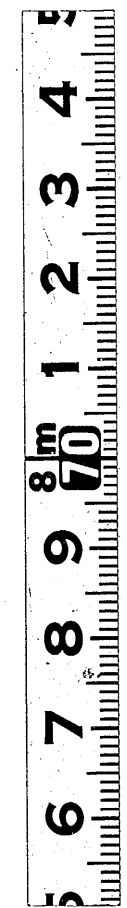


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National Thoughts,

Recommended to the

SERIOUS ATTENTION

OF THE

PUBLIC.

(Price Sixpence.)

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National Thoughts,

Recommended to the

SERIOUS ATTENTION

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PUBLIC.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

SHEWING

The DAMAGES arising from
a Bounty on Corn.

By a LAND-OWNER.

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY, in *Pall-mall*.

(1)

National Thoughts, &c.

THE wisdom and good policy of any government cannot, in any instance, appear more conspicuous, than in forming good and proper regulations for promoting and securing a perfect and universal industry among the poor.

The poor in every country are the class of people of the first consequence. Their industry is the only source of wealth to every country; and it is on their number, strength of body, vigour and moral state and a right application of all these particulars that the defence of every country depends.

If such be the real state, utility and weight of the poor in every country, and if the well-being of a country depends entirely on the moral state of the poor: What danger is *England* at this time threatened with, from the idle and licentious behaviour which in general prevails among this rank of people throughout the whole kingdom?

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It is a known and general observation that industry creates trade ;—trade produces wealth ; that the increase of wealth will inevitably introduce luxury, which, in its turn, will destroy every thing, by producing idleness and debauchery, which do gradually infect the whole mass of the people.

That it is true in fact, that such has been the fate of all countries, which have risen to any height of wealth, cannot be denied ; but I shall notwithstanding contend, and do hope to make it appear, that such regulations may be provided, as may prevent such consequences, and make even luxury so far beneficial, as to be an incitement to the introduction of manufactures not yet established, as well as to the improvement of those already established.

I shall set forth what I have to propose as proper to correct the disposition, which almost universally prevails among the lower rank of people, to riot and outrage, by shewing first how ineffectual penal laws are of themselves to perform this work ; and shall then shew what preventive methods may be made use of, and that these are such as will, co-operating with the penal laws, give immediate relief, and will in time, in a manner, totally eradicate the causes of a mischief which at present threatens the most fatal consequences.

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First then with regard to the operation of penal laws in this case. If these are sufficient to cure this evil, or even to check it, how happens it, that, notwithstanding the great variety of penal laws now in force, criminals of all kinds multiply so fast as we see they almost daily do ? Why are our prisons now found too small to contain them ? How comes it to pass, that the numbers, which are condemned every Sessions at the *Old-Baily*, and executed, make no impression on the minds of the poor, and in no degree deter people from committing capital crimes ? And why in many instances of lesser crimes, is the number of offenders within these late years, increased to such a degree, that, were the full punishments, the laws allow of, adjudged against all such offenders, our prisons could not contain perhaps one quarter of them ? And is it not for this reason alone, that the punishments in such cases are mitigated ? And is it not the necessary consequence of this mitigation, that these laws are contemned by these people whom they were intended to terrify and restrain ?

Is there any charm in our prisons and houses of correction, which purifies the heart and disposition of those that are confined in them ? Or do we not, in fact, find, that those, who have been confined in bridewell, generally prove more immoral after

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their enlargement, than before their commitment? And do not the punishments for the lesser crimes, do in many instances, prove only preparations for the commission of greater?

If this be true, why are our thoughts totally bent in contriving new forms of penal Laws? Why should we not think of preventive methods, and consider whether it may not be reasonable, as well as possible, to remove, at least in some degree, the temptation to offend?

If this can be done, our goals will be relieved, the present heat and severity of prosecutions will be abated, and our poor will have ease, who will most amply deserve it, by that amendment in their morals, which will be the necessary consequence of such methods.

I come now to the second head, namely, that of regulations. And here I must observe, that it seems to me, that drunkenness and idleness are the sole causes of the calamitous situation of this kingdom, with respect to the poor.

Whatever regulations therefore can be chalked out, which will make every individual among the poor less capable of getting drunk, and will put him under an obligation of being industrious, such must be salutary at this juncture.

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What I shall propose, as a means to prevent the frequent drunkenness among the poor, is, to take away all low credit; and that a law should pass to enact, that no Sum should be sued for, as a debt, which does not exceed in value the sum of three pounds.

