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L E T T E R S

CONCERNING THE  
TRADE and MANUFACTURES  
OF  
S C O T L A N D;

Particularly the WOOLLEN and LINEN MANUFACTURES.

Humbly submitted to the Consideration of the Honourable Convention  
of the ROYAL BOROUGHS of SCOTLAND.

SECOND EDITION:

With LARGE ADDITIONS.

BY DAVID LOCH, MERCHANT.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by all the BOOKSELLERS in  
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[Price One Shilling.]

To His Excellency,

GENERAL JOHN SCOTT,

Member of Parliament for the County of Fife ;

The following LETTERS

Are most respectfully inscribed,

In testimony of the greatest regard to the

Ancient Family of SCOTSTARVET,

To his own approved Character in Public

As well as in Private Life,

And, as a small mark of the inviolable attachment

Entertained to him, even from infancy,

By his most obedient,

Most obliged,

And most devoted Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

To the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh, and to all the other Honourable Members of the Convention of the ROYAL BOROUGHS of SCOTLAND.

My LORD, and GENTLEMEN,

HAVING been early initiated in trade, and having persevered in business many years in different quarters of the globe, I thought it my duty to render my experience, in some degree, useful to my country.

The true sources of the wealth of a country are its staple commodities. By these I mean goods which can be manufactured, and brought to market, with little or no assistance of materials, from foreign countries. Prejudice, politics, and other causes, have induced many to believe, that Linen is the staple of Scotland. The reasons of my being of a different opinion, are exhibited in the following letters. The sentiments which they contain, I have uniformly expressed, during more than twenty years, and sometimes in the Convention of the Royal Boroughs ; but there never was a more favourable opportunity of publishing them to the world than the present. If they shall have the good fortune to meet with your approbation, and if they shall have any tendency to promote the good of my country, my most sanguine wishes will be accomplished.

If there shall be any objections started, either to the matter or to the manner of my letters, I shall be happy to answer them personally. To the former I shall produce facts ; to the latter, I can only say, that I profess to write merely as a man of business, and not as a scholar. I have the honour to be,

My Lord, and Gentlemen,

Your most humble and

Most obedient servant,

DAVID LOCH.

# L E T T E R S

CONCERNING THE

TRADE AND MANUFACTURES

OF

S C O T L A N D.



LETTER I.

To the PRINTER, &c.

SIR,

Leith, March 18. 1774.

AT a time when parliament is busied in finding out proper means for the relief of the Linen Manufactures, it may, perhaps, be thought presumption in me to doubt how far any encouragement at all ought to be afforded to what we have long been taught to consider as the great staple of this country. Facts, however, are stubborn arguments. They have convinced me, that the Linen Manufacture ought to be so far from being considered as beneficial, that it is the very reverse; and, by employing so many hands, which might have been much more advantageously used in the Woollen trade, has been one great cause of the impending ruin which threatens so many of our labouring people. That I may not be thought to speak without proper evidence, I must beg the favour of you to publish the following state of facts.

Yours, &c. D. L.

FACTS relating to the WOOLLEN and LINEN MANUFACTURES.

THAT Wool is the staple of Great Britain, from the Land's-end of England to the most northern islands of Zetland, will be evident to any person who will give the least attention to the matter. I will not  
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even except the most western islands of the Lewes, and the other islands and main lands of the Highlands of Scotland. In short, it will be found, that Scotland, in every part, has Wool sufficient to employ all the labouring part of men and women, from the age of seven to extreme old age, for the good of the country and of themselves. Indeed, God and nature seem to have ordained this country for the Woollen Manufacture, and denied the Linen; and I am clearly of opinion, that the more Linen we make, the more we lose; for, notwithstanding all the endeavours of the British Linen Company, and all the bounties given by the Trustees, the weavers, spinners, and all employed in that branch, are ruined, and in real want, from the highest persons employed to the lowest.

The reverse is seen in every town in Great Britain, where Wool is made their staple. Let any man look at the people at Leeds, Wakefield, and every place where the soil and climate help them to that invaluable article *Wool*, he will see them going to Church well fed, and well clad, and peace and plenty in their countenances; whereas, in the Linen counties and towns, nothing is to be seen but misery and want, famine and nakedness.

I now set forth what I have learned from experience in my first trade; (I wish it had always been carried on in that manner). I did not need money. The honest Woollen merchant trusted me some pieces of coarse Scots made Woollen cloth, from 4s. to 10s. *per* yard, and some dozens pairs of stockings, from 20d. to 4s. *per* pair: These goods I bartered at Hamburgh for goods that found ready sale and good profit here, the hose particularly; for the stockings that cost me 20d. *per* pair, I got one yard of linen, valued there at 30 shivers. I sold that in Edinburgh at 3s. *per* yard, and a great pennyworth it was. All my hose went off in that proportion for several voyages, till I gave up going to sea, and could not get a proper person to attend it. I wish I had never dealt in any other branch, and continued going over to Hamburgh myself; in which case it is hard to say what profit might have been made. I have shirts by me, that have been in common course of my wearing these 25 years past, which cost me a pair of stockings *per* yard, valued 22 d. at Leith: Any man of business might wear them: They are now worn as thin as a cobweb. I have Scots linen that I bought seven years since, which cost 5s. 3d. but is now all to pieces, though no oftner worn than in the ordinary course with my old Hamburghers.

All the stockings that can be made in Scotland, after supplying ourselves, may be sold to good account in the Seven Provinces of Holland; and Campvere is a free port for this valuable staple of Scotland. They will likewise find a ready market in Bremen, Hamburgh, Lubeck, and Dantzick,

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Dantzick, all of which are free ports, and supply the greatest part of Europe with these goods. I am told by a gentleman from England, who has been regularly bred in that branch, that the Wool in this country is as fit for making stockings, coarse and fine, as any Wool he ever wrought in England, or got from any other place.

One thing I well know, that the sensible honest Zetlanders make great quantities of coarse stockings for the Hamburgh market, and get good returns for them; and I have had stockings from Wool of that country so fine as to be worth 10s. 6d. *per* pair. No silk was finer; and they lasted longer with me than any four pair of silk or worsted stockings I ever wore.

Besides, if we will but turn our thoughts to the Woollen trade, we will get both money and linen far better and cheaper than possibly we can make it. Does any man of sense think the Germans will give us such flax as they manufacture themselves? No: The flax that is made use of in Silesia is of a far superior quality to any I ever saw brought home here. As to the thing you call *Flax*, of the growth of this country, it will not bear the name to any person that has been in a country where flax grows. The soil, the climate, the want of constant weather, all are against us. No lint we grow will dress half the length the foreign flax will: And to all these bars of nature, every article you have to import for this hopeful trade (the flax only excepted) is burdened with 25 *per cent.* of the value to the public revenue, besides heavy freight and insurance; and the flax is often rotten before it comes to hand. Many a tun I have seen spoiled before shipped; and, when the ships have long passages, it heats in the ship and rots, and the damage by sea is very considerable. I have known a little water in the ship below heat the whole cargo; so that all of it has suffered in point of strength, in a lesser or greater degree, as it was nigh the part affected.

The Wool is free from all these risks, and is our own growth; and, if we take some from England, you have it not so far to carry it by land as many of the English manufacturers have from one part of England to another. Add to all these advantages, that every article wanted from abroad for the woollen manufacture, is duty-free, (and most just it should,) from the valuable article of cochineal to the lowest priced matters; and all drugs for dyers uses are also free. Whereas all articles imported for linen, as aforesaid, at a medium, pay 25 *per cent.* to the public, viz. pot-ashes, pearl-ashes, wood-ashes, soap, &c.; and besides the excise the soap pays, it is made from the pot and pearl-ashes that have already paid the customs; so that, what with freight, officers fees, and charges, the ashes will be loaded in all with about 40 *per cent.* more than our neighbours

bours upon the Continent pay. Even on the rough materials, viz. the flax, we pay 18 per cent. more than they; for what with freight, insurance, officers fees, shore-dues, and the quantity lost at a medium on all that is imported, there will not be less than 18 per cent. charges on the whole; nor is our water so fit for whitening linen as the water on the Continent.

