

132-9



0410

MR. FORMAN'S
LETTER

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
William Pulteney, Esq;

Shewing how
Pernicious, the IMPERIAL
COMPANY of Commerce and
Navigation, lately established in
the AUSTRIAN NETHER-
LANDS, is likely to prove to
GREAT BRITAIN, as well
as to HOLLAND.

Pro Rege saepe; Pro Republica semper.

LONDON:
Printed for, and Sold by S. Busssey, in Ivy Lane.
M. DCC. XXV.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE

William Pulteney, Esq;

SIR,



Am but too sensible that the in-
human Manner, in which several
of my Actions have been repre-
sented to the World, together with
my long silence under that Inju-
stice, have given my Enemies great
Advantages over me, and render'd me a very un-
fit Person, in the Opinion of some People, to point
out to *Great Britain*, either her present Interest or
future Danger; and I don't, in the least, doubt,
but that this Undertaking, will once more raise
the Fury and Clamour of a powerful Faction a-
gainst me.

I humbly confess, Sir, that except the force of
Education, and the Example of some of the great-
est Men in *Britain* may be allowed some small Plea
in my favour, I have but very little to offer in ex-
cuse

(6)

cause of several parts of my Conduct in the Beginning of his Majesty's Reign. But tho' I have been unfortunate in my way of thinking, yet I have this Consolation, to which God is my witness, that I never fell into any Error or Mistake against the Government, either through a mercenary View, Thirst of Revenge, or an ungrateful Principle. Whatever my Faults have been, I have sincerely repented of them, and have often promised you to make *Great Britain* and his Majesty all the honourable Attonement in my Power, by endeavouring to be a faithful Promoter of their Interest for the future.

In this Crisis of Affairs, my Duty, as well as my honour, calls upon me to fulfill those Promises, whatever the Event may be; and how much soever some Men may calumniate me, and prefer the Gratification of a private Revenge to the Interest of their Country, I shall speak my mind like a Man, who resolves to act up to the dictates of his Conscience, without either courting the Smiles, or fearing the Frowns of any Party. A long series of Misfortunes have inured me to dangers, and made me perfectly well acquainted with the Effects of Party-rage, Ingratitude, and Malice; but tho' I expect a Storm of all Three from two different Quarters, I am nevertheless perswaded, that all impartial Men, both at Home and Abroad, who have the least regard for the Honour and Happiness of *Britain*, will weigh my Arguments without Prejudice; and that you yourself, Sir, upon perusing them will look back upon some Pieces of my Life, which may possibly have still left in you the Traces of that Esteem and Friendship, with which you once were pleased to honour me.

As

(7)

As I have now engaged myself to speak and act like a *Briton* fearless of his Fate, and anxious for his Country, I shall, from time to time, give you my thoughts upon such things as have fallen in my way, during the Nine tedious, melancholy years of my banishment, and think it necessary to begin with the *Ostend* Company, as an Affair, which has drawn the Eyes of all Europe upon it, and by its importance seems, not only to call for all the Tongues and Pens in *Britain*, but even to demand the utmost Address and Integrity of her Ministers. It is no small encouragement to me to go on with this Work, that the Parliament of *Great Britain*, and the Court of *France*, have already shewn their Apprehensions of the Danger threatened from this rising Colossus: And the lively and frequent Memorials given in by the *Dutch* to the Imperial Minister about it, plainly evince, how prejudicial this Republick apprehends it may be in its consequences to the two Maritime Powers, which have been hitherto so justly esteem'd the Bulwarks of Property and the Liberties of *Europe*.

