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LETTERS

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TO THE

REFORMERS OF ENGLAND,

ON THE

REFORM BILL

FOR

IRELAND,

&c. &c. &c.

BY

DANIEL O'CONNELL, Esq. M.P.

LONDON:

W. HAY, PICCADILLY,

MCCCXXXII.



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TO THE  
PATIENT AND BRAVE PEOPLE  
OF  
IRELAND.

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“ Hereditary Bondsmen, KNOW YOU NOT,  
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow ?”

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FELLOW COUNTRYMEN,

I DEDICATE these Letters to you—they were written to assert your rights, and to expose your enemies.

It was one object of mine to shew the British nation how much we are wronged. It was, and is another object of mine, that every one of you should know and feel that a majority in the Imperial Parliament are ready to treat Ireland with *injustice* and *insult*.

Convinced as I am of the value, and of the connexion between both countries, and of the necessity of re-establishing that connexion, on the basis of separate Legislatures, in order to make it permanent, I have felt it my duty to demonstrate, by the irresistible evidence of facts, how alien from our rights, and regardless of Irish interests, the present Government must inevita-



bly be. This is certainly the fittest moment to make the conclusive experiment; because this, *in the first place*, is a reforming Parliament—a Parliament warm in the pursuit of political justice. *In the second place*—all Reformers in this country must admit that a debt of gratitude is due by them to their Irish fellow-labourers. *In the third place*—the House of Lords, who are supposed to entertain an hereditary hatred to Ireland, were never so weak and impotent as they are at this moment. They have dragged their honours through the mire with a dexterity of filthiness which has exceeded the hopes of their worst enemies. They never were less capable of resisting, although many of them may be as ready as ever to resist a popular and beneficent measure for Ireland.

This, then, is the time to demonstrate the truth of my theory, “*That the British Parliament, even under the most favourable circumstances, is incompetent—utterly incompetent to do justice to Ireland.*”

They are, I repeat, utterly incompetent. Intrigues at Court—old jealousies of Ireland newly revived—the natural distaste of the Peers to look on us in any other point of view than that which combines hatred with contempt—and even in the House of Commons, almost a total want of sympathy—save from one generous spirit here, and another there, thinly scattered through the House. But, without entering into further details, I again

pronounce the moral incompetency of the British Parliament to do us justice.

I hold the proof of it in my hands—the Irish Reform Bill. Here it is, with its paltry endeavour to keep from the people of Ireland all participation in the franchises of the British Constitution. Here it is, perpetuating, in the name of Reform, and consecrating all the foul injustice of the Peel-Wellington disfranchising measure, and giving us a machinery of registration, almost too audacious for the bold bad men who perpetrated, as they imagined, the total annihilation of the popular spirit in Ireland—a machinery rendered still worse by the Reform Bill!!!

I have not written these Letters with the vain and foolish hope of obtaining justice for Ireland; I totally disclaim that folly.

But I did write them to prove my candour—to shew that I would not employ the insulting insufficiency of the Irish Reform Bill as an argument for the repeal of the Union, without first emphatically warning those who *now* have *our destinies* in their hands, that, unless they deprive me of that argument, it will be my sacred duty to use it with all the energy of my mind, and all the earnestness and perseverance of a character, which has been formed by love for that country, in whose cause I have already contributed, in some degree, to the achievement of a bloodless, stainless, but most important victory.

Surely, after it shall have been, by the adoption

of this Reform Bill, demonstrated, that the Parliament in this country is not in a position to do us justice, there will not be found one Irishman who has ever professed patriotic feeling, so recreant to his country's cause, as not to join me in seeking, by all legal and constitutional means, for the repeal of the Union.

People of Ireland!—you have passed through a gloomy period of oppression. Your business now is, to be reconciled, the one to the other. Party feuds—religious dissensions—ancient animosities—modern quarrels—should all be buried in one common oblivion. The time is come, when we should no longer divide from each other, under any nicknames, or peculiar appellations. We have one common country—we have one common interest—the peace, prosperity, and freedom of that country. These cannot be attained, save by and through a resident Legislature. The moment is fast approaching, when we will forget our reciprocal injuries and injustices to each other—and, at that moment, our constitutional independence must be restored, and no longer the serf, or the bond slave of Britain, but, combined with her in interests and affections, and united only by the golden and cherished link of the Crown, we shall be the best customer and consumer of Britain in peace, and her firmest support, and ready partner, in the dangers and victories of war.

Let no despair come over your minds. It is well that this proof should be given of the impos-



sibility of obtaining justice for Ireland in this Parliament. This will secure a combination and community of exertion in Ireland, and place us Repealers beyond the reproach of the wise and the good in this country.

There were many men who told me that they would not look for the repeal of the Union, because they believed that a reformed Parliament would attend to the wants and wishes of the people of Ireland. This class of persons will now see, that not only was their expectation unfounded on any known fact, or circumstance, but that Ireland is actually refused any thing approaching, in the most remote degree, to common justice. She is, in truth, refused a Reform Bill,—because the name does not constitute the thing. She gets one in name—she is refused it in reality.

I am just informed, by authority of a very high description, that care has been taken by the Commissioners of Division in Ireland, to manage matters so, that the Duke of Devonshire is to have no less than three Close Boroughs—Dungarvon, Youghal, and Bandon ; and, mark this particularly—Stanley has not, up to this moment, published the detail of the population returns in Ireland, nor *the maps* of the new boundaries of Boroughs—and yet, to-morrow, we are to go into Committee on this very Bill !!!

Men of Ireland—Catholics !—Protestants !—Presbyterians, and Dissenters of every Christian denomination !—this Bill is insulting and injurious

to us all—we are all its victims. A haughty and contemptuous perseverance by the Ministry in wrong, includes, and involves us all in one common contumely. The struggle to hand over to an absentee Oligarchy the representation of Ireland, equally oppresses the inhabitants of Ireland, of every class, and of every creed. Irishmen of every class and creed, hoard this injustice in your inmost souls; and recollect, that you have only *to will* the remedy, in order to be certain of attaining it.  
**WE ARE EIGHT MILLIONS!!!**

I have the honour to be,

**FELLOW COUNTRYMEN,**

Your most devoted, faithful Servant,

**DANIEL O'CONNELL.**

*Parliament Street,  
 London,  
 12th June, 1832.*

TO THE  
REFORMERS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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LETTER I.

BROTHER REFORMERS, *London, May 22, 1832.*

I APPEAL to you from the contemplated injustice of the Irish department of the British Ministry. I respectfully solicit your aid to prevent another act of gross iniquity, another vile insult from being inflicted on the people of Ireland.

My cause of complaint is this:—the Reform Bill prepared for Ireland by the present Administration is *defective, partial, oligarchical, unjust,* and *daringly insulting.*

My object is twofold:—*first*, to prove the truth of these assertions; and, *secondly*, to solicit your assistance, in order to prevent the consummation of this iniquity.

But, as a preliminary, you have a right to know what species of Reform Bill I require for Ireland. I do not hesitate one moment to give you that information. I ask, in the name of the Irish people, for just such a Reform Bill for Ireland as you have obtained for England—THAT IS ALL. Is my

demand unfair or unjust? I anticipate an universal reply in the negative.

I ask, then, for Ireland a Reform Bill which shall be identical with the English Bill, wherever an identity of institutions and of other circumstances allows it to be identical. Wherever institutions or other circumstances are not precisely similar. I then demand that the Reform Bill for Ireland should as closely resemble as possible the English Act—that it should be as similar in its provisions as possible, and that the extent of Reform in Ireland should be equivalent to, and equally satisfactory with that in England.

I ask for the people of Ireland the *same measure* of Reform which the people of England receive. I will not be—I ought not to be content with less.

In other words, I look for as complete an equality of Reform in both countries as possible.

But the Ministerial Bill for Ireland is directly the reverse. It is, I repeat it, partial, restricted, unjust, and insulting. It is constituted to sacrifice the Irish Reformers to the Irish Tories—who, by the bye, constitute the very worst class of Tories in existence.

I proceed to point out the principal particulars in which the Irish Reform Bill differs from the English. They are these:—

First—The English Bill greatly enlarges the elective franchise in the counties of England. The Irish Bill, on the whole, diminishes the number of voters in the Irish counties. The Bill for Scotland exceedingly increases the number of voters in Scotch counties. The Irish Reform Bill diminishes the number.

Secondly—The Irish Bill creates too high and

too Aristocratic a franchise in the Irish towns and cities: it alters the present law to the prejudice of the people and in favour of the Oligarchy.

Thirdly—Although the Irish Reform Bill destroys the individual and direct power of nomination in sixteen boroughs, it substitutes so exceedingly narrow a basis of franchise as effectually to render those Boroughs Close Boroughs, and to make them liable to the most gross and profligate corruption.

Fourthly—It renders the registration of a vote almost impossible for any but a rich man, and thus deprives the middle and poorer classes of their votes. This is effectuated by complication of detail in the registry, and by the pressure of great delay and enormous expence.

Fifthly—It leaves the registry of the votes to a set of persons, who, taken in the aggregate, are, from want of sufficient aptitude, and also by reason of their zealous Tory principles, the most unfit to have that power.

Sixthly—It continues all the enormous expence and delays of contested elections; which in England, under your Reform Bill, must be over in two or three days—but in Ireland, by our Reform Bill, may last full fifteen days, as before.

Seventhly—The Irish Reform Bill does not give Ireland her due and fair proportion of Representatives in Parliament.

Eighthly—The Irish Reform Bill glaringly, and I may say gratuitously, insults the people of Ireland by giving an addition of only five Members to all Ireland; while it allocates one out of the five to a single College—the College of Dublin; a

College having already one Member, without any adequate or just right to any representation.

Upon the whole, my decided and deliberate conviction is, that with the exception of throwing open the representation of Belfast, Cork, Galway, and Dublin, the Irish Reform Bill will make matters worse than they are at present in Ireland with regard to the right and power of the people to choose Representatives. In short, that it should be entitled, “ An Act to restore to power the Orange ascendancy in Ireland, and to enable that faction to trample with impunity on the friends of Reform and of constitutional freedom.”

Such is the plan matured at a third attempt, by Mr. Stanley, for the Reform in Ireland. He is, I know, determined to persevere in his measure. I also know that he will be supported by all the Tories in the House, and by a vast and overpowering majority of the Whigs. Indeed, I have greatly to complain of the total disregard to Ireland—I believe I ought to call it contempt for Ireland—exhibited by the English Whigs and Reformers in Parliament, with some, and but few exceptions.

I proceed now to prove the truth of my assertions. I take up my eight heads of complaint *seriatim*; and if the Reformers of England and Scotland will condescend to read these Letters—for I must extend them to at least three or four—I pledge myself satisfactorily to demonstrate that every one of my objections is well founded, and that the Irish Reform Bill is a Reform Bill only in name—that it is a practical blunder, such as Irishmen never commit—that while it purports to reform, it renders matters worse; and, in short, that it is



one of those base delusions which could originate only in the brazen audacity and cold heart of an English Tory, who found himself placed in the attitude of an English Whig, with controul over the present fortunes of unfortunate, long oppressed, much insulted, but, thank Heaven, no longer weak or powerless Ireland.

My first complaint is, "that Stanley's Reform Bill for Ireland ought to augment, but will, in fact, diminish the number of voters in Irish counties."

Now the great principle of the English Reform, as, indeed, of *all* reform, is "*enfranchisement*," that is, to increase the number of voters. The principle of the Irish Reform Bill is *disfranchisement*, that is, to diminish the number of voters. This principle of disfranchisement, I must say, is not confined to counties. I shall show, before I have done, that it applies to some of our boroughs.

