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SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
PRESENT STATE
OF
SCOTLAND:

IN
A LETTER to the Commissioners and
Trustees for improving FISHERIES and
MANUFACTURES.

To which is subjoined,

A LETTER from the Annual Committee of
the Convention of ROYAL BOROUGHS, to the
several Boroughs of SCOTLAND, by Or-
der of the General Convention, for preventing
the pernicious Practice of *Smuggling*.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by W. SANDS, A. MURRAY, and J. COCHRAN.
Sold by the Bookfellers. MDCCXLIV.

S O M E
 CONSIDERATIONS
 O N T H E
 P R E S E N T S T A T E
 O F
 S C O T L A N D :

I N

A LETTER to the Commissioners and
 Trustees for improving FISHERIES and
 MANUFACTURES.

G E N T L E M E N ,

I DO in *Truth* — what all *pretend*, and most
 Men believe they do; I love my Country.
 —This Disposition has moved me to do,
 what every Man *ought* to do, to give Atten-
 tion to its Interest, and to endeavour to promote
 its Good. But, as my poor Endeavours have not
 been blessed with the wished for Success, my At-
 tention has, for many Years past, served only to
 fill my Mind with gloomy, ill-boding Thoughts,
 as it at *present* lays me under the deepest Concern,
 from a thorough Conviction, that the Ruin of

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what I wish best to is unavoidable, unless kind Providence by Miracle interpose, or, (what is next to a Miracle in this degenerate Age), unless the People are brought, in spite of inveterate Prejudices, to *know* and to *pursue* their real Interests.

Miracles in our favours, though Miracles were more rife than they are generally thought to be, our *Worthlessness* forbids us to expect; — and the *rooted Prejudices*, the *gross Ignorance*, and the *stupid Indifference* that have Possession of the Minds of the People, render the Hopes of bringing them to *see* and to *do* their Duty almost desperate. — But as two Things are capable of certain and very obvious Demonstration; the one, — *That their immediate Ruin is unavoidable, unless they alter their Course*; and the other, — *That it is absolutely in their Power, by changing their Conduct, to avoid Destruction, and save this Nation*; — I cannot rest satisfied that I have done what my Duty and my Affection to my Country requires, until I have exposed to their Eye those two Propositions in that Sort of Light, and with that Degree of Evidence which *ought* to bring Conviction, and must render them *inexcusable*, as well as *despicable*, — unless they act upon it.

It is for this Reason, Gentlemen, that I put Pen to Paper, and take the Liberty to address what I write to you; not by way of Instruction, as you know the Circumstances of the Nation much better than I do; but by way of Appeal to your Knowledge and Experience for the Truth of what I write. — You, Gentlemen, are of no Party, or Faction, in those Politicks which unhappily divide the Kingdom; you have long
laboured

[3]

laboured for the Good of your Country in the most generous and disinterested Manner; you have for many Years bestowed your Time, and employed your Industry, in cherishing our *Infant Manufactures*, without Fee or Reward, other than the Satisfaction of doing good; — you have, with Pleasure, seen them rise to a Pitch that promised Deliverance from Poverty; you know, that the Value of the Linen stamped for Sale, from the Time you began to act till last *November*, exceeded *L. 2,700,000*. — But, alas! you know also, that this gay, this pleasing Prospect, is on the Point of disappearing; — you know, the Funds have failed, and that there is not Money wherewith to pay the Annuity due last *Midsummer*; you know, there is a full Stop put to the Payment of Premiums, and Salaries to Officers; and you know the unavoidable Consequence, — That the whole System must sink, and the Manufacture fall to its pristine Discredit, when the Encouragement and Means of Instruction to do well, and the Guards and Checks against doing ill, are withdrawn. But, what is still more material to my present Purpose, you know the *Source* from which this Evil springs; you saw, with Grief, the extravagant Use of *uncustomed Tea* and *Spirits* begin, — and foresaw the Destruction that must inevitably ensue to the Country, as well as to the Revenues and Manufactures; your annual *Reports* to his Majesty, for many Years back, have taken notice of this dangerous Circumstance, and *foretold* the Mischiefs you *foresaw*. — The Event has justified your *Prediction*; — and that *Prediction*, were there no other Evidence, is sufficient to satisfi-

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fy any one to what Cause our Complaints are owing, — You, therefore, Gentlemen, are the most proper *Witnesses* to appeal to on this Occasion; and, if what I affirm shall be confirmed by your Approbation, — it must become the *Belief* of the People. How far that Belief will dispose them to act, and whether there is so much common Sense and Regard to their Country left in their Minds as shall induce them to do, what is easily in their Power, to prevent the undoing of themselves and of the Publick, is what I intend to try by publishing this Letter.

To trace the *Disease*, under which we at present labour, to its *Source*, we must look back to the *Union* of the Kingdoms. The Treaty for that *Union* was carried on and concluded much against the Inclinations of the Generality of the People of *Scotland*; and the only popular Topick produced for rendering it palatable, was the great Advantage that must accrue to *Scotland* from the *Communication of Trade*, to which by the *Union* it was to be admitted. This Consideration was surely weighty; and, had the People honestly made use of that Privilege to which they were invited, the Complaints, under which we now suffer, would not have had a Being. But, unfortunately, the People took the most mischievous of all Turns: In place of pursuing *fair Trade*, they universally, with the Exception of *Glasgow, Aberdeen*, and one or two Places more, took to *smuggling*; their small Stocks they invested in Goods that bore *high Duties*, and, under the Favour of *running* those securely on our wide and ill-guarded Coasts, they flattered themselves they should soon grow rich,
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profiting at least of the high Duty, which by running they were to save.

Though this Scheme proved *destructive* to almost every Adventurer who entered upon it, though it was bottomed on Fraud and Dishonesty, and though it evidently tended to what it has very near accomplished, the total Ruin of the Country; yet so blind, or rather perverse, were the People, that they without Hesitation, and almost without Exception, gave into it. — The *Smuggler* was the Favourite. — His prohibited or high Duty Goods were run ashore by the *Boats* of whatever Part of the Coast he came near; when ashore, they were guarded by the Country from the Customhouse-officer; if seized, they were rescued; — and if any Seizure was returned and tried, the *Juries* seldom failed to find for the Defendant. These Circumstances gave the *Running Trade* the Appearance of absolute Security; and have so *thoroughly* destroyed the Revenue, that the Customs are hardly able to pay the Salaries of their own Officers.

Gain expected was the *Temptation* that drew the Traders into this villanous Project; and a *Dislike* to the *Union*, an *ill Opinion* conceived of the first Sett of Customhouse-officers that were sent down hither, an *Unwillingness* to favour the Revenue, on a Supposal that the Money thence arising was to be remitted to *England*, and *Partiality* to their unhappy Countrymen who were dipt in this Trade, together with small Bounties and Presents received from the *Smuggler*, drew the Bulk of the People in, to favour them.

When the *Smuggler* runs Goods that *do not* interfere with the *native Produce* of the Country,
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[6]

he hurts the Revenue *only*; but when he imports Merchandize of any kind that prevents the *Consumption* of home Commodities, unless such Commodity can draw the Value at a foreign Market, it is evident, that, besides robbing the Revenue, he wrongs his Fellow-subject *just so much* as the home Commodity loses of its Price, by lessening the Demand for it. In addition to this, if the foreign Commodity is taken from a Country that does not receive *equal Value* of our Goods in Exchange, the Difference comes necessarily to be paid in *Bullion*.

This Reflection, however obvious, was either not made, or not attended to: For, from the Commencement of the Union to this Day, the *smuggling* those Sorts of Goods, which interfere, *the most sensibly*, with the Consumption of *our own*, and which are for the greatest Part purchased in Exchange for *Bullion*, has been persisted in, and encouraged to that Degree, that our own have sunk above *one third* in their Value; and there is hardly a Penny of *Coin* left, — the *Smuggling* of many Years having bartered *almost all of it*, against those *foreign* Commodities that have *sunk* the Value of *our own*.

For twenty Years after the Union, this Mischief continued, without being *very* sensibly felt. — By much the *greatest* Part of the Wine brought into the Out-ports paid no Duty, — and *none* paid higher than the *Spanish*; — Brandy in vast Quantities was imported without paying *any*: And by those Means the Consumption of Beer and Ale was in *some* Degree impaired, and the Use of home-made Spirits *almost universally* laid aside. — But as the Price of Wine never came so *low* as to bring it within

[7]

within the *Reach* of the *Populace*; as the *Vice* of *Punch*-drinking had not prevailed over the *meaner* Sort, who were accustomed to no better Liquor than Twopenny; and as the *more pernicious* Practice of *Tea-drinking* was confined to what may be called *People of Condition*: our Grain still bore some Price, because the Consumption of Malt-liquor was considerable. — The Excise, though lower than it had formerly been, produced Sums fit to answer the Expence of the Civil Government; and such Cities and Towns as had an Impost on Beer and Ale granted to them, found no *considerable* Diminution of their Revenues.

