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NO. IV.

INVASION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE
FEMALES OF IRELAND.

NEITHER the memory of man nor the annals of history affords an instance of danger so dreadful and alarming as that which threatens our kingdom at the present crisis. A danger which from the singularity of its nature, and the universality of its extent, begs all comparison, and stands without a parallel, even amidst the most dreadful catastrophies of subjugated nations. At a time when we had ended a long protracted and bloody war with the people of France, a war that carried off myriads of our blooming youths and vigorous heroes, bereft faithful wives of their beloved consorts, divested helpless orphans of parental aid, and deluged an extensive continent with tragic scenes of human blood; when Britain and France had concluded a treaty of peace, established on the firmest basis, confirmed by the most solemn engagements, and promising a permanent source of tranquillity to both nations; when we reposed an entire confidence in the political conduct of the French, and had banished every suspicion of danger. then alas! is our nation threatened with an invasion highly dangerous in its nature, and lamentably des-

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tructive in its consequences. This awful and much to be deprecated catastrophe, derives its origin from the following circumstances. By the long continuance of the late war with France, the male population of that kingdom has been so far impaired, that from a most accurate and regular census of its present inhabitants, it has been ascertained, that there are not less than eleven females for every male in that kingdom. The French ladies upon finding themselves so far preponderate in point of number, have employed the greater part of the last four months in concerting plans and devising measures to redress this epidemic evil, and having heard of Irishmen's much celebrated military prowess, they have at last unanimously concurred in the design of invading our native island, and carrying off, by violence, all its male inhabitants. Their plans for this purpose seem to have been concerted by the most consummate female politicians in France, and report even goes so far as to state, that not a few of the other sex have exercised their talents in the cabinet in order to confirm the plans of this Amazonian expedition. But whether the motives of these gentlemen may have been pure French politesse, the advancement of the public good, or some others more powerful than both, I shall at present leave the candid and judicious reader to determine.

Such however are their resolutions, that those ladies who have at-

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ready husbands, will be permitted to remain at home, provided their husbands can advance no reasons sufficiently cogent to produce a divorce. Previously to their sailing from Brest, all the men in France will be obliged to marry; their wives will be ballotted from the aggregate mass of the female sex, and if any of those apathetic beings known amongst us by the name of old bachelors, refuse to accept of the wives thus allotted them, their goods shall be confiscated, and they themselves collected into some of the principal towns, where in public buildings called lumber-rooms, secured with large iron grated doors, they shall be exposed a number of hours every day to the ridicule of the insulting populace, and considered as the detestation of humanity.

The resolutions also bind all unmarried ladies, from sixteen to sixty years old, to embark as heroines in this wonderful expedition; but it is hoped that this part of the act which restricts to certain ages may yet be repealed, as several troops of girls from thirteen to sixteen years old, and even some widows at the advanced age of seventy have volunteered their services. Upon landing in Ireland, the French widows are to seize upon the husbands of all scolding wives, and it is positively affirmed, that they will so minutely investigate the conduct of our Irish matrons in this respect, that no woman who has ever given her husband even one curtain lecture, shall be any longer permitted to retain him. The young ladies of France will then proceed to secure all those young bachelors who have been frequently denied by prudes and coquettes. The conduct of the latter will be so nicely scrutinized, that those who have ever refused more than one proposal, shall be

ranked with the women whose *eloquence* has annoyed the tranquillity of their husbands, and the punishment awarded them shall be imprisonment for life in the small island of Rathlin. Such of the French ladies as will then remain unprovided with husbands, will immediately seize upon all the males from sixteen years and upwards, until they shall have made a complete monopoly. Then shall they begin to execute those designs which more immediately affect the persons of our lovely damsels. But as to ladies a hint is sufficient, I shall not at present enter into a minute detail of the fatal consequences of this formidable invasion. Let it be sufficient to observe, that several millions of the females in France, are now disposed according to the most systematic plans of their chief politicians; some learning the different departments of military tactics, others engaged in collecting from all arsenals and magazines the necessary arms and ammunition; some eagerly employed in studying the best systems of navigation, others practising the most laborious maritime employments, some learning economic housewifery, others making the most splendid and magnificent cradles, the receptacles of a future offspring. Exulting in the happy prospect of immediate conquest, they undergo with pleasure, even the most laborious duties, and animated by the hopes of an easy victory, they enjoy in sweet anticipation, the numerous comforts of conjugal felicity. They look forward with extatic raptures, to that delightful juncture, in which the comely daughters of our vanquished island, shall pay to them submissive homage; when all the matrons of our northern capital, shall be supplanted by Parisian widows, and even its noblest youthful ladies made

submissive slaves to the haughty dames of France.

