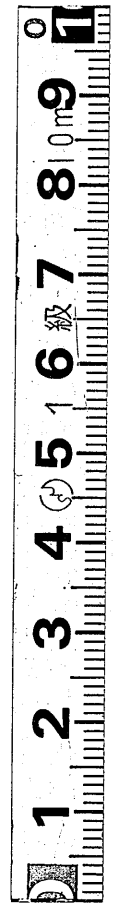


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A N

IMPARTIAL REPRESENTATION

O F T H E

C A S E

O F T H E

POOR COTTON SPINNERS

In LANCASHIRE, &c.

WITH A

M O D E

Proposed to the LEGISLATURE for their Relief.

1780.

*“ He that oppresseth the Poor reproacheth his Maker ;
but he that honoureth Him hath Mercy on the Poor.”*

PROV. SOL.

The C A S E.

THE poor inhabitants of Lancashire and part of Derbyshire and Cheshire, in a great measure depend upon Spinning and preparing Cotton Wool from the state in which it comes from abroad, to be fit for the Weaver's use. This is the only employment whereby many thousands of families subsist, as in this part of the kingdom alone the Cotton branch is carried on. The Cotton from its first being in its raw state, as received from the West-Indies, till completed for the Weaver, goes through seven preparative stages, called Carding, Roving, Spinning, Doubling, Twisting, Winding, and Reeling, all of which were done by the hand labor of the cotton spinners of the said counties, whose wives and children were employed in their respective houses in some of the several branches, so that it came out of their hands finished ready for the loom.

By labor being thus distributed into the hands of the poor at large, it being of such kind as their wives and children though young, could assist them in thus manufacturing the Cotton, and there being a sufficiency of employment, every industrious manufacturer was able therefore to maintain comfortably his family and dependants. In these times poor's rates were very trifling, because no one had occasion to apply to the parish, if they could work.

About ten years ago inventions were found out to make large Machines turned by water, or horses, whereby the seven preparations through which the Cotton went were effected, in such immense quantities, in so short a time, and with the assistance of so few hands, and those children only, with the help of an overlooker, that it has produced the most alarming consequences.

The proprietors of these Machines finding their private emoluments to be excessively great, applied to His Majesty, and under the specious pretence of new and beneficial inventions for the Preparing and Spinning of Cotton, which would tend to the advancement of trade and good of the laborious community, obtained five or more several patents, for the sole and exclusive right of Spinning on these new invented Machines. Being able, therefore, to under work the rest of the tradesmen in the Cotton branch, who had no share in these Patents, the proprietors, to the essential detriment of the laborious community, have of late years erected divers of these Machines, to the number of fifteen or twenty, in the several counties of Lancashire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Denbighshire and Cheshire, one of which alone contains three hundred windows and upwards, and have sold them, when erected, to divers dealers in Cotton, at the rate of 7000*l*. for every 1000 spindles, giving proper security not to sue the purchasers, by reason of that exclusive right which vested in the proprietors, by virtue of the patent for the enjoyment of them.

These Machines at the time of their first erection were not so detri-

was then built, and trade at that time every day increasing, and the Cotton exportations very large.

But since the year 1774 our exportations having very considerably abated, and the demands in the Cotton branch not being half so great, together with the rapid increase of the number of these Machines, which require so few hands, and those only children, with the assistance of an overlooker, as above stated, and performing upon a moderate calculation, with the attention of a child, as much work as would, and did upon an average, employ ten grown up persons: and the other Cotton dealers, who had no share in these Patents, nor in the divers erections made by the patentees, having found out Engines for Carding by water, horses, or hand, which, with the labor and care of one or two persons, will perform as much work as would have employed and provided bread for eight or twelve; and also other inventions, to wit, Jennies for Spinning with one hundred or two hundred spindles, or more, going all at once, and requiring but one person to manage them: (one of which spindles was the old and usual instrument by which every poor woman obtained her bread) and likewise Doubling, Twisting, and Winding Mills, performing all these in one Machine at once, with the care of one person, and even that a child, which would have employed and found subsistence for eight or ten grown up people: and these Engines (Mills or Machines) not being under the description of the Patent Machines for Carding, Roving, Spinning, &c. and therefore vesting no right in the patentees to sue the erectors for damages, has caused them to increase with such rapidity, that many are now built in every town, village, and hamlet in Lancashire, and the circumsccribing counties. The poor manufacturer, his labor, the source of his support, being thus monopolized and taken away, has been thereby deprived of the very means of providing a living for himself and family, and therefore of consequence has endured all the stimulating pangs of want and wretchedness.

