

upon this occasion, the king of Leinster gave to Fitzstephen the town of Wexford, to Maurice Fitzgerald the adjoining district, and a gratuity to each of the soldiers. By this success, the number of his forces being encreased, Dermod led them into Ossory, to punish the king of that country who had incurred his displeasure.

THE people of Ossory, afraid to face the enemy in the field. kept themselves in their marshes and fastnesses, to tempt them from which, Dermod and his auxiliaries pretended to retreat quickly. The Ossorians were deceived; collecting from all quarters, they pursued until they were drawn into a plain, where the English turned, attacked and entirely defeated them. Dermod, in his cruelty to the vanquished, and the depredations committed in Ossory, discovered a revengeful disposition, shocking to every feeling of humanity. Victorious in several engagements, he quite subdued the country. This unexpected success, and particularly, the military renown of the English soldiers, alarmed the monarch. He convened the assembly of the states, in which it was determined that every province should furnish a certain number of men to be added to the royal army for the defence of the kingdom. The resolution was executed with dispatch and Roderic, at the head of a numerous army, marched to give battle to the king of Leinster. Alarmed by this threatening danger, Dermod and his allies chose a situation encompassed by woods, where they entrenched themselves to prevent an attack from such a superior force. Roderic, by one vigorous exertion, should have blasted the hopes of the king of Leinster and expelled the invaders of his country.

But



But he preferred negotiation. Having endeavoured, in vain, to detach the English from Dermod he entered into a treaty with him by which it was agreed that he should be restored to the government of his province; that he should behave peaceably in future; that he should break off all connection with the foreigners, and, in security, give up as a hostage to the monarch, his natural son and six others.

Soon after this transaction, Maurice Fitzgerald, brother-in-law of Fitzstephen, arrived at Wexford, accompanied by ten knights, thirty gentlemen and a hundred soldiers. At a place about two miles from the town, Fitzstephen was then employed in building a fort. Determined to secure, if possible, an establishment in the kingdom, the two brothers immediately joined and solicited the king of Leinster to break the treaty of peace into which he had entered with Roderic. He basely complied. Their united forces spread themselves over the territories of Fingal and wasted it by their depredations. Dublin was next attacked and shortly after submitted, to avoid the dreadful consequence of their rapacity.

### LETTER XXXII.

NEW prospects began to open to the ambitious Dermod. He now flattered himself with the hopes of being able to open a way to the monarchy of Ireland. But as for this purpose additional succours were necessary, he dispatched a messenger to Strongbow requesting him to hasten over with the stipulated reinforcement. At the same time, he informed him of the flattering object presented to his view. On receiving this intelligence, Strongbow

applied to the king of England for permission to pass over to Ireland with his followers. Such an application was necessary as the powers which Dermod had received from Henry related only to the recovery of Leinster. That monarch had been offended at Pembroke; he was also jealous of the design in which he wanted to engage, from an apprehension that it might interfere with the ambitious scheme which he had himself formed in respect to this country; but not thinking it expedient to irritate, by a flat denial, a nobleman of such courage and influence, he returned to his request an equivocal answer. Interpreted by Strongbow in the manner most agreeable to his wishes, he began to make the necessary preparations for his intended expedition. In the mean time, he dispatched to Ireland two of his principal officers, Raymond and William the brother of Maurice Fitzgerald, with about eighty well disciplined soldiers, who, in May eleven hundred and seventy one, landed safely within five miles of Waterford. Whilst they were employed in building a small fort for their security, they perceived a considerable number of the inhabitants of Waterford and of the vicinity advancing to attack them. As their appearance was unmilitary, Raymond placed himself at the head of his small force and marched out to meet them, undismayed by the superiority of their numbers. After an obstinate contest of two hours, the ~~Irish~~ were repulsed with considerable slaughter and fled. To invade the rights of the innocent is an act of flagrant injustice, and cruelty follows in it's train. Seventy prisoners taken upon this occasion by the English were put to death, whose only crime was their fighting with heroic courage in defence of their country.

There



There is nothing surprising in this victory. In war and especially in the field of battle, superior discipline is an equivalent to almost every other advantage.

STRONGBOW having compleated his preparations, set off for Ireland, but, before he embarked, received orders from Henry to desist from his undertaking. But he proceeded with his design and landed on the coast of Waterford, the twenty third of August with two hundred knights and a thousand soldiers in his train. Being joined by the other English adventurers, it was agreed, in a council of war, to besiege Waterford immediately. The very next day, the operations were begun. In two different attacks, the citizens repulsed the enemy; but, unfortunately for them, there was a house near the wall, supported by a wooden pillar. It was perceived and cut by the English. The house tumbled to the ground, bringing along with it the part of the wall to which it was contiguous. The town was immediately entered by the enemy and carried by storm. All found in arms, except two, were instantly put to death. Such pitiless, such inhuman barbarity would stain, with indelible disgrace, the laurels of victory, obtained, not like this over the rights of human nature, but in a good cause. This military atchievment was performed by the English without the assistance of Dermod. Shortly after, that prince arrived at Waterford and fulfilled one of the articles of their agreement by giving his daughter Eva in marriage to the Earl of Pembroke. The rejoicings on this occasion were interrupted by intelligence that Hasculf, governor of Dublin, had revolted and that an Irish army commanded by the monarch in person, lay encamped

camped before the walls, for the protection of the city. Dermod immediately set off with his army to the capital. Upon his arrival, he found that Roderic had broken up his camp and marched off, in order to chastise Donald O'Brian who, taking advantage of his absence, was wasting Connaught by his depredations. Without loss of time, he invested the city which had now no means of protection but its own internal strength. The citizens were alarmed and sent Laurence their archbishop, a man of an excellent character and greatly respected, to treat with Dermod about terms of capitulation. But, whilst they were deliberating about this matter, Miles Cogan and Raymond Fitzgerald, broke through the walls, on the opposite side, and took possession of the town. We are informed by Stanihurst that the father of Dermod like himself had trampled on the rights of his subjects; that the people of Dublin provoked at his tyranny had invited him to an entertainment, put him to death and buried him with disgrace. This had enraged Dermod. Resentment wrangled in his heart. He had spared Dublin before through the interposition of Robert Fitzgerald; but he resolved now to gratify his revenge. A number of the inhabitants were put to death and the town plundered at discretion. The government of it was vested in Miles Cogan.

### L E T T E R    X X X I I I .

**D**ERMOD next plundered the territories of O'Rourke king of Breffney whom he had before so deeply injured. It was a disgrace to the princes of Ireland that they were all this time buried  
in



in a state of supine indolence. A resolution of doing something for the common safety seems to have been entered into on the present occasion. But before any measure should be taken, it was thought expedient for the monarch to send a messenger to Dermod to complain of the baseness of his conduct, to exhort him to return to his duty, and to threaten that if he did not he would compel him to obedience, and, in the mean time, strike off the head of his son, whom he had retained as an hostage since the ratification of the late treaty. To this message, Dermod paid no regard. Deaf to the voice of nature, the danger to which his son was exposed was to him a matter of perfect indifference. A regard to his faith, to his country and to motives of justice had as little influence. On several occasions of late, his arms had triumphed. Success had drawn to his standard a considerable body of Irish. His auxiliaries from England were distinguished by martial abilities, and firmly determined, to support the cause in which he was engaged. These considerations determined him to persevere. Whether Roderic executed his threat with respect to his son is uncertain; as to the design of chastising his ambition with the sword, it proved ineffectual. The fame of the Earl of Pembroke, the success of his arms, the dreadful execution of the English cross bows, before unknown in Ireland, spread terror all around. The enemy to be opposed was not like the Danes strangers to military discipline and to the arts of war. Roderic was likely to lose his authority and a regard to the preservation of their liberty was growing weaker in the breasts of the natives. But the fond expectations of ambition depend on the slenderest thread. When Dermod

thought that his hatred of his enemies and desire of power were about to be fully gratified, death blasted his delusive hopes. His character may be described in a few words. He was a bad husband, an unnatural parent, implacable in his revenge, of boundless ambition, a tyrant and the assassin of his country.

IN consequence of this event, Strongbow assumed the government of the province of Leinster, and took possession of his personal estates, in right of his wife. It was of importance to get the justice of his claim to these new dignities recognized by the citizens of Dublin, the capital not only of his province, but of the whole kingdom. He went thither without delay and received the allegiance of the citizens. Their fidelity had been lately tried. It has been mentioned that Hasculf the governor of Dublin, fled from it, being a second time threatened with a siege. Upon his arrival at Denmark, he collected a number of ships and soldiers, returned and besieged Dublin. A fortunate sally relieved the town. Hasculph was taken prisoner. Having excited the resentment of the English, he was put to death. But with respect to Strongbow the death of Dermot made a very different impression on the minds of the chieftains who had supported his cause, they all, two or three excepted, deserted him. Encouraged by this favourable circumstance, Roderic, who, you have seen, had acted hitherto an inglorious part, collected a numerous army and laid siege to Dublin. Strongbow, apprehensive of the danger, had provided himself, as well as possible, with the means of defence. Fitzstephens, governor of Wexford, detached a body of men to his assistance. His force was likewise strengthened by draughts from the other garrisoned



soned towns in the province. Notwithstanding all these precautions, Pembroke soon found that the garrison of Dublin was insufficient to protect it against a force, which now surrounded it on all sides. At land it was attacked by the Irish army, and from the sea by a fleet brought against it from Denmark. In this dangerous situation, Pembroke, by the advice of his officers, proposed to Roderic, upon condition of his raising the siege, that he would hold the province of Leinster from him, as his liege lord. These terms were proffered to the monarch, by the archbishop of Dublin, who, prompted by love for his fellow citizens and the public cause, had before, though ineffectually, interposed his good offices in it's favour. The monarch replied that he would storm the town unless Strongbow would consent to deliver up to him all the cities and forts in Leinster, and, with all his followers, depart from the island against a certain day. Pembroke and his officers were intimidated, but, encouraged by Cogan, secretary to the general, they determined to sally forth upon the enemy. Their camp was attacked, with impetuosity, by six hundred men, commanded in front by Cogan, in the centre by Raymond Fitzgerald and in the rear by Strongbow. The Irish, confiding in the superiority of their numbers, were quite unprepared for so unexpected an assault. Many of them being cut to pieces and their baggage and provisions seized, they were forced to raise the siege and march off with precipitation. Strongbow having thus wonderfully escaped from the threatened danger and preserved Dublin of which, in reward of his magnanimity, he made Cogan governour, set off to Wexford for the relief of Fitzstephen, who, he

was

was informed, stood in need of his immediate assistance.

THE people in the vicinity of Wexford having heard that Fitzstephen had sent the reinforcement to Strongbow, mentioned above, attacked him, made themselves masters of the place and took Fitzstephen prisoner with several of his officers. Upon hearing of the approach of the English general, the inhabitants set fire to the town and returned to a neighbouring island. Strongbow advanced to attack the enemy; but was obliged to desist, the Irish having declared that if he did not, they would put to death all the prisoners.

ABOUT this time, as it would appear, another insurrection of the natives happened, upon which an engagement followed betwixt the contending parties that gave rise to a memorable incident. As Pembroke was about to lead his forces to battle on this occasion, his son, a youth, animated by the love of glory, entreated him to place a troop of horse under his command and to permit him to have a share in the engagement. The father expostulated; represented to him that his tender years rendered him unfit for encountering the dangers of such a trying situation, besides, that the enemy, much superiour in number, would be emboldened if his troop gave way, and his own forces intimidated. At the same time he told him that if he would not be diverted from his purpose he must be aware of the consequence, for that if he shrank from the battle his life would be the forfeit. The unfortunate youth persevered, acted for some time in the engagement with spirit, but being overcome by the enemy, fled in terror to his father for protection, who immediately, put him

to



to death. This very extraordinary fact, in which we discover much of the savage ferocity of a barbarous age, was represented in marble, in a church in Dublin, consecrated to the Trinity, which remained until the year fifteen hundred and sixty eight, when the church fell, and buried the monument in it's ruins.

Adieu.

### LETTER XXXIV.

**S**TRONGBOW now proceeded to Waterford. Here a messenger arrived from O'Brian king of Limerick, to complain of certain injuries which he had received from Donald king of Ossory, and to request his assistance. Pembroke joined his forces to those of O'Brian. Donald was intimidated. He requested a safe conduct, that he might come and plead his cause before the English general. It was granted; but his reasons for commencing hostilities against O'Brian were not admitted. Judgment was given, that he should be hanged and his country spoiled. The idea of such treachery excited the indignation of Prendergast, one of the English leaders. He mounted his horse, commanded his followers to do the same, and swore, that the sentence of the council should not be executed. Upon this, the king of Ossory was given up to Prendergast, who gallantly, with the assistance of his men, conducted him to a place of safety. Such actions reflect honor and true glory upon a soldier.

THE jealousy of Henry was roused when he heard of the unexpected success of his subjects in this kingdom. They might make an entire conquest of it,  
and

and hold it in their own right, which would blast his ambitious views with respect to it. Many of the adventurers were Welsh, whose success in Ireland would strengthen the power of their countrymen, and render them more turbulent. They had before been sufficiently inclined to disturb his government. Besides, Pembroke had particularly incurred his resentment, by leading his followers to Ireland, in violation of his express command. For these reasons, Henry published a proclamation, in which he forbade his subjects to hold any communication with Ireland, and enjoined all of them, who were already there, to return instantly home.

To avert the King's displeasure, the adventurers sent Raymond Fitzgerald to make their submission to his Majesty; to assure him of their dutiful allegiance, and that all their conquests, in Ireland, were made, not on their own, but on his account. This did not satisfy him. He commanded Strongbow to repair to England, to vindicate, personally, his conduct. The Earl obeyed; gave Henry a full account of the affairs of this kingdom, offered to resign to him all his pretensions, and to hold of him, as his liege Lord, any part of his conquests which he might permit either himself or his followers to possess in this country. By these concessions the King was disarmed of his resentment, approved of the conditions and dismissed Pembroke to Ireland, with an assurance, that he would soon follow, attended by a force sufficient to reduce the whole kingdom.

So early, at least, as the year eleven hundred and fifty six, Ireland had attracted the ambition of Henry. That he was then determined to embrace the first opportunity of reducing it to his obedience



is evident, for at that period, he applied to Pope Adrian and obtained a bull, by which he pretended to give him an unlimited power to subdue this kingdom, in order to root out of it the seeds of vice, idolatry and superstition, and to teach it's inhabitants the true religion of Christ. From the conditions of this celebrated bull, it appears that Adrian was not inattentive to his own interest. In it a yearly pension was secured to the Pope of one penny from every house, called Peter's Pence, and the rights of the church of Rome, through the kingdom of Ireland, were to be held sacred and inviolable. We would as little have expected so extraordinary an application from this prince as any other who ever sat upon the English throne. The claims of the clergy of England to exemption from the jurisdiction of the civil courts he opposed with unshaken firmness, until he overthrew their pretensions by the famous constitutions of Clarendon. Nor did the virulent opposition of Thomas a Becket, supported by all the influence of Rome, intimidate him from persisting in a cause, of so much consequence to the peace of the realm and the interest of his subjects. How different the principle from which he now acts. A pretence is wanting to sanctify an iniquitous design and to gratify his thirst for domination; the Pope is acknowledged to be possessed of a plenitude of power, by which he may transfer the rights and privileges of a kingdom. This grant of Ireland from his Holiness, the king of England could make no use of, from the situation of his affairs, until the transactions happened in this country which have been now related.

HAVING

HAVING made the necessary preparations, Henry set out for Ireland accompanied by a number of his nobility, four hundred knights and four thousand soldiers and landed at Waterford the eighteenth of October in the year eleven hundred and seventy two. Pembroke surrendered Waterford to the king as his liege lord; he likewise did homage to him for the province of Leinster with which he was invested by the king as the successor of Dermot. Henry next received the homage of M'Carthy Prince of Desmond, whom, on paying a certain tribute as a mark of subjection, he permitted to enjoy all his territories except the city of Cork. The like terms were imposed upon O'Brian of Thomond who made a surrender of Limerick. O'Faolan of the Decies, the chieftain of Ossory and all the petty princes of Munster imitated their example. You have seen that the men of Wexford had made a prisoner of Fitzstephen; they had brought him before the king and made grievous complaints of his misconduct. Henry assumed the appearance of displeasure and remanded Fitzstephen to prison. Some time after, he set him at liberty, having previously obliged him to resign to him all his possessions as the best security of his allegiance.

HENRY proceeded forwards to Dublin with all the pomp and parade of war. The princes, through whose territories he passed, presented themselves before him and submitted to a power which they had not spirit to resist.



## LETTER XXXV.

UPON the arrival of Henry in Dublin, the chieftains came to him in numbers and submitted. He received them courteously and treated them with polite attention to conciliate their favourable opinion and secure their attachment. The festival of Christmas approached which he resolved to celebrate with all possible grandeur and magnificence. Dublin did not afford a building large enough to accommodate the king's train and the multitude of strangers who flocked to the capital on the present occasion. To supply this want, a large pavilion of hurdles, in the Irish fashion, was erected in the suburbs and richly decorated with ornaments. Here the king, in the most obliging manner, sumptuously entertained his vassals. Delighted with this vain parade, they shamefully forgot that they were sacrificing to unmanly fear and to an inglorious gratification all regard to the liberty and the independence of their country.

AN attachment to the interest of religion was the pretended original motive which induced Henry to invade Ireland. To this he now thought it expedient to pay some attention. He convened a meeting of the clergy at Cashel where Christian, archbishop of Lismore presided, as legate from the Pope. There the bull of Pope Adrian was read, and as the object of it was to aggrandize the power of the clergy, approved. A variety of ordinances were framed, with a view to the reformation of manners and to extend the influence and give force to the ecclesiastical constitutions. It was enacted by this assembly, besides other particulars, that the modes of public  
worship

worship should be strictly conformable to those of the Church of England; and that the clergy should be exempted from coyne, coshering and other secular exactions.

THE strain of servile flattery and submission to the king by which this synod was concluded, represents them in a light very little to their honor. The bards of former days did not act this interested unmanly part; nor did the clergy of Ireland, at an after period, withhold their strenuous exertions in support of the privileges of their country.

THE Pope being informed of the proceedings of the Irish clergy at Cashel, was so highly pleased with the conduct of Henry, that he assigned the kingdom of Ireland to him and to his heirs, and by authority apostolic constituted them kings thereof for ever. Matters of civil polity next engaged the attention of Henry.

By the express authority of Matthew Paris, historiographer to Henry the Third, it appears, that he assembled a council, or parliament at Lismore where the laws of England were, by all, gratefully accepted and established by the sanction of an oath. A statute of this parliament, is mentioned and the purport of it quoted in an act of the second year of the reign of Richard the Third. By it, it was provided that in case of the death or removal of any chief governor, the chancellor, treasurer, chief justices and chief baron, keeper of the rolls and king's serjeant at law should be empowered, with the consent of the nobles of the land, to elect a successor who was to exercise the full power and authority of their office, until the royal pleasure should be farther known.

THIS



THIS affords incontestible evidence that Henry not only did appoint the officers mentioned in this statute, but that a parliament was actually established in Ireland during his reign. To regulate the proceedings of this assembly, this king did afterwards transmit to this kingdom a parchment roll containing an ancient form or a modus for the holding of parliaments. The king's order, respecting it, accompanied it in these words, "Henry, King of England, Conqueror and Lord of Ireland, sends this form of holding parliaments to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices viscounts, mayors, seneschals, magistrates, and all his loyal subjects of Ireland." Some have called in question the reality of this modus. But the learned Sir Edward Coke, than whom, in such a matter, we cannot have a more competent evidence, has not the least doubt of it's authenticity. It was exemplified in the reign of Henry the Fourth, being found in the custody of Christopher Preston, the form of which exemplification was published by the express authority of the said king. Now, as Mr. Molyneux justly reasons, is it credible that all this could be done, that by a solemn declaration of his Majesty, it should be set forth that the modus was produced before the Lord Lieutenant and Council at Trim, if the whole affair had been an imposition.

THE institution of the Irish parliament, the laws enacted in it, the appointment which was made of a chief governor, sheriffs, ministers of justice, and all the other officers of state, were solely confined to that part of the island ceded to Henry by the adventurers, and which was now to be governed by English law. The establishment of officers for this purpose,

purpose, the division of those districts into counties, the grants made to them, by this prince, of the laws and constitution of England, are farther confirmed by the authority of particular records.

DURING the continuance of Henry in Ireland, he made several grants. To Fitzstephen he gave a portion of land in the vicinity of Dublin. To Humphrey de Bohun, Robert Fitzbernard, and Hugh de Goodville he committed the City of Waterford. Wexford was placed under the protection of William Fitzandelm, Philip of Hastings, and Philip de Braoso. He invested Hugh de Lacy with the territory of Meath, giving with it, to him, as he had to others, all the liberties and free customs of the English constitution. He also made him governor of Dublin, as likewise justiciary, an office pretty much of the same kind as that of Deputy Lieutenant. In this manner, he endeavoured to attach to himself the affections of these leaders, and to render them independent of Pembroke, of whose power he seems to have been jealous.

THERE was no intercourse betwixt this country and England during the winter, on account of the inclemency of the weather. In spring, intelligence arrived to the king that his sons, the eldest in particular, were forming a conspiracy against him, and that two cardinals, sent from Rome to enquire into the cause of the death of Becket, having waited for him a considerable time, threatened, that if he did not immediately return to England they would excommunicate him and lay his dominions under an interdict. Alarmed by these disagreeable accounts, he left Ireland with all possible expedition.



## L E T T E R XXXVI.

**I**N consequence of the grant made by Henry to De Lacey of Meath, he proceeded to plant there an English colony. This provoked the resentment of O'Rourk who possessed the eastern part of Meath. A quarrel very soon arose betwixt him and the new settlers. O'Rourk complained to De Lacey that they had injured him. A day was appointed to settle the dispute. De Lacey and Maurice Fitzgerald on the one side, and O'Rourk on the other, accompanied by a few attendants, met to compose the difference. In course of the debate, a scuffle arose, in which, after defending himself with obstinate valour, O'Rourk was slain by the nephew of Maurice Fitzgerald. The death of this prince raised the indignation of his subjects and disposed them, when an opportunity offered, to chastise the English whose invasion of their rights had been the cause of the injury.

SHORTLY after this, O'Dempsey of Offaly incurred the resentment of Pembroke. The Earl, to support his assumed power, led forth his troops and wasted his lands. He smarted for this act of injustice. As his army were on their return laden with booty, they were attacked by the Irish, beaten and deprived of the spoils they had taken. To these matters, the particular situation of Henry did not permit him to pay any attention. Instead of being able to assist others, he required aid himself from every quarter. Henry his eldest son as likewise his sons Richard and Geoffrey abetted by Lewis king of France and some of his principal subjects in that country and in England, had taken up arms against him and were in a

state of open rebellion. Threatened by this unnatural combination with alarming consequences, he called over to his assistance Earl Strongbow and a number of his Irish barons with their followers. Their absence from the kingdom presented the Irish chieftains with an opportunity of taking up arms. Disposed to embrace it with alacrity, they exerted themselves to expel those rapacious adventurers who had invaded their country, endeavoured to overturn their constitution, and had actually seized a considerable part of their possessions. A dispute betwixt two of the English leaders was also favourable to their wishes. Harvey of Mountmorris had been placed at the head of the English soldiers. Raymond Fitzgerald second in command, of a temper more gentle and condescending, was a favourite with the men. This gave rise to a jealousy in the breast of Mountmorris which prevented that good understanding betwixt him and Raymond so necessary in their present situation. Henry being informed of the critical state of his affairs in this kingdom, was obliged to send back to their assistance Strongbow and the other forces which he had so lately called over into England. The Earl, by attending the standard of the king, had not only removed the prejudices which he had formerly entertained against him, but highly recommended himself to his favour; for we now find him invested with the office of Lieutenant and put in possession of Dublin, Waterford and Wexford.

PEMBROKE, on entering upon his office, found it attended with considerable difficulties. The army, discontented with Mountmorris, insisted that he should be dismissed from his command and that Raymond Fitzgerald should be substituted in his place.

Pembroke



Pembroke was obliged to gratify their desire. Raymond invested with the command of the soldiers, to strengthen their good opinion of him by gratifying their desire of plunder, led them into Offaly and Lismore where they got considerable booty and in a skirmish with the prince of Desmond, 1174. came off victorious. This success enflamed the ambition of Fitzgerald. He applied to Pembroke to invest him with the office of constable and standard bearer and to give him his sister Basilea in marriage. The Earl, jealous of his encreasing consequence, denied the request. Raymond, in disgust, threw up his commission and retired to Wales. Mountmorris, being placed once more at the head of the army, advised Strongbow to permit him to attack the Irish of Munster, that he might have an opportunity of gaining the favourable opinion of the soldiers and of recovering his lost reputation. The Earl not only complied with this desire but promised him a reinforcement.

As this detachment was proceeding from the capital to join him, it was attacked and entirely routed at Thurles by O'Brian of Thomond, a man warmly attached to the interest of his afflicted country and distinguished for valour. Strongbow who led the detachment, deeply affected by this unexpected misfortune, retreated with precipitation to Waterford. Encouraged by this success, a number of the Irish chieftains of Leinster, assisted by Roderic and other auxiliaries, rose up in arms, renounced allegiance to Henry and laid siege to that town. In this extremity, Pembroke was reduced to the mortifying necessity of entreating Raymond to return from Wales, and resume the command of the army, promising to grant the request, his refusal of which

had occasioned his displeasure. He complied; landed with expedition at Waterford with thirty knights and four hundred Welshmen compleatly armed. This obliged the Irish to raise the siege. From the account of Cambrensis, the relief was critical. He says that the people of Waterford driven to despair by the tyrannical behaviour of the English within the town, were, when Raymond arrived, just upon the point of putting them to the sword. From what followed, this appears to have been very probable; For Pembroke and Fitzgerald had scarcely departed when the citizens of Waterford rose upon the English garrison and recovered possession of the town.

#### L E T T E R    X X X V I I .

**F**ROM Waterford, Strongbow had proceeded to Wexford, where, in reward of his services, he gave his sister in marriage to Raymond, and made him constable and standard bearer of Leinster. But the marriage rites were scarcely celebrated, when their happiness was interrupted. Roderic, with a numerous army, had passed the Shannon, entered the territory of Meath, compelled the English settlers to abandon their habitations, and was advancing to Dublin, which, at present, was in a defenceless state. Upon intelligence of this, Raymond put his troops in motion, and marched off to oppose the incursions of the monarch. The business was already done. The forces which Roderic had led into the field were strangers to discipline, fit only for making a sudden and violent effort. When gratified by plunder, they refused to continue longer in the field, retreated



retreated with precipitation, and left the enemy to repair the destruction they had committed.

You have seen that the incursion of Roderic into Meath, like all his other attempts against the English, was unsuccessful. This prince, naturally of a pacific disposition, perceiving that he could place no confidence in followers, undisciplined, impatient of control, and disunited, resolved to make the best terms he could with the enemy, to preserve his province from the devastations of war. But, scorning to treat with Pembroke, he sent, for that purpose, three ambassadors to Henry, who, having restored his kingdom to tranquility, was then at Windsor. Terms of accomodation, still extant, were concluded. By them, Roderic was to enjoy all his rights of sovereignty, and all his privileges, in the most ample manner, as the vassal of Henry, to whom he was to do homage, and to pay a tribute of every tenth hide. But, Meath with it's appurtenances, Leinster, Waterford, with the country between that city and Dungarvan, Dungarvan with it's appurtenances, were to be subject entirely to the authority of the king of England. Here Roderic was to have no power and the vassals immediately belonging to these territories who had fled from them, were to be compelled to return. Roderic was to take hostages from his inferior chieftains, and Henry, at option, to take hostages from him for the faithful performance of their duty. It merits particular notice, that these articles were agreed upon and ratified with Roderic, in a grand council of prelates and temporal barons, not as a provincial king, but the monarch of Ireland and as possessed of all the rights which any of his predecessors had enjoyed

who were invested with the sovereign crown of this realm. In this agreement the inferior chieftains appear to have acquiesced. The view which Doctor Leland has given of this transaction is very satisfactory. No other of our historians has done equal justice to the rights of Ireland.

HAD the English chiefs in this kingdom been united, greater advantages would have resulted from this treaty. But they were disunited. Harvey of Mountmorris still considered Raymond as his rival. Reflecting with envy on the preference given to him by which, on more occasions than one, he had been honourably distinguished, he resolved to injure him, if possible, in the good opinion of Henry. With this view, he dispatched emissaries to England who charged him with treasonable designs. Inclined to be jealous of the power of his Irish barons, the king listened to the accusation and dispatched four commissioners to Ireland, two of whom were to conduct Raymond to the king, and two to remain here, to superintend the affairs of the kingdom.

1176. RAYMOND was preparing to obey when accounts arrived that O'Brian had once more laid siege to Limerick and that the garrison was reduced to the last extremity. Pembroke, though oppressed by infirmity, collected his forces, for the relief of the town and ordered them to march. They disobeyed, determined not to engage in the service under the command of any other leader except Raymond their favourite general. Strongbow laid the affair before the commissioners, by whose advice Fitzgerald was placed at the head of the troops. He led them immediately to the relief of Limerick. But, on his march, he was informed that the Irish had

had



had raised the siege and strongly fortified themselves in a defile near Cashel through which he was obliged to pass. Raymond not intimidated by this circumstance, advanced, drove the enemy from their entrenchments, and compelled O'Brian to submit to the English power. The general continued his progress through Munster being called upon by M'Arthy, Prince of Desmond, to assist him against his son Cormac, who, in violation of the duties of a child and a subject, had cast him into prison and robbed him of his possessions. Raymond chastised the traitor, relieved M'Arthy from captivity and reinstated him in his territories. In return for this important service, M'Arthy furnished his deliverer with provisions for his army and for the garrison of Limerick, and gave him besides a valuable grant of lands in the county of Kerry.

AT this juncture, a letter from his wife informed Raymond of the death of Earl Pembroke. This event obliged him to strengthen his army as much as possible that he might be enabled to take care of the affairs of Leinster, which, upon so critical an occasion, required his particular attention. He withdrew the garrison from Limerick which he committed to the care of Donald O'Brian who had lately desisted from his opposition to the power of Henry and promised him allegiance. Force only had procured the submission of O'Brian; the moment he had a prospect of relief from oppression, he considered himself absolved from the obligation. Raymond had scarcely departed from the town, when, by his order, it was consumed to ashes, to deprive the English, in future, of a place of so much consequence to their interest.

WITH respect to Pembroke, if we believe the English historian, he was generous, affable and of an insinuating address, neither dejected by misfortune nor elated by success. He was diffident, readily advised, but prompt and vigorous in execution. His military abilities were distinguished. Though of a peaceable disposition, when in the field, he kept up all the pompous state and magnificence of war. The courage with which he opposed the enemy in arms, gave place to the feelings of mercy towards him when conquered. His uncommon bodily strength gave occasion to the appellation of Strongbow, by which he was commonly distinguished. Whatever may have been his good qualities in private life and as a soldier, previous to his arrival in this kingdom, the Irish, with respect to his relation to them, can give him no other character, but that he was a rapacious invader who exerted all his might to gratify his ambition and to establish a foreign power upon the ruins of the liberty of their country.

Farewell.

### L E T T E R XXXVIII.

**A** Government, even perfectly free, should not be imposed on any nation, whatever may be it's civil polity. The act of imposition is despotism. Whether the English government, in the time of Henry the Second, composed chiefly of the aristocratical principles of the feudal constitution, was much superior to that of Ireland, is perhaps a very doubtful question. The condition of the people of this country, as subjects of the King of England, and partaking as an independent nation of the improved laws



laws and privileges of the British constitution, would be greatly to their advantage; they must have cause to rejoice in it. But the steps by which the English power was at first introduced into Ireland were a flagrant violation of the rights of nations and of the Irish constitution. Having related the transactions contained in the preceding letters we are prepared to examine this matter. On what ground will the advocate for England, respecting this point, found his argument? He will say that Dermod an Irish prince, by the permission of Henry, applied to Earl Pembroke and others to aid him in recovering his dominions, that he actually received this assistance, by which he was reinstated in them; that he married his daughter to Pembroke, and, upon his death, transmitted to him his territories as an inheritance; that these possessions together with his allegiance and that of the other adventurers were transferred to Henry. But did not the same power, the choice of the people, which gave Dermod the crown deprive him of it, and that for the best reason, because he was a tyrant. As he was justly dethroned, he could have no right to apply for such assistance, and the granting of it was iniquitous. How could the king of Leinster, had he even lawfully enjoyed the rights of sovereignty to his death, transfer the crown as an inheritance, which, by the constitution of his country, reverted to his subjects to be disposed of by them at pleasure: Or, suppose he had power to transfer the province of Leinster, could a title be derived from hence to the other parts of the kingdom over which he had no dominion? Grant for a moment that the English king did conquer Ireland. A just conquest vests the conqueror with certain powers

powers over the conquered, but the conquest of this kingdom by Henry must have been unjust for he had received no injury. If he had, he would have proclaimed it and seized such an opportunity for the purpose of gratifying his ambition. In that case, it would have been unnecessary for him to have made the absurd application to the Pope for a bull to sanctify his design. But if an equitable claim to obedience is derived from unjust conquest; then power and right are the same idea. Then the law of force is the law of God, the law of reason, the law of justice. Then the highwayman who deprives me of my property or the assassin who robs me of my life does no wrong. Then Camillus who saved his country and Cataline who would have buried it in ruins, are to be considered in the same point of view: Upon this principle the shocking barbarities of Nero, of Caligula and of Cæsar Borgia should not excite our detestation.

STRANGE is the argument that power is derived from conquest if those from Britain, who, it is said, subdued Ireland and whose descendants at this day compose the chief part of it's inhabitants, should lose their privileges and sink down into the abject condition of slaves.

BUT Henry, never did conquer this country. He, or rather the adventurers who engaged in the cause of Dermot, only conquered Leinster, Waterford, Dungarvan and the districts by which they were united. The rest, by far the most considerable part of the kingdom, was altogether unsubdued by their arms. The appointment of a viceroy and other officers of state, the laws and constitution of England by which the former, as a distinct principality, was



to be governed, and the treaty entered into with Roderic, as the representative of the latter, most evidently point out this distinction. The terms of this treaty constituted a meerly nominal subordination. Homage was a form which, scarcely in any degree, lessened the independence of those by whom it was performed. The feudal barons did homage to their superior, and, at the same time, considered it as their right to make war upon him at pleasure. Philip the First of France did homage to the count of Sancerre for certain lands which he held of that nobleman who was one of his own subjects, With respect to tribute, it is exactly to be considered in the same light. Roderic was to do homage and his chieftains, through him, to pay tribute to Henry, and yet, as Hoveden observes, this treaty took away scarcely a privilege from the Irish; they governed their people by the brehon law; they elected their magistrates, their officers; they pardoned and punished malefactors, they made peace and war in respect to one another, without control, and that even to the time of Queen Elizabeth.

To say any thing of the claim derived from the grant made to Henry of Ireland, by the Pope, would be ridiculous. In my next letter I will proceed with the transactions which succeeded the death of Earl Strongbow.

Farewell.

LET-

## LETTER XXXIX.

UPON the decease of Pembroke, the council committed the government to Raymond, with the approbation of the commissioners, until the King's pleasure should be known. But Henry did not approve of the appointment. He made Fitzandelm deputy, in whose loyalty he placed greater confidence. The unexpected events which happened immediately at the time when Raymond was summoned to England to exculpate himself from the sinister designs with which he had been charged by Mountmorris, had, as you have seen, prevented him from repairing thither for that purpose.

FITZANDELM came over to take possession of his new dignity. He had in his train John de Courcey, Robert Fitzstephen, Milo de Cogan and forty knights. Vivian, the Pope's legate, and Wallingford, an English ecclesiastic, sent over by Alexander, with a brief which he had granted to Henry as a farther confirmation of his title to Ireland, likewise accompanied him. The authority of this brief and of Pope Adrian's bull was most dutifully admitted by an <sup>1177.</sup> assembly of the clergy about this time convened at Waterford. With the spirit which had characterised the council of Cashel, they recognized the title of his Majesty to Ireland in the most ample terms. All who should dare to resist his power were threatened with the severe displeasure of these loyal ecclesiastics.

FITZANDELM was but ill qualified for the high office to which he had been raised. Destitute of spirit and absorbed by avarice, he treated the adventurers from  
from



from England, not as friends joined with him in support of the same cause, but as obstacles to the gratification of his selfish passions. The Irish he courted by flattery, whilst, at the same time, he took every opportunity of deceiving them. All parties were highly displeased with his conduct. In particular, John de Courcey, a baron equally distinguished for bodily strength and intrepid courage, was provoked by the behaviour of the deputy. Determined to be free from his present disagreeable situation and to enlarge his prospects, he prevailed with Armoric of Saint Laurence, with Robert de la Poer and a number of soldiers to enlist under his banner, to procure, for himself and for them, a settlement in the province of Ulster.

THUS encouraged, De Courcey set out upon his enterprize. In a few days he arrived at Downe, from whence he expelled Dunleve the chieftain, and spread around havoc and desolation. Unprepared to oppose this iniquitous invasion, the affrighted natives fled from their habitations, which, with all their possessions, they left exposed to the violence of this audacious robber. Vivian, the Pope's legate, was then accidentally at Downe. Filled with abhorrence of the conduct of De Courcey, he endeavoured to restrain his depredations, by representing to him the infamy and injustice of thus attacking the property of the innocent, in violation of the faith of treaties. The passionate and rapacious leader, deaf to his humane representation, resolved to persist in his design, and, for the security of his men, fortified Downe. Vivian, provoked at his baseness and cruelty animated Dunleve to exert himself in defence of his country. The panic by which this chieftain and his  
followers

followers had been struck, having by this time subsided, he collected ten thousand men, placed himself at their head and marched to dispossess the enemy of Downe. De Courcey advanced to meet him. A battle ensued. The Irish fought with bravery, but were defeated. In a second engagement they were equally unfortunate. De Courcey continued to extend and secure his settlement. But he narrowly escaped the merited punishment of his rapacity. Having led forth his men, in quest of provisions, they seized from the inhabitants a number of cattle. Upon their return, in the midst of a narrow road deeply encompassed by woods, they were suddenly attacked by a body of Irish, who had lain concealed in ambuscade. The English, after having sustained a considerable loss, forced their way through the assailants and reached one of their forts. The Irish pursued and encamped at the distance of half a mile from De Courcey. Unfortunately, flushed with victory and unapprehensive of danger, they were not upon their guard. The enemy being informed of their insecurity by Armoric of Saint Laurence, who at midnight had reconnoitred their situation, attacked and cut them almost entirely to pieces.

DURING these transactions in the North, Milo de Cogan, invited by a son of Roderic who had risen in rebellion against his father, made an incursion into Connaught. The people of that province unprovided in any other means of protection from the enemy, laid waste the country. Milo, from the want of provisions, was obliged quickly to retreat to Dublin, where, incessantly attacked in his rear by the people whom he had so cruelly injured, and covered

with



with shame and disgrace he arrived, at length, with difficulty.

