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CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
POLICY, COMMERCE
AND
CIRCUMSTANCES
OF THE
K I N G D O M.

L O N D O N,

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P R E F A C E.

MUCH hath been said and written of late on the very interesting subjects of our national policy, commerce and circumstances; though not greatly to the satisfaction of intelligent and candid men. Representations have appeared exaggerated, and arguments so strained as to render them suspected of intentional deception. More dependance has at least been made on assertions than proofs: and even what have generally been produced as proofs were fallible in their natures, therefore disputable and inconclusive.

BUT the times having become critical, the sensible few, who are unfashionably solicitous for the

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welfare of their country, have wished to see points of such importance more effectually discussed. In order to gratify whom, and indeed not unsolicited, though entirely uninfluenced by any party or individual, the task has been attempted in the following sheets. The principles proceeded on are in their natures demonstrative; the facts striking and important; the authorities respectable. Arguments and deductions are submitted to the judgment of the impartial public.

MATTERS which concern all men should, in books, be so explained as by all to be comprehended. The mere elements of national policy may be little known by many readers of sense, who have not been in situations to acquire certain knowledge from practice,
information,

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information, or study. The scientific part of commerce may be still less generally understood: and yet in its nature is of the highest importance to all in their national, and to many in their practical and official capacities. The informations, therefore, which have been thought necessary to be furnished on those heads, make the following work more of a miscellaneous than systematic kind, though the general conclusion is regularly drawn from demonstrative and corroborant facts.

THE task will ever prove arduous to combat rooted prejudices, whether imbibed from blind prepossession, or too wilful a regard for mistaken self-interest. It must, however, be persevered in with respect to many important matters,

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or this kingdom will become ruined.

To so wretched a pass have policy, principle, and even understanding arrived in this country, that we estimate the degrees of our national wisdom and strength by the comparative folly and debility of our neighbours; instead of deciding by what the realities of things are, and what they might, and ought to be made among ourselves.

CAN it be thought a satisfactory consolation to the distressed people of this country, to be told the French are still more oppressed by the enormity and partiality of taxations, the abuses of justice, or the excesses of power?

THE

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THE restoration of due constitutional weight to the general body of the people is become absolutely requisite for the safety and welfare of the state, in order effectually to break that extensive and burthensome chain of corruption, which extends from the highest officers of state down to the vilest connections of the dirtiest electors in the most contemptible boroughs of the kingdom. A practice that may as much be considered as the rotten part of policy, as the scenes in which it is in part carried on long have been, as the rotten parts of the constitution; for it is rooting apace from the minds of mankind all the respect and veneration which should be the due of executive and legislative government; is rendering us reproachable in the eyes of all

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Europe, and burthening to excess all property and industry, for the support alike of the low, whom it makes useless from debauchery, and the high, whom it renders shameful in profusion, and infamous for servility.

WHAT the real sense of the wise and good part of society is of these matters, has been made sufficiently evident by almost every late election in which it could possibly be manifested. It is not, therefore, from a want of virtue in the people that practice is become so corrupt as we behold it. We see, in Mr. OLIVER, an honourable representative, who openly declares he will suffer no suspicion of influence on his public conduct: and we have seen in the inhabitants of Westminster, the residence of courtiers

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tiers and great scene of corruption, electors who would neither be bribed or treated for the giving of their votes in the cause of their country. Such representatives and such electors appear honourable indeed. Were their examples to be generally followed, we should soon become a respectable, glorious, prosperous and happy people. Let not the abettors then of a corrupt and ruinous system pretend, that the vices of the people make the practice of it necessary. There are sufficient virtues in the people, if government would avail itself of the disposition of the times, for accomplishing the reformation which is become so extremely needful; and if neglected to be undertaken, the nation, nay the world must know where to lay the blame: and the people of the whole

* P R E F A C E.

whole kingdom will be every day learning more to know whom they ought NOT to confide in, and, of course, whom it is their duty with resolution to oppose.

THE sudden great fall of late in the price of bank-stock, which is more than any other the barometer of public credit, will serve to shew what the state of the latter must become with the certainty of a war; of which we must suppose there has at least been a probability, or the expences which the nation has been put to should be deemed inexcusable. Be the event, however, what it may, such an impression made on public credit, by an alarm, should serve to evince the necessity there has long been, of more important measures being taken, for its effectual susten-
tion,

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tion, than any that we have yet beheld.

ON the reports spread of our disputes with Spain being likely to become accommodated, the stocks have, however, appeared rising again, and the price of gold has sunk two-pence below four pounds an ounce, both probably from the same cause, if the reports are true, that the Dutch have sent over large orders for purchasing. It may sometimes be convenient for the great stock-jobbers on the continent to give temporary supports to the prices of our stocks, for the serving of their own purposes: but the first operations at home are those most to be relied on as criterions of the state of public credit: and indeed they were such as must appear on any like occasion.

No-

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Nothing remains, on the part of the writer, but to apologize for any imperfections in composition, that may appear in the following work, which has not been a little hastened for the better timing of its appearance. He has been faithful in his instancing of facts, and really honest in his intention: for the rest he relies on the candour of his readers.

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C O N S I D E R A T I O N S
O N T H E
P O L I C Y , C O M M E R C E , & c .

C H A P. I.

Signs of the declining Condition of the Nation.

THERE are few men who now scruple to acknowledge, that the situation of this kingdom is become extremely critical; from the accumulated weight of its burthens by debt and taxation, and the decrease of its commerce in exported manufactures.

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We have had Treasury information,* that population declines apace: and it is well known the Poors-rates† have, of late years, greatly

* See Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom, &c. published in the year 1766, supposed to be written under the auspices of Mr. Grenville. Wherein we are told the number of houses in England and Wales, from 1759 to that year, had decreased five thousand seven hundred and ninety; with including in the account all the new buildings about Westminster, and every where else. Most other writers of credit, of late years, have been likewise of opinion, that population decreases considerably in this kingdom.

† Whatever may occasionally be the case with respect to private charities, it is certain that Parish-reliefs are no where given with a lavish hand. There may indeed, in some places, be misapplications of the poors-money; but there is no extravagant bestowal of it in any. We may therefore consider the great increase of the poors rate, almost every where,

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greatly increased throughout the kingdom. These two circumstances,
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where, to be an incontestable proof of increasing distress among the lowest order of people. The High Sheriff and forty other gentlemen of the county of Kent, signed an advertisement that was dated, Maidstone, August 7, 1770, summoning the county to meet at that town on the 2d, and at Canterbury on the 5th of the following month of November, "to consider of proper methods for the better care of the poor, and for applying to parliament for carrying the same into execution;" as alledged, "for relief of occupiers of lands, now under very heavy and increasing rates." Which advertisement we have seen repeatedly published in the newspapers.

Let it be here remarked, that Kent is an opulent, maritime, much-improved county. And by not being a manufacturing one, is unexposed to the suffering of extraordinary burthens from suddenly-lost branches of trade, a misfortune that has been severely experienced by some others. Nay more, its extensive cultivation of hops must occasion a more than ordinary

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stances, of decreasing numbers, and increasing wants among the people, should be thought sufficient to demonstrate the unprosperous situation of our national affairs: but there are others, to be hereafter pointed out, which will put the matter beyond dispute.

C H A P.

ordinary demand for labour. It likewise abounds with Noblemens and Gentlemens seats, whose parks and gardens must furnish much occasional employment. There are, moreover, three Royal Dock-yards in it; two places of great public resort; and it has many other advantages which serve to make it flourishing. We may therefore reasonably conclude, that most other counties must be more burthened with their poor: and indeed there is no one in which the misfortune is not much experienced, and greatly lamented.

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C H A P. II.

*Commerce our great national Object,
as the only sure and lasting source of
Wealth and Population.*

IT has been long agreed by all men of understanding, that the resources of a country will always be in proportion to its useful population, which must every where depend on the means furnished for good employment; so that in the degrees those are wanting, every state, of course, will be proportionally poor and weak.

It is not the extent of country that makes the state powerful, but the number of its inhabitants. Nor can a number of inhabitants enrich a state, unless they are usefully employed. A country of mere soldiers

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diers, with all their ideas of high importance, could only exist, like a banditti, on the plunder of their neighbours. Rome had no sooner conquered the world than she began to lose it again: and the empire of Macedon became broken as soon as the establisher of it died. What a nation of mere soldiers are, we at present see by the Turks: and the like will become experienced by the nations of Barbary. But the industrious and populous empires of China and Japan have been alike prosperous and durable.

With his vast extent of territory, the grand Sultan, whose supplies of every kind are exacted from oppressed, harrassed, starving and depopulated provinces, may be pronounced a feeble Potentate, though his country is naturally fruitful.

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But the Venetians and Dutch, with small portions of land, have each, in their turns, been very powerful states; from the proportional great numbers, industry and opulence of their people.

Thus, from false policy, the immense and fertile empire of Turkey has been turning into a desert; while, from true policy, the naturally insignificant and scanty swamps of Venice and Holland were improving into crowded hives of useful and wealthy people. It is true the condition of these commonwealths has become altered, though not in an equal degree, from the tendency there is in all kinds of governments to corruption and abuse. Venice has been greatly weakened by the abuse of aristocratic power, which is too apt to

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prove mischievous: and the form of government has, in effect, been changed from democratic to aristocratic in Holland, from the influence of wealth among a part of the people; which has enabled them in too great a degree, to make a property of their country. Yet, even in their present condition, no doubt can be entertained, that conjunctively these two little countries would prove much an over-match for the vast Ottoman Empire, by means of their naval force, and commercial resources for the hire of mercenary armies, were the other powers of Europe to be neutral on the occasion.

Our insular situation, in a healthy climate, favourable and advantageous to industry and navigation, with the blessings of a fruitful soil,
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and land abounding with mines, as their surrounding seas are with fish, seems to be marked out by Providence for the emporium of commerce, the only sure source of great and lasting power to a state. Nay, such, in a very eminent degree, it already has long been: nor can any thing but false policy prevent its continuing so for ever. The effects of false policy which we have to apprehend, and indeed already too much experience, are those which arise from mistaken interests partially pursued, as they may so operate as to prove greatly oppressive to the many and highly injurious to the state.

Nature, however, reason and observation, all plainly point out to
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us our true object of national policy, which is commerce; the inexhaustible source of wealth and power to a people.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

On the internal Policy of the State.

THERE is no mystery in true policy, there can be none in trade. Causes alike in both ever did, and ever will produce their natural effects; such being the all-wise and immutable laws of Providence. A moderate degree of observation will be sufficient to convince every man, that there can be no other requisites needful for the well governing of a state than good sense, real honesty and true information.

In times of peculiar difficulty and danger, our great Queen Elizabeth so regulated the administration of her government, by a very few obvious, but sensible maxims, as to reign

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reign in the hearts of her people, acquire never-fading glory to herself, and lay all the foundations of opulence and power to which her country has since arrived; and which, by the same admirable means, may be yet abundantly increased. But a great reverse of fortune will become experienced, and that at no great distance of time, should we mistakenly desert them.

The balancing powers which are so happily interwoven in the frame of our excellent constitution, however wise in their natures, were no other than the fruits of plain reason and natural observation, being derived from ages that we call barbarous; and yet they contain all that could be hoped from the most extensive knowledge and experience, assisted by great learning and sound judgment.

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judgment. But we can continue no longer a free, prosperous, or happy people, (for they are blessings that must be enjoyed, or will be all lost together) than while the respective powers of the component parts are kept in their due bearings towards each other, for mutual support. They are like the sustaining legs of a tripod; either of which being made to give way, the machine, so usefully erected, must fall to the ground. The people can no sooner lose their liberty, in this country, than the sovereign will find himself deprived of his importance and security; and the too great prevalency of the aristocratic power will only serve to endanger its existence, as has been the case heretofore. In most other countries indeed it first proved baneful to the democratic order;
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and then, for want of that support, became an easy, and fell an unpitied prey to regal despotism. But our own people will henceforth have a ready resource against the violence of either.

In like manner, there are three balancing interests among the people of this kingdom, which are those of land, money, and labour; and, as in the other case, they are the natural supports of each other, while a due balance is maintained; but the too great prevalency of either would prove injurious to all.

As the body of the people are the strength and wealth of a state, so workmen and labourers give all value to lands; and they are likewise the support of all dealers. It is by means of their skill and labour only that

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that wealth can be brought into a country: and was there no money to be a medium for traffic, there would little employment be furnished for dealers. Every order of people therefore are entitled to a due portion of regard, and all ought to shew, by their conduct, they are sensible alike of their dependance on each other. The protection of government is equally due to all, and the restraints that are wholesome should be also laid on all alike.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

On the landed Interest.

LAND is, in itself, of little or no value to the owner. The solitary lord of a million of acres would be but a naked, defenceless and miserable creature, destitute of every convenience and blessing of life. A landed man's commodity, therefore, derives all its value from the commodities of others: such as the labour of the husbandman, the skill and toil of the artizan, the industry and property of the dealer (who purchases, like all other people, the products of lands for consumption) and the wealth and knowledge of the merchant, who exports them.

Experience

Experience has long shewn, that a people, by their skill and industry, may become rich, powerful and happy, without the possession of lands for agriculture; because money will procure a sure supply of such products from other countries. But land, without people, is of no value at all. Why, therefore, all power should be assumed by, and all preference in consideration be given to the possessors of land, in any country, is an enquiry worth making; but more especially in a trading nation, like ours. Yet such has really become the case, from making a landed qualification necessary for obtaining a seat among the representatives of the people; and, in most instances, from having landed electors, or

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such as are under the influence of men of landed property.

Hence has arisen the distinction of a landed interest; which has become paramount in its operations, from ingrossing all influence in the state, and all weight in the scale of interests; at least in comparison with theirs who give to land its whole value. And hence too has arisen the partial favour which we see shewn to that kind of property, by giving a more than natural value to the products of lands; to the injury of the state, the hurt of our national trade, and the prejudice of the people. But this is a point that will hereafter be more fully considered and explained.

C H A P.

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C H A P. V.

On the monied, or trading Interest.

THE interest of traders, like that of landed men, is to make the most they can of their commodities, which are skill, industry and money; being each of them separately, or all together, a man's property: but they have no means, like landed men, to give them an artificial value. These commodities are generally employed in four distinct ways; which are manufacturing, dealing among ourselves, exporting the products of this kingdom to foreign parts, and importing those of other states to this country.

The manufacturer's is a very useful, and, of course, respectable calling.

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calling. He applies his skill, industry and property to such purposes as are greatly serviceable to the state; by employing artificers to work the cheap materials of his own and other countries into valuable goods, as well for home use, as for foreign consumption. In doing which, he infinitely advances the worth of such things as are naturally of but little value: and is the means of furnishing abundance of good employment, to the support of population. He accommodates us not only with necessaries, but also elegances, for our national use; and supplies abundance likewise for exportation to other countries. In return for which last we receive either such commodities as we want, or gold and silver.

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The most valuable dealers among ourselves, are those who buy by wholesale of manufacturers and importers, and sell by retail to consumers. They are a numerous body of industrious people, who employ their property and credit, and exercise their talents, to purposes that are serviceable to others and themselves: and are, therefore, a necessary and valuable part of the community. There are, likewise, other kinds of dealers, or tradesmen, who are equally useful.

Merchant exporters are those who invest great property in the manufactures and commodities of this kingdom, which they send to foreign countries for sale. The kind of traffick which they practise is, of all, the most estimable;

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for they add to the riches of their country by the very profits which they make, being gained from other nations, and added to our own stock.

Merchant importers are those who supply us, from other countries, with the necessaries we want. Raw materials, brought hither to work up for re-exportation, are more beneficial in the acquisition than gold and silver. All that is useful, or necessary, are valuable imports: but expensive articles for luxury, and whatever is introduced to the prejudice of our own products, or arts, are pernicious.

Factors, are those who transact business for people residing in other countries, or in the remote parts of this kingdom. The profits they
make

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make, by dealings from abroad, are clear gains to this country; and in their transactions for their fellow-subjects at home, they may be considered as highly useful.

There are other kinds of dealers, who are pernicious to this country; such as engrossers, for enhancing the prices of raw materials of all sorts, any kind of merchandize that is applicable to such arts as are called useful, or the necessaries of life. To these may be added stock-jobbers and state-jobbers: all of which kinds of dealings should, as much as possible, be discouraged and prevented. Such as are necessary to practise might be better regulated than at present, which could easily be so done as to occasion great savings to the state.

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C H A P. VI.

On the monied property of the Funds.

OUR true monied interest is certainly that which is employed in commerce abroad and dealings at home, as (described in the preceding chapter;) being the property of those chiefly who are to be ranked among the best members of society. But there has become a new kind of false monied-interest, or property, which was introduced in the last age, and is known by the name of funds; a term, when applied to the state-concern therein, that should be understood to mean funds of poverty, debility and danger: and with regard to proprietors, of idleness, inutility, folly, luxury,

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luxury, dissipation and stock-jobbing knavery.

To ministers of state they have been generally funds of influence and abuse, in jobs and taxes, which latter have often been made more than needfully grievous to the people, for the sake of gratifying individuals. The ends of establishing them were, to strengthen the hands of ministers, by the multiplication of employments: and to create attachment to government, from the dependency of property on its support for security. But in the degrees they have increased the powers of administration, they have weakened those of the state: and the progress of the system can be extended very little farther, without inevitable ruin to the proprietors,

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tors, or government, nay possibly to both.

They are become the ceaseless means of making enormous gains by the wicked parts of the knowing few, (who, either at home or abroad, are in the secret of affairs) at the expence of the ignorant and credulous many : by the practice of every species of fraudulent falsehood, imposition and artifice ; to the ruin of all principle, and the extirpation of all shame. They are moreover, in effect, a most dangerous instrument put into the hands of our enemies, which they may at any time employ to our very great embarrassment and national disadvantage.

Whatever cause there might formerly have been for adopting such a system,

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a system, there certainly of late could be no good reason assigned for its continuance. The evils we experience from it, and our sense of the difficulties and dangers it may hereafter involve us in, should induce us to endeavour, as fast as possible, to tread the track backwards again, in order to escape those evils to which it manifestly leads.

To value ourselves on such a national credit as induces us to burthen and mortgage all property and labour, which are our sources of wealth and power ; is shewing ourselves just as wise, as a people, as the individual would appear, who, without regard to means for future subsistence, should glory in being able to mortgage his estate ; because credit so abused, in either case, can end in nothing but embarrassment,

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barrassment, perplexity, beggary and ruin.

We commenced the late war under a debt of near eighty millions. Three per cents were then above par: but in the course of that war they were reduced to near sixty; and we were of course, forced to raise money at equivalent rates, by means of douceurs and additional interest. Our debt is now greatly above an hundred and thirty millions; and three per cents have fallen to much under eighty.

Should we get involved in war again, as seems likely soon to happen; little doubt should be entertained, that our three per cents will quickly fall considerably under fifty: when we must be forced to give above

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bove six per cent for money, should we find our credit good enough to procure it even at such a rate. But how new taxes could be levied for the payment of such interest, which probably would every succeeding year become raised, those would do well to point out, for public satisfaction, who endeavour to persuade us to believe, that burthens create powers, and that the nation has become proportionally more affluent by the increase of its incumbrances. But we live in an age in which paradoxes are made articles of political faith; for we not only hear such absurdities insisted on in conversation, but even see them avowed in print, sometimes by men of no ordinary figure in life.

This kind of monied-interest, or property, is then to the body politic,

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tic, what an over-grown wen is to the natural body: a monstrous excrescence, that sucks up the invigorating fluids from every limb and member, and to so enfeebling a degree, as must gradually deprive it of all vital powers, and hasten on mortality.

That the property of individuals in the funds, being purchased on national faith, and a supposed security in mortgaged taxes, should be as safe as any other kind of property, is readily acknowledged; so that the state, let the exigency be what it may, can never ease itself thereof by annihilation, without being guilty of the greatest injustice. Yet there certainly are those who already wish the doing of it; and others who own a time will arrive in which
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it must of necessity be done. But as that can never happen in other than times of difficulty and danger, who will pretend to say, what the consequences of it may prove, in a thousand ways, to the state? The ruin of stock-holders will infallibly involve in it the ruin of abundance of traders: And the situation of the times may make it productive of numberless evils. It would be better, therefore, for all men to sacrifice superfluous* expence to the redemption

* Mr. Hutchenfon, so long ago as in the reign of Queen Anne, wisely considered the public debts as mortgages on all private property, and the taxes for the payment of interest on them as so many reductions of the incomes of individuals; which, if the practice continued, would in time prove an insupportable burthen to the people, ruin our trade, and endanger the state. He therefore proposed every man's contributing a part of his property
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demption of their property, of every kind, from so burthenfome and mischievous a mortgage. This there can be little reason for supposing the public would not do, if government

to free the rest from the incumbrance, on the same principle as a wise man sells a part of his lands to pay off embarrassing mortgages on the whole. But such honest measures were not suited to the factious and selfish views of corrupt ministers, whose objects in funding, as they called running in debt, were to increase their own influence, and supply gratifications to their creatures; on which principle the proposal was then ridiculed, as it ever since has been, by all those who either did, or were endeavouring to serve themselves at the expence of the community. They even gloried in the credit which enabled us to run in debt, and entail such increasing burthens as must gradually debilitate the kingdom. Some sensible and honest men are now for adopting Mr. Hutcheson's scheme; while others are so villainous as to wish to see the sponge applied, not caring who unjustly suffers, so they themselves obtain relief.

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government were to set them a good example therein; by abolishing sinecures and unnecessary employments, reforming all abuses in the expediture of public money, raising the supplies in a more frugal manner, lowering the salaries of many offices, taxing extravagance, instead of industry, discouraging luxury, and restraining diffipation.

The manners and principles of a people may be easily influenced, at least in such matters as can be demonstrably proved of advantage to themselves. The wise already see, very clearly, the dangers to which we are become exposed; and even the weakest feel, nay complain of the heavy burthens that have been laid upon them. Nothing then can be wanting, but integrity and abilities in those who act for the public, for

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effectually applying every power of the state to the retrieval of its circumstances, and the recovery of its trade: which latter, if effected, must soon contribute such additional means towards fully accomplishing the former, as would speedily put our affairs on so flourishing a footing, as gradually to enable us to cease continuing tributaries, either to rivals abroad or mere idlers at home. Nay the latter would thereby be made serviceable members of society, from being necessitated to make some useful applications of their property, instead of continuing burthensome and mischievous ones, as at present; for those cannot be otherwise in a land of industry, like this, who have not, as Mr. Hume observes, more real employment than for two hours in a year.

C H A P.

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C H A P. VII.

On the labouring interest.

AS with respect to all others, the interest of labouring men lies in their commodities; which, among this order of society, are skill and labour. These they naturally endeavour to dispose of to the best advantage: and whatever they gain is eventually clear profit to the state. Political arithmeticians always estimate the annual value of individuals, to the national community, by what they can earn; as the state receives the whole thereof in taxes, and for the purchase of its commodities. If a man's work be always on goods for foreign markets, then foreigners pay his wages; which brings so much money, or of money's-worth, into his country,

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as it amounts to in the whole course of his life. When considered in this light, the body of people of whom I am now treating must appear, what they really are, the most valuable and important order in the state. Yet are proud ignorance and arrogance too apt to consider them as national nuisances and incumbrances; while in fact, they only can be such themselves; especially if their incomes are from government, which receives its whole supply from the people. The most valuable and serviceable part of a national community, must be those whose contributions are greatest towards the support and defence of the state. The most unuseful and burthenfome are, the generality of those who derive their support from it.

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It has been fashionable of late to join in loud outcries against the working people of this kingdom, on account of pretended extortionate demands of wages, and likewise for idleness and vice, by some at least who have little right to reproach them either from principle or practice. Their vices shall not be attempted to be vindicated by me. Let those who accuse them be careful not to set them ill examples. If we look attentively into every order of life, we shall see in all abundance to lament, to despise, and even to detest; therefore there can be little right in any one order strongly to reproach another.

