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S. F. WADDINGTON'S
REPORT

RELATIVE TO THE
COMMERCIAL RELATIONS
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOMS,

PRESENTED TO, AND APPROVED BY
A PRELIMINARY MEETING OF MERCHANTS, &c.

AT THE
NEW LONDON TAVERN, CHEAPSIDE,
21st Jan. 1812.

"Your Reporter thus presents an Adamantine Base for an Open Trade
"beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn.—It is for others
"to call Meetings and erect the glorious Superstructure—he will
"not again obtrude himself."

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND
SOLD BY SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES, PATERNOSTER-RROW; C.
RICHARDSON, CORNHILL; AND C. CHAPPLE, FLEET-MALL.

London. 1812. Printed and Sold by the Author.

Price One Shilling.

THE
 REPORT
 OF THE
 COMMITTEE
 OF THE
 HOUSE OF COMMONS
 ON THE
 PETITION
 OF THE
 EAST INDIA COMPANY
 IN RELATION
 TO THE
 TRADE
 TO THE
 EAST INDIES
 AND
 THE
 TRADE
 TO THE
 WEST INDIES
 AND
 THE
 TRADE
 TO THE
 SOUTH SEAS
 IN THE
 YEAR
 1811

J. G. Barnard, Printer, Skinner Street, London.

OPEN TRADE,
&c. &c.

A COMMERCIAL REPORT,

Containing the general Reasons why the Undersigned resolved to present to the United Kingdom, an Outline (in a Publication, intituled, "*The Oriental Exposition,*" and sold by Sherwood and Co. Paternoster-row), for a free and open Trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn; and has *presumed to summon together a select Meeting* at the New London Tavern, on the 21st of January, 1812, when this Report was read.

AT the termination of the Session of Parliament, 1811, the contemplative poli-

tician, and friend to his country, could not view without alarm the actual consequences of a long and pernicious scheme of domestic policy, and continental warfare.

At home we had, in lieu of the precious metals, an incalculable extent of paper currency; and our revenue had commenced an abridgment, because that, abroad, the profound prohibitory measures of our subtle foe had completely cramped our industry, and endangered even our loyalty and our internal tranquillity. This, then, was the actual position of our once pre-eminent kingdom.

In order to ascertain what could be the fundamental CAUSES of this alarming situation, your Reporter sought, but in vain, to find them amongst the aerial or vindictive conceits of public men, actuated either by interest, or more plausibly indeed, by

what it is the fashion to term "existing circumstances."

These CAUSES, then, were to be found in the *comparative modes* by which wars had been heretofore conducted; and in what was the actual civil policy of a WISE government.

In this research, it was impossible for your Reporter to err, when he pronounced that "with such WISE governments, wars could not be conscientiously and safely prolonged beyond the moment when the integrity of the commonwealth was assured," and "the moment that the OCCUPATION of the whole population was no longer guaranteed."

In the examination of former wars, your Reporter ascertains that, generally, BOTH those primary objects were most scrupulously attended to; and, in a comparison,

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he was mortified to find that, even before the Revolution, the latter object was peculiarly predominant; for the Stuarts appear to have had in view the aggrandizement of our commercial natives, at the expence of the Dutch and French nations.

For the purpose of ascertaining by what different hostile act this great object, the OCCUPATION of the whole mass of the people was endangered, your Reporter had but to remark, that, in all wars up to the present one, the United Kingdom had never lost its continental intercourse: there had ever existed, either by arrangement tacit or understood, an immense contraband, even with France itself; and this social hostile scheme of government would have again obtained in this war, if the United Kingdom had not resorted to the new feature of blockading the ports of the antagonist.

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What was the consequence? The United Kingdom, by the countervailing measures of the foe, and by the fruitless specie loans to its continental allies, lost its European continental markets, and was imperiously compelled to recur to a paper substitution for the once specie currency.