This complaint is still more strong than any Englishman, not acquainted with the details of Irish affairs, could possibly conceive, and for this reason;—When the veracious Wellington and candid Peel were compelled by the people of Ireland to concede religious freedom to the Protestant Dissenters of England and Catholics of Ireland, they exerted a vicious ingenuity to make that concession as little valuable to popular liberty as possible. Accordingly they annihilated—they totally annihilated, the 40s. franchise in Ireland, not only where it depended on a freehold of a life or lives subject to a heavy rent, and therefore capable of being abused—but also where it arose from a fee-simple estate, not subject to any rent whatsoever. This was not all—they raised the franchise to what is an enormously high valuation in a poor country

—that is, to ten pounds annual value over rent and charges; and that, I repeat, in a very poor country, where ten pounds a year is certainly of three times the importance of that sum in this country. But even this was not all—they rendered actual residence and occupation of *the entire freehold*—mark, of *the entire freehold*—necessary to constitute a vote. But even this was not all—they superadded a most tedious, vexatious, expensive, and, in many instances, totally impracticable mode of registry of voters, as a preliminary to the right of voting.

I wish to dwell upon this point, that the British Reformers may clearly comprehend how outrageously unjust it is still to augment the difficulties in the way of the right to vote in Ireland, and still further, positively, and directly, to diminish the number of Irish voters in Irish counties.

I will illustrate the atrocious working of the Peel-Wellington Disfranchising Bill by some instances of its practical operation. Most of those instances are taken from the counties in which the Orange interest prevails. For example: In Armagh there were 8,419 voters on the 40s. franchise. These were replaced by 1,087 ten-pound voters—that is, seven eighths were annihilated. In Cavan, 5,195 replaced by 781. In Down, 10,775 replaced by 1,902. In Donegal, 2,310 replaced by only 66. In Dublin County, the Metropolitan County, 2,490 replaced by 109. In Londonderry, 4,457 replaced by 839.

In Monaghan, 12,452 replaced by 946; in Mayo, 23,672 replaced by 335; Roscommon, 7,777 replaced by 470; Sligo, 4,551 replaced by 303; in Tyrone, 6,468 replaced by 701; in Galway, 32,055 replaced by 1812.

I need not continue the catalogue. These numbers show that the Peel-Wellington measure took, in twelve counties in Ireland, their votes from 110,612 voters, and replaced them by only 9,351. Thus, in little more than one-third of that country, destroying the franchise to the extent of more than 100,000 voters. The result of the lists of voters in the remaining counties, would be found not to differ materially from those I have above enumerated.

I now appeal to every honest and candid Reformer in Great Britain, whether the first step to a real and not mock or delusive Reform in Ireland, should not be to increase, not diminish, the franchise. Many of our counties were reduced to the station of Close Boroughs. The popular rights were nearly destroyed. If Stanley intended to give us Reform, real Reform, honest Reform, would not his first effort be to increase the franchise, to augment the voters; and to give, at least, a reasonable portion of the people a voice in the choice of Representatives?

Judge, then, honest and manly Reformers of Great Britain, of the grief and indignation with which your equally honest and determined brother Reformers of Ireland receive the Stanley Reform Bill, the operation of which is, not to augment, but still further to diminish, the number of our county voters.

Reflect on this, which is the literal and plain fact, that the Tories contrived, under the shadow of the Catholic Relief Bill, to render as oligarchical, as close, and of course as corrupt as they possibly could, all the Irish counties—and that the only county Reform to be given us by Stanley is, to

make those counties more oligarchical, more close, and therefore more liable to corruption.

Let any one of you after this ask, why is Ireland discontented? Why is Ireland disturbed! Alas! do you not perceive *the principle* on which Whigs and Tories, with indiscriminate recklessness, govern Ireland?—The principle of never doing us, in any instance, justice, lest we should become so strong as to be able to put an end to our other oppressions.

What I assert and insist on is, that the Irish Reform Bill ought to augment the franchise and increase the number of voters in our counties, as the English and Scotch Reform Bills have augmented the one and increased the other. It would be unjust to leave us stationary when the other parts of the empire increase the quantity of human freedom. It is doubly unjust to leave us stationary while we are suffering under a recent and most iniquitous diminution of our franchises, and when there is an increase in the other divisions of the empire. But it transcends in injustice when the other parts of the empire are augmented in franchise, to have an actual diminution take place in Ireland.

No country in the world was ever treated so badly by an *unnative* Government as Ireland has been by the Government of England. I could demonstrate that Poland had never so much reason to complain of Russia, nor Greece of the Turks—but I confess that the conduct of this *reforming* Administration towards Ireland fills me with more of resentment than all the past.

Reformers of Great Britain, you have no interest in Ireland's being ill governed. On the contrary,

your interest is that we should be well governed and prosperous. I therefore, but much more readily, relying on your generous sympathies, appeal to you from the injustice and insult now offered us.

Recollect that there will be, by your Reform Bill, the following rights of suffrage—the following franchises established in England:—

1. The franchise of 40s. freeholders for a life, or lives. This franchise requires occupation of the freehold by the freeholder.

2. The franchise of 40s. freeholders in fee-simple. This franchise is to continue in England, and does not require actual occupation.

3. The franchise of £10. clear yearly value for any freehold estate, whether for life or in fee. This franchise does not require actual occupation by the freeholder.

4. The franchise of similar value to copyholders. This franchise is, for the first time, given by the English Reform Bill, and introduces a numerous class of new voters.

5. The original lessee, or the assignee of a term originally of at least sixty years, of the clear yearly value of £10. This is a new franchise, and does not require actual occupation.

6. The original lessee, or the assignee of a term originally of at least twenty years, of the clear yearly value of £50. This is a new franchise, and does not require actual occupation.

7. The sub-lessee, or assignee of a sub-lease of a term not less, originally, than sixty years, with a clear profit of £10. This is a new franchise, but requires actual occupation. It is the first franchise in England which is encumbered by the necessity of actual occupation.

8. The sub-lessee, or assignee of a sub-lease of a term not less, originally, than twenty years, of the clear annual value of £50. This is a new franchise, but it requires actual occupation.

9. Any tenant whatsoever, liable to a *bona fide* rent of £50. a-year. This is a new franchise, and requires actual occupation.

Such is to be the state of the elective franchise in England. It consists altogether of nine different classes of voters, and is an augmentation of former rights by no less than seven classes, and some of those classes are multitudinous in their nature—that is, capable of giving rights of voting to *many* individuals out of *one* property.—How melancholy and miserable is the contrast which the state of Ireland is destined to afford.

In Ireland we are to have but *four* classes of voters.

1. The existing one, a freehold of £10. clear annual value. This franchise requires actual occupation.

2. The existing right of freehold of £20. clear annual value. This does not require actual occupation.

3. The lessee, or assignee of a term of originally not less than fourteen years, of the clear yearly value of £20. This is a new franchise, and does not require actual occupation.

4. The sub-lessee, or assignee of a sub-lease of a term of not less, originally, than fourteen years, of the clear annual value of £20. This is a new franchise, and requires actual occupation.

These are all—and thus England has, at present,



two franchises, and acquires, by the Reform Bill, seven additional franchises. Ireland has at present two franchises, and acquires, by the Reform Bill, only two more.

England, a rich country, has two franchises of 40s., multitudinous in their nature, and only one requiring actual occupation. Four franchises of £10., one only of which requires actual occupation; besides two franchises of £50. annual value, one only of which requires actual occupation; and one franchise of mere payment of £50. a year rent.

Mark the contrast with Ireland—Ireland, a poor country, has no 40s. franchise, has only one £10. franchise, and even that franchise requires actual occupation. Ireland has, then, but three franchises of the enormous value to us of £20. annual value, and one of these three requires actual occupation.

To put this matter in a still more clear point of view—Let me take in England a single estate worth £50. a year, and in the hands of an occupying tenant who pays that rent for it. Now such a property as that could, in England, qualify no less than twenty-six persons to vote, while in Ireland such a property could not possibly qualify more than three persons to vote.

Thus, then, the English are to have the advantage, and I heartily rejoice at it, of seven new classes of voters—of nine classes in all; Ireland is to have but four classes—two only being new classes; that is, in new classes the English Bill is to the Irish as seven to two; in classes generally, as nine to four. But this approximation in the general classes is proved to be quite delusive, when you recollect that, in point of valued property, En-

gland has an advantage equal to twenty-six against three, or more than eight to one.

Thus, in new franchise, the English Bill is seven to two better than the Irish. In popular character as arising from property, it is more than eight, very nearly nine to one better than the Irish Bill; and let it always be recollected, that this difference is enormously aggravated by the fact, that Ireland is beyond comparison the less wealthy country.

Let me not be misunderstood—I do not in the least desire to diminish the advantages which England possesses. On the contrary, I say it with the utmost sincerity, my ardent desire would be to augment these advantages. I am a radical Reformer, and on principle think every Englishman ought to have a right to vote. I quote, therefore, the advantages of the English Reform Bill—and they are very great—only to show how defectively the Irish Bill is, as I firmly believe, wilfully and designedly made.

This Letter has run into such length, that I must pause, and reserve the residue of this my first complaint for another Letter.

I have hitherto confined my attention to show the necessity that exists to augment the number of voters in our counties, and to prove that no sensible augmentation can take place under the Irish Reform Bill. I have shown the to us insulting contrast of the increase of franchises and of voters given to England. In my next Letter I will prove, that the practical effect of the Irish Bill will be to diminish the number of voters, although an increase is so imperatively required by every principle of justice and common sense.

Reformers of Great Britain, recollect that we have honestly and zealously stood by you in the contest for Reform. When your Reform Bill was in danger, we flung overboard our own grievances and our just resentments—nay, more—had Wellington found any set of men mad enough to join him, in attempting to govern the country to the exclusion of Earl Grey, and had a resort been made to Polignac Ordinances instead of Acts of Parliament, you would have found your constitutional liberties supported by one million of Irishmen in arms, true to your sacred cause to the last of their blood and their breath. British Reformers, do not we deserve your peaceable but determined assistance to compel the Administration, and to induce the Parliament to give us a Reform Bill equally satisfactory with that of England or of Scotland?

I have the honour to be,

your faithful Servant,

**DANIEL O'CONNELL.**

## LETTER II.

“This is essentially a Conservative measure.”—*Speech of Crampton, Solicitor-General for Ireland, on the second reading of the Irish Reform Bill.*

*London, May 29, 1832.*

**BROTHER REFORMERS**—Look to my motto—see how it has verified my worst fears. The candid but indiscreet avowal of the Irish Law Officer, by whose hand this Irish Reform Bill was drawn up, places beyond a doubt the real intentions of the Irish Government, and the real nature of the Irish Reform Bill.

It is “a Conservative measure.” English Reformers, mark that, I most earnestly implore you. If you have any sympathy for Ireland—if you regret her wrongs, and the complicated injustice which she has for centuries endured at the hands of the British Government, and which she never endured with more of harshness and of contumely than from the Anglesey-Stanley Administration, now inflicted on that unhappy country. If, I repeat, you have sympathy for her sufferings, or indignation at the injustice done and intended towards Ireland, rouse, I entreat you, now, and rescue us from the fatal effects of this “Conservative measure.” How I thank the Solicitor-General for the word!!

Shall I despair of co-operation from the British Reformers? Alas, I fear that the complaints of the miseries inflicted on Ireland, and of the insults now offered her, will fall on the dull cold ear of British apathy as the complaints and groans of former periods have wasted themselves in useless attempts to rouse attention, and to procure redress.

I, however, shall have done my duty; and although I may do it here in vain, I am not without resources—nor shall any sickness of the heart come over me. I am one of those who have taught the “hereditary bondsmen” of Ireland, that they who contend for freedom must principally rely on their own exertions.

I return with heaviness and sorrow to the Irish Reform Bill, and proceed to justify Mr. Crampton, and to show how well that Bill merits the appellation he gave it of a “Conservative measure.”

In my first Letter, after stating the eight distinct topics of great magnitude on which the Irish Reform Bill falls glaringly short of the rights and privileges which Reform will give to England and to Scotland, I proceeded to develop the first of them—that which related to the most important of all—namely, the extension of the elective franchise.

It will be recollected that I insisted that Ireland had peculiar claims for a great extension of franchise, on account principally of the gross injustice inflicted on her in the spoliation of that right by the Wellington-Peel Administration.