It is however a fact sufficiently notorious, that the rates of labour

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have not risen in proportion to the increase of taxes, and the prices of provisions and other necessaries of life.

* Mr. Hume informs us, that in the reign of Henry the VIIth. the wages of a bricklayer, mason, tyler, &c. were ten-pence a day. Sir William Petty, mentions the wages of an † husbandman to be about four shillings a week, which was eight-pence a day; and those of working ‡ tradesmen (in which order we must include manufacturers) to be two shillings, and half a crown a day, in the reign of Charles the II^d. in which reign, he says, § lands were worth but twenty years

* In his history of that king's reign.

† P. 112 of his works.

‡ P. 124.

§ In his Political Arithmetick.

purchase,

purchase. And we learn from || Mr. Locke that the wages of a labourer, in the reign of Queen Anne, was twelve-pence a day. Let me add too, from good information, that in the reign of George the first, the late Earl of Lincoln paid the many workmen he employed for several years, in improving his park and gardens of Oatlands in Surry, seven shillings a week, which was fourteen pence a day.

Thus we see how land has risen in value since the reign of Charles the II^d. it being now nearly doubled in many parts of the kingdom; while even superior workmens wages have little increased in any, but, on the contrary, in many parts have become reduced, even as low as

|| In his first tract on the lowering of interest, and raising the value of money.

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those instanced to be given by the late Earl of Lincoln to his mere labourers. And as for labourers, their wages at present are but ten pence a day in some places; nor in any, I believe, more than twelve-pence, in the common course of business. Yet almost the whole of our enormous taxes have been laid on since the reign of Charles the Second: many of which fall entirely upon the labouring part of the people, and all greatly affect them in the prices of provisions and other necessaries of life. Every tax laid upon commodities is supposed to be at least doubled by traders on consumers, and most commonly greatly more. The same likewise has been the case with regard to the prices of cheese, butter, and many other essential necessaries of life to the poor: and
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the like may probably be said even of house-rent, if the * window-tax is included: in order to make savings, in which latter, we see the poor wretches in many cottages almost deprive themselves of light.

* Hearth-money was considered as an intolerable tax in the reign of James II. It was one of the great causes of incensing the people against his government. The act for repealing it calls it, "A great oppression on the poorer sort, and a badge of slavery upon the whole people." But what was that, when there were few other taxes, to the window-tax, when taxes in general have become so enormously increased? How differently do men who profess the same principles think at different times! what was deemed oppressive before the revolution, has not been thought so, in a far greater degree in our days, and with contracted means for bearing it. But the abilities of the poor to pay taxes do not appear, of late years, to have been objects of consideration either to administrations or parliaments.

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Money, therefore, cannot be supposed to go half so far in the house-keeping of poor people as it did in the reign of Charles II. yet the wages of labourers in the best places have been raised but a third, and in others but a fifth; while the pay of workmen and manufacturers has been scarcely raised at all, nay, on the contrary, in many places it has been considerably reduced. I heard a Manchester manufacturer own, not long ago, that many of their weavers could earn but seven shillings a week: with adding these words. "Though I own, but do not say it ought to be so, that many of their families have not a shoe or a stocking among them." Upon which he was asked, If he thought such were equitable earnings for a man who had served seven years to learn an art,

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art, which he assiduously practiced to the utility of his country? surely these must be greatly worse times than those of our fathers, when the propagated fears of being reduced, like the French, to the wearing of wooden shoes, served to rouse an indignant populace to assist in effecting a revolution. But people need not go far out of the metropolis to see families, of children at least, without shoes or stockings, and with hardly any kind of cloathing: which were sights rarely seen heretofore.

Thus, while lands have been nearly doubling in their value, and the profits of home dealings have been more than doubling on taxes, the prices of labour have, in many callings, been diminished, in others kept unvaried, and in none raised

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raised proportionally to the advancement of other property, or the altered rates of things. Yet, unequal as their treatment has been, those unhappy, distressed, oppressed and useful people have become the objects of abuse throughout the kingdom.

Industry, like every other exertion of human powers, whether of the body or mind, requires its proper stimulations. To toil incessantly in want, is too hard a condition for a human creature to endure. Men will not be laborious, but on the prospect of reaping some enjoyment therefrom: nay it would be the most detestable tyranny to require it on other terms. The want of due encouragement must naturally make men sink into despondency, or plunge into

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into desperation: which are such evils as government ought to guard against with the utmost care.

Every man who honestly endeavours to obtain such comforts of life as are suitable to his station, by skill and industry in his calling, must be fully entitled to the enjoyment of them. They are no more than his implied conditional and constitutional dues from the community, of which there is no member more valuable. And should he find himself deprived of them, either by artifice or force, and has no other means of remedy left, he must, and will have recourse to the laws of nature, which are imprinted on his heart, and operate through all his feelings. One way or other, he will find himself necessitated to shift as well

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as he can. He will either separate from that society to search for a better lot, which numbers of such people have already done, and are yet doing; or he will turn preyer on the community, in which he had been preyed upon, and wherein he could not comfortably subsist by a better kind of practice.

As hath been already said of lands, so it may be said of ores, minerals, and of every kind of raw materials; that, in their natural state, they are of little or no value. As all their worth is then derived from the skill and labour of workmen, ought those, who give value to every thing, to be considered, nay treated as of no value in themselves? Do individuals use their very cattle, or purchased slaves in such a manner? far otherwise: from
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considering them as their property, they take care of them for their own sakes. The meritorious labouring poor natives of this country may, therefore, be said to be in an infinitely worse plight than negroes are in the West-Indies. Nay there are many of them in the condition of out-casts from society, from being unable even to get settlements; because parishes will not hazard their becoming burthensome, from sickness or old age. But is not such policy as unwise as it is cruel; while, at the same time, we admit *Negroes and Indians to be imported, and welcome among us such unnaturalized fo-

* Negroes are not allowed to be imported into France, Portugal and some other countries, for so wise a reason as, that they may not obstruct a better population.

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reigners as must be our national and religious enemies, nay and even pedling Jews, who are a mischievous people? none of these imported races breed us soldiers or sailors, work on our lands, or but rarely practise useful arts: yet they are encouraged to occupy the stations of natives who would. Such policy should be thought disgraceful both to legislative and executive government. There can no population be so good as the native, which will be naturally extended to the degree it is encouraged: but the starving of it down, to be replenished by succedaneums like these, is giving such proofs of excessive ignorance, or wickedness, as might even be thought disgraceful to a nation of savages.

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As landlords have strove to keep down the price of labour, in order to raise the value of their own property, so farmers and master-workmen have done the same, for the enhancement of their own gains, while, at the same time, they were likewise practising every artifice for raising the prices of their commodities. From these partial and self-interested sources have been circulated throughout the kingdom the insidious reproaches of exorbitant demands of wages, and the too general accusations of vicious extravagance in those who had it not in their power to be guilty of the offence. Such have been the effects of a prevailing rapacious spirit: so much the more to be censured, as those who suffer them have been the

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means of giving affluence to their accusers; nay the people to whom we are not only indebted for individual conveniences and felicities, but also for the whole of our national powers. Yet to them, for their utility, the state indisputably owes convenience, encouragement and protection: which government should insure to them, as their natural and social dues.

That there may be grounds of complaint for exorbitant demands of pay for some kinds of labour, especially in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, will be readily allowed, particularly with regard to some kinds of portage, and occasionally in other ways. All such abuses are deserving of restraint: but they ought not to be
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made the grounds of general reproach. Regulations in many matters may be needful: but let oppressions be removed.

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C H A P. VIII.

On Taxes.

POLITICAL maxims give a character to times : and they have greatly varied in this kingdom since we became a trading people. How far they have influenced an alteration of practice with regard to taxation may be worthy of enquiry, as well as how far they are the causes of effects which appear menacing of approaching evils.

It was one of Queen Elizabeth's political maxims, that the purses of her subjects were her richest Exchequer ; for while they had abundance, she never could want. And from regulating her conduct by that opinion, she was so happy as never to experience a failure of resources,

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resources, or even of inclination in her people to supply her with whatever she required. It is true, she never did demand extraordinary supplies, but for obvious needful purposes : and she always took care there should be no kind of waste, or abuse in their expenditure. The natural good consequences of which excellent conduct were, an abundant increase of all valuable kinds of commerce, on those only sure principles with respect to exports, cheap labour and cheap commodities : advantages that are incompatible with excessive taxation. Hence her subjects were continually growing more numerous and wealthy, while the resources and powers of the state became proportionally increased.

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Her successor was not so wise as to adopt her maxims in these matters. He shewed himself disposed to plunder his people without mercy, alike for the indulgence of his own vanity, and the gratification of his favourites and courtiers. But however Elizabeth's maxims continued to be the policy of the times, or at least of the wisest people, as may be seen by the writings of Lord Bacon, who sensibly observed, that money, like muck, is of no use in the heap, but when scattered about, it produces plenty.

Observation served to shew then, as at all times it ought, that in proportion as the Exchequer overflows, its resources will dry up. The parliament therefore, in James's reign, would not be so lavish in
their

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their grants as he wished to be in his profusion. So that from the spirit of the times, as well as the integrity of the House of Commons, against the will of the court, the kingdom became prosperous and affluent. In fine, such as Lord Clarendon represents it to have been at the commencement of the civil war.

In the reign of Charles II. who was too much of his grandfather's disposition, the profligate court tried likewise for powers to become lavish in the highest degree. But the opinion of all sensible people continued unaltered, as we find by the writings of * Sir William Petty, who advised the taxing of

* In his chapter on taxes and public levies, page 125, &c.

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all extravagance to reward industry, in the improvement of lands and fisheries; in the working of mines, and in the encouragement of manufactories. He proposed taxing expensive eating and drinking, in order to enable people to wear better cloaths, as being of more advantage to the state: and instanced, with approbation, the modes of taxation in Holland and Zealand, where heavy taxes were laid on eating and drinking, in order to restrain excesses therein: from thinking that men should not be taxed according to what they earn, but in proportion to what they spend; as the former promotes the prosperity of a state, and the latter has a contrary effect. The late Sir Matthew Decker, in his time, proposed a like system of policy in taxation for this kingdom,

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dom, as it could be pursued at less expence, was in its nature less exceptionable, and more favourable to industry and commerce than our own. But it did not suit with the views of administration in Sir Robert Walpole's time, which were to favour luxury and extravagance among the great, in order to make their vices and necessities conducive to the rendering of them subservient to administration in their political capacities; and likewise to secure to government a greater election influence, by means of those additional employments which must be occasioned by a more complex and expensive mode of taxation; as also for encouraging dissipation, and even intemperance, among the inferior classes of people, for the sake of raising taxes on them therefrom,

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from, with making, moreover, their indulgence in vice the means of impelling them to excessive labour. This was the scandalous doctrine of the very mischievous author of the fable of the bees, whose wicked system has been ever since followed, though his book was legally censured.

Upon the whole, Sir William Petty was of opinion, that taxation to a certain degree might be serviceable; but not in any mode that encouraged vice, or cramped, or dispirited industry. Other writers of those times appear to have been of the same opinion. Of their number, the very sensible Marquis of Halifax was one, the following of whose admirable maxims of state are not unapplicable to our present purpose.

“ That

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“ That the profit of places
 “ should be measured; as they are
 “ more or less conducing to the
 “ public service; and if business is
 “ more necessary than splendour,
 “ the instrument of it ought, in
 “ proportion, to be better paid.
 “ That the contrary method is as
 “ impertinent, as it would be to
 “ let the carving of a ship cost
 “ more than all the rest.”

“ That if ordinary beggars are
 “ whipped, the daily beggars in
 “ fine cloaths (out of proportion-
 “ nable respect to their quality)
 “ ought to be hanged.

“ That a wise prince will not ob-
 “ lige his courtiers, who are birds
 “ of prey, so as to disoblige his
 “ people,

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“ people, who are beasts of bur-
 “ then.”

The same may be said with re-
 gard to government expences of
 every kind. And it should be ever
 remembered, that, however con-
 venient he may be for corrupt pur-
 poses to ministers, every revenue of-
 ficer, is a bee converted into a drone
 in the political hive. Instead of as-
 sisting to increase the general stock,
 he burthenomely subsists on the la-
 bours of others.

Mr. Locke was of opinion, that
 taxes upon commodities affect the
 landed interest more than if laid di-
 rectly upon land; which would be
 a good deal the case, if the prices of
 labour were raised proportionally to
 the increase of taxes; but that has
 not been done in this country.

There

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There is indeed no taxing of tra-
 ders in the articles of their traffic,
 because they are, and ever will be,
 the raters of the values of their own
 commodities: so that experience
 shews, for a small tax laid on any
 thing they deal in, they will take a
 large consideration in price. Thus
 those whose single commodity is la-
 bour, are taxed by government, di-
 rectly, for their windows, for sta-
 tute-work and most commodities
 they consume, and they are indirect-
 ly taxed by land-owners in the in-
 crease of farm-rents, because the
 farmer raises proportionally the
 prices of his commodities; while
 other dealers add to the taxes that
 are laid on the commodities they
 sell, another to themselves in the
 prices which they exact; without
 workmen having any advance in their
 own

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own wages that is equivalent. Besides there are particular taxes which bear peculiarly heavy on working people; as, for example, the excise on strong beer, which in no inconsiderable degree is a necessary of life to those whose business is laborious, or greatly exhausting to the human frame. Of this, as well as of the excise on * malt-spirits, and some other taxes, the rich pay nothing; and for which, in the wages of workmen, little or no consideration is made. Taxes, therefore, may prove profitable to some dealers in their effects, but they fall heavy upon labour, as some of them do upon land.

* These indeed must be owned a luxury, though perhaps often used for want of cloaths and fire.

Mr. Hume

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† Mr. Hume wisely observed, the following maxim was likely to become extremely abused, “ that every new tax creates a new ability in the subject to bear it, and that each increase of public burdens increases proportionably the industry of the people;” because, as he afterwards adds, “ exorbitant taxes, like extreme necessity, destroy industry, by engendering despair.”

This writer says farther, “ historians inform us, that one of the chief causes of the destruction of the Roman state, was the alteration which Constantine introduced into the finances, by substituting an universal poll-tax,

† In his discourse of taxes.

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“ in lieu of almost all the tithes,
 “ customs and excises which for-
 “ merly composed the revenue of
 “ the empire. The people, in all
 “ the provinces, were so ground
 “ and oppressed by the publicans,
 “ that they were glad to take re-
 “ fuge under the conquering arms
 “ of the barbarians; whose domi-
 “ nion, as they had fewer neces-
 “ sities and less art, was found pre-
 “ ferable to the refined tyranny of
 “ the Romans.” §

From

§ The following remarkable article appeared lately, among other paragraphs of foreign news, in our public papers.

“ Nanci, September 1, 1770, since the
 death of King Stanislaus, we reckon not less
 than 2000 families have migrated from hence,
 notwithstanding every method taken to prevent
 it. Nothing can put a stop to it, as they have
 little to lose, and may gain much by the
 change.”

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From what has been said, it must
 appear evident, that far too great
 a proportion of our levies, by tax-
 ation, are torn from the backs, and

It may be supposed the little court of that
 amiable monarch, who was a friend to the hu-
 man race, supplied numbers of people with the
 means of support; of which they were depriv-
 ed when Lorrain became annexed to France,
 the revenues of the country since being mostly
 drained out of it.

The poor Germans, who, in the year 1764,
 were deserted here by the person who had en-
 gaged to convey them to America, and by cha-
 ritable contributions were supported, and sent
 thither; had no sooner arrived at the lands as-
 signed them in Carolina, than they wrote pres-
 sing letters to their friends in Germany to sell
 what they had and follow them thither: which
 letters were sent through the hands of the re-
 verend Mr. Wachsel, minister of the Luthe-
 ran church, in Little Ayliff-street; and may be
 thought to furnish a remarkable instance of
 mens preferring the cultivation of a foreign de-
 sert to a state of oppression, among their
 friends, in their own country.

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squeezed from the bellies of our working people; who (notwithstanding all that can be said to the contrary) have been driven by hardships to the unnatural resolution of deserting their native country in great numbers; and will be still likely so to do in greater, if we continue our cruel policy of impelling them by necessity to extreme toil, without affording them so much as a prospect of comfort from it.

The reader will observe, better maxims were adopted while we were rising to greatness. They were founded in reason, and the natures of men and things. But with our system of funding, in miseries and debts, our conduct became regulated by contrary maxims; such as are alike repugnant to true policy and humanity, and which, if not speedily

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ly renounced, must produce fatal effects.

It is become highly necessary to call forth the virtues and abilities, and to check the vices and follies of the human race. Our corrupt and partial system of policy has been already carried too far. The powers of the state can no longer support it; nor ought the natural, or political rights of the people to be sacrificed any longer, for the serving of such purposes.

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C H A P. IX.

On Exports, Imports, and the Balance of Trade.

THE exports of a country are all entirely in its favour: and would procure returns to their whole value, (with freightage, if sent in our own shipping, and the profits of the merchant-adventurer, if he resided in this kingdom) either directly or indirectly, in gold and silver. If, for example, we send goods to Spain, without wanting commodities from that kingdom, the money paid for them would be sent hither directly, in Dollars or Double-Dobloons: or, if she had a debt of a like, or a greater amount due to her from another country, then she would pay us indirectly, by a transfer of so much of

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of the debt owing to her, in bills of Exchange on that country. In which case we should receive the value of those bills in money from the latter, with the profits of Exchange in so doing.

Imports are against the country that receives them, unless of raw materials for manufactures, to be afterwards re-exported; in which case, they are beneficial to the importing country to the whole amount of workmanship: and the country that works them up would moreover get the freightage in both voyages, should the shipping of it be employed, and likewise the profits of the second merchant-adventurer, if he were resident therein. Workmanship in manufacturing in general may at least, upon an average, be estimated at ten times the

F 3 value

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value of the raw materials; and being of so much more value to a country, it of course must be a desirable traffic even to purchase raw-materials with money, for working into manufactures for re-exportation; consequently to get them in return for manufactures, must be the best kind of commerce that can possibly be carried on. There are likewise various other imports which, from being useful, are necessary to receive: but, if merely for our own consumption, they are against us in trade.

If, upon the whole of our traffic, we export to a greater value than we import, the balance will be in our favour, to the amount of the difference. If we import more than we export, the balance

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balance will be against us, to the degree that we so do. And such balances must, and will be received, or paid by us, in the precious metals.

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C H A P. X.

*On national and commercial Cir-
culation.*

THE natural circulation every where, or medium of traffic, consists properly of the national coinages of gold and silver; which, if not fraudulently diminished, are the only obligatory tenders for reception. It is true indeed that in most countries some kinds of foreign coins are in effect current, as in this kingdom those of Portugal especially have been. For many ages back we read of the currency of Testons in England; and Mr. Locke mentions double, single and half Testons, as of current circulation in his time. But their gold coins have since suppli-
ed the place of those silver ones
in

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in our currency, occasioned by the discovery of the gold mines in Brazil. These latter are the only foreign coins, of late years, which have had currency in our circulation; though from the very extraordinary prices of gold, occasioned by the heavy balances we have to pay to other nations, we have had none of late among us that ought to pass currently, from their not being of due weight; nay we have now hardly any but small pieces, which owe their currency to their usefulness in change, from the great scarcity we experience of our own silver coin. The Portuguese coin has, however, a fixed value by tale: and therefore, may be considered as a part of our natural national-circulation.

Besides

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Besides this kind of circulation, which is natural, we have two others that are artificial; one of which is of a public, the other of a private nature.

The public artificial circulation is that of bank-notes, which have national security, in debts owed to the Bank by the state. This is highly useful to the community, as well as to the bank. To the former, by its portability, and facilitating quality in the dispatch of business; and to the latter, in the use of the money for which it is issued. The only national evil to be apprehended from it is, the facility it may afford ministers for making too free with the credit of the nation.

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The private artificial circulation is, that of notes issued by bankers and other traders, which to them is so much artificial stock; and, as such, is publicly useful, while regulated by discretion, and prosecuted with integrity. From bankers in this way, little harm has been experienced; but by some other traders it has been a credit very often much abused. This, however, is a matter that may be thought more to concern individuals than the state.

These several branches of artificial circulation all depend, for their existence and extent, on the proportional shares of credit that are voluntarily given to them by the public, as no man can be compelled

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pelled to a concern therein against his will.

It is beside our present purpose to treat farther of circulation by credit. But with regard to our circulation in real money, there are two important points highly deserving of public consideration; one of which is, to preserve a due balance at home of the respective coins, for our national convenience; and the other, to prevent a national loss from adhering to an erroneous comparative value of them, when estimated by that of other nations, and particularly those to whom we have the greatest balances to pay.

The same remedy that will secure convenience in one case, will prevent evil in the other; which
is,

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is, to lower our comparative value of gold to silver, at least two and an half *per Cent.* gold being at present valued above six-pence in the guinea too high. Therefore, besides suffering very great inconveniences at home, from the want of change for gold, we lose to the degree mentioned by parting with our silver instead of gold. Little doubt can be entertained, in the passage of remittances in gold through this kingdom, from the southern to the northern countries, of there having been often much light gold left here, in exchange for our good silver coin, while we had any considerable quantity of it in circulation, to the loss of the difference in value to us. And while that difference in value is suffered to continue, we never can have a coinage of good silver which
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will not immediately go from us in the same manner; either in exchange for the light gold belonging to other nations; in preference to gold, for the payment of balances due from us to other countries, as the advantage to the exporter therefrom will be what has been already mentioned, or in the channel of illicit trade, as will hereafter be more particularly observed.

Two measures have been proposed for remedying these evils: one of which was, the debasing of our silver coin; and the other, diminishing it, either way in the necessary degree for answering that purpose. But the well-founded objection to both these remedies has been, that silver is the coinage which ought by no means to be altered; because it is not only the proper

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proper money of this kingdom, but likewise of the whole world: accounts being every where kept, and national exchanges made in denominations of that species. So that, as *Mr. Locke* very wisely observed, silver is the real money in all countries, and gold no other than a commodity: for as their comparative value has always been variable, and in the nature of things must ever continue so to be, there never can be a possibility of giving them both a lasting fixed value: so that one only should be the money of fixed value, by which, as times and circumstances may require, the value of the other may be estimated, as a commodity to be dealt in by way of traffic.

Our gold coinage then is that which requires being altered, alike
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to remove the inconvenience we at present experience in our home circulation, and to prevent the loss we sustain in our payments made abroad, from the preference that is given to silver for that purpose; on account of our gold being so over-valued, that it will not proportionally go so far as silver does in making those payments. It may not be improper to observe, in this place, that was our trade on an exact balance with all the world, and we had no payments to make abroad, but for dividends to foreign creditors in our stocks, as they are improperly called; and those payments were made in silver coin, which would be the case if we had a sufficiency of it that was good in our national circulation, we should then, in effect, pay them five and an half per cent. interest for three per

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per cent. annuities, our silver being at least under-valued to that difference: and, in fact, as far as we do pay any part of our debts in good coin of that sort; such is the difference to our prejudice.

But, in our present circumstances, the charge of re-coining all our gold may be thought to lay government under a great difficulty; so that of course it becomes a question, whether it be not better to go on suffering and losing by degrees, than incur a heavy expence at once by the re-coinage of our gold? I shall only observe farther, that, in the progress of this evil, the mischief may be hazarded of having our good gold coin at last purchased with a debased, or diminished silver coinage from abroad: an evil that, in a case not dissimilar,

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lar, was foreseen likely to happen both by Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke, though not clearly expressed by them, because they mentioned only metals; for it would be no crime to coin English money in some countries at no great distance from us; and there are people, we should know, who would not scruple to do it. But should that ever happen, it will prove mischievous to us in a very high degree. Here, for good reasons, the subject shall be left to the serious consideration of those whose peculiar duty it is to be attentive to these matters.