In times of national and public danger, when such impending ruin seems to threaten our devoted kingdom, should we not be aroused to our country's honour, and defend to the very last extremity the patriot's cause? But as this seems exclusively a female war, and as our Irish heroines are possessed of true Amazonian spirit, they would undoubtedly consider the man that lifted arms in the cause, as doing violence to the vindictive feelings of the gentler sex, and denying them the privilege of self-defence in foiling the assailing foe. Though we must at once perceive the impropriety of defending their rights in the open field, yet may we perform to them a most essential service in our closets, by giving them timely warning of that imminent danger, which should call forth every talent, and excite every genuine patriot to repel the invading foe. It has passed into a proverb equally common and intelligible, "that a person warned is half armed." Now I have every reason to hope, that our Irish ladies will by no means consider this hint either officious or untimely upon a subject, to them, so momentous, interesting and important. Should there be any want of propriety in my manner of intimating to them the approaching danger, I am fully persuaded, that it is more than counterbalanced, by my deep concern for their safety and my ardent wishes for their success. In the mean time, our Irish ladies should be actively employed in forming themselves into corps, under the conduct of such as are possessed of the most heroic fortitude; in learning the most necessary manœuvres of military exercise, and in raising along the eastern and northern coasts the most impregnable fortifications. No doubt

there will be considerable difficulty on their part, in selecting suitable commanders, but let it be their chief aim to fill all the eminent posts with such married women as are vulgarly called termagants. These both from their continual elevation of voice, and the fear of losing their husbands, possess an infinite superiority over the rest of the sex. Would my advice be of any service in that way, I would warmly recommend as generalissimo Mrs. Turbulent; the wife of a well known inn-keeper in a northern village. To describe this lady's excellent qualifications, would engross more time, and occupy a greater space than my present paper affords; suffice it to say, that she has a voice more sonorous than the trumpet of Neptune, and an arm sufficiently athletic to wield the ponderous club of Hercules. Besides she has for no less than sixteen years, kept the whole parish in complete subjection, so that from her practice and experience in commanding, she stands unrivalled by heroines both of ancient and modern times.

I am extremely happy to state, that every female, with whom I have as yet conversed upon this subject, has expressed the most profound gratitude for my friendly warning, and even some have evinced a complete reformation of conduct on being informed of the impending danger. A few days since I happened to visit my friend Agricola, who lives on the northern coast of this kingdom. This goodnatured man has been married twenty-five years, and within that period he has scarcely passed a single day, without receiving several certain lectures; so that his married life forms one continued scene of servile obedience, and implicit submission to the most arbitrary and despotic of all monarchical governments, viz. that of the

petticoat: a government which brings its subjects under continual vassalage to the most imperious and domineering tyrants. As I approached the house of Agricola, I heard a dreadful noise, which increased in proportion to my approximation; no sooner did I enter the room, than I found my ears stunned with a storm of eloquence, which for the intensity of its noise, far surpassed that occasioned by the explosion of an hundred cannon, and nearly equalled the most terrific peal of thunder. Electrified and amazed, I stood immovable until the termagant dropped her clamorous note, when recovering from my surprise, I seated myself upon a chair at such a distance as to be beyond the reach of violent blows. After some time the impetuosity of her passion gradually subsided, the stereness and torvity of her countenance decreased, when dispelling seven or eight immense wrinkles from her minacious forehead, and spending a considerable time in adjusting the muscles of her face, she accosted me in apparent terms of tranquil complacency. As soon as I found her possessing the appearance of goodnature, I began to describe to her in terms the most energetic and emphatic, the immediate danger that threatened the ladies of Ireland, and particularly those who reside along the coasts; she turned pallid in an instant, the blood began to stagnate in its course, and every symptom of terror stood displayed in her countenance. Upon perceiving this Agricola was inspired with the courage of a Hercules, and with a voice and look, both highly indicative of sincerity, ardently wished for the happy period that should relieve his wounded mind from a load of poignant anguish. With a countenance the most cheerful and serene, he inquired warmly respecting the place of dis-