Let any man consider what is set forth, and chuse which of these branches is best for his country, his family, and friends. Make proper use of your Wool: It will bring you linen, wine, corn, and all necessaries; gold and silver to the bargain. You will have a balance against all Europe, if you mind your Wool and Fish.

This is from a trader that sincerely wishes well to his country, and has risked many hundred thousand pounds in trade. Were he to begin again, woollen goods should be his only branch; nor would he doubt of selling 50,000l. sterling worth a-year at the markets he has mentioned, where he has been often personally, and sold woollen goods, in every one of them, to good account.

I am not afraid nor ashamed to put my name to this, as I am fully satisfied I can answer for every thing I have said on the subject. I know the ill success of the manufacture at Haddington, where I had two shares, will meet me, and perhaps some others. I do not chuse to make any reflections on the management of that company; but I may venture to affirm, that there never was, in my time, a fair and proper trial made on this great object.

The Aberdeen people have done well with their stockings; may they long continue to succeed! And my late friend A——— S——— of Musselburgh made excellent goods, and brought up a large family, on a very small stock in the woollen trade. Several private people have done the same; but none of them have had sufficient stock to carry it on as it should be done. Perhaps the politicians in this country found the linen trade would suit their purpose better, and please the English, who are jealous of a rival in that most valuable branch. Much, much might be said to support what is here set forth; but I hope this is sufficient to convince the unprejudiced.

D. LOCH.

LETTER II.

Leith, March 21. 1774.

I MUST beg leave to give you more trouble on the subject of the Woollen Trade: I am told there may be at present three millions of sheep in Scotland, and that, without encroaching upon a single acre of corn-

corn lands, there is mountainous ground in this country to feed ten millions; which the farmers no doubt would attempt, if there was sale for the wool. This number could be raised, by sparing the ewe lambs for a few seasons. And will not this be a great means of lowering the price of provisions? I should think, in this event, that mutton would sell at half the present price, and the store-farmers be no losers, as the wool will fully make up for the difference of the price. And if we suppose good mutton to be sold at 1d. halfpenny, or 2d. per pound, the industrious poor might live both well and cheap, on wholesome good food, without consuming much corn; for the mutton, with potatoes boiled or roasted, would make a good meal, though no bread were in the family. Upon the whole, I consider our wool to be of more value, if properly used, than all the gold and silver in Peru and Mexico. Let it only be tried; the good effects will soon be found among all ranks in this country.

D. LOCH.

LETTER III.

Leith, April 10. 1774.

IT was not my intention to answer any letters that were not signed; but as the letter, signed A Manufacturer, (Caledonian Mercury, April 4.), requires particulars as to the charge in importing flax and ashes from the ports where most is shipped, and the charges of landing the same in this country, (for indeed it is not his province to understand that,) I will satisfy this letter-writer, and the public, with the articles of charge, which are,

	<i>per cent.</i>
For a cargo of flax, shipped at St Peterburgh, Riga, or any other port in the Baltic, commission 2 per cent. port-charges, shipping charges, and Sound dues, 2 1-half per cent.	4½
Insurance, at a medium, through the season, 3 1-half per cent. freight to Leith 1 1-half per cent.	5
Loss, by dry damage at a medium, and short useles flax, packed so that it cannot be discovered,	5
Sea-damage that the under-writers are not liable to pay; for they don't pay under 5,	3½
B	18
	carried over

brought forward	per cent	18
Shore dues at Leith, portorage, custom-house charges, 1-half per cent. ware-house rent, and weigh-house dues, 1-4th per cent.		0 $\frac{1}{4}$
In all,		18 $\frac{1}{4}$

*Charges on a cargo of Pearl and Pot Ashes.*

Commiffion 2 per cent. port-charges, shipping, and Sound dues, 2 1-half per cent.	per cent.	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Infurance, at a medium, 3 1-half per cent. freight to Leith, 2 per cent.		5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Loss by sea-damage, which the under-writers do not pay,		4
Duties,		25
Portorage, cartage, shore-dues, cooperage, custom-house fees, weigh-house, &c.		1 $\frac{1}{4}$
In all,		40 $\frac{1}{4}$

The same charges attend wed and wood ashes; only they are not so liable to damage at sea, nor are the duties near so high as on the pot and pearl ashes; but it equally affects the value, as they are much cheaper in price. The flax from Holland is not loaded with such high charges and freight as from the Baltic; but even from Holland it will be equal to six or seven per cent. This is but a small part of the trade; for the bulk of flax used in Scotland is imported from the Baltic.

*The charges on Flax from Holland are,*

Commiffion 2 per cent. shipping charges and port-charges, 1 1-half per cent.	per cent.	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Infurance through the season 1 1-4th per cent. freight to Leith 1-4th per cent.		1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Loss that the under-writers do not pay, 1 per cent, portorage, cartage, shore-dues, 1-4th per cent. custom-house fees, and petty charges, 1-8th per cent.		1 $\frac{3}{8}$
In all		6 $\frac{3}{8}$

The *Manufacturer* could not have applied to a better hand to be instructed as to the charge of goods from abroad, than D. Loch, who was for some time a shipmaster, and many years a merchant and under-writer: Many thousand pounds has he paid for duties, freight, port-charges,

charges, Sound dues, &c. on the articles before-mentioned; and likewise paid losses as an under-writer, and received premiums on many ships from the Baltic and Holland.

He never meant, by what he has said in favour of the Woollen Manufacture, that the Linen trade should be given up altogether immediately, or even at any time hereafter, totally abandoned. Let us continue to make for home consumpt, but never think of being able to supply the English, or foreign markets, or to make it our staple, particularly the fine white Linen article, which is a most ridiculous idea; but, at the same time, continue to encourage the manufactures in Fife, Perth, and Angus shires, in making their thin low-priced Linens, which are generally made from flax the growth of these counties, and have a long established and ready sale at London, and other foreign markets.

D. LOCH.

## LETTER IV.

*Leith, April 19. 1774.*

I HAD almost resolved not to answer any letter that was not signed with the name of the person who wrote it; but the writer of the letter signed A. N. (*Weekly Magazine*, vol. xxiv. p. 65.), seems to point more at me than to support his own trade as a Linen-manufacturer. Indeed he does not write in the stile of a merchant or tradesman, but seems to have taken aid from some gentleman of the law. Be that as it may, I am ready to meet him on the ground I have taken up, and perhaps may convince him that every word I have set forth is for his own good; and the good of his country. My reputation as a merchant is well known. My thoughts as to the Woollen and Linen trade are not of yesterday. I was for several years a member of the Royal Boroughs in their annual convention. I always spoke my mind as to the trade that I was satisfied was for the benefit of this country, which I was convinced was the Woollen. I have heard many *Don Quixotte* schemes at these meetings about the Linen staple. I am very sorry that what I foretold concerning it has come to pass.

The British Linen Company made the greatest trial, and with the best appearance of success. That company had the greatest support of any branch that has been attempted in this country. The directors were the most sensible, knowing gentlemen in the country; their servants honest, and some of them very clever (witness Mr W. T—d): Yet all would not do.

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do. I had the honour to be acquainted with some of the gentlemen that were in the direction some years ago. I have furnished the company with ships for several seasons to bring home their flax. My poor opinion has been asked by some of the gentlemen largely concerned. I always was explicit, that the trade could not support itself. I gave my reasons in a former letter. Part of the stock came to sell the other day by public sale. Fifteen hundred pounds sterling stock of the British Linen Company, I am told, sold only for L. 442 : 10s.

Had the fourth part of the money and attention been applied to the Woollen manufacture in this country, in place of the Linen, I am clearly of opinion we would have been the most thriving people in Europe; and I hope it is not too late to begin: For I am well informed, by a person versant in the Woollen trade, that our spinners of flax, with very little pains, would soon come to be good spinners of Wool, and the weavers in like manner.

As to Mr A. N.'s want of Wool; get the money that has been laid out in forcing flax these many years past, and you will find Wool in plenty. "No country can do good (says the great Baron de Montesquieu, and the writer of the Farmers Letters) that has the rough materials to pay for to foreigners." That we are to manufacture the cash paid abroad for flax, is inconceivable.