But when the opening a Trade with the *East-Indies*, first at *Ostend*, and afterwards in *Sweden*, brought the Price of Tea in the Northern Parts of *Europe* so low, that the *meanest* labouring Man could compass the Purchase of it; — when the Connection which the Dealers in this Country had with many *Scotsmen* in the Service of the *Swedish* Company at *Gottenburg*, introduced the common Use of that *Drug* amongst the *lowest* of the People; — when *Sugar*, the inseparable Companion of *Tea*, came to be in the Possession of the very *poorest* Housewife, where formerly it had been a great Rarity, — and thereby was *at hand*, to mix with Water and Brandy, or Rum; — and when *Tea* and *Punch* became thus the *Diet* and *Debauch* of *all* the *Beer* and *Ale* Drinkers, the Effects were very *suddenly* and very *severely* felt. — The *Excise* sunk in proportion as these Abuses grew; the *Malt-duty* kept Pace with it; the *Imposts* in Cities and Towns fell *still lower*, as these *Vices* prevailed more in *Towns* than in the open Country: — Grain yielded

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[8]

no Price; and, at present, the melancholy Experience of every Man informs him, that there is no *Bullion* left in the Country, at least none in proportion to what was some Years ago.

Our Exportation to *France* hardly pays for the Wine which the Palates of the better Sort of People must be pleased with from thence; our Exports to *Holland* come far short at present of paying for the Flax we import from that Country; and, since the Herring-fishery on our Coasts has failed, we have not Commodities to give the *Swedes* in exchange for the Iron and Timber which we must have from them.—How then must the *Brandy* we have from *France* directly, or by the way of *Holland*? how must the *Tea* we have from *Holland* and *Gottenburg* be paid for? Why, surely, either in *Bullion*, or what from other Markets would fetch this Country *Bullion*.—And if any Man will but recollect how many, or rather how few Crown or Half-crown Pieces he has met with for some Years past, and consider how industriously they have been picked up by the *Smuggler*, he can be under no Difficulty to account for the Cause of the *Scarcity* of our *Coin*.

The Purchase of foreign Spirits before the *Epidemical* Disease of *Tea-drinking*, cost the Nation annually a very considerable Sum, which would have been long ere now sensibly felt in the Diminution of our *Specie*, had it not been for several Accidents, that brought or kept Money in the Country.—The unnatural Rebellion that broke out in the Year 1715, was the Cause of large Remittances for the Support of the Army, which then was sent, and for some time kept in *Scotland*; the

[9]

the Attempt of *Spain* on the Highlands in 1719, produced the like Effect; the Purchase of the forfeited Estates by the *York-building* Company, brought us considerable Sums from *England*, and the expensive Undertakings of that Company in Woods, Iron-works and Mines, kept at least the Rents of all the Estates they had purchased at home, if they did not draw further Sums from *England*. These Circumstances, not to mention the different Supplies we have had at different Times, by the Return of some of our Countrymen with Fortunes picked up by their Industry in foreign Parts, prevented for some time our feeling the Effects of *Smuggling*.—But since the ruinous Expence of *Tea* came to be added to that of *foreign Spirits*, and the *Waste* of *Bullion* thereby occasioned, has not for several Years been supported by such *contingent* Supplies, we feel the Sore with a *Vengeance*; and now to our Sorrow and Confusion see, that our *Coin*, and with it our *Trade* and *Credit*, are gone; and that our *criminal* Indulgence to the *Smuggler* has been the Cause of these Misfortunes.

It is hardly possible to make any *exact* Estimate of the Quantity of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits* imported, and made use of by such as *ought* to be satisfied with the Product of their own Country; but it falls within every one's Observation, that the *Use* of *Tea* has descended to *Hundreds*, for every one that drank it fifteen Years ago; and that *foreign Spirits*, plain, or made into *Punch*, are become the Entertainment of every one who cannot come at Wine. These Liquors must necessarily supply the Place of some other Liquor formerly

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accustomed; and if any one will but compare the *present* Amount of the Excise and Malt with what those Duties produced *formerly*, and consider the *Decrease* in the *Brewery*,—he must necessarily charge that *Decrease* to the Account of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits*,—and conclude, that the *Tea* and *Spirit* drinking is *high*, in proportion as the *Brewery* is *low*.

For Example, if the *Impost* of two Pennies on the Pint; in *Edinburgh*, produced *L. 7383 per annum* at a Medium of five Years before *Midsummer* 1728; and if the yearly Produce has been but *L. 4905* at a Medium of five Years preceeding last *Midsummer*; and if the Number of Inhabitants has been *nearly* the same in both Periods: can it be a Doubt with any one who knows that *Tea* is become the common Breakfast of *Blue-gowns* and the *Fish-carriers* of *Musselburgh*;—and that Footmen and Porters get drunk over *Punch*, as freely; and *almost as cheap*, as they formerly did over *Twopenny*,—that the *Decay* of the *Brewery* is *immense*; and that the *Cause* of it is *the Use* of *Tea* and *Spirits*?—This, however, is the unlucky Case of the City of *Edinburgh*; and the Case of every other Town that has had the like Grant, will by their Books appear to be *nearly* the same.

If it must then be admitted, that *Tea* and *Spirits* prevent the Consumption of our own *Malt-liquors*, can it require an Argument to prove, that this must *prevent* the Sale and *lower* the Price of our *Grain*? Is it not manifest, that so much as is *not* consumed at home, must ly on the Proprietors Hands, and *perish*, if there is no Demand from abroad? And does not every body know, that we
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have no Demand from abroad, except when their Crops miscarry? which seldom happens but when ours are deficient also. If any one doubt of this, I should be glad to know from him, what is the Cause of the present *low Price*, or rather *no Price*, for *Grain*.

Without spending more Words on proving a Proposition so very plain, as that *preventing* the Consumption of our *Grain*, *lowers* its Value, I shall proceed to another, equally certain, though not so obvious, or so commonly attended to; and that is, That by much the greatest Part of the landed Interest of this Nation, perhaps nine tenth-parts of the whole, suffers *cruelly* by the Abuse I am considering.

It will be admitted,—that the *Rents* of Lands in *Scotland* arise generally from *Grain*, and that they are paid, partly in *kind*, and partly in *Money*. If the Rent is payable in *Grain*, the Reduction directly affects the *Landlord*: If his *Boll*, which last Year brought *L. 6*, brings this Year no more than *L. 4*, he loses *one third* of his Income; and the *Farmer*, who pays him that Rent, loses in proportion on every *Boll* that he can afford to carry to the Market.—On the other hand, if the Rent is payable in *Money*, the Loss affects the *Farmer* in the *first* place; but, if he conditioned to pay *Money-rent*, on the Supposition that the *Boll* was to be worth *L. 6*, it is manifest he must soon fail;—the *Landlord* cannot hope to recover *Payment*, or, when the Lease is broke, to find another *Tenant* who will take a Lease at the *same* Rent.

Hard then must be the Case of the *Landlord*,
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and *miserable* that of the Tenant. It is a *melancholy*, but a *well known* Truth, that *few* landed Gentlemen can boast of being *altogether* free of Debt; and it is also true, that the *Turn* of the greatest Part of them is to *live up* to their Fortunes. Now, if their Income shall be reduced one third, they must either *starve*, (for so they will call retrenching their Living), or the *Creditor* must *starve*, and he again, to prevent that Calamity, must call the Law to his Assistance; *Process* must issue, *Fails* must be crowded, Lands must be *sequestered*, Estates must be *sold* at less than the Value, because there is no Money; and the Children of Families which have subsisted with some Respect for Ages, must become a Load on the Charity of their Friends, if any such are left able to support them, or must be turned adrift into the wide World, to look for Bread the best way they can. And as for the Tenant, whose Condition is at this Day, generally speaking, very *poor*, the Reduction of his Income is attended with *immediate* Beggary; upon Failure of Payment of Rent, his Lease is forfeited, his Goods are taken in Execution, friendless and helpless he must wander from Door to Door, leading perhaps an Infant-family, which must perish for want, if not supplied by the Charity of Neighbours, who in the general Distress will be little able to afford Assistance.