I have met with so strange an Account of the Origine of this Company which now portends so much mischief to the Trade of *Great Britain*, that I cannot but look upon two or three very particular Circumstances as a proper Introduction to the Arguments I have to offer against it. Mr. *Kerr*, so well known in his Life-time by his Intrigues and private Negotiations abroad, seems boldy to assert in the Papers he has left behind him, that this Company, was projected many years ago by some very powerful People among the

the

(8)

the Friends to the *Hanover Succession*, to the End that *Flanders* might serve as a Refuge, both to their Persons and Effects in case of any misfortune. I must confess, Sir, that I don't know what to say to this Assertion, no more than to a great many other Passages in the same Papers which seems directly levelled at several considerable Persons, as if they were sacrificing the Interest and Safety of Britons to their own private Fears or Avarice. But supposing what Mr. Kerr, says to be true: As there is no moral possibility, that the Chevalier de *St. George* can ever be in capacity to give his Majesty, or his Royal Issue, the least disturbance for the future without breach of Trust in our own Ministry, the Motives which induced *English Men* to enter into measures tending to the inevitable ruin of their Country, now no longer subsist, and the Ministry's Conduct in this Affair will be the best Rule for *Britons* to Judge by, what Apprehensions they ought to entertain upon this Account.

Another thing that very much hastened the Establishment of the *Netherland Company* was the Conduct of Our own *East India* Directors at home. Mr. Ray, one of the present Directors in *Flanders*, if I have been rightly informed, was the first private Adventurer that sent a Ship from *Ostend* to *China*, and other People being about to follow his Example, the *English* Directors wrote him a very complaisant Letter, recommending their Interest to him, and hoping that, as he was a Man of Honour (a Character he very well deserves) and a fellow Subject, he would use his utmost endeavours to discourage such Proceedings for the future. They also wrote much about the

(9)

the same time to Mr. Logan then Consul in *Flanders* to have a watchful Eye over what was doing there; but the fate of that Letter ought to give the Ministry a Caution, not to send weak ignorant Men abroad in such Employments for the time to come. Some Merchants at *Ostend* seeing the Letter lie in the Post-Office, and guessing at the Contents by the Company's Seal upon it, went immediately to invite the Consul abroad, and made him so drunk before the Letter was brought to him, that they took it out of his Pocket without even allowing him an Opportunity to read it. This I dare aver to you to be matter of Fact, for I have seen Copies of the Letters with a Gentleman of undisputed probity, and one deeply concerned in the *Ostend* Company. The Originals so fully explain'd the great damage this Trade would do to the *English* Company, and consequently how advantageous it would be to the *Flemings*, that it was thought highly necessary to send them to the Court of *Vienna*.

Thus, Sir, you see three very particular Circumstances in the rise of the *Imperial Company* of Commerce and Navigation lately established in the *Spanish Netherlands*; and now I humbly beg leave to lay before you some of those Dangers with which it immediately threatens the Trade of *Great Britain* and *Holland*. I am very sensible how delicate a thing it is to touch the Interest of Crown'd Heads, or to comment upon their Actions; but against this reflection, I weigh the Duty which every Man owes to his Country. With due respect to his Imperial Majesty, it cannot but be surprizing to all Men of sense, to see the Court of *Vienna* persist so inflexibly in an undertaking

taking, the justice of which has been so vigorously and so reasonably disputed by the two greatest and best Allies it has. This proceeding in the Imperial Ministers admits of very serious reflections; it ought to open the Eyes of Britons, and, in my humble Opinion, demands the Attention of those, whose Employments make it their Duty to preserve that Ballance of Power, upon which the happiness of so many Millions of People depends.

Mr. Mac Neny one of His Majesty's Irish Subjects, but principal Advocate at present for the Flemings in this Affair has employed a great deal of Time and Paper against the Directors of the Dutch East and West India Company's; but there are so many Gentlemen in those two illustrious Corporations, so very capable to expose the Fal-lacy of his way of Arguing that I will not presume to trouble you with the Points in debate, further than as I find them absolutely necessary to my Design of giving the British Nation a View of the Cloud now hovering over it. I am told that he has been very fairly answer'd by a Gentleman, whose Performance upon that Subject I have not yet had the Happiness to see; But by the Applause that Piece has received, and the sanguine Resolutions it has produced in the States of Brabant, I suppose that the learned Author has spoken to the Purpose, in regard to the Right by which the Austrian Netherlands pretend to disturb the repose of Europe, and invade the Properties of their Neighbours and Protectors.

Tho

* Mr. Westerveen.