As to what Mr A. N. says about writing for show, he is much mistaken. I do it from a feeling for the poor, and the prosperity of my country. With respect to his parade and show of learning about the wearing of some shirts, I had always as many shirts, without cambric, or lawn, or such trumpery about them, as served me the year round, washing only five or six times in the year. Linen that will not stand thirty-five times, being wore but one day, is but poor stuff.—As to the liberties this said Mr. A. N. takes with D. L. he might have spared them, as he must know little of him to write in the manner he does.

D. LOCH.

P. S. Among many others, one great advantage the Woollen goods have preferably to the Linen, is the quick return; for, after all Mr A. N.'s fracas and apparatus for preparing his ground to sow his flax-seed, and his great pains in dressing his flax, when will he bring his Linen to market, and turn it into cash? Not in less than eighteen months; whereas you may have the Wool off your sheep's backs to-day, and in eighteen days have your stockings at market, and part of your cloth in six weeks; and thus money in your pockets. This is a material advantage in every trade, but more so to the manufacturers of this country, who have

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have but small stocks; for it consists with my knowledge, and I dare say with Mr A. N.'s experience, that the Linen manufacturers have been often obliged to send their goods to London, on purpose to raise money after all their long outly; and he must know they pay dear for that money, which has ruined many a good man in the end.

D. L.

## L E T T E R V.

Leith, June 1. 1774.

I HAVE now given the public my thoughts on the trade and manufactures of this country; the great staple of which I have shewed to be Wool: The more I consider it, the more I am convinced of its truth. We complain for want of money; no wonder! Let every Scot-man wear cloth manufactured in Scotland, and drink home-brewed malt liquors. This will save to the country, upon these two last articles alone, at least 200,000l. sterling *per annum*. The well known proverb, is a most just one, *a penny saved is a penny gained*, and is the most sure way of getting money, and keeping it at home.

The quantity of broad cloth that comes from our industrious neighbours yearly is astonishing. I lately saw a comparison made between cloth of the English fabric, and some made at Musselburgh by Mr Hyflop, both of the same prices and colours. None of the company could distinguish which was of this or that country; but they unanimously pitched upon the Musselburgh cloth, as being the best goods for the money. I am by no means for stopping an intercourse of trade with England: God forbid! For of all the people I ever dealt with, the English are by far the best. They are an open, friendly, honest, warm-hearted people, and trade with ease and honour in all their dealings, far preferable to the Hollanders, whom a late anonymous writer thought proper to mention as a pattern for trade, &c. The English take from us good commodities, and pay us well for our black cattle and wool, which feeds and clothes them; and much of that wool they return us, in manufactured goods, to clothe ourselves.

The other article I point at is London Porter. It is a shame and disgrace to the people of this country to use so much of it. At a medium, for several years past, the quantity brought into the port of Leith, and the other ports of the Frith of Forth, exceeds L. 50,000 sterling *per annum*. And I imagine Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, Inverness, and all the

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the other ports of Scotland, may be about L. 40,000 more; a pretty sum truly to be paying for an article we can so well want! What came of our fathers, not to say forefathers, who never tasted it, nor thought of it? Good strong ale and two-penny pleased them; and they were as merry and good company over it as we over porter. Besides, it is a very expensive drink. People but of low circumstances will whip off their two or three bottles at a few draughts. I have seen the bill at drinking porter run higher than a claret bill some years ago. I will not venture to say, that we have yet arrived at such a degree of perfection in brewing it as they have in London; but I have, for some time past, been supplied from a person with Porter made by Mr Gardiner, a little south of Edinburgh, which pleases me well; and I have had several porter drinkers take part with me at my house, who agreed that the porter was good, though not old enough; but they never found out that it was Scots manufacture. It is really amazing what aversion we have to every thing made in our own country. Better ale, small beer, and two-penny I never drank in all the countries I have been in, than in this. And why we cannot be pleased with these, and such porter as we can make among ourselves, is unpardonable. I am afraid we deserve in part what Mr Glover lately said of us, that we had every sense but common sense; for I do think, that a Scotsman that will not wear good cloth, because it is made here, and refuses to drink good porter, because brewed in or about Edinburgh, in a great measure verifies that gentleman's assertion, and may justly be said to have no regard whatever for his country. I could say much more on this subject; but I hope I have said sufficient to induce some abler hand to take up his pen for the welfare and prosperity of Scotland, which I most solemnly declare was my only motive for writing this, and my former letters.

D. LOCH.

## L E T T E R VI.

*Leith, June 4. 1774.*

I SHOULD not have troubled the public with an answer to Scotiae Amicus's letter [Weekly Magazine, P. 229.]; but as he does not so much as enter into the state of the Woollen or Linen trade, but goes on with the spirit of declamation, a few hints may not be improper for his perusal. It is extremely surprising, that none of those writers will put their names to their papers, as I do; nor will they meet with me to converse

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verse on the subject: If they would but come and have a fair state of facts laid down, I have not the least doubt but I could convince all these writers, and every Scotsman, from the first gentleman at the board of Trustees, to the lowest Linen Manufacturer, that my plan is for the good of my country. My real reason for answering Mr Amicus's letter is this: He takes upon him to say, that I was soon tired of one branch of business; and draws a comparison betwixt me and a Dutch merchant. He should have first gone to the custom-house books in Leith, before he had ventured his hearsay-story; and there he would have seen that I pursued one branch of trade for twenty years together, viz. the Hamburg trade. As to the Greenland trade, which he is pleased to mention, I was amongst the first that promoted it. I was one of the first named as a manager of the Edinburgh whale-fishing company, and among the first who subscribed to the stock; and I stand possessed of more of that stock to this day than any one partner of that company. Besides, with a few other merchants in Edinburgh, I fitted out two other ships for the Greenland trade, viz. the Prince and Princess of Wales, and continued the trade several years; and after this I bought two ships of the Edinburgh whale-fishing company, on my own proper account, in which some gentlemen joined me, and took one half concern; but I held the other half of both ships, and all the materials and stores, which, I believe, was risking more in that trade than has been done by any man in Scotland; and I continued this till one of the ships, the *Edinburgh*, was lost in the ice. I still continued the ship *Leith* for eleven years, with very bad success. How does this answer our friend Amicus and his Hollanders? I will venture to say, there are very few in this country who were in trade more steady to this plan than I was, or trusted more to your slip of paper dealers, and linen manufacturers, by whom I have lost a large sum of money. If these and others would pay what they are justly owing, I would have ten times the fortune and stock that I began trade with. Many hundreds of pounds are due me for flax, flaxseed, pearl, weed, and wood ashes, all imported to support the Linen Manufacture. But what is all this to the point! Had my fortune any connection with Amicus's scheme?—He likewise is pleased to mention Mr Glover. I have not the honour to be acquainted with that gentleman, but I wish we had a few such merchants in this country; for what I have been well informed of is, that he understands trade and manufactures the best of any man in Britain, perhaps in Europe, and that he is by no means an enemy to Scotland or Scotsmen; on the contrary, he has done essential service to them on several occasions: Part of what he mentioned in his late speech, I am sorry to say, is too true. What Amicus



cus says as to the flax standing the wind, let him step out to a field, when the flax is full in seed, after a gale of wind, and the flax will tell him the consequence. As to his waters, I have been on the Continent in many places, and know from experience what I advance. With regard to the gentleman's scheme of taking off the duty on ashes, &c. he owes that to me: I have pointed out that strongly to Mr Amicus; and twenty years ago I got one of the ablest men in this country (Mr Oswald of Dunnikier) to try administration to take off the duties on all the materials imported for the linen manufacture, and likewise the duty on hemp. And Mr Amicus must likewise know, that I was a great promoter of the linen trade in one branch, the sail-cloth and Osnaburg business, carried on at Leith, under the firm of, The Edinburgh Roperie and Sail-cloth Company: And I will further say, I was as active, and did as much to encourage it, as any one partner; and I have to this day a very high esteem for the gentlemen in that company, and wish them all success. But believe me, Mr Amicus, if the duties were taken off hemp, it would be of more advantage than all the others. You ought to make your own coarse linens; bring in as few materials from abroad to manufacture at home as possible; mind your wool, your fish, your black cattle, your mines and minerals; these are good home materials, which can employ all your heads and hands.—These are the sentiments of one who wishes his country and its trade as well as all your anonymous correspondents; and I shall be ever ready to contribute to it, to the utmost of my power. As I formerly said, I am not afraid nor ashamed to sign my name to what I write.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R VII.