The *other* pernicious Consequences of Smuggling affect the landed Gentleman and Farmer in *common* only with the Bulk of the People. Is *Coin* so scarce that we cannot go to Market? that Sore must be felt by every one. Is *Credit* so low, and Trade so dead, that no Hopes are left of bettering our Condition?
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— the Prospect must be equally disagreeable to all. — Are our Manufactures, which at present seem to be our *only Resource*, to perish, because the Revenues cannot afford the Monies destined to support them? Are our numerous Poor to remain unemployed? Must our *excellent Workmen*, thoroughly bred to the Loom, starve? or must they for Bread *abandon* their native Country, and *add* to the *Stock* of Artists in a neighbouring one, at present our Rivals in that Business, and thereby give *that* Country an Advantage *never* to be recovered by *ours*? And is this last Circumstance to happen, in all Probability, within the Compass of a Twelvemonth? — Those Reflexions are very bitter; but they pierce, or ought to pierce, the Heart of every *Scotsman* alike.

But it is far otherwise with respect to the Article now under Consideration, the reducing the Value of *Grain*. To the *poorer* Sort, especially to such as love to be *idle*, it is considered as a Blessing; and to the People in general it is surely a Convenience; but to the *landed* Gentleman and *Farmer*, it is certain Destruction. — Hard, therefore, is their Case, who share *in common* with their Fellow-subjects *the other* Calamities that attend *Smuggling*, and are *over and above* cursed with this Plague, which must soon put an End to them.

Hard however as it is, they certainly *deserve* no Pity, and *cannot* expect to meet with any, if the Distress which is *just* approaching, shall reach them. Pity they *do not* deserve, because by their *own* Act they have pulled, and are daily pulling this Mischieff on *themselves*; and Pity they have no Reason to look for, if the Evil shall continue,
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because it is undeniably in *their own* Power, and in *their Power only*, as Things at present stand, to prevent it.

It is a Circumstance well known to every one who knows any thing of *Scotland*, that the Grounds which produce Corn, ly alongst the Coasts; — that the Midland shews mostly barren Muirs and bleak Mountains, yielding only coarse Pasture for low-sized Cattle; that the Land is every where so cut by *Fritbs* and Inlets of the Sea, that nine tenths of the Corns produced in the whole Country grow on an *Edging* within five Miles of the Coasts of the Sea, or of the Banks of Rivers, so far as they are navigable.

Now, if this shall be admitted to be the Case, and if it is at the same time true, that *Smuggling* has been nursed up, and brought to its present Perfection, by the Inhabitants of this *Corn-growing* Country, and that it cannot subsist *one Moment* without their Countenance and Protection; the Misery *they* have brought upon *themselves* cannot lay Claim to the Compassion of any Man, — but on a Supposition that they acted ignorantly, without being aware of the Mischief they were bringing on their *Country* and on *themselves*: And if, after the Admonition they now receive, they shall proceed in the same *wicked*, as well as *foolish* Course; or *shall not*, on the contrary, exert the Power which their Situation and Circumstances put in their Hands of retrieving their *Country* and *themselves* from Ruin, and thereby repairing in some Degree the Wrongs they have done to *both*; — the *Contempt*, the *Curses* of their Country, must be their Lot; — and, in place of Compassion from Men,

Men, they will have just Cause to look for *Vengeance* from the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

Wide and ill-guarded as the Coasts of *Scotland* are, the *Running* Trade could never have succeeded without the Assistance of the Inhabitants of the Sea-coast. — The *Smuggler* must have *Boats* to lay his goods on Land; — he must have *Carriages* to transport them by Land; he must have *Cover* to shelter them in, until *Carriages* are provided; he must be possessed of the *favourable* Disposition of the People, to secure against *Informations* to the Customhouse; nay, he must be confident of their *Power* to protect his Goods from Seizure, or to *rescue* them, if by Accident they should be seized. — All these Aids are *indispensably* necessary, and yet all these Aids the *Felon*, who has been *murdering* his Country, has hitherto had.

Boats, if the Weather permit, the *Smuggler* is absolutely sure of, whatever Part of the Coast he touch at. Our Fishermen, every body knows, have for the most part left off their *proper* Business, and dedicated their Time and *Industry* to the Assistance of the *Runner*; in so much that our Markets are far from being so well supplied with fresh Fish as heretofore. — And the Quantities caught and cured for Exportation, come far short of what the Coast-Fishing formerly produced. — Which is *another Branch* of the numerous Losses with which this abominable Practice is attended.

When his Goods are laid on Land, all Hands are at Work for his Service; Cattle and Carriages are ready; every Farm-house, every Cottage is open for their Reception. — Giving the least Information to the Customhouse is, in the Opinion of

[16]

of the People, branded with Infamy: And if any loose Information shall direct the Officers to a Search, the Country is in Arms, and nothing less than a Detachment of regular Troops can protect the Officer in his Search, or fetch the Goods to the Customhouse, when seized.

This monstrous, this unnatural Encouragement, received from that Set of Men whom of all others Smuggling hurts in the most tender Part, is the sole Support of it. Withdraw but the Assistance of those whose Fortunes depends on the Value of Grain, and the Customhouse must prove too hard for the Runner. But such is the Power of Prejudice, such is our Blindness, or rather stupid Insensibility, that, though no one can contradict, or indeed dissemble the Knowledge of any of the Circumstances that have been stated; yet, Gentlemen and Farmers go on in the usual Train, — cherishing and hugging in their Bosom the Smuggler, that Leech that lives by sucking their Heart's Blood.

But what makes the most ridiculous Figure in all this Matter, is the Silliness of the Temptation that prevails with them, so notoriously to give up their own Interests, and those of their Country; which, besides the Prejudices already stated, amounts to no more than this, That the Gentleman has Rum and Brandy, and his Lady Tea and Coffee, at very reasonable Rates, and the Farmer has small Presents of these precious Drugs made him.

Let no Man be so absurd as to imagine, that, without this Countenance from the Proprietors of Lands on the Coasts, and their Tenants and Ser-

[17]

Servants, Smuggling could keep its Ground in Scotland; because in England, where the Runner does not meet with the same Countenance, we hear of great Bands of armed Smugglers travelling alongst with their Goods, and even fighting pitched Battles with the Officers, and their Assistants the Troops: For the Case of the Runner is very different in the different Countries.

In England, where the Goods run are a Trifle, compared with the regular Importation, the Smuggler sells his Goods at or near the Prices which Goods that have paid the Duty draw. Thus he profits of the whole Duty, and can very well afford to pay extraordinary Hire for Carriages, and to have a Gang of Bravo's in Pay, to secure him against Officers and their Assistants.

But, in Scotland, every body knows the Matter stands quite otherwise. The Smuggling Trade is much overdone. The Facility of running has invited every petty Dealer to try it. No foreign Spirits are, and no Tea can be regularly imported into this Country. — In place of drawing a Price equal to the prime Cost and Charges, with the Addition of the Duty, the Smuggler is obliged frequently to sell the Goods cheaper than they cost him; — which is the Cause of the numberless Bankruptcies that every Day happen amongst that Gang. — Under these Circumstances, the Running Trade cannot support the Apparatus, or bear the Expence that is necessary to make it successful in England; and if you deprive it of the Encouragement it has from the ill-fated Country, the Country must soon be delivered from that Curse.

On this Occasion it may not be improper to observe,

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serve, that if *Running* were to be attended with the *same* Expence in *Scotland* as it is in *England*, one of my capital Objections to it would cease. It would indeed *rob* the Revenue of a *Trifle*, and it would *drain* the Country of *some* Money; but it would not *destroy* the Value of our *Grain*; because the *Smuggler* could not afford to sell it *so* cheap, as to invite the very *poorest* of the People to become Purchasers; and consequently it would not prevent the *Use* of *Malt-liquor*, as it does at this Day.

And this Reflection is the Foundation of the *Hopes* I entertain of seeing an End put to this extensive Mischief, by the *joint* Resolution and Action of the Gentlemen whose *All* depends upon opposing it. Should they rouse themselves from the *Lethargy* that possesses them, and do what is *manifestly* in their Power, prevent the running of Goods without paying Duty; the Consequence whereof must necessarily be, that foreign Spirits and Tea *could not* be sold without adding the Duty to the prime Cost and Charges; it is my fixed Opinion, the Complaint would cease: For the lowest Class of the People, who run upon those Commodities, because they *can afford* to purchase them, behoved then to return to their former Diet, because, at the advanced Price, they *could not*; and the better sort, who are so made to them by Custom, that they cannot *think* of dispensing with the Use of them, may still enjoy what they are fond of, as freely and as cheap as they did before the excessive Consumption of these Goods began; because they *can afford* to pay the Duty.