This paper substitution, then, gave to our internal energies an astonishing impulse: not an agriculturist but was benefited, not a manufacturer or a merchant without embracing it for the purpose of expanding his machinery and his connections. All this, however, required an EXTERNAL expansion of the demands for our national industry; but, alas! our continental hostility only abridged our already contracted channels, and neutrals, especially those of the United States, were the vehicles of our industry, and, at the same moment or soon afterwards, in their ingress

into hostile France, became the object of our envy and our resentment.

Soon, then, did the United Kingdom find itself further deprived of the precious metals; and it was not difficult to discern to what an extent manufacturing and commercial distress would inevitably arise.

Your Reporter must here, however, declare, as a duty he owes to candor, that he does not presume so far to dive into the mysteries of state policy as to arraign those public measures which, by the continental blockade, has thus unfortunately produced so critical a dilemma. On the contrary, your Reporter is of opinion, that if the United States and other neutrals had had free ingress and regress into all the European ports, our own country would have participated in the drama of European revolution.

It is another opinion which he entertains of the wisdom of granting to the United States, in 1794, a tranquil participation with the Honourable East India Company's extensive and lucrative commerce, but which could not be politically conceded to the LOYAL BRITISH AMERICAN COLONIES, to the SUFFERING *West Indian Islands*, and to 19-20ths of the subjects of Great Britain and Ireland. This state measure, your Reporter pronounces as having proved the most impolitic and unfortunate act of His Majesty's long and eventful reign.

This United States' participation of seventeen years, by the lower rate at which they can navigate, by their immense sales to OUR OWN North American and West Indian Colonies, where, although re-shipped, they found no difficulty in introducing immense quantities of teas, mankeens, and other of their Oriental importations, at

GREATLY LOWER prices than the loyal EUROPEAN BRITISH; in addition to their uninterrupted commerce with the European ports (until very lately), gave these United States such an incredible increase of wealth and commercial power, such an insight into the arcana of manufacturing and nautical science, as induced them even to prescribe our national industry; and, aware of our interminate European warfare, aware, no doubt, of our commercial difficulties, cunningly calculating upon our East India Company, and government connection and INDIVISIBILITY, presumptuously supposed that we could be even INSULTED with impunity.

There were, however, inducements for preserving the terms of amity with the United States, which became almost insuperable. To the United Kingdom an immense balance was due; and if the former did not retain their French alliance,

a debt as great would be lost to republican America. This then was, and is yet, the actual situation of our commercial relations. By the events of the continental war, we had successively abandoned our commercial relations in almost every one of the European countries; and, in but too many cases, had left our balances behind us. It is the same with the United States. In Buenos Ayres, and in the Brazils, our impetuous commercial energy, like some stream long obstructed, became a fatal inundation, and one-half of the adventurers were ruined.

A further emission then of circulating medium became necessary, to avert a general distress, and this has produced a thousand desultory disquisitions upon the nature of *commercial balances* and of a *circulating medium*. The most able pub-

licists have merely agreed that "there is by an increased paper circulation, a GENERAL NOMINAL INCREASE IN PRICES OF PERHAPS EVERY ARTICLE," but, not one of them appears to have discovered, that this, THUS GENERAL, is not of itself an evil; for, IF IT WERE, *it would in the natural course of events, have produced, long ere this, some national commotion,* nor has any one of them yet rationally accounted for the wonderful phenomenon, that although an increased circulating medium had thus advanced every *internal* article, yet we were actually SHIPPING our industry at LOWER PRICES THAN BEFORE THE BANK OF ENGLAND RESTRICTIONS OF 1797.

To account for this most important position, your Reporter conceives it sufficient to state that, such increased circulating medium gave greater facilities to the internal intercourse of man with his neigh-

bour, ALIKE POSSESSED WITH A CONFIDENCE IN THE INVINCIBILITY OF THEIR GOVERNMENT. There are different denominations of commercial property: there is CASH, or the representative of cash; and there is CREDIT, or CONFIDENCE in our neighbour. Your Reporter will demonstrate this, for he recollects the moment: it is not thirty-five years since what is called *accommodation paper*, viz. reputable commercial houses exchanged their names, and thus anticipated payments by a discount. This, in process of time, became general; and, what able commercial man can presume to account for that increase of our internal and external commercial relations, SUBSEQUENT to such thirty-five years ago, BUT TO THE FACILITIES to which this discount through the Bank of England gave to our national energies?