THE representation given of the distracted state of Ireland at this period, is painful to the feelings of humanity. There is no doubt but to this the selfish and corrupt administration of Fitzandelm greatly conduced. His unjust and impolitic conduct could not be long concealed from Henry, he displaced him and vested with the powers of Deputy Hugh de Lacy, a baron whose knowledge of the affairs of Ireland, experience in the arts of government and regard to the principles of justice, qualified him for discharging with propriety the duties of that important office.

Farewell.

#### L E T T E R XL.

**H**ENRY, at this time desirous of providing a secure and honourable establishment for John, his youngest son, assembled a council at Oxford and in their presence invested him with the lordship of Ireland. This grant was made, as our annalists say, with the sanction of a number of the principal Irish clergy and barons whom the king called over to England and consulted upon the occasion.

DOCTOR Leland observes that it does not appear to have been an act of the English legislature, and that the assembly who met at Oxford, before whom it was declared, was not a parliament but a council, called to be a witness of the transaction.

To be holden of the king, his son John and heirs, the following grants were made, immediately subsequent to the above appointment,

To

To Milo de Cogan and Robert Fitzstephen were granted the kingdom of Cork; to Herbert Fitzherbert the kingdom of Limerick; to William Fitzandelm, a principal part of Connaught, as also the guardianship of Leinster, during the minority of the only son of Pembroke, to whom it descended as a fief; to Robert de la Poer the territory of Waterford. The king likewise granted to Sir Thomas de Clare all Thomond and to Otho de Grandison all Tipperary. In these grants, the king reserved for himself and his heirs, the city of Cork, the city of Waterford and an adjoining district. It has been asserted by several authors, that when Henry invested his son with the Lordship of Ireland, he transferred to him and to his heirs all the independent privileges of sovereignty without any reservation. The words of the above grants plainly point out the fallacy of this opinion. From them it appears, that Henry reserved to himself and to his successors the privileges of feudal superiority, of whom John and his descendants were to hold the kingdom as their supreme liege lords. This point does not, even in the smallest degree, affect the independent constitutional privileges of the Irish nation. Whether, in consequence of the transference, the supreme unrestricted executive power or privileges of majesty, respecting Ireland, resided in John or remained with Henry, is of no importance to our political rights.

As almost every one of the above grants lay within the limits which were under the immediate protection of Roderic and, of consequence, were a violation of the treaty into which Henry entered with him and solemnly ratified, they were warmly opposed by the Irish chieftains. The people of Limerick,



merick, particularly, beheld this act of injustice with keen resentment. Upon this, Fitz-herbert resigned his pretensions to Limerick, in favour of Philip de Braoso, who, bringing with him from Wales a number of needy and profligate adventurers, made his appearance before the town. The inhabitants, filled with indignation at the sight set fire to it and retired.

THE administration began now to have a very different complexion from that which it had under the government of Fitzandelm. De Lacy executed the duties of his office, as Lieutenant, with prudence and fidelity. By shewing a willingness to promote the interest of the English adventurers, he conciliated their affections. The natives also had cause to entertain a favourable opinion of him from the pains which he took to protect them from injury.

BUT it appears that the government of Ireland was a most invidious and a most difficult task. Fitzandelm, by his improper administration, incurred the displeasure of the king and the popularity which De Lacy had acquired by the rectitude of his conduct excited his jealousy. He was recalled and the office of viceroy committed to the joint care of John, constable of Cheshire, and Richard, Bishop of Coventry. Being disqualified for holding the reins of government, three months concluded their administration. The cheerfulness with which De Lacy had submitted to the unjust deprivation of his office and the satisfactory manner in which he had vindicated his conduct to Henry, removed the suspicions of the king and he was reinstated in the government. By his own particular desire, Robert of Shrewsbury, a confident of Henry, accompanied him to Ireland as

an assistant in the administration and to be a witness of his conduct.

IN the year eleven hundred and eighty one, died Laurence O'Tool, Bishop of Dublin, so highly celebrated by his countrymen. This excellent prelate, at an early period, had devoted himself to a monastic life, the duties of which he discharged in a very exemplary manner. This laid the foundation of his future dignities. He was remarkable for his benevolence, for the strictest chastity, for temperance, hospitality, and, above all, for the love of his country. Upon the first attempts of the English on this kingdom he took an active part in support of the national privileges; continued to oppose their encroachments with zeal, and, though obliged, at last, to make his peace with Henry, was still the friend of Ireland. Contrasted with the fervility of his interested cotemporaries of the sacred order, his conduct, in this respect, appears in shining colours. To remove unfavourable impressions received of him by Henry and to intercede with him in behalf of his countrymen oppressed by the lawless depredations of the British soldiers, he passed over to England. From thence he went to Normandy to be present at the council of Lateran. Worn out by the infirmities of age, he was taken ill upon his journey. Perceiving his last moments to approach, his country recurred to his thoughts; he lamented it's sufferings, he expressed the anxiety of his heart for it's deliverance in pathetic terms. Death closed his eyes, for ever, but left the remembrance of his virtues to warm with gratitude the breasts of Irishmen and to be admired by posterity.



For several years, Cogan and Fitzstephen had enjoyed the districts granted to them in Desmond. This encroachment on their rights, the natives had seen with seeming acquiescence. But men who have violated the privileges of humanity can place no dependance on any marks of confidence or friendship which may appear in the conduct of the injured. This, these barons dreadfully experienced. On a particular occasion, it was necessary that Milo de Cogan should confer with the citizens of Waterford. At the house of an inhabitant of the city, he met them, accompanied by the son of Fitzstephen. Nothing but a sense of the deepest injury could have induced Irishmen to violate the rights of hospitality. The two chiefs were put to death with five of their attendants. This seems to have been the signal of a concerted insurrection. M'Arthy flew to arms, and, with a body of men collected for the occasion, marched to Cork to attack Fitzstephen. The intrepidity of Raymond, the nephew of Fitzstephen, saved the town.

At this time, in particular, the want of a fleet was sensibly felt by the Irish. From their first attempt upon the kingdom, the superiority of the English in this respect, was a circumstance as much in their favour, as their defensive armour, their celebrated cross bows, and the advantages of their military discipline. Hence, the coasts were exposed to their depredations and they could transport succours, when necessary, without interruption. At this period, the state of his affairs in Ireland, required assistance from Henry. Under the command of Richard, brother to Milo de Cogan, and of Philip Barry, he sent over a considerable force. Cambrensis the

historian appointed tutor to John and several ecclesiasticks, came in their train, with a view to regulate the church. They seem to have been ill qualified for that office. Instead of recommending themselves by that affability and condescension becoming their profession, their supercilious carriage rendered them very obnoxious to the Irish clergy. The dislike was mutual. At their meetings, they gave way to angry passions which they gratified by loading one another with invectives.

In a state of society little improved by the arts of cultivation a man distinguished by the virtues of political wisdom, of justice and fidelity, is not to expect his reward. Henry, through the calumny of De Lacy's enemies, for the best of men will have enemies, once more removed him from the administration which he committed to the care of Philip de Braoso. The conduct of Philip was a striking contrast to that of De Lacy. He stripped numbers of the grants which they had obtained from his predecessor. Despising even the very appearance of justice and decency, accompanied by a body of troops, he paraded through several parts of the kingdom for the purpose of rioting, of extortion and rapacity. The forms of religion he held in open contempt, from whose ministers he extorted sums of money, in defiance of the stipulations of Cashel. His government, as might be expected, was of short duration.

Adieu.

LET



## LETTER XLI.

**H**ENRY had discovered a fond partiality for two of his children which they requited with the basest ingratitude. Notwithstanding, as you have seen, he bestowed the lordship of Ireland upon John. Still more impolitic was the measure which he now adopted, of sending him over to this country, though yet but twelve years of age, to take possession of his new inheritance.

ATTENDED by a pompous train of proud and rapacious courtiers, by Glenville a celebrated lawyer, a number of ecclesiastics, and a very considerable force, he landed at Waterford, on the first of April eleven hundred and eighty five. There the English settlers of Leinster and a number of chieftains attended his court to acknowledge him as their liege lord and to present him, upon his arrival in the kingdom, with their compliments of congratulation. When, according to the custom of their country, the Irish, with undesigning simplicity, were advancing to salute John, his attendants interposed and thrust them off with indecent rudeness. This was not enough; they were laughed at by these polished courtiers, plucked by the beard and treated with other marks of contemptuous indignity. Scarcely any injury makes a deeper impression on the mind, than contempt. The Irish lords stung by this base treatment, hastened from court, and, determined to vindicate their honor, proclaimed to their followers the insolence of the English in order to rouse them to arms. “Oppressed by their pride,” exclaimed they in the language of indignation, “how can we submit

to their power, whom entreaty cannot move nor our misfortunes soften, nor our affection soothe, nor respectful treatment inspire with friendly sentiments! Are these the auspicious beginnings of their dominion! Do they mean by such usage to conciliate our minds to peace or to rouse within us a disposition to war? Are these the fruits we are to experience of British politeness? To reject our congratulations, and to return our friendly salutes with disdain." Such affecting language could not be heard without making a deep impression. The courtiers took no pains to efface it. By their conduct they strengthened the resentment conceived against them and rendered it more extensive in its influence. They not only despised the Irish but gratified with eagerness their rapacious dispositions. They plundered them indiscriminately. Even the English settlers were driven from their possessions, without any regard either to their country or to the services which they had done to Henry their common master. These, provoked by such injustice and ingratitude, deserted the side of their oppressors and combined against them with the injured natives.

THE alarm of war sounded in every quarter. The castles of the English were seized, and many of their most distinguished leaders, being suddenly attacked, were either despoiled of their settlements or put to the sword. Carnage and devastation were spread, almost into every quarter. Meath, which in a particular manner had been the object of De Lacy's attention, was upon the point of being lost by the impending storm.

JOHN's goodly train had continued to indulge themselves in luxury and to gratify their avarice and  
pride



pride with an astonishing degree of insensibility to the pernicious consequences of their folly. Besides, as might well be expected from men of such abandoned characters, they were at variance with one another, and their councils full of jealousy and contention.

COMPELLED at last to exert themselves for their own security and to restore the public peace, they took up arms and attempted to disperse their enemies. But effeminated by a course of sensual gratification and strangers to the desultory manner of fighting of the Irish, they were reduced to the disgraceful necessity of giving up the contest and of retreating for safety to their fortifications.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R XLII.

**W**HILST such was the distracted state of Ireland, a quarrel betwixt his sons Richard and Geoffry, a dispute with the clergy who had continued to give him trouble since the death of Becket, and his affairs in Scotland, Wales and on the continent, had engaged the attention of Henry. As soon as he had leisure to turn his thoughts to this kingdom, perceiving how miserably the administration was conducted by the ministers employed to direct the councils of John, he recalled them, together with his son, and vested John De Courcy with the office of viceroy. The fittest person to quiet the disorders of Ireland, at this time, would have been the prudent De Lacy. But he was no more.

UPON the ruins of an abbey in Meath, sacred to Kolumb-kill, he had prepared to erect a fortress.

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The natives, who held this abbey in great veneration, considered the attempt as impious. Impressed by this sentiment, one of the labourers, watching a favourable opportunity, drew a battle axe, which he had concealed for the purpose, and killed the baron on the spot. Not one of the English adventurers, according to the accounts of several authors, merited so well the commendations of posterity. He suffered himself to be engaged in an unjust cause which he supported with steadiness; in all other respects, he is entitled to distinguished praise. Instead of that overbearing insolence, that pride, avarice and rapacity, for which his countrymen in Ireland, almost without exception, were remarkable, a strict regard to prudence, moderation, humanity and justice, was conspicuous in his character. It was in the year eleven hundred and eighty six, that De Courcy, created Earl of Ulster, received the reins of government. The resentments excited in the Irish by John and his impolitic courtiers were become so general, that had they been guided by prudence, by steadiness and unanimity, they might have been attended with the most serious consequences to the English settlements. But, at present, as on former occasions, their efforts, in vindication of their rights, were violent, but, from want of perseverance, they could not derive from them any real or permanent advantage. To the attainment of the great object of their wishes, their original independence, the intestine quarrels by which they were disunited, on every trifling occasion, were still a more insuperable obstacle.

For some time, De Courcy was obliged to stand upon the defensive. This but ill suited his impetuous temper. He resolved to atchieve some exploit



plot worthy of his former reputation, and, with that view, led his army into Connaught. Bold, but not circumspect, he pitched his camp without having taken proper care to examine his situation and the strength of the enemy. Being attacked and unable to maintain his post, he was forced to retire, with precipitation, and to evacuate the province. This repulse animated the men of Ulster to take up arms, once more, in support of their rights. De Courcey marched with his forces to Armagh, where the principal strength of the enemy was collected. He took it by storm and re-established his power in that quarter.

IN the month of July of this year, eleven hundred and eighty nine, died at Chinon in Normandy, Henry the Second. The noble historian who has written the life of this prince has drawn his character in shining colours. According to him, he was a wise politician, strict and impartial in the administration of justice; conducted his government by a regard to the liberty of his subjects; was brave, generous and distinguished for the forgiveness of injuries. These virtues he possessed in a considerable degree; but his invasion of Ireland and subsequent transactions in that country, have left a stain upon his memory which can never be effaced. How far his conduct in this matter, until the death of Pembroke, is reconcilable to the principles of justice, I have endeavoured to explain in a former letter. You will recollect that his treaty with Roderic was also particularly taken notice of. Nothing could be more shameful than his violation of this engagement, which was ratified with all the circumstances of solemnity necessary to make it binding upon every principle of justice.

justice and of honor. For the sake of gratifying a number of rapacious favourites, to make grants of land to be peopled with English colonists within the prescribed limits of Roderic's jurisdiction, and without any pretence to justify it, was cruelty to the natives, injurious to the Irish monarch and reproachful to Henry. This dishonourable breach of faith enflamed the resentment of the Irish and exceedingly encreased the calamities of this unhappy country.

Adieu.

### L E T T E R XLIII.

**R**ICHARD, Henry's second son, upon his death, ascended the English throne. As the lordship of Ireland had been vested in his younger brother, he did not interpose any authority with respect to the government of this kingdom. John, during the life of Richard, appointed deputies, made grants, and performed every other act of sovereign power, as his distinct and exclusive right. From the time that Peter the Hermit began to preach the necessity of taking up arms, in order to expel the Saracens from Jerusalem and deliver Christians from the insults and the difficulties to which they were exposed in their pilgrimages to the Holy Land, almost every country in Europe had, with astonishing rapidity, caught the enthusiastic flame. It had entirely taken possession of the mind of Richard. He was determined to engage personally in a crusade, his obligations to which appeared to him in a stronger light, than the important duties, which, as their sovereign, he owed to his English subjects. It cannot then be supposed that



that he would be inclined to pay the least attention to the affairs of this country. He did not even assume any title from it as liege lord. The first deputy of Ireland appointed by John, after the death of his father, was Hugh, son of the famous De Lacy.

THE natives smarting under a sense of the multiplied injuries which they had received from the English, whenever a suspension of their intestine quarrels took place, were disposed to seize every opportunity that offered to resist their encroachments. Richard was now absent. He had carried with him a number of troops to Palestine which would prevent the British adventurers in this country, from receiving any assistance from England. The favourable occasion was embraced by the petty princes of Munster, those of Desmond and Thomond in particular. They joined their followers to those of Cathal King of Connaught whose magnanimity against the common enemy was signalized, in the most conspicuous manner.

DE COURCY, from his multiplied acts of injustice, had particular reason to dread the impending storm; Armoric of Saint Lawrence, to whom he applied for succour, hastened to his assistance. In his march through Connaught, a numerous body of the enemy attacked him suddenly, from an ambuscade. The horse determined to provide for their safety by flight; but the foot having discovered their intention conjured them to reflect upon the stain which so shameful a desertion would fix upon their reputation; to consider their mutual attachments, their mutual confidence and the valour which they had displayed on former occasions; they entreated that they would not suffer them, in this emergence, to  
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be exposed to the fury of the enemy, friendless and unassisted. It was impossible but that such affecting remonstrances must have their proper weight on minds not quite insensible to the principles of virtue and of honor. Each horseman, after the generous example of Saint Lawrence, killed his horse, determined to live or die with his fellow soldiers. The Irish came on to the attack with fierce impetuosity. A thousand of them, it is said, perished. Numbers of the English fell upon the occasion: The survivors, having exhibited proofs of intrepid courage, broke through the assailants and pursued their march.

CATHAL and his auxiliaries, probably struck by the valour which the English displayed in this battle and foreseeing the effusion of blood likely to be shed by a continuance of the contest, concluded an agreement with De Lacy, and both parties, for the present, ceased from hostilities.

To De Lacy succeeded, as viceroy, William Petit, who, shortly after, was superseded by the Lord Maxfield Earl Marshal of England. This nobleman had married the daughter of Strongbow whom he had by Eva, the only child of Dermot king of Leinster. He was high in favour with Richard who had appointed him one of the regency when he set off for Palestine. He had likewise a considerable estate in Ireland. But all these advantages were not sufficient to enable him to preserve the peace of this country. The natives renewed hostilities, under the command of O'Brian; engaged and defeated the English army at Thurles. This advantage however did not secure Thomond and the neighbouring districts from their ravages, to which the enemy were encouraged by the death of O'Brian, whose name, as one of the best friends of his



his distracted much injured country, has been recorded with distinguished praise. But the people of Thomond did not continue long without a spirited avenger of their wrongs. Cathal of Connaught, whose enterprising genius has been spoken of above, roused his followers to arms and led into Munster a numerous body of troops. The English, not daring to wait his approach, retired. Cathal advanced and destroyed their fortifications.

AT the same time, M'Arthy of Desmond having defeated the enemy, in a pitched battle, reduced Limerick. A detachment of the English were likewise routed by him in conjunction with the men of Connaught and other auxiliaries. In consequence of this victory, Cork surrendered to the Irish. This was the last town or garrison which the English possessed in the province of Munster.

EARL Marshal, affected by these misfortunes, gave up the government of Ireland to Hamo de Valois, in the year eleven hundred and ninety seven.

THE clergy had now arrived at the zenith of their power. A politic governour would therefore, considering the circumstances of the kingdom, have avoided giving them offence. De Valois paid no regard to this consideration. To supply the necessities of government, he seized the possessions of the clergy. Provoked at this treatment, they used every endeavour, but in vain, to procure from John redress. Thus was a new cause of dissatisfaction with his government added to those, which were before sufficiently numerous.

IN the year eleven hundred and ninety eight, died Roderic O'Connor, the last of the supreme monarchs of Ireland. Roderic, as has been said, was of the  
house

house of Heremon, and therefore eligible to the honours of sovereignty. But it was his courage that raised him to the throne. In the different parts of the kingdom, the people had submitted to his authority. No prince, for a series of years, could claim a better title. Under this idea, Henry entered into the treaty with him which has, more than once, been mentioned. Had this prince opposed the English with the same courage which purchased for him the crown, they would not, it is highly probable, have procured a settlement in the kingdom. The forces with which they assisted Dermod were in the beginning very inconsiderable. A spirited effort of the monarch must have expelled them. When, by arms, he should have enforced his right, he depended upon the feeble and ineffectual methods of accomodation.

By his agreement with Henry, he gave up one province of his kingdom; and by repeated violations of it, he had the mortification to sustain new losses. The unnatural rebellion of his sons completed his misfortunes. They compelled him to relinquish the crown. Having experienced a large share of prosperity and tasted bitterly of adverse fortune, sick of the instability of human affairs, he sought for a retreat from the cares and disappointments of life, in the solitude of a convent, where he lived until death put a final period to his calamities.

Adieu.

LET-



## LETTER XLIV.

NO power of the human mind has produced such astonishing efforts as courage when animated by religious enthusiasm. These combined principles had engaged Richard in the expedition to the Holy Land, and led him on to those martial achievements that reflected upon his arms, distinguished glory. As he and his allies were marching to the siege of Aſcalon, Saladin met and encountered them in battle, at the head of thirty thousand men. In the beginning of the engagement, the two wings of the Christian army were defeated. The magnanimity of Richard, who commanded the centre, not only restored the battle, but obtained over the Saracens a compleat victory. After several successful sieges, he was enabled to approach within sight of Jerusalem, the recovery of which city from the infidels had been the grand object of his undertaking. But the zeal of the other Christian princes being greatly abated, they resolved to desist from the enterprize and return to their respective countries. Richard, thus disappointed of his hopes, was obliged to conclude a truce with Saladin, and to procure from him the best terms which could be obtained in favour of the Christians. Upon his return home, being shipwrecked near Aquileia, he put on the disguise of a pilgrim that he might be able to make his way unknown through Germany. But, as he passed by Vienna, he was discovered by Leopold Duke of Austria. Leopold, having on a former occasion, been offended by him, to gratify his resentment and his avarice, most ungenerously seized Richard and cast him into prison.

prison. After a tedious confinement, in which he was obliged to submit to many indignities, he was ransomed by his subjects. Some time after, being employed in besieging a castle in Bretagne, he received a wound of which he died soon after.

UPON the demise of Richard, Arthur of Bretagne, the son of Geoffry, an elder brother, had the best title to the throne; but John usurped his right and added the murder of that innocent prince to his other crimes.

THE present distracted state of Ireland  
1199. required from John very particular attention. His care was now engaged by more interesting objects. Affairs on the continent and in England, and more particularly, the dangers incident to a disputed succession, employed almost the whole of his thoughts.

MILES Fitzhenry, natural son of Henry the First, was appointed deputy of this kingdom, in the place of Hamo De Valois.

ABOUT this time, John made a grant of Thomond to William De Braoso, the city of Limerick and certain cantreds excepted. But this spirited baron, less concerned about his property, than the liberties of England, which the king seemed determined to sacrifice to his ambition, expressed himself upon the subject with a freedom which enflamed the resentment of John. To avoid the impending danger, William fled to Ireland for protection: Being here insecure, he passed over to the Isle of Man and from thence to France, where he died. His wife and son did not escape the king's displeasure. By order of the inhuman tyrant, they were seized in Meath, sent over prisoners to England and put to a violent death.



THE above mentioned grant to Braoso, and particular districts in Connaught, formerly conveyed to English settlers, were committed to the care of William De Burgo, a baron of the family of Fitzandelm. In consequence of this trust, he led a body of forces to Limerick which he attacked and recovered. The Irish were now deprived of the assistance which they had so often received from the brave Cathal. Carragh O'Connor, a branch of the family, disputed his title to the sovereignty of Connaught. With their usual fickleness, many of the friends of Cathal deserted him and by going over to his rival increased the number of his partizans. Carragh had not the attachment to his country which had distinguished the patriotic Cathal. In his mind, every generous sentiment was absorbed in the gratification of ambition. He applied to De Burgo for aid, by whose assistance he was placed on the throne of Connaught. A new event now presents itself to view. De Courcey and De Lacy, solicited by Cathal and by O'Niall of Tir Owen, who had warmly espoused the common cause, joined their forces to those of the Irish chieftains, several of whom, besides those now mentioned, had united in the service of their country, and marched to drive from the throne of Connaught, Carragh the usurper. The attempt was unsuccessful. Cathal finding that he could have no dependance either on his own strength or the present circumstances of his allies, had recourse to other methods. He had the address not only to detach from the interest of his rival, De Burgo, now become an independant baron, but prevailed with him to support his cause. Thus befriended, he engaged the forces of Carragh, who, having fallen by the sword, left him the undisputed possession

possession of the throne. A regard to his own interest, as we may well suppose, had induced De Burgo to lend assistance, to Cathal. But not obtaining from him the reward he expected; he determined to enforce it by having recourse to arms. The fortune of Cathal prevailed. De Burgo was defeated. Fitzhenry taking advantage of the resentment excited against De Burgo in the mind of Cathal prevailed with him, as also with O'Brian of Thomond, to join their forces to his, and to attack Limerick, which had continued in possession of that rebellious baron. The city was taken and De Burgo obliged to return to his dependance on the English crown.

CATHAL, and O'Brian on this occasion, forgot their duty to their country. These chieftains who had assisted the deputy with their arms, now entered into a treaty with him from which John derived substantial advantages. To be secured in the safe possession of a third part of Connaught; Cathal surrendered to the King of England, the other two parts, acknowledging himself his vassal and promising a yearly tribute of a hundred marks. O'Brian also made concessions of importance to the English interest.

#### L E T T E R XLV.

**I**T was at this time necessary to reduce to obedience a much more powerful baron than De Burgo. Some time before, De Courcey had been deprived of the office of deputy, in favour of De Lacy. His high spirit could not submit to this mortification. He retired, in discontent, to his settlement in Ulster and renounced his allegiance. The resentment of

John



John against De Courcey was very much heightened by another cause; he had impeached his title to the crown, and cast severe reflections on him as having occasioned the death of his nephew Prince Arthur.

DE LACY, who, when this baron was removed from the government, had been substituted in his place, was considered by the king as the fittest instrument to punish him for his rebellion and received a commission for that purpose. A battle ensued in which De Courcey was victorious. What power could not effect, De Lacy accomplished by address. He bribed some of De Courcey's attendants who betrayed their master into his hands whom he sent prisoner into England. John condemned him to perpetual imprisonment and transferred his possessions in Ulster, with the Earldom annexed to them, to De Lacy.

THE English interest in this county began now to wear a more favourable aspect. 1203.

The rebellion of De Courcey and De Burgo were suppressed. The people of Desmond were not formidable being embroiled with intestine dissensions and deprived by death of the assistance of their valiant leader Daniel M'Arthy. Limerick and Cork had been recovered and strengthened by fortifications.

UNDER pretense of chastising the De Lacys and William De Braoso who had become factious and turbulent, in the month of June, twelve hundred and ten, the king paid a second visit to Ireland. It is very probable that his real design was to be furnished with a specious reason for keeping together his forces to secure himself against the displeasure of his English subjects which he had justly incurred by the

meanness, the insolence and tyranny of his government.

UPON his arrival, a considerable number of chieftains attended his court, and did homage to him as their liege lord. Whilst in Ireland, he performed no military atchievement worth notice. England was never ruled by a prince more ambitious than John. At the same time, no king could be more contemptible in arms. The De Lacys and Braoso dreading the effects of his resentment, fled to France. With respect to the fate of these unfortunate barons, Braoso, we are told, was never restored to the king's favour. His unhappy wife and children were cast into prison where they experienced the bitter effects of John's unrelenting cruelty. The De Lacys, being stripped of their all and reduced to the most humiliating circumstances, by the intercession of the abbot of Saint Taurin, obtained the king's forgiveness and were reinstated in their possessions.

BEFORE John left Ireland he paid some regard to the political interest of his subjects.

WE have seen the principles on which Henry settled the affairs of this kingdom. The part of it subdued by the British arms was that only, which, properly speaking, acknowledged his sovereignty. Here, a form of government was established exactly similar in it's several departments, to that of the English constitution. Henry well knew that to maintain his authority and secure the allegiance of his subjects, this was essentially necessary. Is it to be supposed that the English adventurers formerly the subjects of a free empire, however indifferent they might have been to the rights of the natives, would be insensible to their own? Would they submit to have no parliament,



liament, no laws, no constitution? Would they shed their blood, would they submit to a variety of the greatest hardships to procure a settlement in this country, and then yield up their lives, their property, their most valuable privileges to the control of an English despot? A glorious recompense of their labours this, in the estimation of haughty barons and of their high spirited followers. The idea is fraught with absurdity.

AT the desire of his English subjects of this kingdom, John gave them a code of laws founded upon the principles of English polity, the object of which was, to regulate the prerogative of the prince and the limits of their obedience. Likewise, by general consent, in parliament, he ordained that the English laws and customs should henceforward be observed in Ireland. By the former, we are to understand the statute law, and, by the latter, the common law of England. In a patent roll of the eleventh of Henry the Third, are these words, "The King to the barons, knights and all his freeholders greeting. Your wisdoms, as we believe, have sufficiently been informed, that when John, formerly King of England, our father, of happy memory, came into Ireland, he brought with him discreet men skilled in the laws, by whose unanimous advice, at the request of the Irish, he ordained and commanded the laws of England to be observed in Ireland, and left the said laws, reduced into writing under his seal, in the exchequer of Dublin." In the exchequer the code of laws mentioned above, was also deposited. For the more regular administration of justice, John likewise established courts of law whose jurisdiction was to extend to the limits of the pale. By this term, that

part of the kingdom occupied by the adventurers and governed by English law, on account of being separated from the rest by an enclosure of pales, is generally distinguished. With the same view, as had been done by Henry, sheriffs with proper assistants were appointed and the boundaries of their jurisdiction ascertained. In order to this, the English territory was divided into the counties of Dublin, Meath, Kildare, Lowth, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary. Here we may pretty evidently perceive how far, at this time, the pretensions of English government, in point of any real power, extended in Ireland. In what remained, which composed about the two thirds of the kingdom, the English influence was in a great measure nominal.

Adieu.

#### L E T T E R XLVI.

**T**HE deputy appointed by John to direct the affairs of this country was De Grey Bishop of Norwich. His government was the first, as we are informed by Matthew Paris, in which money was coined here of the common standard with that of England. By this, the commercial intercourse betwixt the two nations could be conducted with greater facility and advantage than when the money current in each was of a different value and denomination.

We are informed that the administration of this prelate was active and vigilant. It might have been added, that like the government of almost every one of his predecessors it was marked by injustice to

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the natives. The large portion of his territory granted by Cathal to the English, might, you would suppose, have gratified their rapacity. He had reserved to himself but a third of his possessions. Even on that, they cast a greedy eye and attempted to make encroachments. It is probable, as he usually had done, that the prince of Connaught, would, on this occasion, have had recourse for justice to his own strength could he have commanded the means. But, in consequence of his concessions to the English, of which he now had cause most bitterly to repent, his strength was weakness. As his only resource, he appealed to John. John seldom regarded the complaints of the injured, but to the grievance of Cathal he gave attention. By letters patent, he expressly commanded his deputy of Ireland and officers of justice to protect Cathal in the undisturbed possession of all his just rights and privileges.

SOME time after, the Bishop of Norwich, having been sent for to England, committed the reins of government to Comyn Archbishop of Dublin. Upon his death, Henry De Londres, who succeeded him in the archeopiscopal see, was appointed lord deputy. He governed Ireland until the year twelve hundred and thirteen when he was called over to England by John, as his situation rendered the assistance of all his counsellors necessary whose advice could be useful to him. From the time that this prince ascended the English throne, he was involved in a continued series of misfortunes, of these, his dispute with Pope Innocent the third, in respect to the election of an archbishop to fill the see of Canterbury, was the most disgraceful. Upon this, as on every other occasion, he conducted himself with disgusting violence and with

an abject meanness which rendered him despicable. To reduce John to submission, the Pope laid his kingdom under an interdict: He then pronounced against him a sentence of excommunication. Finding that he still persisted in his opposition, he deposed him and transferred his dominions to Philip King of France. Instead of endeavouring to retrieve the consequences of his folly, by resisting with wisdom and firmness this flagrant presumption of the pontiff, he consented to resign his kingdom to the Pope and to hold it of him as his vassal. In the littleness of his soul, he not only submitted to this astonishing meanness, but to do homage with all the humiliating rites prescribed to inferiors, on such occasions, by the feudal law.

THE obnoxious government of John had given such universal offence to the English, that in the pleasure with which they were witnesses to his disgrace they extinguished all regard to the dignity and the independance of the nation. But, not long after, they exerted themselves effectually in defence of their rights. Of all the princes who had ruled England, those of the Norman line were the most absolute. Under their government, the people were greatly abridged of the liberties they had enjoyed during the reign of the Saxon Kings and the barons lost much of the power derived to their order from the principles of the feudal constitution. John, in particular, had trampled insolently upon the privileges of all his subjects. On this account, he was hateful to them. There was such a mixture in his character of odious and contemptible qualities, that he was an object neither of respect, of affection or of fear. Having long borne with his tyranny, which was  
equally



equally intolerable even after his dishonourable concessions to the Pope, the barons at last, roused to a sense of their duty, armed and compelled him to ratify that glorious character of liberty by which the powers of the crown were restrained within due limits, and the rights of the people, of every order, ascertained and confirmed. This act of justice was extorted from John by necessity. Though he had sanctified it by an oath, he endeavoured to re-establish his tyranny, with the assistance of an army of foreign mercenaries. This attempt exceedingly heightened the indignation with which the English had been inspired by his former usurpations. Determined that he should rule them no longer, they made an offer of the crown to Lewis, eldest son of Philip King of France, who accepted it and came over to England where he was invested with his new dignity. As John was making preparations to recover his kingdom, he was seized by a disorder of which he died, after an odious and contemptible reign of seventeen years.

## L E T T E R XLVII.

**H**ENRY the Third, the eldest son and successor of John was but ten years old when he ascended the throne. Geoffry De Maurisco, a celebrated lawyer of Munster, who, for some time past, had conducted the government of Ireland, was continued deputy. In the first year of this reign, the Irish barons transmitted to England a list of grievances, particularly of encroachments on their rights which they had suffered in the late reign. They supplicated Henry to take them, of his  
royal

royal grace, under his protection and to secure their privileges. You have seen that the English, from aversion to John, had transferred their crown to Lewis of France. As an inducement to his barons to disannul this very extraordinary transaction and to recommend himself to their favour, Henry, by advice of his ministers, shortly after his accession, called a grand council at Bristol where he ratified the great charter of liberty granted to them by his father. Convinced that no other answer to the complaints of his Irish subjects could be as satisfactory, Henry gave them a duplicate of this charter, wherein their rights, privileges and immunities, were placed upon the very same foundation with those of the English. By this charter, which is still extant in the exchequer of Dublin, the civil and political institutions of England as the grand principles of legislation; the right of electing representatives, the privileges of parliament, an exemption from the usurped interference of any foreign jurisdiction, the trial by jury, a security with respect to life, liberty and property, were conveyed to Irishmen as a free and independant nation for ever. Britons have ever boasted of Magna Charta as the sacred, the impregnable rampart of their liberties; upon the same principle, we glory in it as our birth right and dearest inheritance. The power which attempts to transgress this line of free and equal government, violates the dictates of reason, and insults the great law of justice written upon the heart by the finger of God.

It was on the fourth of November that the above grant of Magna Charta was transmitted to Ireland. Henry renewed and ratified it by another, the February



bruary following, in these words. “The King to the archbishops, abbots, earls, barons, knights and free tenants, and to all his faithful subjects in Ireland. In proof of our approbation of your fidelity to our father, which he has experienced, and which we are likely to experience, we will, in consequence of your distinguished fidelity, that you and your heirs enjoy for ever, out of our favour and as a gift to your kingdom, the liberties granted you by our father and ourselves.”

In the second year of his reign, Henry joined with Maurisco, in the office of deputy, Henry De Londres, in whose loyalty and abilities he seems to have placed particular confidence. During the beginning of their administration, Ireland enjoyed more than usual tranquility. This was in a great measure owing to the influence of Lord Pembroke, whose power, as guardian to the king, was extensive, and who was particularly connected with this country by the large possessions which he held, in the province of Leinster, as the heir and representative of Earl Strongbow.

UPON the death of Pembroke, in the year twelve hundred and nineteen, Hugh De Lacy, aided by O’Nial of Tir Owen, made incursions into his estate in Meath. This brought over to Ireland William the young earl, who immediately commenced hostilities with De Lacy, in vindication of his right. How the matter was determined is not said, but the dispute ended, after the contending parties had wasted Meath and the adjoining districts.

AT this time, the King granted to O’Brian, prince of that territory, the country of Thomond to be held by him, during his minority, for which he was

to pay a fine of a thousand marks and a hundred and thirty marks yearly.

HENRY had promised protection to his Irish subjects, without partiality or distinction. Too often have kings slighted their engagements, prompted by interest or ambition. To Richard De Burgo, the descendant of that factious baron who had bid defiance to the government of his father, and whose return to obedience had been, in a good measure, owing to the conduct and valour of Cathal, he granted the whole of Connaught. For his services, Cathal merited a more grateful return: By giving up a large share of his possessions to John, he shewed a disposition to live upon terms of peace and amity with the English; he was, besides, an immediate descendant of Roderic, the acknowledged head and representative of the natives, to whom the faith of Henry the Second had been publicly pledged, in security of their rights. Soon after this iniquitous and dishonourable violation of his property, he died. The subjects of this unfortunate prince, supported by O'Nial of Tir-Owen, without paying any regard to the grant of Henry, placed his brother Tirlaugh on the throne of Connaught; but Maurisco deprived him of the sovereignty and substituted in his place Ædh, a son of Cathal. This, we have reason to suppose, was done with a view to sow the seeds of dissention among the men of Connaught, that De Burgo might be enabled to establish his claim. But the English soon found that they could place no confidence on Ædh; he quarrelled with them; was defeated and afterwards killed in a tumult. Hubert De Burgo, justiciary of England, being made deputy of Ireland, appointed, as his substitute, his kinsman Richard De Burgo,



Burgo, who, having displaced Tirlaugh, whom the people of Connaught had reinstated in the sovereign authority, placed Feidlim on the throne, another son of Cathal.

WHATEVER confidence De Burgo might have placed in Feidlim, as favourable to his views, this prince scorned to make concessions inconsistent with his honor and the privileges of his subjects. Provoked by this disappointment, the Deputy joined his forces to Tirlaugh and made war upon Feidlim. Feidlim exerted himself with vigour, and after several reverses of fortune, found himself, in spite of all opposition, seated on the throne.

By this time, Hubert De Burgo had fallen under the displeasure of the king. Feidlim, resolving to improve the favourable opportunity of relieving himself from the power of his enemies, passed over to England and laid his complaints at the foot of the throne. He supplicated the king to take him under his protection. Henry listened with favour to so just an application; wrote to Maurice Fitzgerald, at that time deputy, "to pluck out by the root that fruitless plant John De Burgo, which Hugh De Burgo had planted in those parts, that it might bud no more." In the acts of injustice done to the prince of Connaught, John De Burgo had been particularly instrumental. Orders were given by the king, and executed, that Feidlim should remain undisturbed in the possession of his territories.

DURING the administration of Richard De Burgo, Henry transmitted to him an order by which he was commanded, at a certain day and place, to summon the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, knights, freeholders and sheriffs, and in their presence,

presence, to cause to be read publicly the charter of his father John, to which the seal pendent was annexed, and that in obedience to it they should swear that the laws and customs of England should be observed in Ireland, and that in behalf of the king, he should command the laws and customs contained in said charter to be firmly held and observed in the several counties of Ireland, of which, public proclamation, in each of them, respectively, should be made, that none should presume to disobey his Majesty's command. This was a new, a public and a solemn ratification of our privileges as freemen and partakers of the benefit of the English constitution, which, like the preceding grants, was to extend not only to the English of the pale, but to those of the natives, who, at any future period, should be received on the same footing as subjects of the King of Britain. From the moment that an Irishman renounced his ancient form of policy, consented to hold his land as an English tenure, and was admitted to be governed by English law, he was entitled, in their fullest extent, to all the liberties derived from the British constitution.

Farewell.