Leith, June 12. 1774.

I TOOK notice, in my first letter, that this is not a country for the growth of flax, neither is any island that I know. The weather is too changeable, and the snow never lies so as to keep the frost out of the ground; whereas, in the eastern countries of Europe, where the best flax grows, the frost never touched the ground since the creation, nor ever will; for about the middle of October the snow falls, perhaps from two to three feet thick, often more. Immediately the frost sets in, and freezes the snow so firm, that carriages go over it the whole winter, without breaking the crust.

To-

Towards the middle of March, the heat of the sun dissolves the snow, when vegetation commences more rapidly than any can imagine who have not seen it. The ground is like a hot-bed, and being so manured by the snow, the flax-seed and barley sown in these grounds will be ready to reap in seven or eight weeks from the sowing; and it often happens that no rain falls all the time the flax is growing; yet there is no need of the ground being much moistened, as the plant covers the ground in so short a time, as to screen the earth from the great heat and drought. Indeed it sometimes happens, that not a cloud is to be seen for many weeks together in these climates, but constant sun-shine, and fine pleasant summer weather, that are not to be met with in lands lying in the middle of the ocean. And yet I think we are much better situated, notwithstanding our changeable weather, as we have a country so proper for breeding sheep that produce good Wooll, which article these flax-climates have not.

And as we are so well situated for trade and commerce, to make use of our Wooll to the best advantage, it is my opinion, after long experience, that every country, which nature has provided with materials within itself, should prefer manufacturing these to all others which they may purchase from their neighbours, such as those wanted for the Linen Manufacture.

At the same time, I am not for those who have been bred to, and are engaged in the Linen trade, to give it up all at once; but to get out of it slowly, and apply more to the Woollen branch. I think we should make no more Linens than are necessary to serve ourselves; and we ought not to think to serve England with that article, especially in all its branches, as there are several articles, particularly the fine Linen made in Scotland, by which the manufacturer cannot make daily bread by selling them in England. And to imagine to make Linens that would bear a proper profit by exportation to any country abroad, or to our plantations, is an absurd idea, while Germany and other eastern countries remain; for they are, and will probably ever be, able to undersell us, both as to price and quality, 30 per cent. Can we suppose the Americans or West-Indians will purchase from us, when they can be supplied with German Linens at the Dutch and Danish free-ports in the West-Indies, upon much better terms? No restriction that can be laid on trade by our laws will prevent them, and indeed the temptation is too great to be withstood.

As a further argument, to show that flax is not a plant of this country, it to be observed, that you cannot sow the seed raised by your own growth of this year, to hope for any crop that will pay your labourers for the next: And if you continue it three years, though you change the place of the

D. country

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country any where within Scotland, it will scarce come above the ground; which is demonstration that it is no plant of ours. Thus we have every year a large sum to pay to the Dutch and Ruffians, even for the seed to raise such poor flax. The money (and it is all cash) that has gone out of this country in my time to pay flax, and flax-seed, to Holland and Ruffia, is immense; it is almost beyond all credibility. I nearly know the sum that has been remitted, for these twenty years past, to Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Hamburgh, for this article; but I do not chuse to mention it, for it would be thought incredible; besides what is paid for pot, pearl, weed and wood-ashes, &c.

Upon the whole, this trade has carried more money out of Scotland than all our foreign trade put together has done in my time; for the French and Spaniards take our goods, the Ruffians take none; and this trade has likewise been the great cause of the scarcity of cash, and of the London and Dutch exchange being so much against us. As there have been less of these articles imported within these two years, the exchange has been much more moderate.

Let private people raise such flax as the country will grow, and manufacture it for their own use, and the use of Scotland, and let them pay their flax-seed abroad. Hemp we must pay for; but to import flax is against this country, unless you pay it with Woollen goods.

I know you will think the Paisley branch worth attending to; I believe it; for it requires but little flax to carry it on; and I am told our short flax answers the purpose. It is proper to encourage that manufacture; but then it cannot be extended any great length. Every branch that requires little money to be paid abroad is valuable to this country; and if we could pay all with Woollen goods, import as much as you please of necessaries and luxuries. Among many advantages that the Wool has preferable to the Linen, the quick return, as mentioned in one of my letters, is a great one; then the store-master is able to give nine months credit, as he has twelve months to pay his rent after his Wool is shorn; and all this paid in our own country: Whereas, you must pay the flax with cash to foreigners, and before you see it. Providence is extremely kind as to the time the sheep cast their fleece, being midsummer, at a time when there is the least to do in our corn-fields, and the days long to carry on the work with speed. The poor sheep need no more attendance till your harvest is over, to smear them to stand the winter. I am told much might be done in the smearing to better the Wool, and equally to protect the sheep.

D. LOCH.

LETTER

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LETTER VIII.

*Leith, June 20. 1774.*

IT will perhaps be thought presumptuous to take upon me to write upon a subject that so many learned and able men have had before them; but as I have the good of my country, and all mankind at heart, I will venture to throw out what occurs to me on trade, commerce, and manufactures.

I have already enlarged upon the Woollen Manufacture; and it is most certainly the great staple of Scotland. The Fisheries are the next; and the black cattle is a solid valuable article. This last branch has been pretty well attended to; the other two have been much neglected. Government has given great encouragement to our herring and whale-fishing. Something more should be done for the cod and white fishing: And the herring fishing, I think, without any more bounty, might be put on a much better footing than it is at present. I should wish to have a meeting with eight or ten of the ship-masters, who have been employed in that trade for these five years past: Something might be pointed out of real use to that valuable business, which so much contributes to employ honest hardy seamen, and to reduce the price of provisions, which the legislature has been extremely attentive to, and has done much good by the well concerted corn-bill and others.

The increase of sheep would be a great help. And would it not be proper to give the public money, that is allotted to be distributed as premiums by the trustees in this country, to the farmers that shall raise the greatest number of sheep, and bring to market the greatest quantity of good merchantable Wool? and to lessen the premiums as the number falls short, and to give such encouragement to the cloth and stocking manufactures as the parliament should think fit? The money would be much better bestowed than in forcing a trade that nature has often forbidden, and which never can in this country support itself.

As you increase your sheep, you will always have abundance of good mutton; this will greatly tend to keep down the price of all vivres. I should think, that to lessen your number of horses and dogs would be a help to lower the price of provisions. What would you think of a tax of five shillings upon each, without any exception, or such sum as the wisdom of parliament should think fit (not less than 5s. *per annum*?) Would not this tend to introduce the labouring of lands more frequently with oxen, and raise more of these valuable animals, and to destroy many useless dogs, who devour the innocent sheep and lambs? In this place,

place, where I live, there is scarce a carter, porter, failor, foldier, or fish-wife, but must have their dogs, some two or three, who destroy a deal of provisions, and besides, kill and tear the harmless sheep and lambs. Within these two years, I have seen, in my neighbourhood, more sheep devoured, belonging to the Earl of Abercorn, Lord Elliock, Mr Alexander Robertson, Mr Alston, Mr George Knox, and others, within two miles of Edinburgh, than the whole species of dogs is worth, except the sheep-dogs, who are the only part of the tribe that are of real value. But let them all pay the tax; I am for no exceptions in the law, if it can be avoided: And I doubt not but, by the increase of the sale of Wool, the store-master would be well enabled to pay for his useful dogs.