That this is the case, appears from very recent facts; for out of the county of Lancaster itself, have been raised for his Majesty's service, within these three years, besides the Militia, not less than four thousand men, who being able no longer to endure the want of the necessaries of life, and the remediless cries of their wives and children (whose province the Spinning business principally was) occasioned by the monopoly of their labor, through the universal introduction of these Machines and Engines, added to the great decline of trade, chose rather to enlist for soldiers or marines, than to follow any illicit mode of living; the consequence of which has been, that the numerous poor forsaken wives, children, and aged parents of such men, who have enlisted, were obliged to apply to the parish, in such abundance, that it is a certain truth the poor's rates have risen so excessively since the years 1773 and 1774, at which period these Machines and different Engines began to multiply so exceedingly, that in Westhoughton, a very extensive Hamlet in the central part of Lancashire, the assessments for the relief of the poor, for the year 1779, were nine shillings in the pound.

The residue of the poor manufacturers who remained at home, in languishing expectation that times might perhaps mend, and the demands in the Cotton manufacture be as great as formerly, and then

they would be able to satisfy the necessities of their families, but being disappointed in these their expectations, by seeing at their very doors these Machines and Engines erected, the great cause of their calamitous situation, and the number of them daily multiplying, whereby all their future hopes of a subsistence, should trade again revive, were cut off, and not being able any longer to endure the wants of nature in themselves and families, which before the erection of these Machines and Engines were competently supplied; in a fit of desperation, several thousands of these indigent sufferers, about September last, rose throughout a great part of Lancashire, and in the course of a few days pulled down and broke in pieces several hundreds of the Carding, Doubling, and Twisting Engines and large Jennies; and being irritated and enraged by the assistants of the owners of the Patent Machines shooting one, and wounding many others of their fellow sufferers, both men and women; they unhappily set fire to and burnt down one of the large Patent Machines. In consequence of which event, besides those killed and wounded, there has been upwards of fifty men and women sent to Lancaster Goal, and several taken up, their houses broke open at midnight, and hurried away on board his Majesty's tenders, without a legal trial or being heard in vindication of themselves, and even from places to which the king's proclamation did not extend, leaving their destitute and exasperated wives and offspring exposed to poverty and misery.

The truth of the circumstances and facts of this case, can, and if necessity shall require, will be well attested by the affidavits of several persons of good character and reputation.

And in as much as it is, or ought to be the object of every upright government, the universal welfare and happiness of the subject, and not by a partial distribution of property or labor, to exclude the residue of the subjects from an opportunity of subsistence; and as it is supposed that no Patent for the sole enjoyment or use of any particular art or invention is granted, but upon condition, "*that it is not detrimental to the subjects in general, interested in that art or business which the Patent exercises its influence upon;*" it is therefore strongly to be hoped, that the Legislature will at this time interfere, and either by suspending the exercise and use of these Machines and Engines, or so far restrain the use of them, by laying a tax upon the produce of some, and the tools and instruments of the others, as thereby to give liberty to the poor laborious manufacturer to earn his bread, by being able to complete the Cotton upon the same or nearly the same terms as the Machines and Engines thus encumbered with a duty can.

And it is much to be feared, that if the Legislature doth not interpose, consequences of the most destructive and disagreeable nature will unavoidably follow: for either they will, when driven by necessity and the cries of hunger, and being able to hold out no longer, desperately repeat their former actions, and rise up in large bodies, and burn and demolish, as they have done before, those monopolizing erections, the sad causes of their distress: or, if this should not be the case, they will distressedly emigrate in large numbers into Ireland, to which they are so near, whereby this country will lose its most industrious and best manufacturers, and understanding their business, Ireland will then be

able to vie with, if not excel us, in the beauty and goodness of its Cotton productions.