Let me remind my readers, that I shewed, by a reference to twelve counties only, that the voters in those counties were diminished by the Wellington-Peel measure, from 110,612 to the compa-

ratively small number of 9,351. I produced the details, in order to justify the conclusion that the reduction of voters was equally great all over the entire country. I owe to myself to add that Mr. Stanley, in his speech on the second reading of the Irish Reform Bill, has shown that I have understated the argument and underrated the calculation to my own prejudice; for he distinctly admitted that the £10. voters who replaced the 40s. freeholders did not exceed 20,000.

Now the 40s. freeholders were admitted to be more than 200,000.

This, therefore, may be taken as a conceded and undoubted truth, that we come to the consideration of the Irish Reform Bill with the fact unquestioned and unquestionable, that Ireland has recently suffered this injustice—namely, that her voters have been diminished from 200,000 to 20,000; a sacrifice, at once, of no less a number than 180,000 voters!!!

Add to this, that England, where the voters are not for the present diminished in anything—I mean in counties—gets seven additional classes of voters, and Ireland gets only two classes.

I refer to my former Letter for these details. I mention them now only to show how imperative it is in point of justice, honesty, and common sense, to give Ireland an increase of franchise.

I have, however, asserted, and I will soon proceed to prove, that the Irish Reform Bill, instead of increasing—as it plainly ought—our county electors, actually diminishes their number!!!

Let me, before I go into that proof, place the injustice done to Ireland in another, and I think a striking point of view. I complain with the more



bitterness of the injustice of lessening our county voters, because England gets a very great addition to her county voters, and Scotland gets an enormous increase to her county voters.

England, as I have shown, in addition to her present two classes of voters, gets seven multitudinous new classes. Scotland profits still more extensively in the change. Her present county voters do not exceed 1,100; her new county constituency will exceed 30,000. This fact I have from the men in Scotland best suited to ascertain its perfect accuracy. I do not hesitate, therefore, to pledge myself to its truth. Scotland multiplies her county voters by nearly thirty times their present number. She has 1,100; she gets more than 30,000.

But, if such be the case of England, as it certainly is, with her voters multiplied by at least four; and if such be the case of Scotland, with her voters multiplied by thirty; what ought to be the case of Ireland? I ask, whether I am unreasonable when I say, that Ireland ought to have her voters multiplied, not by thirty—I do not ask that—but at least by four. I do ask and insist on that addition.

But, in point of fact, the number of county voters is to be diminished by the Irish Reform Bill. I proceed to prove the truth of this assertion.

I take up, in order to avoid all cavil or dispute, the calculations made by Mr. Stanley himself. I will do nothing more than correct these calculations where they are manifestly and beyond controversy mistaken—mistaken, not wilfully on his part, but by reason of his ignorance of the details.

Mr. Stanley calculated the Irish voters thus; £50. freeholders at 22,000, and he is borne out by the Parliamentary Returns; £20. freeholders, at

9,000, and he is also borne out by the Parliamentary Returns; and £10. freeholders, at 20,000, and he is borne out by the Parliamentary Returns.

This would give for Ireland 52,000 voters, and so Mr. Stanley stated it. But 52,000 on a population of eight millions is exceedingly small. However, I do not rest for the present on this point. I proceed to show the error in Mr. Stanley's calculations, though it is drawn, I admit, from Parliamentary Returns.

Let me just allow that the calculation of £10. freeholders is accurate; there are of them 20,000, in round numbers. But the returns show the £50. freeholders to be 22,000, in round numbers; and the £20. freeholders to be 9,000, making together 31,000.

Here lies Mr. Stanley's mistake. He did not know that the reason of the accuracy of the return of the £10. voters is, that it comprises a space of only *three* years, and, therefore, that the list of *casualties* is small, few have died off in that period, few have disposed of their freeholds. But the return of the £50. freeholders comprises the space of forty-one years, beginning so long ago as the year 1790, and including grandfathers and fathers, as well as persons of the present generation; in short, including many who are dead, ten, twenty, thirty, and more years.

The return of the £20. freeholders is pretty much in the same predicament—it goes back in all cases eight years, and in many to the year 1795. It includes a multitude of persons who have been dead many years. The practical result at the late elections has been, that the £50. and £20. voters have never been found to equal one-sixth of the

number of names on the registry roll—not near one-sixth in many cases—perhaps, not one-ninth. I, who have been elected for three counties, can speak with confidence on this subject.

We shall now see what the amount of the voters in Ireland is by taking up Mr. Stanley's calculations, corrected only where his ignorance of Irish subjects makes that correction necessary. The ultimate and accurate result will be thus:—

Of £10. freeholders	-	-	-	20,000
Of £50. and £20. less than one-sixth				
of 31,000, say one-sixth of 30,000				5,000

Total registered voters in Ireland 25,000.

But to this is to be added a formidable list of voters of another description—namely, the clergymen of the Established Church, who have a right to vote out of their benefices. They amount to, at the lowest computation, 1,100; but as I take every thing in the most unfavourable way to my argument, I will write them down only 1,000—making altogether for Ireland 26,000 voters—of whom, however, four to the hundred are parsons—men, who, with *very, very* few exceptions, vote for Anti-Reformers, Tories, and Orangeists.

This, then, is the state of Ireland at present. There are 26,000 voters, of whom 1,000 are violent enemies of popular rights and liberties.

These 26,000 are all that are entitled to vote out of a population of seven millions. I will show, presently, why I say seven millions.

When the Union was established between England and Ireland, the representation of the latter was based on a franchise, which was, in 1829, found to comprise near 220,000 voters of all classes. If

Ireland now got, as England gets, seven new classes of voters, surely our voters ought to be 370,000 at the least. Lord Althorpe has repeatedly declared, that the new franchise, given to England, would bring in half a million of new voters. Of these take but 300,000 for the counties; then the case would stand thus:—The English counties, as compared with the Irish, in point of population, appear, by the returns of 1821, to be as 12 to 7; but take them to be as 12 to 6. Observe now, I sink and diminish the case of Ireland in every instance, that no man should by possibility say I am unreasonable; but taking it to be 6 to 12 instead of 7 to 12, yet England getting 300,000 new votes in her counties, Ireland ought to get 150,000, which, being added to her former 220,000, on the basis of the Union, would give her 370,000 county voters.

Mark, British Reformer—honest British Reformer—that Ireland has but 26,000 voters instead of 370,000—an injustice to the extent of 344,000 voters. But what ought to be my sensations of disgust and indignation, when I know, as I shall prove, that the 26,000 existing voters, instead of being increased by the Reform Bill, are to be actually diminished?

Take this injustice in another point of view. Scotland, with a population of only 2,365,807, has an agricultural population certainly not exceeding one million and a half. The cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow alone have, the former 162,156, and the latter 202,426 inhabitants, making together 364,582. I do not, therefore, underrate the agricultural population of Scotland at one million and a half.

Now, the exceedingly defective and avowedly

partial enumeration of Ireland gives a return of 7,734,365 inhabitants.

In the almost total failure of trade and manufactures in Ireland, I am confident no man will accuse me of exaggerating the agricultural population of Ireland at seven millions.

Now, contrast Scotland, under the Reform Bill, with Ireland.

Scotland, for one million and a half of her inhabitants, will have a constituency of 30,000 voters.

Ireland, for seven millions of her inhabitants, will have a constituency not exceeding, as I shall presently show, 25,000 voters. I implore every man, who values justice and fair dealing, to look at that picture, and at this. If we were Scotch, we should have 140,000 voters—we are Irish, and we are allowed in all only 25,000.

If we were English, we should get 150,000 *additional* voters—that is, mark, 150,000 in addition to 220,000. We do not get one additional voter because we are Irish—not one—nay, our present number is to be diminished.

Follow me in this last point, and I think I will make it demonstration that this Bill will diminish the voters in our counties. Thus, at present, every qualified person in twenty-five boroughs having representatives in Parliament, are entitled to vote in county elections; they are so entitled, whether they have votes for the borough representatives or not. These county voters are persons in trade or of independent means, residing in the towns, and are, beyond any comparison, the most patriotic and liberal portion of the constituency; they were, and are Whigs, and Reformers almost to a man;

they are, accordingly, to be struck out of the county constituency by the **CONSERVATIVE MEASURE** of the Irish Reform Bill.

Let me, for example, take my own county, the county of Kerry. The £10. registered voters in my county are only 178, and of the voters more than 80 are in the town of Tralee. These 80 voters will be struck out of the county by the Irish Reform Bill, and thus the county constituency, in its popular shape, will be reduced to 99!!!

In the county of Clare, there will be a loss in the town of Ennis of near one hundred voters to the county. In the county of Cork, the county will lose the independent voters of Mallow, Bandon, Kinsale, and Youghal. Tipperary will lose the voters in Cashel and Clonmel. In short, in 25 towns, voters, on an average of at least the number of a hundred in each town, will be lost to the independent county interests. I understate the loss of the entire at 2,500 annual voters.

On the other hand, there will of course be some increase, by reason of the two new classes of chattel voters. But taking all Ireland, as it really is, at 25,000 freehold votes, I defy any man seriously to assert, that the chattel voters will, at £20. clear profit, (for that is the qualification,) amount to 1,250. Yet I will go beyond any possible exaggeration, and I will suppose the chattel voters will amount to 1,500. Yet, as the counties lose on the borough towns 2,500 votes, as I have already shown, it will have an ultimate loss of county votes, amounting to 1000, on a total of 26,000, reducing our county constituency to only 25,000.

Of these 25,000, full 1000 will be benefited clergymen—leaving all Ireland but 24,000 county



voters, and the Clergy of the Established Church four per cent. on the entire.

Yes, this is indeed a **CONSERVATIVE MEASURE**. It places Ireland in a state of degradation and contumely, not to be thought of without pain and disgust.

Scotland changes the county constituency from 1,100 fictitious voters to 30,000 real and substantial voters.

England adds 300,000 to her county voters, whilst Ireland, struck down by Wellington and Peel to 26,000 county voters, receives, for her only consolation, a shifting of scenery, and a real and substantial diminution of 1,000 county voters.

I confess I cannot bear this injustice; it exceeds my endurance; but I will not waste my breath in idle anger.

In the first place, I appeal to the Reformers of Great Britain. In the House of Commons, the Reformers have little sympathy for us Irish—plenty of lip service; but, upon every division, they will vote in shoals against the extension of Irish rights.

As to the Tories, I repeat what I have already said—they will, on every division, vote with the Ministry for the restriction of the Irish right of suffrage, and against us, who will struggle to the last, to obtain for Ireland as good a Bill as is to be immediately the law in England. Against Ireland the Ministers will command many, very many, of the Whigs, and all the Tories, to the last man.

In conclusion, I demand these things for Ireland; I refuse to accept, with satisfaction, any thing less; I will take any instalment of public liberty, but I will not release one particle of my entire claim.

I ask for the counties in Ireland these franchises:—

First—The restoration of the forty shilling franchise in fee, and perpetual freehold.

I ask this franchise, because it is preserved and made perpetual in England.

Second—I ask for Ireland, that the £10. franchise, on terminable freeholds, should be reduced in Ireland from a £10. qualification to one of £7. annual value—£7. in Ireland being a larger qualification relatively to all the necessaries of life, than £10. in England.

Thirdly—I demand a similar £7. franchise in Ireland in chattel leases of 14 years, being the usual occupation tenure on extensive tracts in Ireland, and that term being recognised in the Act relative to the qualification of Deputy Lieutenants in Ireland, and also in the Irish Reform Bill.

Fourthly—I demand that no freeholder in towns should be disfranchised in the counties of which such towns have been and are parts. No town in Ireland gets a Member either original or additional—Why should the existing right be taken away? This was one of the principles of representation on which the Union was formed. Why should it now be unjustly, as well as capriciously taken away? The Reform Bill will be both unjust and insulting if it interferes with this right. On behalf of the people of Ireland, I respectfully, but firmly insist on its continuance.