By this means the poor will be unable to spend their time in Alehouses so frequently as they do; where their money, and often more than they are worth, is consumed in idleness and drunkenness, and their time and health are entirely thrown away; which ought to have been employed in industry for the support of their family, as well as for the publick utility and benefit. By these means great numbers of the poor are thrown into necessitous circumstances: Their families are pinched, and their children, ragged and dirty, are taught to pilfer and beg, to raise a little common stock to help out a daily maintenance. Thus are these miserable children put under an incapacity of acquiring any one moral habit; set out wrong, as soon as they are able to go alone, and are tinctured with vice in their earliest infancy. And thus thieving gives a maintenance, and supplants Industry and trade.

In this manner are the unfortunate children of the poor of this kingdom educated, whose parents are addicted to drunkenness, and who are debauched by this credit, which is supposed useful. And I must call on those
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who have made observations on the conduct of the poor in general, in the several countries where they live, to determine how great a part of the poor are thus addicted to drunkenness; and whether I have not here given a true representation of the manner in which their children are trained up.

Here then are the numerous nurseries which supply the whole kingdom with every species of thief and malefactor we yet know of: And in their passage from these nurseries through the several stages of a licentious course of life, they are, on different occasions, confined in the several kinds of prisons, and receive the punishments which our penal laws have affixed to the several degrees of offences of the lower order; until at last advancing from the lesser offences to the highest, they arrive at the condemn'd hold, from whence they have an opportunity of shewing their heiform at the gallows.

If this be a true sketch of the unhappy situation of the poor of this kingdom, what pity and compassion must not every one feel, who considers this their miserable and unhappy state? That instead of receiving protection from society under such wise and prudent regulations, as would train them from their infancy to arts of industry, and make them not only usefull, but the most valuable subjects;

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jects; all the temptations to vice and immorality are suffered to lie before them; and they are, even in their earliest infancy, bound as it were, to a kind of apprenticeship to the practices of a licentious course of life.

It may be said that all this arises from a general neglect in the execution of our penal laws; that there is great variety of penal laws in our statute-books, which appoint punishments for every kind of misdemeanor, and that there are houses of correction in every county throughout the kingdom, where these are administered; and that all this licentiousness and debauchery, which is now got to such a height among the poor, arises from a great remissness in the execution of the penal laws.

It is very true that our penal laws in general are not strictly executed. But how can they be strictly executed even on the greater part of offenders; since near two thirds of every parish in the kingdom are in the debauched state I have mentioned? And how comes it to pass, that our laws in general are not strictly executed? Does not this necessarily arise from the number of them? How is it possible that the laws in any country should be well executed, or even well understood, where there is an annual addition made to the statute-books of one large folio volume; a great part of which is taken up with penal laws,

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laws, and, as they are commonly, but falsely, called, remedial laws? These laws, when enacted, are never communicated to the peace officers, but take the common chance with other books of being read, under this singular discouragement of being sold at a higher price; for this volume cannot be bought for less than forty shillings. Under this inconvenience and expence, every justice of the peace must give up his whole time the year round to study acts of p——t.

I shall leave this digression with asking one question. How intelligible will our laws be twenty years hence, with the addition of twenty large folio volumes to our statute-books? I really fear, that, in a course of years, the nation will be as much without law from the overgrown bulk of our statute-books, as if we had no law at all in the kingdom.

But to return to the subject of the poor, it has been observed above, that idleness and drunkenness are the original causes of all the evils which it is here proposed to redress; and it has been hinted that, without the assistance of low credit, this excess of drunkenness could not be carried to that height, to which it is now grown among the poor. Nothing can be more plain, than that the allowance of this kind of credit, among this class of people, must produce the most mischievous
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consequences, that in every light, in which it can be considered, there will not be found any one real advantage or conveniency to arise from it, and that it is impossible to hope for any degree of reformation among the poor, as long as this low credit is suffered to subsist among them. It is said that it enables them to set up little trades. It is true that it is this low credit which fills the towns throughout the kingdom, and particularly *London*, with the numbers of little shops we find, which I really look upon as publick nuisances every where.

The little low chandlers-shops, and all the variety of little shops under whatever denomination they take from the business they pretend to follow, are in general no other than places of debauchery of all kind and do in general clandestinely retail all ordinary kinds of spirituous liquors. This will appear, as I am told from the great number of informations, which are exhibited at the *Excise-Office* weekly against those, who keep these several kinds of little low shops, to the amount of no less than from an hundred to a hundred and fifty in a week.

