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CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
PROPOSAL
FOR THE
REDUCTION OF INTEREST,

So far as it RELATES to the
East-India Company,
AND ON

The QUESTION to be Ballotted for,
at the EAST-INDIA House, on *Wednes-*
day next, the 3d of *January* :

WITH
Some REMARKS on what pass at the two
GENERAL-COURTS on this Subject.

In a LETTER to the GENTLEMEN and LADIES,
Proprietors of the *East-India* Stock.

L O N D O N:
Printed for C. CORBETT, against *St. Dunstan's Church,*
Fleet-street,

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TO THE
Proprietors of the *East India*
Stock.

Gentlemen and Ladies,

THE Proposal made by Parliament for the lessening of Interest on such Part of the publick Debt, as now carries *Four per Cent. per Annum*, is a Matter of the utmost Consequence, as well to this Nation in general as to every Individual; but seems most particularly and most immediately to affect those, who have all, or most of their Fortunes in Annuities, or Stocks, depending on Annuities running at that Interest.

It is not my Intention to enter into Arguments for or against the general Scheme of the Proposal; I shall therefore, consider it only as it is relative to the *East India* Stock, and make some Remarks on the

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Steps hitherto taken, to exclude you from having any Advantage from it, though you should think it beneficial; and on the other hand, let you know the Endeavours that have been used to put it in your power to chuse for yourselves, either by accepting or rejecting it.

In order to explain the manner in which this Proposal may affect *East India* Stock, it may be necessary to premise the present Situation of the Company, with regard to what is due to them from the Publick; and what is due from the Company to the Possessors of their Bonds; and to consider the different Nature of these two Debts.

The Debt due from the Publick to the Company was created at three different Periods; the first for Two Millions; the second, for One Million Two Hundred Thousand Pounds; and the last for One Million. These different Sums being advanced for the Service of the Crown always at an Interest below the common Interest of the Times, in order to compensate the Loss the Company might sustain thereby, the Legislature always gave them, or confirmed to them, their exclusive Privileges of Trade, or prolonged

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longed them to a distant Time. That the Value of these Privileges may be judged of, we need only look back to what past in 1730, when the Debt due to the Company, amounting to Three Million Two Hundred Thousand Pounds ran at an Interest of Five *per Cent. per Annum*, and their exclusive Privileges were to continue six Years to come, *viz.* to the Year 1736. The Government being at that Time under no Necessity to borrow Money, the Company did not think fit to wait to see what might be the Situation of publick Affairs, when their exclusive Privileges were near ceasing, but thought it prudent to submit to an immediate Reduction of One *per Cent. per Annum* on their Capital, *viz.* from Five to Four *per Cent.* a Loss of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, and to pay Two Hundred Thousand Pounds in ready Money to obtain a Prolongation of their Privileges for thirty Years to come beyond the then running Term.

In the Year 1744. the Government wanting Money, and being desirous to keep down the Rate of Interest, likely to rise considerably on the breaking out of the

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War

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War with *France* then hourly expected, had once more Recourse to the Aid of the *East India Company*, and came to an Agreement, that the Company should raise One Million on their own Credit, and lend it to the Government at Three Pounds *per Cent. per Annum*, in Consideration of a Prolongation of their Privileges for fourteen Years beyond the Term agreed to in 1730. so that they now stand confirmed to *Lady-Day 1780.* and the Debt due from the Government to the Company is Three Million Two Hundred Thousand Pounds at Four *per Cent. per Annum*, producing One Hundred and Eighty Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, and One Million at Three *per Cent. per Annum*, producing Thirty Thousand Pounds *per Annum*; but as on lending the last Million it was agreed that no Part of the Three Million Two Hundred Thousand Pounds should be paid off, unless a proportionable Part of the One Million was likewise paid off at the same Time, for Example's Sake, if Three Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds of the Four *per Cent.* Annuity be paid off, One Hundred Thousand Pounds of the Three *per Cent.*

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Cent. Annuity must be paid off at the same Time; therefore the two Sums so blended are to be considered as one Sum, amounting to Four Millions Two Hundred Thousand Pounds, producing an Annuity of One Hundred and Fifty-eight Thousand Pounds, or Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings, Two-pence, and six-seventh Parts of a Penny *per Cent. per Annum.* This is the Situation of the Company, with Regard to the Debt due from the Publick.