Reformers of Great Britain, we deserve your co-operation, we seek nothing but what is just and reasonable, we will not be content with less. If Stanley's *Conservative Measure* is carried, the

people of Ireland, wounded in their just pride, and affected in their national interests, will feel it necessary to counteract Stanley's plans of Oligarchy by increased and continued agitation and excitement. In short, we *will* not be insulted and done injustice to with impunity.

Reformers of Great Britain, it is not to you, but in aid of your liberties, that we make those declarations, which may be called threats. We ask your aid, we deserve your good will. We have stood by you, and we are ready again to share your battle; but we should not deserve your co-operation, if we did not feel a confidence of ultimate, and, perhaps, more complete success by our own means, and from our own resources.

Aid us, then, because we deserve *your* aid.

I have the honour to be, Brother Reformers,

Your most faithful Servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

## LETTER III.

“This is essentially a conservative measure.”—*Lord Crampton, Solicitor-General for Ireland.*

BROTHER REFORMERS,

*London, May 31, 1832.*

I PROCEED in the painful task of developing the injurious and insulting nature of the Reform Bill intended for Ireland.

Of the eight objections which I stated to that Bill, I have already fully canvassed but one: It was that which related to the franchise in counties at large.

I undertook to show, and I have shown, that—  
“Whilst the English Reform Bill greatly enlarged the elective franchise in the English counties, and the Scotch Bill exceedingly increased that franchise in Scotch counties, the Irish Reform Bill does not increase the county franchise at all; but, on the contrary, diminishes the number of county voters.”

The abstract of my argument is fit to be repeated. It is this—England acquires for her counties at least 300,000 additional voters—Ireland will acquire no increase.

Scotland converts her 1,100 fictitious and parchment county voters into 30,000 substantial voters—Ireland actually diminishes the number of her county voters.

I attempted to calculate the amount of that diminution. I estimated it at 1,000—that is, Ireland, having at present 26,000 voters, I draw this inference, that there would be a diminution of 1,000. I draw that inference, rather from local knowledge, than from Parliamentary documents. Nay, the Parliamentary documents are framed more to weaken my calculation of the precise amount of the loss, than to confirm it. But the maps, which would point out the errors in those documents, are not as yet printed. It is, therefore, impossible for me to be certain as to the intended contents of each of our future Boroughs, particularly whether or not they comprise entire parishes, or only portions of parishes.

Under these circumstances, I prefer running no risk of inaccuracy, and I, therefore, abandon the calculation I had made of an absolute loss of 1,000 voters, and leave the amount of the diminution of voters unascertained. It must be large, because no less than twenty-five towns are to be deducted from our county constituency. Yet, as the exact loss is *disputatious*, I consent to give Mr. Stanley this advantage, namely, that it may be smaller than I have stated it. But, at all events, it must be considerable.

This result, however, is inevitable, that whilst Ireland, with an agricultural population of seven millions, is to have a constituency of only 26,000 voters, Scotland, with an agricultural population of only one million and a half, is to have a county constituency of 30,000 voters.

Having dismissed the county constituency, I now proceed to that of the cities, towns, and boroughs. My assertion is—and this is my second objection.

to Stanley's Bill—"That the Irish Reform Bill creates too high and too Aristocratic a franchise in the Irish towns and cities. It alters the present law to the prejudice of the people, and in favour of the Oligarchy.

I proceed to prove this my second objection. To perceive the force of my proof, it is necessary to understand the present situation of our Boroughs.

They consist of eight cities and towns that are counties of themselves, and twenty-five towns, that are now portions of the surrounding counties.

Of these, the eight first are what, under the existing system, may well be called open places; of the twenty-five Boroughs, *ten*, and only *ten*, are pure Nomination Boroughs, by means of their original constitution; *eight* more have become Nomination Boroughs by mere usurpation, having been originally free; and *seven* are, or rather ought to be, open and free. There is, besides these, one other, the rottenest and worst of the entire—the College of Dublin.

In the open Boroughs in Ireland are to be found, at present, a constituency, not exactly the same in all, but between them are to be found a constituency of this description in the following classes:—

1. Freeholders of 40s. and upwards in fee.
2. Freeholders of 40s. for terminable freeholds.
3. Freemen by birth, servitude or marriage.
4. Freemen by grace especial.
5. Householders of £5. annual value.

Now these five classes are to be swept away by the Reform Bill!—that is, they are to be allowed to drop off until the entire shall be extinct, and in

their place there is to be substituted an immediate and continuous franchise of householders of £10. annual value.

The five classes which belonged to the operative and humble classes are to be extinguished, and the higher and more Aristocratic right is alone to remain. The £10. franchise, besides, is far too high for our towns. Let any man only think that this £10. qualification is that which is to subsist in London, and also in Portarlington, and also in Ennis. Is it not plain, that the class of persons who thus will have a right of voting in London, (and nobody rejoices more at the extent to which it is carried in London than I do), but is it not plain that the right in London will extend to the poorer classes, whilst in Portarlington, Ennis, Kinsale, &c. &c., the occupiers of £10. houses exclude the poorer classes, and are, beyond any comparison, of a more wealthy, at least, comparatively wealthy class? The £10. house franchise shuts out from the right of voting very few in London. It will shut out from that right nearly four-fifths of the inhabitants of the smaller towns in Ireland.

But why should the £5. householders be disfranchised? Had this been an *enfranchising*—that is, really a Reform Bill—would it strike off the ancient right of the £5. householders, to substitute the more narrow right of £10. householders? Why does this Reform Bill at once double the amount of the qualification? It would operate in directly the reverse manner if it were really a Reform Bill. It is, therefore, idle to call it any thing else than a “Conservative,” that is, an Anti-Reform measure.

Alas for Ireland! how little of sympathy or support does she obtain from English Reformers. Here is a Bill, purporting to increase our popular privileges. It strikes off five popular rights. It takes the highest of the pecuniary qualifications in these rights, and it doubles that qualification; and then Stanley says, that this is a Reform Bill; and the Reformers of England are satisfied with his high and haughty dictation, and leave us to our fate.

But I persevere—I continue to demonstrate the iniquity of treating Ireland thus—I stop to point out some of the atrocious consequences. Take Downpatrick; the present number of *resident* voters is 493—the Reform Bill will reduce the number to 220; that is, by way of reforming Downpatrick, Mr. Stanley strikes off, at a single blow, more than one half of the *resident* voters. He strikes off 273, leaving only 220. At Newry, he reduces the *resident* voters from 935 to 700—only 235 struck off. In Mallow, he finds a constituency of 524; whereupon, by way of reform, he reduces them to 200. In Dungarvon, he finds 871 voters, and he reforms them by his usual process of reduction to 210, striking off no less than 661.

Now this is called a Reform Bill for Ireland!! and it is thus that the honest Irish Reformers are to be treated by the contemptuous iniquity of the Irish side of the British Ministry.

Having thus established my second objection, and shown that the Irish Reform Bill is, in our towns and cities, a mere filching of the rights of the humbler classes, in order to vest the power of



election in an exclusive and excluding Oligarchy, I proceed to my third objection :—

“ That, although the Irish Reform Bill takes away the direct power of nomination in from ten to eighteen boroughs, yet it substitutes so narrow a basis of representation, as effectually to render those boroughs close boroughs, liable to the most gross and profligate corruption.”

Let it be borne in mind, that the only permanent franchise in our towns is to be the £10. house franchise.

In a poor country like Ireland, this is an enormously high rate of franchise. I have already observed on the difference between £10. in London and £10. in Tralee. They are, to be sure, the same in nominal and legal amount—but the man with an income of £10. a year in London is next to a pauper. With such an income in Tralee, or Ennis, he is rather in comfortable circumstances. But I do not leave the matter in theory—I come to the practical working of the mock Reform Bill.

Under the new Bill, the permanent constituency of Athlone, for instance, is set down in the Parliamentary Return as arising from 220 houses. Now, as amongst the occupiers of such houses, there will be of course women and minors, it is not too little to take off ten per cent. so as to find the actual voters—thus, Athlone will have but 198 voters. Bandon has 240 houses to confer votes ; there will, on this scale, be only 226 voters. Cashel, on a similar calculation, will have but 180 voters ; Coleraine, 170 voters ; Dungannon, only 145 voters ! Portarlington, 167 voters !

Let this paucity of voters but be looked at, and then let me ask, whether this is not just the species

of constituency most exposed to corruption? In England, fatal experience has shown, that the most profligate bribery and corruption have prevailed in Boroughs, ranging from 150 to 250 voters. This number, however, is to be the *Reform* constituency in very many towns in Ireland. In such boroughs as these, the briber has only to buy a simple majority. He then commands his return. Three or four thousand pounds will, therefore, command the return after the Reform, as it does under the present system—with this deplorable difference, that at present the transaction of the sale of these boroughs is one of great comparative innocence. It is simply a sale between two individuals: the one merely pays his money, and the other merely fills up, on parchment, a return to Parliament duly signed; and so the business closes. There is neither riot, drunkenness, perjury, or other immorality, save the sale of the right of legislation. But in the half-open boroughs, it is quite different. The voter must get liquor, as well as money. Liquor for weeks, perhaps, months, before the election. Then, there is the direct bribery; and then there is the Bribery Oath!

But I will go no farther. I will simply taunt the High Church Stanley. I will ask him, is this your Protestantism? Is this your veneration for religion? How can you dare to call that a Reform, which, while it takes away from one individual the unlawful power to name a legislator, throws before one hundred the strongest temptation to make that nomination through the horrible and God offending means of drunkenness, bribery, and soul-destroying perjury?

Stanley, you are warned. On you there will be

the guilt of opening the door to crime, unless you consent honestly to enlarge the town constituency.

But there is one way to dissipate the temptation, and to counteract the tendency of this Reform Bill. It is by rousing the higher impulses of patriotism and virtue—and this, I inform Stanley, *we will do* in Ireland. It will be necessary, to be sure, to continue public excitement, and to increase the resources of patriotic agitation. Excite and agitate we will, because it will be our bounden duty thus to shut out bribery and perjury.

Yet what a Statesman is this Stanley, who leaves us no other alternative, but either to submit to the consequences of public corruption, or to keep alive that higher tone of political feeling, which it is often difficult to manage, and oftentimes dangerous to attempt to control.

Lord Grey ought to understand, that the people of Ireland are as determined to insist on, and to exercise, constitutional privileges, as the people—the triumphant people of England. Let him reflect on this question—whether it would not be better to allow the Irish to enjoy those privileges in the quietude of the ordinary tide of affairs, rather than to make it necessary for them to raise the storm of political passions, in order to enforce and secure that enjoyment?

I have now to observe, that in few of the towns in England is there to be any diminution of the existing *resident* voters. In many of the towns in Ireland there is to be great reduction of the *resident* voters—and this by what is called a Reform Bill!!!

I have next to observe, that in all the Borough towns in Scotland an immense increase will take

place in the resident voters. Alas for poor Ireland! Behold the melancholy, the heart-sickening contrast in Ireland—there is in many towns to be a great diminution of *resident* voters!!!—and this by what is called a Reform Bill!!!

Why—why, in the name of common sense, not send Lord Anglesey as Governor-General to India, and make Stanley Commander in Chief of the Army! He is really more fit for that than for Ireland.

I conclude, by stating my demands on behalf of the Irish people, with regard to our cities and towns.

I demand then these franchises:—

First—The perpetuation of the franchises of all *resident* freemen, entitled to their freedom as of right, by birth, servitude, or marriage.

I ask for this franchise, because it is in substance preserved in the English Borough towns, and is reasonable in itself.

Secondly—I ask that, in our towns and cities, being counties in themselves, the occupying freeholders in fee, or of perpetual freehold of 40s. and upwards, should be preserved as they are in England.

Thirdly—I ask that, in such town and cities—that is, being counties in themselves, the £20. freeholders, though not occupying, should be allowed to vote.

Fourthly—In the towns, not being counties in themselves, occupying freeholders of 40s., seized in fee, or of perpetual freehold, should be allowed to retain, as in England, the elective franchise.