As to the butchers, gardners, and tanners, they keep more dogs than they have use for; and, to my knowledge, some of these people's dogs did much damage among the sheep in the noblemen and gentlemen's grounds above mentioned. And besides, the making any exception as to the tax on sheep-dogs, would be a cloak to every little country-village, to keep that great nuisance, little dogs, or what we call collies; which have often been the cause of very dismal accidents to gentlemen and others, by their barking, and attacking their horses heels when travelling; by which means, many in my remembrance, some gentlemen of eminent worth, (particularly the late Mr George Lauder), have been thrown from their horses, and lost their lives.

This law would enable government to lower, or to take off some part of the duty on salt and leather, which falls heaviest on the poor, as they use more salt provisions and leather for shoes than the rich. The excise on soap and candle falls more on the wealthy: And all the excise on spirits, porter, strong ale, and all other liquors, falls on the drinkers; and these should be drunk sparingly by labouring people, and the less the better for their health and labour.

Perhaps there has not been a time, for many years past, that government had it so much in their power as now, and they have been lately showing great inclination to do good things for their country. We have a good king; we have a steady wise administration: Our whole people in every part of the island of Great Britain are loyal, quiet, and well disposed; a few wrong-headed, rotten hearted, disappointed, noisy, turbulent men excepted. All the evil I wish that turbulent set is, that they were sent to that hopeful country Russia, or to the great King of Prussia's dominions, for a few years, to teach them to know what liberty is, and how much we enjoy it in this island. I almost adore the memory of the wise, prudent, honest, sensible men, that fixed our most valuable constitution upon such truly noble principles; so that from the King, to the lowest

est of the subjects, we are governed by prudent good laws: That every man's life and property is secured to him, and is tried, if in fault, by his door neighbours, who will always do justice, and lean to the merciful side rather than to the side of cruelty.

How wise and good an action have the king and parliament done at present, in giving the heir of the late Lord Lovat his estate! It is to be hoped all the other noblemen and gentlemen in the like circumstances will meet with the same favour. Their estates are of little consequence to the public, but very great to the families they belonged to. And the putting of them into their natural possession, will contribute to people the country, and will extinguish the last remains of disaffection. Happy and wise times, when the iniquities of the fathers are not visited on their children!

If the members of the house of commons would take away all officers fees at the water-side, and give the land and coast-waiters more salary, it would be serving the revenue and assisting the fair trader. These fees paid at the water side are a great encouragement to the unfair trader, and a great loss to the merchant, who is not; nay, that practice makes the officer insult the man who imports fairly, and he cannot get equal dispatch as the other who pays high fees. It is to be hoped, at any rate, that all fees within and without doors will be taken off the Wool, and all high on Wool, and Woollen goods going coast ways, and the officers very troublesome. It will be of much consequence to trade, if some regulation take place as to these fees, and the officers be ordered to do their duty without fee or reward, and to give all dispatch at legal hours. Upon the whole, the revenue will never be honestly dealt with, nor the merchant well served, while these officers have the disposal of favours, and the public money, as they please, and to take such liberties as are most shameful; and the merchant must pay, or put up with the abuse that these people will oblige him to submit to.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R IX.

*Leith, June 30. 1774.*

I HAVE with pleasure perused Mr M. K.'s letter to you [Weekly Magazine, Vol. xxiv. P. 367.]. I wish he had put his name at full length to it, as I think it very sensible, and true in every article.

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I must beg leave, through the channel of your useful Paper, to say what I have learned from a judicious and experienced farmer in the sheep and black cattle way. He is much pleased with the letter; but, in place of having the sheep housed in the winter, he recommends the planting of whins on a south exposure, and dry; which, he says, is the best protection and feeding for sheep in cold snowy weather; and indeed his reason is obvious, as he says they fully and destroy the wool, if housed.

As to destroying the eagles and foxes, he approves much of it; but says (which I know in this neighbourhood to be true), that the numberless, useless, destructive dogs do more harm than all the other animals put together; and that, within these two years past, the noblemen, gentlemen, and farmers, in a circuit of a few miles round Edinburgh, have had above 300 fine sheep devoured, or tore to pieces, by these vermin. Some law, or tax, to suppress these useless dogs, ought immediately to be applied for.—There is not a porter, a chairman, a fish wife or cadie, &c. but must have their dogs; and, as many of them must want their necessary food, they naturally betake themselves to the fields, and fall on the harmless sheep, which they destroy, much to the prejudice of the proprietors, and loss of the country.

Before the union, I find large sums came into Scotland for wool, after cloathing ourselves, and sending a good value of cloth and woollen goods abroad. Whence it appears, that the number of sheep in Scotland, before that period, must have been much larger than at present; and I am well informed, that, forty years ago, there were, in East and Mid-Lothian, twenty sheep to one that are in these counties at present.

Yours, &c. D. LOCH.

#### L E T T E R X.

*Leith, July 1. 1774.*

**I** HINTED, in a former letter, how prejudicial the importation of such large quantities of London Porter was to Scotland; and then computed the loss to this country at L. 90,000 sterling for the last year: A very great sum, you will say; but, I am well informed, it was considerably more. What must the English nation think of us? They are too generous and open hearted to thank us for our money to ruin ourselves.—Besides this, we are bubbled by the dealers in this pernicious article. Let any person go into a tavern or ale-house in Edinburgh, or Leith, and drink this dear *stuff*, for so I call it: It is not genuine porter; you

you will find at least one-third, if not one-half, of the drink in the bottle small beer. Whether the mixture is made in London, or Leith, or perhaps partly in both, is not material to the drinkers who pay for it. Sure I am, *they* pay high to please their corrupt taste; for what with the smallness of the bottle, and the quantity of small beer glutted down with the porter, the drinker pays at the rate of seven-pence for an English quart or Scots chopin of porter: Whereas you can have a chopin of good Scots porter for three-pence, and excellent strong ale at the same price. And I do aver, there are many good porter brewers in and about Edinburgh and Leith, who make such porter as any Scotsman may be pleased with, and much better worth the money than the adulterated trash which is drunk by hundred dozens in a day in and about our metropolis. It is nothing but prejudice in many, and self-interest in others, which have carried on this destructive branch of business to such a height.

No person would wish for better porter than is manufactured by the following gentlemen, viz.

George Millar, St Ann's Yards,	} <i>Edinburgh.</i>
James Hotchkiss, Grass-market,	
Archibald Campbell, Cowgate,	
Messrs Gardners, Goosedub,	} <i>Leith.</i>
Baillie Cundel and son,	
Matthew Comb,	

How ridiculous is it to advance, That porter cannot be made without Thames water? Mr Combrune, who writes a very sensible Essay on Brewing, laughs at that vulgar prejudice. Every man of sense that I have conversed with, does the same. And I am well informed, that, even in London, where one butt of porter is brewed of Thames water, there are ten made from the New River, and other water about London. We have as good soft water in this neighbourhood as in Britain; and to say our people have not genius to arrive at perfection in this branch, is an insult on the country; witness the Soapery in this town, and the Glass-houses. It is not many years since these were set a going; and up-hill work it was for some time; but, by perseverance and application, our people became as good soft soap-boilers, and bottle-makers, as any in the kingdom.

The prejudice against our soft soap was full more than against the porter; inasmuch, that we were even obliged, for several years, to send it to England for sale. This prejudice is now entirely got the better of; and the manufacturing of these two articles, soap and bottles, save a great deal

deal of money to the country. I hope soon to see the woollen goods, and our home-brewed porter, save ten times more than both. Besides these mentioned, do not our country people carry on the works at Pref-ton-pans, at Carron, and several other places, to the satisfaction of their employers? Upon the whole, our people can perform any branch of manufacture, when intrusted, equally well, and at as little expence, as any in Europe, when the materials can be got equally good and cheap; and there is no premium can be given equal to a ready sale at home. The market abroad will open to you of course.

To do the gentlemen, merchants, and others at Glasgow, justice, they give all encouragement to their own porter, and all articles made among themselves; and much merit they have in so doing. May they go on and prosper, and put their heads and hands to extend the Woollen along with the Linen branches, which they carry on, without taking much money out of the country. Neither is this country deficient in Mechanics, witness the Caldton Smiths in the Chimney-way, &c. Many more instances might be given as to the genius, industry, good heads and hands among our Scots tradesmen.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R X I.