The Debt due from the Company, arose from the Necessity they were under, at lending from Time to Time such large Sums to the Publick, to borrow Money for carrying on their Trade, as they lent their Money to the Publick at a Rate under the common Interest of the Times, in Consideration of the Advantages they received in Point of Trade. It was not to be expected they could borrow Money at the same Rate of Interest, and on the same Terms they had lent, without giving to the Lender something adequate to the Privileges granted to the Company: But as this could not be done, and as the paying a higher Rate of Interest than they had lent at, would have been

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been a continual considerable Loss; to prevent which, the Method of borrowing Money on their Bonds, was approved of as the only Expedient; and this could not have succeeded, had it not been for the particular Conditions annexed to them, which makes them of great Convenience to the Bank, private Bankers, and such who have large Sums lying by them, to be employed at a future Time; since by these Conditions, the Possessor of a Bond is always Master of his Money, on giving six Months Notice, and at liberty, when they have six Months Interest due, to pay them into the Company's Treasury for the Amount of Principal and Interest; and in the same Manner as Cash is paid in for Goods, bought at the Company's Sale: So that the Nature of the Debt, due to the Company from the Publick, differs in this very material Circumstance, from the Debt due from the Company to Bond Proprietors. That the Publick will pay what they owe the Company, only when it suits the Publick; and the Company must pay as above, whenever it suits the Bond Proprietor to call for his Money, or to pay his Bonds in at the Sale; that

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that is, when ever they are under Par in *Exchange-Alley*.

Having explained the Company's Situation as Creditor and Debtor, I come now to consider the Proposal made by Parliament for reducing Interest, so far as it is relative to the *East-India* Stock.

This Proposal extending only to Debts, carrying Interest at the Rate of Four Pounds *per Cent. per Annum*; from what has been said it doth not appear that the Company, if considered as a Creditor, receiving only Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings, Two-pence and six seventh Parts of a Penny *per Cent. per Annum*, can look upon themselves as included in this Proposal; they might therefore with great Propriety have fore-born to have taken any Notice of it, had it not been for the Intimation given them of the Resolution of Parliament, since past into a Law; whereby it is plain the Legislature considers the Debt due to the Company in a different Light, and the Exception made in the Act as to this Debt confirms this, as it would be absurd to except a Debt, carrying an Interest of $l3, 15, 2 \frac{6}{7}$ *per Cent.* in an Act that is intended to affect only

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only Debts, carrying Interest at Four *per Cent. per Annum*. Nevertheless, as there is nothing compulsive on the Creditors of the Publick by this Act, it is not material whether we consider it in one Light or the other ; the only Thing under Deliberation at present, is the Question to be balloted for at the *East-India* House, on *Wednesday* the 3d of *January*, and to consider how far it may be of Advantage or Disadvantage to the Share you have in the *East-India* Stock.

It is impossible that Persons unexperienced in Business in general, or who are in a great Measure unacquainted with the Nature of the Company's Affairs, can be so good Judges of what is most for the Company's Interest, as those to whom the Management of them hath been intrusted, and who have conducted them for a Number of Years uninterruptedly and without Reproach. The Question now, the Object of your Ballot, comes recommended by the Opinion of the Court of Directors, as was declared from the Chair to the General Court, held on *Wednesday* the 13th Instant. And at the General Court held on *Tuesday* the 19th