#### L E T T E R XLVIII.

**H**ENRY was not taught wisdom by the recent example of the misfortunes which were the consequence of his father's folly. Of profligate morals, and profusely extravagant, he was always needy. Not supplied with money, as he desired, by his barons, on whom his demands were endless, he invaded their privileges without any regard to  
Magna



Magna Charta. Of those who expressed themselves dissatisfied with his extortions, young Richard, son of the Earl of Pembroke, late Protector of England, was particularly distinguished. For this, the king marked him out as an object of his high displeasure. To avoid the consequence of Henry's resentment, Richard, with a number of his friends, fled to Wales, and from thence to Ireland, where, in right of his father, he possessed lands, to a very considerable extent. Descended from Earl Strongbow, and, by his mother, from an Irish chieftain, he had, independent of his property in this kingdom, extensive influence.

BEFORE he reached Ireland, Fitzgerald, the deputy, the De Lacys, Richard De Burgo, Maurisco, with other barons, had received orders from Henry to secure Pembroke, on his arrival in this kingdom. To engage them the more effectually to this service, the lands of the Earl Marshal, in Ireland, declared to be forfeited by his misconduct, was granted to them, and to their heirs for ever. The temptation had, on the minds of these ungenerous barons, it's full effect. They determined to execute the king's command. But, as Pembroke was powerful, treachery was necessary, which they did not scruple to employ for accomplishing their infamous design.

MAURISCO assumed the appearance of friendship for Richard; encouraged him not only to assert his own personal rights but to reduce the whole kingdom. The unfortunate earl fell into the snare. When he had recovered his own possessions, he took Limerick and extended his incursions. As he was now too great a criminal to hope for pardon, his enemies threw off the mask; told him they could no longer

longer be spectators of his rebellion; to reduce him to obedience by force was now become their indispensable duty. But, say they, we wish to avoid the effusion of blood, and are willing to compromise the matter by a treaty. Having no suspicion of their intention, he complied and met them, for this purpose, on the plains of Kildare. The barons proposed a truce, with which Pembroke would not comply. The sword, they then declared, must immediately decide the quarrel. At the moment of onset, Maurisco, who till now had continued his feigned attachment to the Earl, drew off his followers and left Pembroke to oppose a hundred and fifty men, with no more than fifteen followers. Having taken an affectionate farewell of a tender brother whom he had in his train and dismissed him, he supported the charge of his assailants with heroic valour. They were vile assassins. One of them plunged a dagger into his back. The wound proved mortal of which he died a little after.

WHEN this transaction was known in England, the people, with whom Pembroke was a favourite, and the discontented lords who considered him as one of the most active and most powerful defenders of the common cause, were exceedingly provoked. The King, dreading the effect of the general indignation excited in England upon account of it, and the resentment of the Irish, especially of Leinster, who were ready to break out into open hostilities, put on the cloak of hypocrisy; pretended to be deeply affected by the death of Pembroke, denied that he had given the sanction of his authority to this act of the Deputy and his accomplices, and vested Gilbert, the brother of the deceased Earl, with the honor of  
knighthood,



knighthood, and with all the rights and possessions of the family.

GILBERT being in favour with the King, Fitzgerald, who had been very instrumental in procuring the death of his brother, dreading his resentment, went over to England, and pacified him by arts of the vilest insincerity.

WE have seen the infamous behaviour of De Burgo, with respect to Earl Pembroke. To this, in concurrence with the deputy, he added another attack upon Feidlim. He seized part of his territories. Before Fitzgerald left England, the Prince of Connaught appeared in the presence of Henry and complained of the injury. He confined his accusation to De Burgo, either gained by the address or afraid of the power of the deputy. The king commanded Fitzgerald and the nobility of Ireland to banish De Burgo and to use their endeavours to reinstate Feidlim in the possession of his rights. He felt this act of justice with gratitude. Shortly after, the King, being engaged in hostilities with the Welsh, summoned his liege subjects of Ireland to his aid. None of them obeyed, except Feidlim. Had Fitzgerald given Henry effectual assistance, he might have prevented the mortification and distress in which he was involved, in that unfortunate expedition. But he neglected his duty, on which account, the King removed him from the government of Ireland and substituted in his place Sir John, the brother of Geoffry Maurisco.

Adieu.

## LETTER XLIX.

**V**ARIOUS distractions, at this period, disturbed the peace of Ireland. The feudal barons were most impatient of control, ever unwilling to be directed in their conduct by the regular principles of government. To restrain them and all the King's immediate subjects in this country from irregularities destructive of the public tranquility, three different times, during the present reign, a grant of the English laws and constitution was transmitted to Ireland. The following writ which Henry now sent over to this kingdom, may be considered as his fourth grant to us of the liberties of England. "Because for the common benefit of the land of Ireland and the unity of the King's territories, the King, by the advice of his counsellors, hath provided that all the laws and customs of the kingdom of England, may be possessed by the kingdom of Ireland and that it might hold and be governed by the same laws as King John, when last in Ireland, commanded; because it is the pleasure of the King that the common laws of England may be current in Ireland, in like manner, under the authority of the King's new seal, it is commanded to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, &c. that for the peace and tranquility of the said land, they may permit themselves to be governed by the said laws and that they may be observed throughout the land." This charter is to be found among the patent rolls in the tower. To what a wretched state of weakness must the government of Ireland have been reduced, at this period, when it was necessary that it's legislators should



should be requested by the King to permit themselves to be amenable to law? The weakness of the sovereign and the turbulence of the Irish grandees are here equally conspicuous.

IN the year twelve hundred and fifty three, Henry having projected a marriage betwixt his son Prince Edward and the Infanta of Spain, he made a grant of this kingdom, with certain exceptions, to him and to his heirs for ever. Provision however was made, in this conveyance, that Ireland should always be connected with and dependant on the English crown. The various departments of government, here, were now conducted in the name of Edward and subject to his immediate authority. It appears that Henry was jealous lest his son should withdraw this kingdom from it's allegiance to him as supreme liege lord. To prevent which, he frequently interfered in his administration. He would not permit him to name such deputies as were most agreeable to him; he superseded his writs and controuled him in other acts of government which had not the sanction of his own letters patent.

HAD Edward come over to Ireland, as was once designed, happy, in all probability, would it have been for the interest of this nation, but the distractions in England, occasioned by his father's impolitic administration, and afterwards, an enthusiastic desire of displaying his courage and zeal for the church, in the Holy Land, prevented the execution of this scheme.

IN twelve hundred and fifty four, Henry being engaged in a war upon the continent in defence of his territories in France and pressed for the want of assistance, his queen, as appears upon record, trans-

mitted to Ireland, the following requisition. “To the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, burgeses, freemen. Intreating from them assistance of men and money against the King of Castile who has invaded Gascony, the compliance with which will turn to their immortal honor.” This, as Mr. Molyneux observes, is one convincing proof of the antiquity of our parliament, and also shews that neither men nor money could be raised in Ireland without it's consent.

MISERABLE was the state of Ireland at this period. M'Arthy rose in arms to expel the English from Desmond which he claimed as his ancient patrimony. The Geraldines, who now acted independent of all government, engaged him in battle. The event was fatal to them. Thomas Fitzgerald and his son, eighteen barons, fifteen knights, and many other of their adherents perished upon this occasion. Walter De Burgo next attacked M'Arthy, slew him and ravaged his country. The general confusion was likewise encreased by a quarrel which broke out between the De Burgos and the family of Fitzgerald. Maurice Fitzgerald and two of his partizans were so violent in this dispute as to seize the persons of Richard De Capella Lord Justice, Richard De Burgo, together with Butler, Cogan and others, and cast them into prison. A parliament which met some time after at Kilkenny set them at liberty.

IN England, the barons, for the same reasons which had provoked their displeasure against John, were enemies to the government of Henry. The clergy were of the same sentiments, and the people, now raised to greater consequence in the political scale, stood forth also in opposition to his tyranny.

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This country, on which, as well as on England, he laid a heavy hand, felt most sensibly his extortions. Ireland was likewise distressed from another quarter. By authority from the Pope, a number of hungry Italian ecclesiastics poured into it, to prey upon the industry of it's inhabitants. The clergy from England imitated their example. Against the latter, in particular, the resentment of the Irish clergy was excited, to a high degree. Resolving to free themselves from this unreasonable burden, they published a spirited ordinance, in exclusion of every English ecclesiastic from holding a canonicate in any of their churches. It appears however that our own clergy who were thus dissatisfied with this encroachment on their own privileges, aspired to a domination over the rights of the laity which shews that they possessed a large portion of the spirit of the times.

IN twelve hundred and sixty eight, Sir Robert De Ufford was appointed lord deputy, who was not more fortunate, in the government of this country, than his immediate predecessors. During his administration, the Irish made an attack upon the castle of Roscommon which they reduced. Upon this, the English took the field and came to an engagement with the enemy, at Glenburry. The particulars of this memorable battle are not upon record; we only know that the English were entirely defeated, a great number of their men being killed and taken prisoners.

WORN out by the infirmities of age and by a variety of adverse occurrences which pursued him through a great part of his life, Henry died, the sixteenth of November, in the year twelve hundred and seventy two. His reign was prolonged to the very

uncommon period of fifty six years. The character of this prince was distinguished by meanness, caprice, a violence of temper and an attachment to favourites, which altogether unqualified him for the duties of government. Instead of recommending himself to the confidence of his people, he sacrificed their good opinion, for the sake of present convenience, to passions which led him to encroach upon their rights. We are told that he was religious; it should rather be said that he was devoted to superstition. Hence, he suffered his subjects to be exposed, in a shameful manner, to the ambition, the avarice and rapacity of the Roman pontiff.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R L.

**P**RINCE Edward having returned from Palestine eminently distinguished by the glory of military achievements, was crowned King of England, upon the death of his father Henry.

IN Ireland, the barons, knights and other vassals, took the usual oaths of allegiance. This affected submission was immediately followed by acts of hostility against his government. Fitzmaurice, the governor, having attempted to suppress some of these insurrections in Leinster, was made prisoner. 1272. Glenville, his successor, was equally unfortunate, for being called into the field, on a similar occasion, he was defeated.

THE North Britons, taking advantage of these disorders, made a sudden incursion into this kingdom, destroyed several towns and villages and carried off very considerable plunder. Irritated by this

unprovoked



unprovoked violence, Richard De Burgo and Sir Eustace Le Poer, with their adherents, invaded the Islands of Scotland and retaliated upon the aggressors.

THOMAS Le Clare, Son of the Earl of Gloucester, in the year twelve hundred and seventy four, received from Edward a grant in Thomond of considerable extent. To encrease his influence or gratify a needy favourite, it was usual with the King of England, to make grants of land in Ireland, without considering whether such acts could be reconciled to solemn treaties entered into with the natives; whether this was not disposing of possessions which he could not transfer from the present proprietors, without doing violence to the dictates both of justice and humanity. Would men, not utterly destitute of all spirit and of every regard to their own interest submit quietly to such encroachments? How could an English monarch complain of the turbulence of the Irish when he thus wantonly provoked them to rise up in rebellion against his government?

WHEN Le Clare attempted to take possession of his grant, he met with the most determined opposition from the O'Brians. In the first conflict, O'Brian Roe, at this time King of Thomond, was taken and executed, but he had sons who vindicated his cause. By a stratagem, they drew Le Clare, with his father-in-law Maurice and their forces into a pass surrounded by mountains, compelled them to make satisfaction for the death of their father, to give hostages for their good behaviour in future and to relinquish all pretensions to the territory of Thomond.

NOTWITHSTANDING the natural attachment of the Irish to their own laws, some of the chieftains,  
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in the preceding reign, harassed by oppression, had applied to Henry to take them under the protection of the English law; he wisely complied with their desire. So long as the greatest part of the nation was governed by its own distinct political institutions, the authority of the sovereign was limited in proportion, and the causes of dissention multiplied. To encourage the Irish to submit to the British government must always have been a favourite object with the crown. But it was not a favourite object with the principal adventurers. A liege subject of the King, upon the principles of the British constitution, possessed a security against the violation of his rights, which a native, not received to that privilege, did not enjoy. Lands held by a native as an English tenure could not be granted to another, and if he was treated ill, being comprehended within the limits of the law, it provided for him a redress of injury. Hence, the barons, who wished to indulge without restraint and without punishment, their rapacious dispositions, at the expence of the Irish, opposed their being admitted to this advantage. Of this, the present period exhibits a striking instance. A body of natives, scourged by oppression, applied to Edward to grant them the privilege of being governed by the laws of England. They entreated him earnestly to comply with their request.

1280. They did more. They offered him six thousand marks if he would gratify their desire. Upon which, the King commanded Robert De Ufford, at this time deputy of Ireland, to take council with the prelates, barons and commons, relative to this matter, expressing, at the same time, his desire and that of the English council, that they should gratify



gratify the Irish. But, for the reasons mentioned above, no steps were taken towards the accomplishment of their wishes. Some time after, they renewed their application, but were equally unsuccessful.

THE misfortune of De Clare, in his dispute with the O'Brians, had not taught him a regard to justice. He once more intermeddled in the affairs of Thomond. Two chieftains, that he might profit by the competition, were instigated by him to commence hostilities. But the magnanimity of their Prince M'Arthy disappointed his expectation. He addressed them with the warmth of patriotism; pointed out how pernicious such contentions were to their interest and the advantages derived from them to the common enemy. His arguments prevailed. They laid aside their animosities and were reconciled. Had the example of M'Arthy been imitated and had the same disposition influenced the princes and the chieftains of Ireland, what disgrace and what effusion of blood would it have saved to this unhappy kingdom! The dispute which Mac Dermod of May Lurg had, at this time, with the King of Connaught, terminated in a manner very different from that mentioned above. They came to an engagement, in which the King of Connaught was slain and two thousand men. Upon hearing this, De Ufford was summoned, by the King, to inform him why he permitted such quarrels to happen under his administration? The Deputy replied, "That he thought it expedient to suffer one knave to destroy another to save expence to the King and to purchase the peace of the land." Edward pleased with this answer, bad him, with a smile, to return to Ireland. The minister who expressed himself in this manner and the prince who  
could

could hear such language with approbation, must have been sent by Heaven, in it's wrath, as a scourge to the nation, who had the misfortune to be under their government.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R   L I.

**F**OR a century past, it had been usual with the kings of England, when they wanted money from their subjects, to ask it for the pretended purpose of making an expedition to the Holy Land. This service they knew was always agreeable to the people and particularly to the clergy. With this pretence, Edward now applied to the Pope to assist him in obtaining a supply from the clergy of this country. His Holiness, with his usual pious liberality, granted him a tenth of their revenues. The King, not satisfied with this exorbitant imposition, added to it the demand of a fifteenth. The conduct of the clergy did them honor upon this occasion. They absolutely refused to submit to this shameful extortion.

His Majesty being probably informed that his servants in this kingdom were accustomed to purchase large estates, which he thought had a tendency to render them too powerful, transmitted an ordinance, by which he prohibited the Justice of Ireland, or any other of his officers here, to purchase lands, in this country, without his licence, on pain of forfeiture. This illegal order was issued by the authority of the King and council, not by that of the English parliament, for he held no parliament in the seventeenth year of his reign, which is the date of  
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the ordinance. It was at a later period that the parliament of England assumed a power of making laws to bind us.

NOTHING was more common than for the Deputies of Ireland to abuse their trust. The present year, twelve hundred and ninety, his Majesty appointed Lord Justice of this kingdom William De Vesey, who was married to an heiress of the family of Pembroke, and, in her right, possessed the county of Kildare with other districts. A quarrel arose betwixt him and John Fitzthomas Fitzgerald, baron of Offaly. They accused each other of high treason, and carried on the dispute, for some time, with great bitterness. De Vesey charged his opponent with being factious, more disposed to employ his power in creating dissensions among his fellow subjects, than to preserve the public tranquility. Fitzgerald, with strong expressions of resentment and contempt, retorted the accusation upon the Lord Justice. They hastened to England, made their complaints of each other to Henry, and were permitted, upon a certain day, to plead their cause before the King and council. The speeches which they are said to have made upon the occasion, and which are preserved upon record, present a striking picture of the rough unpolished manners of the times.

AGAINST the accusation of De Vesey, who spoke first, Fitzgerald defended himself at considerable length. He concluded his speech with this defiance: "To justify that I am a true subject, and that thou, Vesey, art an arch traitor, to God and my king, here, in the presence of his Highness, and in the hearing of this honourable assembly, I challenge the combat." Vesey accepted the challenge, and  
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the day was fixed when this important tryal was to be determined. It arrived. The lists were ready, and a crowd of spectators waited, in anxious expectation of the event. But Vesey did not appear; he had withdrawn privately to France. This was considered as an acknowledgment of his guilt. His lands were forfeited to the crown, which the king transferred to Fitzgerald, and settled them upon him and his heirs for ever. An instance happened of a dispute being determined in England, by this method of single combat, even so late as the seventeenth century. The success of Fitzgérald in this dispute rendered him more restless and turbulent. He attacked Burgo Earl of Ulster, and having vanquished him and his brother, he cast them into prison where they lay until they were set at liberty by a parliament which met, some time after, at Kilkenny. This parliament, regularly convened by writs issued to the barons, clergy, and also for two knights from each county, was summoned with a view to put a stop, if possible, to those feuds, which so much distracted this unhappy kingdom.

THE ordinances of this assembly deserve to be particularly mentioned. As a matter of much consequence to the regular administration of justice, and, which does not appear before this to have come under the cognizance of parliament, it was determined that each county should be a separate district, and provided with a sheriff to take care of it's civil concerns. With respect to those who had settlements on the limits of the pale, they were enjoined to be more particularly attentive to their duty, to prevent those hostile invasions so destructive to the public welfare. A law was framed relative to the  
 establishment



establishment of a general militia and to the means necessary for it's regular support. A particular law was also enacted for uniting in interest the English of the pale and to engage them to give each other mutual assistance, when their settlements were attacked.

It was usual for the barons to retain a number of disorderly dependants, who, being, on every occasion, the ready instruments of gratifying their ambition, their revenge, or their avarice, greatly contributed to disturb the public peace; likewise, by encreasing their expence, they rendered them more needy, and, of course, more rapacious. It was therefore enacted, by this parliament, that the number of these followers should be diminished, and that no baron should make war, except liberty for that purpose was obtained either from the King or chief governor.

Nothing could be more reproachful to the English and destructive to the state, than to violate the stipulations which they entered into with the Irish. These should have been made upon fair and honourable terms, and when concluded, held sacred. A law was enacted for this purpose.

To prevent the English from conforming to the dress of the natives and from cutting their hair after their manner, was the object of another law.

It was thought to be of use that two barons, in the absence of the Lord Deputy, should, in these districts where the natives had settlements, be vested with authority to treat with them of all matters in which the public tranquility was concerned. An act relative to this was the last of the present parliament. These acts had not the desired effect. If there be not a certain similarity betwixt the manners of a  
people

people and the laws, they can have but little influence on their conduct.

NOTWITHSTANDING the pains taken at this time, by the legislature, to prevent civil commotions, the O'Connors, Mac Arthys and a number of other chieftains, were, shortly after, up in arms. To defend Leinster from their attacks, the English found it necessary to collect their forces to that quarter, from the other provinces. The King of England was at this time engaged in a war with Scotland, in which he had called over to his aid John Fitzthomas, the Earl of Ulster, and a number of their followers. The natives were always disposed, as might naturally be expected, to embrace such opportunities of attempting the recovery of their rights. Whilst the affairs of this kingdom were embroiled by the evils of intestine dissention, King Edward died. He lived sixty nine years, thirty five of which he had sat upon the English throne.

THE conduct of this prince was favourable to the prosperity and to the liberties of England: As to this country, for the welfare of which he took no effectual measures, it continued, as we have seen, pretty much in the same situation.

Adieu.

## LETTER LI.

**E**DWARD the Second, son of the deceased King, was the heir of his crown, but inherited none of his respectable qualities. England, during his reign, lost the consequence to which it was raised by the politic and spirited government of his father. This prince was not to be taught wisdom by example



ample nor improved by advice. It was one of the last instructions of his father that he should never admit to his counsels Gaveston, an unworthy favourite, to whom he had been attached. As a proof how much he respected this advice, scarcely had life departed from Edward, when he recalled Gaveston from banishment, and distinguished him by particular marks of his confidence and affection. But he became so obnoxious to the nobility that he was obliged to go, a second time, into banishment. To make his exile as honourable as possible, Edward sent him to Ireland as successor to Sir John Wogan who had acquitted himself, in the office of Deputy, with considerable reputation. In this station, the vigour of his military achievements, rendered Gaveston respectable. Of a graceful exterior and distinguished by courtly manners, liberality and courage, the soldiers fought under his banner with cheerfulness and spirit. But the barons entertained very different sentiments. Accustomed to treat their chief governors with little deference, the self importance and the haughty demeanor which he assumed towards them and maintained, excited their aversion. Had not Gaveston been soon recalled, the mutual jealousy which subsisted betwixt him and De Burgo, Earl of Ulster, would probably have broken out into open hostilities.

OF all the barons, De Burgo could least bear the idea of a competitor. About this time however he met with a mortifying stroke. To establish a claim in the territory of Thomond, he marched there with an army. Richard De Clare, at the head of the Geraldines, met him in the field, defeated and took him prisoner. The dispute however terminated by  
the

the marriage of two of his daughters with Maurice and Thomas Fitzjohn.

UPON the removal of Gaveston, Sir John Wogan was reinstated in the office of deputy. In February, thirteen hundred and nine, a parliament was held at Kilkenny, in which a variety of laws were enacted, for composing the discords of the kingdom and improving it's constitution. Of this parliament Prynne takes particular notice. The beginning of the following year, another parliament was held at Kildare. This year, a matter happened which would be altogether unworthy of notice, were it not a striking instance of the superstition of the times.

RICHARD De Havering had been appointed by the Pope Archbishop of Dublin; but, as his title was disputed, he had not been consecrated. An unfavourable dream relating to the matter, was considered by him as so decisive a proof of the illegality of his title that he relinquished his dignity.

OUR attention is now called to more interesting occurrences. Edward, animated by the same ambitious views, with respect to that nation, for which his father was remarkable, led a powerful army into North Britain. Wallace, the gallant hero, whose name, to this day, is remembered by his countrymen with honor, and with distinguished gratitude, had lost his life fighting in defence of their liberties. Robert Bruce, son of that Robert who had been competitor for the Scotch throne, animated by the same spirit, and zealous in support of the rights of his family, stood forth upon this occasion, and gave the forces of Edward a signal overthrow at Bannockburn. The splendor of his success made so deep an impression on the Scotch, that they placed  
him



him on the throne. Edward, his brother, who had shared with him in his dangers and in his victory, thought himself entitled to an equal recompence for his services. Robert would not divide with his brother the honours of the crown which he desired. However, to gratify his ambition, he consented that he should be acknowledged his successor. But, as Edward was of an active and enterprising disposition, it was expedient to employ him in such a manner as would divert his attention from any scheme destructive of the public peace. A favourable opportunity was presented from Ireland. Deep was the impression of resentment made upon the minds of the Irish by the fatal stroke directed by the English against the independence of their country. A considerable number of them had been expelled from their possessions; the rest would not be admitted to the benefit of English law. A set of needy and rapacious adventurers passing over from Britain, in a constant succession, made no scruple of enriching themselves by the most unjustifiable methods. There was not a native who could be secure from their rapacity. Distressed by this galling yoke, they ardently wished to be emancipated. A prospect now opened which seemed to flatter their desires. Edward had met with a signal defeat; there was no vigour in his administration; his English subjects were disaffected to his government. It was very natural to suppose that the brave people who had vanquished the tyrant and who were in a situation very similar to their own, would be willing to take them under their protection. Impressed by these sentiments, a number of chieftains in the North, threw themselves for aid upon the King of Scotland, whose dominions were

contiguous and with whose subjects they were connected by the ties of consanguinity. Robert Bruce laid the matter before his brother Edward and pointed out Ireland to him as an object worthy of his ambition. Edward engaged immediately in the business. But he was precipitate. Neither he nor the Irish were sufficiently prepared for so arduous an enterprize. The first attempt miscarried. This misfortune however did not intimidate Bruce. Determined to prosecute the design, at the head of six thousand men, he landed in the North of Ireland on the fifth of May in the year thirteen hundred and fifteen. His army was joined by considerable numbers of the Irish whose leaders ratified with Bruce the necessary articles of stipulation. The act was voluntary, they were therefore to fight as freemen. De Courcey and his descendants had violated the rights of the natives; they had slaughtered them without mercy, robbed them of their property and driven them from their habitations. Those who had set such an example of injustice and cruelty could not complain when they themselves were treated in the same manner. On the present occasion, the English settlers of Ulster, felt the resentment of those whom they had thus wantonly oppressed in it's most awful consequences. They were driven from their usurped acquisitions by the Irish, who spread, wherever they came, havoc and devastation. In a state of society so uncivilized, revenge is a ruling passion.

Adieu.

LET-



## LETTER LIII.

**R**OUSED by the danger which threatened his possessions with destruction, the Earl of Ulster armed his followers, and, joined by the provincial troops of Feidlim O'Connor Prince of Connaught, marched forth to oppose the enemy. The two armies met and engaged near Coleraine. Bruce was victorious, after which, he reduced Carrickfergus. Animated by this success, he moved forwards into the country, expelled the English settlers and carried his arms beyond the province of Ulster. Roger Mortimer, at the head of a body of forces, advanced to stop his progress, but he was not more fortunate than De Burgo. Having come up with the Scotch and Irish at Kenlis in Meath his troops were defeated. Victory crowned the arms of Bruce with new laurels at Skerries, where, on the twenty sixth of January, thirteen hundred and sixteen, he encountered the English army led in person by Sir Edmond Butler the Lord Justice.

EDWARD returned to Dundalk where he was crowned King of Ireland. His affairs began now to wear a very favourable aspect. We have observed that Feidlim, Prince of Connaught, had been an auxiliary to De Burgo; during his absence in that expedition, a chieftain took advantage of this circumstance to deprive him of his territory. Alarmed by this insurrection, Feidlim returned immediately from Ulster, defeated his rival and re-established his authority. Having settled this affair to his satisfaction, and being encouraged by the success of his revolted countrymen to avow his real sentiments, he

threw off the mask and openly declared in their favour. O'Brian of Thomond, and other petty princes of Munster and Meath, together with the clergy, engaged warmly in the same cause. An account of the proceedings of Edward, having reached his brother in Scotland, he passed over to his assistance. Pressed by the want of provisions, he returned soon to Scotland, but left a body of forces with his brother to enable him the more effectually to prosecute the war. The army of Edward daily increased. He was even joined by several of the English, in particular, by the De Lacys and their partizans.

A GENERAL and severe famine had delayed the operations of war.

JOHN Fitzthomas Earl of Kildare, the Earl of Carrick and other English barons, perceiving the imminent danger to which their affairs were exposed, began to exert themselves with vigour, in support of them. A considerable force was detached against Feidlim which joined issue with his troops at Athunree and entirely defeated them. Feidlim was slain in the field of battle.

BRUCE had driven the Earl of Ulster to Dublin whither he followed with his forces. Finding the city too well provided with the means of defence to admit of an attack with a reasonable prospect of success, he spread his troops into the neighbouring parts which he wasted.

MEAN while, Mortimer of Wigmore, appointed Lord Deputy, arrived in Ireland with a small force. The strength of the English army daily increased. Bruce was no longer a match for the enemy, to whom the situation of the country was more favourable. He turned his course and with all possible expedition



pedition arrived, once more, with his army, in the province of Ulster. Mortimer had pursued Edward, but finding that he could not overtake him, he dismissed the greatest part of his forces, for the present, and returned to Dublin where he held a parliament. The Earl of Ulster, having deserted his province and being suspected of disloyalty on this account, and because he was brother-in-law to the King of Scotland, had been seized in Dublin and cast into prison. This parliament took the affair into consideration, and, having obliged him to give hostages for his good behaviour, enlarged him.

THE King of England resolved to assist his cause in this country, which hitherto had been unsuccessful by the influence of spiritual aid. For this purpose, he applied to the Pope and prevailed with him to pronounce a sentence of excommunication against all his enemies in Ireland. O'Niall of Tir Owen, upon the present occasion, a gallant defender of the privileges of his country, to prevent the effects of this unjust measure, represented to the pontiff, in warm terms, the conditions on which his predecessors had permitted Henry the Second to invade Ireland; the violations of public faith of which that prince and the English had been guilty, the numerous wrongs of the natives who now cast themselves on his clemency and protection. In consequence, his Holiness wrote to the King of England, informing him of the complaints of the Irish and exhorting him to redress their grievances. No regard was paid to this admonition.

ALEXANDER Bicknor, now Lord Justice, placed Sir John Birmingham at the head of the English forces which amounted to fifteen hundred chosen

men. They advanced toward the North. Bruce  
 1318. likewise put his army in motion. The oppo-  
 site parties met at Dundalk. A superiority of  
 numbers was on the side of the Scotch, but the Eng-  
 lish army was much better appointed and well sup-  
 plied with provisions. In this respect, they had  
 greatly the advantage of the enemy, who, for some  
 time, could with great difficulty procure the com-  
 mon necessaries of life. The battle began. On each  
 side, the combat was sustained with intrepid courage.  
 At length, victory declared in favour of the Eng-  
 lish. Bruce was slain. Robert had once more landed  
 in Ireland with a new reinforcement, but having  
 heard of his brother's defeat, instead of pursuing a  
 cause which had, in the end, proved so unfortunate,  
 he embarked his troops and returned to Scotland.

THIS unsuccessful effort of the natives to extri-  
 cate themselves from the oppression of the English  
 and to regain their independance, instead of contri-  
 buting to the welfare of the kingdom, multipli-  
 ed it's calamities. A number of the Irish, unmind-  
 ful of what they owed to their own honor and the  
 common cause of their country, had fought under the  
 banners of England. This exposed them to the con-  
 tempt and resentment of their countrymen, and, of  
 consequence, was a new cause of intestine feuds.

WITH respect to those of the natives who invited  
 over the Scots and assisted them during their invasion  
 of Ireland, they furnished the English with reason  
 for treating them with greater severity.

HAD Bruce been successful, what use he would  
 have made of his power, it is impossible to say. It  
 has been observed, that when he landed in Ireland  
 he entered into certain stipulations with the Irish;

there



there can be no doubt but he engaged, on that occasion, provided he were successful, to govern them by their ancient civil and political institutions. Animated by this hope, so dear to the hearts of freemen, no wonder the natives should expose themselves with cheerfulness, to every difficulty and run every risque in support of the arms of Edward Bruce.

Adieu.

#### LETTER LIV.

**T**HE civil distractions which had encreased during this war, for the reasons mentioned in my last, did not end with the battle at Dundalk. With a view to procure some degree of public tranquility, the Irish council transmitted a petition to the King, requesting that he would issue an ordinance for the holding of annual parliaments in this kingdom. In these times of confusion and when the powers of the several branches of the legislature were not so clearly defined, it was usual to apply to the King to determine and establish, by his prerogative, points in which the privileges of parliament were essentially concerned. It appears that this petition, the purport of which should have been transmitted by bill from either the lords or commons, was granted. But it was productive of no good effects. Unbounded licentiousness, both in principle and in conduct prevailed universally. Instead of entertaining, such accounts hurt all the finer feelings of humanity. But intestine commotions were not peculiar to Ireland. In the fourteenth century, the northern nations of Europe were but little advanced in the arts of civilization.

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THE Goths and Vandals, wherever their power prevailed, established a system of policy, most unfriendly to the happiness of society and to the rights of mankind. Under this government, kings were destitute of power; the great vassals of the crown, imperious and uncontrouled, were involved in perpetual quarrels either among themselves or with their neighbours, and the great body of the people were slaves. Where there was no balance of power, nor any legal subordination, perpetual feuds must be the inevitable consequence. In this respect, England had not the advantage of other nations. The Norman conqueror by restraining the influence of his lords, beyond what was usual in the feudal system, became too powerful. His successors most industriously imitated his example. The barons, provoked by the loss of their privileges, were, upon all occasions, ready to arm for their recovery. Nor did even Magna Charta, the object of which was to restore to all the members of the state their just rights, provide an effectual cure for these evils. It's salutary effects were sometimes defeated by the monarch, sometimes by the barons, who, in their turn, as circumstances permitted, endeavoured to grasp at power in a degree prejudicial to the constitution and to the general welfare. This want of subordination and those perpetual scenes of disorder in every department of the state, must strike every attentive enquirer into the history of England and of Europe, during this period. Need we wonder then that the Irish should labour under similar disorders? Had Henry the Second compleatly conquered Ireland and established the feudal constitutions, this kind of government containing in it's principles the seeds of civil discord,  
intestine



intestine commotions must, of necessity, have been prevalent. But as Henry and his immediate successors only laid the foundation of the semblance of power in this country, and the natives were governed, in general, by their own laws, which, in many essential respects, differed from those of England, and as the English were continually encroaching on the stipulated rights of the Irish, which the Irish not only endeavoured to maintain, but embraced every opportunity of recovering the independence of their country; civil discords must necessarily, in a very peculiar manner, distract the peace of the kingdom.

AN additional cause, at this time, conspired with those above mentioned, in disturbing the public tranquility.

WE have seen that the principal adventurers had refused to admit certain of the Irish who applied for it to the benefit of English law. We now behold an astonishing reverse. The British settlers of Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Kerry, were driven from their possessions, by a number of their own countrymen who had received the laws and adopted the manners and customs of the natives. Maurice Fitzthomas of Desmond was at the head of these rapacious insurgents. This conduct, however extraordinary and inconsistent it may appear, proceeded, in those of both parties, from the same principle. The adventurers who would not admit the Irish to the protection of English law, acted from a view of plundering them with impunity. Those of them, who conformed to the laws and the customs of the Irish, renounced the English law, because it required of those who were governed by it greater regularity of conduct and punished acts of injustice with more severity.

severity. The former were more disposed to violate the rights of the natives, the latter, to plunder all indiscriminately. There was an essential difference, in point of severity, betwixt the English criminal law and that of the natives; the first inflicted the penalty of death on many offences, the other punished the greatest crimes by Eric or the imposition of a fine. As men are strongly attached to their customs, the adventurers would not have adopted those of the Irish had there not been a considerable similarity betwixt them and their own. When the English speak of this change as a shameful degeneracy, we plainly perceive the absurdity of the imputation. It proceeds from national vanity. Had England, for at least two centuries after the invasion of Ireland, the least pretence to civilization or to polished manners?

THE unfortunate attachment of Edward to favourites, the effect of a weak understanding, embittered the happiness of his life and ended in his destruction. When Gaveston, by permission of the barons, was recalled from Ireland, the same insolent temper which had exposed him to the severe effects of their displeasure, once more excited their resentment. Led on by Thomas of Lancaster, they restrained the authority of Edward, seized Gaveston and put him to death. The King could not be cured of his folly. Some time after, Hugh Spencer, the son of a nobleman of high station, occupied the same place in the affections of Edward which had been so fatal to Gaveston and so destructive of the public tranquility. The nobles, filled with resentment against the King and with envy and hatred of his favourite, first absented themselves from parliament,



ment, and then, finding the cause of their dissatisfaction still to continue, they rose up in arms, and by the assistance of Queen Isabella, a woman of infamous character, took Edward prisoner and compelled him to resign the crown in favour of his son. Having been kept in captivity about nine months, during which time no harshness or contemptuous treatment was left untried which could render his situation distressful and humiliating, he was put to death in the most unnatural and most shocking manner.

Farewell.

### LETTER LV.

**Y**OU have seen the principal events which took place in Ireland during the reign of Edward the Second. With respect to matters relating to our political constitution, some attention was paid to them. Much indeed could not be expected from such a prince.

To the immediate subjects of the King of England, in this country, had been granted, and repeatedly confirmed, the English common law, the English statute law, and the privileges of a distinct and independent legislature. But in the infancy of our government, instances often occurred in which the extent of the laws, whose authority we had recognised, and their application to particular cases, were very imperfectly understood. When any difficult point occurred, it was usual with our legislature to transmit a requisition to his Majesty for the necessary information, who, in return, sent back an ordinance,

dinance, explaining the matter in question, in the form of a mandatory writ.

THUS, in the fourteenth year of Henry the Third, a doubt had arisen in Ireland, whether younger sisters should hold of the elder and do homage to her, or to the liege lord. Upon which, the Deputy sent four knights to England, to bring a certificate of the practise and common law in this case. They returned with a transcript from Henry, in which it was declared to be the practise in England, that younger sisters should hold of the liege lord, enjoining, that the said custom should be proclaimed and observed throughout the dominion of Ireland. The law here explained, being a part of the common law of England, which we had adopted, was of course our own. It is generally known by the name of the *Statutum Hiberniæ*.

IN like manner, and upon the same principles, Edward, the late king, in the fourteenth year of his reign, sent a writ to the Chief Justice of Ireland, requiring that the same law should be observed here which was observed in England, in cases of felony.

THREE years after, he transmitted from Nottingham an ordinance, that no writ original, pleadable at common law, shall be received by any officer but under the great seal of Ireland, nor any other process made but under the seal of the exchequer in this kingdom, in respect to matters belonging to it. This was settling the practice of our courts, in a manner conformable to our Magna Charta, which determined, that we were to enjoy the privileges of England, as a free people. Writs, in England, must issue from the proper courts. So must they also in Ireland. The English law, in general, had  
been



been received here at the original establishment of the present constitution of Ireland; but, since that time, several laws beneficial to this kingdom had been enacted in England, it was therefore thought useful, that these should be adopted by our legislature.

AGREEABLY to this, in a parliament held the thirteenth year of Edward the Second, certain statutes of Henry the Second, Henry the Third and a statute of Edward the First, were confirmed in Ireland and all other statutes of force in England were referred to be examined in the next parliament and so many as were then allowed and published to stand likewise for laws in this kingdom.

THE nation governed by it's own laws, is free. Men governed by laws to which they do not give their consent are slaves, and their governors are tyrants. It appears, that from the year eleven hundred and seventy two, when the foundations were laid of the present Irish constitution, to the sixth of Edward the First, including a period of more than a hundred years, no English law was received in this kingdom except such as had, in this country, the sanction of our own legislature. Then an English law was enacted entitled the statute of Glocester, which extended in it's operation to Ireland. "Another British statute of the following year and one enacted at York the twelfth of the subsequent reign, claimed a similar power with respect to this kingdom. The Irish legislature enacted, in the nineteenth of Edward the Second," that the statutes made in England should not be of force in the kingdom of Ireland unless they were allowed and published in it by parliament."

DID not this act most evidently imply that if British laws enacted without the participation of our legislature had extended to Ireland, they were usurpations?

Farewell.

## L E T T E R LVI.

**T**HE accession of Edward the Third to the English throne, whose reign shines in the annals of Britain with a conspicuous lustre, did not, by any means, produce the wished for advantages to this unhappy country. Thomas Fitzjohn, created in the former reign Earl of Kildare, and now vested <sup>1327.</sup> with the office of deputy, had but little success in quieting the disputes which prevailed among the Irish barons. His successor, Roger Prior of Kilmainham, or, according to Prynne, John Darcy, convened a parliament at Dublin, which, by its influence, settled a dispute betwixt Lord Arnold Poer, William Bourk, and the Butlers and Birminghams, that had been attended with very disagreeable consequences.

A PETITION of the natives to the King, requesting it to be enacted, that all the Irish, who would, might use the laws of England, without purchasing particular charters of denization, was transmitted by him to this parliament. It was rejected. Certain chieftains had obtained, by purchase, the rights of English subjects; but the benefit of these charters was entirely confined to the individuals who procured them; they were not extended to their followers, who continued to be governed by their an-  
cient



cient laws and customs, therefore contributed very little to the public tranquility.