Commercial circulation is the means used for transferring property from country to country, by bills of exchange. As for example, Joseph of Lisbon, owes money

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ney for cloths to George of London; and Adrian of Amsterdam, owes money for salt to Peter of Lisbon. Joseph pays Peter for his bill on Adrian, and remits it to George. Edward of London, owes Lewis of Bourdeaux, for wine. Edward pays George for this bill, and remits it to Lewis. James of Bourdeaux, wants to place money in the hands of John, of Petersburg, for the purchase of hemp. James pays Lewis for this bill, and remits it to John. Henry of Petersburg has sold brandies consigned to him by Michael of Amsterdam, from a port of France. Henry pays John for this bill, and remits it to Michael: which bill, in Amsterdam, when due, becomes paid to Michael by Adrian. Thus, as far as this bill can operate for that purpose, accounts are settled

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between eight persons for various kinds of business, in four different countries, by one bill of exchange; which, being drawn at usance, is payable at two months from the date of it.

The circles bills of exchange take, to such effects, are often far more extensive: some of them being drawn at usance and half, others at two usances, and the usance likewise of some places is for a much longer time. By being the medium of mercantile dealings, they constitute the commercial circulation of Europe; into which streams that of Asia, Africa and America, by the produce of cargoes, bills of exchange, of bottom-ree, and of respondentia.

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As many readers, from being unacquainted with the commerce of the world, might not readily comprehend what is meant by the general circulation of Europe, which may be occasionally mentioned in this tract, it was thought proper to furnish this short explanation of it. By which it will appear, that the commercial affairs of the world are principally transacted without sending money to and from the respective places of trade; that really being done in no great degree, but between a very few, and those such as may be called the centres of circular negotiations; the rest doing little more, in that way, than merely receiving or paying the respective balances of their trade; which must, and will be paid by those who lose, to

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such as gain by commerce, in money, let what laws soever be made to prevent it. This Mr. Locke saw very clearly; and therefore he called laws made to prevent money being carried out of a country, laws to hedge in the cuckoo; for they will be found no more efficacious to obstruct its going out, than fences are to impede the flight of birds. And wherever there is a necessity of its going, all impediments serve but to increase the quantity parted with, by just so much as shall be deemed adequate to the difficulties and dangers that are made to occur in such transactions.

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

On the comparative Value of Trade in Manufactures, Corn, &c.

THE resolving of one short question should be thought sufficient for deciding rightly on this point: and that is, Which of them furnishes most employment to a people? For as every industrious person may be estimated of so much value to the state as he earns by his labour, all he so earns being profit to it; so, of course, that kind of trade must be best, which most serves to support and extend a laborious population.

Sir William Petty says, "Manufactures are better than agriculture, and trade is better than manufactures." But as all trade,

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except mine-working and fisheries, must depend on manufacturing or agriculture, we will consider them all comparatively, but more particularly the two latter, as foundations of trade; because there is no trading country without manufactories, or agriculture.

Mining is certainly the least profitable trade of all. The people who work the gold, silver and diamond mines of Asia and America, may be ranked among the most wretched of civilized people, nay, the bulk of them are actual slaves. Even the undertakers of those works get much less, and fare infinitely worse, than the undertakers of our tin, copper, lead, iron, or coal mines: and the countries in which they are, we find, are always poor and weak, in comparison

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son with most others. Nay, they do not even enrich distant proprietary-countries that engross all kinds of commerce with them, as we may observe by Spain and Portugal. The former of those kingdoms was better peopled, and proportionably more powerful, before the acquisition of its mines, than it is at present. Portugal likewise was made more opulent and powerful by her India trade, while she engrossed it, than she is at this time; nay, she employed numbers of ships more in her Brazil trade, before the discovery of the gold and diamond mines in that country, than she has done since; because her mining infatuation made her neglect her sugar and tobacco cultivations, which her oldest and wisest people say, from experience, were far better pursuits.

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The first trade of this kingdom is well known to have been in the ores of Cornwall. But what was that county then in comparison with Tyre, the inhabitants of which bought their ores to manufacture and trade in? Or what would Cornwall be now, from the sales of her ores only, in comparison with any one of our principal manufacturing counties? Were it not for her fisheries and trade from them, her agriculture, and some peculiar advantages resulting from her ports, particularly that of Falmouth, the Cornish people, in general, would probably be the poorest of all Englishmen; and they are at present far from being the richest. It is true their agriculture is not yet sufficient for their supply, nor probably ever will be, owing to the nature

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nature of their soil from mines; therefore they import from other parts of the kingdom, and particularly the Isle of Wight, a great part of the corn which they annually consume.

But, as an undeniable instance of the ineffectuality of mines to enrich a country, let us look to Sweden, a land of them, and yet perhaps the poorest kingdom in Europe; nay it must be greatly so, considering the extent of it.

Fisheries are certainly highly useful, both with regard to home-consumption and foreign trade. But they are of a nature more to strengthen than greatly enrich a maritime country, as may be seen by Holland, the vast opulence of which state is obviously owing to other

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other causes; such as a wise application of her lands, her manufactures, her being the great centre of commercial circulation, and above all, to her well-regulated trade. Agriculture, with its consequent traffic, or by the mere trade in provisions of any, or all kinds, never did materially, nor ever will enrich any country. There is no instance of its so doing to be produced in ancient or modern times. Poland, Sicily, Sardinia, Naples, Greece, Barbary and North-America are, at present, all striking instances to the contrary. So, likewise, our sugar-islands, for their produce is a species of agriculture, are wretched countries, and of themselves would be incapable of defence: nay such was this very kingdom till arts and trades became introduced into it,

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it, as appears from the many conquests that have been made of it. Such likewise is the case of Poland at this time, that land of immense agriculture. The bulk of inhabitants in Poland are actually as miserable white-slaves as those of our sugar-islands are black ones: the wealthy few of either country being those who monopolize the lands. The great wealth of our sugar-planters is entirely owing to our connection with their property, and the partial favour they obtain here. We give them their riches, and at the same time protect their property; which latter all the proprietors of lands in any one island, would be unable to do themselves. Neither could the land-owners, with their farmers and plowmen, protect their own property here, of themselves, against the

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the power even of the Dutch, if the island was inhabited by no other kinds of people; nay, nor with even adding to their numbers all artizans who could exist as workmen by their employ, and all who would be maintained by trade in their products. Few likewise would be the ships that could by such means be kept in constant employment, and therefore those of other nations would be chiefly used for that purpose; as is the case at present of all countries of mere agriculture, except North-America; and would be there too if it was not for the peculiar constant demand of the West-Indies for her products, and likewise for her extensive fisheries. Besides one great branch of the North-American trade is, that of building cheap ships, which they often

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often sell at the ports to which they send their cargoes.

Manufactures then, and trade in them, as every able writer acknowledges, and all observation and examples serve to prove, are undeniably the supports of extensive population, by the abundant means which they furnish of good employment to a people: and proportionable to industrious population will, every where, be the degrees of national opulence and strength.

Six-pennyworth of ore, from a mine, may be wrought into curious manufactures to the value of twenty guineas, and of course furnish, from skill and labour, what will support a numerous and useful family for the better part of

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of a year. The same may be said in a greater degree with regard to flax. And though the best workmanship on wool is not in an equal degree of value; yet it is in a degree that is very considerable, and with a far more extensive application. The like may be said concerning skill and labour on all kinds of materials that can be made useful to mankind; those being of most consequence to a state that furnish the most employment, whether from the higher degree of curiosity, or the greater extent of use.

But as no pursuits of a country can support an extensive population that do not furnish abundance of good employment, so we see no one is populous from, or ever was made wealthy by the exportation
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of ores, minerals, raw-materials for manufactures, corn, cattle, or provisions of any kind. Yet for home use and manufacturing purposes, these and every other species of cultivation, or application of lands and labour, are of high importance to a state.

Most examples have served to shew, in all ages, that fertility of soil is not absolutely requisite for the flourishing of general trade. The lands of a country must every where depend on the manufactories of it for their value: and not the manufactories on the lands, in order to be made flourishing, and beneficial to a state. These are truths highly necessary to be clearly comprehended by statesmen in a trading country, for regulating their
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conduct; because wherever a trading interest is sought to be rendered subservient to a landed, the ruin of both will infallibly prove the consequence.

Of all the ancient commercial countries, Carthage and Burgundy (if the latter while under a distinct government can be deemed ancient) were the only two in which there was fertility of soil: and of modern ones, no more than England and France have that advantage. The fertility of Burgundy was probably of great service to her manufactories and trade: but they undoubtedly were not the sources of her opulence and power. For those provinces no sooner lost their manufacturers and trade than they became poor and insignificant,

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cant, in spite of their fertility; nor are they to this day become any farther flourishing than in proportion to the new manufactories that have of late years been established in them, and the consequent commerce that has by means of them become introduced. This single instance of the different effects of manufactories and agriculture on the powers of a country, might be considered as decisive on the point of their comparative merits: but another can be furnished from this kingdom, which should be more striking, of the contrary effects produced here, by the very causes of misfortune to the Burgundians.

England had been for ages an exporting country of corn, as well as of wool, as we find by an act

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of parliament of Edward III. Yet England continued a poor country, while Burgundy grew wealthy. But when tyranny oppressed the manufacturers of Burgundy, numbers of them were wisely invited to England, who soon turned the balance of interest in favour of this kingdom. In short, the prosperity of England was founded on the ruin of Burgundy: the former rising, by manufactories, in proportion as the latter became reduced by mere agriculture. May these remarkable instances of the extraordinary effects of good and bad policy inspire us with due care, not to let an injudicious alteration of our system be the cause of making the two countries change conditions again; or what perhaps may be more likely, make us change conditions with another set of provinces.

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vinces, whose present situation is such as to make them bear some resemblance to those of ancient Burgundy in their fallen state.

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C H A P. XII.

A Writer refuted, who has endeavoured to cause a Preference being given to our Corn Trade.

AFTER the experience of ages, confirmed by the opinions of all our best writers, and contrary to the most accurate observations of the effects of causes in other countries, which must serve to shew, that manufactures, and commerce in them, are the surest and most lasting sources of great wealth and power to a state, it should appear wonderful, that some men can think, and others take upon themselves to prove, that agriculture and our trade in corn have been the real foundations of all our national prosperity; and that they therefore ought to be made
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our chief, nay our only objects of pursuit. Yet such talkers and writers have become much too numerous in this kingdom, and great will be our misfortune if their opinion should have prevalency.

Among those writers, * Mr. Arthur Young has most figured of late; to whom the public may possibly be indebted for some useful informations given to farmers, for the management of their lands. But he has waded far out of his depth in knowledge, when treating our of commercial and, of course, political interest; being a mischievous advocate for giving to lands an unnatural value, and to so enormous

* Author of 'The Farmer's Letters, Tours through England, &c. &c.

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a degree, as would infallibly deprive us of our most important commerce, beggar the state, and depopulate the kingdom.

But he appears so ill informed, as to ground all his opinions on the state of the corn trade within the twelve last years: which, with respect to Europe in general, has perhaps been extraordinary beyond example; owing to such a succession of untoward seasons, as no man living can remember the like, nor probably will any one now living ever see in so long a course again. To the misfortune of bad crops in the southern countries, that of the embroiled state of Poland hath been added, which latter country has for ages been considered as the granary of the north: nay, on favourable occasions, great quantities

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of that corn are always sent to the southern markets, which are indeed every year supplied with it in smaller degrees. He has, therefore, framed his hypothesis on such temporary accidents as will probably cease in the present, or coming year: for the harvests in the south are now said to be so abundant, that the demand for foreign corn is quite stopt: and what of imported there is at their ports sells greatly to loss. Should those countries have favourable crops next year, which, because usual, may probably be the case, there then will become great quantities stored in Sicily, Naples, Sardinia, Spain, and perhaps Barbary; which may prevent any great demand from hence for several years to come. It has not been uncommon for Sicily, and even Naples, to have a good part

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of their crops for many years on hand; which they keep in good order, in dry caverns under ground, ready to answer any foreign demands: therefore such as lately offered here, we are not likely soon to see again.

He supposes we have fifteen millions of acres of lands now in woods, downs, and commons, all of which he wants to have applied to agriculture; to the destruction of our timber for ship and house-building, as also for other uses, particularly as fire-wood, and wood for smelting ores; to the diminishing of our breed of sheep, already so far effected, by the prevailing practice of inclosing lands, as much to enhance the price of mutton, and likewise wool, particularly one kind that is very essential to our manufactories; and not a little to
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the depopulation of the kingdom, from the distress occasioned thereby, in a variety of ways, to our poorest working people. All these evils he would entail on us for the sake of growing an immensity of corn for exportation, without considering where that corn is to find a vent. Many years ago, we grew more corn than there regularly offered markets for taking off our hands: which caused such stocks to be often stored as occasioned much being spoiled; and reduced the average shipping-price of wheat, including charges, to five and twenty shillings a quarter, it being often shipped at so low a price as twenty, nay and much under occasionally; for in one part of the year 1738 it was shipped at seventeen shillings; and in 1733, at fourteen shillings a quarter,
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exclusive of the bounty and shipping charges.

As he does not consider where such prodigiously increased quantities of corn are to find markets, so neither does he consider where government is to find money for paying bounties on its exportation.

He depreciates the employment of manufacturers, which supports abundant population, and brings great riches into the kingdom, while he represents that of wheelwrights, of blacksmiths, of harness-makers, &c. as of the utmost importance for that purpose; tho' it never can be made so to do, but in a very limited degree.

He asserts, the demand for our corn is surer than for our cloth, which

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which is contrary to all experience; the latter having been always in a great degree regular and certain; whereas the former has always been unsteady and precarious. We sometimes export a great deal; more frequently but little; have often no demand at all; and whenever we have had occasion to import, we have rarely wanted means for doing it: even a glut was the consequence of the last imports we made. What then should we do with the produce of fifteen millions of acres more, if they were appropriated to such growths?

He furnishes a table of prices and quantities exported to shew, that the more grain we export the lower the prices become: which is contrary to reason, and likewise to all experience. In the nature of things,

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things, it must be the low price of corn that occasions exportation, and not exportation the low price of corn. Can the extraordinary demand for a commodity make it become cheaper? or has it ever failed, on any thing whatsoever, to have a contrary effect? An experienced merchant could have told him, that it has not been unusual for the prices of our corn to be speedily raised near, nay above cent. per cent. on any sudden great demand of supplies from abroad. Every body then goes to shipping off corn; and the number of purchasers occasion the raising of the price. The next consequence is, markets become glutted abroad, so that corn perishes there for want of sale; adventurers lose stock and block, the nation loses the corn so sent out; no new purchasers offer
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at home; the prices here, of course, then decline again, and perhaps sink below the rates they were at before such a demand had happened. Here are natural causes, he may see, assigned for the sinking of prices from exportation; but then it was, because exportation had first ended. Thus is this writer's mysterious assertion explained, it is to be hoped, to his full conviction; as I am sure it ought to be to his confusion, as a tracer out of the effects of causes, in which he has discovered an entire want of knowledge.

He accuses workmen, and particularly manufacturers, of being idle, extortionate, vicious, extravagant, luxurious and riotous, with a great deal too little reason, and even without discrimination. But
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it might be asked this writer, and all who are so weak as to use such invectives, to what wise end all such cant of the times can be directed? Would they have them all to be hanged out of the way? or, by way of good riddance, would they have them shipped off all at once, to become plagues to the Americans? No, they want them to toil and starve, for the benefit of landed men, farmers, and jobbers, who seem to endeavour at engrossing all vices as well as profits to themselves. It has been shewn, workmen are evidently aggrieved in the rates of their labour; and what can hopeless hardships produce, but despondency, or profligacy? If they are wanted to be made orderly and industrious, they should be enabled to live soberly with comfort. Freemen must be encour-

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encouraged to goodness; slaves only can be made resigned to hopeless toil and wretchedness: and even they will endure it no longer than they can find, or but fancy they foresee a remedy, as we may learn from Turkey, Barbary, and the West Indies; the latter of which kind of wretched people have no cause for envying the condition of great numbers of our own.

But has not, of late, the maxim of policy here been avowedly, nay practically demonstrated to be, that private vices are public benefits? Hence have we seen * temptations to

* Numbers of people now living must remember when we had no Ranelagh, or Vauxhall, at least in the present mode; nor any of the thousand other scenes of idle resort, and

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to vice and folly spread before the people, in the great numbers of beer and tea-houses, and the variety of other scenes of idleness and dissipation that are suffered to be kept open; some of which are alike frequented by every order of men and women. But taxations

mischievous as well as disgraceful dissipation in the high and the low; to the corruption of manners and principles, as well as the waste of time and money. Yet, were people in general not only more happy and prosperous than, but likewise far more orderly and contented than at present. More hurtful still have become the numerous public resorts throughout the kingdom, which give it the appearance of a country rather of pleasurable folly than of industry and wisdom. Nay, the very bounds of the kingdom are become too limited for our frantic excursions. We leave no rendezvous of vice and idleness throughout Europe unfrequented. So madly do we pursue pleasure, to public injury, private ruin, evil example, and the loss of real happiness and security.

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are by such means increased, and necessities are created; which latter the high and low alike experience, and often make use of the same means to supply; the little by robbing on the roads, the great in other places. So there is only this difference between them, that, in order to supply their wants for indulgence in vice, one order preys on individuals, and the other plunders the whole community. What a pity it is, there is become no kind of rivalry in setting contrary examples!

He makes partial extracts from French writers upon agriculture and the corn trade, who were such visionary theorists, that the government of that kingdom prohibited, by an edict, any farther controversies on the subject; and established

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a system directly contrary to his own, which was that of free trade in provisions, disdaining to make the interest of the state subservient to that of land-owners. And it is the only good policy for a manufacturing and trading country to pursue; as, in the ordinary course of things, it will keep lands, provisions and labour at their natural prices, though there may indeed happen extraordinary occasions for restrictions therein.

He published a pamphlet, during the last session of parliament, to point out the expediency of immediately opening our ports for the exportation of corn; and a motion was made in the house of commons for so doing, which the minister wisely and effectually opposed. Had he not done so, the
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famine which has so severely afflicted France, would probably have become the portion of England. That publication therefore served to expose either his want of knowledge, or of integrity; for from the state Europe was then in, with considering in particular the condition of Poland, France had reason to foresee, as she actually did, an approaching want; and she accordingly took measures, though in vain, to prevent the fatal effects of it. But had our ports been opened, as he proposed, six weeks exportation might have afforded the French a timely remedy, and drawn the calamity upon us; as was foreseen and said here, both publickly and privately, by many honest and discerning men.

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But the most extraordinary part of this writer's wonderful productions is, that in which he gives his calculations of the benefits derived to this kingdom from the exportation of corn. The following are his words: " I have already
 " shewn, that the nation has, in
 " fact, profited by the annual ex-
 " portation of rather more than
 " four hundred and twenty thou-
 " sand quarters of corn, of all sorts,
 " above the sum of one hundred
 " and forty millions, in less than
 " seventy years."

Let us endeavour to draw precision out of this passage, from balancing his *rather more* in quantity, and *above* in value, by giving him *full* seventy years instead of *less*, in point of time, for gaining
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to the kingdom such profit; in order to suppose it an exact annual exportation of four hundred and twenty thousand quarters, which may be considered as a fair compromise with him, on his own estimate, and then the real account will stand thus:

420,000 quarters, at 25 shillings	£	
per quarter	—	525000
Freightage on 84,000		
tons, each of 5 qrs.		
at 15 shillings per ton		63000
		<hr/>
		588000
Years		70
		<hr/>

The whole gains in seventy
 years will then be £ 41,160,000

This is a lumping calculation, as of a regular and certain exportation; but, as hath been already observed, nothing can be more irregular and uncertain than a foreign
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reign demand for our corn. However, we will not dispute his quantities, but mean only to disprove his calculation of gains.

Let it be remarked, we estimate the whole freightage at five quarters to the ton, which is the practice for wheat only; the ton of barley and rye being always six quarters.

We allow fifteen shillings per ton freightage on the whole, being for long and short voyages, though most of our corn exports are made on the narrow seas only: so that from our western ports to France, the eastern to Holland and the Hanse towns, and from those on St. George's channel to Dublin and other parts of Ireland, the freightage cannot be more than from the
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out-ports to London, or from one part of our coast to another, if at any considerable distance; and therefore, of course, it must be greatly over-rated.

If we allow one shilling a quarter for shipping charges and waste of sackage, which will be enough, as a very great quantity of such corn must be always shipped in bulk, and deduct that shilling per quarter from the respective bounties, the average market-price of wheat will be nine and twenty shillings a quarter; that of rye seven and twenty shillings and six-pence; and that of barley six and twenty shillings and six-pence; which latter, in a course of seventy years, has been far more than the average price of all of them together, the par price of our wheat
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being not more, by the general comparative rates and qualities of wheats throughout Europe, and likewise those other parts of the world that have dealings therein with Europe.

By comparing, then, my favourable estimation of profits to this kingdom, with that of Mr. Young's exorbitant ones, even from the quantities he has given of exported corn, it will appear with what accuracy he calculated our seventy years gains from trade therein.

By his account, the profits	£	
have been	— —	140,000,000
By mine	— —	41,160,000
		<hr/>
Difference	£	98,840,000

Let it rest with Mr. Young to satisfy the public, whether his misrepresentation of a matter of such
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importance, as ninety-eight millions, eight hundred and forty thousand pounds, is owing to ignorance or design.

I can allow no kind of profits made by merchant-adventurers to be added to the account; because it is the general opinion of those best acquainted with the corn-trade, that more money is lost than gained by the exporters of it from England; nor have I ever heard any other opinion given thereon, by any one man of real knowledge or experience in that so much boasted branch of our national commerce.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

On Bounties; particularly those granted on exported Corn, Malt and Flour.

IF the riches and strength of a state depend on the numbers of its industrious people, and those, as of course they must, on the means furnished of good employment; and if manufactories are what, beyond comparison, do supply a state with such means, it must follow to be pronounced, that our national trade in exported manufactures should be the leading object of government in our commercial pursuits. And as such commerce can only be either obtained or preserved, by our having preference among purchasers, which can only be expected from accommodation in prices, it must

must follow to be allowed, those can only be consequent of the low price of labour, which ever must depend on the cheapness of provisions. Every measure, therefore, that tends to the making of provisions dear among ourselves, and cheap among our rivals in manufacturing and commerce, in its nature must be mischievous; and of course, what we should be greatly watchful to prevent, and assiduous to remove. Now our bounties granted on exported corn, malt and flour have obviously this tendency, and therefore must be operatively ruinous to our greatest national interest.

The pleas urged in favour of those bounties are, first, that they increase the value of our lands; secondly, that they secure us plenty
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at home; and, thirdly, that they enrich the kingdom, by the returns which they procure to us of gold and silver.

To the first plea I urge, that our lands are undoubtedly entitled to their highest natural value: but not to an artificial one, by the state's payment of bounties, which proportionally raise the prices of provisions to our own working people, and lower them to those of rival countries; because our so doing will infallibly ruin our forty-times better trade in manufactures, and, of course, to that degree injure the nation. Therefore every advance of the value of lands by such means is not beneficial, but injurious to the nation: nor is it of a nature to prove otherwise to landlords, as none of them can be benefited

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benefited by any unnatural advance of rents. The increasing of an income does not make a man richer, if, by the means used for doing it, he as much increases his necessary expences. Now this will be the case, if it is done by enhancing the prices of the necessaries of life; for every one he deals with will, and does take a full, if not more than due allowance, in the rates of his commodities, for the additional charge he is put to for subsistence. I say, with respect to traders this will be the case: and it ought to be the same with labourers and workmen of every kind, but I have shewn, it is not. The natural consequence has, however, been the raising of the poor-rates immensely throughout the kingdom; which great burthen falls peculiarly heavy on those of the landed

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landed interest. Thus we see a man's circumstances are not bettered by an augmentation of his income, if from the means of acquiring it his necessary expences and charges become increased in an equal degree. How idly then does the landed man (as most of them affect to do) complain of his burthens, when he is the layer on of them upon himself, by measures that he thinks for his own advantage; and which he glories in, as the height of human wisdom, as well as, in the utmost degree, of national utility!