Let us then consider here how this low credit operates in these instances. It serves the purpose of such of the poor, who, from laziness or from a little pride to become venders of goods, instead of following the more use-
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ful, but (as they think) meaner employment of a manufacturer; chuse to set up little shops of no sort of benefit, but in every respect prejudicial to the town where they live. For, as they buy chiefly on credit and consequently dear, they must also sell dear, and do generally sell on credit. They rarely receive money for what they sell, and being as backward in their payments of what they owe, find a quick transition from these shops to a prison. The poor are their only customers, and what draws them to these places, where (if they pay at all) they pay a higher price, than elsewhere, for what they purchase, is the opportunity they have of being accommodated, without paying for what they take: and it very often happens, that many of these customers, when they have raised their score to any height, abscond and run away: Whereas, if there were none but shops of substance, the poor would be obliged to pay ready money for what they want: A necessary check to keep them in even circumstances. So that, if we consider these little retailers of all kinds in the most favourable light, meerly as venders of what they avow to sell, it is plain that the credit, which they give for small sums, does but accelerate the ruin of those who deal with them. Nor are such little shops, as these, of any kind of use whatsoever with regard to keeping down the prices of things, but they have

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have quite the contrary effect. For, as was observed, buying on credit, they buy dear, and must therefore sell dear. They rather encourage the selling the commodities, in which they deal at a high price in the retailing shops in general. And it is a very great error to think, that encreasing the number of sellers, *in every manner*, will always keep the price of goods low. This with submission will not always hold true. And is an error of fatal consequence in some cases.

To prove my assertion, I will take the instance of the butchery business in *London*. For as the greater part of the *London* butchers have not substance sufficient to buy a live bullock, or a number of sheep at the live markets, nor customers to take off a whole bullock, these cannot supply themselves with meat any otherwise than by buying such parts of a bullock as they can dispose of, as well as mutton, of the more substantial butchers, who make them pay at such rates as they think proper. These must have some profit, and the price they sell at, is the price which the more substantial butchers likewise set on the meat they retail to their own customers. It is plain therefore, that the price of meat is raised by means of these little butchers, and that the customer pays more for his meat than he would do if such low butchers were not suffered to trade.

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How is the case with the grafier who sends his fat cattle to the *London* markets? There being but a part of the butchers who buy at these markets, the price is there kept down, and consequently the grafier does not receive the true price he ought to have in proportion as the plenty or scarcity of meat shall at any time happen to be. The grafier therefore is apparently injured. We have a wise law which says, that no man shall sell beef who does not kill beef, yet it is not regarded. We have another law in our statute-books, which says that no one who fats cattle shall follow the business of a butcher. This is founded on mistaken principles, but has produced many prosecutions, to the great prejudice of the grafier, and a visible obstruction to the free and open market. This subject deserves the serious attention of the land-owner and manufacturer. But I have not time fully to set forth, but only barely to hint at the corruptions, which have crept into *Smithfield* market which affect the whole kingdom.

But what claim could these little retailers have to any right of continuing their shops, were their lawful trade even of some publick utility or convenience; when we find that, in defiance of the laws, they are the most notorious venders of spirituous liquors, and that from the moment their shops are opened in the morning, gin-drinkers flock in, and a
 succession

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succession of customers of this kind is continued, without any interruption, till their shops are shut up again late at night?

That this town of *London* in particular, and every part of the kingdom, may be delivered from such pernicious nufances, I could wish that a law were passed to destroy that sort of credit which encourages and enables the poor to become retailers of this low kind. The little chandlers, green-grocers, and those who keep cellars or huts to sell oysters, are all of them clandestine venders of gin. These will all be forced to lay aside their employments, if the legislature will be pleased to destroy that low credit which has been the means by which they were enabled to set up, and do continue in these pernicious employments. Though I have above recommended it to the publick to obtain a law to destroy all low credit in general to the value of three pounds, yet I think it would be proper, with regard to all these little low shops, to raise the sum to ten pound, and that a law should pass that no debt, contracted by any tallow-chandler, green-grocer, and seller of oysters under the value of ten pounds, should be esteemed a debt, or liable to be sued for. There are besides these, as I am informed, hawkers of fish, who cry their fish about the streets in the forenoon, and keep cellars where they expose what fish remains unfold, in stalls before their cellar-doors; these
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likewise sell gin. There are little fruiterers likewise with cellars and stalls, who are venders of gin; if these could be described they ought to be included in such a law.