The Legislature is therefore humbly addressed to take this matter into their serious consideration, and either to *suppress* or to *tax* these Machines and Engines, as in their wisdom and discretion it shall seem best.

The objections that are made (but be it understood it is by the proprietors of these Machines and Engines themselves) against a suppression or taxation of these destructive instruments, are, 1st, "That thereby the ingenuity of artificers in time to come will be restrained" But this objection carries in itself its own confutation; for no wise government ever ought, or will encourage such unparalleled inventions, as deprive the industrious poor of whole counties of their bread, and drives them through want and hunger, either lawlessly to rise up in riots to burn and destroy them, or to emigrate by thousands from their native home.

2dly. "That these Machines and Engines are at this time the sole cause of retaining the relics of the trade we now have."—That this is not true is evident, for if these innovations were totally suppressed (as in common humanity they ought) the industrious poor would be able to manufacture the Cotton, with hand labor in the old manner, and with Jennies of twenty-four Spindles, none of which ought ever to exceed that number, and as the price is not great, every Spinner can purchase, that it might be sold at as cheap a rate, as the owners have sold that worked on the Machine.

And from hence a consequence flows, which the proprietors themselves cannot deny, that the labor, upon a very low computation and average of nine out of every ten of the poor Spinners, has come into their pockets; these Machines and Engines not requiring the attendance of one person in ten, and that a child, while they perform that work which would have employed, and provided a living for ten grown up persons at least: Nor is the community at large any ways benefited by the introduction of these new inventions, for considering the great inferiority in point of wear, owing to the grain of the wool, worked on the Machines, being cut to pieces in the carding; the goods, made of Cotton carded by hand, more than makes up for a small difference in the price to the purchaser, by their longer duration.

And this it is which accounts for the immense sums they have gained; one of whom, within the small space of ten years, from being a poor man not worth £5. now keeps his carriage and servants, is become Lord of a Manor, and has purchased an estate of £20,000; while thousands of women, when they can get work, must make a long day to card, spin, and reel 5040 yards of cotton, and for this they have *four-pence or five-pence and no more.*

3dly. "That the Patent Machines are a benefit to the community, and no disadvantage to the laborious poor, because they are only employed in making Cotton Twist for the Ground (Warp or Chain) for Striped Cottons, usually called Calicoes, which ground, before the invention of these New Instruments, was Linen, and manufactured in and received from Ireland and Germany."—But we beg leave to observe, that the operation of these Machines is not con-

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ined to these Callicoes only, for they now univerfally make the ground for Dimmities, Quilted and Flowered Petticoats, and Cotton Hofs, which heretofore was a very extenfive branch of the laborers bufinefs, and ufed to have employed many thoufands of thefe unhappy fufferers.—And be it further known, That the Cotton ground of thefe very Callicoes, can now be wrought by the hand labor of thefe poor men and women, at as cheap a rate, and much more durable than thefe Patent Machines now do. And therefore, this objection, like the others, is entirely removed.

The fourth and laft objection is, “ That if the Legislature was to prevent the exercife of thefe Machines and Engines in this kingdom, it would tend to eftablifh them in foreign countries, which would be highly detrimental to the trade of this country ”—— In anfwer to this objection, let it be obferved, that the fuperior character which Lancafhire Cotton Manufactures have gained in foreign countries, has not been owing to the fpinning of the Cotton in the leaf. It is well known that Lancafhire is poffeffed of the able Weaver, the curious Cutter, the compleat Dyer and Dreffer, and the ingenious Finifher, (Bleacher, and Printer,) whofe abilities in the feveral branches of their profeflion, never were equalled by any other country in Europe; and therefore, to bring a Velvet, Vilveret, &c. to the fummit of beauty, (which only has recommended our manufactures in preference to all others) yet remains the province of Lancafhire alone. To whatever place, therefore, the Machine may be carried abroad, (though by the bye fuch transportations are prohibited by our laws under the fevereft penalties) they muft procure all thefe feveral artifts, in the fame perfection, or what availeth Spinning for the warp and that only?——But if it fhould be thought moft conducive to the interefts of government, not to fupprefs, but only to lay fuch a tax upon the produce of fome of thefe Machines, and Utenfils of the others, as thereby to give an opportunity to the laboring Manufacturers of getting their bread; the proprietors will, upon this plan, yet reap large profits from the produce of their Inftruments, fo that, on thefe feveral grounds, there furely can be no real caufe for this objection.