Should the Proprietors of Lands on the Coast,
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moved by *their Interest*, and by Regard to *their Country*, come seriously to a Resolution of exerting themselves to prevent the Destruction of *both*, that *Vermin* the *Smuggler* would no longer overrun us. Every one knows the *Power* which Gentlemen have over their *Fishermen*; — who generally hold their *Huts*, their *Acres* and their *Boats*, by no other Tenure than the Master's *Good-will* and *Pleasure*: — And no one doubts of the great *Authority* they have over their *Tenants*; — if the Tenant has *no* Lease, which in many Places is the Case, he must not disoblige the Landlord; and though he have, the Term is commonly so short, (which in other Respects is unfortunate), that he must not risk the giving Offence. A Signification, that no Lease should be renewed to any one who assisted a *Smuggler*, with Conditions in Leases to be hereafter granted, — That assisting the Smuggler should *forfeit* the Lease, must quickly determine the *Farmer* to alter his Conduct, and thereby put an End to the destructive Traffick.

The Reason why I mention the *Authority* Masters have over their *Fishermen* and *Tenants*, is to shew, that though those last should prove reluctant, and still retain a hankering to that sort of Commerce, which has long been in fashion, and which has furnished them with Means of getting drunk very cheap; it is nevertheless in the Power of the Masters, whose Eyes will, I hope, by what I write, be opened, and turned to the true Interests of *their Country*, to *compel* them to do what is to manifestly for *their own*. Not that I think *Compulsion* will for any Tract of Time be *necessary*; since I am well satisfied, that, if due Care is taken,
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the *Farmer's* Eyes may be *also* opened, and he be determined by *Interest* to save the Country from *Ruin*.

Many of the Gentlemen, whose Estates ly near the Coast, have Jurisdiction *patrimonial*; they are *Barons*. Most of them are in the *Commission* of the Peace, and have thereby, not only *Authority* to second their honest Intentions, by putting the Laws in Execution, but also frequent *Opportunities* of assembling and consulting together, at *Quarter-sessions*, *Head Courts*, and *Meetings* for levying the *Supply*.—All of them, I dare say, *love* their Country, and it is their *present* Opinion, that they would risk their *Lives* for its Defence; they have had Education, they have Knowledge, and they can see what their *Duty* to their Country, and what their *own* Interest requires: Should they, happily for this poor Country, think on the dangerous Way we are in, as I do; should they come to salutary Resolutions in their *respective* Counties and Districts to oppose the *Smuggler*; should the Gentlemen of *different* Districts alongst the Coast, maintain a *Correspondence* on this Subject with each other; and should the *Opinion* of the Gentlemen become also the *Opinion* of the Farmer, which with a little Time must necessarily be the Case; no Man who knows any thing of this Country will doubt that the *Smuggler* must betake himself to some other Business.

If the *Smuggler* cannot depend on having *Boats* to receive his Goods from the *hovering* Vessel;—if he can hope for no *Shelter* to cover them when landed; if he is to have no *Protection* or Assistance from the *Farmer*, but, on the contrary, is to look upon

upon every *Farmer* as an *Informer*, and as an *Assistant* to the Officer, he must be very *mad* indeed if he persist in *running*.

For though the Case of *landed* Gentlemen can not extend itself to the Ports of *Royal Boroughs*, yet, if they exert themselves within their respective Estates, the Case of the Runner must be desperate.—Every one who is in any Degree acquainted with this Subject, knows, that in Fact *little* or nothing is run in the Ports belonging to Boroughs;—those Ports are generally guarded by Officers, who have the Assistance of Troops. Ships, 'tis true, loaded with *prohibited* Goods, are frequently forced into these Ports, when stormy Weather or other cross Accidents *prevent* their running their Cargoes at Sea.—But, in Port, they always have Officers on board, who prevent running to any *considerable* Value;—and when they sail for the foreign Port to which they *pretend* they are bound, their Business is, to meet by Appointment with Boats on some convenient Part of the Coast, to ease them of their Loading;—but not to put into the Port of any Borough, until they are light, and have lodged their Goods securely in the neighbouring Country, from thence to be brought with Convenience to Boroughs, or any where else.—So that if the *landed* Gentlemen prevent running where their Power to do so is unquestionable, there seems to be little Danger of running within the Liberties of Boroughs.

And if the Assistance of the *State* of *Boroughs*, to curb this wasting Evil, were necessary, there seems to be no doubt of obtaining their hearty Concurrence; as they are skilled in Trade, and well

acquainted with the Disease, of which the greatest Part of them are *very near* expiring.—They have, several Years ago, taken the Matter under their Consideration, and have given each other the strongest *Exhortations* to resist the Mischief. But as they were not *then* seconded by the *landed* Gentlemen, whose Interest is more deeply concerned even than theirs, their *Intreaties* failed of the hoped for Fruits.—However, as the Letter of the 3d of *September* 1736, addressed to the several Cities and Towns of the Nation by the *annual Committee* of the General Convention of *Royal Boroughs*, shews fully their Sense of the Matter, and may be of Service to convince those who may be disposed to yield more readily to *Authority* than to *Argument*; I shall take the Liberty to reprint it, and to subjoin a Copy of it.

If the various Reflections already made, are fit to yield full Conviction, that the excessive Use of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits* has been the *Ruin* of this Country;—that this *Ruin* has been pulled on it by the *weak*, the *criminal* Indulgence of the *Gentry* and of their *Tenants* to *Smugglers*; and that it is easily in the Power of those who suffer *most*, and *most directly*, by the Evil, entirely to prevent it for the future: I cannot yet be brought to think so *meanly* of the *Heads* or of the *Hearts* of my Countrymen, as to doubt that they will exert themselves, if their Case, and that of their Country, is fairly recommended to their Consideration.

Whilst *popular Prejudices* run high in favours of the *Smuggler*, and before the Mischiefs flowing from his Practice were *severely* and *universally* felt, he

he very possibly might *not* have known the Extent of the Wrong he did to his Country, or to his Fellow-subjects who favoured him;—and therefore may be considered as having *erred* rather *ignorantly* than *wickedly*: But if, after *knowing* the fatal Tendency of that Traffick; if, after *seeing* the Poverty and Distress it has brought on the *Nation*, he relentless persists in repeating the *cruel* Wounds he has given, he can be no otherwise considered than as the *blackest* of all Villains, the *most execrable* of all Murderers; a *Parricide*; and must, if there is any Zeal for the publick Weal, if any Spirit is left, *raise* the Country against him, as *Wolves* have heretofore done, and as a *much less* mischievous Animal, a *mad Dog*, does at this Day.—Wherefore I am willing to flatter myself with Hopes, that if *Gentlemen* can be brought to take becoming Resolutions on this Subject, no Man, however *dishonest*, will be found *so bold* as to attempt the Running-trade in defiance of the joint Endeavours of the People.

Upon the same Prejudices and Mistakes, the *Connivance*, the *Lenity*, the *Partiality* of Country Gentlemen to *Smugglers* in *time past* may be excused: But when that *Partiality* is by fatal Experience found to be destructive of *almost all* the valuable Interests of the Country, and noxious to *every* Individual,—I cannot suffer myself to think, that it will subsist in the *Heart* or in the *Conduct* of any Gentleman one Moment longer. Before the Defolation that attends Smuggling was generally felt or known, I do not at all wonder that Men declined the *invidious* Task of *informing*, or assisting the Customhouse-officer. Neither is it

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surprising to me, that if the Goods belonging to any Gentleman's *Neighbour*, to his *Friend*, or to any other of his *Dependents*, were in danger of being seized, he should *connive* at the securing or rescuing them; and I can easily figure to myself what Inducements might have prevailed on the Generality of Men to *mitigate Penalties* when they sat as *Judges*, and to *wish* at least for the *Claimants* when they sat as *Jurors*. But now, when the Question with the Smuggler is brought to this Issue, Whether *they* or *the Country* shall sink or swim? I am confident no Gentleman will be so *mean*, as to put the Interest of his *Neighbour*, his *Friend*, or his *Dependent*; who, from this time forward, must *confessedly* be a *Villain*, if he is a *Smuggler*, in competition with *that* of his *Country*: And I encourage myself, on the contrary, to believe, that every Gentleman who loves, or would be thought to love his Country, will rouse himself and his Neighbours from that *faulty Heedlessness* which has so long possessed them, and endeavour to make use of all the Weapons that Law has *put* or *left* in their Hands to destroy their *common Enemy*.