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19th, the Chairman declared, the whole Court of Directors continued unanimous in the same Opinion they were in at the preceding General Court, save one Gentleman, who had given him leave to name him. The steady and deliberate Opinion of such a Set of Gentlemen, who by a special Oath are obliged to give their best Advice, for the Interest of the Company, ought to have great Weight. They are under the Ties of Interest to give their best Advice, as they must be large Proprietors to be qualified to be Directors, the Stock must be their own Property, and not in Trust : Moreover, can it be supposed that Gentlemen, otherwise of unblemished Characters, should in this Instance be so wicked, ungenerous, or ungrateful, as to mislead those who have voluntarily placed and continued so great a Confidence in them for a long Series of Years? Should the Dissent of one single Gentleman, from the Opinion of twenty-three, be thought of Weight enough to raise a Doubt of the Judgment or Sincerity of the rest ; it can be no Impeachment of that Gentleman, to remark, that his coming into the Direction was in *April* last,

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and that by his usual Business, until that Time, he could not acquire such a Knowledge of the Company's Affairs, as most of the others must from their long Experience have attained. But as Opinions, however well founded, are not Convictions sufficient to those who resolve not to believe, let us consider the Question itself, as it stands supported by Fact, by Reason, by Justice and Honour, and by the Relation it hath to the Interest of the Company.

The first Part of the Question contains an Acceptance of the Proposal from the Government; which is followed by the strongest Facts, with Reasons why the Company should accept it on certain Conditions, therein mentioned. The Fact is, that the Company hath greatly suffered by having been subject to raise the Rate of Interest on their Bonds; the Reasons are, that they may hereafter be exposed to the same Inconveniences: Therefore, in order to enable them to lessen their Bond Debt, they annex the Terms and Conditions on which they agree to the Reduction of their Interest. These Terms and Conditions mean no more, than by Degrees to get rid
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of a Debt of Three Millions, Two Hundred Thousand Pounds, in Bonds; by taking the first favourable Opportunity to sell at Times, or together, so much of their Annuity. And as it is Part of the Proposal, that the Bond Proprietors shall have the Preference to purchase the Annuity at Par, it is just and honourable in the Company to give them this Preference; since the Annuity must necessarily be worth a Premium when sold; and that Premium will in a great measure, if not quite, compensate the Loss they might otherwise suffer by having bought Bonds at a high Price.

It is plain the Company's sole Inducement to accept the Proposal, is to embrace the Opportunity, to pay off a burthensome and dangerous Debt; a Debt not contracted out of Choice, so much as out of Necessity, as has been already explained. That Necessity being now over, and the Company in Possession of their Privileges fully paid for, for above thirty Years to come, is it possible any Proprietor of *East-India* Stock can desire to let such an Opportunity slip, without being biased, either in Favour of his Property, in other Companies, or in the

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Four

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Four *per Cent.* Annuities, or else that as a Bondholder, he wishes to have this Load of Bonds continued for his own Convenience, without regard to the Sufferings of the Company, in which his Share may be very inconsiderable, in Proportion to his Property in Bonds, or the Funds.

The only Objections hitherto made, that seem to carry any Weight against accepting the Proposal, are, the Loss of a Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds a Year, being the present Difference between what the Company receives from the Publick, and what they pay for Interest on their Bonds: The Probability of the Bondholders refusing to accept of the Company's Annuities, when reduced in Exchange for their Bonds; in which Case, the Company must remain incumbered with their Bonds on worse Terms, than they would by rejecting the Proposal. Another Objection is, that as the Four and the Three *per Cent.* Annuities are blended, if the Company dispose of Three Million Two Hundred Thousand Pounds of their Annuity, there ought to be a Proportion of the Three *per Cent.* sold along with the Four *per Cent.* that