This Cafe, therefore, clearly refolves itfelf into two points;— Whether the proprietors of thefe Machines and Engines fhall ftill excluflively continue to reap the enormous profits they have done thefe ten years paft, fo as thereby to exclude the moft numerous and laborious part of the inhabitants of Lancafhire, and part of the adjoining counties, from an opportunity of getting their bread; and caufe them to flee by thoufands into Ireland, upon which the other artifts employed in finifhing, &c. will moft certainly follow: Or whether they ought not to be fo far taxed, as to put it in the power of thefe poor men and women to earn their living, by being able to manufacture the Cotton on as low, or nearly the fame terms, as the proprietors, paying a moderate duty, can, which will yet yield a very ample and fufficient gain to thofe concerned in this monopoly. For the plan of which tax, fee the following pages.

IF

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IF the Legislature fhould think it beft not to fupprefs, but to tax thefe Machines and Engines, the following fcheme of taxation is, with great deference, fubmitted to their judgment, by one who, from a child, has been regularly brought up in all the branches of the Cotton bufinefs, and is accurately acquainted with the extenfive and moft amazing profits, accruing to the proprietors of thefe Machines and Engines.

1ft. With refpect to the Patent or other Machines, going by water, horfes, or otherways, which Card, Rove, Spin, Double, Twist, and Reel, or Wind; or which Card, Rove, and Spin; or which perform any two of the three firft, with any of the fubfequent operations; or which Card and Spin, or Rove and Spin; Hand Inftruments, which only Card, or Rove, or Spin, or Double and Twist, or Double or Twist excepted.

All Hanks compofed of two threads doubled or twifted together, under eight Hanks and eight inclusive, in the pound, every thread of which fhall be fifty-four inches long, eighty double threads in one Lea, and every Hank contain feven Leas, under the penalty of Twenty Shillings each Hank, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 1 1/4

From eight to twelve Hanks in the pound, to contain the fame length and number of double threads in each Lea, and number of Leas in each Hank, as aforefaid, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 1 3/4

From twelve to fixteen Hanks in the pound, to contain the fame length and number of double threads in each Lea, and number of Leas in each Hank, as aforefaid, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 2 1/4

From fixteen to twenty Hanks and upwards in the pound, to contain the fame length and number of double threads in each Lea, and number of Leas in each Hank, as aforefaid, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 2 3/4

All Hanks of fingle thread under fixteen Hanks, and and fixteen inclusive, in the pound, every thread of which fhall be fifty-four inches long, eighty fingle threads in each Lea, and every Hank contain feven Leas, under the penalty of Ten Shillings per Hank, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 1 1/2

From fixteen to twenty-four Hanks in the pound, to contain the fame length and number of fingle threads in each Lea and number of Leas in each Hank as aforefaid, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per Hank — — — — — 0 2 1/4

From twenty-four to thirty-two Hanks in the pound,

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in each Lea, and number of Leas in each Hank; as afore-
said, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per Hank — o 1

From thirty-two to forty Hanks and upwards in the
pound, to contain the same length and number of single
threads in each Lea, and number of Leas in each Hank,
as aforefaid, under the penalty aforefaid, to pay per
Hank — — — — — o 1 1/4

*And in order to prevent the proprietors of these or other Machines and
Engines evading this Act, by carrying their Instruments over into Ireland,
Holland, Germany, France, or any other foreign parts, and preparing the
Cotton fit for the Weaver, and sending it to their correspondents, agents, or
partners, in Great Britain, free from the duty; all Cotton received from
abroad, in any other state than in its raw condition, if it has gone through
any of the above-mentioned seven preparative stages, to be rated at, and
liable to, and pay the above-mentioned duties and penalties.*

2d. As to those Machines (or Engines) Patent and
others, which Double, Twist, and Wind; or which
only Double and Twist, or Twist and Wind, or Twist,
turned by water, horses, or otherways, Hand Instru-
ments excepted.