embarkation, and upon my informing him that it should probably be within twenty miles, he immediately resolved to be present on the beach, that by surrendering himself to the first widow that should land, he might get rid of his noisy consort. But I, commiserating the condition of a numerous family about to lose a tender and affectionate father, admonished the old lady with respect to her good conduct in future; and whether from good sense or self interest, I will not presume to say, she has profited so far by the advice, that her temper is now completely changed, and she modestly acquiesces in the opinion of her husband upon every occasion. That voice which was formerly louder than the shouts of Stentor, is now modulated so as to consist only of the most gentle and soothing accents; that countenance, which formerly exhibited a prospect more gloomy than the surface of the boisterous ocean, is now the seat of an unruffled calm, and in short this (now goodnatured) woman, and her loving husband live in the utmost harmony and love, enjoying one uninterrupted scene of prosperity; feasting on the most refined luxuries of conjugal affection, and sharing the mutual happiness of a *perpetual honeymoon*. Here is an example highly worthy of imitation, and admirably calculated to inspire matrons with affection to their loving husbands. Never has the passion of love been more permanent in the breast of a female, than when it originated from a sense of fear. Let then those ladies, who once summoned up every charm in order to captivate a lover, or secure a husband, still continue to exercise those amiable graces so highly ornamental to their native modesty, and so enchanting in the eyes of their husbands. Let them only for a moment reflect, that now is of all times

the most dangerous to counteract the wishes, or contradict the words of those gentlemen who are only waiting in anxious suspense, for any tolerable pretext upon which to assert their claims to these modern Amazons. But I am sorry to state, that the fatal consequences of this threatened invasion will not be solely confined to matrons; such is the gaiety, and such the vivacity of those Parisian ladies, that they will soon attract the attention of those lively sparks that are always actuated by a sense of novelty, and become sponaneous victims of the true coquette.

Walking out the other day I met Miss Flirtilla Emmerson, a young lady, who, for several years has been the brightest luminary in this northern hemisphere. Seldom does she appear in any public assembly, without slaying her "thousands, and her tens of thousands." Though not yet turned of twenty-three, she possesses numerous trophies of her vanquished lovers. It is even said her skill in captivation is so profound, that she has often conquered a dozen by a single glance. Upon my giving her a slight hint of her immediate danger, she has absolutely resolved to abandon the savage and inhuman practice of making universal conquest, and to marry a frigid-hearted old bachelor of seventy. Some neighbouring ladies who envy her condition, take the liberty of saying that she having formerly refused so many proposals, now makes a virtue of necessity, and is taught by experience, the fatal consequences of permitting favourable opportunities to pass unimproved. But though some giddy young flirts may so far err in judgment, as to think that old men are not the proper objects of conjugal affection, yet will they find by experience, that when numbers with reluctance, must give their youthful husbands to the French

ladies, my friend Flirtilla, will be permitted to retain hers, he being considered an object unworthy of removal. A friend of mine to whom I related both this story and that of Agricola's wife, asserts, that a general imitation of the conduct of those two ladies, would be the most effectual means of securing against the effects of the intended invasion. But my real opinion is, that recourse must be had to arms, as the only means of securing our national safety. Shall the poor uncultivated Gento women, who are strangers to the lively sensibilities of the most tender affection, voluntarily leap into the flames that consume their deceased husbands, and shall not our Irish females so highly celebrated for conjugal fidelity, brave all the horrors of the martial field, in securing the possession of their husbands when alive?

J.G.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

WHILE considerable diversity of sentiment appears to prevail on the subject of Mnemonics, and while one set of people supports a system which another considers only a fair subject for ridicule and contempt, a few candid remarks from an impartial person, who professes, at least, to have no guide except truth in any controversy, may not be unacceptable to the readers of the Magazine.

The subject of mnemonics appears to have early attracted the attention of ingenious men. Some of the learned ancients speak particularly of the art of assisting the memory. And there can be no doubt but the subject is one of the least proper that could be selected for the shaft of ridicule. Memory is of the highest importance to men in