KING Edward now adopted a measure highly prejudicial to his interest in Ireland. Maurice Fitzthomas, as we have seen, had cast off the English character and laws, and, as an Irish chieftain, seized considerable territories in the province of Munster. This baron was created Earl of Desmond and his lands formed into a county palatinate. In the counties of Tipperary and Kilkenny, the example of Desmond was followed by the Lord Tipperary, who, in the same manner, possessed himself of extensive districts to which were annexed like immunities. Several privileges were granted to James Butler, created Earl of Ormond. More than a third part of Leinster was, in like manner, alienated. There were now not less than nine counties palatine, in different parts of the kingdom.

THE privileges of a county palatine, were most extensive. The superior lord might pardon felonies, murder and even treason; he might appoint judges and justices of the peace; all writs and indictments ran in his name. The king's officers could not enter into the limits of it or hold any of his courts. Such independent jurisdiction, instead of preserving the public peace, which was no doubt the design of his Majesty in conferring it, was a most dangerous instrument in the hands of factious barons, disposed to employ their power, not for supporting the authority of government, but for gratifying their own ambition.

So miserable were the distractions of the kingdom, in various parts, that the Deputy called to his aid the Earl of Desmond. He assisted him with ten thousand

thousand men. But government was unable to furnish them with the means of subsistence; hence, they had recourse for support to the oppressive exactions of coigne and livery. By this, the discontents of the people and the concomitant disorders were encreased.

IN the year one thousand three hundred and thirty one, Sir Anthony Lucy was made Deputy and entered upon his office with a determined resolution to exert himself in order to establish peace. By letter, the King enjoined the Earl of Ulster and others of the nobility to assist him in his endeavours to enforce obedience to law. This is a striking proof of the weakness of government at the present period.

SIR Anthony summoned a parliament to meet at Dublin repeatedly. His orders for this purpose were treated with contempt. Suspecting that this flagrant disobedience proceeded from the turbulence of certain of the barons, Maurice Desmond, in particular; he seized him and cast him into prison, from whence, after eighteen months confinement, he was transmitted to England, to answer for his conduct.

EDWARD now resolved to enforce the claim of his grandfather to the kingdom of Scotland, which his father had relinquished, not from a regard to justice, but from the want of power. But, the better to secure success, it was necessary that the object of his preparations, for this purpose, should be concealed. With this view, he declared his intention of coming over to Ireland to restrain the irregularities of government, and make an entire conquest of the kingdom. His Irish barons were enjoined to attend him in England; supplies were demanded from our parliament,



liament, and ships, for transporting his troops, ordered to rendezvous at Hollyhead. When his preparations were thoroughly compleated, he threw off the mask, and led his forces against the Scotch to Hallidown, where he obtained a compleat victory.

INSTEAD of arms, the chief expedient used by the King and his ministers to remedy the disorders of Ireland, were the feeble methods of treaty and accommodation. Barons, insensible to the sacred obligations of honor and public faith, made no scruple of violating their engagements whenever it was conducive to their interest, or to the gratification of their ambition. Still more ineffectual were certain ordinances which he transmitted to this kingdom: in some particulars, being an imposition of English law by his own authority, they were a violation of the privileges of the Irish parliament. To encroach upon the rights of the constitution, was an impolitic method of restoring peace to this country.

IN the year thirteen hundred and thirty three, William De Burgo Earl of Ulster was assassinated at Carickfergus by his domesticks. The O'Nialls, to whose family the lands of De Burgo had originally belonged, seizing the favourable opportunity, collected their followers and took possession of a considerable part of the territory of their forefathers. His estate in Connaught was seized by two of the Bourks, who, to secure the acquisition, took the name of Mac William and conformed to the laws and customs of the Irish. The widow and the only daughter of De Burgo fled for protection to England where the young lady was married to Lionel the second son of Edward.

THOUGH the distracted state of this country had rendered it in a great measure, incapable of contributing to the support of government, Edward, who had paid little attention to our affairs, demanded a supply. As might have easily been foreseen, it was refused. Edward, haughty in his temper and flushed by the success of his arms, determined that his Irish subjects should feel the heaviest weight of his resentment. He commanded that the debts due in this kingdom to the crown, formerly remitted, but which had not received the sanction of the great seal, should be immediately discharged. He commanded that all the grants made in this country, during his own reign or that of his father, should be cancelled. He commanded that the Lord Justice and all public officers whose property was in Ireland should be displaced, and that other of his subjects, born in England and whose possessions lay entirely in that kingdom, should be substituted in their stead.

ENFLAMED with resentment, the English of this country, resolved to maintain their privileges and the inheritance of their ancestors. To provide a remedy for these discontents, the Irish council summoned a parliament to meet in Dublin. A division for the first time, now took place betwixt the English by birth, and the English by blood; the former only attended the parliament called by the King's authority. Of the latter, the Fitzgeralds, the Earl of Desmond, the Earl of Kildare, a respectable number  
 1341. of barons and of the clergy and gentry with the mayors of cities, assembled at Kilkenny, taking the stile of the prelates, the nobles and commons of the land, and there drew up a remonstrance against the proceedings of the King and his ministers,



nisters, which they transmitted to England. From it, we clearly perceive that in a multitude of instances the administration of Irish affairs had been conducted in a manner the most shameful and iniquitous. The remonstrants declare, "That they neither could nor would endure that Ireland should be governed by his ministers as heretofore. They ask, how a land full of war could be governed by him that was unskilful? How a minister or officer of state should, in a short time, become so rich? How it came to pass that the King was nothing the richer of Ireland?" Edward, by this spirited measure, was forced into a more becoming conduct. He gave a favourable answer to the remonstrance, made a strict enquiry into the deportment of his officers, removed some of them and afterwards restored to their former proprietors the lands which he had resumed.

Adieu.

#### LETTER LVII.

**T**HERE is a memorable record of the same year in which the parliament assembled at Kilkenny, mentioned in my last. Walter Archbishop of Armagh had, in the preceding reign, been advanced to that see by the Pope's provision, in which there were some clauses injurious to the prerogative of the crown. Upon which, the King withheld the temporalities until he renounced all clauses in the Pope's bull prejudicial to his rights and paid a fine of a thousand pounds for receiving from the pontiff such a provision. Had the Princes of Christendom, upon all occasions, opposed with equal spirit the ambitious pretensions of Rome in matters

of a civil nature, it would have prevented many transactions which disgrace the annals of Europe, would have served essentially the interest of these nations and reflected upon their memory distinguished honor.

SIR Ralph De Ufford was now sent over to preside in the administration of Irish affairs. His conduct was very disagreeable to the old English settlers and to the natives. With a view to reduce those who opposed his government, in June, he summoned a parliament to meet in Dublin. Desmond refused to obey; and to support his opposition called upon his followers to meet him at Calan. Provoked

1345. by this contumacy, the Deputy raised the standard of war, marched with his troops into Desmond and seized the lands with the person of the Earl. Having procured bail, he was set at liberty. But the ungenerous Desmond did not appear upon the day of tryal, in consequence of which, many of his sureties were ruined. The Earl of Kildare, accused likewise of disaffection, was also apprehended, but he was released from captivity by the following deputy Sir John Morris. Sir John was succeeded in that office by Walter De Birmingham who warmly espoused the cause of the Earl of Desmond. He carried in person the complaints of that nobleman against Sir Ralph De Ufford to the foot of the throne. Though Desmond had certainly been a rebel, he was graciously received by Edward, who being now engaged in a war with France had occasion for his service. He and his dependents together with the Earl of Kildare, accompanied the King to the continent and had a share in the honors of that memorable expedition.



ABOUT this time, the King transmitted ordinances by writ to the Lord Deputy respecting the government of Ireland, of which were the following. "It is our will and we order that matters relating to us and our Irish affairs, especially the most important, be discussed in council, by skilful counsellors, prelates and grandees and certain persons of the vicinity, commoners, distinguished for probity and discretion, in the places contiguous to which the business is to be done and chosen for the purpose. These counsellors, prelates, nobles and others of said land according to custom, shall, on the principles of justice, law, custom and reason, treat of such affairs in parliament."

THAT the minds of the guilty might be delivered from fear, with respect to the past, the King, besides, issued a commission to the chief justice, to receive to his grace and to grant particular pardons, for a year, to all who had disturbed the public peace, those guilty of treason excepted.

To the injury of religion and disgrace of the sacred office, pastors did not reside in their respective parishes. To remedy an evil so prejudicial to the people in what concerned their present and immortal happiness, the King authorized the Archbishop of Dublin to constitute perpetual vicars in all his benefices, and prebendaries with certain proportions of tythes and other profits for their support, who were perpetually to reside and discharge uniformly the duties of their office.

Farewell.

## LETTER LVIII.

**T**HE year thirteen hundred and fifty three was distinguished by the wise and virtuous administration of Sir Thomas Rokeby. A memorable saying of his is recorded by historians, expressive of a temper very unlike that which marked the conduct of his predecessors, "I am served without parade or splendor; but let my dishes be wooden rather than my creditors unpaid." Had the times permitted the establishment of equal laws, a governor, possessed of such principles, would have introduced order and tranquility into the state and given steadiness and vigour to the constitution.

IN consequence of a requisition from Ireland, the King, by an ordinance, determined that in cases wherein the judgment of the courts of law was disputed an appeal should lie, not as hitherto to the English courts, but to the parliament of Ireland. This prevented unnecessary delays of judgment, saved a considerable expence, and restored an essential privilege that belonged to it as a distinct and independent kingdom. To submit the determination of our civil rights to a foreign judicature, even when directed in it's judgment by our own law, is to be considered in the same point of view as to acknowledge the authority of foreign laws. Both are disgraceful to the nation, inconsistent with the privileges of freemen and hostile to the principles of our constitution.

IT is the opinion of a number, learned in the laws of our country, that the removal of causes, by writ of error, from our court of King's bench to that  
of



of England, was authorized by an Irish act of parliament, There may have been such an act though it cannot be found, as our statutes, for a long series of years, are entirely lost. The origin of appeals to the English court of King's Bench, seems plainly to be this. As the laws of England, adopted in this country, were of difficult comprehension, the Irish judges, before judgment was given, in particular causes, frequently applied to his Majesty, as King of Ireland, for information, with respect to the meaning of the law. In like manner, after judgment was given, the party which thought themselves aggrieved, supposing that the law was still imperfectly understood, or, that it had been perverted to their prejudice, applied to the King for restitution. The court, in which the King originally presided in person, and which accompanied him, wherever he went, assisted him by their advice on such occasions. Afterwards, when His Majesty ceased to sit in the court, and it possessed the whole of the judicial power belonging to it, exclusively, applications by those who sought for redress were made to it from Ireland, as to the King's substitute, which came, insensibly, to be considered as appeals and judgments given upon the principles of Irish law.

In thirteen hundred and fifty eight, his Majesty sent over to this kingdom an order; that whereas some justices in Ireland, by writs, precepts, bills, without indictment, presentment, or due process, arrested and imprisoned small and great, in obscure prisons, detaining them in iron chains until they obliged them to pay fines or ransoms. He enjoined that, in future, none should be indebted or imprisoned

soned without indictment and due process, against Magna Charta, other statutes and common law.

If the scandalous misconduct of the King's officers could have been corrected by such an interposition of the royal authority, an edict of Edward which followed that above mentioned, must have had this effect. It was to this purpose. That the justice of Ireland with one of the nearest prelates and earls, the chancellor, treasurer, and others of the most skilful justices of the bench and barons, should, annually, diligently enquire, by oath, of honest and lawful men, concerning all officers, except those in judicial places, how they demeaned themselves in their offices; what justice or injuries, oppressions, grievances, or damages they did to the King or his people, by colour of their office or authority; whether they perverted justice by gifts, and certify him and his council in England what they found to be the case, under their seals, without delay; that such officers should answer, as well to him as his people, at the end of the year. This order, had it been strictly executed, must have produced admirable effects.

To limit the power of the King's officers, Edward the First had forbidden them to purchase lands in Ireland without a royal licence. This order some authors have asserted was never executed. But they are mistaken. For shortly after, Edward issued a writ to seize all lands or tenements purchased in this country without his consent, which he considered as forfeited by the ordinance of his grandfather.

You have seen that a jealousy had arisen in this country betwixt those of the adventurers who were English by blood and such as were English by birth.

The



The ancient settlers considered the latter as greedy interlopers who wanted to usurp those privileges and to enjoy those advantages to which, as the reward of their own services and as an inheritance derived from the merit of their ancestors, they considered themselves exclusively entitled. On the other hand, the English by birth entertained the most contemptible opinion of the old settlers, and thought there was no advantage to be obtained in this country to which they had not an equal, nay, a superior right.

To compose those differences, the King transmitted an ordinance by which he enjoined the Lord Justice with the assistance of the chancellor and treasurer, to enquire into the cause of them whenever they should happen, to try the delinquents and to inflict such punishments as were suitable to the nature of their offence and the law required.

THIS ordinance, was followed by one of a different nature. Edward issued a mandate that no native of the land should be admitted to any benefice in the church, or to any civil employment of the state whatever. The King seemed to be sensible, at least in part, of the iniquity of this undistinguishing proscription. For, the following year, by a writ, he commanded that certain clergy of the natives, faithful to his government, should be admitted to benefices and be undisturbed in the possession of them.

It has been said that the authority of English law extended to twelve counties in Ireland. To these were to be added the lands given to the King by Cathal, in Connaught, and by Donald O'Brian in Thomond. About the tenth of Edward the Second the power of the English began to be shaken. It

continued

continued to decline. The thirtieth of the present reign, but four shires of the pale remained. It is very extraordinary, that Edward, who had now subdued the Scots, and acquired high renown, by the splendor of his victories in France, did not think of coming over to this country in person, to remove the causes which had brought his affairs here to so low a condition and to reduce the kingdom entirely to his obedience. He thought it sufficient to send over, as Deputy, Lionel Duke of Clarence his second son. All who possessed lands in Ireland being summoned, in very urgent terms, to attend his standard, he came, accompanied by several Irish Lords of distinction and fifteen hundred men. Lionel had a personal interest in this country. You will recollect that he married the only daughter of Richard De Burgo, in consequence of which, 1361. he was the heir of his possessions and enjoyed the title of Earl of Ulster. The title was the only advantage derived to him from that connection. The lands belonging to it had been seized and continued to be held by the chieftains who were descended from the old proprietors. Clarence was unfit for the office in which he had engaged, especially in such critical times. Ignorant flatterers, having instilled into him strong prejudices against this kingdom and the descendants of the first adventurers, he forbid, by proclamation, any of the old English to approach his camp. This measure marked equally by pride and folly, deprived him of the advice and assistance of those who were alone acquainted with the circumstances of the country. The natural consequences followed. The refractory bid defiance to all his attempts to reduce them to obedience. Lionel



onel saw and rectified his error. By assistance from the old Irish, who were now invited to his standard, he obtained advantages over the enemy, which, if not substantial, procured some reputation to his arms.

### L E T T E R L I X.

**L**IONEL was soon recalled from Ireland, to which he returned, in the year thirteen hundred and sixty seven. He found that during the intermediate administration of the Earl of Ormond and Sir Thomas Dale, disorders had still prevailed, to which the competition betwixt the old and the new English settlers greatly contributed. Many of the former had assumed the customs and the laws of the Irish. The latter considered these as unnatural apostates, who merited nothing but contempt and the deprivation of their property. This was one principal cause of the dissention and tended very much to weaken the authority of government. To strengthen it, to recover those who had deserted English law, and put a stop to the practice in future, Lionel, whom experience had improved in the arts of policy, summoned a parliament to Kilkenny, which was attended by a very respectable number of members, spiritual and temporal.

It was then enacted, that intermarriages with the natives, or any connection with them, as fosterers, or in the way of gossipred, should be punished as high treason. That the use of their name, language, apparel, or customs, should subject to the forfeiture of lands and tenements. That to submit to be governed by the brehon laws was treason. That the

English

English should not make war upon the natives, without the permission and authority of government. That the English should not permit the Irish to graze upon their lands; that they should not admit them to any benefice or religious privileges, or even entertain their bards. That to compel English subjects to pay for, or maintain soldiers, was felony. This respected the oppressive imposition of coigne and livery. That traitors and felons should not be protected by flying to sanctuaries. Sanctuaries, by claiming an exclusive right of affording a refuge to criminals, which placed them beyond the reach of the law, had, in this respect, been very destructive of the public tranquility. It was likewise enacted, that wardens should be appointed to estimate the men and armour which each of the King's vassals was obliged to provide for military service.

SUCH were the particulars of the famous act, distinguished, by way of eminence, with the title of the Statute of Kilkenny. Some articles of it were equitable and conducive to the general good. With respect to others, none more iniquitous are recorded in the annals of mankind. To forbid the natives from grazing in their lands; to deprive them of every benefit in the church, though possessing in common with the English a religion, whose divine principles inculcate the exercise of good will to all men, without distinction; to forbid every intercourse with them, as if they had not been partakers of the same nature; these were dreadful stretches of power. The ties of humanity reprobate, as most unnatural and disgraceful to men, such partialities. Politicians seldom regard the dictates of benevolence; never when it interferes with their interest. Sound policy would



would have prescribed a different mode of conduct. It would have taught our legislators to conciliate, by gentle treatment, the affections of the natives, instead of drawing, betwixt them and the English, so odious a line of distinction. It would have taught them to admit them to the benefit of English law which they had often requested, instead of placing them at a greater distance from it, by arming against them the severity of a penal statute and depriving them of the common privileges of nature. Had this been their guide, national prejudices, ambition and a rapacious spirit, would, in their conduct towards the Irish, have been extinguished by a regard to the public good. Then, as all would have enjoyed equal privileges, and been subject to the same restraints, the English would have had no temptation to assume the manners and customs of the natives and the natives would gradually have become happy and contented with their situation. Government would have received a great addition of strength and a cause of one of the principal evils been removed which disturbed the public peace.

THE statute of Kilkenny with the strictness in the conduct of public affairs observed during the administration of Clarence, produced a partial temporary effect. The degenerate English, as they are called, were frightened into a compliance with the law; his Majesty's writ operated in Ulster and Connaught and the revenues of these provinces were accounted for in the exchequer.

THE earl of Desmond succeeded the duke of Clarence as deputy. Desmond was succeeded by Sir William Windsor. His administration affords the following memorable instance of the corrupt practices

practises of government, during these times. A question had been debated in parliament respecting certain impositions proposed to be laid upon the people. When put, it was rejected by the majority; Windsor, notwithstanding, ordered a statute, upon the vote of the majority, to be entered in the records of parliament.

SIR Richard Pembridge was next appointed to preside in the government of Ireland. He absolutely refused to enter upon office, such were the difficulties attending it, from the distractions which were then prevalent in different parts of the kingdom. The revenue was quite reduced. Sir John Davis assures us, that in the year of Edward's government, in which his affairs were most prosperous, the whole revenue did not amount to ten thousand pounds.

UPON the refusal of Sir Richard Pembridge, Sir William Windsor was continued deputy. Being discouraged by the perplexed state of affairs, he resigned the government to the Earl of Ormond who convened a parliament. Supplies were asked. The members, on account of the weakness of the pale, would not grant them.

PROVOKED by their refusal, and determined to carry his point, he issued writs to the clergy and commons of Ireland, in which he required them to choose two bishops for each diocese, two knights for each county, and two members for each city and borough, as their representatives, to attend the King in the parliament of England, to assist him by their counsel and influence, in planning such methods as might be necessary for supporting the government of Ireland.

THIS



THIS was not the first instance of the kind; for in the white book of the Exchequer of Dublin, in the ninth year of Edward the First, a writ is recorded which had been sent to the Chancellor of Ireland, wherein he mentions certain statutes enacted with the consent of the prelates, earls, barons and commons of the kingdom of Ireland, assembled at Lincoln, and certain other statutes enacted afterward at York. Edward the Second also, in the eighth year of his reign, summoned the nobles of Ireland to the parliament at Westminster, there to treat upon the state of that land. Such a measure was a direct attack upon the parliamentary independence of the Irish constitution. The lords and commons assembled, were not, upon the present occasion, unmindful of their dignity. They unanimously declared that the summons was illegal, inconsistent with the privileges and ancient usage of the kingdom; that a respect for the King, and a regard to the necessities of the times solely induced them to comply with the requisition; that they reserved to themselves a power of either acquiescing in, or refusing the supplies which should be granted to him by their representatives. At the same time, they declared that their present compliance was not, in future, to be considered as a precedent for infringing the rights, privileges, customs and laws of the kingdom. Our representatives repaired to England, as desired, but we have no satisfactory information of what was done in consequence.

THAT wages, according to ancient custom, were to be levied, to bear the charges of those of the clergy and commons, who went to England at this time, appears from a writ in the Tower relative to this transaction,

transaction, wherein the King requires James Butler, Lord Justice, and the Archbishop of Dublin, Chancellor, to issue writs under the great seal of Ireland, to the counties, cities and boroughs, for satisfying the expences of the men of that land, who last came over to serve in parliament in England. There is another roll which mentions a complaint of John Draper to the King that he had been denied his expence for serving in the English parliament as burgeses of the city of Cork. This last record refers to a different occasion, in the present reign, when our representatives had been called over to sit in the English parliament, as in the return respecting that now mentioned, John Draper did not serve as burgeses for the city of Cork.

THOUGH the calling of our parliament to England was a flagrant breach of privilege, it is a manifest acknowledgement, on the part of that kingdom, that Ireland ought only to be bound by the acts of it's own legislature. Edward wanted money from this country; had not he and his council known that the right of granting it was the original, the sole, the exclusive right of our parliament, the trouble and inconvenience would have been saved of sending for our representatives, on this or any similar occasion, and application would have been made for it to the English parliament.

EDWARD died at Shone in Surry, the twenty first of June, thirteen hundred and seventy seven, in the sixty fifth year of his age and fifty first of his reign.

THIS prince transmitted some ordinances to Ireland which, had they been obeyed, would have had good effects; in other respects, our affairs, during this reign, were shamefully neglected. The at-

attention



tention of Edward was taken up with objects, which in his view, were more desirable. The pursuit of them gratified his ambition, but reflected little honor upon his character. His attempt upon Scotland governed by a minor and his near relation, was most ungenerous. The justice of it had no other sanction than the iniquitous claim, upon that kingdom, of his grandfather Edward the First. Neither had he a right to make war upon France, to which he next turned his attention. In the minds of a warlike nation military renown extinguishes a sense of equity. The victories of Cressy and Poictiers are considered to this day as reflecting distinguished glory on the British arms. Edward gained large acquisitions in France. They were no real advantage to him, and, on account of the bloody and unsuccessful wars in which they engaged his descendants, they were to these nations a great misfortune. This high spirited prince restrained the turbulence of the barons, to which, likewise, their being so much employed in foreign wars greatly contributed. Hence, and by the wisdom of his government, England, during his time, was free from intestine commotions and enjoyed an uncommon measure of peace and tranquility. The affability, munificence and courteous behaviour of Edward the Third, excited the love of his English subjects, and his magnanimity commanded their admiration.

Adieu,

**T**HE splendid and amiable qualities which distinguished Edward the Black Prince, did not descend to his son Richard, who, on the death of his grandfather, succeeded to the English throne. As when he received the crown he was but eleven years of age, the administration of public affairs was vested in his uncles the Duke of Lancaster  
1377. and the Earl of Cambridge. The former of these possessed almost entirely the powers of government.

A NUMBER of English grandees held large estates in this country which they managed by agents. These, by their rapacity and inattention to every thing but their own immediate interest, contributed greatly to the public disorders. Frequent attempts had been made by the King and his ministers to oblige these absentees to reside upon their lands in this kingdom. A similar order was now issued on pain of considerable forfeitures. The English parliament, with much reluctance, lent some assistance towards supplying the necessities of the Irish government. A privilege was granted to his Majesty's subjects here to work their mines, on paying, as a tax, the ninth of the produce.

EVEN then, England had usurped a power of forbidding us to trade, with foreign nations. For the encouragement of commerce, a privilege was now granted to us, to trade with Portugal, without being subject to either duties or restrictions. But the disorders of Ireland were too deeply rooted to be cured by such partial remedies. Nothing in this country  
could



could supply the want of a wise and humane system of policy and of a regular well conducted administration. In the beginning of the present reign, we meet with nothing worthy of attention. Deputy succeeds deputy. One insurrection follows another; the whole scene, insipid, painful and disgusting.

A WEAK understanding and violent passions distinguished the character of Richard. Princes of this complexion generally attach themselves to favourites. The King chose, as the object of his particular affection, Robert De Vere Earl of Oxford, a young nobleman, corrupt, lively and of insinuating manners. Among other honors heaped on this profligate minion, he was created Marquis of Dublin, and, with certain reservations, obtained a grant of the whole kingdom of Ireland, to be held of the King in feudal tenure. This very extraordinary act was authorized by the Lords and Commons of England. In this transaction, the folly of the King and the presumption of his parliament are equally astonishing. De Vere, attended by a grand retinue, set out to take possession of his government. Richard accompanied him to Wales, but, when they came to the point of separation, he could not bear to part with him. He carried his favourite back with him to London, and Ireland, in the name of De Vere, was, as formerly, committed to the care of deputies. The connection of Robert with this country, vanished with his power. That was transient indeed. In a short time he incurred the high displeasure of the English nobles, was proclaimed a traitor, defeated in battle by the Earl of Derby and compelled to fly from the kingdom. Of course, his grant of Ireland was cancelled, where matters re-

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mained in their usual train. Feuds continued; the imprudence of administration was loudly complained of and applications to parliament for supplies, were in a great measure ineffectual. The wretched state of the country induced the King, in the fourteenth year of his reign, to send over commissioners of enquiry, to examine through every part of the kingdom, into the many losses and dangers to which his subjects were exposed, as well from the incursions of his enemies as the default of those employed in the departments of government. They were to proceed with the greatest strictness, being enjoined to receive information upon oath, concerning the subjects of their enquiry, from persons of integrity, that such remedies might be applied as would restore the kingdom to a state of good order and tranquility. But good order and tranquility were not restored by this or any other means made use of in these times.

IN October, thirteen hundred and ninety four, probably with a view to recruit his exhausted coffers, and to give some reputation to his character, which was become not only odious but contemptible to his English subjects, Richard came over himself to Ireland with an army consisting of four thousand men at arms and thirty thousand archers. Never had the Irish seen in their country so powerful a force. The disaffected dropt immediately all thoughts of resistance and adopted a mode of conduct more conducive to their safety. Seventy five chieftains, among whom were four petty princes, did homage to the King, promising obedience to his government. This act of submission was easily performed, but the heart was not concerned, therefore nothing was to be expected



pected from it. When no equitable regard was paid to the circumstances of the natives, when no public grievances were redressed, no salutary plan of government adopted, to suppose that a mere outward acknowledgement of subjection from those who so frequently, and without any effect, had given the same marks of obedience would be attended with any useful consequences, was extreme folly. The weakness of Richard on this occasion, in the splendor and stately pomp which he displayed with affected ostentation was most conspicuous. He reaped nothing from this expedition but the gratifications of pride and vanity. Having spent nine months in Ireland, without performing any thing worthy of praise, of the large expence he had incurred, or of the public hopes, he returned to England.

THE King, before his departure from the kingdom, vested with the powers of deputy, his uncle, Roger Mortimer Earl of Marche. It immediately appeared that the engagements of the natives, in which Richard had placed so much confidence, were of little avail. The Irish had been forced to stipulate with the King, that they would give up Leinster entirely to the English and seek elsewhere for habitations. But when Mortimer commanded them to remove, they refused obedience. To be obliged to bid farewell to the place of their nativity, which to every human being is an object of dearest affection, to be torn from the possessions of their forefathers, which they had cultivated with their hands, which had supplied their wants, and which they had hoped would descend as an inheritance to their children, seemed to them hard indeed. Prompted by a sense of justice and an irresistible impulse of nature,

nature, they resolved to die where they were born. Steps were immediately taken to enforce the treaty. The English barons, with their followers, attacked the natives. Success was various. In one engagement, the Irish were defeated, in another they were victorious. Part of them, expelled from their habitations, retired to a neighbouring district; pursued by their enemies, they engaged them at Kenlis on the twentieth of July thirteen hundred and ninety eight, and gave them a total overthrow. The Lord Deputy was killed in this battle. When Richard received intelligence of this misfortune, his vanity was mortified and his breast burned with resentment. In May thirteen hundred and ninety nine, he came over, a second time, with an army to Ireland. He landed at Waterford, where, having spent some time in making a parade of grandeur and magnificence, he set forward to Dublin. As he advanced through Leinster, lately wasted by the ravages of war, he found much difficulty in supplying his troops with provisions. The natives, unequal to the English in numbers and in discipline, retreated to the woods. Richard considering them as vanquished, marched forward, destroying what remained in the province, by fire and sword, with the exultation of a conqueror. His triumph was short lived. Mac Murchad a leader of the Irish, by attacking from their fastnesses, on every favourable opportunity, his detached parties and hanging on the rear of his army, harassed his forces exceedingly. The straits to which they were now reduced, by the want of subsistence, aggravated their distress. To the enemy, whom he had just before treated with contempt and whose property he had wantonly destroyed,



ed, he was compelled to apply for an accommodation. His offers being rejected, he pressed forward and had the good fortune to reach the capital. For some time, tempestuous weather prevented him from receiving any intelligence from England. The first account informed him that his affairs there were irretrievably ruined. In his folly he had first banished, without a sufficient cause, and then deprived of his estate, Hereford, son of the Duke of Lancaster. Enflamed with resentment, he resolved to take advantage of the King's absence in Ireland and of the discontents of the people; collected a number of partizans, passed over to England, represented the incapacity of the King for governing, and claimed the crown by the right of consanguinity. The disaffected, in great numbers, crowded to his standard and renounced their allegiance to Richard. When intelligence of this revolt reached the unfortunate king he returned to England, in sullen discontent, and meanly resigned to his competitor a throne on which he was unqualified to sit with honor to himself or with advantage to his people.

THE following very extraordinary ordinance transmitted during the reign of Richard the Second, is upon record, "The King to the treasurer and barons of his exchequer in Ireland. The justices and governors of Ireland, for the time being, have not power to remit, relax, pardon, or otherwise to overthrow what hath been ordained by our council in England in our parliaments for the reforming of our said land," if the parliament of England had power to bind our governors or judges in their proceedings, then this country had no constitution, the privileges of Magna Charta communicated to us upon the principles

principles of reason law and of justice had no force and Irishmen were slaves.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R L X I.

**A** SENTENCE of the parliament of England, procured by undue influence, deposed Richard the Second, and placed the crown on the head of Henry Plantagenet, son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the fourth son of Edward the Third. Richard had many friends, who, of course, considered Henry in the light of an usurper. In this critical situation, the affairs of England were quite sufficient to engage the attention of the new king. The business of Ireland was conducted in the usual manner. It was governed, first by Sir John, and afterwards, by Sir William Stanly, as deputies. The last of these was succeeded in this office by Stephen Scroop. During their administration, the Scots, at that time upon bad terms with the English, made several descents upon the northern coasts of Ireland and obtained some inconsiderable settlements. In the second year of his reign, Henry sent over to Ireland, as viceroy, his son Thomas Duke of Lancaster with very extensive powers.

THIS deputy, from whom something effectual might have been expected, made enquiry concerning the grievances of the natives, issued ordinances of redress, subdued some petty chieftains, obliged them to do homage, in testimony of their future obedience, and left the kingdom without having, in any one essential point, contributed to it's interest. In the year fourteen hundred and five, James Earl of

of



of Ormond was constituted Lord Justice of Ireland. He convened a parliament at Dublin, in which the great charter of Irish liberty, granted by Henry the Second, enlarged and so often ratified by his successors, was once more confirmed. This appears to have been done by the express desire of the King, who, in the writ which he transmitted for the purpose, having recited the letters patent of Edward the Third, before mentioned, in which he had enjoined, that all affairs here, particularly the more important, should be transacted in parliament, as usual, upon the principles of law and justice, adds, "Now we, these ordinances, desires and all and singular the commands contained in the aforesaid letters, for ourselves and our heirs, to the utmost extent of our power, do accept, approve, ratify and confirm." The statute of Kilkenny had likewise the sanction of this parliament.

In fourteen hundred and seven, the Lord Deputy, Sir Stephen Scroop, with the assistance of the Earls of Ormond and Desmond and the Prior of Kilmainham and their followers, invaded the territory of Mac Murrough, the famous Irish chieftain, engaged him in battle and defeated him. Animated by this success, they advanced to Callan, in the county of Kilkenny, where they fought a second battle with the Irish, in which they cut off O'Carrol, another chieftain, and eight hundred of his followers. In fourteen hundred and eight, Lancaster resumed the government of Ireland. The Earl of Kildare, during his absence, having broken out into rebellion, he subdued him and threw him into prison, where he remained until he confessed his fault, promised allegiance and paid a fine of three hundred marks.

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The Deputy then led his forces against the disaffected in Leinster. Fortune was unpropitious to his arms. He was wounded in battle and departed from the kingdom in disgrace. He left behind him to conduct the affairs of government, Butler, Prior of Saint John of Jerusalem. As maintenance could not be provided for the English forces, from the revenues of the state, necessity compelled them to have recourse for support to the exactions of coigne and livery. A parliament was called in which this grievous oppression was declared to be high treason. No fund being provided to render this imposition unnecessary, it was continued. Attentive to their own rights, a law was enacted that the statutes made in England should not be of force in Ireland, unless they were allowed and published in the kingdom, by parliament. The affairs of government in this country were reduced to such a state that it now became necessary to dispense with several articles of the statute of Kilkenny most unfavourable to the natives; the English were obliged to trade with them, they admitted them to their markets. The Irish, from their numbers and increased power, became necessary for cultivating the land. How mortifying to the pride of the English was the following circumstance. They were compelled to pay to the natives, as the price of protection, a certain annual tribute called black rent.

HENRY the Fourth governed England thirteen years. His reign was full of trouble and inquietude. Before he ascended the throne he was generally beloved; after he was exalted to that dignity, he lost his popularity. His friends, to whom he was chiefly indebted for it, were dissatisfied with the manner in which



which he rewarded their services. The methods by which he obtained the crown, were considered by great numbers as iniquitous. Hence, one insurrection after another disturbed his peace. He overcame them, but that they were founded in justice, the feelings of remorse for his conduct which embittered his moments of reflection, were, to his own heart, a convincing evidence. Had he procured the crown, not by violence but on the principles of right, the murder of the late unfortunate king, to which he must have been accessory, has fixed an indelible stain upon his memory. For courage, military abilities and those qualities requisite to the arts of government, he was much distinguished.

## L E T T E R LXII.

CERTAIN territories in France had been annexed to the English crown, from the period of the Norman conquest. The acquisitions of Edward the Third, in that kingdom, had been very considerable. Richard the Second was quite incapable of maintaining these conquests, and the situation of Henry the Fourth was too critical to admit of his directing his arms to the continent. His son and successor, Henry the Fifth, seated securely on the throne, and of a bold enterprising genius, turned his views to France, resolved, that he would either recover, there, the territories of his forefathers, or, die in the attempt. The mighty preparations necessary to the prosecution of this arduous design, left him little time to think of the affairs of Ireland. As a convincing proof of this, he appointed Sir John Stanley viceroy of this kingdom.

Sir

Sir John had borne that office before, and given evidence, by his conduct, that he was altogether unequal to the duties of it. The quartering of his soldiers on the people, for which the natives had been so severely condemned, and to prevent which practice among the English, a law had been lately enacted, distinguished, particularly, his short and disgraceful administration. The Archbishop of Dublin was chosen in his place, to whom, in a short time, succeeded Sir John Talbot Lord Furnival. Upon his arrival, he called together all the forces he could collect, and marched through the several districts of the pale, in military parade. Some of the disaffected natives were reduced to submission. He took Mac Murrrough prisoner, which, probably, was the most important service he performed on this occasion. It is said, that this deputy was not remarkable either for justice or a regard to the welfare of the kingdom. During his government, a law was enacted by the English parliament, which, even at this distant period, must excite our indignation.

THE miserable condition of this country, for a long series of years, owing, in a great measure, to the oppression of the English, induced many of the natives, from time to time, to remove to England, in order to procure more comfortable means of support. Of these, no doubt, a number, particularly of the lower class, were not well behaved. Instead of punishing the offenders in the usual way, the parliament of England enacted, that all those of the Irish, supposed to be irregular in their conduct, should depart from the kingdom. This law, shameful in itself, became still more injurious from being executed



executed with a degree of severity, beyond the original meaning and design of it.

PERSONS of a respectable station, even those who had gone to England for the purpose of education, were driven indiscriminately from the kingdom with contempt. Hard indeed, that a people connected to the English by so many ties, should be excluded from the protection of the law, and deprived of those privileges authorised by custom immemorial, and sanctified by the law of nations.

HENRY had made rapid progress in France. At Agincourt, in particular, his arms were crowned with shining laurels. The Irish parliament, which met a short time after this memorable battle, considered the time to be favourable for laying before his Majesty a state of the kingdom, and for entreating a redress of grievances. A petition, with this view, was drawn up, but it was stopped by the Chancellor, who, being too courtly to interrupt the agreeable feelings of the King, by a business of this nature, refused to affix the seal to it. Such men disgrace the dignity of office, and are the pests of society.

IRELAND merited some gracious marks of attention from Henry, for, at this time, the Prior of Kilmainham led over to his assistance, into France, sixteen hundred men.

FURNIVAL being called over to England, he appointed, as his substitute, Richard Talbot Archbishop of Dublin, by whom a parliament was convened at Naas, in which a subsidy was granted to his Majesty.

THE succeeding Lieutenant of Ireland was James Earl of Ormond. The King gave him the following extraordinary powers. He had authority not only

to preserve the peace, laws and customs of Ireland, to summon councils, and to hold parliaments, but to prorogue, adjourn and dissolve them at pleasure. He had authority to pardon treasons, murders, felonies; to inspect the conduct of his officers, to remove them, as he thought proper, and put others in their place, the chancellor and treasurer excepted.

THE old English adventurers, who continued to suffer by the unjust and contemptuous treatment of the new settlers, rejoiced at the appointment of Ormond, as he was not only powerful but disposed to do justice and be serviceable to his country. The parliament which met after his arrival, were disposed to co-operate with his laudable intentions. Furnival had left the kingdom largely in debt, contracted in his official capacity. By a law, provision was made for the payment of it. A subsidy was likewise voted and the grant accompanied by a representation of grievances. The sanction of the great seal was not now refused to the request of the commons, as the Chancellor was absent and a substitute did the duties of his office. The grant was transmitted by the Archbishop of Armagh and Sir Christopher Preston, who also laid the complaint of grievances before his Majesty. Though it appears that they were not entirely overlooked, yet no effectual step was taken to redress them. The evil was of a complex nature, malignant, and had acquired great strength from custom. Weak princes had neither wisdom nor ability to apply to it a radical cure, and a king so ambitious as Henry considered other objects more worthy of his attention. The fame of military achievements, the splendours of victory had attractions, in his eye, not



to be found in those deliberate exertions of wisdom, in that steady, uniform perseverance, necessary to reconcile the jarring interests of a nation and to harmonize it's disunited parts upon the principles of equal justice of reason and sound policy.