It may be said in objection to what I have here proposed for destroying all credit with regard to these particular retailers to the value of ten pound, or any sum under ten pounds, that this will entirely break them; and that it would be very injurious as well as unconstitutional to put any set of people under particular laws. To this I answer, that if we cannot obtain a law of this kind, which will effectually put an end to the pernicious traffick, which these people carry on, we shall find that this calamity will grow every year more general and fatal, when these people, in defiance of the law, retail all these liquors without licence, shall it not be thought reasonable and just to make a particular law to secure the publick from such audacious practices which threaten the general destruction of the lives of the people? I should be sorry to find that any law shall be thought unconstitutional, which shall be necessary to attain, what in my opinion, ought to be one of the principal objects of the legislature.

But if notwithstanding what has been offered in support of this measure of destroying all credit, with regard to these low retailers for sums under ten pounds, it should still be thought

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thought an improper regulation, I shall, however, hope, that what I have proposed with regard to low credit in general, will be approved of, and that a law to that effect may be obtained, as I am convinced that such a general law is necessary at this time.

And least there be any who, notwithstanding what has been offered, may still doubt whether this low credit is not in some degree useful to the poor, I would beg of such to consider how credit in general operates on individuals of the higher classes, and to recollect how few of those who make any considerable use of this privilege escape ruin; and I would beg of them likewise to recollect how few instances there are, even among the industrious part of the poor in country parishes, of persons who, instead of taking the relief from his parish, borrows two or three pounds, are ever able to clear such a debt, or at least so speedily as their creditors generally require; and if they fail, as they generally do, to answer the demands of their creditors, they are thrown into goal, and the publick loses the benefit of their industry. And I must not omit to take notice of the ease the poor will receive, when free'd from these exactions which they are hampered with in all counties by such attornies whose practice is almost entirely, if not solely, confined to recover debts of this sort.

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Nor is the state of the poor in such places where courts of consciences are established much mended; for, by means of this low credit, debts are as frequently contracted in such places, as in any others; and notwithstanding those courts have a summary way of proceeding, the poor are as often taken from their industrious employments, to which they seldom return after a confinement of thirty or forty days.

If a poor person is disturbed, by any means whatsoever, in the industrious course he is once fixt, he seldom settles again to industry. And I always consider this class of people, as in some respects in a state of minority. They can never, from their situation in life, and from the nature of their education, acquire, at any one point of time in life, such a degree of discretion, as to be capable of judging properly for themselves, or to know without continual guidance, wherein their own well-being consists. And whoever considers them in this light, as minors, will soon see what is proper to be done to secure their industry, and to preserve their moral state and happiness: If this be the true light in which they ought to be considered, let me ask whether the publick, who are their real guardians, ought not to be careful to remove from them, at any rate, all temptations to drunkenness? Whether a power of contracting debts is not dangerous in the hands of these, as in such whom
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the law considers as minors? Whether granting privileges of any kind to such minors, be not only improper but destructive to their well-being.

Whether their necessary wants, which may arise at any time from accidental misfortunes, such as sickness and diseases of other kinds, should not always be supplied by *Gift*? Whether it is not in some degree a contradiction in our statute-books, to oblige every parish in the kingdom to relieve the necessities of all poor belonging to their respective parishes, at the same time that there are laws existing which give them credit, and enable them to borrow. These parish laws, though they have proved in a great measure ineffectual for the purposes for which they were intended, are declaratory of the sense of the legislature, that their real wants and necessities should be supplied to them by gift: But the laws, which support low credit, give them the dangerous privilege of borrowing.

I hope I have now said what is sufficient to prove how improper it is to permit low credit to remain, and that I have also shewn what mischievous consequences have attended it; and that it has likewise been clearly proved, that it is this low credit, which introduces this excess of drunkenness among the lower rank of people, and that still supports it.

It may here be said that gin is now sold at so cheap a rate, that there is but a slender

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use of low credit on this article. This I must in some measure allow to be true, and I shall, in the appendix to these papers, consider what regulations may be made in some matters relative to the manufactory of all spirituous liquors; and shall endeavour to shew that, under such regulations, the price of gin for home consumption may be raised by an additional duty.

I come now to the head of idleness and shall here endeavour to point out what may be a proper method to put the poor under an obligation of being industrious. And here our statute-books will assist us by providing us with a most excellent law, I mean the act of the 9th of the late king, which act empowers every parish in the kingdom to erect a workhouse for employing and maintaining their own poor, and to take in poor from any other parish at such rates as shall be agreed upon by such contracting parishes.

