
Sir,

I received your Letter, wherein you tell me of the strange Representations made of us on your Side of the Water. The Instance you are pleased to mention, is that of the Presbyterian Missionary, who, according to your Phrase, hath been lately persecuted in Drogheda for his Religion; but it is easy to observe, how mighty industrious some People have been for three or four Years past, to hand about Stories of the Hardships, the Merits, the Number, and the Power of the Presbyterians in Ireland, to raise formidable Ideas of the Dangers of Popery there, and to transmit all for England, improved by great Additions, and with special Care to have than inserted, with Comments, in those infamous weekly Papers that infest your Coffee-Houses. So, when the Clause enacting a Sacramental Test was put in Execution, it was given out in England, that half the Justices of Peace through this Kingdom had laid down their Commissions; whereas, upon Examination, the whole Number was found to amount only to a Dozen or Thirteen, and those generally of the lowest Rate in Fortune and Understanding, and some of them superannuated. So, when the Earl of Pembroke was in Ireland, and the Parliament sitting, a formal Story was very gravely carried to his Excellency by some zealous Members, of a Priest newly arrived, from Abroad, to the North-West parts of Ireland, who had publicly preached to his People, to fall a murthering the Protestants; which Abuse, although invented to serve an End they were then upon, and are still driving at, was presently handed over, and printed with shrewd Remarks by your worthy Scriblers. In like Manner, the Account of that Person, who was lately expelled our University for reflecting on the Memory of King William, what a Dust it raised, and how foully it was related, is fresh enough in Memory. Neither would People be convinced, till the University was at the Pains of publishing a Latin Paper to justify themselves. And, to mention no more, this Story of the Persecution at Drogheda, how it hath been spread and aggravated, what Consequences drawn from it, and what Reproaches fixed on those who have least deserved them, we are already informed. Now, if the End of all this Proceeding were a Secret and Mystery, I should not pretend to give it an Interpretation. But sufficient Care hath been taken to explain it. First, by Addresses artificially (if not illegally) procured, to shew the miserable State of the Dissenters in Ireland, by reason of the Sacramental Test, and to desire the Queen's Intercession that it might be repealed. Then it is manifest, that our Speaker, when he was last Year in England, sollicited, in Person, several Members of both Houses, to have it repealed by an Act there, although it be a Matter purely national, that cannot possibly interfere with the Trade and Interest of England, and although he himself appeared formerly the most zealous of all Men against the Injustice of binding a Nation by Laws, to which they do not consent. And lastly, those weekly Libellers, whenever they get a Tale by the End relating to Ireland, without once troubling their Thoughts about the Truth, always end it with an Application against the Sacramental Test, and the absolute Necessity there is of repealing it in both Kingdoms. I know it may be reckoned a Weakness to say any thing of such Trifles as are below a serious Man's Notice: Much less would I disparage the Understanding of any Party, to think they would choose the Vilest and most Ignorant among Mankind, to employ them for Asserters of a Cause. I shall only say, that the scandalous Liberty those Wretches take, would hardly be allowed, if it
were not mingled with Opinions that some Men would be glad to advance. Besides, how insipid soever those Papers are, they seem to be levelled to the Understandings of a great Number. They are grown a necessary Part in Coffee-house Furniture, and some Time or other happen to be read by Customers of all Ranks, for Curiosity or Amusement; because they lie always in the Way. One of these Authors (the Fellow that was pilloryed, I have forgot his Name) is indeed so grave, sententious, dogmatical a Rogue that there is no enduring him; the Observator is much the brisker of the two; and, I think, farther gone of late in Lies and Impudence than his Presbyterian Brother.

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1 Mr. Broderick, afterwards Chancellor.