WHEN the arms of this prince, by a series of rapid successes, had penetrated into the capital of France, when, by the treaty of Troye, he was declared the heir of that kingdom, and, in consequence of it, married the princess Catharine, who brought him a son to inherit his extensive dominions, he was seized by a disorder, at that time incurable, and forced by the hand of Nature to bid adieu, for ever, to all his conquests. Seldom has there been a more striking instance of the vanity of ambitious hopes, and of the instability of human greatness. Henry had great abilities, and several amiable qualities. He was loved by his friends, respected by his enemies, and admired by both. But ambition took the lead in his mind; it was the passion whose objects engaged his principal attention, in which all his schemes were centred, and with whose gratifications he was most delighted. When he died, he was but thirty four years of age, ten of which he had sat upon the throne.

Farewell.

### L E T T E R LXIII.

IF the affairs of Ireland were neglected by Henry the Fifth, the prospect, upon his death, of their being properly conducted was still more discouraging. When the crown was placed upon the head of Henry the Sixth, his weak and un-  
1422.  
fortunate

fortunate successor, he was but nine months old. A war to be supported in France, where much remained to be done by the British arms, in order to the complete conquest of the kingdom; the ambition of rival and powerful barons, to which no control from the crown could be expected, during the course of a long minority, exhibited an awful prospect in relation to the affairs of England. What hopes then of happier days could we entertain in this neglected country?

THE lords and commons of England appointed the Duke of Bedford guardian of the kingdom, in preference to the Duke of Gloucester who had been destined, by the will of the late king to that office. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, the natural son of John of Gaunt, was entrusted with the education of the young prince.

THE first Lieutenant of Ireland, appointed by the new ministry, was Edmund Mortimer Earl of Marche and Ulster who substituted, as his deputy, the Bishop of Meath an Englishman.

A PARLIAMENT summoned to meet, in fourteen hundred and twenty three, passed a vote, that eighty marks should be annually paid to Gerald Kevanagh which had been the pension of Mac Murchad, for assisting to preserve the public peace.

MORTIMER having died of the plague, Furnival was, a second time, made deputy of Ireland, who was succeeded by the virtuous Ormond. His former administration was distinguished; it was his endeavour to make the present conducive also to the public good. Notwithstanding, we find, from a record of parliament which describes the limits of the pale, that



that the English interest in this country continued to decline.

DURING the present government of Ormond, in the year fourteen hundred and thirty one, happened the remarkable case of the Prior of Lanthony. A judgment, in the common pleas, being removed to the Irish parliament, was affirmed there; upon which a writ of error was sent from England; but the King's bench in England, would not take cognifance to reverse a judgment confirmed by the parliament of Ireland. In consequence of this, the Prior petitioned the King that the record might be transmitted to the English House of Lords, there to be examined. It is not said that there were any farther proceedings in this cause. We have here a decisive proof that the English court of King's bench considered the powers of our parliament to be distinct, supreme and independent. That the lords did not then entertain different sentiments, but acted on the same principles, we have great reason to suppose.

THEY must have seen, as every unprejudiced mind must see, that a nation vested by the principles of the constitution with an exclusive authority to make laws, must likewise have an exclusive authority to explain, apply and execute them.

IMPRUDENT grants and titles improperly conferred, were ever to be injurious to Ireland. James, having by his power and address, expelled his nephew from his rights, was vested by parliament with the territory and the honors of the house of Desmond. He was also empowered to purchase lands to a considerable extent and made governor of the counties of Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Kerry. Besides, having represented the necessity which there was of

constantly attending his charge, and the danger, when abroad, to which he was exposed, from the King's enemies, to whose service he was known to be a zealous friend, he obtained the uncommon privilege of absenting himself from parliament. Desmond, as might have been expected, abused these powers. The Deputy not being able to force him to obedience, was obliged to procure a suspension of hostilities, by treating with him as an independent chieftain.

ABOUT this time, it was enacted by the Irish parliament, that all statutes made within the realm of England against purveyors, should be observed, in all points, and executed in this kingdom. These English laws had been enacted in the reign of Richard the Second and in the preceding reigns, but were of no power here until stamp'd with the sanction of our legislature.

A CAUSE determined the twentieth year of this reign deserves notice. Every transaction merits particular attention, which tends to illustrate and ascertain the privileges of our country. John Pilkington brought a scire facias against a certain person, to shew why letters patent by which the King had granted an office to him should not be repealed, as the said Pilkington had the same office granted him by former letters patent, to occupy by himself or his deputy. Upon which, the defendant pleaded, that the land of Ireland, time out of memory, had been severed from the realm of England; ruled by customs and laws of it's own. That it hath a parliament summoned by due authority, vested with a power of making statutes, by which parliament it was ordained, that every one who held an office in  
said



said land, before a certain day, shall occupy it by himself or forfeit it; that Pilkington occupied said office by a deputy, for which, it was forfeited. Five judges argued upon this cause, three of whom gave judgment in favour of the defendant. In the course of the argument, two of the judges declared that an English statute sent to Ireland, by the King, under his great seal, does not bind it, except it be approved by the Irish parliament, which was not denied by the other judges.

EVEN the best of men are not exempted from ingratitude and injurious treatment. Though Ormond merited the love of all, he had enemies. These misrepresented him to the King, who being, in consequence, prejudiced against him, ordered him to relinquish the government of Ireland and to vindicate his conduct, in his presence. Inspired by a sense of conscious integrity, Ormond summoned to Drogheda a meeting of the nobility and gentry. To them, in presence of the agents sent from England to recall him, he applied, whether as deputy of Ireland he had merited the accusation of his enemies. The assembly bore a very honourable testimony to the virtuous unexceptionable manner in which he had discharged the duties of his office. Henry was satisfied for the present, but, some time after, his accusers had the address to carry their point. Ormond was recalled and the Earl of Shrewsbury substituted in his place.

SHREWSBURY held a parliament at Trim, by which a few sumptuary laws were enacted, 1447. to check a taste for expence which was beginning to appear, very inconsistent with the present impoverished state of the kingdom. Some statutes

were likewise enacted with a view to the public peace. One of them was most unjust. By it, any of the denized natives who should kill or rob, might be used as an Irish enemy and slain. That is, a native by his charter of denization was entitled to the privileges of English law and yet might be punished for an offence, even to the loss of life, without being allowed the benefit of either judge or jury.

THE Deputy entered into the views and sentiments of the faction which had been so unfriendly to Ormond; having been supported by them during his government, on his return to England, he supported them in their renewed efforts to injure him with the King; but Henry, naturally gentle in his disposition and probably convinced of the innocence of Ormond, protected him against the malevolence of his enemies. This, as Doctor Leland very justly observes, appears to have laid the foundation of that attachment to the family of Plantagenet for which the Butlers were afterwards so distinguished.

Farewell.

#### L E T T E R LXIV.

**A**RIVAL was now about to appear as a competitor with the Plantagenets for the British throne. That family derived their claim from John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward the Third. Richard Duke of York, descended from Clarence, the elder brother of John, had been, on more than one occasion, regent of France, where he supported the interest of his country with considerable dignity and reputation. Discontented with the manner in which he was treated by the English court, he adopted a mode of conduct



duſt which raiſed ſuſpicions in the mind of Henry, or rather, in his ambitious queen, that he intended to aſſert his title to the crown. To place him in a ſituation leſs favourable to ſuch a deſign ſeemed highly expedient. With this view, it was reſolved to make him lord lieutenant of Ireland. He was poſſeſſed of the earldom of Ulſter in this kingdom and of a very extenſive eſtate which deſcended to him, by the mother's ſide, from Lionel third ſon of Edward the Third, who, you remember, married the only daughter and heiress of De Burgo Earl of Ulſter. As an additional motive to induce Richard to come over to this kingdom, his powers were enlarged beyond what were ever entrusted to any former vice-roy.

Thus encouraged, York came to Ireland as deputy. He had already indulged the ſecret hope of placing himſelf upon the Engliſh throne. His connexions in this country and the additional powers annexed to his office were circumſtances which he determined to improve in ſuch a manner as to render them conducive to his wiſhes. To conciliate the affections of the people, he treated all who approached him with affability and politeneſs. Amidſt the oppoſite pretenſions of rival chieftains, he was obliging to each, but gave the preference to none. Ormond and Deſmond were competitors for pre-eminence; both of theſe lords he engaged for ſponsors to his ſon Clarence, who was at this time born. This was a maſter ſtroke of policy.

EOCHAGAN an Irish chieftain invaded Meath. York marched to oppoſe him. The matter ſpeedily ended in an accommodation. What a pity that men animated by the love of liberty and a high ſenſe of

their natural independence should ever have been deprived of it! Says Eochagan, on returning home to his friends, "I have given peace to the King's Lieutenant."

ON every treaty with the insurgents, the Deputy testified a strict regard for justice. By these means, he acquired a high degree of popularity.

IN two successive parliaments, by his influence, acts were passed very beneficial to the kingdom and favourable to the privileges of the subject. The exaction of coigne and livery was forbidden, and, as a provision for the king's forces in place of it, it was enacted that every portion of land of the value of ten pounds, should be obliged to furnish and maintain an archer on horseback. He also was empowered by law to call upon the king's vassals, when occasion required, according to the principles upon which they held their tenures.

SOME circumstances had arisen which excited more strongly, the suspicions of the queen and her party, with respect to the designs of York. As his scheme was not yet ripe for execution, it was necessary to remove them. For this purpose, he set off for London, eluded the vigilance of his enemies who had been stationed on the coast of Wales to prevent his landing, appeared in the presence of the King, and satisfied him in respect to his intentions.

WITH a view to gain his favourable opinion, the Deputy on his departure, had left, as his substitute, the Earl of Ormond, a sincere and zealous friend of the house of Plantagenet. Ormond being recalled to England was succeeded in the government of Ireland, first by the Archbishop of Armagh and then, upon his death, by Sir Edward Fitz Eustace. By this

time



time disorders began to encrease, in several parts of the kingdom. O'Connor, one of the insurgents, made incursions into the territory of Kildare. Being surprized by the Deputy and attempting to escape, his horse threw him to the ground. A son by his side, watching the safety of his father, flew to his succour and remounted him; but again he had the misfortune to fall. Begone my child, cried O'Connor, and take care of your own preservation. The other refused and entreated his parent to mount once more, and endeavour to escape from his enemies. More anxious for his son than his own safety, the father would not comply, and, in the midst of this interesting and amiable contest, was taken prisoner. The heart possessed of such exquisite feelings of natural affection, one should imagine, was scarcely capable of a crime. O'Connor, in the present instance, had committed no crime, even in the eyes of the Deputy, who, having examined his offence, found it to be trivial and set him at liberty.

In a parliament held by Fitz Eustace, it was enacted that there should be no appeals to England, except in cases where there was a charge of treason against the King's person; but if the plaintiff failed of his proof, he should pay damages to the defendant, besides a considerable fine.

By this time, York had openly avowed his pretensions to the crown, taken up arms and defeated the King's forces at Saint Albans. In this engagement, Somerset, the general of the royal army, was slain and Henry taken prisoner. The British parliament, which met upon this occasion, constituted the Duke, lord protector of England, who, to support his interest in this kingdom, where he had already  
many

many friends, appointed the Earl of Kildare viceroy. Kildare was one of his most faithful adherents; he was besides a particular favourite with the old English settlers. This circumstance greatly conduced to preserve his authority. None gave uneasiness to his government, except the Butlers, who were warm partizans of the opposite cause. Them he reduced to obedience.

THE prospect of York began now to wear a more unfavourable aspect. At Blore Heath, being deserted by his army, he was obliged to fly to Ireland. Here he met with a most cordial reception. He was treated with every mark of honor and respect; his authority as chief governor was recognis'd. Those of every order, almost unanimously, determin'd to maintain his cause, at the risque of their lives and fortunes.

WRITS were transmitted from England for apprehending all who declared in his favour; York not only had influence sufficient to control their execution, but to procure from the Irish parliament a law to prevent, effectually, such attempts in future. Other acts were likewise passed highly in his favour. They confirm'd the patent by which he held his office as viceroy. They made it capital for any one to attempt his life. To prevent the interference of the English parliament in respect to these, or any other of their laws, the independence of Ireland, on any foreign legislature, was declared in the most express terms. Upon this principle, they made it penal for any person to appeal from the decision of an Irish court of law to any of the courts of law in England.

AFTER



AFTER the battle of Blore Heath, Warwick, the Duke of York's zealous partizan, escaped to France, where he collected a considerable force, with which he returned to England, and being reinforced by a number of the friends of the same cause <sup>1459.</sup> prepared to receive him, he engaged the royal army at Northampton and obtained a compleat victory. When the Duke heard of this favourable turn in his affairs, he set off immediately for England to animate his adherents by his presence and by nearly five thousand men who followed his standard from Ireland. At Wakefield he was attacked by the enemy with a force much superior. He was routed and fell upon the field of battle.

THE presence of a governour so just, so prudent and amiable as the Duke of York, preserved Ireland in a state of unusual tranquility. Upon his death, with whom perished more than two thousand of the English who had accompanied him from this country, the natives renewed their former insurrections. In their several districts, the English settlers, having no force adequate to their protection, were obliged to acknowledge the independence of the Irish chieftains and to pay them, for their security, the usual tribute.

WHILST the unhappy dispute continued, respecting the English crown, betwixt the families of York and Lancaster, the reins of government in Ireland, at no period regularly conducted, were more than usually relaxed. Our deputies, being left in a great measure to themselves, seized the opportunity for gratifying their avarice and ambition. Parliaments were often called by them for the purpose of enriching themselves and their friends by the imposing of  
taxes

taxes on the people. As a restraint upon their rapacity, a law, to be in force three years, was enacted, that it should not be in the power of a chief governour to summon a parliament more frequently than once in a year.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R LXV.

**V**ICTORY at Wakefield, where the Duke of York was slain, having declared in favour of Margaret of Anjou, opened to her a fair prospect of retrieving her past misfortunes. It brighten-  
 1460. ed. Near Saint Albans, she obtained a second triumph over the army of York commanded by the Earl of Warwick. Short lived were her hopes. At Santon, Warwick obtained a decisive victory, and Edward, eldest son of the Duke of York, was placed on the throne. Upon his accession, the Earl of Kildare, appointed to the office by the Irish council, was confirmed lord justice of this kingdom. Shortly after, the Duke of Clarence, was created for life, viceroy of Ireland. Victory too often enflames resentment and triumphs over the best propensities of the heart. The Earl of Ormond, a steady friend of the family of Plantagenet, had died in England by the hand of the executioner. Our parliament imitating this shameful example of inhumanity, attainted several lords and a number of the family of Butler, as guilty of high treason. Sir John Butler, representative of the house of Ormond, being so imprudent as to engage to disadvantage the troops of the Earl of Desmond, was entirely defeated. His towns and territories became a prey to the conquerors.



rors. In reward of this successful effort against the only attempt of consequence made in this country in favour of the house of Lancaster, Edward created Desmond lord lieutenant of Ireland. Never before had an Irish chieftain obtained this honor. He was delighted with it. But a cloud soon darkened the agreeable prospect which it presented to his view.

PETIT, an ancient English settler, made incursions into the territories of Melachlin, a branch of an Irish sept distinguished by their consequence in Munster. Melachlin collected forces, repulsed the invader and kept his army together for the annoyance of his enemies. This was considered by the deputy as an insult upon his authority. He attacked Melachlin in battle. Fortune deserted his standard. He was defeated and taken prisoner. One of Melachlin's leaders, on this occasion, was the son of O'Connor, who, when his father was exposed in battle to the most imminent danger, had exerted himself for his safety with such tender and generous sensibility. Once more he appears to us in a distinguished and amiable point of view. Young O'Connor remembered with gratitude the kindness with which his father had been treated by a former deputy and determined to return the obligation to Desmond. He took him under his protection with a number of his followers, preserved them from insult and was the means of their being restored to liberty.

THIS affair lessened the Deputy in the opinion of the natives. They made incursions into Munster and even threatened an invasion of the pale. To avert this danger, Desmond entered into a treaty with them, the terms of which were not favourable to his authority,

HE was now obliged to defend himself from an attack of a different nature. From the time, in particular, of his being created deputy, he had many enemies. These resolved to embrace the present opportunity of gratifying their resentment. They represented to the king that Desmond was disloyal, and an oppressor of his subjects; that instead of opposing his enemies with spirit he had purchased peace by dishonourable treaties.

A PARLIAMENT summoned to Wexford, probably to frustrate this accusation, transmitted an address to Edward, in which, they entreated him to pay no regard to any accusations made to him of the deputy, assuring his majesty that he had been a zealous and a successful opposer of his enemies of the Ormond faction and well qualified for discharging with propriety the duties of his office. Thus supported, Desmond passed over into England, vindicated his character, and returned triumphant.

To secure the favour of the King, whose interposition in his behalf had saved him from destruction, he resolved to exert himself, in support of the English interest in this kingdom.

It has been mentioned that numbers of Irish had continued to live in different parts of the pale. Parliament, now determined that they should, in a year, become liegemen of the king; that they must  
 1465. take English surnames and wear the English garb. Desmond, had not that attachment to the rights of the natives which, as an Irish chieftain, might have been expected. Besides this encroachment on their privileges, they had experienced, soon after his appointment to the government, an act of  
 arbitrary



arbitrary power in the legislature disgraceful to justice and shocking to every sentiment of humanity.

IN fourteen hundred and sixty three, the parliament had enacted, that any of the natives, without legal process, might be killed, if engaged in stealing or robbing, provided they had no persons in their company cloathed in English apparel.

THE parliament of fourteen hundred and sixty five was distinguished by a law which enacted that all statutes made by authority of the parliament of England be ratified and confirmed and held in full force in Ireland from the sixth of March preceding.

AT this period, Earl Rivers, father-in-law, to the King, was dignified with the office of Lord High Chancellor of England. To make way for this promotion, Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, was created, with extensive power, Deputy of Ireland. Before him the enemies of Desmond renewed their complaints. Tiptoft gave them a favourable hearing. In a parliament met at Drogheda, under the influence of the opposite faction, not only Desmond, but the Earl of Kildare and Edward Plunket, on account of various crimes and misdemeanours, were attainted of high treason. Kildare escaped. Desmond, through the violence of his enemies, lost his head upon the scaffold. Kildare went immediately to England. In the presence of the King he complained of the injuries he had received. Edward admitted him to favour and at his Majesty's desire, the Irish parliament reversed his attainder. From the condition of a state criminal in which his life had been exposed to imminent danger, he was vested with the dignity of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Tiptoft, recalled to England and condemned of partiality and injustice,

tice, paid for his misconduct the forfeit of his life by a public execution.

Farewell.

### LETTER LXVI.

**T**HE friends of Henry, by a new and vigorous exertion, placed him once more on the throne. This transient vicissitude ended in the death of that unfortunate prince, and in replacing the crown on the head of Edward, which he now was permitted to wear without disturbance or interruption.

At the meeting of the Irish parliament, in fourteen hundred and seventy four, a law was enacted by which it was expressly declared, that laws made in England should not be of force in Ireland unless allowed and published in this kingdom by parliament. This memorable statute sprung from the noble spirit which claimed for us at first a distinct and independent constitution, which procured for us the privileges of Magna Charta, and which now guarded with jealousy against any designs the English legislature might entertain of breaking down the sacred bulwarks of our liberty, by extending their laws to Ireland.

The same parliament established what was called the fraternity of Saint George. This institution consisted of thirteen principal officers, at the head of whom was placed a captain, whose power, having subsisted for a year, was transmitted to a successor and confined to the same period. These officers had under their command two hundred archers, with authority to call together such additional auxiliaries as any sudden emergence might render necessary.

On



On the anniversary of Saint George, they were to meet together, annually, in the capital, to preserve and invigorate the principles of their institution, of which the protection of the pale was the primary object. This fraternity continued until the tenth year of the reign of Henry the Seventh.

THE family of Kildare had now prospered, for some time, without interruption. But its security began to be endangered from the growing influence at court of John Earl of Ormond. Upon the depression of his house, that nobleman had fled to England, and, by a graceful exterior and polite manners, strongly recommended himself to Edward, who was one of the most accomplished princes in Christendom. His partizans in this kingdom began to recover their spirits. They looked forward with the pleasing expectation of better days, and were not disappointed. Kildare was removed from the government, a friend of Ormond substituted in his place, and the act of attainder which had been passed against his family repealed, by a new parliament devoted to his interest.

THE Bishop of Meath, some time before appointed deputy of Ireland, held a parliament in Dublin, by which, among other laws, it was enacted, that any Englishman, injured by a native, not amenable to law, might reprove himself upon the whole sept or nation. In this manner, to punish the innocent for the crimes of the guilty, was a new and a more flagrant instance of the unjust treatment which the unfortunate people of this country had received from the English, in almost every transaction with them, from the time they first invaded Ireland.

VIOLENT

VIOLENT disputes continued betwixt the family of Kildare and the Butlers. Lately, the latter had acquired the ascendance; they retained it but a short time. Gerald Earl of Kildare was created justice; his honor in like manner was transient. But after having opposed the authority of Lord Grey, appointed deputy by the King, and some changes taken place among the ruling powers, he was reinstated in his office and established his power on a pretty solid foundation. By giving his sister in marriage to Con, the son of O'Nial of Ulster, he attached to his family one of the most powerful chieftains in the kingdom.

THE revenue of Ireland was, at this time, so miserably reduced as scarcely to be sufficient for defraying the expence, as we are told by Cox, of a hundred and twenty horsemen, the whole standing force with which Kildare was furnished for supporting the authority of government.

EDWARD the Fourth died the twenty ninth of April, fourteen hundred and eighty three, in the twenty third year of his reign. He was fond of parade, stained his character by several acts of cruelty; was strongly addicted to sensual pleasure and undistinguished by either prudence or virtue.

Adieu.

## LETTER LXVII.

ON the demise of the King, his young son Edward was proclaimed his successor. His uncle Richard Duke of Gloucester, by bribery, cunning and address, arts of which he was perfectly master, had himself appointed Lord Protector of England.

In



In his person, Richard was the caricature of deformity. In the qualities of his mind, none of the human kind was ever more odious and detestable. He was an infamous hypocrite and his heart bid defiance not only to the common obligations of justice and of honor, but to every sentiment of natural affection and every feeling of humanity. His royal nephew with his brother, whose tender age might have excited in him some compassion, fell victims to his cruelty. The chief obstacles to the gratification of his ambitious views being thus removed, he ascended the throne.

WITH respect to Ireland, a transaction happened in the second year of the reign of Richard, which merits notice. Certain traders of Waterford shipped merchandises of the staple, intending to carry them to Sluice in Flanders, contrary to an English statute of Henry the Sixth, by which it was enacted, that all such merchandises of the kingdom of England and of the countries of Ireland and Wales should be transported to Calais and no where else. The treasurer of Calais seized the ship. Upon a petition of the merchants of Waterford to the King and council for redress, the justices were assembled in the exchequer chamber for their opinion. The chief point to be considered, was, "If towns corporate in Ireland and other inhabitants of that country shall be bound by statutes made in England." The result of their deliberation was, "That the land of Ireland, in itself, had a parliament and all other courts, as in England: And by the same parliament doth make and change laws and are not bound by the statutes of England, because they have not therein knights of parliament," to which they add, "But this is to be

understood of lands and things in the land only to be affected, but the persons are the King's subjects, and, as subjects, are to be bound by any thing done out of Ireland against the statute, as the inhabitants of Calais, Gascoine, Guines; and likewise shall be obedient to the admiral of England, with respect to things done upon the sea."

THE former part of this opinion, which denies that the English legislature has any authority to bind this country internally, is agreeable to the rights of our constitution; the latter part, which claims a power in Britain to bind us externally, leads to a flagrant violation of it. If England, with respect to us, had an absolute dominion over the sea, if she could regulate our trade at pleasure, if our commercial privileges were subject to her control, then Irishmen, in a matter essential to their happiness and prosperity, would have no pretensions to freedom. To a nation such as ours, depending upon foreign trade for so many of the necessaries and the comforts of life, a power of making laws confined within the limits of the land, is but as it were the shadow of liberty. Would not an authority of restraining us in matters of an external nature acquiesced in and acknowledged, be always exercised to our disadvantage upon all occasions of competition? By the sacred unalienable rights of men; by the great charter of nature and of compact, we are a free and independent people, therefore must ever reprobate the idea of being subject, either to an internal or external control by the legislature of Britain or any other nation under heaven. United with England as subjects of the same king, but possessed, without the least possible exception, of distinct and separate constitutions,



stitutions, we may with the same reason, with the same justice and good faith presume, in any instance and under whatever possible description, to make laws to bind her, as that she should presume to make laws to bind us. Every Irishman should have this conviction engraven upon his heart in indelible characters. You have seen that this glorious principle, on every occasion, animated the breasts and influenced the conduct of our ancestors. And would it not be a shameful degeneracy in their posterity not to imitate so noble and so laudable an example?

RICHARD was too busily engaged in opposing his enemies and in endeavouring to establish his usurped authority, to pay any particular attention to the affairs of Ireland. He continued as deputy, Gerald Earl of Kildare. In fourteen hundred and eighty three, he held a parliament, which was twice assembled the following year. Neither the acts of these parliaments, upon record, or any other transaction of his government merits attention.

It was not to be supposed that Richard could long sit upon a throne which he had purchased by a series of detestable villainies. Buckingham, the dupe of his own ambition and the instrument employed by the King, in executing his abominable schemes, unfortunately experienced that the heart, which heard not the voice of justice and humanity, was a stranger to gratitude. Richard defrauded him of the promised reward of his services. Buckingham rebelled and endeavoured to strip him of the crown. This opposition was but the beginning of his troubles. Richmond, a surviving heir to the pretensions of the house of Lancaster, landed in England with an army, en-

countered and slew Richard in battle at Bosworth, on the twenty second of August fourteen hundred and eighty five. Upon this fortunate event, he mounted the throne by the name and title of Henry the Seventh. His marriage with Elizabeth, daughter of Edward the Fourth, united the claims of the houses of York and Lancaster, whose competition for the crown, had, for a series of years, deluged England with inundations of blood.

Adieu.

### L E T T E R LXVIII.

**T**HE revolution that placed Henry on the throne was by no means agreeable to the leading families of Ireland, all of whom, Ormond and his connexions excepted, had been warmly attached to the house of York. Henry, who had a mind too exalted to be influenced by resentment, and who was one of the wisest of princes, took measures the most effectual for gaining the affections of those who were hostile to his interest. Whilst his friends, the family of Ormond and of Desmond, were restored to their honours and estate, Kildare was continued deputy and the other officers of state permitted to retain their employments.

**B**UT neither he nor his connexions felt, as they ought, this unmerited kindness. They still acted on the same principles. Henry suspected Kildare, and, to prevent him from pursuing schemes inimical to his authority in Ireland, ordered him to repair to England, under colour of receiving information concerning the affairs of this country. Kildare penetrated the design and eluded the command, by  
procuring



procuring a representation to his Majesty, that the present state of Ireland would not admit of the absence of the Lord Deputy.

IN England, the numerous partizans of the house of York, notwithstanding the marriage of Henry with Elizabeth, were much displeas'd with the late revolution. Their discontents daily multiplied. Richard Simon, a Priest of Oxford, ambitious and enterprising, resolv'd to take advantage of them. Seizing the present opportunity, as most favourable for the execution of a scheme, which, for some time, he had been employ'd in bringing to maturity, he held forth to public view one Lambert Simnel, who, as the Earl of Warwick, just escap'd from the tower, claimed a right to the crown. He had been admirably instructed and was well qualified for the purpose. His mein, his address, with his conversation, were suited, with great propriety, to the part he had to act.

IN England, this daring imposture would soon have been discovered.

THE Duke of Clarence, reputed father of this pretender to royalty, had been born in Ireland, of which he was viceroy for many years. Besides, the warm attachment of the people here to the family of York, would render them more liable to be deceiv'd, on the present occasion. For these reasons, Ireland was fix'd upon for the theatre on which young Simnel should make his first appearance. Kildare, who, we may suppose, had been prepar'd for the business, gave Simnel, on his arrival, the most honourable reception. The intelligence was every where received with joy and with mutual congratulations.

THE Deputy and council admitted the evidence in favour of the identity of his person as indubitable. His title to the crown was recognized and he was proclaimed king by the name of Edward the Sixth. The family of the Butlers, a few others, with the city of Waterford, alone continued in their allegiance to Henry.

OF those who warmly espoused the cause of Simnel was Margaret of York, Dutchess dowager of Burgandy and sister of Edward the Fourth. She rejoiced in the hope that the present occasion would turn out favourable to the wishes of those who were interested in the fortunes of her family. By her influence and the exertions of her friends, two thousand well disciplined troops were sent over to Ireland, in support of the pretensions of Simnel. Thus encouraged, the cause of the impostor in this country prospered apace. All opposition ceased and he was crowned with due solemnity. Parliaments were summoned and all the various departments of government conducted in his name. It being with difficulty that the forces collected for executing this mad enterprise were furnished with the means of subsistence, and the friends of Simnel being filled with sanguine hopes of success, it was resolved to remove the scene of action to England. Having done every thing possible to encrease their strength, which by this time was become pretty considerable, and having made every necessary preparation, they took shipping and landed on the coast of Lancashire where they were joined by Sir Thomas Broughton and his friends.

UPON hearing of this extraordinary business, Henry had used proper means for detecting the imposture.



ture. He took the real Warwick, from prison, where he had been for some time confined, and shewed him publickly to the people. He also procured a bull from the Pope by which Simnel was declared to be a cheat, and his adherents excommunicated.

FINDING, however, that Simnel had the audacity to persevere, he led his forces to the North where the insurgents were principally collected, and having vanquished Lovel, one of their most active partizans, he engaged the impostor at Stoke, in the county of Nottingham, where all his short-lived honors perished.

THE King took him prisoner, but as he was only the weak, inconsiderate tool of a party, Henry inflicted on him no other punishment, than to reduce him, for the remainder of life, to a station suitable to his original insignificance.

THE people of Ireland, who, from the pains taken to deceive them, did not discover till too late the shameful imposture, began now to tremble for the consequences of their folly. To avoid the impending danger, they cast themselves upon the mercy of the King, and promised that in future they would preserve their allegiance, inviolable.

IN England, dissatisfaction with the present government was only suppressed for a time, not extinguished. The assistance of Kildare and of the insurgents who were very numerous, was necessary to preserve the peace of this kingdom from being disturbed by the hostile designs of the natives. Henry therefore with a policy and moderation highly to his honor accepted of the submission of the Irish rebels. Kildare was even at present continued in office. However, some time

time after Henry thought it expedient to send over Edgecombe, a confidential servant, with five hundred men, to secure the fidelity of his Irish subjects. Edgecombe executed his commission with prudence and integrity. In a progress which he made through several parts of the country, he took an oath of allegiance from the nobility, gentry and citizens. To the people of Waterford he paid the compliments to which they were entitled for their loyalty. Previous to this, in common with others who had retained their allegiance, they had received the King's thanks and been honored with new privileges. The lenity with which the malecontents had been treated by Henry, especially his permitting them to retain offices of state, gave much offence, to the Butlers in particular, who thought their loyalty deserved a more substantial reward than mere thanks. To quiet these jealousies, the King sent for the leading men to court, treated them with kindness and took pains to reconcile the difference. The matter was at present compromised. Kildare and his friends were continued in the departments of government. As they were vastly more numerous and powerful than the opposite party, had they been dismissed from their employments, the greatest distractions must have been the consequence.

DURING these transactions, the Earl of Desmond, quite disengaged from public affairs, acted, in all respects, within the limits of his own territory, as an independent chieftain.

IN the North, O'Nial had endeavoured to deprive Tirconnel of Tir Owen of his independence. With an assumed air of superiority, a messenger, in his name, delivered to him this mandate, "Send me tribute,

bute,



bute, or else." "I owe you no tribute," returned the spirited Tirconnel, "and if." This laconic dignity was, in a striking manner, characteristic of the free independent principles which animated the Irish chieftains. O'Nial and Tirconnel, continued their quarrel to the great disadvantage and misfortune of both parties.

Farewell.

## LETTER LXIX.

**I**N the year fourteen hundred and ninety two, the Earl of Kildare was removed from the office of deputy to make room for the Archbishop of Dublin, and Sir James Butler was made treasurer in the place of the Baron of Portlester. These and other changes of the ministry were occasioned by the alarm of an insurrection which threatened once more to disturb the government of Henry. The fate of Lambert Simnel might have extinguished the hopes of the partizans of the house of York; but they were determined to pursue their object while the least possibility of success remained. Encouraged by the persevering resentment of the Dutchess of Burgandy, they spread a report that Richard Duke of York had escaped from prison when his brother, Edward the Fifth, was assassinated. This was the prelude of their scheme. When matters were prepared, Perkin Warbeck, the son of a Flemish Jew, beautiful in his person, sensible and of accomplished manners, was exhibited in public, made to personate the Duke of York and to assert his right to the crown. The claim of Simnel had been recognised in Ireland. On the same stage Perkin made his appearance assum-

ing

ing the name of Richard Plantagenet. He applied, in particular, for aid, to the Earls of Desmond and Kildare; Desmond espoused his cause; Kildare was equally, by inclination, attached to his interest, but experience had taught him to act with caution. The people of this country, warm, affectionate and unsuspecting in their temper, were once more in danger of being deluded. Happily for Ireland, Perkin accepted an invitation from the King of France and went over to that country. After several unsuccessful attempts, he was taken prisoner by Henry, who had the magnanimity to pardon his crime and set him at liberty. Perkin was equally distinguished by folly and ingratitude. Being discovered in contriving a new plot, he was apprehended a second time and suffered by the executioner the ignominious death which he so justly merited.

In September, subsequent to the landing of Warbeck, Lord Gormanstown was appointed deputy. Connected with Kildare and his friends they supported his administration. The Butlers and their faction opposed it. Gormanstown convened a parliament at Drogheda. His enemies asserted, that as only four of the shires were summoned and the Duke of Bedford lord lieutenant, of whom Gormanstown was deputy, had resigned his letters patent previous to the issuing of the writs, the assembling of it was irregular, therefore refused to acknowledge its authority.

By this time, Henry, from his own experience, was convinced that the government of Ireland had not been managed in a manner conducive either to the interest of the crown, or to the public tranquillity. Within the limits of the pale, the principal families were divided into factions; the officers of  
state



state were inattentive to their duty, and the Irish chieftains, impatient under a sense of violated rights, were disposed, on every opportunity, to break forth into insurrections. The King clearly discovered these evils, and to correct them, sent over Sir Edward Poynings, attended by a considerable force, as Lord Deputy of Ireland.

HAVING made such a change in the officers of state as the King's affairs required, and reformed as many of the abuses which had crept into the pale as his time and circumstances would permit, he led his forces against the partizans of Warbeck, whom, during the course of his administration he either entirely repulsed or compelled to subjection.

KILDARE, to remove all suspicion with respect to his loyalty, of which, from his past conduct, there was too much reason to doubt, had embarked with the deputy in these operations. But from some particulars of his behaviour, he was charged with treason, was seized and cast into prison.

IN fourteen hundred and ninety four, a parliament, the most remarkable for the laws passed in it of any hitherto held in Ireland, was convened at Drogheda. By it, the statutes of Kilkenny and all other previous salutary laws were revived and confirmed. The acts of Simnel's parliament and those passed in that held by Lord Gormanstown, on account of it being irregular, were annulled, and several laws, for establishing good order and repressing injustice, particularly with respect to the barons, who, in many instances, had made a very improper use of their power, were enacted. The scandalous practice of coigne and livery which had harassed the people and banished from Ireland many of it's most industrious

industrious inhabitants, together with all other iniquitous exactions, were expressly forbidden. Besides other provisions made for supplying the wants of government, a standing tax, of twenty six shillings and eight pence, was imposed on every six score acres of arable land. It was likewise enacted that all statutes lately made within the realm of England be deemed good and effectual in law and be authorized, approved and confirmed in Ireland. The English statutes lately made, which are here adopted by our parliament, would seem plainly to be those which were enacted since the eighth of Edward the Fourth, as all English laws, in force, were then received and stamp'd with the sanction of the Irish legislature.

THESE now mentioned and every former act, by which our parliament adopted and gave the impression of their authority to English acts, as necessary to their being of force in Ireland, is equal to a positive and express declaration of the commons, that we have an independent constitution and cannot be bound by British statutes. If the force of British statutes extended to this country, would there have been any necessity for the interposition of our legislature in order to their being received and obeyed in Ireland? Such an interference would not only have been officious but vain, and strongly marked with absurdity.

By this parliament, it was also enacted, that the chancellor, treasurer, judges, master of the rolls and officers accountants in Ireland, should hold their offices, not as formerly during life, but during the King's pleasure. The abuse of power by the officers of state had long been a subject of complaint. But this  
remedy



remedy was worse than the disease. Officers dependent on the crown and holding at pleasure, become of course, on all occasions, instruments ready to support it's measures, and are therefore dangerous to the constitution. But the statute of the present parliament, distinguished by the name of Poynings law, being of all others the most remarkable, merits particular notice.

THE power with which the Deputy was invested of convening parliaments and giving the royal assent to laws, not communicated to the King, had been exceedingly abused. Parliaments, instead of promoting the public good, the great end of their institution, were frequently made the instruments of a faction whose leading principles were avarice, ambition or the gratification of revenge. The influence of the English by birth, or of the more recent adventurers from Britain, was generally prevalent with the deputy, who, in compliance with their desire, summoned parliaments much more frequently than was necessary, in which laws were enacted injurious to the property and to the rights of the ancient English settlers. Statutes were even passed which affected, immediately, the interest of the crown, more especially since the dispute commenced betwixt the families of York and Lancaster, to the former of which, the people of Ireland in general, and especially the legislature, had been warmly attached.

To prevent these evils in part, acts had been passed in several reigns, particularly one in the time of Henry the Sixth, by which it was enjoined, that the parliament should not meet more frequently than once in a year. These, however, being temporary and occasional, had little effect. A remedy was

now

now applied which was indeed radical. By the influence of Poynings with the present parliament, it was enacted, that, hereafter, no parliament should be held in the land of Ireland until the particular causes and considerations and all laws to be passed in it, be first certified by the Lord Deputy and his council to the King, and that such acts, considerations and causes thus previously specified and affirmed by the King and council, and none others, should have the force of laws. In like manner, the particular time of assembling parliament was to be specified.

THE rights of majesty and the rights of his people of Ireland made it necessary that his deputy should be restrained from convening parliaments and from giving the royal assent to laws without the knowledge and approbation of the King. But the law of Poynings whilst, in these respects, it secured the royal prerogative, was equally injurious to the privileges of parliament and to the interest of the nation. By indisputable right, we received by compact from England a constitution similar to her own, but by this statute, we received a new constitution, in which one of our inherent most essential rights was annihilated. In England, the people send their representatives to parliament vested with the high privilege of deliberating; to the King is reserved the power merely of assenting, or giving a negative to those bills which were the result of their consultations.

THE principles of it's original institution, and the rights of our parliament had been, and, to this time, continued to be perfectly the same.