It is because I am persuaded that *such would be* the Behaviour of the People if they were duly informed, that I take the Liberty of making this publick Address to you, *Gentlemen*, who of all others *know best* the melancholy Condition of the Country, and are therefore the *best qualified* to give Evidence of the Facts, on the *believing* or *disbelieving* whereof, the *saving* or *utter Destruction* of this Nation, *at this very Time*, depends.—Your *Stamp* must make those Sentiments *pass current*;

[25]

rent; and if they become the Sentiments of the *Publick*, the Work is done.

You, *Gentlemen*, who, without Fee or Reward, dedicate great Part of your Time to the Service of your Country, are a noble *Example* to other *Gentlemen*, no less interested in its Welfare than yourselves, to form themselves into *Societies* on this Occasion, in their respective Counties, to watch over the publick Good, and to guard against the common Enemy. — Could that generous *Example* prevail; did *Gentlemen*, in the different Districts alongst the Coast, form themselves into small *Societies*, shall I call them *Confederacies*? which should *correspond* with one another, and with you, *Smuggling* must receive its Death's Wound, and the Country be delivered from its present Distress. Nor do I see why this may not be expected: For, though *Inattention* to the publick Good, and a kind of *Insensibility* as to its Concern, seems to be the *present Disease* of most Men; yet there are, I hope, *a few* still left scattered up and down the Country, whose *manly Spirit* is not *quite sunk*; — who cannot stand the *Reproach* of being *accessory* to the Ruin of the Nation, by *not* preventing it when it is clearly in their Power; and who, by exerting themselves, may awaken their *lethargick* Neighbours, and bring them, *for avoiding* Shame, to *do* what they have not *Virtue* enough to move them to.

Your *Example* must encourage *Societies* already formed, such as *Magistrates* and *Councils* in Corporations, to watch over and promote the true Interests of the People under their Care. It is proved, in the Letter from the Committee of the Convention

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tion already mentioned, that *Smuggling* is destructive to the *State of Boroughs*; if therefore they can be stirred up to mind their common Concern, and, *in conjunction* with the *landed Gentlemen*, to pursue it, I am not able to foresee what can prevent their Success.

You, Gentlemen, can cure the *Apprehensions* of the unhappy Persons now engaged in this *villanous Trade*, that, if they *desist* from it, they shall fall out of Business, and find no Employment wherein they may improve their small Stocks: You can point out to them a *Trade*, wherein the Gains are much *more certain*, as well as *more innocent*; — you can tell them what may be got by raising, dressing and selling Flax; — you can tell them what Gain attends employing the Poor in *Spinning*, and the *purchasing* and *selling* Linen Yarn; — you can shew them what *Profits* attend *Looms* of all kinds; and, by opening the *various* Branches of the *Linen Manufacture*, you can satisfy them, that in it *alone* there is room for *employing* to great Advantage much more Money than they ever *abused* in *Smuggling*.

You can further, with great Truth, assure them, that, if they will but withdraw their Stocks from that *guilty Traffick* in which they at present are employed, the *Funds* for supporting our Manufacture must be so much *improved*, that it will incontestably be in your Power to *encourage*, and thereby to *introduce* and *promote* several *new Branches* of the Linen Trade, upon which the commendable Spirit that is now stirring amongst our Manufacturers disposes them to enter; but in which, Progress cannot be made for *lack of Funds*;

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—and they must then with Satisfaction *see Bread* provided for *Thousands*, and a Field opened for *every one* who is not disposed to be *idle*, to improve his Fortune in.

And, by comparing their *present* Business with *that* to which you invite them, you can point out this *essential*, and very *interesting* Difference, That the one *cannot* be carried on to any *Extent*, without *draining* the Nation of its *Bullion*; whereas the other *cannot* be carried on to any *considerable* Pitch, without *adding* to the *national Cash*: And that *the one* stuffs the Country with *foreign Drugs*, of no Use or Advantage to it, but which, by being consumed, *lessens* the Value, by *preventing* the Consumption of the *natural Product*; whereas *the other* fetches *Money* from abroad, in *return* for the *Product* of the Soil, and the *Labour* of the *Industrious*: And that Money employed in promoting and extending the Trade, *increases* the Number of working People, puts Money in Pockets to which Coin was heretofore a Stranger, and thereby enables *Multitudes*, who formerly lived in great *Want*, or were supported by *Charity*, to go to Market, and to pay for a *comfortable*, in place of *begging* for a *scanty* Subsistence; a necessary Consequence whereof it must be, that our Grain, and all the other Product of our Lands must not only *recover* their former, but must fetch a *higher* Price.

Your Opinion, *Gentlemen*, I am much disposed to hope, will soon become the *Opinion* of the *People*; and how small soever the Disposition of the *Idle* and the *Indolent* may be to *act* for the Good of their Country, yet such Persons are commonly willing

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enough to *talk* for it. — From this very *Talking*, I am sanguine enough to look for *some* Advantage. It may give a Turn to the *Prejudices* of the Publick; — it may point out the *Smuggler* as the capital Enemy to the Country; it may make opposing, discovering, and declaiming against him, *fashionable*: And if this shall become the *Fashion*, I doubt not we shall soon have the Assistance of the *Clergy* (whose Remissness to expose and prevent a Practice so *shamelessly* sinful, so fraught with *Fraud* and *Perjury*, I have long complained of) to open the Eyes of their Parishioners of all Ranks, and to deter them from confederating with the Destroyers of the People. — I am not, I must confess, very fond of having Matters of *Policy* treated in the *Pulpit*: — But when any scandalous *Vice* prevails, the more *epidemical* it is, it becomes *the more* the Duty of the Clergy to inveigh against it; and if with it is evidently connected the *Destruction* of the Nation, — I do not see why *that* motive also, to desist from it, may not be offered to the People from the *Pulpit*. It is not easy to determine, how far the Benefit from this Assistance may reach: — But one Thing I am inclined to believe, that, if the Clergy *do* their *Duty* in this particular, we shall no longer see *Jurymen* of the established Church, the Strictness of whose Conscience will not permit them to *kiss the Book* in the Court of Exchequer, *return*, upon their Oath, taken in the *most solemn Way*, their Verdict for the *Smuggler*, against *full* and *complete* Evidence; which heretofore has frequently been the Case.

If you, *Gentlemen*, concur in giving the *Alarm*; if you declare your *Opinion* that the Nation is on the
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the *Brink* of Perdition, and must in all probability *now* perish, unless relieved by such Resolutions as have been mentioned; I can entertain no doubt that your Endeavours will be seconded. How degenerate soever the present Age may be, *Notions* of publick Weal are stirring, and are very strong in the Heads *especially* of the *Youth* of the Nation. Hence that *Zeal* for *Liberty*, that *Concern* for the Good of the Country, which has got so many *young Gentlemen* the Appellation of *Patriot*, wherein (if their Title to it is *just*) they most *justly* triumph. — Of this Character, many sprung from the best Families, endued with excellent Parts, improved by Learning and Study, are following the Profession of the *Law*, in which they very probably are, one Day, to make an *eminent* Figure.

The *present* Object that ingrosses their Attention, and warms their Zeal, is the *Honour* of the Kingdom, and the *Freedom* of the People; which they apprehend to be in danger, and, on *that Supposal*, exert themselves with becoming Spirit. I do not say, that I fall in with *all* their Sentiments concerning the *Reality* of the Danger, and the *Means* of preventing it; but this I will say, because I believe it, that the *Spirit* they show is *unaffected*, and flows from a *real Concern* for the Good of their Country. And if this is the Case, what Reason can there be to doubt, that those *Gentlemen* will concert proper Measures, exert every Talent, and leave no Stone unturned, to prevent the *instant* Destruction of the Nation, when they are *told*, so as to *believe* it, that *immediate* Ruin is to attend the Continuance of *Smuggling*? And if they (not to speak of their Influence in their several Counties) do

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do but lend their *Mouths* in this City, from whence the rest of the People generally take their Sentiments, the Cry against that *infamous* Practice must prove *too strong* to be withstood; and they will have the *manly* Satisfaction of having *delivered* their Country, *over* and *above* the Prospect of the *actual* Enjoyment of the Blessings purchased by their Virtue; which we old Fellows cannot expect to *see*, and must *only hope for* to our Posterity.