All Hanks, of any number in the pound, every
thread of which shall be fifty-four inches long, and
after the rate of eighty single threads in each Lea, and
every Hank contain seven Leas, under the penalty of
Ten Shillings per Hank, to pay per Hank — o 1/4

3d. As to those Machines and Engines which Card, or
Card and Rove, going by water, horses, or otherways,
Hand Instruments excepted.

For every pair of Cards twelve inches long and four
inches broad in the wire, or under these dimensions,
to twenty pair and twenty inclusive, in one Machine or
Engine, to pay per pair, per week — — — — — o 4

For every Spindle, or Roving Tool, in the Carding
and Roving Machine or Engine, not exceeding twelve
Spindles or Roving Tools, to pay for each Spindle or
Roving Tool, (over and above the duty for the Card-
ing Machine or Engine) per week — — — — — o 3

From twelve, and not exceeding twenty-four Spin-
dles or Roving Tools, to pay for each Spindle or Rov-
ing Tool, not exceeding that number (over and above
the Carding duty aforefaid) per week — — — — — o 6

That any person or persons who shall use or exercise
any Machine or Engine, going by water, horses, or
otherways, Hand Instruments excepted, containing
more than twenty pair of Cards of the dimensions

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aforefaid, and twenty-four Spindles or Roving Tools,
in such of the Carding Machines or Engines, which
also rove, to pay for every pair of such Cards, per week o 8

And for every such Spindle or Roving Tool, per week 1 0

For every Carding Engine turned by hand, the cards
therein to be of the dimensions aforefaid, not exceeding
twenty pair in such Engine, to pay for the same per
week — — — — — 2 0

That any person or persons who shall use or exercise
any Hand Carding Engine, which containeth more
than twenty pair of cards of the dimensions aforefaid,
to pay for every such pair per week — — — — — o 4

And if any person or persons shall use or exercise two
Hand Carding Engines, turned at the same time and
by one person only, containing in such Engines above
twenty pair of cards in the whole, of the dimensions
aforefaid, to pay for every such pair exceeding twenty,
per week — — — — — o 4

That no person or persons shall use or exercise any
Carding Engine or Machine whatsoever, the wire on such cards
being more than twelve inches long and four inches broad,
under the penalty of Fifty Pounds.

4th. As to those Instruments which rove; or spin; or
double and twist; or double, or twist; or double, twist,
and wind or reel by hand,

For every hand Roving Instrument, which containeth
more than twelve spindles or roving tools, and not ex-
ceeding twenty-four, to pay for each spindle or tool,
per week — — — — — o 3

For every such Roving Instrument, containing more
than twenty-four spindles or tools, to pay for every
spindle or roving tool exceeding that number, per week 1 0

For every Hand Spinning Instrument, which con-
taineth more than twenty-four spindles, and doth not
exceed 30, to pay per week — — — — — o 6

For every such instrument, containing more than
thirty spindles, and not exceeding forty, to pay, per
week — — — — — 1 6

For every such instrument, containing more than
forty spindles, and not exceeding fifty, to pay per week 3 0

For every such instrument, containing more than fifty
spindles, and not exceeding sixty, to pay, per week 5 0

For every such instrument, containing more than
sixty spindles, to pay for each spindle, per week 1 0

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For every Doubling and Twisting; or Doubling; or Twisting Hand Instrument, which containeth more than twenty-four spindles, and doth not exceed thirty, to pay per week ———— 2 0

For every such instrument, containing more than thirty, and not exceeding forty spindles, to pay per week ———— 4 0

For every such instrument, containing more than forty spindles, to pay for each spindle, per week — 1 0

For every Hand Doubling, Twisting and Winding or Reeling Instrument, containing no more than twelve spindles, to pay for each spindle per week — 0 2

For every Hand Doubling, Twisting, and Winding or Reeling Instrument, containing more than twelve, and not exceeding twenty-four spindles, to pay for each spindle, per week ———— 0 4

For every such Instrument, containing more than twenty-four spindles, to pay for such spindle, per week 1 0

Provided, that nothing in this act shall extend or be construed to restrain any laborer from using a pair or pairs of cards fixed upon a stock to work with the hand above Twelve inches long and Four inches broad in the wire; or from making use of a single pair of hand cards containing above the demensions aforesaid in the wire.