To the second plea it may be replied, that the bounties have not prevented our occasional wants of corn, which this country has perhaps more frequently experienced since the institution of them than before, and from the very same
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cause too; for the writers of former times attributed most of the wants that happened to excessive exportation. There was therefore no want of such an encouragement given to agriculture, to insure us plenty at home. People will naturally put their lands to the best uses, for their own sakes: and our bounties have only served to make us put them to the worst, from an ignorant infatuation that deserves the name of phrenzy. But we may always trust to individual eagerness for getting money, which ever did, and ever will make men endeavour to employ their lands to the best advantage. It was that very pursuit of interest which caused scarcities, occasionally, as well since as before the establishment of bounties. We always trust too much to growing crops, when ex-
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tenfive foreign demands offer. So that whenever the harvests happen to prove scanty in this and the neighbouring countries, after years of great exportation, we experience wants, never less, but often more than if bounties were not granted. Of this truth we have occasionally had very striking examples: and in the present year no unremarkable escape of a famine, which would probably have been attended with deplorable circumstances. The farmers entertained strong hopes of an exportation being permitted. The jobbers grew alert, and appeared ready to go work. But the parliament disappointed them, to the disapprobation of the sagacious Mr. Young, and with acquiring the curses of all the cormorants of the kingdom; who are ever eager, for their own advantage to heap
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miserics on their country. There can be no occasion to force exportation, which the bounties must do when there is no great demand for corn, or when there is but little stock on hand; for then they will prove peculiarly dangerous, as would have been the case here last year, had they been then suffered so to operate, for the effects of them would have been dreadful.

Sicily may be considered as a country almost entirely of agriculture, and the duty on exported corn is no inconsiderable branch of the royal revenue. Yet, by a standing law of the kingdom, exportation there ceases when the price of wheat rises to an hundred Taries a Salme. The Salme so exactly corresponds with our English quarter, that the utmost difference
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there can be between them does not exceed two or three quarts. The exact par value of an hundred taries is seven and thirty shillings and six-pence: and Sicily wheat is better in quality than English full twenty per cent. a bushel of that rendering as much pure flour as five pecks of ours; and the rate of it is proportionally higher at all foreign markets. Thus exportation always ceases in Sicily, though in no considerable degree a manufacturing country, even with diminishing thereby the public revenue, when their wheat is at thirty-seven shillings and six-pence a quarter; while here we tax the people eventually to pay a bounty of above nine per cent. on ours when it is at eight and forty shillings a quarter; though to put our people on a footing with the Sicilians in their

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their supply of bread, exportation should cease here before wheat reaches thirty shillings a quarter, market price: for their market price is so much under the shipping rate as the duty in Sicily amounts to; whereas ours is so much above it as the degree of the bounty is here, being five shillings a quarter. Ought the people of this country to continue satisfied with a treatment so severe; burthened beyond measure as they are by taxations, and especially in the peculiar one of bounties, not paid to government, but to those of the landed interest? Or should we wonder at beholding how enormously lands rise in value, while commerce is fast declining, poverty becoming deplorable among the lower orders of people, parish-rates much

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augmenting, and population fast decreasing?

Observations might serve to convince us, that fewest grievous wants are experienced by those countries which always import corn, such as Holland, the Hanse Towns, Portugal, Genoa, Leghorn, Marfeilles, &c. because they commonly keep great stocks on hand: and some of them have immense granaeries filled with foreign corn, which they replenish from every exporting country in which prices are favourable. Thus their own supply is made regular from super-abundant importations: and they trade to advantage in the surplus of it, particularly Holland and Marfeilles. The former in the soft wheat, as well as the rye and barley of England, France, Poland

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Poland and Flanders: and the latter in the hard wheat of the Levant, and the barley of Barbary. Of these they are usually prepared for furnishing quick supplies to other countries, on any sudden great demand, and generally get what may be called the cream of markets; leaving the refuse of them to others, like ourselves, whose farmers and jobbers keep their corn generally back, on the first alarm of rising markets abroad, in order to obtain excessive prices: by which means unexperienced merchant-adventurers here frequently suffer excessive losses, for a speedy glut is the sure consequence of a great demand any where; when it is not uncommon for exporters to lose forty or fifty per cent. Sometimes indeed hoarders here are completely caught in their own
K 4 snare:

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snare: many of whom often so over-stand the market as to be made to keep their corn, to great waste, for a twelvemonth, or more; and then find themselves compelled to sell it for * half the money they had refused.

The truth is, that a forced trade in corn could never have been needful in this country, being probably one of the first branches carried on by the natives; for that in ores, as hath already been observed, was originally in other hands.

* The writer was present, some few years ago, when a gentleman, who resides in Kent, laughed at a farmer of his neighbourhood for having refused sixteen pounds a load for his wheat; which, after keeping for a year or two, much to waste and damage, he was glad to sell for eight pounds a load. The farmer acknowledged the facts: but appeared, from what he said, too much disposed to make other like experiments.

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The earliest application of a people must naturally be to agriculture, being so needful for their subsistence. And their parting with any surplus of corn is as natural, either for money or other necessaries they may want. That we exported corn before Edward the Third's reign must be certain, because experienced inconveniences from doing it in excess occasioned an act of prohibition to be then passed. But, as we must suppose, from inconveniences experienced likewise from perpetual prohibition, exportation was re-allowed, by the like authority, in the reign of his immediate successor; with a provisional power, however, lodged in the hands of the king and council, to put a stop to it whenever needful. The granting of the bounties

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bounties, therefore, introduced no new kind of commerce among us : and the most favourable motive we can assign for the doing of it was, their making the bounties preparatory to the laying on of a land-tax, though the latter was certainly very equitable without them ; land being the only kind of property in its nature immoveable, and therefore, of course, that which should most contribute towards national defence.

On the third plea it may be remarked, that returns made for such corn as we do not want for our own use, like other returns, are in our favour, to their extent, and so far operate to our advantage. But to force exportation by unnecessary encouragement, must be hazarding frequent want to ourselves.

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Most of the great scarcities of ancient times, as the best writers inform us, were attributed to excessive exportation : the bounties, therefore, must serve to expose us to their greater frequency, as probably has been experienced since the time of their establishment. But we even purchase gold too dear by a corn trade with bounties, because they serve to injure our better trade in manufactures, which must depend on cheap labour, as that does on low-priced provisions ; against which they will operate, first, by eventual taxation on the people, to the amount of the bounties : and, secondly, by making them pay so much more for those species of provision than the workmen of such neighbouring countries as are our rivals in trade as those bounties amount to ;

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for such are the differences between market and shipping prices. So that the payment of the bounties, and the differences in the prices of those commodities occasioned by the bounties do, together, enable neighbouring foreigners to eat bread made of English wheat at considerably more than five shillings per quarter cheaper than Englishmen can: and they are supplied with the other articles at proportional lower rates.

Similar are the effects of the bounties, likewise, on distilleries, breweries, starch-manufactories, and other branches of trade in which such bountified commodities are used as materials. Concerning all which we may say, as Sir William Petty said of rape-seed, in his time, the Dutch can buy our materials,

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materials, apply them to their purposes, and get a good profit by supplying us with commodities made from them.

The same able writer likewise humourously observed, that the Dutch had for a long time turned over to the Danes the patriarchal trade of cow-keeping, for supplying them with lean cattle; and to the Polanders that of plowmen, for growing corn for their use, in order to reserve their own lands and people for far better employs; the former in the production of madder and flax, as well as for fattening cattle: and the latter as manufacturers, mariners and fishermen; by which they were respectively made of more value to the state.

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But our improved wisdom has since made us ambitious of becoming plowmen and horse-breeders to half the countries of Europe, while we are said to purchase madder of the Dutch to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year; it being a very essential article to our important businesses of dying and callico-printing, in which they are our rivals, and accordingly have greatly raised the price of it on us: to which we submit, though it is a native plant of the kingdom. We likewise import most of the hemp we use from Russia, as we do our flax, and also linnen yarn, both free of duty, from wherever we can get them; all together, we must suppose, to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds per annum more. Yet these articles would

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would be of much more advantage to cultivate than corn, because they furnish more employment to industrious people. Corn however we will grow in preference, and tax ourselves to pay people for taking it off our hands; though by so doing we make ourselves dependent on foreign nations for such other articles as are essentially necessary to our navigation and manufactories. So, likewise, we breed horses for exportation, without charging them with a duty, though the doing it serves to make horses dear at home; and a duty on them, as an article of luxury, is what foreigners would be willing enough to pay.

Let it be farther remarked, that bounties have a generating nature. For example, those we grant on the

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the exportation of corn discourage the growth of flax. So we have found it necessary to tax anew the very poorest of our people, by additional duties on such coarse linens as they only use, for giving premiums to rich farmers for the growing of flax : and we have since eventually taxed ourselves farther, for the payment of bounties to favour the exportation of Manchester linens, which are manufactures that we have been long loudly boasting were in the most flourishing state. Thus have we taxed ourselves in one way to discourage the growth of flax, and in another to encourage it : but the latter not proving effectual, we have since taxed ourselves anew to encourage the manufacturing of goods made with flax. Which surely, all together, may be considered as a compound
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of such heterogeneous and counter-working measures as would be sufficient to disgrace a nation that is scarce one remove from the state of barbarism.

Though I have ventured to say, on assertions positively made by men of supposed knowledge in trade, that we pay to the Dutch three hundred thousand pounds a year for madder, yet, that I may not be suspected of attempting to impose on the public, I shall now add, that, by the custom-house books, the medium of four late years importations appear to be no more than eighteen thousand five hundred and nine hundred weight, two quarters and one pound per annum, which could not amount in value to one hundred thousand pounds. But as madder pays no
L₄ duty,

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duty, the importers might probably under-enter quantities received, on the view of supporting prices. However, I mention what dealers have asserted, and what by the custom-house books appears. And if an hundred thousand pounds should be the utmost we annually pay for madder, that sum, added to the amount of what we pay for hemp, flax, and linen yarn, with the loss of labour by such imports, may be considered to amount, all together, nearly equal to the real medium value of our exported corn, malt and flour; so that our imports and exports of the products of lands may reasonably be supposed pretty much on a balance.

But it may be worthy of consideration, how far the state and people have been affected by the altera-

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alteration of conditions for the making of such exports. Formerly there were duties upon the exports as well as imports of corn: In the first of James the first the rates and limits were as follow.

On wheat to 32 shillings a quarter, the export duty was two shillings a quarter. On rye to twenty shillings a quarter: and on barley, malt, peas and beans to fifteen shillings price, the duty was sixteen pence a quarter; all to be transported in English shipping. Proclamations would then at any time stop exportation, agreeable to regulations made by the exportation act of Richard the second.

The like were the regulations and duties prescribed by the act of the third of Charles the first.

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By

By the act of the twelfth of Charles the second, entitled, A subsidy granted to the king of tonnage and poundage, being the first year of his actually reigning, both the limits and duties became very much extended. The limit of price for exporting wheat was to forty shillings; rye, beans and peas twenty-four shillings; barley and malt twenty shillings, and oats sixteen shillings per quarter. The table of duties on exportation was as follows:

On wheat, 20s.	-	-	-
Rye	}	10s.	} a quarter.
Barley			
Malt			
Buck-wheat			
Beans			
Peas, and			
Oats, 6s. 8d.			

On

On importation the duties were thus regulated.

For wheat, when not exceeding five shillings and sixpence a bushel, five shillings a bushel.

When exceeding that price, six shillings and eight pence a quarter.

For rye, when not exceeding four shillings and sixpence a bushel, three shillings and four pence a bushel.

When exceeding that price, five shillings a quarter.

For barley, beans and malt, when not exceeding three shillings and sixpence a bushel, three shillings and four pence a bushel.

When exceeding that price, five shillings a quarter.

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By

By the act of the fifteenth of Charles the second, entitled, An act for the encouragement of trade, the limits for exportation were extended, with the same duties, for wheat to forty-eight shillings; rye, peas and beans thirty-two shillings; malt, barley, and buck-wheat twenty-eight shillings, and oats thirteen shillings and four pence a quarter.

Import duties, to the same prices, were made,

For wheat, 5s. 4d.	- - - - -	} a bushel.
Rye, peas and beans, 4s.	- - - - -	
Barley and malt, 2s. 8d.	- - - - -	
Buck-wheat, 2s.	- - - - -	
Oats, 1s. 4d.	- - - - -	

By the act of the twenty-second of Charles the second, entitled, An act for improvement of tillage and the breed of cattle, the rates for exportation

exportation were farther extended, and the duties reduced as by the following table.

For wheat, to 53s. 4d. 16s.	From	} a quarter.
thence to 4l. 8s.	- - - - -	
For rye, to 40s. 16s.	- - - - -	
For barley and malt, to 32s. 16s.	- - - - -	
For buck-wheat, to 32s. 16s.	- - - - -	
For oats, to 16s. 5s. 4d.	- - - - -	}
For peas and beans, to 40s. 16s.	- - - - -	

Such continued the state of corn duties outwards and inwards in this kingdom till the revolution; when all outward duties became immediately abolished, and the following bounties on exportation were established.

For wheat and flour, as far as 48s.	} a quarter.
5s. - - - - -	
For rye and flour, as far as 32s.	
3s. 6d. - - - - -	
For barley and malt, as far as 24s.	}
2s. 6d. - - - - -	

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While the union was negotiating between the two kingdoms, an act was past for granting a bounty of two shillings and sixpence a quarter on oats and oatmeal, as far as fifteen shillings a quarter price, if the like duty took place on beer or bigg in Scotland. And also, in England, for a bounty of five shillings a quarter on wheat-malt.

The inward duties on corn, as regulated by the act of the 22d of Charles the Second, were confirmed by an act of the 5th of George the Second.

Thus stand, to the present time, the outward bounties on corn, malt and flour, and the inward duties on grain in this kingdom.

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On these regulations I take the liberty of making the few following remarks.

Tonnage and poundage were to be numbered among the most ancient revenues of the crown. So that having been instituted in the earliest times of foreign intercourse with our neighbours, when commerce was little practised and but ill understood, it is not to be wondered at, that no distinction was made with respect to commodities, or even the kinds of commerce on which duties were laid. But they were, for many ages, too low to prove prejudicial, and too few to be found oppressive. Imports and exports were, therefore, nearly burthened alike. The home commodities charged with duties

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duties belonged chiefly to the wealthiest people: and the foreign ones introduced were likewise chiefly by them consumed.

It formerly was the practice of all countries, and still is of most, to charge all exported corn and provisions, as well as raw and rough materials, with duties: and the practice was not unwise. The English, from very ancient times, manufactured most articles for their own common cloathing, as well as furnished themselves with provisions; and, therefore, by laying duties on their exported wool, ores and corn, taxed the manufacturers of Burgundy and other neighbouring countries; and never, but in times of occasional scarcity, taxed themselves by other imports than articles of luxury. The only fault then

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then lay, in taxing imported provisions when they became necessary and dear.

The low-rated duties, before the reign of Charles the Second, might serve rather to favour than injure manufactories in this country. But by his first book of rates they became raised in a very hurtful degree, and were afterwards made enormously oppressive by the act of the 15th of his reign, though it was called an act for the encouragement of trade; which in general must have been very ill understood in those times, notwithstanding Sir William Petty had certainly very right ideas of both commerce and agriculture. But he must certainly have had pre-possessions to struggle with that were too strongly rooted to be overcome: and indeed
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some able men of those days were of opinion, that necessities were requisite to create a spirit of industry, as we see by the writings of Sir William Temple; as, in fact, they really may be in a certain degree. But that degree was then greatly exceeded. The burthens were soon experienced to be far too heavy both on the lands and people: so that in the 22d. of that reign it was found necessary to reduce the rates again, by an act made for the improvement of agriculture and the breed of cattle.

If we compare the reign of Elizabeth with that of Charles the Second, it will appear that greater efforts were made in industry, and commercial as well as naval and military enterprize, in the former, though taxes were infinitely less
numerous

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numerous and heavy then than in the latter reign. But then an honest, nobler, and more frugal spirit appeared in the government of Elizabeth than of Charles, which gave a superior turn in every thing to her times. One was an active government of wisdom, virtue, policy and business. The other a tame, indolent, abject one of folly, treachery, ferocity, corruption, vice and dissipation: and, as is natural, the qualities of the people greatly corresponded, in each reign, with those of the respective courts. Such will in all countries be generally the case: though in a free country, like our's, no longer than till abuses and apprehensions arouse the nation to opposition, as they did in the latter end of Charles's reign; when the foundations of that resistance
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ance were laid which proved the ruin of his ignorant and obstinate brother; who, by neglecting to learn wisdom from the misfortunes of his father, became the victim of errors that appeared hereditary in his race.

The act to establish bounties on corn, &c. passed the two Houses of Parliament during the interregnum, immediately preceded by that for abolishing hearth-money. It was the first act that passed concerning trade, and stands in the Statute-book, the twelfth made in the reign of William and Mary; preceding all those made for the establishment of government, and thereby is made to appear almost conditional for doing it. The act declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession

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succession of the crown, being so far behind it as the thirty-fifth; that for the recognition of the king and queen the forty-fourth, and that for settling the civil list revenue the fifty-seventh of the first year of their reign.

There can be no doubt entertained, that landed men had experienced inconveniences from the high duties on exportation: however those on importation, though injurious to the state and people, were very advantageous to them. But surely the abolition of the former, with the continuation of the latter, might well have contented them.

They appear to have been very eager to seize the only opportunity likely to offer for making the whole body of people their tributaries,

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taries, for such by that act they most grievously became: though, from time and craft, farmers and jobbers have since gradually wrested the advantages almost entirely out of their hands. Let us now hope that more wisdom and honesty will soon procure their entire abolition, as highly mischievous to the state.

It has already been observed, that no country was ever made opulent, or powerful, by agriculture and trade in provisions, even where duties were charged on exportation. But our practice of granting bounties on such provisions is without an example, and probably will for ever be without a follower.

Bounties

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Bounties of every kind are useless, often very hurtful, and not unfrequently mere jobs. None can be serviceable except, for a short time, to favour new undertakings, of which more than ordinary hopes can be rationally entertained. A trade that cannot be carried on without them should be always thought not worth pursuing, as they but serve to burthen better branches, by the taxes which they occasion. Drive the nail that will go, says the proverb, very wisely: for to endeavour at driving that which will not readily go must prove labour in vain; nay loss of expence, as well as toil. Our trade in spare corn ever did, and always will go sufficiently on without any kind of aid. And the bounties are so far from bringing

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more money into the kingdom, that they only serve to lessen such returns. They in no degree affect the prices of grain at foreign markets in our favour; but only serve to enable rival workmen to eat it cheaper than our own people.

The argument most urged by writers in favour of the bounties is, that corn has been cheaper since their establishment than before. But whether such be the fact or not, is by no means worth disputing; the single point for consideration being, what the medium price of corn ordinarily is throughout Europe. This every man, who has a competent knowledge of the corn trade of the world, must know to be, comparatively estimated with respect to quality, not more than equal to
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that of England at * six and twenty shillings a quarter, market price. Let it be observed, that English wheat may be considered as nearest the medium quality of any: that of the countries southward of France being from ten to twenty per cent. better; and that of the Baltic, Holland, Flanders, France

* This estimation is framed on what may be called par prices every where, and with supposing we had no bounties, so that we consumed and shipped our wheat at no other than natural prices. On which principles of calculating, this is an over-estimate of its medium value, as every man must acknowledge who has been long experienced in the corn trade of the world. How ungrounded then are the opinions of landlords, farmers and speculative dealers, with regard to equitable prices! How oppressive, by their practices, do they make them to the people! and how destructively must the bounties operate on the great interests of the kingdom!

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ence even [during the approaching winter : and indeed the sooner we become awakened from our present dream of delirium on this subject, it will be the better for the kingdom.

Infinitely preferable would it be for this country, were we to make the exportation of corn less our object, as then many of our lands would become appropriated to better kinds of culture ; such as would be more serviceable to the community, and better likewise for those of the landed interest, because of a less fluctuating value.

If corn then has fallen in its value here since the establishment of the bounties, it has likewise done the same, and in greater degrees, in the other parts of Europe, owing

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ing to a more extensive cultivation of it every where. But if corn has become cheaper, all other farming necessaries have been much raised in this country, perhaps nearly doubled in their prices ; such as beef, mutton, bacon, pork, butter, cheese, &c. Nay, we are forced annually to import oats, in spite of our added bounty on that grain and oatmeal, though for the encouragement of growth and exportation, I believe, no such bounties have been ever paid, as oats and oatmeal are not used in the southern countries, where even horses are fed with barley ; while, in consequence of our other bounties, we have been forced, as hath been already remarked, to grant premiums for the growth of flax, and bounties on the exportation of

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linen manufactures ; with (to the loss of much useful employment) admitting the importation of linen yarn, like rough flax, free of duty. So that, upon the whole, the payment of the bounties, as before was observed, has not only been a direct tax on the people to their whole amount, but also an indirect tax, in the prices of those commodities for their consumption, to the full of the differences between market and shipping rates ; with favouring in that degree the labour of rival nations, preventing the production of other raw materials at home, and raising the prices of them to manufacturers. The burthens, therefore, which they occasion are become, with our immense taxes, insupportable by trade, and in effect by the kingdom ; as will be

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be made appear by the state of our commerce, and the circumstances of the kingdom. It must, therefore, be high time to rid the nation of such an evil.

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C H A P. XIV.

The Landed-Interest rightly considered.

THE true landed-interest, from the nature of the property, must be the same as that of the state, it being the only kind of property which cannot be removed. Whenever stocks become unfaleable, they will be no longer secure, nor will they then continue a property of value. Other kinds of personal property will be always faleable, or removeable; and can be made, like arts, skill and labour, to emigrate from the kingdom.

Extensive population ought equally to be the leading object of the state and landed men. The
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ground-rents, in flourishing towns, are by far the most valuable of all kinds of landed property: and the value of all kinds of lands must ever be proportional to their vicinity to cities and opulent towns, from the more than ordinary profitable uses to which they thence become applied; as also from the saving of time, as well as of the expence that would be incurred by the conveyance of any kinds of products to distant places of sale. Sir William Petty calculated, that, in his time, so much land as let for twenty shillings a year, was worth eight pounds in Ireland, twenty pounds in England, and thirty pounds in Holland. These differences in value he justly attributed to the different degrees of population and riches that were then in the respective countries; though
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they, in part, were likewise owing to the different application of lands.

Sir William Temple was certainly mistaken in ascribing the laziness of the common people of Ireland to the plenty of their land-products, because it must have been then, as it now is, entirely owing to their want of encouragement to become industrious; for when transplanted, even at the state of manhood, we see the very Irish Catholics become here the most laborious of people: and those who go to America do as well as the English, and, if protestants, presently become a blended people. But in the cow-keeping part of their own country they are in want of stimulations to industry, from the little call there is for labour, and, of course,

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course, the little profit that is to be made by it. However, in their manufacturing provinces the face of things, of late years, has become greatly altered, insomuch that the disparity of appearance is very great between their provinces of mere grazing and agriculture, and those in which the linen manufactories are established: so that the shew of industry and value of landed property are proportional in both. Were the Irish allowed to export woollen manufactures, the cheapness of provisions there would soon drain this country of its workmen, and make the condition of the two kingdoms become speedily changed, as much to the advantage of their lands as to the injury of ours, and the like to the respective people. Let statesmen and landed legislators timely open their

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their eyes with respect to these matters; or England, sooner perhaps than they apprehend, may change conditions both with Ireland and America. We ought not to provoke the Irish, Americans, or even any subordinate order of our own people to think too seriously of their respective interests, from a want either of candour in state-measures, or of consideration, or moderation in those of great landed-property.