To what besides, your Reporter sub-

mits, can be imputed our superiority in the arts, over our enterprising and ingenious rivals? Not surely to the different forms of government, for, if this were argued, we must now abandon our boasted freedom, thus crippled in its foreign relations, and in Buonaparte's profundity, and commercial knowledge of the true interests of a country, yield the palm to an absolute dynasty.

The precious metals, then, your Reporter humbly conceives, are not intrinsically essential to the welfare of a state: if they were, the pitiable dominions of the former Tuscany or Naples, or of Bavaria, or of Prussia, would have been governments of prime consideration, for in those, and many others, it is well known that their whole impoverished circulation was in specie.

How happens it, nevertheless, that

this reasoning will not apply to the period subsequent to the Bank restrictions, and since this immense increase of the circulating medium? Because that, different from the period from 1780 to 1797, we have lost nearly the whole of our EXTERNAL channels! Our country, by the paper emission, has been internally improved and beautified, but, by the blockade of Europe, repelled by the French decrees, and by the capricious humour of the United States and other neutrals, instead of a vent for our industry, which should have preserved EQUAL PROPORTION to the INCREASED ENERGIES OF OUR CIRCULATING MEDIUM, we discovered nothing but a melancholy reverse! And thus have we the appalling sight of bankruptcy and ruin, UNLESS A FAR DIFFERENT SYSTEM OF PUBLIC MEASURES BE IMMEDIATELY ADOPTED.

Your Reporter will proceed to suggest

what they ought to be: but his impartiality compels him previously to bear testimony, that, in a close investigation, he sees nothing in the conduct of the Bank Directors, BUT SOUND JUDGMENT: they have had a most arduous task: their arrangement of accommodations has been generally judicious. And your Reporter has, on another occasion, and to the highest powers, with reasons not to be promulgated, illustrated the wisdom and necessity of preserving every respectable PROVINCIAL EMISSION of the circulating medium.

Your Reporter, under all the circumstances, then, is obliged to declare that the actual COMMERCIAL EMBARRASMENTS, and perhaps, NATIONAL TRANQUILLITY; and, THE GENERAL OCCUPATION OF THE MASS OF THE COUNTRY, imperiously demand that, a SPEEDY EXTERNAL RENT should be found for the surplus industry

of the kingdom; and, that OUR STAGNANT COLONIAL PRODUCTIONS SHOULD RECEIVE THE TEMPORARY PROTECTION OF THE GOVERNMENT. And, for the purpose of restoring our former or of obtaining an adequate channel for our increased national industry, it becomes the PRIME DUTY of our government, either IMMEDIATELY to resort to a GENERAL PEACE, OR TO CHANGE THE WHOLE FEATURE OF THE WAR BY HERMETICALLY SEALING EVERY EUROPEAN AND ASIATIC PORT.

Your Reporter is aware that many a philanthropist will exclaim, that "this latter resort is contrary to the humane laws of nations, thus to interrupt the peaceable commerce of neutrals." Your Reporter replies, that the *law of nations* has supposed the INTEGRITY, not the OVERTHROW of nations, and, if a scheme of war has, by the loss of external commerce, stagnated our internal energies, which at

the same time highly aggrandized the neutrals, let such neutrals forbear, and calmly repose until this GREAT EUROPEAN CONTEST is at an end.

If, however, such neutrals unfortunately breathe hostility, let them obtrude themselves on the awful conflict; let them arrange their armour, they will speedily repent it in sackcloth and in ashes: the British trident can ascertain the fate of nations! So much for the future hostile plan. But your Reporter is compelled to declare that, AS SPEEDILY must a wise government resort to some new channel for our native industry: and none presents itself but the immense regions beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn. The Asiatic ports must be proscribed but to the British flag.

Their interminate continents and numerous islands, would give an impulse to our kingdom and its American depend-

encies EXCEEDING ALL PRECEDENT: and it would be corroborated by the cheers of a triumphant navy, unknown to past ages, and conducted by heroes indignant at that inert scheme of warfare, by which their courage has been but a negative quality; and their forbearance, under a thousand insults, has been sanctioned under the accommodating shield of "state necessity."