Provided, that if any person or persons shall use or exercise two or more Instruments, for the purpose of doubling and twisting, or doubling or twisting only, turned at the same time, and by one person, containing more than twenty-four spindles in the whole; or two or more Hand Doubling, Twisting and Winding, or Reeling Instruments, turned at the same time, and by one person, containing above twelve spindles in the whole; or two or more Hand Roving or Spinning Instruments, turned at the same time by one person, exceeding twelve spindles or roving tools in the whole in such Roving Instruments; or twenty-four in all in such Spinning Instruments; in such case they shall be considered as only one instrument, and pay for the same according to the number of all the spindles contained in such instruments.

Provided, that if any person shall use or exercise by himself, his family or servants, any number of Hand Roving, or Spinning; or Doubling; or Twisting; or Doubling and Twisting, or Doubling, Twisting, and Winding Instruments, which contain in the whole in such Instruments above the spindles following; to wit, twenty-four roving spindles or tools, sixty spinning spindles, forty doubling or twisting spindles, twenty-four doubling, twisting and winding spindles, in such case all such instruments, exceeding the respective number aforesaid, shall be considered as only one instrument, and subject and liable to the duties and penalties aforesaid. And that this clause shall be liberally construed, in order to prevent as much as possible a monopoly, by

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persons having large factories or hundreds of these Roving, Spinning, Doubling, and Twisting Instruments, in one building, and thereby effectually hindering the beneficial purposes intended by this Act, which is to cause a general distribution of labor.

Provided also, That if any person or family shall use or exercise two or more Hand Roving Instruments, containing in the whole more than twelve Spindles or Tools, such Instruments shall be rated as one only, and pay the duty for the same accordingly.—The reason of this particular clause is, that by the manufacturer being permitted to have no more than twelve of these Roving Spindles duty free, the poor old women who can only Rove, and that but upon one Spindle, and not on these Jennies, may not be entirely deprived of this employment, of which they are only capable.

That if any person or persons shall use or exercise any Hand Spinning Instrument for the purpose of *roving* the Cotton with above twelve Spindles, or of *doubling and twisting*, or *doubling or twisting* two threads together on the same with above twenty-four Spindles, in such case it shall be considered as two or three distinct instruments, according to the number of the abovementioned operations it performs, or such instrument is appropriated to, and be subject and liable to the same duties as the before-mentioned Roving; or Doubling, and Twisting; or Doubling; or Twisting Instruments are.

That no person or persons whatsoever shall use or exercise any Hand-winding Instruments, which containeth more than two bobbins or Spindles, under the penalty of Twenty Pounds for each Instrument.

Provided also, that if any person or persons shall use or exercise any Instrument or Instruments, turned by the hand, which at one and the same time card and rove, or card and spin, or card and double, or card and twist; or any Instrument or Instruments, turned by the hand, which at one and the same time rove and spin, or rove and double, or rove and twist; or any Instrument or Instruments, turned by the hand, which at one and the same time spin and double, or spin and twist; such Instrument or Instruments shall be considered in the same light as the Patent Machines for carding, roving, and spinning, and pay duty for the same according to the quantity of the produce thereof, after the same rates as the Patent Machines.

Now with respect to the mode of collecting the several duties before proposed and mentioned.

First, as to those machines upon the produce whereof the duty is to be laid.