Tho' there is no doubt, but that the establishing an East India Company in Flanders, is, in the Judgment of all impartial Men, contrary to the Treaties made with the Emperor and his Predecessors, yet I humbly presume that the Stress of the Dispute at present need not lye so much whether the Austrian Netherlands have, or ever had a Right to Trade to the East Indies, &c. which is what Mr. Mac Neny so strenuously sticks for; as whether such a Trade may not be prejudicial to the rest of Europe, particularly to those very Powers which put his Imperial Majesty in Possession of them. If this happens to be the Case, as it certainly will, by allowing a Right which was never acknowledged before, by introducing new Customs, and by turning the Course of Commerce into another Channel; then this Question naturally arises; Whether all true Britons and Dutch-Men, in Justice to themselves and their Posterity, of whose future Properties and Liberties they are Trustees and Guardians as their Forefathers have been of theirs, ought not unanimously and vigourously to join in the most effectual means to prevent it?

We need not look many years back to find a Precedent sufficient to authorize such a Proceeding. If upon the Death of the late Emperor Joseph, the Allies were obliged to change their Plan in regard to Spain, and to leave King Philip in Possession of that Crown, meerly to preserve the Ballance of Power in Europe; the very same consideration now more loudly calls upon the two Maritime Powers, to oppose the Establishment of an East Company in Flanders, since it so apparently threatens their own Trade and Navigation,

gation, without which, the Liberties of *Europe* can never be maintained and supported.

England and *Holland*, have almost Time out of mind, carried on a Trade to the *East Indies* and *China*, and were never encroached upon by the *Flemings*, when subject to the King of *Spain*: Nor had they been interrupted or interloped by them to this Day; had the *Netherlands* been left in the Possession of their old Masters. This Point has been modestly touched upon in one of the *Dutch* Memorials, and as hastily slid over by Mr. *Mac Nery* in his Answer. *Great Britain* and *Holland*, it seems, have conquered and acquired, at an incredible effusion of their Blood, and an immense waste of their Treasure, so many new Kingdoms and Provinces, and so many Millions of Subjects for his Imperial Majesty to a very fine purpose, if they must at last by the very means of such important services, be stript of one of the most valuable Branches of their Commerce; but this is not the only Misfortune *Britons* have to apprehend in this Case, for if they sit tamely under this Insult, it will infallibly open a Gap, and serve as a precedent to the *Flemings*, to make further encroachments upon the Trade of *Great Britain*. It is very dangerous, Sir, to let Evils take too deep a Root before the Remedy be applied: The Breach at *Dagenham*, might have been stopp'd at the beginning, for less than twenty Shillings, but being imprudently neglected, it cost afterwards above ten times as many Thousand Pounds. The Case is much the same at present in regard to the *Flemings*; it is much easier to suppress the *Ostend* Company, while they have not one Ship of Force to oppose us, than when they have

have gotten a good Fleet; which, (for several Reasons not very proper to be mentioned here.) I assure you they will have in a few Years, if not timely prevented by an honest Administration in *Britain*.

But, Sir, the *Flemings* have brought so many Arguments to support their Endeavours to share our Trade with us, to those Countries where our long Commerce, as well as laborious and dangerous Discoveries, has render'd the Navigation much easier to such new Beginners than it would otherwise have been; that it will be necessary to look back a little to the Treaty of Alliance concluded at the *Hague*, the 7th of *September* 1701. between the Emperor, the King of *Great Britain*, and the States General of the United Provinces. It is very well worth every *Britons* Notice, that there is not an Article of that Treaty, relating to the Emperors Interest, but what has been faithfully and punctually performed by the *English* and *Dutch*, as far as the Liberties of *Europe*, and the Situation of Affairs would permit. They have put his Imperial Majesty in Possession of the *Spanish Netherlands*, *Naples*, *Sicily*, and the *Milanese*, while *Great Britain* and *Holland*, have been impoverished and almost exhausted by the late War, the Emperor has been aggrandized and made more Powerful by it than any of his Predecessors since the Emperor *Charles the Vth*. It is also remarkable, that of the fourteen Articles of that Treaty, five expressly mention the Security and Advantage of the Navigation and Commerce of *Great Britain* and *Holland*; which shews how jealous the Maritime Powers then were of their Trade, and how ridiculous it would have been in any Man to imagine that they would at that time have

have suffered any new Competitor with them in the *Indian* Seas. If they would not suffer it then, it is less reasonable to believe that they ought to do it now, since by establishing a New Company in *Flanders*, their Trade must be visibly impaired, and consequently in a worse condition than it was at the making of that Treaty, by the first Article of which, his then Imperial Majesty was obliged to *remove* and *prevent* all that might be hurtful and prejudicial to them; Which he certainly would do were he now alive.