This Letter, *Gentlemen*, has swelled to such a Bulk, that it is high Time I should take my leave of you. It is proved, I hope, beyond Contradiction, that *Smuggling* (by which I mean chiefly through-out — the running of *Tea* and *Spirits*) has been, and is now, the *Bane* of this Country, the *Drain* of its *Coin*, and the *Destruction* of the *landed Interest*; it is proved, that this Mischief has been fostered and carried to its present enormous Size — by the *inexcusable* Countenance it has met with from those who are the *most sensibly* hurt by it; and it is self-evident, that it is *in their Power*, with the greatest Ease imaginable, to rid themselves and the Nation of this intolerable *Nuisance*. Whether laying those Truths before the Gentlemen of this Country, will determine them to *act*, is more than I can tell; I am sure *it ought*, and I am pretty confident *it will*, if there is the *least Spark* of Honour or common Sense left amongst them. But if it should not, my Mortification will be *very compleat*; my Concern for the *unavoidable Desolation* of my Country, will be *aggravated* by this *cruel* Reflection, that my Countrymen, whatever *Airs* they give themselves, are *the most contemptible, the most*

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most abject of all Scoundrels; — and I shall have no other Recompence for the Trouble I have taken, but the Sense that I have done my utmost to avert their *Ruin*, and prevent their *Disgrace*.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most humble Servant.

EDINBURGH, March 28.

1744

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The Annual Committee of the Con-
vention of ROYAL BOROUGHS,

T O

The several *Boroughs* of SCOTLAND,

By Order of the last General Convention,

For preventing the pernicious Practice of *Smuggling*.

Loving Friends and Neighbours,

THE General Convention of the *Royal Bo-
roughs*, whose Duty and Interest it is to
take care of the Commerce and Welfare
of the whole, having taken into their serious Con-
sideration, the many Mischiefs that have attended
the pernicious Practice of *Smuggling*, to the great
Discouragement of all fair Traders, and to the utter
Destruction of many Thousands of the unhappy
Persons who were engaged therein, whereby
Commerce is sunk to the lowest Ebb, and this
Part of the Nation wholly drained of Money, and
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impoverished; and having with deep Concern observed, that this destructive Practice may still continue, to the utter Ruin of the Estate of *Boroughs*, as well as of the Country, unless the Eyes of Mankind in general are opened to see the Danger, and unless the Sober and Industrious, who love their Country, and are concerned for its Welfare, can be prevailed on to co-operate with and assist in the Execution of the late Act of Parliament, for the more effectual preventing the *smuggling of Tea, Brandy, &c.* have commanded us, their Annual Committee, to draw up, and to send in their Name to each *Borough*, a Letter, exhorting them to desist from this infamous Trade, and admonishing them of the Hazard they run if they persist in it: And we, in obedience to their Commands, and from the most ardent Desire to prevent the total Destruction of our Country, have drawn up the following Reflexions, to which we earnestly intreat your Attention.

To the End what we offer to your Consideration on this Subject may be the more distinct, we shall confine our Thoughts chiefly to two Articles, *Tea* and *Brandy*, and examine the Disadvantages that attend Commerce in these Commodities, as they affect the Nation in general, as they affect the State of the *Royal Boroughs*, and as they have affected, and must still affect the Adventurers in them.

To begin then with these Subjects of Trade as they affect the Nation: Every one knows, and the Nation by fatal Experience feels, that such immense Quantities of *Brandy*, have now, for many Years, been fraudulently imported without Pay-

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Payment of Duty, that the Importers have been obliged to sell *foreign Spirits* cheaper than *Spirits* from our own Corn could be produced; which has not only put an End to the Distillery of *Spirits* at home, but has even diminished the Brewing-trade, by furnishing *Brandy* for Punch at low Prices.

The Advancement of the Revenue is not the sole Reason for laying high Duties on some sorts of foreign Goods; a higher and more extensive Consideration produces such Regulations, *namely*, the promoting the Consumption of our own native Commodities, by making the Purchase of foreign Commodities, which answer the same Uses, dearer and more difficult. Now, this salutary and national View has been, by *Smuggling*, in a great measure defeated. *Run Tea* is sold so cheap, that it becomes a regular Part of the Diet of those who could not think of purchasing it, if the Duty were added to the Price; and the Multitude can hardly be blamed, if they prefer *Brandy* to home-made *Spirits*, when it can be purchased cheaper than our own home-made *Spirits*.

And the obvious Effect of all this, is, That these foreign Commodities being made use of in place of our own, just so much of our own Product becomes useless, as would be employed if these foreign Goods were not imported. If no *Tea* or *Brandy* were imported, People would return to the Diet of their Ancestors; and, where *Spirits* or strong Drink might be necessary, would make Use of their own; which needs must have many Consequences to the Advantage of the Nation: But, so long as the Use of *Tea* or *Brandy* is continu-

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ed, the Consumption of so much of our own Product ceases; which must make the whole fall in Value, when the Product exceeds considerably the Consumption.

The Disposition to cultivate and improve waste and muirish Grounds, which diffused itself amongst the Gentry all over the Country, was one of the most promising Circumstances that attended the *Union*; but that Spirit has been greatly damped by the low Price of Grain: Nor can any Gentleman be blamed for discontinuing his Improvements, when he can have no Hopes of being repaid by the Product of his Grounds; which, nevertheless, must be the Case so long as Grain continues to give no Price; and it must continue to do so whilst *Tea* and *Brandy* supply the Place of the Liquor and Spirits that might be produced from Grain.

Thus Grain, produced by the Industry of the Farmer, and by the commendable Zeal of the Country Gentleman to improve his own Grounds, and to invite his Neighbours to do the like, turns to no Account. In proportion as the Quantity raised, exceeds the Demand, the Price falls, and the Owner finds himself undone, by the Frauds of those who sell foreign Commodities cheaper than he can afford his.

It is astonishing, that Gentlemen and Farmers have not sooner discovered the Source of the Misfortunes they have so long complained of; and that, on the contrary, they have often, in spite of Law and common Sense, put themselves on the Side of the *Smugglers*, and employed their Servants, their Cattle, and their Carriages, in securing, and carrying through the Country, these

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these very Commodities that destroyed the Value of their own, and in some Years annihilated at least one third Part of their Rent.

For, though Grain has lately bore some Price, yet that is manifestly owing to bad Crops at home, or to accidental Demands from our Neighbours; and if the Produce was to be such as in good Seasons is to be expected, without some extraordinary Calamity abroad, it is certain great Part of our Grain must remain undisposed of, which in consequence would lessen the Value of the whole.

Whilst *Flanders* was the Scene where numerous Armies acted, and when the greatest Part of *Europe* was engaged in War, which in some Degree prevented the Culture of the Ground, at the same time that it made a great Demand for Grain to fill Magazines, the *British* Grain, even of the meanest kinds, was of Value; and what remained, after supplying the home Consumption, found vent abroad. But now the Case is strangely altered: The World is in Peace; Countries that were the Seat of War, produce Corns in abundance; even *France* exports Grain to foreign Parts with Advantage; and the Corns of this Country cannot meet with a Market any where upon the Continent; so that it must be made use of at home, or perish.

When our Grain drew Money in foreign Markets, and with that Money the same Quantity of foreign Spirits could be purchased and imported, as could be distilled from the Grain at home, it was perfectly equal to the Country, whether they made use of *Brandy* or *Aqua Vite*; that is, whether they consumed the Product of their own Grain in home-made Spirits, or in Spirits distilled in

France:

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France: But when *Scots* Grain is not saleable in any foreign Market, and must be either distilled at home, or perish, whoever imports foreign Spirits to prevent that Distillation, ruins so much of the national Product, and purchases that Mischief to his Country, at the Expence of so much Bullion, as the prime Cost and the Expence of the Importation amounts to.

It is notorious, that the *Exchange* with *France* is against us; that the Importation of any of our Commodities saleable there, is under Discouragements; and that our *Brandy* from thence, as well as our *Tea* from *Holland*, is paid for in ready Money, or in Bills of Exchange at great Disadvantage to us, which is worse. Under these Circumstances, it is demonstratively clear, that every Penny we pay for *Tea* or *Brandy* is so much Bullion lost to the Nation unnecessarily, because all the Uses of that *Tea* and *Brandy* might be supplied by our own Product; at the same time that this expensive Importation debases the Value of the Growth of our own Lands.