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that otherwise, by the Million remaining, the Company would suffer a Loss; which I admit to be Seven Thousand, Six Hundred and Nineteen Pounds *per Annum.* The Loss of a Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds, were such a Profit real, or possible to be permanent, this would doubtless be a serious Consideration; but one may fairly, in Answer to this Objection, conclude, that what has happened in former Times, may happen again; and that the Company ought to do what every honest Merchant in his Senses, would do under the like Circumstances. When the Company lent their last Million, at the Beginning of 1744, they at that Time enjoyed this transitory Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds a Year; but how soon was the Scene changed? Before the End of next Year, they were obliged to give up all this Profit, and submit to a Loss of Ten Thousand Pounds a Year, which has continued ever since, and still subsists: They then little expected, that before the End of the Year 1745, their Bonds should be bought up in *Exchange-Alley*, at Four Guineas Discount on each Hundred Pounds, and be carried

carried immediately to be marked for Payment at the Expiration of Six Months. This was began to be done by a noted Banker, and followed by others. The Profit these Gentlemen made to themselves, on the marked Bonds, for the Six Months, was no less than after the Rate of Eleven Pounds Eighteen Shillings, *per Cent. per Annum*. The Purchasers of the Company's Goods (many of whom are Foreigners) took the Advantage of the Times; they bought the Company's Bonds likewise, at large Discounts, and paid them at Par, for the Goods they had bought.

The Distress this brought on the Company is not easily described, but by what was said in the General Court from good Authority, had it not been for some fortunate Incidents which happened at that Time, and were with great Judgment and Vigilance improved by the Directors to the Utility of the Company, the Necessity of their Affairs would have required a Call on the Proprietors of Twelve and a Half *per Cent.* being Four Hundred Thousand Pounds, never yet paid in, nay it was a Question, if that would have been sufficient;

cient. But let any one consider what Effect such a Call must have had at that Time on the National Credit in general, but more particularly on the Company's. The Call the Bank made on their Subscription in that Conjunction is but a faint Example of what would have happened. It may be said in Reply, that this Distress was of an extraordinary Nature, we had then a *French War* upon our Hands, and a Rebellion at Home, that it is to be hoped we shall never be again under the like Circumstances; all this is true, but what has happened, may happen again: And Experience has proved, that Publick Credit does not always flourish, though we have neither a *French War*, or a Rebellion. No one Reign has past since the Company's Bonds were first issued, but that they have been at a Discount, and the Company has thereby suffered greatly. It was so in King *William's*, Queen *Anne's*, his late Majesty's, and has been so in his present Majesty's Reign; how chimerical is it then to suppose the like will not happen again? When it does, there is not only an end of your Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds

Pounds *per Annum*, and the Commencement of an annual Loss, but what is infinitely worse, the Danger of having a total Stagnation of the Company's Business, since such fortunate Events can hardly happen, as those by which the Company was so seasonably relieved in the Year 1745. But for Argument's Sake, let it be admitted, that Peace, Plenty, and high Credit are to remain for some time, what is then to become of this Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds? The Answer is plain, you cannot expect to keep it but for a very short time, surely no one can suppose, however ill advised the present Scheme may have been, that the Legislator, if this fail, as it is generally thought it will, may not soon fall into another which may answer their Purposes, and be less advantageous to their Creditors. We must all be sensible of the Efficacy of Lotteries to raise Money at low Interest. In the Year 1744. though in the Height of a War with *Spain*, and at the Eve of the War with *France*, a Sum of One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pounds was raised at Three *per Cent.* by turning only Six Hundred Thousand Pounds
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of it into a Lottery, should the same Method be put in Practice, surely a much larger Sum might be raised in these Times of Tranquillity; if added to this, a Million of the Sinking Fund be applied yearly to lessen the National Debt, the Four *per Cent.* Annuitants may soon find themselves in a worse Situation than they would be by accepting the Proposals now offered them more especially, if the Legislator should reduce National Interest from Five to Four *per Cent.* It may now be asked, what Prospect is there, that the Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds a Year can be lasting, either in War or Peace? The Answer is, there is no Prospect. Would any Merchant in private Life risque being undone for a Chance only of getting One *per Cent.* extraordinary on all he has in the World, by lending it to a Person he cannot oblige even by Agreement to pay him when he wants it; and by borrowing an equal Sum to carry on his Trade of a promiscuous Number of People, who can undo him when they please, by calling in the Money they have lent him; yet such is the Company's Situation; and Example has shewn
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their Bond Creditors have had no Compassion, when it has been their immediate Interest to oppress them.