If the above mentioned Treaty still subsists for the mutual security of the Parties concerned, as by the twelfth Article of it, I am humbly of Opinion it does, the Emperor's Ministers seem to me to have led his Imperial Majesty into Measures very contrary to the meaning of the Treaty it self, and the Design of his August Father. The first Article of it says, "That there shall be from this time a Constant, firm, perpetual, and inviolable Amity between his Imperial Majesty, his sacred Royal Majesty of *Great Britain*, and the Lords the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, and that they shall be bound reciprocally to promote the Advantage of each other, and to remove and prevent all that may be hurtful and prejudicial to them." It is manifest to all the World, that the *English* and *Dutch* have highly promoted the Emperor's Advantage; but how the Establishment of an *India Company* in *Flanders*, which is so visibly to the detriment of the *English* and *Dutch* Commerce, can be consistent with the Justice of his Imperial Majesty, or the meaning of this Treaty,

I leave to the Opinion of every Man, who has not an Interest or Party view in raising new Cavils and Disputes. The intent of the Treaty was to procure for the Emperor "a just and reasonable Satisfaction for his Pretensions to the Succession of *Spain*." Which his Son has amply received "and for the King of *Great Britain*, and the *States General*, a sufficient Security in particular for their Kingdoms, Provinces, and Territories, and for the Navigation and Commerce of their Subjects." Which Commerce is now invaded and encroached upon by the *Netherlanders*. In the fifth Article of the said Treaty it is stipulated that, "To procure the said Satisfaction and Security, the Allies shall use their utmost endeavours to retake and Conquer the Provinces of the *Spanish Netherlands*, to the end that they may become a Bulwark and Barrier to separate and keep off *France* from the *United Provinces* in the same manner as heretofore; the said *Spanish Netherlands* having been the said *States General's* Security till of late that his most Christian Majesty hath possessed himself of them, and seized upon them by his Troops, &c." It does not appear very plain by this Article, nor indeed by any part of the Treaty, that the *English* and *Dutch* were obliged to give up the Province of *Flanders* to the Emperor when Conquered, it never having been a Fief of the Empire or Dependant on it; The principal Motive for Conquering the *Spanish Netherlands*, was that they might serve as a Bulwark and Barrier to the *United Provinces*, in the same manner as heretofore: But heretofore they had no Trade to *India*, nor by Consequence ought they to have any now: For it would be childish and

and ridiculous to suppose that what was intended for the Security and Preservation of the *Dutch*, and which cost them so much Blood and Treasure to obtain, must now be turned to their Ruin and Destruction. If so, it had been much better for them that the *Spanish Netherlands* had been returned to King *Philip* at the Peace, with whom they could have lived very good Neighbours, upon much easier Terms than parting with their Commerce.

Sir, I am not ignorant that a great many well meaning People in *England*, have been industriously deluded into a belief that the Treaty has not been complied with by *Great Britain* and the *United Provinces*, because the Emperor is not put in possession of all the *Spanish Monarchy*: But it ought to be consider'd that the proclaiming the present Emperor King of *Spain*, was an after Game, and no Condition of the Grand Alliance in 1701. By a just and reasonable Satisfaction no more was then meant than the recovery of *Naples*, *Sicily*, and some Fiefs of the Empire at that time in the Hands of *France*: The War was not entered into expressly to dethrone King *Philip*, nor did the Emperor at the making of the Treaty, so much as lift his Expectations or Hopes to the obtaining the Crown of *Spain*, as is very apparent by the Eighth Article, which says, that, "The War being once begun, none of the Allies shall treat of Peace with the Enemy, except in Conjunction, and with the Participation of the other Princes, and the said Peace shall not be concluded, without first obtaining for his Imperial Majesty a just and reasonable Satisfaction (here it was very natural, nay absolutely