That there be proper persons appointed by the Legislature, skilled in the Cotton Manufacture, to collect these duties. Each person to have under his peculiar care a district, great or small, according to the number and magnitude of these works within his circuit; and such persons to go twice a week, or oftner, if the urgency of the proprietor's or manufacturer's business shall require it, to examine into, and take an account of the produce of them. The Cotton spun on these Machines is generally made up fit for sale, in parcels of six or twelve pounds weight. To each of these bundles a paper is made secure by the masters, specifying the number of hanks in the pound, and the number of pounds in the bundle. His Majesty's officer, if he shall think proper, is to search and examine into these bundles what are

their real contents, and whether the ticket annexed expresses the proper weight and quantity. And when every several parcel or bundle is taken an account of by the said officer; a stamped ticket, with the mark of the crown to be put thereon, in lieu of the ticket fixed thereto by the owner. That the proprietors selling or exporting this spun Cotton without these stamped tickets, to be subject to considerable penalties, with the forfeiture of the goods to the Crown and such of his Majesty's officers as shall seize the same. And this clause to extend to all who shall buy, export, or use this Cotton without these permits. And matters to be properly prohibited, under sufficient restrictions, from using the same crown tickets more than once.

2dly. As to the mode of collecting the duty on the produce of the Doubling, Twisting, and Winding Engines, going by water or horses.

The most eligible way of collecting this duty, will be for his Majesty's officer to attend at certain times every week, or oftener, at these works, to take an account of the quantity and weight of the Cotton while it is in the cop, before it is doubled and twisted; because, it comes off the Engine, twisted two threads together, and wound round upon bobbins to be warped for the loom. The exact weight and quantity cannot therefore be so well taken as while the Cotton is in the cop. For by trying the weight of one hundred and twenty yards of the thread, which makes a lea, reel'd off one cop only; the real number of hanks in the pound, and the quantity of pounds contained in such parcel of cops may be easily ascertained. No person to be permitted to work these cops upon these Engines before the officer has seen, and taken an account thereof.

And it shall be in the power of the Collector of His Majesty's duties, to tender to the proprietors of these Machines, &c. on oath, that they have worked no Cotton upon them since the last time of payment of the duty, but which the officer had previously seen, and taken a regular account of, on pain of refusal to forfeit a proper penalty.

3dly. With respect to the collecting the duty payable from the owners of these instruments worked by water, horses, or hand, the produce whereof is not taxed, but the instruments or tools only.

There can no difficulty arise on this head, as both the number of instruments, spindles, &c. and of consequence the proportionable tax payable for the same, are matters of ocular demonstration.

We have now to shew the propriety and happy tendency of this tax; and this shall be done, first, by giving as exact and just an account as we are able of the yearly revenue that we apprehend will accrue to government from the several duties before-mentioned. And, secondly, the clear profits that will still be made by the proprietors of these Machines and Engines, after the payment of the duties. And, thirdly, the general distribution of labor, and therefore of subsistence, to the industrious, but now starving poor, which in all probability will be the consequence of this act taking place.

1st. The Yearly Revenue.

There are at this time erected not less than fifteen to twenty Cotton Machines which Card, Rove, Spin, &c. These works altogether contain, on a moderate computation, thirty thousand Spindles, or more. Every one of

these Spindles will generally spin twelve hanks in one week, of that fineness which makes twenty-four hanks in the pound, and which, according to the duty aforelaid upon hanks of that number in the pound, is ninepence for the half pound; thirty thousand nine-pences is per week 1125l. and per annum

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There are fifty or more Doubling and Twisting Machines erected. These Machines Double Twist, and Wind, at least a thousand weight of Cotton per week. Every pound of this Cotton will, on an average, be about twenty-six hanks in the pound. The duty aforelaid upon hanks, of that number in the pound, is sixpence halfpenny; one thousand weight at sixpence halfpenny, is per week 27l. 1s. 8d. and per annum

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An exact calculation cannot well be made of the Carding and Roving Engines which go by water, &c. because we cannot tell what number of Cards, &c. the manufacturers may chuse to work in their Engines: but upon the low computation that two hundred only are employed, with twenty pair of Cards in each Engine, (saying nothing of those that Rove also) at the aforelaid duty of four-pence per pair, is, for one Engine six shillings and eight-pence per week; two hundred Engines at six shillings and eight-pence, is per week 66l. 13s. 4d. and per annum