As to the Probability of the Bondholders refusing to accept the Company's Annuities, when reduced in Exchange for Bonds; can any one say they will chuse to be paid off at Par, when they can have an Annuity in Exchange for it carrying a Premium? Or can it be doubted if the reduced Annuity, or even the present Three *per Cent.* Annuities will sell at a Premium, if the publick Tranquillity remains but two Years. Before the last War, Three *per Cent.* Annuities were for some time constantly and considerably above Par, though the Times had a gloomy Aspect long before the War broke out; and shall they not now be soon above Par, when every Nation round us, tired with War, is wishing to enjoy the Fruits of Peace?

The remaining Objection is, that the Company's Annuities of Four and Three *per Cent. per Annum*, ought to be inseparable, as the Difference to the Company seems considerable; this would have Weight, if the Four *per Cent.* Annuities were to be paid

paid off without the Company's having any Convenience from it, as the Case would be, were it not for having the Opportunity to get rid of so much of their Debt; but whether it be prudent on this Consideration to let the Opportunity pass, and be still exposed to a Return of the Calamities already mentioned is another Question; doubtless if the Legislature by their Act, had not limited their Proposal, this Benefit might have been insisted upon, and very likely would have been granted; but if one Opportunity of small Advantage has been missed, is that a Reason to lose another of much more Consequence? The only Advantage, which would arise to the Stock by this Alteration, is not a Farthing more than Four Shillings and Nine Pence *per Annum*, on One Hundred Pounds Capital Stock, or about Two Shillings and Seven Pence on each Hundred Pound's Value of Stock, according to the present Market-Price; surely therefore this cannot be an Object worth attending to.

To judge still more accurately what may be the farther Consequences of the general Reduction of Interest to the *East*

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India Stock in particular; It is morally certain, that the less the National Interest is, the more will be the Value of this Stock, taking it for granted, their Trade will be carried on with the same Advantage as heretofore in Times of Peace, or rather, that it will be much more profitable from the prodigious Increase of their Tea Trade, and the Restraint laid on the Wear of Cambricks.

The Company for many Years have given a Dividend of Eight *per Cent. per Annum*, and a little before the *French* War broke out, by an Account laid before the General Court, it appeared, that they might for Ten Years before have divided Ten *per Cent. per Annum* instead of Eight. But as they reserved an accumulating Surplus, it has served to supply extraordinary Expences, and make good the Losses the War has brought upon them. It is therefore certain, if all Four *per Cent.* Annuities are to be reduced, as there is no doubt but they will, if the Peace last but for a short Time, that *East India* Stock, giving at least Eight *per Cent.* will be worth much more in proportion to the Non-trading
Stocks,

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Stocks, or Publick Funds, than it is at present. One might reason a good deal on the general Benefit the Reduction of Interest, and particularly the Payment of the *East India* Bonds, will be to Trade in general; but so much has been said on the Subject on former Occasions by the ablest Hands, that it would be idle to repeat it, as it would be vain to pretend to add to it; it is therefore time to put an end to this Letter, which at first was intended to be kept within Compass, so as to be published only in one of the Daily Papers, which the length of it does not now admit of. The only thing that now remains, is to make some Remarks on the Steps taken to exclude you from judging for yourselves, and the Endeavours that have on the other hand been used to put it in your Power to accept or reject the Proposal. As to this Point, this Address is only to the Ladies possessors of *East India* Stock, and to such Gentlemen among the Proprietors, as cannot attend General Courts, whether from Business, or want of Health to bear the Fatigue of attending, especially at this Season.