lately necessary, to have inserted all the *Spanish Monarchy*, if it had been designed for his Family at that time) " and for the King of *Great Britain*, " and the *States General*, the Security of their respective Kingdoms, Provinces, Territories, Navigation, and Commerce; and without having first taken just and sufficient measures to prevent for ever the Union of the Kingdoms of *France* and *Spain* under one Crown, so that " one and the same King should never be Sovereign of them, &c." By these Words, Sir, it is put out of dispute that King *Philip* might remain King of *Spain*, provided that the Allies could be secured that he should never become King of *France*, and by uniting the Crowns, endanger the Liberties of *Europe*. When the Emperor *Leopold* sent Prince *Eugene* into *Italy*, (who marched with an Army of Thirty Thousand Men from *Roveredo*, towards the end of *May*, 1701, above three Months before the Signing of the Treaty) his Imperial Majesty did not declare the War to be for the Vindication of the Pretensions of his House to the Succession of *Spain*, (which he was sure would never have engaged the Empire in his Quarrel) but for the recovery of the *Dutchy of Milan*, as a Fief of the Empire. Wherefore it is evident that the *English* and *Dutch* have complied with more than they were obliged to by this Treaty, in giving up the entire Province of *Flanders* to the Emperor, and that the establishing an *East India* Company there is contrary to the true meaning and purport of it, and the returns due to so generous an Action.

(18)

This leads to me to take notice of a way of Arguing which I have met with among the generality of Advocates for the *Ostenders*, as disingenuous as it is ungenerous and ungrateful. To disengage his Imperial Majesty from the Obligations they are Conscious to themselves he lies under to the *English* and *Dutch*, they say that the late War was enter'd into as much for the particular Interest of *Great Britain* and *Holland*, as for the Service of the Emperor: That the Proclaiming the *Pretender*, by *Louis* the XIVth, was so great an Affront to King *William* and the *British* Nation, and so nearly regarded Queen *Anne*, that Self-interest oblig'd her to Prosecute the War with the utmost vigour to preserve her own Title and the Protestant Succession: That the Victories obtained by the Allies were as necessary for the preservation of the *English* and *Dutch* as his Imperial Majesty: And that consequently he has not an Obligation to *England* or *Holland* upon that Head, considerable enough to engage him to abandon the Interest of his own Subjects, by hind'ring them to Trade to the *Indies*, which they have a Right to do. This is part of what I have frequently heard in *Brussels* and *Antwerp*: But good manners, and respect to some in the present Administration in Britain, obliges me to conceal the rest.

There is no doubt, Sir, but that the mutual Security of the Persons concerned, was what was principally regarded in forming the grand Alliance and ought to be the Consequence of it, than which we ask no more: But as there is a great deal of difference betwixt securing old Possessions

(19)

and acquiring new ones, the Emperor is here under an undeniable Obligation to his Allies. For notwithstanding it be granted that the Duke of *Marlborough's* amazing Victories were useful to the rest of the Allies by lowering the Power of *France*, yet the Emperor had the greatest Benefit of them, as he was in the greatest Danger. Had not that invincible General marched to *Donawert* and *Blenheim*, the Emperor *Leopold*, must, in all probability, have been obliged to quit the Imperial Diadem: And I never heard an unprejudiced Man of any Nation or Party soever, but what would readily allow, that the Emperor owes, not only all the new Kingdoms and Provinces which he now enjoys, but even the Empire it self, to Queen *ANNE* and the *States General*, by that timely and vigorous Assistance.

Tho' the People always bear the Burthen of a War, yet they are seldom or never let into the Knowledge of the true Motives to one: The proclaiming the *Chevalier* at *St. Germain*, King of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, was the most lucky Thing that could possibly have happened for the *English* Ministry, since they were resolv'd to enter into a War in behalf of the Emperor: It was aggravated and represented to *Great Britain* in the blackest Colours, and the Bulk of the People believe to this Day, that it was the principal Ground of that War, which has cost the Nation so dear: But if they look into the Treaty of Alliance, they will find that the War against *France*, was projected long before the Death of King *James* the Second, since