No. Your Reporter, after mature deliberation, is thus urged to offer his propositions for a participation in the unfathomed and lucrative commerce beyond such capes, by a conscientious conviction that nothing can avert further calamity but an union of opinion upon the necessity of speedily regaining an OCCUPATION FOR THE GENERAL MASS, and thus give activity to our increased circulating capital.

Then, BUT NOT OTHERWISE, shall we soon see that the precious metals will be restored to us, and may again, if we choose, constitute a part of our commercial capital, and soon will it be ascertained, whether our hostile antagonist WILL NOT BE COMPLETELY BAFFLED IN ALL HIS ARTIFICES.

On the subject of the restoration however, of the precious metals, it is incumbent on your Reporter to state, that he has deliberately reflected on the probable evils that may attend the paper medium in this our insulated situation, previous to such an occurrence, and he cannot discover ANY GROUND FOR APPREHENSION WHATSOEVER, IF THE GENERAL COMMUNITY IS OCCUPIED IN ITS ORDINARY HABITS; unless indeed, in the event of an invasion, by the certain confusion that such paper would locally produce; an effectual remedy

for which, however, your Reporter has long ago had the honour to submit to His Majesty's executive servants.

Your Reporter, having published his sentiments generally, will not obtrude any further self-evident proofs of FLAGRANT INJUSTICE; and of the GENERAL INJURY which arises from exclusive commercial privileges, such as those enjoyed by the Honourable East India Company: nor will he dilate upon the pernicious effects produced by a GIGANTIC MONOPOLY, bloated by an INCREDIBLE issue of paper on a common seal.

Your Reporter conceives, and his opinion is corroborated by many private suggestions, from men in exalted stations, THAT IT IS ONLY NECESSARY FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM TO PETITION GENERALLY, TO OBTAIN A PARTICIPATION

in a valuable commerce which was gained for the British people, by the best blood, and by the actual treasure of the whole kingdom; and that the Minister who boldly embraces the prayer of the petitioners, will have established himself BEYOND ANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS; he will INSTANTLY revive the drooping commercial energies of the whole empire; he will be enabled, by merely a small impost on the exports, during THIS CURRENT YEAR, TO PRESENT A SUBSTITUTION FOR THE ODIOUS INCOME TAX; and, in the future years, display to astonished Europe and to our antagonists, what INCALCULABLE RESOURCES we possess, when a great nation is at length aroused from its lethargy.

It would be too presumptuous for your Reporter to describe the mode of participation with the East India Company, even

before the termination of their charter in August, 1813. But, whatever it may be, the NATIONAL HONOUR must be faithfully preserved: not an inferior clerk but will receive his just remuneration; the British Government is founded on the principles of equity.

Your Reporter humbly trusts, that at the General Meeting to be held on the 4th February, 12 o'clock, a committee of twelve able and honourable men will be arranged, to take measures for A SPEEDY GENERAL MEETING to petition the Houses of Parliament: and that a sub and SECRET one of three gentlemen do regulate the correspondence with the large towns of the Union. When this is arranged, your Reporter will transmit to it a private memoir, containing matters which it might not be discreet to promulgate in public.

Your Reporter apologizes for his pre-

sumption, with an assurance, that he has no actual interest in this his humble service; he has presented an adamant base for an OPEN TRADE beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn. The commercial world must MEET--PETITION and ESTABLISH the glorious superstructure. Your Reporter will not again obtrude himself. The time is not yet arrived for men of independent minds; he has, however, discharged a solemn duty to God and to his country.

W. WADDINGTON.

N. B. After this Report was read, it was resolved that a general meeting of manufacturers, merchants, ship owners, bankers, and other principals concerned in London trading houses, be held at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, on Tuesday the 4th February next, at twelve o'clock precisely, "for the purpose of agreeing to petition both Houses of Parliament, soliciting a speedy participation in the trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn."

London, Jan. 21, 1812.