This act likewise, in order to ease the lesser parishes from the extraordinary expence which may in some degree at first arise in preparing a workhouse for such purposes, empowers any such member, as conveniency shall point out, to unite for these purposes of erecting a workhouse for maintaining their poor in common; and gives power to parishes under such union to take in poor from other parishes? What more wise distribution, founded on the most true and just notions of trade,

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trade, could be made to promote a general industry? Those who framed this act foresaw the inefficacy that must attend country workhouses, or the fixing workhouses to the several hundreds in every country; that corruption, which would by various means prevail in such cases, would soon destroy the industry of such workhouses; and, being perfectly sensible, that industry, which promotes trade, is best supported and improved by the rewards which trade necessarily produces to the industrious, and that emulation is a necessary spur to industry; they rightly judge that, in the method proposed by this act, a general spirit of industry would be best preserved; since, by the power of that act, any one parish can set up a workhouse at any time, in case the workhouse, to which their poor shall be sent, shall at any time grow so remiss in their management, as not to answer the publick utility, and the interest of the particular parishes concerned.

Yet this act, in common with most others, has been executed but in very few instances, though in those places, where it has been compleatly executed, it has all the good effects, that could be wished for from any law; and the only point now to be inquired after, is to find out such a method, as shall secure a general and universal execution of this law throughout the whole kingdom. Such a law, I imagine, might be framed as would

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secure a general and compleat execution of that statute.

Suppose a compulsory law to the following effect should pass: That the parish-officers of every parish, in the kingdom of *England* and *Wales* and town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, be obliged to attend at the first *Midsummer* quarter sessions in their respective countries, after the law is passed, and afterwards annually to give an account upon oath of what progress they shall have made in their respective parishes towards the full execution of the said act; such account to be entered in their sessions-book: The justices in court ordering and directing such parish-officers to be diligent and expeditious in getting their several workhouses ready: And if the officers of any parish or parishes shall neglect to attend the quarter sessions as aforesaid, (due notice having been given to them by the clerk of the peace of the respective counties, before the first *Midsummer* quarter sessions, after such a compulsory law has passed, that the law requires their attendance as aforesaid, and no person or persons of credit being parishioners of the said respective parishes, appearing in the behalf of the said parish or parish-officers, capable of giving an account relative to this matter, for which the said officers attendance is by law required) the justices at the said quarter sessions, shall set the fine of 20s. on every parish-officer, who shall have neglected to attend

tend the said sessions. And the justices at the quarter sessions in the several counties, shall order minutes to be entered in their sessions-books of the names of the several parishes, together with the names of their officers who shall have neglected to attend the said sessions, and shall accordingly enter the accounts, which they shall receive at the *Midsummer* sessions annually, and fine such parish-officers as shall be annually found to neglect attending.

And the said justices shall at their *Midsummer* sessions, in the year after an act to this effect shall pass, direct, that true copies of the several accounts, which the officers who shall attend at the said *Midsummer* sessions, and of the accounts delivered in at the sessions of the year preceding, of the progress which their respective parishes have made towards the full execution of the aforesaid act; as well as copies of the minutes entered of the several parish-officers who neglected to attend at such sessions, and the sessions of the preceding year, together with the names of the respective parishes to which they belong, which said copies shall be signed by all the justices present at the said quarter sessions; which said copies thus signed, the clerk of the said sessions shall be directed by the said justices, to deliver to the judges in court, at the assizes which shall be held that year, and on the first day the assizes shall be opened.

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And if the judge of the assize shall find by the said accounts which are delivered in by the clerks of the sessions, that any parish or parishes have not compleatly executed the said act in one shape or other under the option it gives, every parish guilty of such neglect shall be fined in sum of 60*l.* if a market-town, or being a parish making part of a market-town or corporation; and in case of a parish making part of a city the sum of 80*l.* But in the case of a town which shall consist only of one parish, which shall be small, or not of any considerable size, in every such case the fine shall be only 40*l.* and all the said several fines set upon such parishes as aforementioned, and which shall have appeared to have neglected to put the said act in execution, shall be annually fined in the same manner as long as they shall continue under the said neglect. And every parish which having put the act in execution, shall be found to discontinue their compliance with the said act, shall in the first year, and in every year during its discontinuance in not complying with the said act, or such directions as shall be ordered by this compulsory law, be fined in the sums abovementioned; and all the said several fines which shall be at any time set upon any parishes for not executing the said act, or for neglecting to continue the observance of the said act, as well as the fines which shall be set at any time upon any parish-

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parish-officers for neglecting to attend the quarter sessions, or the assizes in their respective counties as aforementioned, shall be paid into the hands of the receiver-general of the county: The fines which shall at any time be set upon the parishes to be collected by the overseers of the poor, in proportion as the poor rates are collected on the occupiers of the lands in the parish or parishes which shall be so assessed, and to be paid by the said overseers, into the hands of the collectors of the land-tax, to be by them, paid into the hands of the receiver-general of the respective counties, and to be by him paid into the exchequer, and to be accounted for to parliament.