Fifthly—I ask, that the occupiers of houses of £5. annual value, instead of ten pounds, should

be allowed to vote. This is the old, long recognized right of householder suffrage in Irish towns. It ought not to be destroyed, or infringed upon; and, *least of all*, should it be wantonly destroyed by a Bill, purporting to be a Reform Bill.

There is only one alteration more that I seek in this section of the Reform Bill—it is, that it should not annihilate the right of any freeholder, in towns, not being counties of themselves, to vote for the county at large. This right at present exists only in occupying freeholders of ten pounds clear value, and in all freeholders of twenty pounds and upwards, clear value. Why should their rights be destroyed under the pretence—the false pretence—of a Reform?

Reformers of England—recollect that I have thus demonstrated these two things:—

First—That Stanley's Reform Bill will keep the constituency of all the counties in Ireland (having an agricultural population of at least seven millions) so low as about 26,000 voters; and this while England greatly increases her county constituency; and Scotland, for a million and a half of agricultural population, will have 30,000 voters—that is, Scotland will have about five times a greater relative number of county voters than Ireland, and England about twenty times a greater number. Is this just? Is this fair? Why are the people of Ireland to be thus insulted and outraged? Is it because Wellington and Peel most unjustly deprived the Irish people of one right, that Stanley shall be empowered by Earl Grey to perpetuate and increase the outrage—and, by contrast with England and Scotland, to add insult to injury?

Must not the Irish perceive—are we so stupid as not to perceive—that the giving an enlarged and liberal Reform to England, and an enlarged and liberal Reform to Scotland, and then flinging to Ireland a stingy, limited, restrictive, and almost mock Reform Bill, can originate only in one of two feelings?

Either a deliberate judgment, that the people of Ireland are unfit for, or unworthy of, equal constitutional privileges with the people of England and of Scotland;

Or a deliberate, base, contemptuous, insulting hatred of Ireland, and of the Irish people.

Let Earl Grey, and Mr. Stanley, take their choice of these excuses. It is nearly immaterial to us, whether they undervalue or despise us.

We are not disposed to submit to either injustice, or to contumely—we will not submit to either the one or the other.

Reformers of England, I say it not in vain boasting, much less in the spirit of more vain threatening—but *we are—we are—we are* EIGHT MILLIONS.—Eight millions of brave, but patient—resolute, but combining beings—Eight millions who already compelled Wellington and Peel to strike their ascendancy colours, and to liberate the Protestant Dissenters of England, as well as the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland; and that without violating any law, or injuring either person or property.

We are eight millions who have again peaceably, and without violating any law, rendered abortive the tithe system, and set the example to Great Britain of each man paying only his own clergyman.

British Reformers, what is it we require? Why, nothing more than an equal measure of Reform with England and Scotland. Shame upon the Irishman that would be content with less.

I have the honour to be, Brother Reformers,

Your faithful Servant,

**DANIEL O'CONNELL.**

## LETTER IV.

**BROTHER REFORMERS,**

*Parliament Street, June 8, 1832.*

It is my duty to commence this Letter, as I did my last, with a retraction of part of my former Letters. I do so with a heavy heart.

I have said, and repeated more than once, that what the people of Ireland demand is a Reform Bill for Ireland, similar in its concessions of popular rights with that obtained by the people of England.

Alas! I was mistaken. I greatly exaggerated the extent of our demands. We do not ask for a Bill equivalent to the English Bill, or any thing like it. We do not ask for the English franchises, or for any thing near in extent, or number, to those of England. Ours is a beggarly solicitation of some feeble approach to the English Bill. We, with "bated breath," and humble demeanour, ask only a faint, a distant resemblance to the English Bill.

That Bill passed the House of Commons with great and extensive franchise newly bestowed, on the people of England—but those franchises have since been much extended, and the rights of voting enormously increased by the House of Lords.

This has been done in two ways. First, by perpetuating the right to vote of forty shilling



freeholders for terminable interests ; and secondly, by making the pecuniary qualification, in almost all the new classes of franchise, depend on the value of *the estate*—not on *the income of the voter*. Thus, if the freehold estate be of the value of £10. and 5s., there may be at least two voters qualified by that property—the one having an income of only 5s. and the other of £10.

In fact, it is almost incalculable to what an extent the right of voting may be carried under the English Reform Bill, in pursuance of the amendments made in it by the House of Lords.

It is certainly somewhat singular, that the popular franchises should have been rendered more extensive by the House of Lords than they were by the Commons. I hope it is not to be accounted for by this, that the franchises are rendered by the Lords so extensive and comprehensive, as to give room for the creation of very many fictitious and paper voters.

I return from this digression to the Irish Reform Bill—I have already pointed out its gross, glaring, and contumelious defects, with reference to the voters in Irish counties, cities, and boroughs. These defects were the subject of my three first objections to that Bill. The three next ensuing objections relate to the mode of registering voters, and of taking the poll in Ireland. I will postpone these for the present, and in this Letter take up my seventh objection, and show its accuracy and force.

The seventh objection is; “That the Irish Reform Bill does not give Ireland her due and fair proportion of Representatives.”

The number of Irish Members, under the Irish

Reform Bill, is but one hundred and five—an increase of only five.

Now Wales, with a population of only 805,236, gets an increase of four Members. Ireland, with a population of eight millions, gets an increase of only five. That is, in other words, eight hundred thousand Welchmen are within one-fifth of being as valuable as eight millions of Irishmen. We humbly thank the English Ministry for this flattering compliment!!!

And there are men who believe that the people of Ireland will tranquilly bury in oblivion an insult of this overgrown magnitude.

Again, Scotland, with a population of 2,365,807, gets an increase of eight Members. Ireland, with a population of eight millions, gets an increase of only five. Who will condescend to take the trouble of calculating the exact ratio of insulting preference? Not I, truly. It is written with a pen of fire on hearts of adamant, and it will become legible in its own good time.

But this comparison is still more outrageous, more debasingly insulting, when we look at these relative proportions in another point of view. Wales has already twenty-four Members. Wales obtains an addition of one to every six. Scotland has already forty-five Members. Scotland obtains an addition of one to every five. Ireland has already one hundred Members. Ireland obtains an addition of one to every twenty!!!

Mark—Scotland increases one to five—Wales, one to six—Ireland, one to twenty! And I, an Irishman, live to write all this—and to write it without one particle of hope of *present* redress.

I may, however, defy any person to point out, in

the history of any country in the world, instances of such flagrant injustice—of such deep, studied, malignant contumely—I mean of any country in the world, Ireland alone excepted. But in Ireland, the instances are not few, nor rare, nor far between. They have been oft and oft repeated, from the treacherous massacre of Mullemart, where the Irish chieftains were invited to a feast, and assassinated so soon as they laid aside their good swords, down to that eternal stain on English annals—the profligately disgraceful breach of the Treaty of Limerick. Yes, in the records of English domination of Ireland, there are many and many transactions of equal turpitude. I will not, therefore, accuse Stanley of more than he merits. He is only the administrator *de malis non*—the executor of the stored, and, as yet, unapplied malignant mischiefs, treasured up for future use by former chief Governors, chief Secretaries, and English Managers of Ireland.

It may be said, that this invidious comparison might be, if not justified, at least palliated, on the ground that the former proportion of Irish Members exceeded, or even equalled, what Ireland was fairly and justly entitled to. I do readily admit, that if Ireland had already a more ample proportion, or even an exact proportion of Members with Wales or Scotland, we should have little or no right to complain. But the fact is, unhappily, the other way. Ireland, instead of having a fair proportion of Members at present, is already suffering great and unmerited injustice in that respect. The Union did not give her any thing like a due number of Representatives.

This will appear quite clear, if we look to the

manner in which the representation of Ireland was managed at the Union. The parricide Castlereagh, a name ever odious to the Irish ear, settled the proportion of Irish Members on a comparative ratio of population—exports, imports, and revenue, with England. The materials of his calculation were naturally exaggerated in favour of England, and understated for Ireland. This was to be expected; but even on his most unfavourable calculation, the matter stood thus—he allowed Ireland—

For Population . . . .	202 Members.
Exports . . . .	100
Imports . . . .	93
Revenue . . . .	39
	<hr/>
	434

The mean of these four quantities being  $108\frac{1}{2}$ .

Such was Castlereagh's calculation, interested as he was to diminish, as much as possible, the rights of Ireland. It will be seen that he left out a most important ingredient—namely, comparative rental.

No matter! Let us take it on Castlereagh's own calculation. Thus it is—it gave Ireland, after all imaginable reductions of calculation,  $108\frac{1}{2}$  Members. Now I do not mean to quarrel about the half of an Irishman. But what did Castlereagh do? Why, without any one plausible pretext, he at once, and without ceremony, cut down his own proved right, and struck off at once eight Members, giving to Ireland only one hundred Members. And why?—precisely, because *he could and would*. Nothing more. It was indeed—*Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas*.

**Mark, British Reformers**—if any thing Irish can command your attention—mark, I pray you, this fact:—That Ireland was, at the Union, spoliated of eight Members, proved by Castlereagh to be her due.

Now, if Stanley, and Lord Althorpe, and Lord John Russell, had one single particle of respect for decency, where Ireland is concerned, they would, at all events, have given us these eight Members. They may now prate about the Union as long as they like; Ireland despises such chattering. Here is the test of their regard for Ireland—the claim to eight Members is, in reason, common sense, justice, and decency, irresistible. They condescend to give her five, while they transfer the eight to Scotland, who had no such claim.

Is there any reason in the world why we should not get the eight—the Union eight—the Castlereagh's eight?

I have, however, said, that Castlereagh designedly omitted one ingredient, namely, the comparative rental of both countries. His omission was supplied, and the gross perversions by which he diminished the rights of Ireland to an adequate representation, were fully exposed in a valuable book, printed by Mr. Newenham, a gentleman who had been many years a Member of the Irish Parliament, an accomplished scholar, and a patriot.

The following was the result of Mr. Newenham's demonstration. It showed that Ireland was, in truth, entitled to representation in the following ratio:—

	Members.
For the comparative Population	- 228
Exports . . .	179
Imports . . .	168
Revenue . . .	85
Rental . . .	186
	846

The mean of these five quantities is 169½.

Again I throw off the half—but thus I show, that the fair proportion of Ireland was, at the Union, 169 Members. We, therefore, did not get two-thirds of our proper proportion of representatives, when the deplorable Union was forced on Ireland by the combination of fraud, bribery, and blood.

We ask at present only 125 Members. High as our rights are, we merely ask to be put into a situation of comparative liberality. Perhaps we deserve the neglect we experience from English Reformers, and the contempt with which the Ministry deal with us, for being so mean and pitiful as to accept of less than justice.

But it has been said, and repeated, and re-echoed, that the representation in England has a double basis, namely, *population* and *revenue*. This is by no means universally, or generally true; but I will consent to take it so.

Let us then see what the result of the calculation will be, taking for ingredients, nothing more than *population* and *revenue*.

I wish to impress this part of the case of Ireland as strongly as I possibly can on the minds of British Reformers; and for this excellent reason—that this has been supposed to be the weakest part of our

case—although, in fact and truth, it is quite the strongest and most irresistible.

Recollect, my present basis consists of population and revenue.

I will take care that there shall be no cavil, nor any dispute about the data I go upon, either with respect to population or revenue. I will take the revenue in the most palpably unfavourable way for Ireland—and I will take the population separately, on the returns of 1821, and of 1832. In short, I defy any man to controvert either my candour or the certainty of my data.

Now, upon the Population Returns of 1821, the population of England was, in round numbers, twelve millions—of Ireland seven millions. But the twelve millions in England have 500 representatives. The seven millions in Ireland are, therefore, on the score of comparative population, entitled to 291 representatives.