BUT



But henceforth it must deliberate no more. What shall, and what shall not be the law of the land, is, in the first instance, to be determined by the deputy and his council: from them such laws or considerations, as they might approve, were transmitted to the king and council for their approbation; to our parliament remained the single, and, comparatively, insignificant power of a negative.

On this occasion, the Irish parliament, by assenting to this law, exceeded the power with which they were invested by their constituents. Entrusted with the great and essential privilege of deliberating, as the motive and sole end of their appointment, they could no more give up or transfer that right, than they could, by a vote, destroy the existence of parliament. This diminution of the privileges of parliament was a diminution of the privileges of the people, their rights being mutual, and inseparably connected. Besides, the rights of the people and of the nation could not be secure whilst the power of legislation depended so much on the deputy and council, who had a separate interest of their own to be provided for, and who would be disposed to encrease the prerogative of the crown, of which they were the immediate servants, and to whose authority they were now become strictly accountable. It might be supposed, that the influence of the lords and gentry of the pale who were admitted to their consultations, respecting the laws to be transmitted, previous to the meeting of parliament, would operate in favour of the people, but as none of them, we may suppose, would be summoned who were likely, on any occasion, to oppose their measures, their attendance could be of little use. However, as Poyning's Law  
restrained

restrained the too frequent meeting of parliament, and was a check upon any flagrant attempts of factious grandees on the rights of the nation, or of individuals, the popular party, who were unprovided in any other security, opposed the suspension of it, on every occasion, except when they could entirely depend on the right intentions of the deputy and the legislature.

Adieu.

### L E T T E R LXX.

**I**N the famous parliament, of which I have given you an account in my last letter, an act of attainder had passed against the Earl of Kildare as guilty of treasonable practices. He had been very imprudent; at present he was probably the victim of envy and personal resentment. Being sent over to England, and admitted to the King, in presence of his accusers, to be tryed for his offence, his Majesty commanded him to provide himself with council, "Yes," replied the Earl bluntly, "the ablest in the realm," freely catching hold of his Majesty's hand, "Your highness I take for my council against these false knaves." The King, instead of being offended at this liberty of Kildare, seemed pleased with the honest compliment paid to his integrity. In the course of the tryal, it was urged against him by his enemies, that he had, with daring impiety, on a certain occasion, burned the church of Cashel. "Spare your evidence," cried Kildare, "I did burn the church, for I thought the Bishop had been in it." Towards the conclusion of the tryal, his accusers, finding that they had not proved their principal charges,



charges, to the conviction of the King, told him in the bitterness of resentment, "That all Ireland could not govern this Earl." "Well," replied Henry, "The Earl then shall govern all Ireland."

ON the conclusion of the tryal, which affords a striking picture of the manners of the times, Henry, convinced that a man of such undefigning plainness and simplicity, could not be guilty of a wilful crime, received Kildare into favour, restored him to all his honours, and made him Deputy of Ireland, in the place of Sir Edward Poynings. This generous treatment filled the heart of the Earl with respect and gratitude. He entered upon his office animated by these sentiments and discharged his duty with spirit and integrity. His magnanimity was put to a severe proof by Lord Clanricarde, who entered into a league against government supported by several very respectable chieftains and by an army more numerous than any which the Irish had brought into the field since the time of Henry the Second. The Earl had married his daughter to Clanricarde. But this connexion had no influence in tempting Kildare to depart from his duty. He collected the forces of government and met the enemy at Knocktow, a place not far from Galway. The Irish were defeated with the loss of two thousand men. This battle was fought the nineteenth of August fifteen hundred and four.

ABOUT this time, many persons were carried off by a plague. It raged with considerable violence and was succeeded by a famine, occasioned by incessant rains.

IN consequence of Poynings' law, the Irish parliament had met much less frequently than usual. Oc-

tober fifteen hundred and eight, a parliament was convened by Kildare, wherein, as was usual, these are the words of Ware, the civil and religious privileges of this kingdom were confirmed by law.

For several reigns, the influence of the English government had declined in Ireland; under Henry the Seventh, it, in some measure, revived. Had his situation permitted, we have reason to suppose that he would have introduced into this country a system of government, which would have repressed the insolence and rapacity of ambitious grandees, and removed the chief causes of civil insurrection. His circumstances would only permit him to rectify in part the evils of the state by temporary expedients.

He died at Richmond the twenty second of April fifteen hundred and nine, in the twenty fourth year of his reign.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R LXXI.

**H**ENRY the Eighth was crowned at eighteen years of age. Though he ascended the throne with every circumstance in his favour, though the  
 1509. factions by which England had been so long distracted were entirely subsided and the affairs of that country in a most prosperous state, he paid little regard to Ireland. Strongly addicted to pleasure, seduced by the advice of pernicious flatterers, and prompted by vanity and ambition to acquire fame by interfering in the wars and in the politics of the continent, this kingdom very inconsiderable with respect to it's revenue and by no means  
 reduced



reduced to a state of regular subordination, was considered by him with little attention.

KILDARE and the other ministers of state were continued in office. The same spirit of loyalty by which the Deputy had been distinguished during the latter part of the reign of Henry the Seventh, attached him to the interest of his son. With a numerous army, he advanced against a body of insurgents of the district contiguous to Desmond and depopulated their country. But, upon his return, he was attacked by the enemy led on by a number of chieftains of distinction. The forces of Kildare encumbered with spoil and fatigued by their march, suffered greatly. Night parted the combatants. The next day, not choosing to renew the engagement, the Deputy returned to Dublin.

UPON the death of Kildare, the council elected his son Gerald Deputy. Henry confirmed the choice. The insurrections suppressed by Kildare broke out afresh. But Gerald, possessed of the same genius and spirit of enterprize for which his father had been so remarkable, in a short time, re-established the public tranquillity. But his own peace began to be disturbed by old family competitions. In particular, the honours conferred upon him excited the envy and dissatisfaction of Peter Butler Earl of Ormond. Destitute in himself of power to injure the Deputy, he paid court to Wolsey, the reigning favourite with Henry, and having been so successful as to obtain his friendship, he accused Kildare of having unjustly alienated the King's revenue, and of having even entered into secret connexions with the enemies of his government. As Kildare had not treated Wolsey with the respectful attention he expected, he was more sus-

ceptible of impressions to his disadvantage. The Deputy was summoned to England to answer for his conduct, was deprived of his office and Thomas Earl of Surry substituted in his place.

O'NEAL had invaded Meath; Surry opposed him with vigour and obliged him to retire to the North. Here, reflecting on his situation and his prospects, he resolved to cease from hostilities and become a peaceful subject. These intentions he communicated to the Deputy who accepted of his submission, conferred on him the honor of knighthood and other marks of royal favour.

SURRY was as much distinguished in a civil, as in a military capacity. Disdaining to be influenced by the dishonourable motives of avarice or ambition, his actions were guided by a strict regard to the principles of justice. His splendid hospitality gained him respect, and increased, from gratitude and affection, the number of his friends. After a residence in Ireland of two years, disappointed of necessary supplies from England which he had been promised, he returned to that kingdom, where he was placed at the head of the troops which Henry had prepared to invade France.

ORMOND succeeded Surry as Deputy of Ireland, whose administration made no figure compared with  
 1521. that of his predecessor. The Irish chieftains despising his authority, indulged, without restraint, those private animosities against each other for which they had been always so remarkable, and which diverted that courage to an inglorious object that ought to have been exerted in recovering their lost liberty, or in securing, against the attack of  
 the



the common enemy, their privileges which yet remained.

A CHIEFTAIN of Ossory, offended at the viceroy, sent an ambassador to Henry to lay before him his grievance, who addressed him in these remarkable words, "King master, stand up. My master Mac Gillipatrick hath sent me to thee and commanded me to inform thee, that if you do not chastise Peter Rufus," meaning Ormond, "He will make war upon you." Whether the King paid any regard to this extraordinary embassy, is uncertain, but Mac Gillipatrick was not the only person dissatisfied with the government of Ormond. Kildare had been out of the kingdom for some time. He returned and renewed his animosity against the viceroy. Their mutual complaints were transmitted to England. Kildare was now successful. The reins of government, being taken from Ormond, were committed to him, but his honours were transient. The King of France, at war with England, to embarrass Henry, proposed to enter into a treaty with Desmond, who listened to the offer with pleasure, flattered in being thus treated as an independent prince, by so great a monarch. Henry highly provoked, commanded the Deputy to seize Desmond. Kildare, partial to his kinsman, made a shew of obedience but did not execute the order. His enemies eagerly improved the opportunity, represented his conduct to the King who cast him into prison, from which he was afterwards, with difficulty, enlarged.

Farewell.

## LETTER LXXII.

**A**FTER some time, the events of which are not interesting, Sir William Skeffington was appointed deputy of the Duke of Richmond who had been created viceroy of Ireland. Kildare had regained his liberty and the favourable opinion of the King. Filled with ambition, and provoked that another should possess an office, which, as he thought, of right, belonged to him, by unceasing applications, he prevailed with the King to recal Skeffington and appoint him deputy, in his place. His head became now intoxicated with power. He forgot his obligations to the King and affected independence. To strengthen his interest, he entered into a close connexion with several of the most powerful chieftains and collected a large number of disorderly followers. None but his particular friends were admitted to his confidence; he gave full scope to his passions; the ancient enemies of his family felt the bitter effects of his power and resentment. These, aided by a number, who, from better principles, were offended at the shameful irregularities of his conduct, began to lay schemes for his destruction. To accomplish this, the master of the rolls was dispatched to the King to represent to him the conduct of the Deputy and the various evils in which he had involved the government of Ireland. Henry, alarmed by the intelligence, ordered Kildare immediately to England, where, as soon as he arrived, he was seized and imprisoned. A report was propagated, which reached Ireland, that he was executed. It was believed by his son Lord Thomas, to whom, during his



his absence, he had committed the government. He was most unfit for the important trust. He was no more than twenty years of age and had all the rashness and petulance of youth. He was credulous, proud of the consequence of his family and despised his enemies. The officers of state were treated by him with supercilious disdain. Instead of allaying, he had heightened the displeasure incurred by his father's administration.

But, when he heard of his death, without giving himself time or taking pains to be assured of the fact, he resigned his office and resolved to draw his sword against a sovereign from whom, he supposed, he had received an irreparable injury. The chancellor laboured to prevent the impending evil. In terms of the warmest affection, he pointed out to the imprudent Lord the folly and the danger of his conduct; laid before him the evils which would be the consequence of persisting in his design, not only with respect to himself, but his family and connexions. In vain. He determined to persevere. The disaffected seized the favourable opportunity and crowded to his standard. But Lord Thomas did not depend entirely on them; he applied for aid to the powers of Germany and Italy with whom Henry was at war. Mean time, he laid waste Fingal and advanced with his army to the metropolis. Being admitted by the inhabitants, to save themselves from destruction, he invested the castle. Leaving the conduct of the siege to a part of his forces, he marched with the rest into the lands of Ossory to vent his displeasure against the Earl, who had refused to join with him in his mad undertaking. He bore down every thing before him and marked his progress with all the devastations

1534. vastations of war. During his absence, the citizens of Dublin, animated by the promise of speedy support, attacked the troops which he had left there and made the greatest part of them prisoners. Provoked by this intelligence, young Fitzgerald returned and laid siege to the city. He continued his operations for some time, but the people of Dublin having been reinforced by five hundred men, he was forced to retreat.

SIR William Skeffington was now appointed Lord Deputy who being in a bad state of health and averse to military operations, in the spring of fifteen hundred and thirty five, placed at the head of the troops Sir William Brereton. Brereton led them to the field, besieged and took the castle of Maynooth. During Winter, Fitzgerald had collected a large body of undisciplined troops. As soon as he heard of the siege of Maynooth, which was one of the strongest of his castles, he put them in motion, but, when intelligence was received that it had surrendered, a great number of his men, who had enlisted with him from the feelings of the moment, deserted his standard; with the remainder, he gave battle to the enemy, by whom, after a short conflict, he was entirely routed. Attended by a few followers, he escaped, with difficulty, to Munster. Here he was followed by the English army now under the command of Lord Grey. Finding that there was no alternative, he accepted of terms of accommodation, by which it was solemnly stipulated that his past offences should be pardoned. His adherents, the principal of whom, were O'Nial and O'Connor, likewise submitted.

THE conduct of this business and of the viceroy in general much displeas'd the officers of state.

Whatever



Whatever might have been the determination of the King, in this matter, to whom complaints were made with respect to it, Skeffington died soon after, upon which the affairs of government were committed to Lord Grey.

MEAN while, Fitzgerald went over to England to get his pardon ratified by his Majesty. But, on his arrival, the King, paying no regard to the engagement of his Irish Deputy, imprisoned him. The eyes of this unfortunate youth were now opened to a complicated scene of wretchedness. When too late, he discovered that his father, instead of being deprived of his life by the King, had died of grief, occasioned by a sense of his own precipitate and presumptuous folly. With respect to the fate which awaited himself, it was that of dying by the hands of the executioner.

HENRY, in whose character cruelty was a distinguishing feature, extended his resentment against Lord Thomas to all the branches of his family. Five of his uncles, although three of them had condemned his conduct, were executed. His brother, a youth of twelve years of age, was forced to fly from place to place, to avoid the vengeance of the King. At last, he found an asylum in Italy where he was protected against the malevolence of his unrelenting pursuer.

Adieu.

### LETTER LXXIII.

SOME time before the period of which I have been giving you an account, a great revolution in England, had taken place in religion.

THE

THE divine Being who guides human affairs with unerring wisdom, frequently educeth good from evil. Henry, from motives well known, had cast off the Pope's jurisdiction and raised himself in his place, to the head of the church. Determined that this change should extend to Ireland, he fixed upon George Brown, a provincial of Augustine friars, distinguished by a warm attachment to the principles of the reformation, as a proper instrument for executing his design. To give him greater influence in his endeavours to persuade his Irish subjects to acknowledge his supremacy, upon a vacancy which now happened, he created him Archbishop of Dublin. Brown engaged in this arduous business but he found the task much more difficult than was at first imagined.

FROM the invasion of their country, the natives were involved in constant disputes and hostilities with the English settlers; they had, also, from time immemorial, been engaged in quarrels with one another. In this distracted state, connected by no bond of union, civil, political or religious, deprived of their bards, of their colleges, of almost every opportunity of improvement, they were involved in ignorance and consequently, in superstition. Being unaccustomed to think and, incapable of investigating truth, they were exceedingly averse to any innovation in the form of religion which they had been taught to consider as sacred and were accustomed to profess. Henry the Second, by acknowledging the sovereignty of Ireland to be held by the Pope's authority, had taught the English settlers to be strongly attached to the papal interest, and so deeply was this impressed on their minds, that the Irish parliament



ment, on some occasions, declared, that the Pope's bull was the sole foundation of the obedience which the King claimed from the people of this country.

IRELAND was considered as the peculiar inheritance of the Pontiff. Hence, it was called the Holy Island, the Island of Saints. For these reasons, the endeavours of Brown and his associates, to induce the people of Ireland to renounce the Pope's supremacy met with the warmest opposition. The chancellor Cromer, Primate of Armagh, who was extremely zealous for the Pope's authority, summoned the clergy of his province; represented to them the shocking impiety of the proposed innovation, exhorted them to perseverance, and dispatched two messengers to Rome to entreat his holiness to support them with his protection. The other prelates joined with zeal in defence of the same cause. The methods hitherto used proving ineffectual, the authority of the legislature was employed in aid of the reformation.

A PARLIAMENT was convened. To prevent delay in passing the acts, Poyning's Law was suspended. An act of attainder being passed <sup>1536.</sup> against those principally concerned in the late rebellion, some matters settled relative to the succession to the crown and laws enacted concerning the King's divorce from Catharine of Arragon and his subsequent matrimonial connexions, his Majesty was, in the fullest manner, declared to be head of the church. It was made treason for laymen in offices under the King or for any of the clergy to refuse the oath of supremacy. To this sanguinary law one was added which vested his Majesty with exclusive authority, in respect to first fruits, the power of disposing of benefices.

benefices, and with relation to all other matters concerning the maintenance and government of the church. Appeals and all applications to the Pope were utterly forbidden. A subsidy for ten years was granted to his Majesty and the twentieth penny of the profits of all spiritual promotions for ever. Those who could not speak the English language were declared incapable of church preferment unless persons acquainted with it were not to be found.

To promote the knowlege of the language, English schools were enjoined to be kept in every parish. The pensions paid to the Irish for protection were abolished, a statute made against absentees and other laws designed to advance the public weal, were enacted.

It was with great difficulty that the friends of government carried the act of supremacy, to which, many lords and commons gave the keenest opposition. Brown exerted himself in favour of it, in a manner which evinced him to be a violent partizan, equally a stranger to the natural rights of men and to the privileges of conscience.

It had been usual to summon to parliament two proctors from each diocese. These, being friends of the holy see and, of course, enemies to the present designs of administration respecting it, were excluded and declared to have no right, in future, to be considered as members of the legislature.

THE statute establishing the King's supremacy, was warmly opposed by the people of almost every rank and description. The particular friends of the papal jurisdiction were very active in spreading the discontents excited on the present occasion and in strengthening their cause. To Cromer and several others,



others, commissions were privately sent from Rome, wherein they were exhorted to oppose heresy, and stand forth, with all their might, in defence of the Catholic religion. O'Nial, flattered by a letter addressed to him in a highly complimentary strain by the Bishop of Metz, in the name of the council of cardinals, engaged zealously, in support of it. He joined the confederacy, and led out his followers into the county of Meath, having declared open war against all the enemies of the holy see. He wasted the country to the terror of the inhabitants who were unprovided with forces to oppose him, and set out on his return to his own country. Mean time, the Deputy, Lord Grey, had been employed in making a progress through the several provinces to encourage the friends of government and to intimidate the disaffected. Upon receiving intelligence of the insurrection of O'Nial and of his departure from Meath, he hastened forward with his army and came up with him at Belahoe.

In the engagement which followed, the Irish were entirely dispersed with the loss of four hundred men.

Farewell.

#### L E T T E R LXXIV.

**I**N fifteen hundred and thirty seven, Lord Grey had convened a parliament which was distinguished by the following spirited declaration of Irish rights, respecting the great pillar of our constitution, their sole exclusive power of making laws to bind this country. “Your Grace’s realm, recognising no superior, but your Grace, hath been, and yet is free  
from

from any subjection to any man's laws but only such as were devised within this realm for the wealth of the same, or to such others as by the sufferance of your Grace and your progenitors, the people of the realm have taken at their free liberties, by their own consent, and have bound themselves by long use and custom to the observance of."

By this statute, called the Act of Faculties, our parliament asserts, that Ireland hath been, and is free from the power of all laws except such as were immediately enacted by themselves, and those enacted in England to which the people gave their consent, not hereby, in any sense, recognising the authority of the British legislature, but freely and voluntarily receiving these laws as of advantage to themselves, and made current, under that idea only, by the express sanction of their own legislature.

LORD Grey being recalled to England in fifteen hundred and forty, he left Sir William Brereton to discharge the duties of his office. Sir William acted with vigour. By his attention and activity he preserved the peace of Ulster and of Thomond which were threatened with new insurrections on the account of religion.

DISCOURAGED by a series of adverse fortune, the spirit of the natives relaxed. A number of monasteries deserted their allegiance to the Pope. Fourteen abbies and ten priories, the heads of which had a seat in the house of lords, surrendered to the king and were suppressed. Desmond and his family had claimed the privileges of absenting themselves from parliament, and of not entering into a walled town; these he relinquished, and acknowledged Henry as head of the church.



FROM an idea not improperly founded in this uncivilized age, that names, even when not accompanied by any additional power, have an influence on the principles and conduct of men, the viceroy, Anthony Saint Ledger, was ordered to call a parliament, by which, in the place of Lord, the style which our kings had hitherto assumed, Henry was recognized as King of Ireland: this title to be transferred to his heirs for ever. The requiring the sanction of our lords and commons, to a matter, in itself of little importance, exhibits a new proof of our being a distinct and independent kingdom.

IN this parliament, the disposal of all abbies was vested in the king. Meath was divided into the counties of East and West Meath.

IT was enacted, that those who were to have in future a right of voting for members of parliament, were to be possessed, in freehold, of forty shillings a year, and that such as were elected in counties, cities and towns must be resident. This was an excellent restriction, as members who do not reside among their constituents, being strangers to them and to their interest, must be quite disqualified for the high trust reposed in them.

IT was likewise enacted, that on the death, resignation or recall of a deputy, the chancellor should issue writs to the privy councillors to assemble and choose for governor, during the king's pleasure, a layman of English birth, and if none such could be got, two laymen of English blood and surname, to be lords justices, to whom the lord chancellor shall administer the oath and give patents. This distinction in favour of the English by birth, tended to create jealousies, and had a most unfavourable aspect,

pect, with respect to the interest and the prosperity of Ireland. Men who are born and have a property in this country; who know it's circumstances, and the best manner of conducting it's affairs; who are acquainted with the people, with it's laws and constitution, are certainly the persons most natural and most proper for presiding in it's government.

Those of another country appointed to this high office, are not only, in these respects, less qualified, but bring with them prejudices and attachments inimical to the prosperity of the kingdom. Besides, a native, in reason and in equity, has a much better right than a stranger, to the emoluments arising from this as well as all the other offices of state. To proceed with our history.

For a short interval, the affairs of Ireland assumed an aspect very different from that to which they had hitherto been accustomed. A state of general tranquility took place. O'Nial and the Northern chieftains who had not submitted since the late insurrection, together with many of the old English settlers who had adopted the manners of the Irish and lived in a state of independence, acknowledged allegiance to Henry, not only as their lawful sovereign, but as head of the church. Several of them gave up their lands, received them again as English tenures, and, as a distinguishing mark of the royal favour, were honoured with titles of nobility. De Burgo, the head of the Mac Williams, was created Earl of Clanricarde and Baron Dunkellan; O'Brian was created Earl of Thomond and Baron of Inchiquin and O'Nial Earl of Tyrone. His son Matthew was also made Baron of Dungannon.



OF this change so favourable to the English affairs we can only assign the following causes. The alteration of the King's title must have made a considerable impression on the minds of those who had hitherto opposed his government; a number of judges were appointed to determine causes upon the general principles of the Brehon Laws which operated in favour of Henry with all those who were attached to the ancient Irish constitution.

SAINT Ledger, also, had taken pains to lessen the dependence of the natives on their respective leaders, by persuading them, when aggrieved, to apply to his tribunal for justice. This politic measure had a tendency to attach them to government. Several of them, as we are informed by Davis, did appeal to the Deputy and his council for deliverance from the bondage in which they were held by their superiors.

SIR Edward Bellingham, who succeeded Saint Ledger, extended the limits of the pale by subduing the O'Moores and the O'Connors, and building the forts of Leix and Offaly. Saint Ledger was soon after reinstated in his office.

THE Earl of Lenox being driven by faction from Scotland, took refuge with Henry, by whose desire he applied to his Irish Deputy for assistance. With three thousand men who engaged in his cause under the command of the Earl of Ormond, he returned to Scotland. But, the Castle of Dunbarton not being delivered to his Irish auxiliaries, as he had reason to expect, and having received great injury from a violent storm they came back unsuccessful.

ABOUT this time, a very different design was formed by the chieftains, O'Dogherty, O'Connor,

and some others. Weary of their dependence on the English, they proposed to the King of France to become his subjects if he would procure the sanction of the Pope and send them the necessary assistance. He was pleased with the offer and sent the Bishop of Valence to Ireland for more particular information. Upon his return, Francis applied to the Pope for his concurrence; but his holiness refused his approbation of the measure.

By his wars on the continent and other expences, having exhausted his treasury, Henry adopted a measure highly unjust and impolitic. He ordered brass, or, mixt money to be coined in Ireland and stamping it with a nominal value made it pass current, to the great injury of the people, more especially of the soldiers.

HENRY died the twenty eighth of January fifteen hundred and forty six, in the thirty eighth year of his reign, one of the most sensual, the most tyrannical, the most impolitic and cruel princes that ever sat on the English throne.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXV.

**E**DWARD the Sixth, whom Henry had by the Lady Jane Seymour, succeeded to the throne at ten years of age. Saint Ledger continued to govern the affairs of Ireland. The tranquility which took place in the affairs of this country, during the latter part of the reign of Henry the Eighth, proceeding from causes which could only have a temporary effect, was of short duration. The disposition of several of the Irish chieftains appears from their application



cation to the King of France, mentioned in my last letter. Taking advantage of the death of the late King, the O'Moores, the O'Birnes, and O'Connors rose in arms against government. The Deputy, aided by Sir Edward Bellingham who had been sent from England to his assistance with four hundred foot and six hundred horse, reduced them to obedience. Bellingham distinguished himself by his courage and activity, in reward of which, he was appointed successor to Saint Ledger in the administration of Irish affairs. He continued to act upon the same principles of attachment to the crown, which had raised him to this honor. New schemes of insurrection were formed, but by his spirit and attention, he prevented them from breaking out into acts of hostility. In one transaction, particularly, he appears not only in a respectable, but very amiable point of view. Desmond, vested with the office of treasurer, was summoned to Dublin to assist, by his presence and interest, the affairs of government. Accustomed to independence and impatient of every thing connected with the idea of subjection, this haughty chieftain refused to comply. The Deputy, upon this, surprised him in his house and carried him to Dublin. Though liable to the punishment of disobedience, instead of treating him with severity, he used him in the gentlest way, pointing out to him, with good nature and condescension, the impropriety of his behaviour and giving him the best advice with respect to his manners and conduct. Desmond became more civilized; daily, from a sense of gratitude to the Deputy for his kindness, he prayed for him by the name of the good Bellingham and from this time was a loyal subject to his death.

THIS conduct of the Deputy was just, politic and humane. Had the English, in establishing their power in this country behaved in the same manner and from the same principles, instead of adding inhumanity to acts of the most flagrant injustice, a multitude of lives would have been saved and the natives insensibly, been reconciled to their government.

INGRATITUDE is frequently the reward of fidelity. Bellingham, instead of the esteem which he merited by the rectitude of his conduct, became an object of envy and displeasure to certain of the Irish grandees, especially to Sir Francis Bryan who had acquired considerable importance by his marriage with the widow of the Earl of Ormond. Complaints of him having been transmitted to England, he was recalled and obliged to take his trial before the King and privy council.

SOME friends who were anxious for his safety desired to plead his cause. His words upon the occasion are memorable. "No," says he, "if my innocence is not sufficient to protect me, I rest quite contented in the belief of the resurrection of the dead, for my enemies may kill but cannot overcome me." Some time after, the prosecution dropped and Bellingham was acquitted.

IN fifteen hundred and fifty, Saint Ledger, once more, took the reins of government. Somerset, the guardian of the young king and the protector of his dominions, thought him the properest person to advance the reformation in Ireland, in the success of which he was warmly interested. As in matters of belief Henry the Eighth was a strict Roman Catholic, the only reformation in religion which he wished to introduce, respected the Pope's supremacy. Im-



provements of whatever kind, more especially such as have to combat prepossessions long established, proceed by slow progressive steps. The King and the principal nobility that composed his court with Somerset at their head, supported by numbers of the people of England departed now from the Church of Rome, not only in what related to the Pope's supremacy but to doctrinal points. Their principles, with respect to religion, were collected into a national liturgy and received the sanction of parliament.

In Ireland, a number had submitted to the reformation, but they were only nominal conformists. The people in general, not only retained but openly professed their attachment to the Pope which they were determined to support with zeal and perseverance. Therefore, as the present enlarged system of reformation was more offensive to their prejudices, Saint Ledger, who had positive instructions to promote it, was obliged to proceed with all possible caution. Instead of calling in the assistance of parliament, which had been done before, but was now considered as too violent a measure, he summoned a meeting of the clergy and endeavoured to prevail with them to receive the liturgy as a form of religion adopted in England and well calculated, to promote the improvement of the people.

To this, Dowdal Archbishop of Armagh, gave keen opposition. He left the assembly with strong marks of displeasure and carried with him the greatest part of the clergy of his diocese. Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, the zealous advocate for the reformation and several prelates received the liturgy, agreeably to which, service was performed in the cathedral of Dublin. In gaining the assent of men to the doc-

trines of Christianity, gentle methods of argument and persuasion amiably distinguished the conduct of Christ and his apostles. Instead of imitating this divine example, a mode of behaviour, alone worthy of the excellent cause in which they were engaged, our Irish reformers acted with the most intemperate zeal. They broke into churches, destroyed their images and every thing which favoured of Popery. To excite hatred instead of making converts was the natural consequence of this shameful, most indecent conduct.

Adieu.

### LETTER LXXVI.

**S**AINT Ledger, being represented, to the English government as not sufficiently zealous, in favour of the reformation, was removed from the office of deputy to make room for Sir James Crofts, who, it was hoped, would be more successful. Convinced that the gaining of Archbishop Dowdal, the great partizan of the Pope, was a matter of first consequence, to effect this was an immediate object with the Deputy on his being appointed to the government. To give the people an impression of his superior sanctity and to strengthen their attachment, Dawdal had retired from public view and shut himself up in an abbey within the suburbs of Dublin. Here he received a complaisant and a very flattering letter from the Deputy in which he requested a conference with him on the subject of religion. Pleased with this mark of respect from the representative of majesty, he complied with the desire of the Deputy,

but



but, to preserve his own importance, refused to meet him any where except in the place of his retirement.

CROFTS waved all ceremony, and a number of clergymen, on each side of the question, met to discuss the point in debate. Upon this occasion, Dowdal defended the claims of the Church of Rome, those of the reformation were supported by the Bishop of Meath. The result was the same with that of all such debates. Each side was rendered more averse to the principles of their opponents, and more determined in favour of their own opinion.

A DISPUTE had formerly arisen, with respect to precedence, betwixt the Archbishops of Dublin and Armagh, which was determined in favour of the latter, in consequence, he was stiled Primate of all Ireland, while the former was stiled only Primate of Ireland. To mortify the pride of Dowdal, that determination, both with respect to title and precedence, was now reversed. Deeply affected by this degradation and by the prospect of feeling more severe effects of the King's displeasure he deserted his see and retired to the continent. The see of Ossory now also became vacant. John Bale was appointed to fill it by his Majesty. Rough in his manners and determined, at all events, to support the reformation, he took every opportunity of expressing his indignation against the forms of the Popish worship. The people beheld him with detestation, rose tumultuously and marked him as the victim of their resentment. The vigorous interposition of his friends, saved him from destruction.

As a mean of establishing the tranquility of the kingdom on a more permanent basis, the Deputy made warm applications to his Majesty, to extend  
the

the laws by which his English subjects in this country were governed, to the natives in general. But the present circumstances of England would not admit of the exertions necessary to this undertaking. Times were changed. When the power and the possessions of the Irish were confined within much more limited bounds, when they smarted under the various oppressions of the adventurers from Britain, they desired, they entreated, they offered to purchase the participation of English law; but their sentiments changed with their circumstances, and they resolved to gratify their strong inclination in favour of their ancient institutions.

You have seen that several of the chieftains had received titles of nobility from the crown. This gave great offence to their dependents. A dignity, together with their power as head of a sept, to descend by hereditary succession, were things of which they had no idea, and to which, being inconsistent with the custom of their country, they were determined not to submit. Accordingly, on the death of the Earl of Clanricarde, his followers elected one of their sept to succeed him, in prejudice to the pretensions of his son who was obliged to vindicate his claim by force of arms. A dispute similar to this took place on the demise of the Earl of Thomond. But the alienation from government of the Earl of Tyrone was a cause of insurrection more important and much more serious in its consequences. When that nobleman returned home, after his late submission and the honours with which he had been invested, his sons John and Hugh expressed great displeasure; that, to their prejudice and the disgrace of their family his natural son had been created a baron. As



on this account, they were angry at Tyrone, they were still more dissatisfied with government. Under the influence of these impressions, they used all possible means to induce their father to reject Matthew from his favour, to renounce subjection to the English power and to return to his former consequence as an independent chieftain. Though Tyrone had sacrificed his independence to the necessity of his situation, the desire of it was exceedingly dear to his heart; guided by it's impulse and inclined to remove the displeasure of his sons, he determined to follow their advice. Intelligence of his design having reached the Deputy, he anticipated the Earl, seized him and his countess, and conveyed them to Dublin where he cast them into prison.

His son John was not intimidated by this unexpected misfortune. With his followers and the aid of a body of Scots, which at that time had made an incursion into Ulster, he attacked the Deputy whose force was joined to that collected by Matthew, and defeated him with the loss of two hundred men. Animated by this success, he kept together his followers and spread all around him the calamities of war.

We have seen, in the late reign, the misfortunes of the family of Kildare and the escape of Gerald, the only surviving branch of that family, from the persecuting resentment of Henry. This year, he was restored to a considerable part of his estate, and, two years after, was created Earl of Kildare and Baron of Offaly.

Adieu.

LET-

## LETTER LXXVII.

**T**O the grief of all those who wished well to the interests of their country and to the success of the reformation, Edward was cut off in the sixteenth year of his age; having sat upon the throne about seven years. Upon this event, the ambitious Northumberland exerted his endeavours to raise <sup>1553.</sup> his daughter-in-law, the Lady Jane Grey, to the crown. It was with the greatest difficulty that this excellent Lady had been prevailed with, to coincide with his wishes. She was proclaimed Queen in England and shortly after in this country.

BUT the hopes of Northumberland and his friends were speedily blasted. Mary ascended the throne. The English recognised her title, and the ministers of state, in this country, followed their example. This princess, born to be the scourge of the Protestant religion, was distinguished by the most intemperate and the most bigotted attachment to the principles of Popery. However, though those employed in administering the affairs of Ireland had been instruments in promoting the reformation, she permitted them to continue in office. But she resolved to recompense such as had suffered for their attachment to Popery. Of these, in particular, George Dowdal, late Primate of Armagh, was restored to his see and to that pre-eminence, in point of style and dignity, the deprivation of which had excited in him such bitterness of resentment. From policy, she thought it expedient to be moderate for some time. The Irish act of parliament recognising the King to be head of the church was not repealed. A licence only  
was



was granted to Roman Catholicks to exercise their religion, with freedom. The designs which she meditated made it necessary to secure the interest of the leading men in Ireland. With this view, young Kildare, already restored to the greatest part of his estate, was now restored to his honours. Charles Kavenah of Leinster was created Baron Balyan and permitted to retain his privileges as an Irish chieftain. O'Connor, long confined in England, regained his liberty and his country, but for this he was indebted to the filial piety of an amiable daughter, who had accompanied him in his captivity. Affected with grief, on account of her father's confinement, she employed her address and engaging manners so effectually with the queen as to procure his release.

THE design which Mary had formed with respect to the reformation in Ireland, now began to appear. Saint Ledger, the deputy, discovered himself, on the present occasion, to be a compleat courtier. In the former reign he supported the reformation, in the present reign, he servilely obeyed the commands of the Queen, and laboured to suppress the reformation. Dowdal co-operated with him as a zealous instrument in this cause. Brown and several other prelates, converts to the reformation, having married, were deprived, and Catholicks substituted in their place.

MARY now threw off every restraint with respect to her religious sentiments and the vindictive designs which they had inspired. She married Philip of Spain and admitted Cardinal Pole into England as legate from the Pope, who was so obliging as to  
transmit

transmit to her a bull, in confirmation of her authority over the kingdom of Ireland.

BLOODY, persecuting zeal erected it's standard with every circumstance of cruelty capable of inspiring the mind with horror. Those instances of severity in which the Protestants had enforced their tenets were repaid with multiplied vengeance. In England, great numbers, among whom were the celebrated Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, fell martyrs at the accursed stake to Popish tyranny and superstition. It was determined that Heresy should be extirpated in Ireland as well as in every other part of her Majesty's dominions. Saint Ledger, accused of having written in the former reign against transubstantiation, was recalled to England, tried for his offence, and obliged to retire from court. He was succeeded as deputy by Viscount Fitzwalters who brought with him from England twenty five thousand pounds to defray the expence of an expedition designed against the Scots who had made incursions into the Northern parts of Ireland for some time past.

In July, the Deputy marched against these invaders: They were vanquished in battle, with <sup>1556.</sup> the loss of more than two hundred slain, and a considerable number taken prisoners.

THOMAS Earl of Suffex was the next viceroy. In fifteen hundred and sixty seven, he convened a meeting of parliament. Religion was the first object which engaged their attention. A bull to be laid before this assembly, calculated to re-establish in Ireland the Catholic faith, had been transmitted from the Pope. Considering it as the dictates of sacred infallibility, which demanded profound reverence



rence from all the true sons of the church, he fell down upon his knees and read it to the lords and commons, who were bent down to the earth in the same humble posture. The whole realm was now to return to it's spiritual obedience to his Holiness. The prospect was joyful. Animated by a sentiment of pious affection, all present crouded to the cathedral where they expressed their gratitude in an act of devout thanksgiving. This tribute to Heaven being performed, the parliament proceeded to business.

AFTER declaring the legitimacy of the Queen, and her just title to the throne of these kingdoms, they revived all former acts in favour of Popery, repealed those friendly to the reformation; acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, and restored the lands which had been alienated and become the property of the crown, to their former proprietors. The territories of Leix and Offaly were formed into counties, to be governed by English law, and, in violence to the rights of the natives to whom they had hitherto belonged, to be disposed of in grants at the royal pleasure. The former was denominated the King's, and the latter the Queen's County.

EMIGRANTS from Scotland had been numerous, and, on some occasions, hostile to government. It was now declared to be high treason to invite them to Ireland, to entertain or intermarry with them without licence from the deputy.

You have seen, that by Poyning's Statute, no law could be enacted except those which, previous to the meeting of parliament, were transmitted by the deputy and council to England, and received the approbation

probation of his Majesty in council. As matters frequently occurred during the sitting of parliament not foreseen, and which required, that laws relating to them should, without delay, be passed, it was enacted by this parliament, that all such laws or reasons and considerations as seemed necessary after the meeting of parliament, and for which no provision had been made, should be transmitted by the deputy and council, in the same manner as those which had been sent over to England, before it was convened. This amendment of Poyning's Law was very useful, but to it was added an explanatory clause which rendered it more obnoxious. According to Poyning's Act, his Majesty and council might reject, but could not alter any of the proposed laws or considerations transmitted. This statute of Philip and Mary, by a forced construction of the original act, empowered them not only to reject, but to alter them at pleasure.

THE exclusive power of deliberating, in the deputy, in his majesty, and in the councils of both kingdoms, continued until the time of James the First, when our parliament assumed a privilege of being humble remembrancers to the privy council, of what bills were proper to be transmitted to England. Hence arose the practice of framing in either house, what are called Heads of Bills, which being once read, were carried up to the privy council, from thence transmitted to England, in the form of a bill where it was laid before the attorney general, and then before his majesty and privy council. If it passed through these different ordeals, where it might be suppressed or altered, at pleasure, it came back to the house of parliament, in which it originated,



ated, from whence it passed to the other house, and from that to the lord lieutenant, whose consent, in the name of the king, stamped it with the authority of law.

BUT the power of neither of the houses extended farther than to a simple acceptance or rejection and that in the very form in which the bill returned from England. They could alter it in no respect whatever.