Mr. Hume in some degree, supports Sir William Temple's opinion, of there being a kind of political necessity to impell labour, by taxes, where there arises none from situation, though he condemns it in excess. But he might have looked to his own country for proof, that mere necessity will not
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always do, in that respect, what may be effected by encouragement. Scotland was ever a very poor country, but never an industrious one, till after the union had taken place. They had a family vanity which prevented their being materially useful to themselves, or their country, in any other than a military way. They were fond of arms, but despised trade, from holding the latter to be disgraceful. Antiquity set the highest stamp of value on every thing in their opinion. They stiled their kingdom ancient, their order of the thistle most ancient, and were all proportionally proud of any supposed * antiquity

* The unfortunate Mungo Campbell was a remarkable instance of the continuance of this infatuation; who declared himself the equal of Lord Eglington, or any other nobleman of his country, though he had served several

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quity of their families; from not rightly considering, that the Hottentots at the Cape of Good Hope, the Savages in America, or the Negroes on the coast of Guinea, have a still stronger claim to aborigine glory. Their clans however prided themselves in slavery and implicit obedience to their chiefs. The chiefs in the controul of their sovereigns. And they were so intoxicated with their ideas of self-importance, from the highest to the lowest of them; that they could not condescend to sink so much beneath it as to aim at bettering their conditions by pursuits of utility to themselves, and of solid advantage to the state. Taxes therefore, laid

veral years as a private foldier, and when he killed his lordship was in the station of an excifeman, which in England is very much despised.

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upon them, might have produced rebellions, but never would have introduced industry, while they continued a distinct people, under such infatuations. The union however, which opened to them a freer intercourse with the English, served gradually to inspire them with a more rational ambition; which was that of aspiring to affluence by industry, and thereby becoming more serviceable to themselves, as well as to their country. But the gradual introduction of manufactories and trade has greatly altered the face of things of late years in Scotland, given an almost incredible increase to the value of their lands, and rendered the people submissive to taxations, from means acquired to bear them. It is therefore, as we may thence observe, more a turn of mind than

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multiplied necessities that induces men to become industrious, which will better be excited by encouragement than compulsion. But the latter, in a high degree, is incompatible with constitutional freedom, as well as social equity; especially if it reaches to the deprivation of comforts.

It were greatly to be wished, that the minds of estated men were fully open to conviction of the following truths, that a foreign trade in corn must be ever uncertain and precarious, as is evidently the case in Sicily, the granary of the south: for it is not uncommon for the people of that country to have great part of the crops of several years lying upon hand, from a want of purchasers: but that a home consumption will be always regular
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and certain. Whence it must follow to be decided, with certainty, that the landed-man's great object should be population at home, for the sure consumption of his commodities.

He will likewise have fewer partakers in the profits of such products in a home than a foreign consumption, as a far less number of dealers will be necessary between the grower and consumer. But jobbers and factors will ever partake largely in all profits from corn sent abroad: and indeed farmers, jobbers and factors must be supposed to share between them most of the advantages of the bounties at present, while the burthens resulting from them, in the increase of parish-rates, do eventually almost entirely fall on landlords;

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in a degree that may be rationally supposed far to over-balance any share they obtain of the bounties. As for the merchant-adventurer, he has no concern in them whatever; for he contracts at shipping prices, which are proportionally under those of the market, the seller being commonly the receiver of the debenture-money. And as such purchasers must ever regulate their prices for buying by the rates for sale at foreign markets, they of course will engage, or not, as the prospect is good or bad from the prices for investiture in this country: the receiving of the bounty being no object of theirs, as making no part of their gains in such business; nor, from their way of dealing, does it prevent their having loss.

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The infinitely greatest and most certain improvement of landed property, would be for a man to get a town built on his estate, large enough to consume all the products of his grounds: for then the consumption of his commodities would become far more regular and certain than he could possibly experience from having every port of the world open to him for occasional exportation. Such would become the good fortune of many, if the bounties in question were taken off to favour manufactories, and our trade in such exports. And though corn might then sell cheaper, the money would proportionally go farther: so that every consequent improvement would be so much clear gains to the landlord;

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while by the same means advantages to the nation would become inconceivably augmented.

Sir William Petty may appear extravagant in his opinion, "That it is not impossible, nay a very feasible matter, for the king of England's subjects to gain the universal trade of the whole commercial world." However it is certain, that, by a right management of the whole British dominions, as they are at present, we might easily obtain and secure a great part of it. The measures for enabling us so to do must be, the discharge of our public debts, and consequent reduction of taxes, not so difficult to be soon accomplished as may be imagined; a diminution

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tion of *law-charges; a register of right to land-property, and likewise of mortgages, for the prevention of law-suits; an equal land-tax; a new mode of taxation, with changing the objects; an abolition of fine-cures, and unnecessary employments of every kind; an effectual discouragement of luxury, dissipation, idleness and vice; a discontinuation of corruption and jobs; an improvement of police, an abolition of bounties, and a free trade in provisions. By these means we might augment population, increase trade in manufactures, enrich and strengthen the kingdom, and sup-

* The late Sir Robert Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford told a gentleman of high character, that all property contested for in our courts, was not of value sufficient to pay the whole of law-charges.

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port, nay, in effect, raise the value of lands, which otherwise will soon fall.

The true interest of landed men must then be, to encourage manufactures, which most support population; according to the degree of which there may be in a country, will be the value of lands, by the only natural and durable means. It is a groundless opinion which many people have entertained, that this kingdom may have too much trade in manufactures, because it can extend no other than an industrious population. A trader might just as wisely apprehend having too great a stock, with too many customers to purchase it, and too many neighbours for his defence; for the apprehension would be similar. A country cannot

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cannot possibly have too many well-employed people; though it greatly may of such as are idle, or burthenfome, because those are every where both useless and mischievous. Thus closely is the landed-interest, like that of the state, linked with trade.

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C H A P. XV.

On Manufacturing Police, and Mercantile Traders.

IT is an erroneous opinion, that prescriptive regulations hurt manufacturing trade; which perhaps was first inculcated to cover incapacity in those who found themselves unequal to a right management of our national concerns; or by such as, from ignorance, became the dupes of designing knaves in trade.

A trading state should support a character for integrity in dealings, as the want of it, or rather a contrary character, will frustrate every endeavour it can possibly exert. No man chooses to deal with

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with a known sharper, however well guarded he may be against the arts practised by him.

The manufacturing trade of England was made reputable and prosperous by such regulations as were prescribed for staple manufactures. As for example, by the act of the fourth of James the First, For making true woollen cloth, not only widths and lengths, (which might affect the *outward duties) but even weight was ascertained; which latter regulation must have been contrived to secure substance to the cloth. Particular frauds likewise were therein specified,

* Manufactures, like all other kinds of exports formerly paid duties; which, as far as regarded them, was the extreme of ill policy, though not in corn, wool or other raw materials.

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and penalties declared. We have now little cloth made that is really superfine, that of a second, third, and even fourth quality being sold, and often shipped for such; to the gross abuse of the public, and great injury of the state. Qualities ought to be ascertained: and then traders may be permitted to obtain what prices they can: but to sell a bad thing for a good one, is infamous cheating, whether in a nation or an individual. Depravity in principle and practice should be alike guarded against in either.

It may be necessary to make cloth of every quality, both for home use and exportation: but the respective qualities of all ought to be ascertained on the pieces, by examiners appointed and paid for that purpose, who should

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should give security for being answerable for neglects or frauds in office.

By an act of the twelfth of Charles the Second, For regulating the trade of bay-making in the Dutch bay-hall in Colchester, those bays were to be examined at the hall, and there sealed: and penalties were declared for neglects or abuses therein. In consequence of which, Colchester bays have continued among the most reputable goods exported from this kingdom: so that if there has been any decline in that branch of our exports, it must have been chiefly owing to change of taste in dress among the people of the countries to which they were exported.

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In like manner, by an act of the thirteenth and fourteenth of Charles the second, For regulating the making of stuffs in Norfolk and Norwich, the inspection even of worsted yarns was appointed, as well as of manufactures, in fairs and markets. The latter, when properly made, were to be sealed, according to act of parliament and bye-laws; but if found defective, the makers were to be fined. The Norwich stuffs, in point of measurement, may continue not very defective: but those of Coventry, and particularly tammies, are scandalously so, being sold for thirty yards, yet seldom measuring more than eight and twenty: which is a breakage of above six per cent. and more than a merchant-exporter can gain by them in a ready-money trade.

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I have known long-bays break, on an average, near ten per cent, in the measurement abroad of an hundred pieces together. It is true, there is some favour shewn there to the buyer in the measurement: but all English goods break more in measurement abroad, by sworn measurers, than the goods of other countries. Stuffs are not so measured at sales; but the merchants must pay for the deficiencies that the buyers find in measurement, and is of course at their mercy for charging it: therefore defective measurements in commercial goods are frauds of the first magnitude. At home, the cheating falls upon the last purchaser in price: abroad it falls on the merchant, and besides exposes him to the suffering of farther imposition. Who then will not prefer trading in the goods
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of those countries that permit no such frauds to be practised? This is actually the case with respect to France: so that it is become much safer to send an order from a foreign country to be executed in that kingdom than to this; as well with regard to measurement, as with respect to the qualities of goods.

The great interests of a state ought not to be suffered to depend on the conduct of interested individuals. A bad man, who can practise frauds long enough to make his own fortune, will care little how much others, or his country, may suffer by them in the issue. It might be thought invidious to point out how very widely, and even highly, this narrow principle of self-service, without regard to duration

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ration or consequences, operates every where in this kingdom. But where its tendency is to ruin the great interests of the state, it does not require divine inspiration to foresee the worst evils that can be dreaded will happen, in the natural course of things; nay, and speedily too, if not timely prevented by the application of effectual remedies.

Abundance of other necessary regulations have been made, from time to time, by acts of parliament, both with respect to manufactories and workmen; and some to protect the latter from oppression, nay grant them succour in times of exigency; but, in effect, they are all become obsolete.

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The respective wages of workmen and labourers were appointed to be yearly, or temporarily regulated by disinterested men, on the most impartial principles, by an act of the first of James the first; made to explain another of the fifth of Queen Elizabeth, extending even to the rates of womens labour: but such modes of proceeding are no longer in practice; all are now left at large, to oppress and cheat as they can.

The same may be said with regard to laws made to prevent vice, idleness and vagrancy, which have been equally rendered ineffectual.

It is in vain to complain of vice and idleness, while the people are encouraged by numberless temptations

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tions to dissipation, for the sake of the revenues that arise from extravagance. Nor can it be of any avail to pass vagrants, or paupers, to their places of settlement, unless means are contrived for the keeping of them there. It is become a fashionable opinion too, that the people must be made extremely needy, in order to compel them to work hard, though there is a spirit of industry in the people of this kingdom far beyond that of any other upon the face of the earth. But the truth is, there is a want of regulations, at least in practice, both for encouragement and restraint. There are some places, particularly the metropolis, where in some branches of business the workmen will make their own conditions; while in others they are totally at the mercy of their

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employers. So that, upon the whole, it is become a war of interests between self-interested people on both sides, without proper coercive regulations that are effectual on either, or rather mutually so to both. What, for example, has become the state of the magistracy throughout the kingdom, but a partial and ineffectual appointment? or what revision, amendment, or enforcement have we seen of the laws of police? Why then do we complain of irregularities in those who are generally most helpless, and the greatest sufferers, while the faults are at least equal on both sides? But great men, and even some late parliaments, have appeared to have other things to mind than the real welfare of the state. It is not to be doubted, that there are numberless gross abuses which stand

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stand in need of correction; but our misfortune is, an apparent great want of will, or of wisdom, to set seriously and heartily about so good a work.

Like the practice of manufacturing, that of dealing too has become greatly altered, of late years, for the worse. In London, for example, the open trade in Blackwell-hall has become turned into a private trade in warehouses: in which latter channel, every one must have heard of the extraordinary proceedings of a late partnership of great eminence.

The same may be said of our foreign commerce in manufactures. We have now no such merchant-exporters of them, on their own bottoms, as the late Sir Peter
O 3 Delme,

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Delme, and others that might be mentioned: nor indeed have we at present any one channel, throughout Europe, open for such a man to employ a large capital in, with the prospect of making five per cent per annum of his money, if he pays commission abroad for the doing of his business; so unprofitable is become the trade of such exports from this country. Almost the only real merchants among us, in this way, are those concerned in houses abroad; who, by their mutual saving of commissions, are enabled to get something. But this should serve to shew, that the trade is warped up to the nearest point of wind by which it can be made to go on with safety. As for such factors in that branch of trade as travel to procure commissions, or have riders about the world to solicit

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licit them, their dealings are merely temporary, shifting and precarious; and not unfrequently even hurtful, from causes sufficiently obvious to be readily conceived.

In fine, this invaluable branch of commerce is entirely without superintending direction. It is true, we have a board of trade, but it takes no immediate cognizance of the commerce of the kingdom: so that it may properly be considered, as indeed it is commonly called, a Plantation Office; and that almost merely too for political use. In France there is an active and well-informed council of commerce. In Holland, the principal merchants have a great share in the government of the country. Here we appear to be all adrift in commercial

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cial matters, without * pilot, or compass, driving before the wind of accident, amidst quicksands and rocks : so that if we long escape shipwreck, we shall have wonderful good fortune.

* Most ministers of state, especially of late years, have been remarkably unfortunate in the choice of their commercial confidants, or advisers ; there having been hardly one of them who had either liberal knowledge or true practical experience of general trade, nay or even a man of good parts : which has frequently occasioned much laughter to lookers-on. During the last parliament, there at least once happened a debate in the House of Commons, on a commercial point, in which no one speaker discovered any material knowledge of the subject.

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C H A P. XVI.

The present State of the British Trade with Europe, Africa, and America.

IT is well known, that little reliance can be made on custom-house entries for judging of the state of our national commerce, there being no kind of certainty in them with regard to exports ; and with respect to imports, they must at least be defective to the whole extent of our national smuggling, which is certainly very great. They, therefore, cannot furnish sufficient information for enabling us to decide rightly on these very important matters.

As little reliance should be made on the reports of manufacturers of,
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or dealers in those commodities : the knowledge of the former being merely local, and that of the latter confined to particular branches of manufacturing, or distinct channels of commerce. Besides, mere manufacturers and dealers do not often sufficiently distinguish between home and foreign consumption. Nor is it uncommon to find them greatly influenced by party-principles in the reports which they make.

To decide accurately then, on this most interesting of all points to the kingdom, we must seek for better evidence, and appeal to facts that in their natures are demonstrative. Such we may consider the Exchanges, they being the barometers of trade between country and country ; and the prices of the precious

precious metals, which are as much the barometers of our general commerce. These, therefore, are the infallible criterions we shall fix upon for deciding, with certainty, on points of such importance, after taking a cursory view of our trade ; beginning with that of Europe, Africa, and America, and reserving that of Asia for a separate chapter.

Our commerce with Russia is certainly very much against us. Mr. Hanway, who resided in that country, and Mr. Postlethwayt, both suppose a million sterling per annum to be the balance against us. With what degree of accuracy [they framed their estimate, I pretend not to determine : but we may however venture to believe the balance we pay must be very large.
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Nay it is greater than may appear by the exchanges, because our merchants are forced to import dollars into that country for the payment of inward duties on merchandize; which practice must serve to diminish the operations of that balance on the exchanges.

The whole exports of Sweden have been estimated, by persons who resided in that kingdom, at five hundred thousand pounds per annum; the far greater part of which is made to England. And as our exports to Sweden are inconsiderable, the balance must be materially against us.

Stock-fish may be the chief article we import directly from Denmark, with probably some tallow, and raw-hides, horns and hoofs.
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But we pay her large sums annually for Sound-duties on our whole Baltick trade, and a great deal for Norway timber: therefore, as our exports to those countries are not large, the balance against us must be very considerable.

What trade we have with Poland is carried on principally through Dantzic. But it cannot be to any great extent, nor the balance very much to our prejudice.

Our trade with Germany being carried on partly through Holland up the Rhine, is so far blended with that of the latter country; the rest we carry on by way of the Hanse Towns, and particularly Hamburg; from whence we receive various kinds of linen cloths, in great quantities

quantities, with many other commodities. The Hamburg exchange shews the trade of those parts to be materially against us.

In our Dutch trade, or dealings, we must include the dividends we pay them for property in our stocks; and, as hath been mentioned, a part of our German trade. Holland is likewise greatly the centre of our exchange circulation with all northern and eastern countries, which to them is very gainful. They get a great deal of our coin and bullion, the former being very common in their currency: and the balance, upon the whole, has always been much against us, as the exchange ever was considerably; but of late years it has turned abundantly more to our disadvantage, which shews the balance against

against us to have become greatly augmented.

Our traffic with Flanders must be considerably to our prejudice, as the Antwerp exchange shews, being very much against us. Our smuggling trade with that country is likewise extremely hurtful.

Our French trade, licit and illicit, must be highly injurious: and our loss therein is not a little increased by the different intercourses of people there are between the two countries: our idle people going thither to spend money, which strengthens their population; and their industrious people coming hither to earn money, to the advantage of their own country, and to the diminishing of native population in this kingdom. Every unnaturalized

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unnaturalized foreigner, who lives here by labour, deprives an Englishman, or family, of the means of subsistence; so that, of course, to the degree they are here, they lessen the number of our own people. This is an evil of the first magnitude, which requires a speedy and effectual remedy. Perhaps the best that can be thought of would be an alien capitation tax, including likewise Indian and negro servants, who have become perniciously abundant.

The smuggling trade between the two kingdoms is also in the highest degree hurtful, being principally from thence in manufactures; but from hence in money, or raw-materials, still more injurious to us than money. In fine, we are in folly as much the voluntary dupes
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of the French, as in policy we are their bubbles: so that it is high time proper remedies were applied for effectually preventing both.

Under this article of French commerce, it may not appear improper to set the public judgment right with respect to the woollen, and some other manufactories of the two kingdoms, because very erroneous opinions thereon have too long prevailed.

There is nothing more common than to hear men boast greatly of the flourishing state of our manufactories, and, at the same time, represent those of France as insignificant, and in danger of decay. But round assertions, or flat denials, do not furnish either positive or negative proofs. Let the following

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lowing real facts then decide truly on these matters.

France works up the whole of her own wool; engrosses that of all Barbary, the country of Algier excepted; receives immense quantities from Spain; has much of what Ireland produces smuggled to her, and gets not a little from England.

England works up the whole of her own wool that is not smuggled to France; imports some from Spain, though a trifling quantity, when compared with what France receives from thence; has raw wool from Ireland, and perhaps likewise some woollen-yarn.

So much for the respective supplies of materials to manufactories, which

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which must be considered as greatly in favour of France. Now let us take a short view of the trade in exported woollen manufactures of both kingdoms.

With respect to fine cloths, they have, to a great degree, engrossed the supply of Turkey, Barbary, Italy and Spain. That of Portugal is almost entirely between them and the Dutch. They must likewise send some to the Baltic, to Hamburg, to America and to the East-Indies.

England sends hardly any fine cloths southward, except the few that go to Turkey; nor many to the northern ports, or up the Baltic. She did send a considerable quantity to America; does send a

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pretty many to Ireland, and a good number to the East-Indies.

France exports few coarse cloths, except to her own settlements. But England a great many, particularly from Yorkshire; where the cloth manufactories are far more flourishing than in any other part of England.

Says, Serges, Long-ells, and some other kinds of goods are chiefly shipped from our western ports, but in less degrees likewise from others; though, upon the whole, not in such quantities as they were heretofore.

The French send goods of similar kinds, in great quantities, to several parts of the world. Since about the year 1730, they have engrossed

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engrossed the supply of most of the cloathing for the secular and regular clergy of the church of Rome, particularly in the southern countries, and likewise for other uses, by a kind of goods they call druggets; to the effectual supplanting of several of our manufactures, and total ruin of one very considerable branch, which was that of crapes, made, heretofore, at Sudbury, and in its neighbourhood in Suffolk. The loss of this trade caused the poors-rate at Sudbury to rise so high as fourteen shillings in the pound. Attempts have been since made in several parts of this kingdom, to rival the French in their manufacture of druggets, but hitherto without success. This is a striking and mortifying proof of our not being on a footing with them in the prices of workmanship.

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We have a considerable stuff trade, from Norwich, Coventry, Exeter, &c. But that from Spitalfields has much declined, as well as from some other places. The French have likewise a stuff trade of various kinds, which is both extensive and flourishing, particularly to the southern countries.

In fine, the French have greatly the advantage of us in fine cloths, and most other woollen articles; while we have no advantage of them but in coarse cloths and baize.

Let those, who so much boast of the flourishing state of our woollen manufactories, enquire what the poors-rates for many years have been at Calne in Wiltshire. Several other places might also be pointed

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ed out which have fallen, with their manufactories, into miserable decay.

Our cotton manufactories may exceed those of the French. But their Cambrick and linen ones have infinitely outstretched ours of England, Scotland, Ireland, or indeed all together, notwithstanding the assistance that has been given them in premiums, drawbacks, and bounties.

Though we, in a very great degree, engross the trade in beaver-furr, we are losing our foreign hat-trade, either from the dearth of labour, or the ill conduct of hatters. Let Mr. Alderman Rossiter say, how many hats he now sends to the house of Martin at Lisbon, which was formerly

P 4 furnished

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furnished by his father with large annual supplies for sale. We used to send great quantities of hats constantly to the Portugueze: but what foreign supply they have at present is entirely from France, who, like other countries, purchases beaver of us to very great disadvantage, and yet much undersells us in hats at foreign markets.

Our silk-stocking trade, likewise, was formerly very great, but is become otherwise at present, nay, there are even great quantities smuggled in upon us from France. We had the peculiar art of weaving them with what were called cheveron clocks, which made them every where much esteemed. But our pretty fellows, who travel to acquire a contempt for the arts as well as virtues of their native country,

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country, not finding they were fashionable in France, imported a dislike that occasioned the disuse of them at home; which, by degrees, caused both the art and the trade to leave this kingdom. Frenchmen, wherever they travel, endeavour to obtrude their own fashions on other countries: which, while it indulges their vanity, advances their interest. We, on the contrary, travel to imbibe the follies, and bring home the fashions of all countries through which we pass, to the disgrace of our national understanding and taste in the eyes of all Europe; nay, to our infinite injury as a people, whose great interest is trade; which a character for national taste would serve essentially to promote. What a pity it is, that we do not prohibit the exportation of fools? It is at least

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a branch of commerce that would bear heavily taxing.

We have also the the art of watering tabbies beyond any other nation; and they are peculiarly admired abroad, being much sought after, as goods of real excellence, by the people of all other countries. But, because they are made at home, our ladies all detest them, and hazard mobbing, or even fines, for the glory of appearing in any frippery French tinsel, or the paltry painted rags of India. It must however be owned, that French silks are abundantly cheaper, and in general more durable than English.

Many other important branches of our trade in manufactures have likewise decayed, while few new ones

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ones have been introduced. The state of our manufactories therefore, in general, may be pronounced far from being flourishing, in comparison with those of France.

If it be our wish, as it certainly is our interest, to support our trade in manufactures, one great means for so doing will be, the establishing of a reputation for national taste in the opinion of our neighbours; therefore we should endeavour to set fashions, and not copy them. The French make a point of discouraging all foreign fashions in their own country: but we, on the contrary, make it our practice to import fashions from abroad, to have foreigners to instruct and dress us, and no sooner see a foreign fop, or flirt in a strange habit,

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bit, than we fall eagerly into aping them.

The Marquis of Hallifax informs us that, in opposition to French pretensions to prescribe laws in taste, the English, in the reign of Charles the Second, took it into their heads to wear vests: which so alarmed the French court, that the Dutchess of Orleans was immediately dispatched to a conference in England, with her royal brother, in order to laugh her countrymen out of their new fashion, and supply Charles with a French mistress, to secure future fertility here in taste to that kingdom. Her Royal Highness bawded with such success, that she succeeded in both points. But some indiscretions she was guilty of, during her embassy, occasioned her death:

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for on her return to France, she was poisoned, as was supposed, by her husband.