Leith, July 6. 1774.

**A**S I said in my first letter, that God and nature had ordained this country for the Woollen, and denied the Linen trade to be the staple, is a truth that I will support. You have almost every thing among yourselves for the one, and you have almost every article to bring from distant countries for the other; and from those countries too that take little or nothing from you but your cash.

It is long since I knew what put the political spinning-wheels in motion. I shall be explicit; it was Archibald Earl of Ilay, afterwards Duke of Argyle, who held the reins of the political system of this country many years; and he had able men to manage for him, and good men; but they were chained to his party. However, it would ill become me to say any thing of this nobleman, after the just and masterly character drawn of him by Dr Smollet in his history.

The doctrine was, *Keep the people poor and they will be dependent*; and sure they were that the Linen branch would keep them so. This I have taken

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taken the liberty to say to some of those worthy men I had the honour to be acquainted with; but words or writing at that period were of no avail: We must not disoblige the English; the Woollen is their great staple; we will get no bounties, no premiums, if we give them offence: A patriotic doctrine you will say; but so it was. Well, what is next to be done? Supply the boroughs and counties with B—L—C—notes, flax-seed, flax, wheels, reels, flax-mills, and wind-mills, to carry on a trade that never did, nor never can support itself; after a trial of forty years, we find it so. No matter for that! Bleachfields must be erected, and premiums given to those who raise most flax, &c. Provost such-an-one must have the direction of his district, with the assistance of the Dean of Guild, Conveeners, and Deacons of crafts; give them a feast, and put flax, &c. in their hands; make the machine go; found up bounties, premiums, and what not, for the Linen; let your bleachfields be encouraged, though they be forbid the use of lime or pigeon's dung: Let them substitute something in their stead, to force the Linen to be soon white, and less expensive than to use soap or any soft materials: Let them use the spirit of vitriol, or some such pernicious materials, to enable us to bleach cheap: Let one devil drive out another; they soften it with the name of the oil of vitriol; and many large bottles are used by some bleachers, I do not say by the whole; but this famous oil is sure to extract the oils out of the yarn, and burn your cloth. This has ruined the character of your Linens; and many an honest house-wife, that makes for her own family-use, feels the effects of this new method of whitening cloth. Let the chemists say what they please, that it may be used in small quantities by skilful hands; so may poison and brandy to the human body; the operation is slow, but sure. Bleach with soap and ashes your cloth for your own family-use, and it will last double the time of that which is forced with a spirit that will corrode iron.

Upon the whole, every method has been tried to lessen the charges upon the Linen Manufacture, but to no purpose. Give the Woollen but the trial, and the good effects will soon be felt by the country, and by every individual.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R X I I.

Leith, July 8. 1774.

**A**FTER serving ourselves, I aver, every yard of fine linen you make is a loss to the country and the dealers, of at least four-pence per yard;

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yard; so the more you wrought the more you lost; and the peoples labour was thrown away. Whereas, if your people had been employed in the natural manufacture of our country, there would have been some fixpences gained upon every yard that was sent abroad. When I mention this, I take in the whole Linen trade and dealers to London and foreign ports, at an average: For I have known some of my friends lose on their fine linens sent to London, and elsewhere, one shilling on each yard; perhaps some few might get the value, or nigh it; but, upon the whole that has gone to London and other places, for these ten years past, that stood the manufacturer 2 s. 6 d. *per* yard, he never netted 2 s. 2 d. at an average. So that the more hundred thousand yards you made of fine Linen, to sell abroad as your staple, you lost the same number of fourpences, besides the price of materials paid to foreigners. Was this a trade meant to be carried on to employ our poor? No; it was starving them, and, as their masters were losers by the business, they could not afford to give wages that they could live by.

D. LOCH.

## L E T T E R XIII.

*Leith, September 1. 1774.*

SIR,

I HAVE, in my former letters, given the public my sentiments as to the great staple of Scotland. And happy am I to be informed, that the noblemen and gentlemen, and most of our people, have joined with me in thinking so. The time I hope is not far distant, when the country shall make a figure in trade over all Europe, America, &c.

We for certain have the materials; and sure I am we have heads and hands to execute, if proper encouragement is given; for I do aver, take us in general, we have as good geniuses, are as quick in our apprehensions, and as steady to our plans as any people on Earth.

Let us be put to the trial upon materials that are our own. How is it possible that the French can undersell the English or us at foreign markets with Woollen goods, when they have not the wool themselves, but are obliged to smuggle it, at a great expence and risque? We have none of that to run. Great Britain can most undoubtedly undersell them at every market abroad. I know our honest industrious neighbours the English have so long had that valuable branch in their hands, and made such high profits, that they are not fond of lowering their prices, and consequently

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quently do not keep up the fabrick of their goods: The French by this means have crept into the trade. But, when all the island join to carry on the Woollen manufacture to its greatest extent in all its branches, and fit for every climate and market, and are satisfied with a moderate profit, as the returns are mostly quick, we shall soon be in possession of that invaluable business; and we will be a help to the English in place of a hindrance. They are only weak, narrow, fordid minds, who think every man that carries on a branch that he is engaged in, hurts his trade. Practice has opened our eyes, and shows us that, the more people are employed in carrying on business in one spot, the more buyers come to your shop. And the article I am treating of cannot be overdone, if the whole inhabitants of Britain and Ireland were employed in it: There is field for them all; and ready sale, if you keep up the character of your goods, and be pleased with a living profit. And these goods will bring you corn, when wanted, wine, oil, iron, hemp, and all necessary conveniences and luxuries of life, and the balance in gold and silver.

Besides the many natural advantages we have in this branch of commerce, you can employ the poor people, in picking, rowing, and cleaning the Wool, when they cannot do any sort of hard labour. And many thousands may be able to get daily bread that at present are on the parish, or in poor-houses. And if we join along with this the making of our own malt liquors, that will likewise be a means of employing numbers of poor labouring men, who are willing to work, but cannot find employment. This I see almost every day. And the using so much London porter has turned many one out of bread, and lessens our revenue of excise greatly. All this is a real loss to our country.

I am,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

D LOCH.

P. S. I have all along observed, that this country is most fit for pasture, and for raising sheep and black cattle. We have some very fine corn lands; but they bear a small proportion to our high grounds. The gentlemen and farmers have improved these lands much of late years; but many have thrown away their labour, by endeavouring to make corn grow in a soil where it will never ripen, and thereby they lose the use for which nature has designed it. Land that lies one thousand foot above the level of the sea in this country, will seldom or never bring corn to perfection. There may be some particular dry spots, that might in some

some hot seasons bring the corns to fill; but that crop is never to be depended on.

I had almost forgot to mention one other article as to the porter. The drinkers of it must be fond to pay high duties; for all the malt that the London porter is made from, pays just double the malt tax that our malt pays; and you must believe that the porter drinkers must pay it.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R XIV.

*Leith, Sept. 2. 1774.*

S I R,

I Formerly mentioned in my letters, how happily we are situated to carry on the fisheries. And this season, I hope will show of how great consequence they are. They are most certainly the next great object to our Wooll; for they employ, and bring up a hardy brave race of men, always ready to serve their king and country, and they bring in real wealth to the nation. Every herring or fish they catch is your own; you have no foreign bills to pay for them. On the contrary, after you have fed and served yourselves, you send the superplus to foreign markets, and get goods, or bills, or specie in your favours for your fish.

Our Western Highlands are most excellently situated for carrying on this great trade. Nature has supplied them with so many fine inlets from the sea, called lochs, and fine harbours in them, that no imagination could figure their safety, and conveniency, without being on the spot and seeing them. The industrious people in these parts are doing great things in the herring-fishing (which by the Dutch is called the great fishing.) The whale-fishing, they call the clean, or small, as being a secondary branch; and may they have all success. And it is to be hoped the islands of Orkney and Zetland will extend their summer fishing, as they have great plenty of herrings, and white-fish on their coasts in the summer months; and it is then and there that the Dutch reap the benefit of their great fishing. I expect we shall soon rival them in this branch of trade. And our small fishing, as the Hollanders call it, has turned out much to the benefit of the country this season. The cargoes that our nine Greenland Scots ships have brought home, will save and realise to the nation L. 15,000 Sterl. I hope the herring fishing this year will bring in ten times that sum; which,

which, for the good of the country and the honest industrious worthy proprietors and adventurers, may God in his providence grant.