I shall not here pretend to describe the exact form of such a law, as may be proper for the purposes of securing a perfect execution of this statute of the 9th of the late king: The sketch I have already given, may be sufficient to explain what kind of regulations I imagine would unavoidably promote the compleat execution of that act. I shall only observe further, that it would be necessary to have several restrictions in such a law, to secure the perfect Utility of the workhouses, which, will under this plan, become general all over the kingdom, and may prevent those corruptions from taking place, which we find do attend most of the workhouses which are at present established.

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In order that it may be understood what kind of restriction I mean, it may be necessary to mention, that in the case of a parish which shall, by virtue of this act of the 9th of the late king, make its option to send its poor to the workhouse of another parish, or to such as are under a union, that exact copies of every agreement, that shall be made between the churchwardens and overseers of the two contracting parishes, for sending their poor from one parish to the workhouse of another parish, should be posted up in the most public and conspicuous parts of the respective parishes or places, there to remain for the space of three days.

Another restriction is, that every parish which shall set up a workhouse, or shall share in, or under a union, should likewise be restrained from letting their workhouse to any person in any manner, so as such person may be considered in any degree as a kind of tenant to the workhouse, and who paying such a rent, shall have the whole management of such workhouse, and bear the profits and losses which shall attend it; and that every parish as aforesaid, shall be restrained even from contracting with any person or persons, by the year, or for any lesser proportion of time, for providing fuel for their workhouses, or any other necessaries which are continually wanted. These, and other restrictions may be necessary to secure the perfect

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perfect utility of the workhouses to be erected under this general plan;—and it is for want of these, and other restrictions, that several corruptions have entered into most of the workhouses which are now erected in the kingdom; and from thence arise those objections which many make to the inefficacy of workhouses for producing a spirit of industry.

Though it may justly be observed, that even the words beggar and vagabond have never been mentioned in these papers, yet whoever will consider the great effects which must arise to the public from suppressing drunkenness by those means I have proposed; and likewise that a general spirit of industry must inevitably be produced universally throughout the whole kingdom, by the perfect execution of the statute of the 9th of the late king, (the execution of which statute will undoubtedly be secured by a compulsory law of such kind as I have here imperfectly sketched out, the intended compass of these papers not allowing me to be particular) I say, whoever will consider these points, will find, after a short time, and a very little experience, that the number of the strollers will gradually diminish, idleness and vice daily wear out, and *London* be free'd from this noxious refuse which now centers in it.

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A P P E N D I X.

IT is an opinion in general received, that the allowance of a *bounty* on *corn* is beneficial to the farmer, and consequently to the nation.

In order to set this matter in a true light, I shall lay down such general *maxims* of trade as cannot, in my opinion, be controverted, on which this question does in a great measure depend.

That the *wealth* of any *nation* is in proportion to its quantity of *trade* and number of manufacturies.

That the *value* of the produce of such a nation is likewise in the same proportion.

That the continuance of its manufacturies, trade, and wealth, depends solely on the degree of vent its manufactures have in foreign markets.

That good regulations for promoting universal industry, are necessary among the people of such a nation.

That it is the interest of such a nation to suffer its ports to be opened for the admission of every kind of foreign produce, or manufacture whatsoever, to which any degree of labour can be added: And that labour is distant wealth.

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That contradicting this maxim, by laying duties, or prohibitions, on any kind, or all kinds of foreign produce, or on foreign goods imperfectly manufactured, forces such foreign nation, or nations, to set up new manufacturies, and to improve their old, to the detriment of the country, where such prohibitions are established.

That consequently, by the known rule of contraries, sending out any commodities unmanufactured, or which are not fully manufactured, must be detrimental to any country.

That it must still be more detrimental to any country to grant a bounty for exportation of its commodities of this sort.

That corn, as it is capable of being manufactured, is unquestionably a commodity of this sort.

If these maxims appear to others, as they do to me, how improper must it be to continue a bounty on corn?

To shew, in fact, the price of wheat in *England* has been lower since the bounty was granted than before, I shall compare the prices of wheat, as they stood from the several mediums taken upon different numbers of years, since the bounty was first allowed in the year 1689, with the prices found from mediums, taken upon equal numbers of years before the bounty took place.