This anecdote, which is really curious in its kind, may serve to shew how long the French have thought it of importance to acquire and maintain the lead in taste. The practice among them is universal, and in every thing, which has made it generally imputed to national vanity: and with respect to the ignorant part of them, that may indeed be the case. But it indisputably was founded in interest, and is * still their national policy:

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* There can need no stronger proof of this than the known cause of the insurrection which happened some years ago in Madrid: which was, his Catholic Majesty's taking upon himself to compel his subjects to dress in the French fashion. This the Spaniards resisted,

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nor, as such, is it unwise; for prepossession in those matters must be of material advantage. It should therefore be the fixed policy of this kingdom to counteract them therein.

Our Spanish trade is every way of service to this kingdom, and of course highly valuable; for, besides silver and gold, we receive from thence several articles of more value than even money: such as wool, raw-silk, the best iron, cochineal, indigo, barilla, and other articles that are extremely useful. But nothing that is more for luxury than some cheap wines, raisins,

resisted, less from national pride than out of hatred to the French. The undertaking was undoubtedly consequent of the family-compact: which measure was really as odious in Spain as French manners and modes.

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cocoa-nuts, seville-oranges and olives, if they can deserve to be so thought. Our corn is never wanted in Spain but on occasions of dearth, which do not often happen. On the contrary, they generally sell much to the Portuguese, and sometimes export great quantities. Upon the whole, we certainly receive a balance from Spain, and might a very great one, had we a better system of commercial policy.

Our Portuguese trade, once very beneficial, has of late become so altered for the worse, that the rates of exchange shew the scales of interest so nearly poised as almost to vibrate on the balance.

While they have been favouring other nations to our prejudice, and
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with the violation of a commercial treaty, in their needful supply of manufactures, they have so raised the prices of their wines on us, with the deprivation of rights by treaty, as nearly to double the cost of them. Yet we have been so impolitic as to suffer those treaties of alliance to subsist, though they expose us to the demands of such succours as we have often experienced to be enormously expensive, without any reciprocal obligation on them. The equivalent for this protection was our exclusive right to import woollen manufactures into that kingdom, which was implied by the treaty of Queen Anne, and heretofore so understood, nay made evident by their custom-house regulations, woollen goods not being allowed entry from any other country. But we first suffered

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ferred this essential right to be invaded, in favour of the Dutch, who have no such commercial treaty with them: and since, in practice at least, in favour of the French, who have no existing treaty with them whatever; [and who grant them no kind of equivalent, as we do expressly, by stipulation, in the duties on their wines. What motives a succession of administrations may have had for suffering every stipulated condition in our favour to be openly violated, without formally renouncing the conditional burthensome ties on us, in favour of Portugal, they themselves must best know: but it may be said, with great truth, that some of them ought long ago to have been made answerable for so doing to the justice of their country.

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It is ridiculous any longer to pretend, that we have any * treaties in force with Portugal, but such as are entirely to our national prejudice: and it will be as infamous as injurious, to suffer those any longer to continue unannulled. We are not in want of means for taking full satisfaction, as well as

* The late imprisonment of a British merchant at Lisbon, was in direct violation of a right established by treaty, and which was expressly explained, confirmed and enforced by a law made in Portugal for that purpose above an hundred years ago. It is as impolitic as ridiculous to oblige people to pay brokages, because they operate as taxes on consumers. But the truth is, our trade in Portugal will not bear paying brokage now, so small are the profits made in it. Here we do not oblige the agents of their wine-company, or any others of them who are in trade, to pay brokages, though no treaty that we know of stipulates any privileges for them in England.

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greatly serving ourselves, by the effectual humbling of Portugal, and therewith awing other powers, if we were animated by the spirit that did so much honour to Cromwell's times, and occasioned the oldest treaty existing at present between the two crowns. But why that treaty, and also those of Charles the second and Queen Anne have not been kept in full force, it is to be hoped will speedily be made a subject of parliamentary enquiry.

At present, the Portugueze trade is no object to this country: and therefore a needless regard for it should no longer be suffered to hazard any future inconvenience, or burthen, from engagements of alliance. It formerly was supposed to be in our favour to the amount of

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between * four and five hundred thousand pounds per annum : but the

* At the time of our entering into engagements for the support of Portugal, during the last war, the late Mr. Charles Townshend, then secretary at war, sent for the writer, to learn from him the state of our trade with that kingdom ; who, though unapprized of the business, and of course greatly unprepared for giving the information required, did assign reasons for supposing, to the time of the great earthquake, our balance had been as is here mentioned. That opinion he published immediately afterwards in a speculative way, with the grounds on which he framed it. The merchants upon the Exchange acknowledged it to be just : and the parliament agreed with them in opinion thereon. Soon after, he wrote publicly likewise against our entering into engagements for the support of Portugal, till grievances and injuries were redressed in that kingdom, by the restoration of privileges and due observance of treaties ; but his admonitions were disregarded. What the effects of that Portugueze war were, such as it was, by greatly adding to our burthens, accelerating the

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the schemes of the † Conde de Oeyras have proved equally fatal to the interests of both kingdoms, however they may have served to cram his own coffers. The whole of their colony trade, and much of their home, has been converted into hurtful monopolies and iniquitous jobs, contrary to every principle of sound policy ; while the kingdom has been ruining, and the colonies oppressed and disgusted, by mischievous regulations, and taxations that are enormous.

the peace, and clogging conditions in our favour, we have experienced to our cost, and may have cause long to lament. The strength and value of Portugueze friendship and gratitude we have likewise since sufficiently discovered.

† A minister, whom many here have often greatly applauded, either at the expence of their candour, or to the great exposure of their ignorance.

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Our trade with Italy in general may be at present in a small degree gainful, but far less so than heretofore. Some of our imports from thence are likewise advantageous, particularly raw-silk and pot-ashes. Their oil too may be considered as a necessary article.

It has long been acknowledged our Turkey trade was on the decline; and of late it has become such, that the company has requested and received parliamentary aids. This article is placed here, as the metropolis of that empire is in Europe.

Our carrying trade, by mercantile shipping in the Mediterranean, was formerly considerable and lucrative, as well as greatly service-
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able by the employ of seamen. At present it may be considered as almost totally lost: owing perhaps to burthens on navigation, and abuses in granting Mediterranean passes. The making of Minorca a free port, under an effectual civil government, might prove of essential service to the kingdom, as we see the good effects that have resulted to France from a like measure at Marseilles; for by that means they have acquired almost the whole trade of Barbary and the Levant.

Our Barbary trade is quite insignificant. That of Senegal, Gorea, and Guinea important. In return for our manufactures, spirits, arms, ammunition, toys, utensils, India goods, and other commodities, we receive gold, gums, elephants-
Q4 teeth,

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teeth, bees-wax, and other useful articles. This trade likewise furnishes a supply of negroes to our West-India and North-American colonies, as well as for sale to the colonists of other nations. It is at present perhaps not in an improving state: but it is certainly very advantageous, though principally applied to the lessening of the West-India balance against us.

The imports from, greatly overbalance the exports to, our West-India islands, so that not only the far greater part of the returns of our Guinea trade stop there, but gold from hence has become one of the most profitable commodities which can be sent to some of our sugar islands. Where it travels to from thence, may perhaps be worthy of enquiry. There is however

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ever another kind of trade prosecuted in the West Indies, which returns us some bullion, but not in the degrees it was used to do: and most of the profits made by West India planters are supposed to be spent in England. Was that not the case, in the present state of things, our trade with the sugar-islands would quickly prove our ruin. Yet it may be apprehended too great a portion of the gains of planters become invested in land-property here, which forms such an increasing influence, as may threaten in time to make the mother country not only greatly tributary, but even subservient to the interests of the sugar islands.

Our North-American trade hitherto has been extremely valuable. What it may hereafter prove, time only

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only can discover. It is my wish not to inflame diffentions about matters of right, concerning which it must be ever dangerous to give cause for enquiries. To restrain a people from getting money, and, at the same time, to claim a right of taxing them, without their own consent given, would be reducing them to so abject a condition as must be totally incompatible with every right idea of constitutional freedom. Away then with the teaduty: and let us cease combating against reason and nature. Could we compel them to acquiescence, we shall leave jealousy and anger to rankle for ever in their hearts, which will always obstruct our interest, and must accelerate separation; an event to be foreseen by every man of understanding. Let us content ourselves with obtaining
all

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all the wealth they can acquire, by a better means than taxation, which is through the channel of commerce. They are taxed in our commodities, and support our population by their dealings with us, which is the great source of our power.

We have been colonizing mad with regard to North-America: the quick peopling of which continent has been made too much our object. Time and nature will too soon render them superior to our controul. Sir William Petty was, in his time, for inviting the New-Englanders to return, from rightly considering home-population to be our true national object: and Mr. Trenchard made a jest of the supposition, that they would continue longer dependent on us than necessity compelled them to be, for
no

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no other reason than because their grandmothers and ours had been formerly acquainted. It is our policy to let them be divided by rival interests and religions, as they will be, and ever were, till we indifferently furnished them with a common cause for union. Let us, in fine, think like men, and forbear to act like wilful women. Of what importance is a preamble that must prevent an act from being considered as constitutional, and therefore, on all occasions, to be resisted?

From this brief view of the state of our commerce it must appear, that the European balance is almost every where against us; that the African balance, in our favour, is sunk in that to our prejudice with

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with the West Indies, and that these deficiencies could not have been supplied by our gains from North-America, as will hereafter be made still more evident.

C H A P.

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C H A P. XVII.

*On the State of the British Trade
and Connections with Asia.*

WE export to the East Indies, manufactures and national products to a very great amount; from whence, in commercial returns for our commodities, in territorial tributes, and by fortunes acquired by private trade in those countries, the freightage of ships, and profits made by the company, we receive, not only all that is needful for our home consumption and use, of piece-goods, teas, coffee, pepper, raw-silk, salt-petre, diamonds and other precious stones, dying-materials, china-ware, &c. &c; but also sufficient quantities of the several kinds of merchandize of those countries to supply the

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the calls of other nations, and likewise exchange and respondentia bills to an immense amount; all of which bills are payable in other countries of Europe, for goods furnished by our India company and individuals, to the companies and people of other nations. To which may be farther added, the freightage of shipping for re-exportation, the profits arising from the investment of great property therein, and by commissions and brokages upon foreign orders executed here; as, also, by the pay of labour, and profits in useful callings of various kinds, to numbers of industrious people, besides contributing to the state an important annual revenue.

Such has become the situation of our East India trade and concerns; and such the advantages are which the

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the state derives from them, exclusive of the duties and excises on what is for home consumption, and the profits from workmanship, on imported raw materials.

Instead of sending out near a million sterling in bullion yearly to India, as was formerly our custom to do, we have not only saved that sum of late, but may be supposed, on a reasonable calculation, to have had near two millions more thrown every year into the circulation of Europe, Africa and America in our favour, by re-exportations, exchange and respondentia bills, and other means. So that the annual difference to this kingdom must have been near three millions to our advantage since the affairs of the company took so fortunate a turn as they did some years

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years ago. Such have been the means by which we became enabled to pay our debts and dividends to other nations, for several years past. Yet how ineffectual those mighty aids have proved, has been but too clearly manifested by the disadvantageous rates of exchange and increasing prices of gold, which prove that coin must be decreasing apace in our circulation at home. Our East-India concerns, therefore, have hitherto saved us from bankruptcy. But how much longer they may continue so to do, should be thought a matter of great doubt.

R. CHAP.

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C H A P. XVIII.

Reasons offered for believing that, without the very favourable turn our India Concerns have taken, an uninterrupted North-American and Corn Trade could not have kept the the Affairs of this Kingdom in the condition they have been, and are at present.

IT has not been uncommon to hear people attribute the want of foreign gold in our circulation, and the high prices at which it has sold, entirely to the stoppage of our American and corn trades. But that opinion must be groundless.

Hitherto returns from America have not ceased coming, though perhaps

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perhaps not quite so regularly and plentiful as heretofore. Rhode-Island hardly stopt importations at all: and many of the other colonies were slow in following the example of Boston, in refusing to suffer importations. Nay the very warmest promoters of that association have been accused, by their enemies, of violating their engagements very highly: and the American merchants here do assert, that great quantities of all kinds of goods have been continually sending to those very colonies which most opposed importation. We have seen lately, in our public papers, even the names of ships and their masters, with mention of the ports from whence they sailed in England and Scotland, of

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twenty

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* twenty-nine ships entered at the port of Boston between the first of January and eleventh of June last : within which time no more than three cargoes of re-shipped goods were returned to Europe†.

However

* See the Gazetteer of the 21st, of September, and other papers on that, the preceding, or following day, on an American publication that was shewn in the city.

† Since this work has been in the press, other printed papers from America have been exhibited in the city; mentioning the ships and cargoes that had arrived on that continent from this kingdom, and particularly at Boston during the year 1769. The design of making these publications was to shew our trade in exports with America had been very little interrupted. Be that as it may, all contended for here is, that the obstructions of that trade have not yet greatly affected the European exchanges, and prices of gold in this kingdom; consequently the signs of our declining circumstances

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However true, or false, these reports may be, it is certain that such have been insisted on both in Europe and America. And as many necessary importations were allowed, so many debts have been paying by the Americans to the traders on this side of the ocean, and as even the goods stored in America, whether the property of traders on that continent, or in this island, must have been paid for to the makers of them here, it cannot reasonably be supposed our home circulation has hitherto been materially affected by North-American

circumstances are not owing thereto. But this should by no means prevent our speedily and effectually putting an end to our present disputes with America, because on our side they are really unjust, as well as highly impolitic.

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measures,

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measures, whatever in future may prove the case.

The like may be said with respect to corn. Whatever the demands may have been abroad for two years past, we certainly had not the means of furnishing any considerable supplies, as the prices at which corn has been kept here have clearly shewn: nor is it pretended that we have at present any considerable stock of old corn upon hand. It is a trade on which we never could, nor ever ought to depend principally, or materially for our support. Crops at home, and demands abroad, are ever equally precarious. The mighty merit of our corn trade is no other than an ideal infatuation, industriously propagated for the support of abuse.

Suppose

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Suppose our corn trade had been open for the two last years, and we had plenty to spare; where did there offer markets for taking off quantities at more than moderate prices? We have been informed of no great wants in the North. Holland and the Hanse Towns had sufficient supplies. What Spain wanted, Sicily chiefly spared. From the south of France and Italy we heard of no distress. Lisbon then was the only market in constant want: and that the prices there continued high, was entirely owing to there being but few places that could furnish her with large supplies. This was for some months done by France, whose greediness for gain exhausted her own stock, and, by her harvest happening to fail, exposed her to

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the want she afterwards experienced. Had we supplanted her in the doing of it, that misfortune would have been ours: we should have had the famine, and France would have escaped it. For eighteen months past America chiefly supplied Portugal, though Sicily was in some degree assistant therein. We could therefore have done no more than furnish part of what she wanted: and another channel of supply opened would have so lowered the prices in that kingdom as to have made us do it to the loss of traders, as the rates of corn have been here: so that the idea of our having suffered from want of exportations of that kind is chimerical and ridiculous.

For many months past however the corn trade in Portugal has been
greatly

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greatly on the losing lay, from the harvest in that kingdom having proved unusually abundant: so that corn and flour have been there selling for a long time greatly under prime cost. Nor can we even now have a prospect of selling corn any where at the prices it bears here.

That there has been the least want of corn in any country during the time we have been attributing our declining national condition to the stoppage of such exports, has been entirely owing to the present distracted state of Poland. But, in the mean time, our increasing advantages from Indian concerns, even in private channels, exclusive of those of the company, have doubly compensated for the suspension of corn exports, had our stock of grain been as remarkably abundant,

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dant, for that purpose, as it has been evidently deficient. The real truth then is, that our alarming condition is entirely owing to other causes, and principally to the decline of our European trade in manufactures; occasioned by the pernicious operations at home of our corn-bounties, and the insupportable burthens of our public debts and taxes.

With regard to the latter, Sir Robert Walpole's opinion has become verified, though of late much affected to be ridiculed by shallow writers and talkers; which was "that this kingdom could not sustain a debt of more than an hundred millions." Nor indeed would it have done so much, but for the wonderful turn our affairs have taken in India: for even with that

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that mighty aid, the powers of the state, we may see, are all dissolving apace. And should we become deprived of it, which is not unlikely soon to happen, the immediate consequences to this kingdom would indeed be very dreadful.

C H A P.

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C H A P. XIX.

*On the State of our Exchanges with
the several Parts of Europe.*

THE rates of exchange between country and country, intelligent men have always considered as sure rules for judging of the state of the trade which is carried on by them; being naturally, in proportion to the degree of losing, against the nation which pays the balance, and consequently, to the like degree in favour of that which receives it. This, I repeat, is naturally, and therefore generally the case. But we must except illicit trade, as that little affects exchanges: and as there may temporary occasions happen for making those rates vary from mere exigencies

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cies in business, the medium price of six or twelve months should always be made the rule for determining the state of such commerce.

The rates of exchange, like the prices of every thing else, will always be regulated by the numbers of respective dealers that appear at market. Plenty of bills, and little money, turn the rates of exchange naturally in favour of remitters: as, on the contrary, a plenty of money and scarcity of bills will give the advantage to drawers.

Should the Dutch, for example, want to remit great sums of money to England, either for investment in our funds, to make large purchases at India sales, or of any other commodities, the exchanges would

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would naturally become in favour of drawers; because they would take advantage of so extraordinary a demand for bills to obtain a rate of exchange in their favour. In like matter, should numbers of people in that country order stocks to be sold, and draw for their amount, on any sudden great call for money to employ to more advantage; or others draw, for a like reason, on their correspondents here, to whom they had consigned mercantile effects; either of such kinds of drawers, in order to secure the money wanted, would become tempted to offer more favourable exchanges than ordinary; when remitters, of course, would stand off on negotiations, in order to increase advantages to the utmost on their side. But these kinds of incidental variations never last longer than

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than the calls which occasion them; so that the exchange soon gets again to its natural rate, being a medium proportionate to the ordinary state of commerce between the two countries.

As in the nation that pays the balance there will naturally be a greater want of sellers than of buyers of bills, the rates of exchange must of course turn against that country in proportion to the balance it has to pay; because so many bills, at least, as serve to answer that balance must be drawn in an exchange trade, by persons who will send over bullion, or money, to discharge them: for no man can draw bills on another country without having effects lodged there to answer them, or sending money for that purpose.

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The making of these exchange-profits, therefore, is what occasions the rates of exchange to be against the country which pays the balance ; and they will always be proportionate to the difficulties or dangers attending such transactions : which should serve to prove the creating of any such must be exceeding ill policy. These explanations of what may be called the science of commerce are thought needful in this place, there being few, except real merchants, who are skilful in such matters ; as must be evident from the many hurtful regulations that have been made, and are continued in most countries of Europe.

The obvious leading policy of a commercial state, or indeed any other,

other, should be, to have as few balances to pay, and as many to receive as possible : and where they are owing, not to cause, by obstructions, their being paid in a disadvantageous manner. But this latter point has already been discussed : and the former, from its very nature, must be too evident to require being enlarged on.

We will now proceed to an examination of the state of our exchanges with the principal commercial places of Europe : they being, as was before observed, the truest barometers of trade between country and country.

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The following table exhibits the several par prices of Exchange; what their rates are at present, and what they were ten years ago, estimated by silver at 5s. 2d. an ounce.

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On	Par Price	Medium of the Year 1760.	Medium of half the Year 1770.
Venice	49 d. 492 decim.	50 d. $\frac{1}{2}$	51 d. $\frac{15}{16}$
Genoa	54 -	48 - $\frac{1}{8}$	49 - $\frac{5}{8}$
Leghorn	51 - 69	48 - $\frac{15}{16}$	50 - $\frac{11}{16}$
Lisbon	67 -	65 - $\frac{11}{16}$	66 - $\frac{3}{4}$
Paris	29 - 149	30 - $\frac{5}{8}$	31 - $\frac{3}{4}$
Cadiz	43 - 2	39 - $\frac{3}{16}$	39 - $\frac{1}{2}$
Amsterdam	36 f. 59 decim.	35 f. 2 d. $\frac{1}{2}$	34 f. 3 d. $\frac{1}{4}$
Hamburg	35 - 17	33 - 11 - $\frac{1}{8}$	33 - 2 - $\frac{1}{4}$

The former six of these exchanges, being made in foreign denominations, are against us in the degrees they exceed the par-rates, because the rising or falling is in our money. The latter two, being made in our own denomination of pound sterling, are to our disadvantage in the degrees they are below par, because the equivalent is in the money of other countries.

The exchanges materially in our favour are those of Cadiz and Genoa. The former, being always much the same as that of Madrid, may be considered as general for all Spain, and therefore extensive in its operations. The latter is very limited.

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The exchanges that appear just inclining to our advantage are those of Leghorn and Lisbon. The former operates for the greater part of Italy: the latter in a degree that may be called general for the kingdom of Portugal.

The other four exchanges, viz. with Venice, Paris, Hamburg and Amsterdam, are all greatly against us. The first is considerable in its operations: and the others very important, particularly that of Amsterdam; which city is greatly the centre of all commercial circulation, but more especially for the countries north and east of it.

Let it be remarked, that in the year 1760 our late war was in its most burthenfome state, having several

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veral heavy subsidies to pay, a numerous army to support in Germany, and an immense fleet to provide with materials from the east countries: the doing of all which must have altered the exchanges very greatly to our prejudice. And indeed all who remember preceding times must know, they were far less unfavourable before that period. But of late years, while we were paying no subsidies, had no army there to support, no fleets to equip, and were at peace with all the world; nay, while we were reaping the advantage of having immense sums poured from India into the general circulation, and particularly on that side of Europe, we see the disadvantages of the Dutch and French exchanges have become nearly doubled on us: which should serve to

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convince us, that our trade and dealings with those, and the more northern countries, have taken such a turn as should be peculiarly alarming.

Should my par rates of exchange be thought inaccurately estimated, because calculated upon silver at five shillings and two-pence an ounce, which is greatly under the medium par value of sterling bullion, it may be alledged, that it must continue to be deemed the par value in our exchanges so long as we continue to make it our coinage price, because the foreign money is estimated by our silver coin; and in so doing I am supported by the best authorities.

In the representation of Sir Isaac Newton to the board of treasury,
which

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which was made in the reign of Queen Anne, he mentions the medium market price of silver to have been about five shillings and four-pence half-penny an ounce, it having often been sold at five shillings and eight-pence, owing to the disproportionate value there was then of gold to silver; we rating it as fifteen to one, while other countries, and particularly those to which we paid the greatest balances, estimated it at no more than fourteen to one, which was near seven per cent. difference. And as the medium of silver here has become considerably increased, though our guinea since that time has been reduced six-pence in value, it must still continue full half as much preferable to gold for exportation, when at their respective medium rates. But both Sir Isaac

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Newton

Newton and Mr. Locke considered our gold coin to be over-valued by silver, and not that our silver coinage was made at a rate under par. Five shillings and two-pence therefore was then considered as the par value of our silver coinage, according to the estimation of other nations, and so it still continues: consequently that must likewise be its par value in exchange. On this consideration our gold was once lowered before: and should another alteration be made in our coinages, for national convenience in circulation, the same consideration should point out our manner of making it, as any wrong method taken for that purpose might produce mischievous effects.

There are two other branches of our trade and dealings which have not

not been yet estimated, being reserved for this place: which are our trade and dealings with Ireland, and our illicit, or smuggling trade with other countries.

With respect to Ireland, it may be said we really get her all. Whatever they acquire in their cow-keeping way: that patriarchal trade, (as Sir William Petty jestingly calls it, when pointing out the Dutch policy with respect to the Danes, and the wiser application of their own lands) by the sale of their butter, salted beef, raw-hides, tallow, hoofs and horns, as likewise by their salted pork, cured fish, occasionally some barley, and what few woollen manufactures they find means to smuggle out; are, to their extent, all made to lessen the general balance against us,

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us, which otherwise would prove heavier to the whole of their value. By these means, with what we are pleased to take from them of their products, not forgetting to specify such important articles as wool and linen-cloths, they are just enabled to pay their debts in trade to us, their pensioners and sine-cure placemen here, and likewise their rents to absentees and English landlords. The state of their dealings with this kingdom is made indisputably evident by the rates of exchange, so disadvantageous to them; as the condition of their national circulation is, by the greatly different values which the same species of money bear in the respective islands. It must however be acknowledged, that they do get a tolerable plenty of claret, to regale themselves with, by stealing abundance

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dance of their wool into France. Which shews how much better a price the French can afford to pay them for that valuable commodity than ourselves, and yet be able to undersell us in manufactures at foreign markets.