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There is a new Custom introducing at General Courts, called together to consider of Proposals of the greatest Consequence to the Proprietors; which, as it is extremely injurious to all the Ladies, and such Gentlemen as cannot attend, ought not to be passed over without Notice. The Business of the Day is no sooner opened from the Chair, but Numbers of the Persons present, if they dislike the Proposition, without giving Time to have it discussed, immediately move to adjourn; and this they do in a clamorous, tumultuous Way, so as to impede the Proceedings, without Regard to the Dignity of the Persons placed at the Head of their Affairs, or the least Respect to those the Proposal came from. At the General Court held the 13th, the Directors were called upon to give their Opinion, which then had the Appearance of being unanimous (tho' one Gentleman thought fit at the General Court, held on the 19th, to declare his Dissent). This Opinion was no sooner given, but the Motion was made to adjourn, and was seconded in such a riotous Manner, that if the Chairman had not assumed a Degree of Authority, becoming the

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the Seat he was in, the Court would have been immediately broke up, without proceeding on Business; and every Person absent had been excluded from giving their Opinion. The Debate of this Day, was exceedingly trifling; several Gentlemen, among whom even some well acquainted with Business, who have formerly been Directors of the *East-India* Company, and are now Directors of the *Bank*, pretending extreme Ignorance; they could not understand the Opinion given by the Court of Directors, that a Matter of such great Consequence ought not to be decided precipitately; that the People absent, as well as those present, ought to have Time and Means to judge for themselves; tho', by the bye, those very Gentlemen had endeavoured to exclude them from judging for themselves; in short, a thousand Difficulties started, and Questions put, which they themselves could easily answer, tho' they gave the Chairman the Trouble to do it. It was at last agreed to print the Opinion, and to adjourn to the 19th, in order to take it into Consideration.

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At the General Court of the 19th, the Question was moved exactly conformable to the Opinion of the Court of Directors. The same Attempt was made, as in the preceding Court, to adjourn without coming to any Resolution : And after a warm Debate of above two Hours, the Question for Adjournment being insisted on, was put, and a Majority being declared against it, contrary to all Rule, and even against the Sense of the General Court, taken before it was put, a Ballot for the Question of Adjournment was demanded ; but that being overruled, it was proposed with much Vehemence to divide the Court ; but that having been deemed irregular, by a former General Court, there was at last a Necessity to agree to put the Question for accepting the Proposal, which was carried in the Affirmative.

Both Sides being prepared to demand the Ballot, by the Decision in Favour of the Question ; it fell to the Lot of those who opposed it ; of those who were for the Adjournment, without putting the main Question ; of those who were for excluding the Persons, to whom this is more particularly addressed.

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addressed. I say it fell to their Lot to demand the Ballot, the Benefit of which they had endeavoured to deprive you of, tho' now very likely they will use every Art to induce you to come into their Measures, tho' inconsistent with your own Interests.

I cannot conclude this Letter, long as it is already, without taking Notice of some Arguments, used in the General Court, against the Question ; and which it would not have been worth while to have exposed, if many of them had not since appeared in Print in the General Advertisers of the 20th and 29th Instant. In the first is a Copy of a Calculation, printed in little Billets, and scattered about the General Court, during the Time of the Debate, in order to draw those present into the Belief of an Absurdity, and thereby by the means of determining their Vote, at that Time against the Question. As this ingenious Calculator states the Case, you may reserve 761905*l.* of your Four *per Cent.* Annuities ; and nevertheless give up a Profit of Thirty Two Thousand Pounds a Year ; but this very well meaning Man ought to have known, before he put his Thoughts in Print, that the whole supposed

