

It is evident, from several passages, that they were written by an Irishman, who must have resided some time in this country, less biassed by prejudices, than most of our European visitants. Indeed, the inducement to publish these letters, arose not so much from any intrinsic merit they can boast, as from the candid and favourable view they exhibit of the United States.

As they might have tended to dispel some of the false medium, through which we are obscurely seen from the other side of the Atlantic, it is to be regretted, they were not originally published there. But whether they were composed for publication; how many of them may have been suppressed or miscarried; or, indeed, what their author's object was in this country, are altogether matters of conjecture; though it is probable, that no more than a detachment from a larger correspondence has fallen into our hands.

It is not necessary to detail the reasons which have led to a belief, that the principal writer, if not some of the others, must have been attached to the company of Jesuits. Independent of a positive declaration to that amount, in one of the letters, there are other, though trivial, circumstances, corroborative of such an opinion. The modern Charlemagne has many motives for re-establishing that order, and the germs of another Paraguay may be intended for our soil. Of this, however, every reader will be enabled to form his own judgment; for, indeed, the very air of mystery in which the correspondence is shrouded, may itself be counterfeit, and put on to give a false importance to things in themselves insignificant.

As, however, the letters are ascribed to a Jesuit, it may be proper to state briefly, that the order of Jesuits, after being broken up, and the members successively expelled from the different nations of Europe, was finally suppressed and abolished by Pope Gregory XIV. in 1773. In addition to the three vows of poverty, chastity and monastic servitude, in order to obtain, in the first instance, a confirmation of their mysterious institution, they were obliged to assume a fourth, that of obedience to the pope; binding themselves to go and to serve, without reward, in the cause