Our smuggling trade must be immensely great, and almost entirely to our prejudice. By the report made some years ago to the House of Commons, by Sir Stephen Janssen, I think the committee were of opinion, that we paid a million sterling per annum for the tea only that was smuggled into this kingdom. There have indeed been measures taken to lessen our smuggling in that article: but they have in a great degree been frustrated by counter-operations on the other side of the water,

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water, so that the practice therein still continues very great. The like may be said with respect to cambricks, fine thread-laces, brandies, gin, coffee, French silks, gold and silver laces, India goods, silk stockings, and a variety of other commodities, many of which are very costly. This trade, being principally carried on with money, proves, of course, an immense drain from us of our silver, as well as of gold. I shall not pretend to calculate its extent, which must be exceeding great; but shall remark, it is not of a nature much to affect our exchanges, bills of exchange very little intervening in such kinds of transactions. The rates of exchange are to be considered as the barometers of our licit trade only, our smuggling balances we must suppose to
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be paid with money, and principally of our own coin: therefore they can as little affect the market-prices of gold and silver as they do the rates of our exchanges.

Thus, with getting the all of poor Ireland, as well as of North-America, and with draining to debility our conquered countries in the East Indies, we have been so dealing, in one way or another, with some countries of Europe, that what with paying dividends to foreign creditors, and balances in losing trade, we see to what alarming rates the exchanges of Europe with this country are got, exclusive of the constant great drain there must be of our national coin by the practice of smuggling, and the mischievous
dealings

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dealings of the great herds of inferior Jews and other low foreigners, whom ill policy has encouraged to resort so much to this country.

C H A P.

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C H A P. XX.

*On the Prices of Gold and Silver,
of late Years, in this Kingdom.*

AS the medium rates of exchange are the barometers of licit trade between country and country, so the average prices of the precious metals may alike be considered as the truest barometers of the general commerce of a nation, on the surest of all principles for judging, which are the natural effects of causes.

It will be always alike with a state and an individual, with respect to circumstances. If income exceeds disbursements, there will soon appear an overflowing of money, by which prosperity and affluence will become demonstrated.

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On the contrary, wherever expences exceed receipts, a want of money will be quickly experienced, which for some time may be concealed by the ready expedient, so commonly practised, of issuing notes. But whenever credit is discovered to be strained, it becomes weakened. The very doing of it to excess is, therefore, always considered as the surest proof that can be given of decaying circumstances.

While we were in a state of receiving national balances, the causes and effects of them were alike clearly seen. The majority of exchanges were greatly in our favour. Those against us were not so in a considerable degree. Our circulation was so clogged with foreign coin as to occasion frequent inconveniencies. Gold was seldom
much

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much above, and often below par, or the coinage price of three pounds seventeen shillings and ten pence half-penny an ounce. Great quantities were, from time to time, sold at the bank for three pounds seventeen shillings and ten-pence, a rate that was made current there for always buying it; and merchants and bankers found themselves continually necessitated to stipulate, as much as possible, the making of payments in foreign money. These were all such clear manifestations of the overflowing of the medium of commerce as furnished irrefragable proofs of the prosperous situation of our national trade. The rates of exchange shewed the particular branches were mostly in our favour: and the ordinary prices of gold, as well as the great quantities of foreign coin

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in our circulation, alike served to shew it was the same upon the whole: the latter criterions for decision serving to confirm the truth of the former.

But during the last eight years appearances have so changed, that every circumstance for judging has become entirely altered. Several of the exchanges that had been most in our favour grew gradually so in a much less degree, while others actually turned against us: and those which had been disadvantageous became greatly more to our prejudice. The clogging quantities of foreign gold coin stole insensibly out of our circulation so entirely, that there now remains no other than what is extremely deficient in weight. The market price of gold increased continually
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by slow degrees, till premiums became given for it, nay at last were publicly advertised by people who took up the trade of collecting foreign gold coin; the price of which, for two years past, has been fluctuating between the enormous rates of four pounds and four pounds one shilling an ounce; being from two and an half to near four per cent. above its par, or coinage price. In the mean time all silver coin became likewise so drained from our circulation, that an increased coinage of *quarter-guineas,

* A remedy that probably will be productive of a great national evil, for near half the quarter-guineas which now pass in circulation are a false coinage of base metal, though not readily to be distinguished by the generality of people. There are likewise base guineas and half guineas, as also false foreign
T 2 gold

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guineas, to loss, could not remedy the inconvenience, even with the aid of small foreign gold coins, which necessity had kept in currency at greatly more than their value, from deficiency in weight.

These extraordinary changes all gradually took place while our American trade was uninterrupted, our ports were open for the exportation of corn, and our India trade and concerns taking such a turn as proved wonderfully advantageous: which are all facts of so striking a nature as, in conjunction with decreasing population, augmenting parish-rates, and stocks

gold coins not uncommon among us; so that our whole circulation is becoming dangerously corrupted.

greatly

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* greatly declining from prices that had been long abundantly below par value, must be allowed demonstrative proofs of the bad state of our trade, the very mischievous weight of our public burthens, and the ruinous situation of our national circumstances.

In vain then will half-informed, designing, or deluded men continue to talk and write vaguely, disingenuously, or ignorantly, as they too long have done, of these matters; with presumptuously boasting, as they have affected to do, that our manufactories are in want

* This had become the case for a considerable time before the news arrived of the Spaniards having dispossessed us of Faulkland's Island, and while the friends of administration were every where asserting there was no danger of a war.

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of hands, our trade of exports never more flourishing, and that the opulence of the kingdom exceeds all example. The indisputable facts I have produced shew the contrary to be the real case, and must serve effectually to prove, that all which such men have been so assiduously propagating are not truths, but falsehoods.

We have long had indeed a superabundance of extravagance among us, of every kind, both public and private. But with the bulk of individuals it has been, as with the state, too much figure upon credit, without solidity or stability: and, on both sides, with deep involvements in difficulties from fast-consuming mortgages. Much of our internal trade, and shew of affluence depend on our public

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public debts: as dividends from them do on taxes, and the latter must on foreign trade, which they have long been undermining. But with a short progress farther in the same destructive track, or by some severe stroke of adverse fortune, which may rationally be soon expected, the commercial foundation must be found to give way. Then down, on a sudden, will the whole superstructure fall: and our gaudy scene of splendour become instantly changed to one of wretchedness and ruin.

T 4 C H A P.

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C H A P. XXI.

The C O N C L U S I O N.

TH E R E can be no need for recapitulating here the several points that have been discussed, as serving to demonstrate, that much of our policy has been partial and erroneous; that our invaluable commerce in exported manufactures has become greatly on the decline, and that the circumstances of the kingdom are in a ruinous condition. The facts and authorities produced, as well as arguments made use of in support of those opinions, are all, with due deference, submitted to the judgment of the public.

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We who are without doors were, some time ago, informed of Lord North's having expressed himself to this effect in the House of Commons, "That by prudent measures and frugal management for no great length of time, the kingdom might become enabled to support a war for four or five years." If such really were the sentiments of the minister in the department of ways and means, of which we ought not to doubt, no stronger confirmation of the truth of my facts and representations can possibly be required by any reader of candour.

On such a declaration however, it should not have been thought impertinence had his lordship been asked, How he could be sure, in case

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case of our becoming forced into a war, that it would be in our power to bring it to a conclusion within so short a period of time? Or, with such limited means for carrying on war, should it happen to last fifteen years, instead of five, what security we could then have for the safety of the state?

More effectual measures than, than we have hitherto seen taken, ought certainly to have been thought necessary for the speedy retrieval of our circumstances, the restoration of harmony, and the improvement of our trade. Some very recent transactions, which have not only much alarmed, but likewise put us to great expence, whatever the event of them may prove, should serve to convince us, that the duration of peace with
some

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some of our neighbours will probably prove very transitory,

Were I to be asked what measures are proper to be taken? I would answer, Begin with turning out of the crooked road of false, factious, partial, intricate and evil policy, which has been too long pursued; and get into the safe and open path of real wisdom and honesty.

No factious opposition will ever be able to obstruct a virtuous government. No factious government will ever be without a powerful opposition. While the people are satisfied, discontented individuals will oppose with little weight: but when dissatisfactions are once general, they will, sooner
or

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or later, become too mighty to be resisted.

There never was a sovereign of this kingdom who was either glorious or happy, without appearing tenderly careful of the rights of the people; nor had any administration ever respect or stability that did not deserve and possess their fullest confidence. The points which they rarely overlook, or forgive, are infringements on their privileges, and perversions of justice.

It will ever be fruitless for ministers, or their instruments, to complain of faction, while people perceive government itself to be little else, from its partial operations to promote particular interests. This has been long clearly

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ly seen, and as openly said, in England, in Ireland, in America. Those who affect blindness to truths so very glaring, may soon have reason to think themselves happy if, like *Lord Wharton's puppies, their eyes open soon enough to save them from political drowning.

The people see plainly, that taxes are not only unequally laid, but also, that they are generally made unnecessarily burthensome by the modes of collecting them: and they know too for what reason.

* A well known story, told by the Earl of Wharton to Sharpe, arch-bishop of York, upon his Grace's making overtures to the opposition, after he had discovered the tory ministry in Queen Anne's reign were not likely long to stand their ground, from the spirit of the people being greatly raised against them.

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They are likewise perfectly well apprised, that there are often infamous abuses in the expenditure of public money. Ministers have long had only to ask for whatever they pleased to want: and know that † accounts of the applications of money pass with little examination, as mere matters in the course of business. The value of votes of all kinds they likewise well know: and feel their own infelicities increased by facilities in accommodation. They always were liberal of their money for good

† It has been long lamented, that the stating and examining of public accounts annually, by a standing committee of the House of Commons, has of late years grown out of use. One of the well known misfortunes of which is, that important accounts are become tedious in settling: so that people much doubt if they always are at last settled with the rectitude they ought.

purposes,

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purposes, whether in the support of government, the defence of the kingdom, the encouragement of real merit, or the reward of public virtue or service. But they abhor being compelled to pay the wages either of public villainy or private vice, because that would be parting with their money to the injury of the state as well as of individuals.

It is become fashionable to complain of the dissoluteness of the times, of the levelling of order, of open irreligion, and irreverence to laws: but such complaints are chiefly made by those who appear most ready to abet other kinds of abuses for the serving of themselves; men who will, at the same time, apologize for every arbitrary stretch of power, every partial abuse
of

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of justice, every species of official rapine, and for servility and prostitution,

That the times have become dissolute, has been chiefly owing to the practices of those whose stations are such as serve to make their conduct most influential, of whatsoever kind it may be. We see men of the character of Verres in stations of the highest trust and confidence; while such as resemble Brutus, or Cato, must be sought for in obscure life, from being considered, or at least represented as men who are unqualified for public service. Pliancy of conscience and servility in practice, we see, are qualities far more likely to advance a man's fortune than exemplary virtue and inflexible integrity, though united with the most

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most shining abilities. The strait road to preferment and honour is through plunder and oppression; to which protection as well as encouragement is often granted, for the merits of resolute attachment, unreserved compliance, desertion of principle, and even disregard to shame.

Among the great, practice in public and private life is the same. All is rapine and riot. Real friendship and social felicity are now no objects of pursuit. All fashionable intercourse consists in confederacies for spoil and power; for ruinous vice; or for the most despicable dissipation, whether in places of public resort or private rendezvous. Sharpers and scoundrels we behold the associates of

U nobles;

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nobles, while genius and merit are become objects of contempt.

Where such examples of dissoluteness are set in superior life, ought any practice of it be to thought severely reproachable in the subordinate orders of people?

Order never has, nor ever will be duly preserved, any where, but by apparent dignity and rectitude of conduct in those who govern and have precedence. Men of fortune, magistrates, judges, prelates, nobles, nay senates and even kings, owe alike to themselves and society the meriting of respect by their conduct: it is not otherwise their due, nor ever was, or will it be really paid them in any country of the world. Men cannot venerate those whom they see cause to censure:

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sure: nor are they to be long kept in awe of such as they have reason to abhor. They will soon learn, to think, and even say, with the poet;

Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:

The rest is all but leather and prunella.

Nothing can be more common than to behold a scowl of contempt glanced from the indignant eye of an honest peasant on a worthless man of rank: and wherever deserved, there can be no good man who will not own it is meritoriously directed. Had the folly and guilt even of kings been deemed uncensurable, nay unpunishable, we should not venerate, but detest the names of Junius Brutus and Timoleon; nor would the august family of our present gracious Sovereign have, probably, ever be-

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come seated on the throne of these kingdoms; nay or indeed those of most princes now, not only of Europe, but the whole world. What ought to be understood of the distinguishing appellations of most sacred, most excellent, most illustrious, most noble, most reverend, most honourable, right honourable, right reverend, honourable, reverend, or worshipful, but an implied correspondence therewith in life, conduct and character? Wherever practice appears the reverse of stile, the appellation will justly be considered as no other than a stigmatizing reproach, or elevation in infamy. Disorderly, however, as many may affect to represent the times we live in to be, we might safely assert, it would be difficult to produce a single instance of great public

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public disrespect shewn by the people of this country to any man who had not, by his conduct, much deserved it. Public opinion is, however, liable to be misled by artifice: but then error can no sooner be discovered than indignation will become transferred to the propagator of it. The sacrifice of order is, therefore, commonly made by those who most complain of its violation. Let men but so act as always to deserve respect, and they may depend on their finding it very readily paid them.

Besides the injury derived from the open immoralities of the great, perhaps the severest blow given to religion has been by the time-serving part of the clergy, whose advancement in station has been made too much to depend on so

U 3 disgraceful

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disgraceful a practice. The all-comprehending system of corruption and servile prostitution has been at least one source of this evil, as it is of every other which can be thought menacing of misfortune to us as a people. Religion, however, has still more influence on the lower than the higher orders of the community. Even enthusiasm has, of late years, been gaining ground among the former, owing, as is natural, to the profligacy of the latter; and particularly with respect to their shameful profanation of that day which prudence, if they have no better principle, should make them decently observe, in obedience to the laws, and for the welfare of their country. The reproach, therefore, of a want of religion is

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least of all due to the lower ranks of people.

That our laws have become too much unreverenced, may be chiefly imputed to their impotence for punishing much guilt in * high offenders: and perhaps from their having been sometimes so warped, in practice, as to be made to screen it in the lowest, when most culpable. The sacred fillet has been thought not always so effectually to seal up the eyes of justice, as to prevent protections and punishments being on either side defective: nay, even royal mercy has

* This appeared long ago from a famous song in the Beggars Opera being sung by a felon, after his conviction, in a court of justice: and since before a magistrate, on his commitment, by the livery-servant of a great lady, who is said to have assemblies on Sundays.

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been extended to its disgrace.—
There could, however, no tumult
happen in which an interposing
Camden would not be entirely safe,
and probably successful; though it
might indeed prove otherwise with
a Trefilian, if such a Judge was
now alive. Partiality is the natu-
ral parent of licentiousness, as pro-
vocation is of outrage. Without
the existence of evil causes, bad
effects can have no birth. When
low people see those who are high
not ashamed to deserve the gallows,
it cannot be expected they will
long fear it themselves. The poor,
in particular, have little cause to
have much reverence for the † laws,

as

† When these sheets were nearly printed
off, the writer first saw extracts of a very sen-
sible letter from the Rev. Thomas Comber,
in Yorkshire, to Arthur Young, Esq; on his
writings,

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as they do not sufficiently protect
them either in person or property.

Law

writings, in which mention is made of an at-
torney's bill amounting, on one side, to sixty
pounds for trying, at the quarter sessions, a
cause concerning the settlement of a few poor
colliers; which was at last left for lawyers
to decide, by measurement to the nearest dis-
tance of a village from the pit. This worthy
clergyman asserts the cause of the poor against
Mr. Young, declaring the greater part of the
labouring people he knows are provident, and
of course orderly; but represents their case as
hard in general, more especially when in want
of relief. He says, there are great neglects
of, and abuses in all charity houses, and
therefore is for having the poor assisted in
their own habitations, as most conducive to
public advantage, as well as their own com-
fort. He however owns the use of tea, and
adds that of tobacco, as extravagancies which
are hurtful, and the same may certainly be
said of snuff and spirits respectively. He like-
wise complains of the partialities and other
misconduct of magistrates, with saying he is
himself in the commission of peace, but, for
the

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Law has been made too expensive for a poor man, by appealing to it, to recover his right: and, in † defiance of it, his personal safety is

the strongest reason, declines acting under it. Happy would it be if gentlemen of Mr. Comber's candour and understanding would give themselves the trouble of publicly detecting more of Mr. Young's misrepresentations, which are many and dangerous. It may be said, with great truth, that there perhaps never appeared a more partial and mischievous writer, as far at least as regards policy, commerce and police; or in favour of a single interest, which is that of landed-men.

† The shameful practice of pressing men into the sea-service is a gross violation of justice and constitutional right; of which there could be no need, but from the scandalously unequal distribution of prize-money, and the protected plunder of agents. Let these evils be removed, and there will then be no occasion for either bounty-money or pressing. Vagrants indeed ought, at all times, to be pressed into the sea, or some other public service, as Bridewells are no cure for them.

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sometimes made precarious. What magistracy has too much become, throughout the kingdom, is too notorious to make the instancing of facts necessary, appointments being chiefly made for the serving of partial purposes.

It cannot with truth be denied, that the people of England have, on all proper occasions, willingly shewn themselves resolute and liberal supporters of every government which they had just cause to respect. They are indeed, as they ought to be, tenacious of their own rights, and may chance to prove refractory on any gross infringement of them; but that is no more than what occasionally happens in all other countries. They understand and love the constitution, under which they are entitled to live

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in safety : and are peculiar in having such strong feelings for it, that, as the marquis of Halifax well observed, " A foreigner must have every drop of blood drained out of his body, and an entire new mass infused, before he can be made to think like an Englishman concerning it." From all observation and example it is evident, that in proportion to the excess of power exercised will, in any country, be the extreme of licentiousness practised. Moderation and rectitude of government must therefore, every where, be the best means to practise for securing acquiescence and obedience from a people : for they never aim at unconstitutional power, unless driven to it by desperation, and even then with no farther view of exercising

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exercising it than for obtaining redress of grievances.

It has been scandalously common, of late, to represent the people of England as naturally turbulent, seditious, riotous, and prone to insurrection, than which no charge can be more false. They are often particularly insulted with the mention of that which was headed by Wat Tyler, during the minority of Richard the second ; but to the just reproach of those who are guilty of so doing, either for ignorance or want of candour, as the following were the real facts.

An unjust government and wickedly-partial parliament had imposed a general poll-tax, by which the richest and poorest were all rated

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rated alike. This justly might be, and accordingly was thought an intolerable grievance by the inferior orders of people, insomuch that discontents became general throughout the whole kingdom. During the fermentation of bad blood, so occasioned, an insolent collector of the odious tax had the brutal impudence to offer the most indecent violence to the daughter of a blacksmith before the father's face, under pretence of satisfying himself that she was of the age prescribed for taxation. Her indignant parent, fired at the horrid outrage, meritoriously beat the ruffian's brains out with a hammer, which he had in his hand; and for so doing was not punishable by the laws of his country. Upon this the people of several counties arose, and tumult, insurrection ensued.

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fued. The wealthy, who had been favoured in that taxation, did not join them: therefore their measures were so ill concerted and conducted as to occasion their miscarrying. If the cry of the people was for levelling order and dividing property, it was because the tax had already done the former, by making no distinction of men in the laying on of burthens. The first aggressors, therefore, in injustice were, in a great degree, the authorizers of that pretension; and, in fact, to them was fairly imputable every consequent act of violence. What then is there to blame in that revolt of the oppressed English people, more than in the many we read of, with approbation, of the Roman Plebeians; who, as Machiavel justly observes, were

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were always in the right when they so acted.

No nation can have a fair pretence for reproaching Englishmen with a disposition to tumult, insurrection, or rebellion; and perhaps least of any the Scotch, who are indiscreetly too free with that treatment of them. It is not my wish to increase animosities, but to assuage them. Nor do I mean to reflect on a people when I remind the Scots, not of the Clan insurrections of ancient times, nor even the worst of their modern practice, but of the Porteus execution, and the tumults and licentious proceedings on the late decision, in Scotland, of the Douglas cause; which Mr. Wedderburn declared, at the bar of the House of Lords, by far exceeded all the licentiousness that had

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had been practised of late in this part of the united kingdom: nor indeed, from such causes, were the people of England ever in an equal degree licentious. There have undeniably been some such stretches of power and law lately made here as warranted alarms: and likewise some such applications of the military force as were not strictly constitutional. While the people not only see, but are made to feel the effects of such wrong policy and abuses as endanger the state and their liberties, they have a legal right to interpose for obtaining such reformatations as are become needful, and are not to be censured for so doing.

If tumults have been as common in Scotland as in England, in Ire-

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land, it may be urged, they have been more frequent, and generally attended with greater mischiefs. So likewise do they happen often in France, in Italy, in Spain, Portugal, and almost every other country in which people continue with the spirit and feelings of men. At Madrid, in their late insurrection, the Spaniards obliged their King to disband his Walloon Guards, and banish his foreign minister, who had fled from their fury. In Portugal there have been often tumults, one not many years ago at Oporto, on the establishment of their wine company, which, tho' of little importance, their bloodhound of a minister called a Rebellion; and caused a number of poor harmless, aggrieved wretches to be executed, with such circumstances

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stances of solemn * barbarity as were sufficient to disgrace the government of a nation even of savages. This was all military work, under the direction of a Judge; who rode on horseback, in his robes, with a drawn sword in his hand, at the head of the soldiers, during the whole of their judicial proceedings, which indeed were very short.

But things were not always thus in Portugal, where an insurrection in the year 1640 raised the Braganza family to the throne of that kingdom, of which his present most faithful majesty is the fifth

* One of which was, the marching out, in procession, of the children of the sufferers, even to infants, to the place of execution, and round the gallows, while the dead bodies of their parents were suspended on it.

sovereign, and who has discharged the obligations of his family by enslaving his people in the very utmost degree. Another insurrection afterwards effected a revolution, by deposing one brother, for incapacity and abuse of power, and making the other regent, who afterwards became king, and was grandfather to his present Portuguese majesty. The Cortes, or Parliaments of Portugal, existed till within the present century. They consisted of four orders, king, peers, clergy and commons: but they foolishly granted fixed taxes, and so made themselves useless: when the nobility and clergy made their court to the sovereign by exalting his authority, to the destruction of the rights of the people; which service has been since rewarded

rewarded with their effectual * humiliation, and the extermination almost

* The following very recent instance of their present abject condition is not a little remarkable. Some of the principal of the few remaining noble families having lately adjusted inter-marriages, the parental noblemen waited on the Conde de Oeyras, now marquis of Pombal, to acquaint him therewith, and request his application for his majesty's consent. The Conde told them, he was surprized they proceeded so far without consulting the king. However he would inform his majesty, and let them know his royal pleasure. The speedy result was, they were told those engagements must be all entirely dissolved, and his majesty directed with whom the respective parties, of either sex, were immediately to marry: which peremptory commands they found it necessary to comply with, to their infinite mortification, and probably compleat unhappiness. Ponder on these proceedings, ye very courtly lords and ladies! who are for hanging all the unruly mob, as you very politely call the people, and exalting sovereign power, for the peace and welfare

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almost of the whole ancient nobility.