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This estimation is taken from an account, intituled an account of the true market price of wheat and malt at *Windfor*, for 100 years, began and published by *William Fleetwood* bishop of *Ely*, from 1646 to 1706, and since continued in the same manner to the year 1745, which account is generally esteemed accurate.

The price of wheat *per* quarter, £. s. d. upon a medium taken on 43 years, from 1646, being the first year the account commences, to 1688, the year before the bounty was allowed, appears to be at the rate of 2 10 8

From the medium taken on 43 years, from 1689, being the first year the bounty took place, to the year 1731, the price of wheat *per* quarter appears to be 1 18 0

An annual loss to the farmer in price since the bounty took place 12 8

From 1669 to 1688, being the last 20 years before the bounty was allowed, the price of wheat *per* quarter, was at a medium 2 6 2

From 1726 to 1745, being the last 20 years, in this account, the price

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price of wheat at a medium *per* quarter was 1 17 9³/₄

An annual loss to the farmer in price since the bounty took place 0 8 4¹/₄

The medium on wheat from 1649 to 1668, being 20 years, was *per* quarter 2 12 8¹/₂

The medium from 1706 to 1725, being 20 years, was *per* quarter 2 4 9

An annual loss to the farmer in price since the bounty took place 0 7 11¹/₂

The medium on wheat for 14 years from 1675 to 1688, was *per* quarter 2 5 4¹/₄

The medium on wheat for 14 years from 1732 to 1745, was *per* quarter 1 15 6¹/₂

An annual loss to the farmer in price since the bounty took place 0 9 9³/₄

If this account of the bishop be accurate, and the estimations of the mediums of the prices

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prices for the several years as above, correctly taken, the loss is very evident. I likewise find, that from the year 1689, being the year when the bounty was first allowed, to the year 1745, when the account ends, containing the space of 57 years, that the farmer has received annually 8s. 5d. per quarter less for his wheat, than it bore, one year with another, 643 years preceding the year, when the bounty was first allowed.

If the prices of barley, and other kinds of corn, had been stated there, I should have been enabled to have made the same computations on them, which would have shewn how the mediums stood upon them, and am satisfied they also would appear, upon such an estimate, to be lowered considerably in their prices since the bounty.

If the freight from *London* to *Holland* be deducted, which is 1s. 5d. $\frac{1}{2}$ per quarter, out of 2s. 6d. which is the bounty per quarter, the remainder being 1s. 0d. $\frac{1}{2}$ is the encouragement given to the merchant to export barley, which encouragement is at the rate of 7l. 7s. 11d. per cent. So likewise with regard to wheat, when the price of wheat is at 1l. 4s. per quarter, deducting the freight, which I suppose to be 1s. 5d. $\frac{1}{2}$ per quarter, out of the bounty of 5s. per quarter, the remainder 3s. 5d. $\frac{1}{2}$ is the encouragement given to the merchant by the bounty per quarter to export wheat, which in the way
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of trade, is at the rate of 14l. 15s. 1d. per cent.

So that in the case of barley, it appears, that whatever the corn-merchant will allow out of this 7l. 7s. 11d. per cent. to tempt the foreigner to buy our corn, that allowance, whatever it be, whether at the rate of 2, 3, or 4 per cent. will be the advantage that every such foreigner will have in his manufactory of barley of *English* growth, over the *English* manufacturer of the same commodity at every foreign market.

14l. 15s. 1d. per cent. is the encouragement, which the bounty on wheat gives to the merchant: Whatever proportion of this encouragement, whether it be 5, 6, 8, or 10 per cent. he may chuse to allow out of this to the foreigner, just so much cheaper will the foreigner be enabled to work, and sell his manufacture than an *Englishman* can.

And what is still more grievous in this case is, that we always find it very difficult, if not impossible, in all cases where there is any considerable degree of disproportion in the price of a foreign manufacture, and our own, to prevent by any penal laws, such manufacture from being run in upon us.

That the running of the foreign manufacture of this kind has encreased upon us ever since the bounty took place, appears, from the many laws which have been made ever since that time, to prevent the foreign manufacture
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of this kind from gaining a vent in our home-market.

If this be a true representation of the ill effects of this bounty, besides the loss occasioned by it to the nation in general, how great is that, which it immediately brings on the farmer? and how can we without taking off this bounty, pretend to make any regulation for raising the price of spirituous liquors, to prevent the melancholy effects that arise from the excess in the use of them?