However, the revenue must be taken into account. I will, in the first place, refer to the Report drawn up in 1830 by Mr. Rice, as Chairman of the Irish Committee, and printed by the House of Commons, in three volumes. It appears, by the details of that Report, that the Irish pay a full one-seventh of the revenue. Take the principal items of wine, sugar, coffee, and tobacco; the revenue from these articles was, in the preceding year, in England, £11,576,713., while it was in Ireland, £1,665,718., being more than one-seventh. I am content, however, to take it at one-eighth.

It will be seen that this is a most moderate demand. The entire revenue of Great Britain last year was, according to the Finance Account published by Parliament, £48,325,215.—while

that attributed to Ireland was only £4,560,897. But this estimate is egregiously and palpably fallacious; because Ireland does not get credit for the far greater part of the duties of Customs which are paid by her inhabitants, neither for teas, nor for any other, the produce of the Eastern world—such as silks, spices, drugs, &c., none of which are imported direct into Ireland; neither does she get credit for the amount of duty on timber, sugar, cotton, coffee, paper, glass, wine, and various other articles, which are imported into Ireland from England. Now it is ascertained by the last separate account kept for Ireland, that for teas alone, Ireland paid duty to the extent of half a million annually, and as scarcely any one article, liable to Customs' duty, is now imported direct into Ireland, surely it is not too much to say, that the inhabitants of Ireland actually contribute on all those articles, exclusive of teas, to the amount of one million sterling. This will bring the account of comparative revenue to this exact state.—

Revenue credited Great Britain	.	.	£48,325,215
Deduct teas consumed in Ireland	£500,000		
Deduct for all other Customable articles consumed in Ireland	1,000,000	1,500,000	
Real revenue of Great Britain	.	.	46,825,215
Revenue credited to Ireland	.	.	4,560,897
Add duty on teas consumed in Ireland,	500,000		
Add duties on all other Customable articles imported from England	1,000,000	1,500,000	
Total Irish Revenue	.	.	6,060,897

It is thus plain that Ireland pays more than one-eighth of the revenue paid by Great Britain. Let it not be forgotten, that I make these calculations



in so unfavourable a way for Ireland, that I give England (with her 500 Members) credit, on the score of revenue, for at least two millions paid by Scotland. Taking, therefore, the Population Return of 1821, and this estimate of Irish revenue at one-eighth—the right of Ireland to representation will stand thus—

For Population, on 500	291
For Revenue, on 500 $\frac{1}{8}$	62
	<hr/>
	353
	<hr/>
The one-half as the medium	176

So that, taking the Population Return of 1821, as giving seven millions in Ireland to twelve in England, and the Irish revenue so low as one-eighth of the English, I make a clear case for no less than 176 Members for Ireland.

But it may be said, that there are errors in my estimate of the revenue, and that, therefore, my conclusion is fallacious. This assertion is true only to this extent—that my estimate is erroneous to the loss and disfavour of Ireland—and that my conclusion is fallacious, because Ireland is really entitled to many more than 176 Members.

However, I defy any person to cavil with another, and the last estimate that I shall make on this subject.

I take up the Population Return of 1832. England has, by that return, a population of thirteen millions—Ireland, a population of eight millions—on a representation of 500 Members for England, on thirteen millions, Ireland would be entitled for her eight millions to at least 307 Members.

Now come back to the revenue. Great Britain £48,325,215.—Ireland, £4,560,897. Credit Ire-

land with the duty on *teas* alone, Parliamentary evidence shows that to be at least half a million; add that half million, as you are bound to do, to the Irish revenue, and you raise it to £5,060,897. You must, at the same time, deduct that half million from the British revenue, and you sink it to £47,825,215. Though it will be seen that this deduction is by no means necessary to my argument.

All I claim for Ireland is one-tenth of the revenue of Great Britain—that is all.

Look at the foregoing specifications of the revenue, and see whether it be possible for any one to deny that Ireland pays one-tenth of the revenue—one full tenth. I have shown she pays much more, but I rest on one-tenth.

Resume with me the calculation, and you will find, that Ireland, on the combined basis of *population* and *revenue*, has the following rights:—

Population, 8 to 13, on 500, gives	307
Revenue, 1 to 10, on 500, gives	50
	—357
One half as the medium . . . .	178

If justice were done to Ireland, if any thing approaching to justice were done to Ireland, she would have 178 Members; and the case, on the combined basis of population and revenue, is quite irresistible to the mind of every fair and just man.

— It may, perhaps, be amusing to recollect that, on the return of 1821, the proportion of Irish population, capable of bearing arms, was 1,664,437, and that of Great Britain, was 2,928,951. The proportions are still more favourable to Ireland on the last returns, and thus Ireland has a large claim

for increased representation, as sustained by physical force.

I recapitulate these points.

First.—According to the vilest of the vile, Castlereagh, Ireland ought to have 108 Members. We get but 105. Ireland, therefore, in this, the most abject and degrading view, is defrauded of three Members.

Secondly.—According to the view of the documents on which Castlereagh made his calculation, as corrected by Newenham, we ought to have 169 Members. We get but 105. Ireland is therefore defrauded, in this view, of no less than 64 Members.

Thirdly.—According to the combined basis of *population* and *revenue*—taking the return of 1821—and the revenue of Ireland as *one-eighth*, Ireland ought to have 176 Members. She gets but 105 Members. She is, therefore, defrauded to the extent of 71 Members.

Fourthly.—According to the same combined basis of *population* and *revenue*, taking up the population returns of 1832, and estimating the Irish revenue so very low as *one-tenth*, Ireland is entitled to 178 Members—as we get but 105, we are thus defrauded of no less than 73 Members.

Thus it will be seen that the most recent and most incontrovertible data give us the highest claim to an increase of Members. We are entitled, on the basis of *population* and *revenue*, to 178—WE ASK ONLY FOR 125. We give up 53 of what we are entitled to, and thereupon we are scouted by the British Legislature—we are neglected and abandoned by the British Reformers, whom we assisted at their need, and we are left to our resources—to

our own unconquered and unconquerable determination to obtain justice for Ireland.

Take up the calculation in any way—population, exports, imports, rental, revenue, fighting-men—view it in any way, or in any mode, and the wrong perpetrated on Ireland is the most gross and glaring. Since the world began, there never was so unjust a proceeding. The British Minister has a strong majority of real and mock Reformers—and in the plenitude of his strength, it pleases Mr. E. G. Stanley to perpetrate these outrages on Ireland, and they are perpetrated accordingly. I restrain my indignation, my honest indignation, and merely state facts.

In distributing the increase of Members in England, the Ministers have acted on the scale of population alone. Now Ireland, on that scale, would be entitled to no less than 307 Members.

But let us go into some details, which will serve to place the contrast between the favour done one country, and the injustice done the other, in a still more striking light.

Mark this enormous preference. The county of Cumberland, with a population of only 169,681, gets two additional Members—that is, it will in future send four Members to Parliament.

The county of Cork, with a population of 807,366, does not get one additional Member. It will continue to send two only.

That is just saying, in so many words, 169,681 people in Cumberland, are of twice as much value, in Parliament, as 807,366 in the county of Cork. Ask for a reason—Oh, the smaller number are English—the greater are Irish.—Q. E. D.

Northamptonshire gets two additional Members. Another Cabinet Minister sits for it. Its population is only 179,276. It will send four Members to Parliament.

Down has a population of 352,571. It gets no increase of Members.

Leicestershire has 197,276 inhabitants. It increases its Representatives from two to four.

Tipperary has 402,598 inhabitants. It must be content with two Members. I, however, doubt much whether Tipperary will be satisfied.

Worcestershire, with a population of 211,356, is to have four Representatives.

Galway county, with a population of 427,407, remains with two.

Wiltshire, with only 239,181 inhabitants, is to command four Representatives.

Tyrone, with 302,948 inhabitants, is to have but two.

Nottinghamshire has 225,320 for its population, accordingly it is to have four Members.

Antrim county has 323,306 for its population, accordingly it is to have but two Representatives.

Derbyshire has a population of 237,170—it will have four Members. Stanley is at home here, I suppose.

Dublin County has a population of no less than 886,964. Not one additional Member—not one.

But why should I pursue the painful, the humiliating contrast? I cannot avoid noticing just one instance more.

Monmouthshire gets a third Member, though its population is but 98,130.

Mayo, with 367,953; Limerick, with 300,080;

Clare, with 258,262; Kerry, with 219,989; Donegal, with 298,104—not one of them gets any increase—not one!

There is but one county in Ireland, that is the county of Carlow, the population of which is so low as that of Monmouthshire. The population of the other thirty-one counties all exceed Monmouthshire; yet it gets an additional Member, and Irish counties, with a population from one and a half to nine times the population of Monmouthshire, are left without any addition.

Is this fair? Is it just? Is it reasonable? Ought Ireland to be content? Ought the Irish people to be satisfied? Yes, provided they be the very basest of slaves that ever crawled on the face of the globe.

I cannot close without one honest burst of indignation at the injustice, and, I will add, ingratitude of the British Reformers to their fellow-labourers in Ireland.

I have demonstrated the contumelious injuries inflicted on us by this Reform Bill. My Letters are long before the public. They have been unfuted, uncontradicted, in any one of their details. And with this case of atrocious injustice to Ireland placed before the Reformers of Britain, what assistance, what sympathy do we receive? Why I have got some half dozen drivelling letters from Political Unions and political characters, asking me whether I advise them to petition, or bestir themselves on our behalf! Bah!

Reformers of Great Britain, I do not ask you either to petition, or to be silent. I do not advise you to petition, or to do any other act, in favour of

the Irish. You will consult your own feelings of justice and generosity, unprovoked by any advice or entreaty of mine.

For my part, I never despaired of Ireland; I do not, I will not; I cannot dare to despair of my beloved country. She has, in my view, obtained freedom of conscience for others, as well as for herself. She has shaken off the incubus of tithes, while silly legislation was doling out its folly and its falsehoods. She can, and she will obtain for herself justice and constitutional freedom; and although she may sigh at British neglect and ingratitude, there is no sound of despair in that sigh, nor any want of moral energy, on her part, to attain her own rights by peaceable and legal means.

One word more. My fifth and last Letter will demonstrate, that all the iniquity of the Irish Reform Bill, in its refusal of franchises, and narrowing of elective rights, sinks into comparative insignificance, when compared with the expensive, tedious, vexatious, unjust, and almost impracticable modes of registration of votes prescribed by the Irish Reform Bill. With that Letter I will close.

I have the honour to be, Brother Reformers,

Your faithful Servant,

D. O'CONNELL.

## LETTER V.

*Parliament-street, June 11, 1832.*

THIS Letter closes my commentary on the infamous Reform Bill for Ireland. I hope no honest man in England or in Scotland, will insult the Irish people by including, in their rejoicings, the Irish Bill. Let them, as they ought to do, rejoice, heartily rejoice at the overthrow of the sordid Oligarchy in England and in Scotland. Let them rejoice, heartily rejoice, that in England one hundred and twelve Swiss are flung out of Parliament by the magic of Schedule A., and that all Scotland is put into a similar glorious Schedule. This is, indeed, a most just cause of triumph, and the people of Ireland will join in that rejoicing, and will heartily concur in the shouts of triumph at the achievement of English and Scottish liberty.

But I do most earnestly implore of the Reformers of Great Britain to abstain from offering so gross, so unmerited, so provoking an insult to the people of Ireland, as to express joy for that which will be to us a cause of the bitterest affliction, the passing of Stanley's mock Reform Bill for Ireland. Let British Reformers recollect, that it is avowed to be a conservative measure.

I now come to my fourth and fifth objections to the Irish Bill; they relate to the registry of votes—they are these:

FOURTH. The Irish Reform Bill continues a mode of registry of voters, *complicated in its details, extremely dilatory, and expensive, and al-*



*most impossible to be complied with by any person, but a man of fortune.*

**FIFTH.** *It leaves the registry of votes in the hands of persons totally irresponsible, and who, taken in the aggregate, are most unfit for that purpose; first, from want of sufficient aptitude; and, secondly, by reason of their zealous Tory principles.*

Before I proceed, I wish to state explicitly to the English Reformers, what it is the Irish want in relation to the registry of their votes.