These Mischiefs, with very slight Attention, might have been foreseen. But at present there is no great Occasion for Reasoning; they are felt. Grain gives no Price, compared with what it did before the immoderate Use of *run Tea* and *Brandy*; and there is hardly one Penny of Coin to be met with in the Nation; the whole is gone, principally in Exchange for that *Tea* and *Brandy* which has destroyed the Value of our own Product.

Another national and very hurtful Consequence that attends this pernicious Trade, is, That Hopes of Gain (which, however plausible, yet have constantly

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stantly failed) have drawn many young Men of small Fortunes, whose Parents or Relations resided near the Sea-coasts, into this dangerous sort of Commerce, on the Prospect of *running* their Goods securely, by the Assistance of their Friends; and thereby has diverted them from employing their small Stocks and their Industry in the Advancement of those Manufactures to which the Nation must owe its Wealth, if it ever recover from its present distressed Condition, and thereby has, in a good measure, disqualified them from being useful to their Country.

We look upon it as a very lucky Circumstance, that the Nation is generally convinced of the Injury arising from the running of *Brandy*; and cannot help lamenting, that they do not so universally see the much greater Ruin that attends the *smuggling* of *Tea*. That it is to the *Smuggling* the universal Use of it is owing, must be confessed; because Thousands, who buy and use it at the present low Rate, could not afford to purchase it paying the Duty: And the chief Temptation to the Use of it, is the notorious Lowness of the Price, which is so small, that Men can hardly let it into their Heads, that it is, in any Degree, a national Consideration.

But they do not reflect, that the Price of *run Tea* is the smallest Part of the Expence, when they entertain themselves or their Friends with that *Drug*; the Sugar drops totally out of the Account: That Commodity is very near as much foreign to this Part of the Island as *Tea* is: And if any one will add the Expence of the Sugar to that of the *Tea*, and compute how much both cost each

each Family that makes use of them, (and how many Families in the Kingdom consume *Tea*), his Surprize at the extreme Impoverishment of this Country will cease, and he will wonder more, that there is one Penny of Coin left, than that we have so little.

Were the Laws that relate to *Tea* punctually executed, the Use of it would not totally be destroyed, but it would be mightily restrained: The Rich might entertain themselves with it, as they do with many other unnecessary, nay, noxious Things; but the Duty would put it out of the Reach of the meaner sort of People, who are infinitely the more numerous; and thereby, in a great measure, prevent the national Loss.

Thus we have laid before you some of the national Disadvantages that arise from *smuggling Tea* and *Brandy*. We verily believe, that no honest *Scotsman* would, upon any Temptation, how great soever, have followed that pernicious Trade from the Beginning, could he have foreseen the Extent of the Mischief to his Country: And we must conclude, that whoever shall be so wicked as to pursue it in time coming, after the late Indemnity has discharged past Offences, and after the cruel Effects of it have been so sensibly felt, and are so certainly known, must be contented with the Character of an Enemy to his Country.

The next View we proposed to take of the *Smuggling* Trade, was, as it affects the State of the *Royal Boroughs*. And, in regard to this, every one knows, the Consideration on which the State of *Boroughs* pays one full sixth Part of the Land-tax, is the exclusive Right to foreign Trade to which they

they are (by many Laws, confirmed by the Treaty of *Union*) intitled: And if foreign Trade were actually, as it is legally, confined to Freemen; if *Royal Boroughs* were the Magazines of all foreign Merchandize, and the Residence of all Dealers in foreign Trade, they might well afford to pay this Proportion of the Tax.

But every one knows, at the same time, that the infamous Practice of *Smuggling* has robbed the *Boroughs* of the Privilege, at the same time that it leaves them groaning under the Burden. The Seacoast, where it can be most conveniently touched, is the Scene of *running*. The Sons or Relations of Gentlemen whose Estates ly near the Coast, are the Importers; their Houses, or those of their Tenants, are the Warehouses for foreign Goods: And whilst Goods can be sold out of those Warehouses cheaper than in *Royal Boroughs*, it is absurd to think, that Freemen can trade without Loss.

Whoever gives the least Attention, must discover, that the Inhabitant of a *Royal Borough* cannot deal in *Running* with half the Advantage an Outlyer can. In *Royal Boroughs* of any Trade, Ports are fixed; there is a Customhouse, and a Crowd of Officers, whose Vigilance can no otherwise be avoided than by high *Bribery*; which brings upon the *Smuggling* a considerable Expence: But Outlyers, in the little Creeks and By-places where they unload their Wares, have no Officers, at least none of any Consequence, to deal with; and trifling Presents, perhaps the Sale of small Parcels of *Wine*, *Brandy* or *Tea*, at prime Cost, secures the Friendship of neighbouring Gentlemen; and consequently secures the *run* Goods against every thing,

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thing, except a Detachment of regular Troops; which cannot easily at all Times be had, and whose Diligence is frequently eluded, because their Livery discovers them, and gives Time to the *Smugglers*, with the Assistance of the Neighbourhood, to remove their Goods.

Wherefore, if *Smuggling* were a gainful Trade, which an honest *Burgess* should resolve to follow; consulting common Sense, the first Step he ought to take, must be, to desert the *Borough* whereof he is free, and to take up his Residence, and make up his Acquaintance, near some Creek remote from the Port, where he might *run* and keep his Goods in Safety, till proper Opportunities might be met with of conveying them through the Country, and perhaps into the *Royal Borough* which he had abandoned, there to be retailed by the *Burgesses*, whose the Right was to have originally imported them.

Thus, if *Smuggling* take place, the *Royal Boroughs* have done with foreign Trade. It is utterly impossible to carry it on in the fair Way, whilst *Smuggling* succeeds in the Neighbourhood; and the odds is so great on the Side of the outlying *Smuggler*, against the *Freeman* intending to attempt the *Running Trade*, that whoever projects to follow it, must, if his Eyes are open, make the Country, and not the *Borough*, the Scene of his Traffick.

These Reflexions are so obvious, and the mischievous Effects of *Smuggling* are so sensibly seen in the declining Condition of many *Boroughs* lately possessed of Trade, that it is amazing some Remedy has not been found out and applied to this
Evil,

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Evil, so dangerous to the State of *Boroughs* in general, as well as pernicious to the Nation: And it is the more amazing, that the only Remedy seems to be in the Hands of those who suffer by the Disease; and who, nevertheless, out of Indolence, or upon some false Notions, will not apply it.

Were the *Freemen* of *Royal Boroughs* universally to give up the *Running Trade*, and to acquaint the outlying *Smugglers*, that they must also quit it, and that, if they do not, the *Freemen* will become Informers; who can doubt that the Outliers must desist? For, not to speak of their Want of Shipping, and of Ability to make up a Cargo without being concerned with some *Freemen*, it is certain they could not import or sell off Goods of any Value, without the Knowledge of *Freemen*; and that Knowledge, employed in giving Information to the Officers of the Revenue, must soon put an End to the Mischief: Nay, the Resolution taken, and declared, would infallibly stop the Evil; because no Outlyer, in his Senses, would thereafter attempt any fraudulent Importation, for fear of Discovery.

The only possible Objection, so far as we can see, that stands in the Way of taking such a Resolution, is the odious Idea that has for some Time been affixed to the Word *Informers*; and to be sure, whilst all dealt in the same illicit Trade, it was unhandfome in any one to make private Gain by discovering. But if an entire Class of Men, nay, the only Men who have a Right (and that exclusive too) to foreign Trade, shall give up the *Smuggling* Method of carrying it on, to prevent their own undoing, and the undoing of the State

of *Boroughs*; can it at all be found fault with in them, if they do not permit another Set of Men, who have no Sort of Right to carry on foreign Trade, to trade fraudulently? and if, after Notice given, they follow all legal Methods to secure foreign Trade to themselves, by putting a Stop to the Frauds of those who would destroy their Privileges, at the same time that they rob the Publick?

Fond, but false Hopes of Gain, made Freemen, soon after the *Union*, fall into the *Running* Trade; and, whilst embarked in it, they durst not complain of Outlyers, tho' they saw them running away with their Privilege, (*i. e.* foreign Trade), for fear of their using the same Weapons that now must be used against them, *viz.* Informations and Discoveries. Experience has since shewed how vain these Hopes were, and how noxious the Trade is to the Nation, as well as to the State of *Boroughs*. Shall the Freemen then, who suffered the Outlyers to gain upon their Privilege out of Necessity, whilst they followed the *clandestine* Trade, sit now quiet? and, when they, for their Parts, must give up all Thoughts of *Running*, allow the Outlyers to enjoy all the foreign Trade, for which the *Boroughs* pay, when their enjoying that Trade, and in the fraudulent Way too, disables the Freemen from carrying on any foreign Trade whatever? Surely, whoever has any Regard to the Weal of the *Royal Boroughs*, cannot be patient under such a Circumstance, or think any Method, that is not illegal or dishonest, too rough, to prevent a Miſchief so general, and so dangerous.