D. LOCH.

P. S. The gentlemen, merchants, and others, in and about Campbelton, have greatly exerted themselves in the herring-fishing. And I am well informed, that, this year, they, with the merchants on Clyde, and places adjacent, will have 220 busses, or fishing vessels, at sea, from 40 to 80 tons, on the bounty, given by the government for encouraging said trade. And last season they had 190 busses on the bounty, and L 12,000 Sterl. well paid. And wisely it is in parliament to do so, as it serves many good purposes, and adds to the national strength and safety.

D. L.

L E T T E R XV.

*Leith, September 5. 1774.*

S I R,

I HAVE read, with much satisfaction, these letters, in your useful paper, on the improvement of the highlands of Scotland, and on the breed of sheep for bettering the quality of the wool. There is no country that ever I was in, (and I have been in many places beyond seas), that promises better than our west highlands for bringing up and feeding sheep, so as to produce good wool; for there the snow lies, in the severest winters, but a few days, from the vicinity of the greatest western ocean; and there are, most certainly, excellent sheep-pasture amongst those numerous hills.

There is one material article which I have not yet observed mentioned by any of your correspondents, and that is the manner of *smearing*. The softness, cleanness, and fineness of the wool depend much upon this operation. I am well informed, by a judicious, sensible farmer, who has had thirty years experience in the management of sheep, that most people use too much tar, which greatly hardens, burns, and hurts the wool: He is of opinion, that much less should be used; and he, at times, uses none at all, but substitutes in its place the juices of broom and tobacco, boiled with strong urine, and mixed with soft soap. This makes the sheep to stand the winter, and keeps them clean, and free from scab, vermin, and most of the diseases they are subject to. The stems and refuse of tobacco answer for the juice; and, if government would give orders to *boil*, instead of *burn*, all the seized tobacco, and let the store-farmers have the juice, or

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fell it to them for behoof of the poor, it would be a great saving of butter, which, among other necessaries, has got up to so high a price. This method would greatly lessen the consumption of butter, and the soft soap is to be had as good, where I now write, as in any place in Europe. The other article is well known. My friend likewise says, that soft soap applied to any part that is affected with itching or scab, removes it sooner and better than any article you can rub the sheep with; and surely it is of a much softer and kinder nature for the wool than tar, and comes cheaper than butter. Indeed from the materials it is made of, it is most undoubtedly the best ingredient that can be applied for sheep. The above mentioned gentleman says, he never knew the soft soap to fail, when rubbed in time on any hard scabby part of the sheep, but it always removed the cause of the complaint.

Your correspondent from the banks of Air [p. 304.], signed, *A Shepherd*, will please know, that both furze, or whins, and broom from the seed, is by far the best and softest way to raise and propagate them. My friend recommends the whins as the best cover and feeding for sheep in time of a storm. (See my letter in Weekly Magazine p. 20.) The soil that is most favourable for them to thrive on, is loamy and dry; the season to sow is March.

The propagating of whins has been much neglected in the sheep-countries in the south of Scotland, where they are mostly wanted. There was a premium given for raising whins by the Scots parliament, (for they are not a native plant; we had them from France.) I lately heard a nobleman from the county of Fife, whom I have the honour to be acquainted with, say, that some of his old tenants have heard their grandfathers tell, that they remembered the time that there was not a whin in Fife-shire.

Yours, &c.

D. LOCH.

P. S. As to the fineness of our wool in this climate, it is a well-known fact, that in all cold countries the great Author of nature has provided a warm cloathing for the whole brute creation; and the colder the climate, the finer is the pile of the fur that covers them:—There can be no exception as to the sheep in this great order. Sure I am, that I have had, and many times seen stockings made from the wool of the growth of Zetland much finer than any thing of that sort of manufacture I ever saw; and the sheep in Spain that produce the finest wool, feed in very high grounds, and consequently in a cold region.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Leith, September 15. 1774.

S I R,

I Have given my opinion, pretty fully, of the trade and manufactures that I thought much concerned Scotland. I now take the liberty to point out, what, I think, from experience, would contribute greatly to increase the commerce and wealth of Great Britain.

The scheme by which Sir Matthew Decker proposed to raise the supply, in place of the present mode, is surely a wise plan, and, if adopted, would save some hundred thousands to the nation annually, and add 30,000 men to the state, who are now employed in collecting, surveying, and herding the traders and smugglers. His scheme puts an end to all smuggling. And as, in fact, the land-holders, and people of property, in the end, pay almost all the duties of customs and excise, it would be better for them, on the whole, and much more convenient for the merchant; for by the present way of levying the customs, the man that deals to any extent in foreign trade must have a great command of money, otherwise he can import little, the duties being often double the prime cost of the goods abroad. And these duties must be paid before you can see or taste your goods. This throws the importer always largely in advance, and requires three stocks to carry on trade, where one would do, were the duties taken off; that is, L. 1000 would carry on as much as L. 3000 will at present.

There never was, in my time, a minister who has paid so much regard and attention to the commerce and trade of Great Britain as the present Lord North: He has shown a steadiness and firmness to every thing for the good of King and country. But, at present, how far such a plan can take place, is uncertain. I know most branches of the revenue are appropriated to pay the interest of certain loans, and it must take time to get the principals paid. But, with great submission to the wisdom of parliament, I think the duties should be considerably lowered, particularly on French goods, which, at present, are next to a prohibition. The long enmity and jealousy betwixt the English and French, has always kept them at a great distance from one another in point of trade; it is time to remove it: There are no people more honest and easy in their dealings in commerce, (the English excepted); I have dealt largely with them, and have always found them so. I have been taken their prisoner at sea; they used me with the greatest humanity and hospitality. I had the



the honour to correspond with the great Baron Montesquieu. As a merchant, his name adds much to the reputation of the profession. He was an honour to mankind. You may believe what pleasure I had in dealing with him. His wines were excellent, and at a moderate price. If we would open trade with the French, by reducing the duties on their wines and brandies, I am persuaded they will meet us half-way, and allow our manufactures to be imported into France, on equal terms. If this were to take place, it would most effectually lower the price of corn, and all the necessaries of life, and afford us good and wholesome spirits; for in all our northern countries some spirits are absolutely necessary; the more moderately used the better: But, in our cold climate, I have seen the good effects of a little at a time, both by sea and land. And, as we must have spirits, is it not better to get them of wholesome quality, and pay them with our manufactures, than to distill two millions of quarters of our best grain, which is the cause of keeping it always so high? and, if good plentiful crops happen, the exporting your corns is of much greater consequence to the kingdom than making it into spirits. I can easily see what will be objected; the revenue of excise and customs will suffer. I think not; for, if the duties are low, there will be no smuggling; the importation of wines and brandy would be immense. Were it one fourth of what the French wine duty is at present, and one third of what the brandy excise is, the revenue would draw double of what it now does, and answer every purpose for which these duties were laid on. If these measures were to take place, they would extend our navigation greatly. The Dutch and Swedes are at present the great carriers of wine, brandy, oil, &c. from the south of France, viz. from Cele, Marfeilles, and other ports to the north of France, Havre de Grace, Dunkirk, and all the ports in the Channel. I have myself had several ships employed in the freight way, from and to the ports mentioned, and cleared money on my ships so employed. But I paid, as all our ships must, five livres to the state for each ton the ship measured. If these five livres were taken off, as they certainly would, if we had our tariff of trade settled, the British ships would get the whole of these freights, and a very great object it is. The preference is always given to our ships over all the Mediterranean; and for a sensible reason. We lose fewer ships in proportion to our number employed, than any nation in the world; and besides, our sailors are more honest. In all my practice, (and I have freighted some hundreds of ships,) I never had a package broke up, nor a cask broached or pierced, or any sort of embezzlement on my cargoes of goods, when on board our own British vessels. Other nations are not so free of this vice. Our sailors are most undoubtedly the most honest-hearted, open, friendly fellows in Europe, and

and despise a dirty action, either at sea or on shore. This trade would increase their number, who are the great bulwarks of our nation.