PRIOR to the time of James the First, the council were constituted sole judges with respect to the bills to be transmitted. This power they were determined not to relinquish. Even from the time that bills originated in parliament, as if they had still been vested with the same authority, they altered or suppressed them. For this practice, the Law of Poynings made no provision, it was therefore a flagrant abuse of it.

THAT the privy council, consisting of a small number, incompetent to determine in such matters, and influenced by their dependence on government, should, in this manner, be permitted to interfere betwixt majesty and the decisions of both houses of parliament, was disgraceful, an affront to the dignity of the nation, unconstitutional, and highly injurious to the general interest.

As the reformation in this country had made inconsiderable progress, religion soon assumed it's usual form. Hence, none of these inquisitorial proceedings stain the annals of Ireland, of which Mary was the cause in England, to the everlasting reproach of her memory. Though she had here little opposition to contend with, it is said, she had issued orders of a sanguinary complexion, but which, from the mistake  
of

of the person with whom they were entrusted, were fortunately, not executed. In consequence of Ireland being a stranger to the horrid scenes acted in England, it became an asylum to a number of Protestants, who fled hither, to avoid the rage of persecution. To the unspeakable joy of the humane, more especially of those who professed the Protestant religion, Mary died the seventeenth of November, fifteen hundred and fifty eighth. She sat upon the throne six years. During her reign, Ireland was, as usual, much troubled with intestine commotions.

ONE of these was productive of an act of barbarity in the English towards the natives, shocking to humanity. The sept of the Cavenahs had spread themselves through the Southern parts of the county of Dublin, where they committed hostilities. These wretched people were attacked by the citizens of Dublin and many of them killed. The rest, to the number of an hundred and forty, shut themselves up in Powerscourt fortrefs. They were compelled to surrender, carried to Dublin, where seventy four of them were put to death by the hands of the common executioner.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R LXXVIII.

**E**LIZABETH, sister and successor of Mary, was crowned in the year fifteen hundred and fifty eight. Being very cautious in the avowal of her religious sentiments, her title was recognised in both kingdoms. Suffex was continued Deputy of Ireland. On his arrival in this kingdom, he was conducted to the Cathedral, where the litany, for the first time



time was fung in England. Commotions were very prevalent, in Leinster, in Munster and Connaught; but those with which the North was threatened were still more alarming to government. Afflicted by the dissentions of his family and the gloomy aspect of his affairs, Tyrone had died in confinement. John, his eldest son, was now acknowledged to be the head of the sept, the territories belonging to which were very extensive. The Deputy had compelled him to submit. Now, he had no alternative but either to permit Matthew to be vested with the earldom and possessions of Tyrone, or openly to renounce his allegiance and support his pretensions by the sword. He preferred the latter. The Deputy was absent in England. Sir Henry Sydney, whom he had left in his place, desirous of being thoroughly acquainted with the intentions of O'Nial, a report of which had reached him, desired a conference with him at Dundalk. O'Nial refused, but, his preparations, probably, not being finished and unwilling to break yet with government, he requested Sydney to pay him a visit and be sponsor to a child lately born to him. Sir Henry, from political motives, thought it best to accept of this extraordinary invitation. In course of conversation, Sydney began to expostulate with John upon the opposition which it was supposed he designed to give to the English government. The chieftain with candour, with much good sense and spirit, justified his intentions. He said that his father's surrender was void, as, according to the laws of tanistry, all his claims to the estate terminated with his life; that even the letters patent, by English law, were void, because no inquisition had been nor could be taken as the lands of Tyrone had not

been made shire ground; that it would be dishonourable that Matthew, illegitimate, for many years, the reputed son of a smith should be intruded into the honours and possessions of the house of O'Nial. Sydney was not insensible to the force of these arguments. Upon consulting the council, to let the matter rest where it was, appeared, for the present, most expedient.

As soon as Elizabeth was established on the throne she openly avowed her sentiments as a friend to the reformation, in the doctrines of which she had been educated. Warmly interested in it's success, she determined to overthrow the structure of Popery erected by her sister, and to spread the influence of the Protestant religion, through all her dominions, not only as it respected the spiritual supremacy of the crown but points of belief. Having taken the most effectual measures in England for this purpose, she gave instructions to her Irish Deputy to exert himself with vigour, in support of the same cause.

THE genius and spirit of the Gospel are unconnected with civil power. The kingdom of Christ is  
 1560. entirely of a spiritual nature, resting upon the conviction of the understanding and the unrestrained affections of the heart as it's only true and real foundation. However, after the example of former princes and that of every nation which adopted Christianity from the days of Constantine, the form of religion, now, to be established, was incorporated with the state and aided by the arm of civil authority. Sussex called a parliament, to which were summoned the representatives of ten counties, being six more than writs had been issued to, for a series of years. It was here enacted, that the spiritual jurisdiction



jurisdiction should be restored to the crown; that appeals to the Pope, the act of Philip and Mary concerning Heresy and all acts in favour of the Roman Catholick religion, should be repealed; that the Queen and her heirs might vest commissioners with a power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. That all who held offices under the crown should, on pain of forfeiture, take the oath of supremacy. An act also passed for uniformity of common prayer. All persons were enjoined to attend the service of the church, on the penalty of nine pence for every absence. In one of the acts, provision was made that where the ministers could not officiate in English they should be permitted to perform the service in Latin. This and other instances of a similar kind, which have been mentioned, strongly mark the weak state of the English interest, during these times, in this country.

A STATUTE was likewise enacted by which first fruits and the twentieth part of spirituals were restored to the crown.

THE warm opposition given to these measures by a number of the members, induced Suffex, after a short session, to dissolve the parliament.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXIX.

IT is remarkable that of nineteen prelates who were present in the late parliament, none of them refused to conform and relinquished their sees, the Bishops of Meath and Kildare excepted. But, throughout the nation, in general, a very different spirit prevailed. Discontents, on account of religion, were universal. The Queen was accused of Heresy. Cler-

gymen abandoned their parishes, which, from the want of Protestant ministers, remained vacant. Churches were not kept in repair, and little regard was paid to the late constitutions of parliament.

THE friends of the Catholick faith looked up to the Pope for support; they also expected assistance from Philip of Spain, a violent bigot to the Romish persuasion, and who was not more offended with Elizabeth on the score of religion than for the assistance she had given his revolted subjects of the province of Holland.

ENCOURAGED by the present discontents, as favourable to the views he had formed of establishing his independence in Ulster, O'Nial openly avowed his pretensions, collected his followers, led them to  
 1560. the field and committed depredations, even beyond the limits of the pale. Suffex, at the head of five hundred men, marched out to oppose him. But, by the interposition of Kildare, the friend of O'Nial, hostilities ceased, upon the terms that his complaints should be adjusted equitably and himself acknowledged dynast of his sept with all the rights belonging to that dignity, and also that if the Baron of Dungannon could not support his claim, he should be created Earl of Tyrone. Mean time, O'Nial swore allegiance to government, which he was bound to renew in the presence of the Queen. Accordingly, with a respectable guard compleatly accoutred and richly dressed in the manner of their country, he repaired to London and with artless simplicity told the story of the injustice with which he had been treated. Elizabeth heard him favourably and dismissed him with presents and with the hopes of her protection. By his conduct, on returning to Ireland,



land, he seemed to have a sense of this kind treatment, for he drove many of the Scots out of Ulster who, we have seen, had for some time harrassed it with their invasions and exerted himself to preserve the public peace.

AT this time Annaly was reduced into a shire called the county of Longford. Connaught was likewise divided into the counties of <sup>1562.</sup> Clare, Galway, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim. But intestine insurrections were still prevalent. The Earl of Clanricarde and Mac Outer were at variance. The Birnes, the Tools, the Cavanahs and other chieftains were in arms. Betwixt Ormond and Desmond, the latter of whom had lately lost in battle, three hundred men, disputes were violent. Upon this occasion, Desmond was wounded and taken prisoner. The men of Ormond employed in carrying him off the field most ungenerously insulted his misfortune, asking him with contempt, "Where is now the great Lord of Desmond?" "Where," replied he with a magnanimity truly admirable, "Where, but in his proper place, still on the necks of the Butlers."

SUSSEX being recalled, Arnold an English Knight, was appointed to succeed him, but, being unfit for the office, he was soon superseded and Sir Henry Sydney vested with the authority of viceroy. Sir Henry had filled that office with reputation. The times required such a governor. The violence done to their religious system had produced discontents in the minds of many, which were likely to continue.

A NUMBER of chieftains, as we have just mentioned, were at variance. With respect to O'Nial, whom nothing could satisfy short of absolute inde-

pendence, he was busily employed in making war-like preparations. "I have not," cried he, "forgotten the royal dignity of my ancestors. Ulster was theirs and shall be mine; by the sword they won it, and with the sword I will maintain it." Animated by these sentiments, he led his forces to Derry. Having provoked the garison, a skirmish ensued in which the governor and a number of O'Nial's men were slain. As he had made no attack upon the town, he complained that he had been injuriously treated, commenced hostilities; applied to Rome and Spain for aid, and exhorted several Irish lords to stand forth in support of the common cause. The Deputy having endeavoured, in vain, to persuade him to peace, adopted a scheme which he thought would effectually reduce him to obedience. O'Nial had driven the chieftain of Fermanagh, and Calvagh of Tyrone from their lands; these Sydney reinstated, and engaged them, with other chieftains offended at O'Nial, to submit to Elizabeth, and to commence hostilities against him.

O'NIAL was unable to contend with the united force of so many enemies. Repulsed and deserted by a number of his followers, he cast himself for protection on the Scots, who, notwithstanding the efforts made to expel them from the country, had gained and continued to possess settlements in Ulster. Either by treachery or in a private quarrel, he shortly after lost his life. Thus ended the exertions of this Northern chieftain to regain those privileges of which his family had been unjustly deprived. Animated by one of the noblest sentiments of the human heart, he encountered every danger and ran every risque in behalf of that liberty which had been transmitted



to him by his ancestors as a sacred inheritance, through the course of many generations.

THE death of O'Nial restored, at present, the province of Ulster to tranquility. Turlogh Lynogh, a branch of the same family, was appointed his successor from the persuasion that he was a man of a quiet temper who would prefer peace to a struggle for independence.

MANY parts of the kingdom being disturbed by disputes and insurrections, the Queen gave orders to Sydney to summon a parliament. It met in January fifteen hundred and sixty nine. A number of members determined to give every possible opposition to government. The legality of the returns were scrutinized and several laid aside as unconstitutional. Still, government had a majority. By law, none could be elected who were not resident; notwithstanding, several of that description were returned by the sheriffs. The opinion of the judges was taken upon the question of their legality. In shameful perversion of justice, they gave it in favour of the illegal returns. But the judges held their places during pleasure and were dependants on the crown.

By a law, Poynings' Statute was suspended in respect to the whole of the proceedings of this parliament, a measure warmly opposed by the minority, as giving a power to the Deputy and council dangerous to the state. To reconcile the minds of the country party to this measure, it was enacted, that no bill should be transmitted to England for the repeal of Poynings' Law, unless first agreed upon by a majority of the lords and commons. Several other laws passed, the principal of which were; that, in  
the

the place of coigne and livery, a subsidy of thirteen shillings and four pence for every plow land, should be granted for ten years; that five of the principal men of every tribe should answer for all the damages committed by any belonging to it; that certain forfeited districts should be vested in the crown; that John O'Nial should be attainted, the name abolished, and his lands in Ulster, a part in favour of Turlogh Lynogh excepted, forfeited to her Majesty; that all who chose might surrender their lands and receive them again from the crown as English tenures; that, to prevent improper persons from being admitted to benefices, as frequently had been the case, particularly in Munster and Connaught, the Deputy and his successors should, for ten years, present to benefices within the bounds of these provinces.

You have seen that Annally had been reduced into a shire and that Connaught was divided into counties; this now received the sanction of parliament. But in these, judges of assize were not appointed as had been done with respect to the other counties. In their place, two courts of presidency were instituted, one for Connaught, the other for Munster. In the former, Sir Edward Fitton, and in the latter, Sir John Perrot presided. The people of these provinces smarted under the severity of their government.

OF Ulster, which was forfeited, one half was vested in the crown, but it was not seized for the benefit of her Majesty, nor any profits received from it. Little was done here except changing the title. The officers of state were negligent of their duty; instead of taking pains to conciliate the affections of the natives they treated them

with



with injustice. In general, they were, as usual, much discontented. The change which had been made in religion continued to give them great dissatisfaction, which at this time was heightened by the Pope who excommunicated Elizabeth. This in their eye, placed her Herefy in a still more odious point of view.

Adieu.

### LETTER LXXX.

**T**HE dispute which had arisen betwixt the earls of Ormond and Desmond had, in the end, been referred to the Queen, who determined it in favour of the former and cast Desmond into prison. Provoked by this affront to his family and excited by other causes of discontent, James Fitzmaurice his brother took up arms against government, and prevailed with a number of chieftains, among whom was the peaceable Turlogh Lynogh, to espouse his cause. Not depending upon their aid as sufficient, he applied to the Pope and to the King of Spain for assistance. Alarmed by this formidable insurrection, the Deputy took every necessary step to oppose it, and after some vigorous exertions, in which he was much assisted by the attention and activity of Sir John Perrot, it was suppressed.

AN unsuccessful attempt had lately been made by Sir Thomas Smith to establish an English settlement in Ulster upon the forfeited lands. Not discouraged by this, Walter Devereugh Earl of Essex, a young man of a warm enterprising temper, highly in favour with the Queen, accompanied by a number of gentlemen of distinction, and by a body of forces, came  
over

over, for this purpose, in August fifteen hundred and seventy three. But he met with unfurmountable difficulties. Several chieftains, filled with indignation by this iniquitous attempt to drive them from their lands and habitations, formed a confederacy, and, by their repeated desultory attacks, harassed his men exceedingly. The principal adventurers became discouraged, deserted him and returned to their own country. After many unsuccessful efforts, he went back to England, from whence he returned to this country vested with the dignity of Earl Marshal. Again he endeavoured to accomplish his favourite scheme, but met with new disappointments. The difficulties he had to encounter were greatly aggravated by the opposition of his enemies, who, jealous of his interest with Elizabeth, were hostile to every thing which tended to promote his interest. He was forced to relinquish the undertaking. The same laudable spirit in the natives which roused them to the defence of their rights, in opposition to the views of the ambitious Essex, made Fitzwilliam, shortly before created Lord Deputy, tired of his office. He beseeched the Queen to recal him. She complied, and placed the reins of government, once more, in the hands of Sir Henry Sydney. Vested with ample powers, he landed the twelfth of September fifteen hundred and seventy five.

IMMEDIATELY upon his arrival, with six hundred horse and foot, he made a progress through several parts of the kingdom, received the submission of Turlogh Lynogh and other offenders, and happily quieted those insurrections which had so long disturbed the public peace. None of the insurgents gave him so much trouble as the sons of Lord Clanricarde,



carde, who, provoked by the severity of Sir Edward Fitton the president of Connaught, had risen in arms against government. He drove them to the mountains, seized several of the castles of <sup>1571.</sup> Clanricarde, took himself prisoner and conveyed him to Dublin, where he had been confined shortly before.

THIS year, types of the Irish character were first brought into Ireland by the Chancellor of Saint Patricks. It was ordered by government, that the book of common prayer should be printed in that language and a church set apart in the principal town of every diocese, where prayers, in the Irish tongue, should be read and a sermon preached to the common people. Whilst penal statutes were a disgrace to Christianity, this mode of making converts to the reformation was agreeable to the amiable, benevolent spirit of the Gospel, and was attended with the success it so well merited.

SIR John Perrot being removed from the presidency of Munster, he was succeeded by Sir William Drury, who, as governor of Berwick, had acquired considerable reputation. In discharging the duties of his office, he acquitted himself with vigour and activity. In a particular instance he gave much offence to the Earl of Desmond; Kerry a part of his territories, was a county palatine, and, of course, entitled to all the privileges of exempt jurisdiction. Hither, a number, to avoid the power of the President, fled for protection. Drury pursued them and exercised in Kerry the same authority as in any other district of the province. The Earl expostulated, upon this encroachment on his prerogative. But in vain. Desmond collected a number of his followers

to aid him in vindicating his rights. They were attacked by the President and routed; upon which he complained of his injuries to the Deputy. In particular, he accused Drury, of having imposed a tax by his own authority. The cause, in common with others of a similar nature supported by the inhabitants of the pale, was heard before the Deputy, and from his tribunal removed by appeal to England. The council, without paying any regard to justice, or to the principles of the constitution, determined it in favour of Drury. The tax, they said, concerned a customary fine, and depended on the Queen's prerogative. Upon this new and flagrant violation of their rights, the minds of the people were inflamed with resentment. Actuated by a spirit worthy of the cause in which they were engaged, they absolutely refused compliance. Government, determined to enforce the iniquitous imposition, and to inflict exemplary punishment on those who had been most active in opposing the measure, seized them, both here and in England, and cast them into prison. They were soon, however, released from confinement, and the matter compromised, Elizabeth having perceived that popular discontents had risen so high as to threaten government with alarming consequences. The haughty spirit of the Queen, who was more strongly attached to prerogative than to the privileges of her subjects, would, it is probable, have been more difficult to subdue, on the present occasion, had she not been threatened with danger from another quarter.

THOMAS Stukely, an English adventurer of enterprise and ambition being refused by Sydney a place which he had solicited, retired to the continent  
in



in disgust and applied to the Pope and Philip of Spain for a body of forces with which he vainly promised to conquer Ireland, in favour of the Marquis of Vincola a natural son of his Holiness. He succeeded in his application and distinguished by the Pope with a variety of pompous titles and vested with all the plenitude of power which had been so liberally granted to Henry the Second for the conquest of Ireland, embarked with eight hundred men. But, on his arrival at Portugal, being invited to serve under Sebastian who was going upon an expedition to Africa, he consented to assist him, upon condition that on their return, the King of Portugal should aid him in the execution of his design against Ireland. With Sebastian, Stukely and his men perished in Africa.

Farewell.

### L E T T E R LXXXI.

**O**F a nature, more serious in it's consequences than the scheme of invasion formed by Stukely, was that planned and executed by James Fitzmaurice, brother of the Earl of Desmond. Some time before, he had engaged in an insurrection against government. He still retained the same resentment to Elizabeth. Animated by this passion, he left Ireland and applied for aid to Philip of Spain who furnished him with a small number of men. With these and some fugitives who joined them, he landed at Smerwick in the county of Kerry. Upon his arrival, two brothers of the Earl of Desmond, Sir John Desmond and James Fitzmaurice with their followers, espoused his cause. He expected more powerful

powerful assistance and to procure it, made an incursion into the interior and more distant parts of the kingdom. In the county of Limerick, he was killed in a rencounter occasioned by a dispute which happened betwixt him and one of the De Burgos. In his place, Sir John put himself at the head of the invaders, who spread themselves through the country, resolving to stand upon the defensive, and, after the manner of the natives, take every opportunity of annoying the forces which might be sent to oppose them.

SIR William Drury, now deputy in the place of Sydney, drew together all the forces he could collect and led them against the Spaniards and  
 1579. their associates. The mode of operations adopted by the enemy rendered the business exceedingly difficult. He was not only harassed by desultory attacks, but lost a detachment of two hundred men. In the mean time, Sir John's forces were considerably increased. Having been in the field several weeks, fatigue and bad health obliged the Deputy to retire and leave the command of the troops to Sir Nicholas Malby. In a plain near Limerick, Sir Nicholas came up with the enemy who consisted of about two thousand men, engaged and after an obstinate battle entirely defeated them.

By letters found in the baggage, it appeared that the Earl of Desmond, whose conduct, for some time, had been suspicious, was engaged in the interest of the insurgents. He now threw off the mask and made an attack upon the English camp, which was unsuccessful. Attempts to persuade the Earl to peace having proved ineffectual, Malby was prepar-  
 ing



ing to force him to submission; but the Deputy died which put an end to his command.

SIR William Pelham, created lord justice by the council, prosecuted the war in Munster on the other hand. Desmond, having rejected new offers which were made to reconcile him to government in consequence of which he had been proclaimed a traytor, used every effort to procure the assistance of friends at home and abroad, but, by the unremitting exertions of Pelham, he was reduced to such straits as to be under the painful necessity of casting himself on the mercy of government. There was now no room for pardon. On her knees and with tears streaming from her eyes, his lady entreated in his behalf. In vain. Nothing would be accepted but unconditional submission. Desmond chose rather to encounter the utmost extremity of fortune.

Soon after, Arthur Lord Grey was made deputy of Ireland. A stranger to the country and to the manner of fighting used by the natives, of whom, with Englishmen in general, he entertained a high contempt, he thought nothing was easier than to put an end to the war. Experience soon convinced him of his folly. A body of Irish were posted in the vallies of Glendelough, from whence, they made continued incursions into the country all around. Grey ordered his men to dislodge them. They marched forward to execute the command. No enemy was to be seen. But, of a sudden, the Irish appeared and made repeated attacks upon them from the woods, until the Queen's troops were entirely destroyed. The Deputy, covered with dishonour, saw now the difficulty of the service in which he had engaged. Winter having left the  
coasts

coasts open which he had been appointed to protect, seven hundred Spaniards and Italians landed at Smerwick with money, arms and amunition for five thousand men. The Deputy having joined his forces to those of Ormond, who commanded in Munster, attacked the foreigners in a fort begun by their countrymen, and which they were endeavouring to finish. The garrison, no longer able to defend themselves, proposed to surrender, on terms which were refused them. Foreseeing the dreadful consequences of their situation, they cried out, Mercy! Mercy! The conquerors, steeled against every sentiment of compassion, put them all to the sword, the Italian general and a few officers excepted, who were made prisoners. This detestable act was universally condemned: the very recital of it thrills the heart with horror.

To assist in re-establishing the public tranquility, Ormond was made president of Munster; Zouch an English officer of reputation, had consigned to his care the County of Kerry, and the celebrated Sir Walter Raleigh, some time before sent to Ireland in the service of the Queen, had the principal command in Cork.

By the activity and distinguished valour of these officers, the force of the enemy was considerably weakened, which would not have been so formidable had it not been strenghtened by the accession of several of the nobility of the pale, among whom was Lord Baltinglas, the Lord of Lixnaw and his son, with others of consequence. The two latter were reduced to subjection and some others of leading influence were taken prisoners. Sir John Desmond fell a victim to the activity of Zouch. The unfortu-



nate Earl of Desmond was reduced to the situation of a wretched outlaw, destitute of friends and protection. Having passed through a variety of distressing vicissitudes, he was obliged, in the depth of Winter, to fly for safety to a wood near Kilmallock. Some Englishmen, from a neighbouring garrison, being informed of his retreat, endeavoured to surprise him. He discovered his danger, fled with his lady from the wretched hut where he had lain concealed, plunged to the neck into a river which ran through the wood, and continued in this deplorable situation until his pursuers retired. Upon this occasion, his servants were killed and his little property carried off. The miserable fugitive wandered about, in extreme necessity, until the following Autumn, when, having driven off some cattle for support, the woman to whom they belonged complained to a brother of the loss she had sustained. Having obtained a few soldiers from a neighbouring fort, he pursued the cattle to night when they were stopped in their progress by a wood. About midnight, having perceived a fire at some distance they advanced towards it and arrived at a cabin where they discovered an old man alone in a hut sitting by the side of the fire. One of them drew his sword and severely wounded him in the arm, upon which he cried out in anguish, "Save me, for I am the Earl of Desmond." His head was severed from his shoulder and sent to London, where it was exhibited as a public spectacle.

Of all the natives, none had been more powerful than Desmond, or possessed, in a higher degree, that bold spirit of independence which they gloried in as their highest honor and for which, upon all occasions, they were ready to sacrifice their lives, their

property, every thing dearest to them upon Earth. With him, the name and family of Desmond were utterly extinguished and his large possessions forfeited to the crown.

THAT Elizabeth and her ministers wished for Irish forfeitures even at the expence of justice and honor, is beyond all doubt, for in the course of the present insurrection, Ormond offered by proclamation, life and lands to those of Desmond's associates who would surrender. Induced by this encouragement, a number of them laid down their arms. This highly offended the Queen, who, under her own hand, gave orders to Ormond to seize those whom he had pardoned. Ormond in a letter to the Lord Treasurer, had the spirit and the justice to reply, that he would never use treachery to any man; that the instructions he had received, were injurious to the honor of the Queen and to his own and that whoever gave the advice was much fitter to execute it than he was.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXXII.

WITH the fall of Desmond, those disturbances which had created so much uneasiness to government, ceased for the present. Had a system of policy, founded on just and humane principles, been now adopted by the English ministry, a permanent tranquility might have been established in Ireland. But the views of England were, rather, to foment dissensions in this ill fated country, lest by it's regaining internal strength, the nation should throw off



off the British yoke, and regain it's original independence.

GREY, who, on many occasions, provoked the natives by his severity, had, at his own desire, 1584. been recalled and the government of Ireland, under the title of lords justices, committed to the Archbishop of Dublin and Sir Henry Wallop. Having presided in the administration a short time, they were succeeded by Sir John Perrot, who, before had held that office, the duties of which he discharged in a manner very conducive to the interest of the crown. He began his government with a declaration of indemnity to all concerned in the late insurrection. To induce the natives and those who were called degenerate English to submit to English law, he made a progress through the province of Connaught where he corrected some disorders and, appointed sheriffs, for the first time, to the counties of Clare, Galway, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim. Whilst engaged in this business, he was called into Ulster by an account that a thousand Scots had invaded the Northern coasts of that province, in aid of their countrymen, who had probably formed a design of extending their power under the command of Surleboy one of their principal chieftains. Upon his arrival in the North with a body of forces, the Scots disappeared. His expedition there, on the present occasion, and another which he made to Ulster, a short time after, were not unprofitable to government. He received the submission of several chieftains and amongst the rest, that of Turlogh Lynogh whom Desmond had prevailed with to renounce his allegiance to Elizabeth. A number acquiesced in those forms which were necessary to the holding

holding of their lands, in future, as English tenures. Besides, he added to the counties already formed, those of Cavan, Fermanagh, Donegal, Coleraine, Tyrone, Monaghan and Armagh appointing sheriffs and other officers necessary to the regular administration of justice. He prevailed also that in these parts, provision should be made, by assessment, for the maintenance of eleven hundred men.

IN April fifteen hundred and eighty five, a parliament was assembled at Dublin. In the upper house, there were present twenty four spiritual and twenty five temporal lords. The lower house consisted of only seven members for counties and twenty seven for boroughs and cities. The first part of the business was a motion from the court party for a suspension of Poyning's Law, which was negatived by the opposite party, who were jealous of the designs of government, particularly with respect to the imposition of taxes. The wishes of government being defeated in relation to some of the transmitted bills, the Deputy was offended and prorogued the parliament.

HE was again called to the North by another invasion of the Scots. Being defeated by Captain Stafford, one of his officers, the invaders passed the Ban, retreated from place to place until they approached Strabane, which, it was supposed, they had a design to attack. To save the town, the English army marched all night, came up with them, and, in a second engagement put them to the rout.

THE Deputy now turned his attention to the province of Connaught. Sir Richard Bingham the president and other commissioners were empowered to make a composition with that province, by which,



in place of former exactions, they agreed to pay ten shillings yearly for every quarter of land containing a hundred and twenty acres, and also to furnish a certain number of soldiers for the service of government. By the same commission it was likewise agreed, that the Irish captainships, titles and the laws of tanistry and gavelkind should be abolished in Connaught and that the lands of that province should be held by patent from the crown as English tenures.

Farewell.

### LETTER LXXXIII.

**T**HE principal act of the parliament which met after the prorogation, was to attain as guilty of high treason, the Earl of Desmond and about a hundred and forty of his adherents.

ELIZABETH had been very solicitous to establish an English colony in Munster. The principal obstacle being now removed, she proceeded with that design. To this end, she gave grants in this province to a number of English gentlemen of rank upon terms calculated for the security of the settlement. It was intended that the colony should be quite distinct, composed entirely of adventurers from England and that each tenant should not be permitted to hold more than the exact portion of land assigned him. But the conditions were eluded. The same person was suffered to hold different denominations of land; English leases were given to others. Agents ill qualified to conduct the business were appointed, who neither did justice to their employers nor to the natives. Besides, the colony was not sufficiently protected by government. The affairs of this set-

tlement would, in all probability, have been better conducted, had not the Deputy, by the strictness of his administration created to himself many powerful enemies, who, some time before, endeavoured to remove him from the government by criminating him to the Queen. But though they failed in this attempt, yet they had influence enough to prevent his name from being inserted among the commissioners appointed to superintend the settlement of Munster.

IN Connaught, Sir Richard Bingham and the officers under him, instead of conciliating by gentleness the affections of the natives, executed English law in such a manner as to render it the object of their aversion. To see the inhabitants pillaged, to be witness to a haughty and insolent parade of military power, to behold the administration of justice accompanied with strong characters of oppression, roused, in particular, the free and indignant spirit of the De Burgos. They flew to arms. Bingham subdued the insurrection and treated those concerned in it with the same unfeeling rigour which was the cause of it. The Deputy exhorted him to act with more gentleness, but he paid no regard to the admonition. Provoked by his behaviour, Perrot compelled him to accept of the submission of the De Burgos. They had recourse again to arms, and were reduced by the President to the brink of ruin when two thousand Scots came to their assistance, who supported for a while their declining cause, but Bingham, surpris'd their camp and by a compleat victory suppressed the insurrection.

THE same inhuman conduct towards the natives, for which Bingham was so remarkable, distinguished the officers of government in the province of Ulster.

This



This excited in the breasts of the Irish lords warm resentment and a passionate recollection of their lost independence.

WE have seen that Matthew, Baron of Dungan-  
non, was a favourite of government. This attached  
his son Hugh to Elizabeth. His manners were po-  
lished, in consequence of his residence in the English  
court and of the advantages he had enjoyed of a li-  
beral education. In the service of the Queen, he  
had given proofs that he was well qualified for dis-  
charging with propriety the duties of a military life.  
Thus distinguished and by the help of an artful ad-  
dress, he so recommended himself to Elizabeth and  
to the Deputy of Ireland that he was created Earl of  
Tyrone, and received a grant of the whole  
of that county free of chief rent, upon con- 1587.  
dition that he would make sufficient provision for  
Turlogh and for the sons of John; that he would  
disclaim all title to the rest of Ulster and abolish the  
name of O'Nial for ever.

HAVING thus obtained the gratification of his  
wishes, he returned to Ireland, took possession of the  
earldom and his estate, and, with views which he  
some time after disclosed, used every means which  
political cunning could devise to establish his power  
and to encrease his consequence. Convinced that  
the distinguishing proofs he had received of royal fa-  
vour would engage him to support and extend the  
interests of government, the Deputy permitted him  
to keep always under his command six companies of  
foot; these he changed, in succession for others, until  
he had a considerable number of followers trained to  
the use of arms. He gradually extended his power  
over the neighbouring chieftains, made peace with  
the

the sept of the O'Caahans, with whom he had been at variance, and engaged in his interest the Scots who had settled in his neighbourhood.

In the mean time, O'Donnel of Tirconnel, having cast off his allegiance, engaged the attention of government. Not being provided in forces to reduce him, the Deputy accomplished the point by a piece of finesse dishonorable to his character. He loaded a ship with Spanish wines and as a vessel of that nation sent it to the coast of Tirconnel. The eldest son of O'Donnel and two companions, by invitation, went on board and being made drunk, were carried to Dublin and secured as hostages for the future good behaviour of O'Donnel. Of a different complexion from this was the general tenour of Perrot's conduct, in the office of viceroy. He loved justice and was particularly careful to restrain the English grandees from disturbing the peace of government, by their avarice or ambition. This created him enemies, who, as has been mentioned, endeavoured to hurt him in the opinion of the Queen. Tired by their continued opposition, he beseeched her Majesty to permit him by relinquishing his office, to free himself from censures and difficulties which he was no longer able to bear. She complied and appointed Sir William Fitzwilliam deputy, in his place.

THE courage of the British navy, with the assistance of a storm having entirely defeated the celebrated Armada of Spain, fitted out at an immense expense for the destruction of England, of the ships that escaped, seventeen, by tempestuous weather, were forced upon the coast of Ireland. The intercourse of the Spaniards with the natives, occasioned  
by



by this accident, tended to encrease their discontents against government and to prepare their minds for the approaching insurrection.

To assist the Irish, stores and money had been conveyed to Ulster from Spain. The Deputy having marched there with a detachment, in order to seize them, and, after a strict search, being able to make no discovery, in a fit of chagrin, he seized, upon mere suspicion, and carried as prisoner to Dublin, Owen Mac Toole, father-in-law to the Earl of Tyrone, and Sir John O'Dogherty. This act of violence against men who had deserved well of government, was not only unjust, but highly impolitic. Fitzwilliam, in another stretch of power, was still more reprehensible. M'Mahon, an Irish chieftain of Monaghan, who had submitted to government and held his land as an English tenure, at this time died. As he had no children, the Deputy had promised that his brother Hugh should be put in possession of his lands. But instead of fulfilling his engagement, for an offence quite agreeable to the Irish customs, and committed before the laws of England had been introduced into his country, this unfortunate chieftain was tried and executed.

Adieu.

#### L E T T E R LXXXIV.

**I**T would appear, that Hugh had scarcely been created Earl of Tyrone when he formed the resolution of becoming an independent prince. The various means which he used to encrease his power and consequence had an immediate reference to this design. Government began to suspect his intention; but

but his plan was not yet ripe for execution, therefore, to remove all suspicion, he went to England, renewed his allegiance and gave sureties for his good conduct. Accused some time after by the sons of John O'Nial, with whom he was at variance, of a traiterous correspondence with the Spaniards, he had artifice to elude the force of the charge and to preserve the favourable opinion of the Queen.

EVERY day, the people became more discontented with government and more prepared to assist him in the execution of his scheme. The proceedings of the Deputy were marked with rapacity, with violence and indiscretion, and, as we have observed, English law was administered, with a degree of rigour, very prejudicial to their rights.

ALL the natives were disgusted, but this circumstance, particularly, marks the sentiments of those in Fermanagh. It was proposed to introduce a sheriff into that county. "He shall be welcome," says Macguire, one of their principal chieftains, "but tell me his eric, that if the people cut off his head, I may be prepared to levy it."

THE heart is filled with indignation by an account of the injustice and inhumanity practised on the Irish, related by an officer in the Queen's service. He acquaints us, that those placed in authority would draw together, perhaps three or four hundred of the unsuspecting country people, under pretence of doing them service, when soldiers would be ordered to make a sudden attack upon them and cut them off. The same author likewise asserts, that if a man had done wrong, submitted and received pardon; upon being charged with a subsequent offence, though he would voluntarily appear before



before a public session to answer to the accusation, he would, without being admitted to tryal, be executed for his former offence.

WHATEVER injustice and want of policy government discovered with respect to the natives, it's attention was now directed to an object of real consequence to the kingdom. There was a time when Ireland abounded in seminaries of learning; but, from causes already mentioned, these had been almost entirely abolished and a long night of darkness succeeded. The accounts which are given of the ignorance that prevailed in this country, even among the clergy, for several centuries prior to the present period, are quite affecting. In such circumstances, neither the reformation, nor any other valuable improvement could succeed.

IN the year thirteen hundred and eleven, the Pope had issued a bull to the Archbishop of Dublin, for the purpose of engaging him to found an university in that city. This and several efforts of the same kind proved unsuccessful, in particular, one made during the administration of Sir John Perrot, which was opposed by Loftus Archbishop of Dublin, because he considered the scheme, then formed, for the support of the intended college, to be prejudicial to his interest. A scheme being now proposed, which did not interfere with his interest, to make amends for his former opposition, the Archbishop patronized it, and resolved to give it all the assistance in his power. By his influence, the monastery of All-Hallows, with the lands belonging to it, were granted for this purpose and a royal charter obtained. A college was erected in consequence, by the title of The College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity,

Trinity, of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin. It consisted of a provost and three fellows in the name of more, and of three scholars in the name of more. The fellows were to hold their office seven years, with a privilege of electing the provost, under the inspection of the archbishop of Dublin, the bishop of Meath, the vice treasurer, the treasurer at war, the chief justice and the Mayor of Dublin as visitors. The circumstances of the kingdom were unfavourable to this infant seminary, but the Queen took it under her protection and gave it such encouragement as laid a foundation for the prosperous state at which it afterwards arrived.

Farewell.

#### L E T T E R LXXXV.

**B**Y this time, Sir Henry Bagnel, president of Ulster, having penetrated the views of Tyrone, impeached him as guilty of treason. Without taking any notice of his answer to the charge, the Deputy transmitted it to the Queen. He had the address to place his conduct in so favourable a light to the English council, that instead of condemning him, their resentment fell upon his accusers. Tyrone, to continue the delusion, joined his forces to those of Bagnel, who was employed in composing some disturbances which had arisen in Connaught.

IN that province, affairs began to wear an unpleasing aspect. The fortress of Baleek was in possession of the chieftain O'Donnel, who having collected a considerable number of partizans, had on more occasions than one, defeated the Queen's troops. By his activity, he increased the consequence of one of his



his associates, a branch of the family of De Burgo, now distinguished by the title of the Mac William. Unprovided in forces sufficient to support government, the President was obliged to retire and apply for assistance to the Deputy. Fitzwilliam, immediately upon this, set off in person, at the head of a body of troops, and proceeded to Enniskillen, to which the Irish had laid siege, after having routed a party of horse and six hundred foot which had attempted to oppose their progress. The Deputy relieved the town. He was now succeeded in the government by Sir William Russell, youngest son of Francis Earl of Bedford.

TYRONE, finding it absolutely necessary to his design to proceed immediately to action, relinquished the title of Tyrone, assumed that of O'Nial, attacked a fort which the English had built at Black Water, took it and drove out the garrison. He endeavoured to strengthen his cause at home and applied to Spain for assistance. It was necessary that he should exert himself to the utmost, as Sir John Norris with the title of lord general had been sent to Ireland to strengthen the forces of the Queen with three thousand men. Elizabeth foresaw <sup>1595.</sup> the danger and the difficulties of the war in which she was about to engage and wished to settle the dispute, amicably. A conference was held in which it appeared, on the one hand, that Tyrone had been first deceitful and afterwards violent in his proceedings against government, and on the other, that the conduct of government, in several instances, even by their own confession, could not be justified. This attempt to prevent hostilities did not succeed.

ULSTER was now in arms; Connaught, as you have

have seen, had commenced hostilities, and Munster caught the same spirit. Even in Leinster, there was little prospect that the public tranquility would be long preserved. Sir John Norris was exceedingly perplexed. His army, from envy in the Deputy, were ill supplied with provisions. They were less able to bear fatigue than the Irish and harrassed by their desultory manner of fighting. To these difficulties was added a conviction, that he had engaged in a bad cause; But, sacrificing his private opinion either to a regard for his own interest or to a principle of honor, he determined, in spite of every hardship, to persevere. Agreeably to this resolution, he led his army into Ulster. Tyrone afraid to face him in the open field, burned Dungannon, wasted the country all around, and then retired into fastnesses inaccessible to the enemy. The English army was exposed to new distresses. Want of subsistence obliged a part of it to retreat to Dublin. From the same cause, during the course of the ensuing Winter, the insurgents laboured under great difficulties. Compelled by necessity, Tyrone made advances towards an accommodation. Norris being inclined to interpose in his behalf, and the Queen heartily tired of the war, a second conference between the opposite parties took place at Dundalk. In the humblest manner, Tyrone expressed his sorrow for having incurred the displeasure of government, engaged to lay down his arms, to pay a fine and give hostages for his dutiful and loyal behaviour in future. In these professions, several of the leading chieftains concurred. They were accepted, on the part of Elizabeth, and all who submitted received the pardon of their past offences.