But if the bounty be withdrawn, a check will be given to the introduction of any such foreign manufactured liquors, and we may then venture, properly and safely, to lay some further additional duty upon our own, which will encrease their price; and consequently the methods proposed in the former part of these papers, will operate more strongly to suppress the debauchery in these liquors, which so scandalously prevails.

If, notwithstanding what has been proved above, that the farmer has sold his wheat at the annual rate of 8s. 5d. per quarter less, since the bounty was allowed in the year 1689, than he did before, for the course of 43 years preceding that time, it may be said, that *Holland*, or any other particular country will be furnished with corn from other parts of *Europe*, instead of buying ours, and so continue their manufactory of spirituous liquors: And that as the *English* manufacturers of

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of this kind have never yet gained any vent at a foreign market, it is a meer chimæra to expect they ever should gain such vent.

In answer to this it may be said, that when the price of corn in *England* is lower than it is in *Holland*, and in other foreign market or markets, our corn will have a vent at such foreign market, or markets without the assistance of a bounty; and that in fact, *Holland* buys our corn for no other reason, than because it buys it cheaper, or as cheap, as it does of any other country. And all other countries that purchase it of us, are moved by the same considerations: That in fact, corn has been of late years produced in *England*, with as little, or less expence than in any other part of *Europe*, notwithstanding the many disadvantages under which *farming* labours from several laws, meant indeed for its encouragement, but in truth very injurious to its true interest: Such for instance, is the law prohibiting the importation of great cattle, which raises their price excessively, and is therefore a palpable hindrance to the farmer's purchasing such numbers of them, as he could conveniently fat, or otherwise make a profit of, which he now loses; and this loss is accompanied with another, that of their manure, which annually lessens his crops of corn.

I must hint again at the inconvenience felt by the farmer, nearly and sensibly, from the

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want of a free market at home, which *Smith's field* certainly is not, to speak of it in the most gentle terms.

It is certain likewise, that the prohibition on raw hides is another injury to the farmer, as it discourages the manufacture of leather at home, and promotes it abroad, and consequently lessens the farmer's price for raw hides; considerably lessens the number of hands in *England*; this as necessarily decreases manufactures of this, and every other sort, and manufactures are ultimately the support of farming.

And with regard to the objection, that lands have risen and improvements of them increased, while the bounty has subsisted: the fact is true, but it has been owing rather to accidental causes, than to any other; but it depends not at all on the bounty, as has been shewn, and will further appear. It has been in truth, owing to the safety and security in which every man found his person and property in *England*, and which were not equally safe any where else. Security is the best friend to industry: Our neighbours, especially of *France*, have seen the truth of this maxim, and for 20 years past, have done a great deal to establish it. In short, we are indebted for the rise of our trade and consequently for the rise of our lands, more to the faults and weaknesses of our neighbours, than any wise establishments of our own.

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So that to contrive a method for the vent of our own produce unmanufactured, is really contriving a way to impoverish ourselves. For in so doing we entirely give up the manufactory of such produce, and in this particular case with regard to corn (as it must be considered in another light, as a necessary of life) we do by such means endeavour, that such foreign country, or countries shall be accommodated with a necessary of life, in as cheap a manner as is possible; and consequently enable them, by reducing their price of labour to undersell us in every manufactory whatsoever.

How then can it be said, that the rents of land depend entirely on corn, especially as the great rise in rents did not commence till near twenty years after the revolution, the æra of the bounty, since I have shewn, that there are others, and very considerable causes of the rise of the rents of land besides that of corn?

I have hitherto been arguing against all bounties for the exportation of our own corn, but I will advance a step further, and venture to assert, that any degree of prohibition, at any time, on the importation of *foreign* corn, will be detrimental to the nation, since, by preventing the admission of it, when our own growth shall be dearer than that of foreign nations, the price of our labour must rise, and our neighbours in such case, will

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not only greatly undersell us in their manufactures of this commodity, but, in some degree, in all others.

From hence I think it plainly appears, that the course of trade in corn should be suffered to ebb and flow as the markets of *Europe* shall direct; and that our ports should always be open to a free course of trade in this particular.

To say as some do, that because possibly we never have had any vent for our manufacture of spirituous liquors, in any foreign markets, that therefore we can never arrive at such perfection in goodness and cheapness as to gain one, seems to me a very strange assertion; unless it can be proved, that our laws in trade direct such regulations, as give a fair trial of the industry and capacities of the people. But we have made no such trial, nor is it indeed possible to make it as long as the bounty remains.

F I N I S.