At present, we have employed in carrying on every branch of commerce, and for protection, about two hundred and thirty thousand seamen. Postlethwait says, the coasting and foreign trade to London alone employs 100,000. I suppose them to be only 75,000. The navy employs 25,000. All the rest of coasting and foreign trade, in the whole of the ports of Great Britain and Ireland, 130,000. These numbers are formidable, and the more so, as you can soon have a good part of them on board your fleets, upon any emergency. Your homeward coasting trade being so extensive, enabled this nation, now so happily connected, and unanimous in their operations, to equip a fleet in four months, superior to what France and Spain could do in two years. Do you think that so wise a nation as France will chuse to quarrel with you at these times? they know too well the difference now, to what it was some years ago; last war convinced them of the truth of it. They must consider, how many brave hardy sailors, and soldiers, come from this country, to fight, conquer, or die with their brethren the English, instead of being, as formerly, so imprudent and impolitic as to take side with the French, upon all occasions, against England. This makes a mighty difference in the balance of war. And I hope we shall never be on other terms with the English nation than we are at present, and were all last war. In this situation, no power in Europe can have ministers of so little penetration, but must see the consequence of making war with a brave and united kingdom. Small as the space is that Great Britain and Ireland occupy in the ocean; yet we have three sea ports to one, more than all France and Spain put together. This is our great nursery for seamen.

Last war, you had one hundred thousand men on board his Majesty's fleet and privateers, with the King's commission, to cruise against your enemies. At that very time you had 8000 merchant ships carrying on the trade of Great Britain and Ireland, who rode in safety, and triumphant in every quarter of the globe. What must foreigners think of this nation, that could carry on such extensive commerce, and take every place they attempted, and destroy every fleet of the enemy they met with? Will they be rash in making war with that nation?

I can foresee another objection will be stated, as to the rum from our plantations, and West-India islands. Why not let their rum be imported at brandy-duty, or a trifle under, though they deserve but little favour from the mother-country? they are disobedient children. One thing, I well know, that, if they can get goods at St. Eustatia, Surinam, or any of the free ports in the West-Indies, on equal terms, or a trifle lower, they will

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never

never take ours. And this country should take measures for their own preservation, to keep our provisions and necessaries of life, at moderate prices, so as to carry on our manufactures, and find a market for them, independent of these wrong-headed people. This step, among others, would bring great advantages, and would humble the pride and haughtiness of the insolent Americans, who, I have no doubt, would have thrown themselves into the hands of any power in Europe, if they could have found one so rash as themselves. But, as I have before said, the Princes of Europe are too wise to embark in such Don Quixote schemes, as they have formerly done, against so great a nation. I again say, that, if we could settle proper conditions and articles with France, and trade with them, as we do with the ungrateful Portuguese, both nations would profit by the bargain, and could keep the balance of Europe in their hands; and, sure I am, we would increase our wealth, and strength, and health more by this than all the Continent connections we have. Times are greatly changed, and that riveted antipathy the English have to that nation should be forgotten, as we in Scotland have done with the English; and we heartily despise the illiberal, indecent reflections thrown out against our country by the disappointed patriots, well knowing, that the English, ninety-nine out of a hundred, look on us as their brethren, and would risk their lives and fortunes for us, as we have done for them; and we will be always ready to do so, on every occasion, when called for by King and Parliament. We love freedom and liberty, and enjoy it more than these flaming dissatisfied patriots, whose great aim is to get into places and power, and then we should be under fine management; but we have one old saying in this country, *better keep well as make well.*

Without any compliment to the present ministry, they have attended more to the affairs of the nation, and done more good than any before them, for these many years past.

D. LOCH.

L E T T E R XVII.

*Leith, October 5. 1774.*

S I R,

I Cannot conclude my letters, without thanking the noblemen and gentlemen, and the publick in general, for the reception they have given to

to what I have formerly published, which has met with their regard and approbation in adopting my plan. I hope to see it carried to the utmost extent, for the good of our country. I have been much obliged to several for useful hints; and here I give you a copy of a letter I had a few days ago from a very sensible intelligent gentleman.

“ S I R,

“ As to the numbers of sheep bred annually in Scotland, I cannot determine, but am certain, if there be no diminution of their numbers in the Southern and Eastern countries, they must be considerably increased in general; for, in some parts of the Western countries, through which I have frequently passed within these ten years, there are very considerable tracts of ground now occupied by sheep, where none were formerly; and am told, that, from some of those sheep farms, 4000 lambs have been, in one, year sent to market; and that the plan of feeding, and rearing sheep in those parts answers so well, that two of those storemasters have already purchased the property of what they a few years ago only rented; which success has induced others to extend the plan over large tracts of hills, that contributed little towards rearing of black cattle, formerly their only stock.

“ Now, if this scheme succeeds in a particular district, it will certainly answer in every place, possessed of equal advantages, of which there are many hundreds of square miles in the west and north parts of Scotland equally capable of this transmutation. As I am not sufficiently acquainted with wool, to say any thing of the quality of what is produced in the above district, I shall say nothing of that; but an easy inquiry will ascertain it; but can say, that, if it improve as much as the sheep have mended the pasture on the hills they feed upon, it must soon be excellent; for, from being covered with dry sapless heath, they are converted into a beautiful verdure, obvious at several miles distance; so that they can be distinguished from those that are not under sheep.

“ As to the quality of some of the wool bred on the west coast of Scotland, I can, with certainty, say, that it equals that of Spain; for, by a comparative trial, I made some time ago, by bringing some of it from sheep killed for my own use, I carried it to Archibald Smart, at Musselburgh, who compared it with his Spanish wool, and said it was equal, if not superior, to any he had seen from Spain; and begged me to procure a quantity of it for him: But his death, which happened soon after, put an end to the scheme.

“ How-

“ However, though I did not bring wool, I brought worsted which was manufactured here, and much admired by the manufacturer for its softness and strength, who begged to have some of it sent, though at an advanced price.

“ Now, as we have sheep who carry wool equal to the Spanish, it is certain we have both climate and soil fit for them. There remains only to increase the number of those sheep, by paying part of the attention they do in Spain. And, as I can say, that the walks, on which these sheep go I have mentioned, resembles those in Spain, as much as their wool does; and there is no less than 130 square miles of the very best sort, contiguous and surrounded on all sides, by upwards of 350 miles of good sheep-pasture; so that no country whatever is better qualified for rearing of sheep; yet at present there is not above 2500 in all the above district.

“ They neither house nor smear their sheep; and they are generally in good condition through the winter, having killed of them in January that did not exceed 30 pound the four quarters, and which carried 8 pounds tallow.

“ Tho’ I have only mentioned one district, yet I know there are many hundreds of square miles of excellent sheep pasture on the west and north coasts of Scotland, which would daily improve, were they put under that culture, which is of all the least expensive, being performed by the sheep themselves  
I am, &c.”

I had likewise the pleasure of a conversation with an honourable gentleman, eminent in his profession, whose clearness of head, soundness of judgement, goodness of heart, and love to his native country is exceeded by none. There never will any emigrate from his lands, nor the neighbourhood, where he shows so worthy an example. He told me some of his tenants and others in that country (the Mearns), have done well by raising flax; and make linens to serve themselves, and coarse goods for sale. They always sow on new ground, never broken up so long as they have it. When that fails, they break up the ground that has been seven or eight years lee; and such ground, well laboured and dressed, seldom fails of a good crop of flax. This carried on to serve ourselves, and for coarse goods for foreign markets, goes hand in hand with the Woollen scheme. Every species of goods that can be made from our own produce, is a real acquisition of wealth. And if we attend to what the great Author of nature has pointed out to us for food and raiment, we need little from abroad; we can serve our neighbours and foreigners with our manufactures, herrings, and fish of all kinds, that will pay what conveniencies and luxuries we want. Necessaries, thank God, we have in our own land.  
I am, &c.

D. LOCH.

F I N I S.