But while the late king of Portugal, who had a very good understanding, was gradually riveting the fetters of slavery on his people, though his spirit was high, and he was guilty of many acts of oppression, he bore opposition, not only to his will, but even sometimes to his very * power, and, upon

fare of this kingdom. And then proceed in your new study of Baret, for the acquirement of wisdom and human felicity; whose books of travels are equally replete with falsehoods, puerilities, ignorance and nonsense.

* He imposed an inland tax on sugar, which, on finding it occasioned great murmuring among the people, he immediately took off again.

He

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upon discovering the disgusts of his people, often altered his measures:

He laid another tax, that was both ridiculous and grievous, which was humourously opposed with insult, but to a happy effect: the circumstances of which may be thought extraordinary and entertaining.

The want of common-sewers in Lisbon, before its destruction by the late earthquake, made the carrying of human ordure out of houses, in large pots, a great employment for black women; many of whom, being slaves, maintained poor widows, with families of orphans, by such work. But a tax being laid of a third part, as I think, of such earnings, and some duties in that country being received in kind, when the day came on which the payment of the tax commenced, all the black women went with their third pot to the Palace-door, where they told the soldiers on guard they were come to pay his majesty's tax in specie. This, as may well be supposed, caused a croud to assemble, the consequences of which were, much mirth and some disturbance. Our abusers of mobs must doubt-

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fures: nor were tumults and disturbances unfrequent in his reign.

It

lefs confider this as a grofs insult offered to a king, who had made himfelf abfolute, at the very door of his Palace; and will naturally conclude they were all ordered immediately to be either cut in pieces or hanged: But no fuch thing was done. They were civilly defired to go off quietly with their loads: which they refufed doing, and infifted on paying the tax in their own way, till the king fent them an order to depart, on his royal promife that the tax fhould be abolifhed, as it immediately was.

During his reign, likewise, a gentleman was condemned to be hanged for intriguing in a nunnery, it being confidered as a kind of facrilege. But as they were conveying him through the Fish-market to the place of execution, the matrons of the place all arofe in his defence, and extorted a promife from the officers of juftice, that the execution fhould be delayed till they had been to the palace, to intercede for his pardon. On which they all
went

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It is ignorant, therefore, as well as malicious to represent the people of England as peculiarly prone

went to the palace-door, in a body, and fent up word to the king, that he ought not to fuffer a man to be hanged, for doing only what he did every day himfelf: and continued fo to clamour, till the pardon was granted. What they accused his majefty of was really a fact: for he did, at that time, nightly vifit a nun in the convent of Odivellas; and what was more extraordinary, he always carried his confeffor and the hoft with him in his carriage.

Towards the latter end of his reign, he likewise obtained a brief from Rome to oblige all perfons under confeffion to name acceffaries in the commiffion of fins; which occafioned fuch murmurings and menaces in the metropolis, and probably throughout the kingdom, that government was afraid to attempt carrying it into execution. Thus, we may fee, even abfolute kings cannot always do whatever they please, but are fometimes awed from meafures by people who are flaves.

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to opposition and tumult; for they have been, and occasionally are the vices, nay sometimes the virtues of all nations. If sovereigns can want to know on whom their reliance is with most security to be placed, the Marquis of Halifax has told them, the laws are the only guards that with safety they can trust, or that legal power is of the only kind which without danger can be exercised. But with respect to men, Poland now shews, as Scotland heretofore did, that entire reliance is not to be made on the chiefs of numerous clans. So likewise has England shewn it ought not to rest upon opulent parties, because their great object will be to serve themselves and their creatures, alike at the expence of the sovereign and community: neither ought it to be placed

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placed on mercenary forces, whether natives or foreigners, as we read or have beheld of imperial Rome, Persia, Turkey, Barbary, Russia and many other states. But reason and observation might serve to convince them, that with the utmost security it can be placed on a well-governed people.

There have been endeavours used of late, to obtrude an opinion on the public mind, that war abroad would immediately and effectually restore union, and establish confidence at home. The supposition is, however, groundless, we experienced the contrary at the commencement of the late war. The people had no favourable opinion of the principles or abilities of the ministry: nor would they place any confidence in men who,
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from weakness, timidity or wickedness, had introduced foreign forces into the kingdom, to the kindling alike of public jealousy and indignation. But gross misconduct in other matters, soon made it necessary for them to quit their stations with precipitancy and in terror, to the full justification of public opinion: when a change of men, directed by the voice of the people, had no sooner taken place, than an entire change of measures made government extremely popular at home, and as respectable abroad. The foreign mercenaries were dismissed: and with our own national force we soon so humbled our enemies as to become a terror to the world. Had the treasury department been as ably superintended as the operations of war were directed and executed, that
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administration would have appeared the most shining one this kingdom ever had been blest with: but the unbounded plunders that were suffered proved equally mischievous and disgraceful. It would be vain then to hope, that mere war will produce union and confidence; for it could only the more distract us, without a popular administration. Far wiser would be our wishes, for such men and measures as might speedily put the kingdom in a condition for supporting a war. Our becoming too soon embroiled may perhaps involve us in such difficulties as would have a ruinous issue.

Lord Chatham's irreproachable character, with respect to speculation, acquired him great confidence: and his spirit, abilities
and

and *affiduity made him every where both respected and feared. He was so universally honoured throughout the whole British dominions, that entire harmony and confidence took place in support of government; the happy consequences of which were, great prosperity and glory. All orders of people willingly contributed their utmost to the support of the common cause: and at the same time so effectually sustained government with their fullest approbation, that the spirit of faction became entirely awed both within doors and without, infomuch that even the practice of bribery might

* He appeared the statesman of real business, avoiding even the parade of levees; which indeed are but assistant intercourses to the wicked policy of governing by faction.

have

have been discontinued with safety.

A like spirit of policy appearing in public measures, during times of peace, would produce similar good effects. The people, from experience, are become wise enough to despise factious administrations, and to abhor being governed by corruption, at their own severe expence, and to the injury of the kingdom. The baneful system has been already pursued beyond endurance: the circumstances of the state can no longer admit of its being practised. We must reform, or become ruined. Let any set of men but avow the design of reformation, and shew, by their measures, they act from right principles, and they need not apprehend any want of support for enabling

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enabling them effectually to baffle all influence and power that can be exerted to oppose them.

Machiavel's wise opinion was alike grounded on observation and experience, that, for their safety and welfare, "free states should frequently recur to original principles:" because stealing ill-practice, with time, will otherwise introduce such corruptions and abuses as must insensibly undermine such a constitution, and by degrees ruin the community; though both might be kept flourishing, nay made what may be called immortal, by timely applications for occasional renovation. Not long ago a noble Lord publicly and patriotically expressed his wishes, that the temper of the times would admit of such expedients

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pedients being practised. Let them however be tried: for matters have been brought to such a pass, that the important alternative is becoming evidently before us, of either reforming or being undone. Circumstances are now such, that this country can no longer be independent than while it continues free: nor will it be ever again prosperous, without removing such evils as are ruinous in their natures.

Corruptions, abuses and consequent dangers have not been uncommon in this kingdom, even from the ages most remote. No human institution can be framed to such perfection, as not to be liable to injury from a continuation of evil practice. There ever has been a difference of times in

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all countries: and in all times good and bad people. The respective degrees of them were what marked the characters of ages, principles and manners being no other than the modes of times. It is the duty, and indeed great end of instituting government, to make the people good and happy. The government that oppresses one part of a people, in order to corrupt the other, is dishonourable and dangerous, and acts destructively against the true ends of political society.

The English constitution has been frequently endangered, nay sometimes, in effect lost; as, in latter ages, was particularly the case under Henry the Eighth, Oliver Cromwell and James the Second: but the spirit of the people, assisted

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assisted by concurring lucky circumstances, soon recovered it again. So have there been times, likewise, in which the honour and interests of the kingdom have been made greatly to suffer: but wiser policy and better practice, often occasioned by necessity, have established them anew. The like will probably continue to happen so long as this country remains deserving of the regard of the people. But it can no sooner cease so to do than they will infallibly desert it; there being now another which will be ever ready to invite and give them welcome.

What a people become when they have suffered their constitutional rights to resolve into mere form, we read of nations now no more: and may behold of many that yet

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exist, but particularly one that is nearly neighbouring. The parliaments of France have given frequent proofs of such integrity and fortitude as do them great honour. Their manly struggles to resist wanton oppressions, and the various outrages of arbitrary power, are as glorious to themselves, as they are reproachful of the servile baseness of those ancestors who suffered the establishment of tyranny to take place. The miseries are there now grievously felt of such deplorable subjugation as it will ever be the highest virtue in Englishmen to dread, and their first of duties to resist, at the hazard of all other evils, whensoever attempted to be stolen or obtruded on them.

Subservient parliaments, an overbearing nobility, relaxed principles
among

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among the people, a self-seeking clergy, and, most of all, times made dissolute for that very purpose, effectually contributed to the enslaving of the French. But time and the wretchedness of their condition have since gradually opened their eyes. The wiser part of them soon saw and lamented their misfortunes, while fools and knaves were affecting to place all their pride in the glory of their tyrannical oppressor. Their parliaments since, in perils, nay with sufferings, have frequently, though ineffectually, opposed prerogative excesses. At length we have seen their peers, and even princes, become sensible of its abuses, and impotent assertors of their violated rights. But they have had the mortification to find their constitutional influence is become shadowy

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dowy and unavailable. * Punishment is seen to follow even the making of representations. They have no prospect of safety but from implicit obedience. Foreign troops awe them into acquiescence with all measures, however disgraceful to themselves, or injurious to their country. A minion, or mistress is suffered to govern, or plunder them uncontrouled. Their fetters, however galling they feel them, are rivetted too fast to be now shaken off. Every † effort they have hitherto

* There have lately been seen men so wickedly hardened in this kingdom, as to wish the same practice might be introduced here; nay, and who even strove to commence it.

† There has lately appeared, in the public papers, an arret of the French king's council of state, for annulling the resolution of the parliament of Bourdeaux, against the Duke

therto made for releasement has only served to expose their imbecility.

Duke d'Aiguillon, in which it is asserted,
 " That his majesty holds his crown of God
 " alone; that in his person alone the whole
 " administration of public power resides, and
 " that he is accountable for that administration to God only.—That his majesty is
 " sole legislator in his kingdom, independent
 " and undivided; that he alone has the right
 " of putting the ancient laws in execution,
 " of interpreting them, of abolishing them,
 " and of making new ones, whenever he
 " judges the good of the state requires it.—
 " That to him appertains the right of pardoning offences, and obliterating the very
 " memory of facts that gave room for the
 " proceedings, on which he has been pleased
 " to impose silence."

Without vouching for the authenticity of this publication, it may be considered of a piece with similar proceedings of the French government; for not many years ago, upon one of the parliaments representing to his present most Christian Majesty, that a certain procedure was contrary to his coronation-oath,

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cility. May their future attempts prove more fortunate: and may Englishmen ever take due warning by the oppressions and ignominies which they see them forced to suffer.

oath, he replied, he took that oath to God, and not to his people; though he took it before the assembled states of the kingdom, and in consequence of his doing it they swore fealty to him. What conscientious casuists are some kings, in support of such usurpations as Frenchmen deserve being slaves for enduring! The coronation oath of a French king is as strong, with regard to the preservation of public rights, as that of a king of England, and all the ceremonies used on that occasion are as expressive of reciprocal compact. But what signify oaths, or ceremonies, when one party can assume the power of explaining them in his own way, and contrary to all rational construction, as well as original practice, on authority derived only from oppressive military power?

Scandalous

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Scandalous should be deemed the plea which we too frequently hear urged, in excuse for the undeniable bad plight of our national affairs, that "those of our neighbours are in a still worse condition." It is such a kind of consolation as a debtor would receive, when in terror of a gaol, from being told of an acquaintance in danger of the gallows. From the guilt of their fathers, it is the great misfortune of Frenchmen to be in a condition that is helpless. From being a nation of slaves, they are excluded from public influence. But such is not yet the condition of Englishmen. As a free people, they have a right to expect, nay require, their public concerns, shall be so managed as, in the utmost degree, to be for their easement, prosperity

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ty and security. In failure of which, it is as much their right to interpose for the dismissal, controul, or even punishment of those public servants who shall dare so far to abuse their trusts, as to suffer them nationally to become injured, dishonoured or endangered. Mismanagements in other countries ought not to be admitted as apologies for any that are beheld in this.

It does not from their conduct appear, however, that our neighbours have much cause to think themselves, comparatively with us, in so humiliating a situation as is affected to be represented. France found the means to make a compromise for the ransom of her subjects who had been prisoners : and has since got possession of Corsica
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by arms, alike to our national injury and discredit. Spain likewise has hitherto evaded her payment of the Manilla ransom, and most deliberately proceeded to the dispossessing us of Port Egmont, if not to our * prejudice, at least much
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* The wisdom of our ever taking possession of Faulkland's Islands may very justly be questioned, as, from their immense distance, they can neither be fortified, garrisoned, or maintained but at a prodigious expence, and to very little purpose. They are so barren, and destitute of necessaries, from their turbulent situation for winds, that they never can be made comfortably habitable ; nor are they in a situation that is any way favourable for the prosecution of commerce. Even in times of war they can be of no kind of use but for watering ships on voyages that never will be made profitable. The coasts of the South-Seas can be no eligible scenes for naval operations. Lord Anson could do little more than rob a few hen-roosts on the Peruvian shores. Upon getting intelligence, in China, of the
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to our dishonour. Nay we have even beheld Portugal violate her treaties

course of the annual Acapulcoa-ship, he did indeed return, and luckily take her; owing, as may be supposed, to the Spaniards having known he had quitted those seas, and therefore thinking she might be sent with safety: which was a circumstance of fortune not likely to happen on any future occasion. Lord Anson and his officers, however, by that means made their fortunes; but perhaps to three times the amount in cost to their country, in ships, men, effects and expences; while the Spanish state was little injured, and the English far from benefited: all that was lost being on the part of Spanish subjects, and all that was gained to the advantage of English individuals, at a great charge to the nation. Such expeditions can never be thought wise in future times. Should we hereafter have designs of any kind on South America, there are shorter and far better courses to be taken. The Spanish trade directly to Lima is very little, and Cape Horn is to be passed with the utmost ease in December, the insurance on Spanish mercantile-navigation being

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treaties with us, alike to the partial advancement of her own interests and unjust prejudice of ours; with grossly favouring, at the same time, our natural rivals and her enemies, to our injury. Such facts should serve to convince us that our neighbours, from acting as they have done, are far from supposing their affairs to be in a worse condition than our own, but rather the contrary: therefore such unsatisfactory excuses and confident assertions should be so far from making us satisfied with the situa-

no more than eight per cent, in times of peace, from Lima to Cadiz. And as for Faulkland's Islands, they will always be to be watered at, without our being at the charge of fortifying, settling, maintaining and defending them. The project, therefore, of our taking possession of them may be considered as ridiculous, and not the effect of wisdom, but of ignorance.

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tion of our affairs, that we ought to consider and treat them as no other than insults offered to our understanding.

Whatever the real condition of our neighbours may be, it is certain their ideas of ours, in a comparative light, have emboldened them to act in a hostile manner against us. Circumstances sufficiently demonstrate, that the measures must have been as deliberately planned as they were regularly executed for dispossessing us of Faulkland's Islands: nor have we less cause to suppose the force which the French have, for some time past, been collecting at the island of Mauritius must be designed for a more important purpose than the making of settlements on the island of Madagascar; though
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even that would be a measure in which we ought to endeavour to circumvent them, for very obvious and solid reasons. As much may be said with regard to the late proceedings of Portugal, which have been uniformly injurious to us, in a variety of ways, and as partially favourable to the trade of our rivals. Therefore, should we again become involved in war, there can be no grounds for our expecting she will act otherwise than as a treacherous and mischievous ally, should she not dare to appear an open foe; agreeable, as may be conceived, to former practice. In all other parts of Europe we are without a friend, but whose assistance we must purchase on terms ruinous to comply with; while, in the mean time, we see discontent
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raging in England, Ireland and America, our affairs in a swift progress to disorder in India, our trade and population declining, from the insupportable burthens of our taxes and debts, and our national circumstances in so wretched a condition as to menace the want of resources in future.

Such a situation should be considered as so far from comparatively advantageous, that it ought immediately to animate us to our utmost exertions, in order, as much as possible, to become prepared for the worst, whatever the event may prove of our present dispute with Spain. It is, therefore, high time for government to seek for resources in the wisdom, not the follies; the virtues, not the vices of mankind.

mankind. * Strong genius, with unremitting application, disinterested virtue and inflexible integrity, are now all become indispensably requisite in those of trust or direction in our national concerns. Temporary shifts and expedients,

* The duke of Sully's representation of the state of the French finances, at the time of Henry the Fourth's accession to the throne, is remarkably striking. The far greater part of the revenues were consumed in collecting them. The courtiers indulged themselves in all kinds of luxury and vice, while the people were grievously oppressed, and the king so needy as often to go ragged, and almost without a dinner. But that very able statesman, with infinite labour to himself, soon restored things to such order, that, with all Henry's expensive frailties, the government would have soon had abundance, the people likewise would have been made prosperous, and the state very powerful, had not the king been assassinated by an enthusiast.

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the little arts of wicked and weak ministers, can no longer avail. The abilities and assiduity of a Sully, with all the virtues of a Sydney, in the leader of our public councils, will barely be sufficient for accomplishing the task that is now needful to be undertaken. The important alternative before us, is permanent greatness, or swift-approaching ruin.

Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat, is a sacred as well as philosophical aphorism, being alike the language of inspired prophets and enlightened sages: those foretelling it of divine interposition, for righteous vengeance; these, from the lights of reason and observation of the effects of causes, tracing it from the operations of nature, ever invariably directed by the

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the immutable laws of providence. Never yet did ruin overtake a people unwarned of their danger by one or the other of these venerable orders of men, as we discover by writers, profane as well as sacred. But blind and wilful † infatuation

† Ever since the wicked system of funding debts became introduced, there have not been wanting sagacious and good men to foretell the ruinous effects which the continuance of it must produce. But knaves had an interest in supporting the delusion, as fools thought they had in relying on it: so the latter have gone on embarking their fortunes on such a bottom as must bulge at last with their weight. Nay, that they had not yet done it, was the very reason exultingly assigned for continuing the practice.

In like manner the extending of corruption, however dangerous to liberty and burthensome to the community, has been tamely acquiesced in, as if for the good of the state, because useful to a minister, and profitable to his creatures; till pushed to such a de-

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fatuation rendered timely admonition fruitless. Neither one from the grave, nor from heaven, could prove successful in his warnings to a people who had devoted themselves to folly, sensuality and rapine: for where all social regards become readily sacrificed to individual gratification, and those who should serve and succour only seek to devour, the strong ligaments and ties of society become broken and dissolved; when division, distraction and annihilation must ensue: the modes of ruin may indeed vary, but the sure end will be the same.

gree, that the nation, as a late writer observed, has become in danger of the fate of Aetæon, in being devoured by its own dogs.

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Of all ancient nations, the most similar to ourselves were the Carthaginians, who were remarkable for agriculture, manufactories and commerce. They were a free people, had a balanced constitution, were civilized by foreign intercourse, expert in navigation, and had great military skill. Their extensive territories in Africa, and colonies in Europe, together with their commerce, made them abundantly wealthy. This by degrees gave an over-proportionate influence to some particular families and connections, which at length produced such powerful factions as, in the end, proved the ruin of the state. The most distinguished of these were the Barchinian and Hannonian, whose rival ambition and enmity first unhinged the con-

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stitution, and then brought destruction on their country.

Had not Hanno and his partizans, out of hatred to Hannibal, who was of the Barcan, or ancient royal line, obstructed his measures during the second punic war, particularly in preventing the succours being sent to him which the senate had voted after the battle of Cannæ, the Roman commonwealth would probably have been quite subdued, and the Carthaginians, after their conquest of Italy, become masters of the world. But by that fatal act of factious treachery fortune was made to change sides. The Carthaginian army became gradually diminished, disheartened, distressed and unsuccessful. Hannibal, from being victorious, saw himself necessitated to act defensively

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defensively, and at length was compelled to quit Italy. Not long after which event, his country became constrained to submit to a humiliating and dishonourable peace.

At the commencement of the third punic war, the Carthaginians were sovereigns of seven hundred cities in Africa, in possession of the greater part of Sicily, of Sardinia, all the islands to the west-ward, and the whole coast of Spain, as far as Cadiz. Most of the commerce of the world was likewise in their hands. They had an immense army in their pay, and a very powerful navy. Yet within the short space of three years their whole empire became lost, and their city rased to its foundations: so that, of all its numerous

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merous and opulent inhabitants, the few who escaped slaughter became entirely scattered, no longer continuing even with the name of a people.

The interval between the battle of Cannæ and the destruction of Carthage was fifty seven years. At the former part of which period faction prevented her becoming mistress of the world: and at the conclusion of it, was the cause of her compleat annihilation.

Such proved the fatal effects of factious influence in Carthage, derived from the over-proportional wealth, and consequent weight of particular families and their connections. A melancholy instance of such a reverse of fortune as should deeply impress the minds of

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of every free and great people. In proportion to the increase of factious influence in Carthage, the popular weight, as well as the authority of the *suffetes, became gradually diminished; infomuch, that, at last, the very office of chief magistrate grew entirely out of use, so that, in fact, the constitution was dissolved: upon which rival factions, in their turns, assumed absolute rule, and by their struggles for obtaining it not unfrequently produced anarchy.

The sudden and dreadful fate of the Carthaginians may, by many, be thought not likely to become ours, who will urge the policy of Europe must be our security against it. The ancients how-

* Two magistrates who were annually elected. Their office nearly resembled that of the Roman consuls.

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ever, as we very well know, had their balancing systems, which did not always prove effectual, as likewise has happened in more modern times. It is sufficiently obvious the balance of Europe is greatly chimerical, having always been variable, and is likely soon much to alter. The policy of most governments, as we may plainly see, is equally selfish and short-sighted: rarely extending beyond a temporary object. A wounded state, like a wounded porpoise, is always in danger of being torn in pieces by its fellows. This Turkey at present is likely to experience: and from various causes, the same may as well happen to any other state of Europe. It did formerly happen to Burgundy, for a time, to Sweden and Portugal, though the two latter recovered their independency:

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cy: and even in our days it had nearly happened to the imperial house of Austria. But there are now no dominions more likely than those of Britain to become dismembered, should an unsuccessful war, internal distractions and a perseverance in ill policy at once furnish motives and opportunities for effecting it. Our future security must depend chiefly on our national, or public circumstances: and what they are at present we sufficiently feel, in our burthens from debts and taxes. Our resources in commerce and money, as the reader has been shewn, are but scanty and precarious. Indeed all men appear ready enough to own the state is near beggary, while they are loud in asserting individuals are wealthy. Much, however, of that private wealth

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wealth consists of the debts which make the state poor to a debilitating degree. Were indeed right applications fully made of such means as we already have, and might speedily acquire, no doubt could be rationally entertained of our becoming, and continuing a prosperous and powerful nation. But such at present is not the case: our political eyes are directed a quite contrary way. Means are continually seeking out for gratifying those who could of themselves be wealthy individuals, at the expence of a poor community; instead of contriving to draw from individual super-abundance what is absolutely necessary for general relief. The respective orders of people who prey incessantly on the body-politic, have been not unaptly compared, by witty men, to the
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several species of vermin that prey on the human body: and they have so long been continually increasing, that their generating much farther must leave them at last without any body at all to prey upon. Hence will arise the evils that in conjunction with ill policy and the wanton abuses of increased power, must be likely to hasten on our ruin: which, though in a different manner, may prove as effectual as that of Carthage, in a variety of modes, and not improbably ending at last even with invasion, and the loss of independency. However, from the ashes of this, a phoenix state may arise that will end but with time, deriving from peculiar natural advantages an earthly immortality. There our language and laws, nay our very names may survive; while
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splendid ruins, the melancholy monuments of past greatness, will probably, in this island, be all the remains of a once powerful state, become no more.

F I N I S.