3466 13 4

We labor under the same difficulty respecting the Hand Carding Engines, as it is not possible to form a certain idea to what extent they may be carried, since the duty laid thereon is so trifling: The effect of this act must however, cause an abundant increase of these instruments, the number and dimensions of the Cards being thus limited:—one thousand at least we may justly say will be built, which at two shillings each, is per week 100l. and per annum

5200 0 0

And as to the Hand Spinning, Doubling, and Twisting, and Roving Instruments, we cannot yet ascertain how this act will operate with the poor, so as to know certainly what the duty will amount to, because we have allowed several of these instruments in one family duty free, with which any industrious man or woman may get their bread, without increasing the number of Spindles; but as we expect there will nevertheless be persons desiring more than bare necessaries, we may safely reckon three thousand of the Hand Instruments to pay duty, and these at sixpence per week, which is the lowest tax, is per week 75l. and per annum

3900 0 0

Total per annum 72474 16 0

(14)

2dly. We shall now endeavour to shew, that notwithstanding this annual revenue of seventy-two thousand pounds will accrue to government, which may be applied to the mutual advantage of the kingdom, here will no unreasonable detriment arise to any individual thereby. And this shall be proved by making it apparent, that the proprietors of these Machines and Engines, after payment of the duty, will yet continue to neat a certain profit of thirty to forty pounds per centum on their goods.

We have before stated, that the fifteen to twenty Patent Machines already erected, include at least thirty thousand spindles, and that each spindle on an average will compleat every week twelve hanks of that fineness which makes twenty-four in a pound, the medium sort spun on these Machines. The proprietors give for each pound picking five farthings, carding and roving three farthings, spinning three halfpence, reeling one penny, wear and tear of the Machine and extra servants, to wit, the overlookers, three halfpence, making in the whole sixpence per pound; to which add the proposed duty of one shilling and sixpence upon every pound of twenty-four hanks, at three farthings per hank, is two shillings per pound. Now the manufacture of this Cotton, duty and all expences included, will be no more than two shillings per pound, but without the duty is sixpence only.

The lowest charge the proprietors make for spinning, &c. (exclusive of the price of the wool) has never been less than three shillings in the pound for twenty-four hanks. It is therefore manifest we did not deviate from the truth, when we affirmed the profits to the proprietors, with the proposed duty, would still be thirty to forty pounds per centum. And what honest man can desire more?

The tax laid on all the other instruments (and indeed of the preceding ones) going by water or horses, is founded on this plain reasonable principle. That these instruments, with the assistance of one or two persons only, being capable of performing as much work as in the same time would, on a general computation, employ from eight to ten grown up people, and the profits thereof vesting solely in the owners; it is but just and equitable a part of such profits should be appropriated to the general exigences of the state, and thereby put it in the power of the poor laboring and pinched artificer of acquiring a living for himself and family of being capable to compleat his work on the same, or nearly the same terms.

And this principle extends its influence *even* to all those *private Hand Instruments* which contain more spindles than are reasonably sufficient to furnish the laborer with the necessaries of life, and has obliged *him*, to pay a certain duty if he uses any Hand Instrument, or turns more than one at a time, containing above a certain number of spindles.

3d. The happy effects which will follow these Machines being suppressed, or reasonably taxed, according to the rates before laid down, are many.

To enter into a particular recital of all the happy fruits of this act, will far exceed our present design; we can but briefly mention a few of the most obvious; and leave every humane mind to suggest the rest. The parishes will be eased of their numerous poor and enormous assessments; the farmer and land-holder delivered from the weight of their taxes; the small tradesman and retailing shop-keeper be able to get

(15)

in their debts; the emigration of many thousands of honest and industrious families will be stopped; population (the strength of our country) increase; future riots prevented; *the hearts of the poor, their labor again reverting into their hands, shall sing for joy*; and we are bold to affirm, none will be sufferers, but those who as much deserve it as monopolizers of food; for we can perceive *no just distinction between forestalling of that article, and depriving a poor man of the means of acquiring it.*

And that this Act shall extend to England, Ireland, Scotland, the Town of Berwick upon Tweed, the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey, and all other, his Majesties dominions.

London, }
Feb, 1. 1780. }

W. C.
&
R. M.