We desire the mode of registry enacted for England, that is the precise amount of our demand.

As far as the registry is involved in the Reform measure, our institutions are either precisely the same, or preferable to those of England; we want, therefore, the same machinery for registration of voters, and entitling the voter to vote as is adopted by, and enacted for England.

We want a registry of voters as cheap and as effectual as the English registry—why should this, our reasonable demand, be refused us?

For no other reason than this—that our rulers are determined to disfranchise Ireland, under the name of Reform; and, therefore, they keep on foot, and even aggravate considerably, and seek to perpetuate a system of registry, introduced by the Peel-Wellington Administration, with the undisguised purpose of converting every county in Ireland into a Close Borough.

I solemnly and conscientiously declare, that if the Irish Reform Bill had given the people of Ireland the same liberal and extensive franchises, which the English Bill preserves for, or nearly grants to the people of England, the effect of even so liberal a Bill would be almost totally lost, if the machinery for registry, and taking the votes, which is inserted in the Irish Bill, were to become aw.

In short, the machinery of the Irish Bill is bad

to so extraordinary an extent, that it would neutralize the benefits of a Reform Bill, most liberal in its franchise. Judge, then, what a Bill this is—that has only two faults. **FIRST**, it restricts popular rights; and, **SECONDLY**, it gives the worst possible machinery!!!

To prove this, to demonstration, I will now proceed to point out the details of the registry and mode of voting in the English counties, and then contrast with these the provisions, which I again deliberately call infamous and atrocious, of the mock Reform for Ireland.

In England, the register of persons entitled to vote, is to be made out thus:

**FIRST**.—The overseers of every parish in England are, on every 20th of June, to affix on all churches, chapels, and public places in the parish, a notice, calling on every person claiming a right to vote, to send in his claim in writing.

**SECONDLY**.—A full month is given to send in such claim; and if the claim be lodged on the 20th of July, it is quite sufficient; it may be lodged any day during such entire month.

**THIRDLY**.—Each person claiming to vote, has no other trouble than to hand in his notice in his own parish, to the overseer, and pay him one shilling. The shilling is the entire expense, and no loss of time is incurred.

**FOURTHLY**.—The overseer is then to make out an alphabetical list of the persons so claiming to be voters. He is to put the words “objected to,” opposite the name of any person he has reason to believe not to be entitled to vote. The list is then to be printed and published, by affixing it on all churches, chapels, and public places, and a copy to be kept by the overseer, which is to be open for public inspection for two weeks, without payment of any fee.

**FIFTHLY**.—Any person claiming a right to vote, is at liberty to object to the claim of any other

person in the list; but he must give notice in writing of his objection, not only to the overseer, but to the person objected to; and a separate list of persons thus objected to is to be printed and published.

**SIXTHLY.**—The lists are then to be transmitted, through the high constable, to the clerk of the peace; and the lists of the persons objected to, including a statement of their respective residences, are to be transmitted to the registering Barrister, in order that he may fix proper places for holding courts to consider the objections.

**SEVENTHLY.**—Every person not specially objected to by the overseer, or by some other elector, is put on the register, and becomes entitled to vote without more trouble or expense.

Let it be observed, that, unless an elector be specially objected to, he thus has his right to vote ascertained, without any consumption of his time, or any expense, save one shilling.

If he be specially objected to, he will have the satisfaction of knowing who it is that objects to his right to vote; and he can, as I shall presently shew, examine that person upon oath, as to the motives and reason for such objection.

**EIGHTHLY.**—A Barrister is to be appointed, to decide the claims thus objected to; his appointment is to be made thus—the senior judge on each circuit, at the summer assizes, is to name a Barrister for each district, or locality. Now this is just as it should be, in point of responsibility. One judge makes the appointment. He is responsible to the public for its fitness. No other person shares that responsibility with him. The trial of the objections is to take place before one Barrister. No other person shares the responsibility with him; and it will be seen that his responsibility is not merely formal, but is direct, personal, and, indeed, pecuniary.

**NINTHLY.**—The Barrister thus appointed, is to

give notice of the times and places for holding courts to decide the claims objected to. It will be his duty to hold these courts as near the residences of the persons objected to as possible.

**TENTHLY.**—The Barrister is to decide in favour of the claim of any elector objected to by a third person, unless that third person attend the court by himself, or his agent, to sustain the objection. The elector, in this case, is put to no trouble, nor is any investigation gone into of his qualification, unless such third person attend the court.

**ELEVENTHLY.**—It is only, in the case of objections made by the overseer, or by a third person who attends the court, that any investigation of the claim of the elector becomes necessary, or takes place. But it then takes place by the Barrister, calling on the elector simply “*to prove his qualification;*” these are the words of the Act. If the elector proves his qualification, then the Barrister is bound to throw upon the objection, the proof of incapacity; and unless that proof be given, the voter is put on the list, or register, and his right to vote is established.

Let it be observed, that there is no direction to investigate title, or to produce any deed, by, or under which, the elector claims to vote, or derives title.

**TWELFTHLY.**—The Barrister is empowered to examine, on oath, the overseer, as to every matter connected with the list, and with his objections to particular persons. This is a most important and valuable power, as it will manifestly deter overseers from making malicious or frivolous objections.

**THIRTEENTHLY.**—The Barrister is entitled to correct all mistakes and omissions of name, residence, description of tenures, and all other errors in the list. He then signs the list, which is to be printed and published; and from that roll the electors are, without further trouble, entitled, without

the production of any other document, to vote at each ensuing election. There is great simplicity and certainty in this mode, and it tends to the greatest facility and expedition, in polling at a contested election—

FOURTEENTHLY.—A Barrister is thus annually to revise the list; but an elector, once on the list, is not bound to give in any fresh claim, or to pay a second shilling, or to take any trouble, unless he shall be formally objected to in any one year, and notice of such objection given to him; and the lists are to be printed annually, and sold to any person willing to buy.

LASTLY.—And this is the most important of all. The responsibility of the Barrister is real and substantial, because it is provided that if any Overseer, BARRISTER, &c. shall WILFULLY CONTRAVENE, OR DISOBEY *that Act, with respect to any matter or thing which he is thereby required to do*, he becomes liable to be sued in an action of debt by any candidate, elector, or other person aggrieved; and a sum of £500. may be recovered against him; and if a verdict be had against him for only one shilling, he will be bound to pay “full costs of suit” also.

This is a clause of inestimable value. It is the surest and most efficient check to misconduct. Where is the Barrister who will venture to misconduct himself, when he knows that a verdict of a jury may punish his delinquency by a heavy penalty, and a total loss of character for life?

Such is the plain and simple plan of registry, such is the cheap, expeditious, and well-guarded plan of registry adopted in England. No Englishman can be, by wantonness or folly, deprived of his right as an elector—he cannot be wilfully delayed or postponed for an hour, without having an immediate and easy appeal to a jury, and abundant redress from, and abundant punishment for, the delinquent.

Let us now see what the machinery is under the Irish Bill. It is, however, fit to be observed, that this machinery is new, that is, has been in existence only about three years. It was introduced to make the Catholic Relief Bill as valueless as possible to the people of Ireland. It was introduced to exclude from the right to vote, as many persons as possible. It, of course, has had that effect; and by means of this machinery, and the other enactments of the anti-popular accompaniment to emancipation, the number of voters in Ireland was brought down from 200,000 to less than 20,000.

Now, if our Irish Reform contrivers had been sincere, they would certainly have, at all events, abolished the machinery of delay, vexation, and expense, invented by the Wellington Administration, to punish the Irish people for having extorted emancipation. The Whigs are continuing that punishment.

I put these questions by themselves:—If our machinery were *good*, as it had been tried for three years, and its practical effects ascertained, why, instead of inventing new, was not this tried machinery introduced into England? It could be so by the single alteration of a temporary or limited, for a general or permanent Barrister. Why, I say, if it were *good*, was it not introduced into England, instead of inventing a new and quite different machinery for England? The reason to me is obvious, because no man would dare to propose such machinery to the people of England.

My next question is,—Why, as this machinery is so loudly and universally complained of by all the Irish people, except the Orange or Conservative party.—Why, I say, is it not got rid of, and the plan in the English Bill, which we demand, conceded to us? Let this also be observed, that all the Anti-Reformers of Ireland are zealous advocates of Stanley's Registry Plan—all the real

Reformers detest it—and we, the Reformers, are at once sacrificed by Stanley, Lord Althorpe, and Lord John Russell, to the wishes of the Irish Tories.

That we most justly complain of the machinery of Stanley's Bill, will appear from the following analysis :—

FIRST—No person can register as a voter in Ireland, without first giving to the acting Clerk of the Peace a notice in writing of his claim, twenty clear days before the first day of each registering Session, to be appointed by the assistant Barrister.

Now, observe, that the Irish elector will thus be obliged to travel, or to send a messenger with the notice some distance, varying in our counties from one mile to fifty or sixty. Twenty miles is not an unreasonable average distance for each voter. Thus, two days are lost in Ireland in merely giving notice of a claim to register; one day going, and one day returning. Two minutes will suffice in England. In Ireland, the voter is put to the expense and labour of travelling during two days. In England, there is no labour, and, of course, no expense of travelling.

SECONDLY.—In Ireland, the notice to be served is extremely complicated, and such as will require, as it does require, the aid of an Attorney to draw up—an aid not *always* to be had gratuitously.

In England, the notice is extremely simple; any person can draw it from the Schedule of the Act. It requires the elector to set out only his name, place of abode, the situation of the freehold, or franchise land, and *such a description of the property as may serve to identify it*. These are the words in the English Act.

In Ireland, on the contrary, besides the elector's name, and place of abode, he must also specify, "*The right in respect of which he intends to apply, and the nature and particulars of the quali-*

*fication relied upon by him, as entitling him to be registered; the description of the property, with the names of the barony, townland, or place where situate; the nature of his interest in the property; THE DATE OF THE DEED GIVING TITLE!! THE PARTIES NAMES THERETO!!! AND THE YEARLY VALUE!!!! AND THE YEARLY RENT!!!!!"*

In England, the Barrister is entitled to correct, and is bound to correct any mistakes in the notice, or list of claims; and so the elector is set right, and is entitled to vote, notwithstanding any blunder or mistake in matter of form.

In Ireland, on the contrary, the assistant Barrister has no such power. A mistake in so complicated a notice, is a ground of rejection; and the elector, after incurring great trouble and expense, has to begin over again.

**THIRDLY.**—The next important step in Ireland, is the attendance at the Session. The list of claimants is to be read over by the acting Clerk of the Peace. What day? Whatever day, or hour, the assistant Barrister chooses! The Sessions lasts from three to ten days—the elector may be there from the first to the last day before the list is called over—he *may* thus be kept absent many days from his business and his family—he has to sustain, at the least, the loss of two, or, indeed, three days—perhaps six; and if he should, by accident, be out of Court when his name is called, he loses all his labour, and has to begin over again for a future Session.

In Ireland, every elector must attend the Sessions; I have said already, at an average journey of twenty miles in most counties. Every elector must attend, no matter how well known his right may be.

In England, no elector need attend, save an elector especially, and by name objected to.



In Ireland, the attendance at Session is the **GENERAL—INDEED, THE UNIVERSAL RULE.**

In England, it is **ONLY THE EXCEPTION.**

In Ireland, the place of Session is fixed for other purposes, and without any possible reference to the residence of the elector.

In England, it is the duty of the Barrister, and he has the power to bring the Court to try the disputed claims as near to the residence of the elector interested in the trial, as he possibly can.

**FOURTHLY.**—In Ireland, each elector, so soon as he is named, is called upon to go on, and prove his entire case, although no one objects to his right of voting; he is required to produce his lease, or other title deed, and to shew it to **BE DULY STAMPED!!!** A mistake, committed in the stamp duty, will, after perhaps fifty years possessing, be fatal to him. He must either produce his title deed, and expose it to all possible adverse discoveries, down to the amount of the stamp duty, or loose his right to vote.