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Profit

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Profit must arise on the Four *per Cent.* Annuities only; that therefore whatever you reserve of them you must reserve a Proportion of the Profit; and that by reserving 761905 *l.* of those Annuities, you keep back 7619 *l.* 15. *per Annum* out of the 32000 *l.* *per Annum*, so that you would in that Case give up only 24380 *l.* 19 *s.* His Project to have the small Sum of 2382 *l.* *per Annum*, allowed to square his Account, is really diverting; this good Friend is so modest, as to desire that One Million of the Debt, due to the Company, may be raised from 3 *l.* 15 *s.* 2 $\frac{6}{7}$ *per Cent.* to Four *per Cent.* when the Legislature is endeavouring to reduce Fifty Eight Millions from Four, to Three and a Half *per Cent.* for seven Years, and afterwards to Three *per Cent.*

In the Letter printed on the 29th, some very extraordinary Propositions are advanced; some of which it may be proper to take Notice of. One is, that the Company have gained within these Ten Years, Two Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds by their Bonds.

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This Proposition was advanced at the General Court, by one of the Gentlemen already pointed at; but it was so well known not to be true, that no one thought it worth answering; and since this Sort of Silence is by the Letter-Writer taken to be an Acknowledgment, I am sorry to be forced to shew the Fallaciousness of this Proposition. If within these last ten Years be meant the ten Years preceding this *Christmas*, the Account will stand thus; there was a Profit at the Rate of 32,000 *l.* *per Annum*, for the first six Years and a Quarter, which amounts to just 200,000 *l.* and for the last three Years and three Quarters there is a Loss on the Bonds at the Rate of Ten Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, which amounts to 37,500 *l.* to which must be added what it cost the Company to get the Bonds reduced to Three *per Cent.* *viz.* a half *per Cent.* *Premium* on a Subscription of Two Millions comes to 10,000 *l.* and a Gratuity paid the Broker, who conducted the Subscription, 4,000 *l.* which two Sums added to the 37,500 *l.* make 51,500 *l.* to be deducted from 200,000 *l.* which leaves 148,500 *l.* instead of 220,000 *l.* for ten Years, or

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14,850 *l.*

14,850*l.* instead of 22,000*l. per Annum*; but if the Period of ten Years be taken back from the last of next *March*, when the Loss which now runs on is to cease, the ten Years Profit will be reduced from 220,000*l.* to 138,000*l.* or 13,800*l. per Annum*; this indeed is an Object, if the Company had suffered nothing by their Bonds. But if it be considered what the Company did actually suffer, and what they would infallibly have suffered, had it not been for the fortunate Incidents already mentioned, they must in one Season have lost much more by having Bonds against them, than they got in the whole ten Years. Other Propositions are, that the Buyers at the Sales advanced so much the more the Price of the Goods, as the Bonds were at Discount: Saying, that the Discount on the Company's Bonds was not owing to Want of Credit. That the having or not having Bonds, will not at all augment (he does not say diminish) the Company's Cash. His recommending a Call on the Proprietors, in Times of the greatest Extremity, rather than to struggle thro' them, in the Manner

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the Directors did in part of 1745 and 1746. The appealing to the Gentlemen of *Lombard-street*, about the Utility of Bonds to the Company. The Distress the Payment of, or lessening the Number of Bonds, will bring on the Bank and Bankers, with many other such like Propositions, are either so unintelligible, absurd, weak, or so fallacious, that they merit no Attention.

To suppose that Men will buy up Bonds at large Discount, in order to buy their Goods so much the dearer, is ridiculous; but if it were possible to suppose they get nothing, the Company must issue the Bonds again to come at Cash. By putting a fictitious increased Value on the Goods, the Duty to the Crown would be considerably augmented in Reality. If want of Credit does not bring the Bonds to Discount, I should be glad to know what does. In *Queen Anne's* Reign, Bonds carried Six *per Cent.* Interest, the full, legal Interest of that Time; they were nevertheless at a Discount so long as the War lasted. But it is Time to close this.

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If it has informed you sufficiently to be able to judge of your true Interest, I have my End.

I am,

Gentlemen and Ladies,

*Your sincere Well-Wisher
and Fellow Proprietor.*

*London, Decem-
ber 30, 1749.*