The last Thing we shall lay before you, is a View of the *Smuggling* Trade, as it affects the unhappy

happy Adventurer. And on this Subject we may appeal to your own proper Knowledge, and to the Knowledge of every one who has been in the least acquainted with the Trade of *Scotland* since the *Union*, what Ruin it has produced, and how many Families it has undone. It is not easy to say, how many Thousands have been concerned in that destructive Trade; but it is very safe to aver, that hardly one Man out of an hundred, who ever dealt in it, escaped being hurt by it, or indeed escaped Ruin, if he did not give it up very soon.

And the Reason is extremely obvious. The strong Expectation of Gain, from the Greatness of the Duty, which was all to be saved, drew Multitudes of Persons with small Stocks, and smaller Correspondence, into the Trade. Those Persons traded above their Stocks, upon Credit afforded them in *France* or *Holland*, and poured in vast Quantities of *Tea* and *Brandy* upon the Country. Could they have sold their Goods at as high a Rate as if they had paid Duty, or near it, which was the Case of the first *Smugglers* just after the *Union*, their Profit would have been great; but, in place of that, when the Importation exceeded the Demand, which happened very soon, they were obliged to sell off their Wares at any Price, as quick as they could, to answer their Bills when they fell due; and *Brandy* came frequently to be sold, with all the Expence and Risk that attends it at present, cheaper than it ever was sold in *Scotland* before the *Union*, when it paid little or no Duty; whereby the Destruction of the Importer became unavoidable.

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Saving the whole Duty on Goods that pay so high as *Brandy, Tea or Wine*, yields a glaring Prospect; but the unhappy *Smuggler* does not consider, or bring into the Account, the Expence of *Running*; the Correspondence he must maintain with Officers, and with the Country; the frequent Occasions for Hush-money, and the accidental Losses by Seizure: Those Drawbacks would prove a considerable Discouragement to the Trade, even were *run Goods* to be sold at the Price they ought to draw paying the Duty: But when, in Reality, the *Smuggler* is obliged to sell his Goods for little more than the prime Cost, because of the excessive Importation beyond the Demand, those Expences, not brought to account, gradually consume his Stock; and the first unlucky Seizure completes his Destruction, and leaves him a Burden on the poor Country, which he had, so far as his Credit could go, exhausted of Money by his pernicious Practices.

Had all the Money made use of in *Smuggling*, been employed in carrying on Manufactures at home, the Manufacturer might possibly have lost, but the Nation must surely have gained; whereas every Penny that has been exported for *Tea, Brandy and Wine*, with the Use of which the Country could easily have dispensed, is so much Money lost to the Nation: And when one sees, for Example, a *Smuggler* (who may have been worth, originally, *L. 200*, and who may have traded ten Years) undone, one is not to say, that *L. 200* is lost to the Nation; but the fair Conclusion is, that *L. 2000* of the national Money is exported by him; because, if he have traded annually to the Value of his

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his Stock, every Year's Trade was so much Loss to the Country.

'Tis therefore surely high Time for the *Smuggler* to leave off this consuming Trade; and, though his Eyes have not hitherto been open to the Misery of his Country, and to his own Danger, through his Practices, it is to be hoped the late Act for preventing *Smuggling*, will shew the Impossibility of continuing in that abominable Course without immediate Destruction. It is penal to be found within two Leagues of the Coast with prohibited Goods on board; all Keepings and such fast Places must be open to the Officers Search; high Penalties attend every Offence: And, if the Country Gentlemen, who are generally in the Commission of the Peace, do not shut their Eyes upon their own Interest, and on the Interest of their Country, but will act with proper Vigour, it must become absolutely impracticable for a *Runner* of Goods to escape Ruin.

And, if the extreme Danger, which from henceforward must attend this infamous Commerce, should put an End to it, the necessary Consequence must be, that the Money now exported in Exchange for useless Commodities, which serve only to lower the Value of our own, will be kept at home, and employed in promoting, purchasing, and exporting those Manufactures by which alone our Country can be recovered from Poverty; and foreign Trade will be restored to its ancient Channel, the *Royal Boroughs*, to which of right it belongs. When Business is carried on in an open, undisguised Manner, the fair Trader, who has too much Virtue to submit to Perjury, and too much

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Prudence to submit his Fortune to Chance, can reassume his Vocation, and form Projects of Trade, without the Hazard of being undone by that Bane of all honest Commerce, the *Smuggler*.

Our Reflexions hitherto have been pretty much confined to the Case of *Tea* and *Brandy*, which we have chosen as the Instances in which the Mischiefs of *Smuggling* are the most conspicuous; but you will certainly carry them further in your own Minds, and see that they apply to almost all other foreign Commodities, the Use whereof can be dispensed with, and that are *run* to avoid Payment of Duties; and particularly to *Wine*. No Man can say, that it is the Interest of this Nation, to have great Quantities of *Wine* consumed in it, in exclusion of Beer and Ale, which naturally would supply its place. No Man can deny, that the Lowness of the Price of *Wine* is the great Inducement to Men of low Rank and small Fortunes to deal in it; and therefore no Man can doubt it is to be wished it bore a higher Price, (if it cannot absolutely be prohibited), to prevent the too great Consumption of it. If no *Wine* were imported without Payment of Duty, it surely could not be afforded so cheap as it is at the Out-ports; and therefore one should think it follows unavoidably, that it is the Interest of the Nation that all *Wine* should pay the Duty.

As it is the Interest of the Nation, it is not less so of the fair Trader, who cannot possibly carry on his Business if he is underfold, as he must be when *Smuggling* prevails. A clear Conviction of this Truth, determined the *Wine* Traders of *Edinburgh*, some Years ago, by unanimous Consent, to
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enter every Drop of their *Wines*, which they have done ever since; and, in consequence of that fair Practice, have avoided the many Losses and Disappointments they were formerly exposed to, and trade in *Wine* at as great a Certainty as in any other sort of perishable Commodity.

Whereas, in the Out-ports, where almost all the *Wine* imported is *run*, the Price is frequently very low. The *Smuggler* is often obliged to sell Hogsheads, which cannot be so easily hid or transported as *Tea* or *Brandy*, for what he can at the time get for them. Accidents spoil the Liquors, and accidental Seizures undo the Adventurer. In these Circumstances, it will be the Height of Madness to think of carrying on any more the Trade of *running Wine*: It will be, by much, less worth dealing in, when *Smuggling* in the other Articles ceases; and the Customhouses will be much better able to look after this Branch of Thieving, when they are not necessarily engaged in correcting the others. Besides that, as it is their Duty to take care of the Execution of the Law lately made, we are credibly informed the Commissioners have come to a Resolution, to bring Things in the Out-ports, with respect to the Importation of *Wine*, to the same Foot on which they stand at the Port of *Leith*; that, after *Michaelmas*, they will stand at no Expence to prosecute Offenders; and that if, after that time, a single Hogshead of *Wine* shall be imported without Entry, and Payment of Duty, they will prefer *English* Bills for discovering and recovering that Duty, which this Nation has not hitherto been much acquainted with. What Inconvenience

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ence this would produce to Men who should be so unhappy as to pursue fraudulent Courses after Notice, we leave to you, to themselves, and to the whole World to judge.

Thus, loving Friends and Neighbours, we have executed the Commands laid upon us by the *General Convention*; and we obtest and conjure you, by the Love you bear to your Country, by the Regard you have for the Weal and Prosperity of the *Boroughs*, and for the Preservation of their Rights and Privileges, and by the Compassion you owe to the unhappy Circumstances of your heedless Friends and Neighbours, who may be ready to plunge afresh into this Gulph of Destruction, that you will exert yourselves in your several Capacities, whether as Men or as Magistrates, to put, at once, an End to this dangerous Mischief, and that you will not think any Trouble too great, or any Means, if lawful, improper to accomplish this important Design. We are,

Right Honourable,

Your most humble Servants,

and affectionate Brethren,

The Annual Committee of the
Royal Boroughs of *Scotland*.

Edinburgh, Sept. 3. 1736.
Signed in their Presence, and
by their Appointment,

ALEX. WILSON *Preses.*

ERRATUM. p. 21. l. 4. for *Cafe*, read *Care*.