I ask, would the people of England submit to such an odious inquisition, and, above all, would they allow any human being to call that a Reform Bill, which required every Englishman to enforce his title, or to forfeit his right to vote? Why, the great objection of the landed interest in England, to the measure of a general registry of deeds (the value of which, in the abstract, every rational man must admit)—the great objection to the registry of deeds is, that it would expose men's title deeds to public inspection; and yet you will not allow a single individual in Ireland to establish at Sessions his right to vote, without submitting to scrutiny all the muniments of his title; and this is called the Irish Reform Bill!!!

**FIFTHLY.**—When the deed, or lease, is produced, then the trial commences, the elector is put to prove his case, as if he had brought an ejectment; and, although in possession, an ejectment is

actually tried, the assistant Barrister is required to make the elector shew the nature of his tenure, and he is to decide on *the validity*, or *invalidity*, of the elector's title ; and to examine, in support, or in opposition to his claim ; and any person in the community is at liberty to come forward, and, without any previous notice, to controvert, by evidence, the elector's title.

In Ireland, in addition to all these particulars, every elector is bound also to produce evidence of his qualification in point of value.

Thus, in Ireland, there is a double trial in every individual case of a registry under the Reform Bill—a trial of the title, and a trial upon the value—with liberty to any body, or every body, to take the elector by surprise, and give any contradictory evidence he may please, to destroy the title, or lessen the value.

Besides, the unfortunate elector has no process allowed him, to compel the attendance of witnesses, neither can he enforce the production of any of the title deeds of the persons under whom he derives. He is, in short, tied hand and foot, and bound to shew the weakness of his title, and disabled from proving his strength, unless, indeed, he be a mere tool in the hands of his landlord, or his agent ; and then, indeed, he may, with some greater facility, register for them and not for himself.

Can any body now be surprised, that, in the County of Kerry, with a population of upwards of 240,000 persons, there should be but 178 electors at £10. entitled to vote ; that is, in the single popular franchise, only one person out of every one thousand three hundred and forty-eight is entitled to vote!!!

I do venture to ask Lord Althorpe, whether he really thinks it honest to insist on continuing such a system as this ; and next, whether he thinks it consistent with truth, to call the Bill which continues such a system, a Reform Bill ; and if it be

inconsistent with honesty and truth, what shall I call it?—Why, something so coarse, as to shock “ears polite,” but which will be re-echoed throughout Ireland.

Now, contrast Ireland with England—the Irish with the English plan. In England, no elector is at all called on to prove his qualification, but an elector, specially and particularly objected to in writing. In England, therefore, the case of such an elector is *the exception*.

In Ireland, on the other hand, every elector must make that proof. It is *the general—the universal rule*.

Should this be so? Should any body in Ireland be called on to *prove title*—and nobody in England called on to prove *qualification*, save a person specially and particularly objected to?

There are a thousand other forceable points of view in which I could place the contrast in this respect—but I fear to be too tedious—and, besides, the facts speak for themselves, and shew that the English system is intelligent and considerate—favourable to the elector, and reasonable; in point of trouble and expense. Whilst the Irish system, if intelligible, is only so by reason of its distinct harshness and atrocity. It is inquisitorial and tyrannical to the elector. It is most unreasonable, in point of labour and trouble.

In England, no elector has any occasion to employ a professional man, to secure his right of voting. It is quite obvious, that it would be perfect insanity, in any elector in Ireland, to trust himself into the Session Court to register a vote, without the aid of a skilful Attorney. This, alone, would create such an expense, as to preclude the far greater number of persons from attempting to register their votes; but that there are, in most of the counties in Ireland, a class of independent and patriotic Attornies, who volunteer their services in aid of the electors; and thus, in this, as

in so many other instances, Irish public spirit counteracts the evils of British misgovernment.

I will pursue the contrast between the English and Irish Bill, only in one case more.

Take an English elector, whose right to vote is clear. Suppose an Irish elector of the same class.

The English elector consumes two minutes of his time in drawing up and handing to his parish overseer his notice of claiming a right to vote; he pays one shilling, and there is at once an end to all expense and to all trouble.

The Irish elector has an equally clear *right* to vote, yet he must first either venture to draw a very intricate notice himself, which will cost him much time, or employ an Attorney to draw up that notice, which ought to cost him not less than ten shillings at the very least. *Secondly*, he must transmit that notice, ten, twenty, thirty, or forty miles, say on an average, twenty miles, to the acting clerk of the peace. Thus are two days time, and the expense of near two days travelling, expended. *THIRDLY*.—He must attend in person at the Session. Here is at least a loss of three days consumed, or spoiled, in going, remaining at Session, and returning home. There is also the actual money expenditure during these three days. *FOURTHLY*.—He has his title ransacked in open court, and is harassed by, in fact, two trials—of title and of value. *FIFTHLY*.—He has next to pay a stamp duty of two shillings and six-pence, in order to obtain evidence of his right to vote.

Now all this vexation and expense takes place in every case in Ireland; even in a case most free from doubt, or difficulty. The Englishman, for one shilling, and in less than three minutes, completes his title to vote. It will cost the Irishman, at least, five entire days; and, at the lowest possible calculation, one pound in money to complete his title to vote.

But mark this distinction. The English elector pays one shilling, and no more—he can earn that shilling by half a days labour. He pays no stamp duty.

The Irish elector pays in stamp duty *alone*, two shillings and six-pence: he cannot earn these two shillings and six-pence by less than five days labour. Thus, what the English elector pays for by half a days labour, the Irish elector must consume five days labour in tax alone.

But the greatest advantage to the English elector, is still unexpressed—it is this. If the Barrister in England shall presume to contravene, or to disobey, in any one particular, the English Reform Bill, the English elector need not complain to any great man, or to any public body. He has a remedy in his own hands; he brings his action, he appeals to a jury, he obtains compensation, and full costs of suit.

In Ireland, what a melancholy contrast! The Irish elector has no remedy whatsoever against the Assistant Barrister—who may harass the elector—who may detain him, and postpone him, and dismiss his claim to register, upon the most idle, the most frivolous, the most vexatious pretext. This the Assistant Barrister in Ireland can do, with the most perfect impunity—no action lies against him—no compensation can possibly be obtained from him—no recourse to a jury—perfect impunity awaits him.

The Barrister, under the English system, is deeply, immediately, personally, and pecuniarily responsible.

The Barrister, under the Irish system, is completely irresponsible.

To be sure, if he were fool enough publicly to boast, or to admit that he acted from corrupt motives, he might be punished; but it is in the impossible case of any man being so insane, as to make such an avowal alone, that any punishment

could follow ; yet, even then, the elector could get no compensation.

In England, the rights of the electors are secured, and the performance of the duty of the Barrister is insured, by a perfect and complete responsibility.

In Ireland, there is no security for the rights of the elector, or for the performance of the duty, because the Barrister is perfectly and completely irresponsible.

One more extremely great advantage is possessed by the English elector—the evidence of his right to vote is put upon record—it consists of the county roll. He has only to point out his name on the list, and then his right to vote accrues.

Hitherto, the Irish voter had something of a similar privilege. When an elector succeeded under the present law in getting his vote registered, his affidavit of registry remained among the records of the county ; and, at the election, that affidavit was referred to, as the primary and perfectly sufficient evidence of the elector's right to vote. The elector could thus vote without entering into any controversy, or personal altercation with his landlord. The evidence of his right was preserved for him on the public record.

Now this advantage, Stanley takes away from the elector by his Reform Bill. It is believed that this flagrant injustice is the contrivance of the very decided, and not a little virulent Tory, that fills the influential office of Attorney General in Ireland, under the present most liberal and Whig Administration. Who is it could imagine it possible that this advantage should be taken away by Stanley, and that by a *Reform* Bill ? The affidavit is still to be made, and filed, and preserved in the county records, but to no purpose, for no object ; because it is no longer the evidence of the voter's right to vote.

The result is this—an elector in Ireland may have the good fortune to go through the gauntlet of the Session Court, through all the trials, all the journeys, and all the expenses of registering. His right may have been adjudicated upon in his favour; his name placed in the county book; his affidavit of registry duly signed by the Court of Quarter Session, filed, and preserved of record. All this evidence is forthcoming; under these circumstances, he, as the law now stands, can vote at once, without difficulty.

But here is Stanley's knack at reforming. He, by the new Bill, destroys the force of all this cogent and conclusive evidence. He takes away its cogency—he annihilates its conclusive nature—and, by way of reform, he substitutes for this evidence of record—What?—A certificate of registry, signed by the assistant Barrister and by the acting Clerk of the Peace!!!—This, indeed, is reforming with a vengeance!

Yet this change, which at first sight seems to be mere folly and absurd drivelling, is not so in reality. It has an object—Stanley, like great Cæsar, ne'er *does wrong without just cause*. He has an excellent reason of his own for this strange alteration. It is simply this—he intends to put into the hands of the landlord an *absolute power of preventing his tenants from voting at all, unless they vote as he pleases*.

It cannot be, as he rather unblushingly pretends, to secure the payment of the stamp duty of 2s. 6d.; because that duty might, with greater propriety, be attached to the affidavit of registry. No, no—his object is purely and simply to take away all self-will from the voter, and to make his vote the property of his landlord.

This he intends to effectuate thus—He knows full well that the Irish landlords have hitherto been in the habit of holding the custody of such certificates as have as yet been used only as an additional

mode of facilitating the proof of registry. It is exceedingly difficult for a tenant to register without the aid of his landlord; and he has no chance of keeping his certificate from the custody of his landlord, unless he is prepared to quarrel with his landlord, and to set him at defiance three, four, or five years before an election, and at a time when no political excitement may exist—when, at all events, no candidates are, or can be named—when no interest is roused as to the mode of voting. Stanley knows that thus the landlords will easily get possession of the certificates—they will thus have in their power the evidence on which alone the tenants can vote—the consequences are obvious—the tenants must vote as the landlord chooses, or not vote at all.

I observed very strongly on this piece of trick and dexterity in one of my Letters to the Political Union. Stanley, in his last edition of the Irish Bill, has attempted a delusion on this point. But it is, indeed, a wretched attempt. He provides for the case of the certificate being withheld from the voter, by allowing him to procure a duplicate—a *stamped* duplicate—mark that—2s. 6d. more, on payment, also, of a fee of one shilling.

But this is a pure—I should call it, a shabby delusion—for at what time is the certificate likely to be withheld? Why, at, or immediately before a contested election—and, I ask, where is the Assistant Barrister then to be found? An obvious motive of delicacy would remove him from the county, during a political contest. But we need not give him so high a motive. His personal and professional interest will take him to Dublin, when the Session is not sitting—the duplicate certificate will be of no value, without his signature; and even if a journey to Dublin were to be taken by each voter—rather an expensive thing from the more distant counties—yet the Barrister would not be warranted, or, at least,



could not be required, to sign the duplicate certificate, without having the county book before him, which he could not have out of the county itself.

This piece of delusion is almost on a par with the introduction of a £10. chattel franchise, on terms of sixty years, in Stanley's Bill, after my first Letter. But he certainly had the candour to admit, that he made that concession in favour of the Orange counties of the North of Ireland, where alone he alledged he had evidence that tenures of that length of years existed. I restrain my natural indignation on this topic. It only proves how truly I described Stanley's Reform Bill as an Orange, or Conservative measure, calculated solely to advance the interests, and increase the power, of the Irish Tories, and virulent Anti-Reformers, and to offer every species of injustice, insult, and contumely, to the Irish Reformers, and the magnanimous Irish people.

British Reformers, I have not described many, and many of the defects which the Irish Reform Bill displays. I have, however, shewn you that its franchises are restricted and Aristocratic; its details insulting and injurious; its machinery contrived to annihilate all independence, and to reduce the electors of Ireland to the station of the burgage tenants of your late most rotten Boroughs.

I now conclude; I have done thus much, and thus much only of my duty. British Reformers, what is yours?

I have the honour to be,

Brother Reformers,

Your very faithful Servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

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