1596.



HOPES were entertained that this pacification would have put an end to the calamities of war; but they were delusive,

INTELLIGENCE was received, that three vessels from Spain had arrived on the Northern coast with ammunition, with assurances to the natives of farther assistance, and with exhortations to persist in the cause in which they had engaged. Filled, by this unexpected encouragement, with sanguine expectations of success, the Irish chieftains, paying no regard to their late engagements, as being extorted from them by necessity, renewed hostilities against government. Their first military operations were directed against Armagh, which was soon obliged to surrender. They next endeavoured to surprize the castle of Carlingford, and, in particular, used their best endeavours to favour the cause of the disaffected Irish who were in arms in Leinster.

HOWEVER extraordinary it may appear after the late fruitless negociation, an accommodation was once more proposed by Elizabeth, and commissioners appointed for that purpose. It had no other effect than to afford Tyrone a new opportunity of disciplining his men, of dispersing his emissaries in order to encrease the number of his partizans, and of taking such other measures as seemed to him most conducive to the success of his cause. The English ministry, unreasonable in their expectations, and ignorant of the difficulties with which Sir John Norris had to struggle, complained of his want of success, and committed to Lord Burgh, vested with the dignity of viceroy, the civil administration, and the prosecution of the war. The sensibility of Norris  
could

could not bear this harsh and ungrateful treatment. He died shortly after of a broken heart.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXXVI.

**B**URGH, reinforced by the followers of Kildare, by Lord Trimblestown and several other chieftains, who espoused the side of government and engaged personally in the service, determined to prosecute the war with vigour. On the other hand, Tyrone laid every scheme, and used every effort to ensure success to the cause, in defence of which he had taken up arms. His success, at first, was flattering. With half the number, Tirrol, one of his officers, defeated and made prisoner a son of Lord Trimblestown who had attacked him in Leinster with a thousand men. In the next operation, victory declared on the other side. The Deputy, having led his forces to the North, attacked and carried the entrenchments of Tyrone, and, immediately after, took the fort at Black Water. He died, and was succeeded in the command of the army by Kildare who did not long survive him.

THE Archbishop of Dublin, the Lord Chancellor and Sir Robert Gardiner, chief justice, were now appointed to conduct the civil administration, and the Earl of Ormond, with the title of lord lieutenant of the army, to command the troops. How far the insurrection by this time extended, may be judged from a declaration of the council, who gave it under their hands, "That it was an universal Irish rebellion to shake off all English government."

As



As the danger encreased, Elizabeth was more anxious to re-establish peace by an accommodation. Tyrone, to save his own immediate interest, coincided with her desires so far as to agree upon a cessation of hostilities for eight weeks. He <sup>1598.</sup> was probably induced to this from the hope that before the truce expired he would receive succours from Spain. Being disappointed, at the end of the truce, he laid siege to the fort of Black Water. Bagnal advanced to relieve it. Within three miles of the fort, he came up with the enemy whom he engaged, but had the misfortune to lose his life, most of his baggage, artillery and colours with near two thousand men. The surrender of the fort to the Irish was the immediate fruit of this important victory. But the advantages derived from it to the natives were of much greater consequence. It diffused spirit and confidence into the minds of all disaffected to government and determined numbers, who had not yet taken up arms, to embark in the common cause. In Connaught all were united in support of it. In Ulster and Leinster it received a considerable addition of strength. In Munster, James Fitzthomas a Geraldine, was distinguished by the natives with the title of Earl of Desmond, and, under the command of Tyrone, placed at the head of the insurgents. The President of the province found himself so pressed by the enemy, that he was obliged to retire to Cork. Flushed with success and engaged in a cause which called forth into action the most violent passions, the disorders committed by the insurgents may easily be conceived. In this respect, they had the conduct of the English for an example who now suffered in their turn and had the mortification to

see their affairs, almost every where, reduced to a very unpromising condition.

ELIZABETH, exceedingly vexed and offended at Ormond for not conducting the military operations in person, displaced him and appointed Sir Richard Bingham commander in chief. In a short time, Bingham died. Two thousand men which he had brought with him from England and a hundred horse were placed under the command of Sir Samuel Bagnal, who, in consequence of the defeat at Black Water, being incapable of doing any service in Ulster, retired to Leinster in aid of the Queen's forces who required his assistance in that province.

To extricate the affairs of government from the pressure which threatened them with destruction, Robert Devereux Earl of Essex, the Queen's particular favourite, a distinguished soldier and passionately fond of military glory, was created Deputy of Ireland and sent over with a larger force and vested with more extensive powers than had ever been committed to a viceroy. He had a commission for disposing of the lands of the insurgents, for executing martial law, and for placing and displacing all officers, at pleasure. He had an army of twenty thousand foot and thirteen hundred horse and a military chest well provided with money to pay them. Essex found even this force to be unequal to that of the enemy whose troops were better disciplined and more patient of fatigue.

INSTEAD of being intimidated, the natives were animated with zeal in defence of their religion and liberty, in proportion to the vigorous exertions made use of by Elizabeth for reducing them to obedience.



THE English General having published an offer of pardon to those who would return to their allegiance, but which was not accepted by a single individual, proceeded with his military operations. His first step was very improper and in direct opposition to his instructions. The insurgents of Ulster being most powerful, he had been ordered to make them the first and principal object of his attention. Instead of this, influenced by the selfish advice of certain of the privy councillors whose property lay in the South and which they wished should be protected, he led his troops into Munster. Here, he could do nothing effectual against the enemy, who, avoiding an open action, in which only he could have a superiority, attacked him from their retreats, hung, for days together, upon the rear of his army, which was considerably diminished and exposed to pressing difficulties.

MEAN while, Sir Henry Harrington, whom he had left in the Glinns with six hundred men, was attacked by the O'Birnes and defeated.

Farewell.

## L E T T E R LXXXVII.

**T**YRONE had not been inattentive to his interest. Having received amunition from Spain, seized particular passes necessary to his security and received into pay a number of Scottish forces, he took possession of an advantageous situation in the neighbourhood of Newry which he fortified by strong entrenchments and there determined to await the approach of Essex. The Earl had now returned to Dublin. By this time, he was acquainted with the

number, with the strength and with the military skill of the insurgents and foresaw the difficulty of reducing them to obedience, by open force. Impressed by this idea, he had written to the Queen and given it as his advice, that to guard the Irish coasts to prevent the enemy from receiving foreign aid, to waste their country, to destroy their provisions, and thus gradually consume their strength, was, though more tedious, the sure and effectual method of compelling them to return to their allegiance. Elizabeth was chagrined, rejected the advice, and enjoined him to march directly against Tyrone. Even now, instead of obeying, he marched into Leinster against the O'Moores and O'Connors. In this expedition, equally unfortunate with that into Munster, he so diminished his army, that he was obliged to write to England for a supply of a thousand men. He was equally unsuccessful in an attempt which he made to call the attention of Tyrone towards Baleek. There, fifteen hundred men detached under the command of Sir Conyers Clifford being attacked to disadvantage by the chieftain O'Rourk, were defeated, and, had they not been relieved by a body of horse which fortunately came up to their assistance, would have been entirely destroyed.

At last, Essex resolved upon an expedition to the North, but, on reviewing his troops, he found that he could lead there no more than thirteen hundred foot and three hundred horse. With this inconsiderable force, he set forwards and reached the borders of Ulster about the middle of September. To engage the enemy with such inferior numbers might have been fatal; he therefore parlyed with Tyrone and concluded a truce of six weeks, to be renewed

for



for a like space until the first of May, no party to commence hostilities without fourteen days notice. By this step, Essex still more highly provoked Elizabeth who expressed her resentment in a letter to him on the occasion in very warm terms. In confidence that by a personal interview he would be able to revive that affection with which the Queen had formerly treated him, he set off immediately for London, not only without permission, but in express contradiction to her order. To guard against the advantage which his enemies, of whom he had many, would take of this rash step, by making an impression unfavourable to him on the mind of her Majesty, immediately on his arrival, he hastened to her apartment, cast himself on his knees and endeavoured to disarm her resentment. Surprised by the unexpected appearance of her favourite which prevented reflexion and excited a sudden emotion of that regard which he had long experienced, she received him graciously. The comfortable hopes with which this reception inspired him were transient. With recollection, the displeasure of Elizabeth returned. She confined Essex to his apartments and then committed him to the Tower. Having regained his liberty he was hurried by the impetuosity of his temper into an act of open rebellion, for which he was publickly executed.

Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

**T**HE efforts of the most powerful and best appointed army ever employed in attempting to establish the English interest in this country, had been defeated. A recruit of money and amunition

was sent to the insurgents from Spain with assurances that a number of troops, in aid of their successful exertions, would immediately follow. These favourable circumstances inspired them with the confident hope that the period, when they should be fully restored to their civil and religious rights, was now arrived.

1599. **FLATTERED** by the high compliment of a phoenix' consecrated plume sent him by the Pope, and by other distinguished marks of his favour, Tyrone openly avowed himself the champion of the Catholic church and addressed himself, in a particular manner, to the natives, to use every effort in behalf of their civil privileges, and more especially in support of the religion of their ancestors. Having given notice that he would break the truce, at the head of two thousand five hundred horse, he proceeded to Munster where he used every possible method to excite the natives to insurrection, to encourage and to unite his friends and to intimidate those who would not engage in his cause.

**ORMOND**, who, on the departure of Essex, had been reinstated in the office of lord lieutenant of the army, had collected a number of forces and attempted to intercept Tyrone, on his return from Munster, but, by his vigilance and activity, he escaped the snare that was laid for him and got safe back again to the North.

**SIR John Norris**, president of Munster, having been killed in a skirmish with the natives, Sir George Carew, an active officer of experience, well acquainted with the mode of conducting military operations in Ireland, was appointed to succeed him. His instructions from government will give us an



idea of the powers with which the president of a province was invested. Except in case of necessity, he was not to obstruct but to aid by his authority the course of common law. Without evident cause, he was not to interrupt the just liberties and franchises of the people. Assisted by a council, he was to try and determine causes which belonged to criminal jurisdiction. He was to execute martial law, to prosecute rebels to the utmost extremity, to determine every thing relating to conspiracies and to forfeitures, and to exercise authority, with respect to all laws, proclamations and ordinances of the realm. The powers of this office, those in particular of dispensing with law and of interfering with the liberties of the subject, were altogether inconsistent with a free constitution.

In the Spring, Ormond invited the President to a conference which he was to have by appointment, with O'Moore, one of the principal insurgents, near Kilkenny. They met. During the parley, a body of men planted for the purpose in ambuscade, rushed out, and, in breach of faith, took Ormond prisoner. Carew and the Earl of Thomond, who had accompanied him, very narrowly escaped. Some time after Ormond regained his liberty.

THE preceding year, Charles Blunt, Lord Mountjoy, was appointed successor to the unfortunate Essex as Deputy of Ireland. He was a man of a bold spirit, and, possessed of capacity and penetration. Upon his arrival, perceiving that the war had not been conducted with prudence, he changed the plan of operations. Part of his troops he quartered in garrisons, from whence he was enabled to annoy the enemy in their quarters, and could call them together

ther whenever he required their assistance. With respect to those of the army who were to be employed in the field he was cautious, for some time, not to expose them to danger. By guarding against surprise and not fighting with the enemy, but to advantage, he raised their spirits and inspired them with confidence, which they had in a great measure lost by their ill success against the enemy.

WHEN he had thus prepared his men for action, and the season of the year became favourable, he put his forces in motion, and, notwithstanding the efforts of Tyrone to stop his progress at the Moyry, the pass which he had fortified in the vicinity of Newry, he penetrated to the North, established an advantageous post at Lough Foyle, strengthened Londonderry and built a fort at Mount Norris which he secured with a garrison. He was particularly attentive in Ulster to the mode which he had adopted of quartering detachments of his men in places which were favourable for harassing the enemy. He garrisoned Dundalk, Ardee, Kells and a number of other towns the most convenient for his purpose. The insurgents now had the mortification to see their detachments cut off, their provisions destroyed, and that the English, by improving every favourable opportunity of distressing them and by conducting the war in the same irregular manner which on former occasions had been of so much advantage to themselves, were acquiring every day a visible superiority. In a short time, the calamities of these wretched men were distressing to the utmost degree. Their cultivated fields and every thing which afforded them means of subsistence were destroyed by the enemy. The heart sickens at the thought of these  
horrid



horrid devastations. A famine ensued with it's shocking consequences.

ANOTHER method was taken by government to distress the insurgents. Considerable sums sent from England to pay the troops, had circulated among the natives, by which means they were enabled to purchase abroad, arms, amunition and other necessaries. To deprive them of this resource, Elizabeth ordered base money to be coined, stamped it with a nominal value kept up by proclamation, and permitted no other to be exported to Ireland. At the same time, she called down the old coin. This was most unwise policy. The design of it was indeed accomplished with respect to the enemies of go- 1600. vernment, but it's friends were also very much distressed, the English soldiers in particular, were so much discontented with the measure that it required all the authority of the Deputy to prevent them from mutinying.

FROM a state of the most flattering prosperity, the cause of Tyrone greatly declined. Sir Arthur O'Nial and other of the principal chieftains, with considerable numbers of his soldiers, forsook him, many of whom, from necessity, enlisted with Mountjoy. These he exposed, by placing them in posts of danger, and then boasted to Elizabeth that by this prudent policy he gradually diminished the number of her enemies. This act of treacherous inhumanity has fixed an indelible stain upon his memory.

Farewell.

LET

## LETTER LXXXIX.

**W**HILST Mountjoy triumphed in the North, the arms of government were equally successful in the province of Munster. Here, as in other places, the minds of the natives, instead of being conciliated by gentle usage had been prompted to acts of violence, by unjust treatment. To the severe execution of the penal laws were added, partiality in the determination of judicial causes, daily encroachments of the English settlers on their property and extortion in the sheriffs and other officers of state. These causes of discontent, co-operating with the example set them by the other provinces and with the influence of Tyrone, produced a general spirit of insurrection. Many flew to arms. To suppress this rising flame, Sir George Carew, the president, had been furnished with two thousand foot and two hundred and fifty horse. United, the disaffected natives would have been greatly superior to this force. Therefore Carew, like a true politician, laboured to disunite them. For this purpose, he made use of a variety of cunning and even treacherous arts, which a man of honor would have considered as disgraceful to his character. When, in some measure, he had accomplished his point, he took the field. In a short time, by vigorous unremitting efforts, his arms made great progress. Afrighted by his success, two thousand mercenaries from Connaught, in the pay of the insurgents, deserted their standard and returned to their own country. In acts of severity, the President determined not to be out done by Mountjoy. As his troops

marched



marched through the province, unfeeling outrage, havoc and desolation marked their steps.

THE followers of Fitzthomas, titular Earl of Desmond, surnamed the Sungan Earl, had been particularly active on this occasion. James, son of the late unfortunate Earl, had been confined in the Tower by Elizabeth. She now set him at liberty, vested with the title of Earl of Desmond, and sent him to Ireland to excite a rivalship betwixt him and Fitzthomas. But James, on coming over, instead of professing himself a son of the Catholic faith, declared himself a Protestant and went publickly to church. This destroyed, at once, every favourable impression which the natives were disposed to entertain of him. In the place of those loud acclamations of joy and affection with which they, at first, received him, they now considered him as an heretical apostate from the religion of his country and of his forefathers. This disappointment was of little consequence. The insurgents were by this time almost entirely dispersed. Not less than four thousand accepted a pardon which Carew offered to those who would return to their allegiance. The Sungan Earl and Florence Macarthy, a very spirited chieftain who had aided considerably the cause of the insurgents, were apprehended and sent over prisoners to England.

IN all quarters of the kingdom, affairs had now assumed an aspect highly favourable to the hopes of government. Little more seemed necessary to break entirely the force of the natives and reduce them to obedience. But new and unexpected difficulties were to be surmounted before this could be accomplished. For, on the twenty second of September, as the council was sitting at Kilkenny, 1601.

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ny, intelligence arrived that a fleet of Spanish ships were in sight and directing their course to the Southern shore. There were fifteen ships, from which there landed at Kinsale, the following day, about four thousand men, under the command of Don Juan D'Acquila, who immediately took possession of the town.

MOUNTJOY, with two thousand men, lately sent him from England and with all the forces he could collect, set off for Munster to oppose the progress of the invaders. About the middle of October, he arrived at Kinsale, which he invested. His troops sustained, with firmness, frequent sallies which were made by the Spaniards. A fort, about half a mile from the town and which commanded the harbour, after a vigorous assault, surrendered to the Viceroy. He continued to press the siege with success. But accounts arrived that Tyrone, with the assistance of his friends, had put a body of forces in motion, and that they were now on their march to Kinsale. O'Donnel of Connaught, with his followers, had reached the territories of Ormond. To stop his progress, the Deputy sent off a detachment under the command of Sir George Carew. But, by means of a frost, the chieftain was enabled to take a rout different from that which was expected, and to press forward to Munster unmolested.

LORD Clanricarde and several chieftains, with a new reinforcement of three thousand men from England, now joined the Deputy. Ten ships of war under the command of Admiral Sir Richard Leviston, likewise arrived, who attacked the Spanish vessels lying at Castlehaven and obtained a compleat victory. On the other hand, D'Acquila was reinforced



forced with two thousand men and military stores. The Spanish general had brought with him a quantity of money, of arms and ammunition, for the use of such of the natives as would join with him in opposing the Irish government. He had, also, to excite them to insurrection by working in the most powerful manner on their religious principles, brought with him an emissary from the Pope with bulls, indulgences and excommunications. But though he had dispatched messengers into different quarters to entreat the Irish to join him; though the Pope's emissary was active and assisted in his views by the priests, few of them took up arms. Having deeply suffered in the late insurrection, they thought it more prudent to be spectators, for some time, of the present contest than to precipitate themselves into new and perhaps greater misfortunes. But when it was found that in consequence of his reinforcement from Spain and the troops which were marching to his assistance from the North, D'Acquila had a prospect of success, a number of the natives of Munster flew to arms, joined the invaders and delivered up to them several places of strength. Farewell.

## LETTER XC.

**T**YRONE had now arrived with his forces at Kinsale and the besiegers were themselves besieged. Had the enemy continued in their present position and avoided an action, the troops of Mountjoy would have been ruined and with them the English interest in Ireland, would, in all probability, have been utterly destroyed. But D'Acquila

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quila blasted at once all his favourable prospects, for, blinded with the vain hope of ending the war by one successful stroke he pressed his allies to come to an engagement with the enemy. Tyrone reluctantly complied and early in the morning of the twenty-fourth of December led his men from their entrenchments. Mountjoy leaving the President with the rest of his army to prevent the Spaniards from attacking him in rear, advanced against the Irish at the head of only twelve hundred foot and four hundred horse. Tyrone had the misfortune to see his troops shrink from their standards. They were entirely defeated with the loss of twelve hundred slain and eight hundred wounded.

O'DONNELL deserted the kingdom. Tyrone fled to the North. All their followers instantly dispersed. D'Aquila, astonished at a defeat of which his own imprudent rashness had been the cause, determined to relinquish an enterprise which he saw to be desperate. Upon the terms that shipping should be provided for transporting himself and the Spanish forces to their own country, he gave up Kinsale to the Deputy, having engaged that all the other places in his possession should likewise surrender. Accordingly, all the other forts were evacuated, except that of Dunboy, which was taken possession of by Daniel O'Sullivan and held by him until the following year, when, after a desperate defence, it was compelled to surrender to the British forces.

THE description given of the war carried on with the broken remains of the Irish in Munster, is shocking to every compassionate feeling of the heart. Many were destroyed by the soldiers like beasts of prey and their lands presented to the eye one con-

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tinued scene of havoc and devastation. Enflamed by resentment and driven to despair, they, in return, put all of the English they met with to death without mercy.

WE have mentioned that Tyrone had fled to the North; hither he was followed by the Deputy 1602. who, to confine his quarters, built the forts of Munster and Charlemont. Chichester and Dowkra, who, besides the settlement at Lough Foyle, had made another at Ballyshannon, co-operated with him in the opposite and more distant parts of Ulster. The same dreadful scene was acted here as in the province of Munster. Thousands of the wretched insurgents driven from their desolated habitations into woods and fastnesses, where they were utterly destitute of the means of subsistence, perished for want. Famine daily multiplied it's unfortunate victims. Even the common highways exhibited spectacles of misery, which the compassionate traveller could not behold without feeling his breast glow with indignation against those cruel passions of pride, of avarice and ambition, which produced effects so shocking and so disgraceful to humanity. The most enthusiastic ardor for freedom and independence could not long support itself under such complicated wretchedness. One chieftain after another deserted the common cause, returned to their allegiance and made the best terms they could with the Deputy. But he received the submission of none without obliging them to swear "That Elizabeth was the only true absolute and sovereign lady of Ireland, that with sincere repentance for their unnatural disobedience, they implored mercy and forgiveness for themselves and all their followers,

followers who had been seduced into that wicked rebellion." To compel men possessed of their principles to take such an oath was a shocking profanation..

TYRONE had frequently made offers of submission to government which were foreign to his heart; compelled by irresistible necessity he now sincerely proposed a reconciliation. The Deputy transmitted his desire to the Queen. She was undetermined. Amidst her deliberations on the subject she died. An account of this event was carried privately to Mountjoy. Not a moment was to be lost. Should the insurgents know of the death of the Queen before peace with Tyrone was re-established, the consequence, in all probability, would be a revival of the flames of war; the Deputy therefore informed him that he was ready to receive his submission and to agree upon terms of peace. This lord, a little before, the terror of his enemies and who had acted with the power of an independent sovereign, now stripped of his possessions, deserted by his followers and reduced to the last extremity of distress, afforded a striking spectacle of the great instability of human affairs. With strong marks of affliction and penitence he approached the Deputy, dropped down upon his knees and implored mercy; entreated to be restored to his honours and the privileges of a subject, renouncing the name and the authority of O'Nial, all connexion with foreigners and all claims to any possessions not bestowed upon him by the goodness of his sovereign. On his part, the Deputy pardoned him and his followers, and, with some exceptions, promised the restoration of his lands and his dignity. On these conditions, the pacification was ratified.

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The business was scarcely concluded, when Tyrone heard that Elizabeth was dead. He now saw that had he delayed his submission, for a little, his cause might have revived with a new prospect of success. Filled with deep regret by the idea, he burst into tears. But his repentance came too late.

Farewell.

### L E T T E R XCI.

**T**HE arms of Elizabeth in Ireland under the conduct of Lord Mountjoy, had borne down all resistance, but, on the death of the Queen and accession of James the First the natives of Munster and in several parts of Leinster discovered a resolution not to submit to the injunctions of government with respect to religion. To be forced from their altars, to be stripped of those possessions, which from times immemorial had been set apart for the support of the Catholic faith, to be harrassed by penal laws for not violating the dictates of their conscience, appeared to them, as to the rest of the Irish, very injurious treatment. Therefore, considering the present opportunity to be favourable, they openly professed their religion, converted the places of public worship to their former use, and ejected from their charge a number of Protestant clergymen. 1603.

THE people of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, were very unwilling to proclaim his Majesty, and discovered a strong inclination to make a new effort, on the present occasion, for the recovery of their lost privileges. But Mountjoy exerted himself with his

usual vigour, dispelled the threatening storm, and soon reduced all matters to their former situation.

MEASURES, more effectual than any hitherto adopted, were now taken, to establish the public tranquility and prevent future insurrections. A proclamation of oblivion and indemnity was published by his Majesty. Hitherto patents for English tenures had been confined to the lords or powerful chieftains whose vassals, still subject to their authority and to that of their own laws and customs, had no connexion with government. This political error which had a leading influence in cherishing a spirit of opposition to government, was now rectified. The jurisdiction which the chieftains had exercised was dissolved and their followers taken immediately under the protection of the crown, to whose authority they were only, in future, to be subject. Every hope of recovering their independence being extinguished, the people, in general, surrendered their lands and received them back as English tenures. The demesne or quantity of land in the immediate possession of each chieftain was all that was granted to him; upon the part occupied by his tenants a certain rent was fixed which he received, in the place of former exactions.

THE counties of Tyrone and Tirconnel were now provided in sheriffs, and judges appointed, not as a matter of form, which had hitherto been the case, but who actually went circuit twice a year through the provinces of Ulster, Munster and Connaught.

By a judgment of the court of king's bench, the ancient customs of tanistry and gavelkind were abolished and inheritances made to descend according to the course of English law, which, in all its branches,

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was extended to every part of the kingdom. A commission of grace was likewise issued to secure those proprietors of estates who were suspected, or had been engaged in the late or any former insurrection, against the claims of the crown.

MOUNTJOY being recalled to England, was accompanied by Tyrone and Roderick O'Donnel, brother of the chieftain, who, in the late commotions, had been so very active against government. The former was confirmed in his lands and title, the latter was created Earl of Tirconnel. O'Donnel was vested with this honor to humble and diminish the power of his competitor Nial Garuff, who, piquing himself upon being considered a friend of government by whom he had been rewarded for his services with an estate in Tirconnel, rendered himself obnoxious to it's displeasure by his untractable and insolent behaviour. The territories of the O'Byrnes of Leinster, who had been active and strenuous opposers of the English power, were at this time formed into a shire. It was called the county of Wicklow.

THE natives who had long been scourged by the power, might now expect, with respect to their surviving rights, the protection of the English government. From their character, independent of every other consideration, they well deserved it. Says Sir John Davis, who lived at this period, "There is no nation under the sun that loves equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or will rest better satisfied with the execution of it, though it be against themselves." The celebrated Coke, his cotemporary likewise declares, and partly from his own knowlege, "That there is no nation of the

Christian world, that are greater lovers of justice than the Irish, which virtue must necessarily be accompanied by many others," If he was convinced that the Irish merited this honourable testimony, what must he have thought of the justice and of the virtues of his countrymen?

Farewell.

## L E T T E R X C I I .

**W**HILST government, in respect to matters of a civil nature, was taking the most effectual measures to restore and to settle the public peace on a permanent foundation, the discontents of many continued on account of religion. From certain transactions of James with his Holiness, and from some expressions of his, particularly in his speech to the English parliament, they hoped that he was not unfavourably inclined towards the mother church, therefore would not be displeased with attempts in favour of it. But they were de-

1605.

ceived. For whatever might have been his private sentiments respecting the doctrines of the Catholic religion, he detested the Pope's supremacy, as he did every thing that interfered with his prerogative, of which, on every occasion, he was extremely jealous. As a decided proof of his intentions, he published a proclamation, by which he commanded all foreign clergy, who had constantly acted as the zealous partizans of Rome, to depart from Ireland. It was received here with the warmest resentment, particularly by the old English settlers of the pale, who, attended by a large concourse of people, presented a petition to the coun-

cil



cil for the open and free exercise of their religion. The council, determined to enforce the proclamation, cast the principal of the petitioners into prison. Fears began to be entertained of another insurrection which were heightened by intelligence which arrived of the gunpowder plot and that Tyrone, with his associate Tirconnel, had fled to the continent. Whether these lords had formed any new scheme against government, of which they dreaded a discovery, there is not sufficient evidence to determine. Be this as it may, they were attainted and their lands forfeited, which, being very extensive, were a great acquisition to the crown.

In another quarter, disorders were excited by a leader whose designs were unequivocal. Sir Cahir Dogherty, who hitherto had espoused the cause of the English, tired of a state of subjection, by an act of treachery, got possession of the fort of Culmore, destroyed the garrison and from thence proceeded to Derry which he also took, plundered and burned to the ground. He continued his depredations for five months, at the end of which, his followers were dispersed and himself slain by Sir Arthur Chichester who acted as deputy to Lord Mountjoy now created Earl of Devonshire. This insurrection added considerably to the lands escheated to the crown in the counties of Cavan, Fermanagh, Armagh, Derry, Tyrone, Tirconnel now called Donegal, which, it was determined, should be parcelled out among adventurers, for the purpose of making a permanent settlement in support of government. Invited by the crown, settlers from England, but chiefly from Scotland came over who brought with them the principles and the discipline

of the Presbyterian religion, and formed the first class of adventurers. The second were composed of such as had served in Ireland either in a civil or in a military capacity. A third class consisted of natives. The two first were obliged to take the oath of supremacy, from which the latter, for their encouragement, was excused. Government fixed the respective tenures, the rents to be paid to the proprietors and to the crown, and prescribed such regulations as seemed best calculated to the support and improvement of the settlement.

In this business the city of London took an active part. The society which engaged in it obtained a large portion of land in the vicinity of Derry and upon the lower part of the river Ban. Encouraged by the privileges granted them, they expended a considerable sum of money on it, and, among other improvements, rebuilt Derry and built the town of Coleraine.

In forming this settlement, the several districts were divided into parishes, glebes set apart, tythes appointed, and churches ordered to be built, 1611. to support and strengthen the Protestant religion. Provision was made for the maintenance of free schools, certain lands added to those already in possession of the college and the advowson of six parishes.

SEVERAL towns built by the planters were incorporated, who had a privilege, by charter, of sending members to parliament.

THIS plantation made considerable progress. Notwithstanding, it laboured under several disadvantages and great abuses were committed in conducting it. Buildings, so necessary, could not be expeditiously erected. Too many agents were employ-  
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ed, to the prejudice of the patentees. Covenants were broken. The commissioners appointed for dividing the lands violently deprived the defenceless natives of the rights reserved to them by the King and that often in favour of the worthless and undeserving.

SIR Arthur Chichester was very useful to government in the whole of this business. In reward, his Majesty granted him the territory of Inishowen and other forfeited districts containing a scope of land very extensive.

SINCE the beginning of this reign, I have had occasion more than once to mention the dissatisfaction of the natives upon account of religion. This was likely to be a fruitful source of discontent. It does not appear that the penal statutes were strictly executed: but the proclamation requiring foreign ecclesiastics to leave the kingdom had been renewed. The oath of supremacy was necessary, to qualify lawyers for pleading at the bar, and for the holding of any office under government.

THE Irish lords and all others whose spirit was not entirely broken by the hand of power, or were attached to the Catholic faith, complained, in particular, of this disqualification, as a grievance. They thought this need not have been added to the other severities of which they complained; that it was hard to be stigmatized with such a mark of reproach and to be obliged to labour under so great an inconvenience, for not acting a part expressly forbidden by the principles of their religion.

ABOUT this time, as we are informed by Selden, the order of baronets was established. The honor was to be hereditary. The number not to exceed two hundred. Each baron, at his creation, was to pay

pay to his Majesty a certain sum towards defraying the expence of Irish government.

Farewell.

### L E T T E R X C I I I .

**Y**OU have seen that the institution of our parliament was coeval with the first principles of government established in Ireland by Henry the Second. From that period, this most respectable assembly, the representatives of the people and the guardian of their liberties, met frequently. In an early period, it consisted of few members. Until the reign of Henry the Eighth, the number of temporal peers was very small and of these, some being generally concerned in insurrections, were excluded from the house, others did not attend; of the spiritual peers, those who lived beyond the limits of the pale, being not admitted to the benefit of English law which was necessary to their being considered as subjects, were not summoned to parliament. With respect to the commons, writs were sent only to those who lived in shire ground. Before the thirty fourth of Henry the Eighth, when Meath was divided into two shires, there were but twelve counties besides the liberty of Tipperary. The ancient cities were but four, and the boroughs which sent burgesses not above thirty. The house of commons could not then consist of more than a hundred members. To the other shires, Queen Mary added those of Leix and Offally in which there were boroughs erected which sent members to the house of commons. Elizabeth formed several counties in Connaught and Ulster, but from the latter,

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on account of it's remote situation, no representatives were sent. Seventeen counties were added during the present reign. All Ireland was now divided into counties. Forty new boroughs were likewise erected. King James therefore resolved to call a general representation of the whole kingdom, in which English and natives, without distinction, should meet to give the sanction of their authority to the measures of government which he had adopted, and to enact such additional laws as might seem expedient.

WHEN the design of calling the parliament, which had not now met for twenty seven <sup>1611.</sup> years, was known, the recusants took the alarm from an apprehension that this measure would be productive to them of new and more oppressive injuries. Upon this occasion, the Lords Slane, Gormanstown, Trimblestown, Dunsany and Lowth, transmitted a petition to his Majesty expressive of their jealousy with respect to the design of summoning a parliament, expressed uneasiness that the causes had not been made known, agreeably to Poyning's Law; represented the impropriety of admitting mean boroughs, "Some few and beggarly cottages," to a share in the legislature, and complained that the penal statutes were executed with much more severity than in the reign of his predecessor. The King, without paying any regard to this application, which he considered as an impertinent interference with his authority, determined that the parliament should meet.

IT assembled the eighteenth of May, sixteen hundred and thirteen. In many of the elections, the court candidates had been defeated, but when the commons proceeded to the choice of a speaker, the

the country party found themselves in the minority. Sir John Davis, the attorney general, was chosen, in opposition to Sir John Everard, formerly a judge of the king's bench, a man of a respectable character. The minority insisted that Everard had the majority of constitutional votes and forced him into the chair. It was asserted by them, in support of their opposition, that the sheriffs had sent no writs to several of the old boroughs, that from others, the returns would not be received; that most of the patents and charters of the new boroughs were dated, after the commission for the writs were issued. The house continued, for some time, in the greatest confusion, when the country party, finding their opposition to be of no avail, seceded. In the upper house, the Lords, on the same side of the question, seceded also and refused to return, until the point in debate was settled by the commons.

CHICHESTER, finding that all his efforts to heal the division were ineffectual, prorogued the parliament to the fifth of June.

IN the mean time, agents from each party repaired to England and laid the affair before his Majesty, who, in flagrant violation of the rights of the Irish parliament, referred the final determination of it to the English privy council. Their decision was, that several of the returns were illegal. With respect to the complaints of the country party, in relation to the other returns, and a variety of grievances, James, with strong expressions of resentment for this opposition given to his government, declared them to be groundless. The influence of his tyrannical proceedings was visible on the meeting of parliament, the proceedings of which were perfectly agreeable



agreeable to government. The King's title to the crown was recognized with an acknowledgement of thanks for the measures he had adopted and the pains he had taken in the settlement of the kingdom. An act of attainder was passed against Tyrone, Tirconnel and other principal chieftains concerned in the late disturbances. The following acts were likewise passed. An act of repeal, with respect to certain statutes forbidding trade and an intercourse with the natives in other particulars. An act declaring that all the people, indiscriminately, who should acknowledge allegiance to his Majesty, were to be entitled to the privileges of subjects. An act of repeal of a statute enacted in the reign of Philip and Mary against bringing to Ireland, retaining or marrying with the Scots. An act of oblivion and general indemnity and an act of subsidy amounting to somewhat more than twenty thousand pounds.

THAT in granting this subsidy, the commons were much more complaisant to his Majesty than faithful to the interest of their constituents, appears from the following extravagant assessment which was necessary to raise it. Every personal estate, of the value of three pounds and upwards, was taxed two shillings and eight pence halfpenny in the pound; aliens twice as much. Real estates, of the value of twenty shillings and more, were rated at four shillings in the pound. Considering the present impoverished state of the kingdom, the consequence of that relaxation of industry, of that want of internal cultivation and of foreign trade occasioned by the calamities of war, this was an exorbitant tax. The parliament was prorogued until the twenty fourth of October.

Adieu.

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## LETTER XCIV.

**B**ESIDES the Northern province, James was determined to establish plantations in other parts of the kingdom. With this view, he appointed a commission of enquiry to examine and determine with respect to the escheated lands in Leinster and the adjoining districts. Upon inquisition, they adjudged that eighty two thousand five hundred acres were forfeited betwixt the rivers of Arklow and Slane and in Leitrim, Longford, Westmeath and in the King's and Queen's county. These were apportioned to English settlers and to the natives, upon the same principles and with the same regulations as those by which he had settled the colony in Ulster. In executing this scheme, little regard was paid even to the plainest dictates of equity. Old obsolete claims were received even so far back as to the reign of Henry the Second. The times had been full of confusion, and, in a series of years, innumerable changes of property had taken place; notwithstanding, if the title according to the precise forms and the strictest letter of the law, was not made good, it was forfeited. Perjury, fraud, the most infamous acts of deceit were practised to benefit the rapacious favorite adventurer. Juries who had the honesty and the resolution to follow the dictates of their conscience and would not find for the crown, were punished in the star chamber and other judicial courts.

SIR Oliver Saint John now filled the place of deputy, Chichester having been called over to England, where, as an additional reward of his services, he was created baron of Belfast. This substitute

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tute of majesty was neither distinguished for temper or the principles of sound policy. He put in force, with severity, the penal statutes; he strictly enjoined the oath of supremacy, a measure, in a very particular manner, offensive to the recusants. The magistrates of Waterford absolutely refused to qualify as the law required. In consequence of their refusal, the Deputy seized the liberties and revenues of the city. Complaints were made of him to the King, who removed him from the administration and substituted Lord Falkland, in his place.

ENCOURAGED by this circumstance, the recusants became more confident, avowed, with less reserve, their religious principles, and the deep sense with which they felt the hardships of their situation. The extortion of which the soldiers were guilty, in levying the impositions of the crown, the execution of martial law in time of peace, severe exacti- 1622.  
ons of the clergy and rigour of the ecclesiastical courts, the unconstitutional interference of the privy council and star chamber, in causes which should only be determined at common law, and particularly the invasion of their property, which the natives had suffered in the several plantations lately established in the kingdom, were grievances of which they loudly complained.

THOUGH no man had more conceit than James, his judgment was superficial, in particular he had no claim to political wisdom. At present, in a striking instance, this was manifest. A most absurd kind of folly had prompted him, for some time past, to press with eagerness, the marriage of his son Charles with the Infanta of Spain. To ingratiate himself with his Catholic Majesty, he permitted him

to recruit his troops with levies from Ireland. For this purpose, a number of Irish refugees were sent over from Spain, who were cordially received by their old friends, with whose assistance they soon raised a large body of recruits. Instead of being sent immediately away, from the want of transports, they staid some considerable time in the country. As they consisted of the lower class, were disaffected in their principles, and, of course, very disorderly, government was seriously alarmed, from an apprehension of the consequence, more particularly, as the forces had been reduced to thirteen hundred foot and seven troops of horse. At last, transports arrived and they left the kingdom. Discontents being very universal, had not government been considerably strengthened by the number of Protestants lately settled in Ireland, and the minds of the natives smarted deeply under a sense of their recent misfortunes, it is more than probable, that the favourable opportunity which offered would have been seized and this country involved in new distractions.

It appears, that during the present reign, the customs had encreased from fifty pounds annually to nine thousand seven hundred, and that the revenue arising from the court of wards, had risen to ten thousand. Notwithstanding, three years arrear were due to the army. The œconomy of the times was wretched. Much of the public money was squandered in useles offices and pensions, the disgraceful wages of prostitution and the bane of a free state.

Adieu.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.