the Treaty it self, which must unavoidably have taken up a considerable time in adjusting, was Signed ten Days before the * Decease of that unortunate Prince. So that the proclaiming the *Chevalier*, impartially consider'd, is so far from amounting to a Demonstration, that there is not even a shadow of Reason to Assert that the *French* King had any prior Design to establish that Gentleman in the Throne of *Great Britain*, in contavention to the Treaty of *Ryswick*: But rather appears an effect of his Resentment against the *British* Nation for entering into that Alliance against him in favour of the House of *Austria*. When a Man disinterestedly and calmly reflects upon his most Christian Majesty's Behaviour at the Death of Queen *ANNE*, he cannot but be of this Opinion. For had *Louis* the *XIV*th, then had any Inclination to Act contrary to the Treaty of *Utrecht* in favour of the *Chevalier*, nothing, humanly speaking, could have hinder'd his having Success, as Affairs stood at that Time in *Britain*.

I hope, Sir, I have fairly proved that the proclaiming the *Chevalier* had no influence at all in forming the grand Alliance against *France* and *Spain*, and as to Queen *ANN*'s being obliged to prosecute the War, and follow King *WILLIAM*'s Plan, in regard to her own Safety and the Protestant Succession, I am humbly of Opinion, that other measures might have been

* The Treaty was Signed the 7th of September, N. S. and King James dyed the 17th of September, N. S.

taken,

taken, more for the Interest, though perhaps not so much for the Glory of *Great Britain*, since the World would hardly then have known that it had produced a Duke of *Marlborough*. At her Majesty's Accession to the Crown, she might have had what Terms she pleased from *France*, as well for securing her own Title, and the Protestant Succession, as the *British* Commerce; Nay, her Friendship would have been at that Time of such Consequence to *France* and *Spain*, that to purchase it they would have given her an open Trade to *Mexico* and *Peru*. She might have saved the numberless Millions of Pounds *Sterling* thrown away the last War, and instead of leaving the Nation fifty Millions in Debt, she might have left it free from all Incumbrances, besides the prodigious Wealth, that such a Trade and such a Peace would have brought along with them. But of all these Advantages have we been deprived by a generosity and concern for the House of *Austria*, which has always proved fatal to the Interest of *England*!

It is evident, that whatever were the Motives for entering into that War, the Emperor has been infinitely the greatest Gainer by it. If the *Pretender* and the dreaded greatness of the House of *Bourbon* have been dear Bugbears to *Great Britain*, the House of *Austria* has been a Sponge to soak up the best Blood in her Veins, and a Gulph that has swallowed up the Wealth of the Nation. Tho' *Britons* still lye groaning under the Debts contracted in that War, and are struggling with insuperable Difficulties to raise the yearly Taxes to pay the Interest of those

(22)

those Debts, the Emperor has acquired Kingdoms and Provinces in the finest parts of *Europe*, which in extent may equal *Great Britain* it self, for which I appeal to *Naples*, *Sicily*, the *Milanese* and the *Spanish Netherlands*, in the Conquest of which, the Blood and Gold of *Great Britain* had the greatest Share. While his Imperial Majesty enjoys the Revenues of those prodigious Acquisitions, All, that duped *Britons* have to boast of, and shew their Children and Relations, for a great part of their private Fortunes expended in the late Wars, and all the Blood their Houses have lost in the Emperor's Quarrels with *Louis* the XIVth, is but two small holds in the *Mediterranean*, for the Security of their Commerce in that part of the World, and even those (it is said) they are in danger of losing. But *Britons* have ever been more renowned for Fighting than Politicks: And (I hope I may say it without Offence) tho' they beat all the World in time of War, all the World tricks and imposes upon them in time of Peace; but whether to Attribute this misfortune to an excess of good Nature peculiar to the *British* Nation, or to Ignorance, or Corruption in her Ministry, or to whatever other Cause I leave to better judges to determine.

Had not the Interest of the House of *Austria* been more prevalent with the *British* Ministry than the Interest of *Britain* it self, we might have had Advantages from the *French* King at the Treaty of *Gertrudenburg*, which there was no possibility of obtaining afterwards at *Utrecht*. We might then have had a glorious

(23)

ous and advantageous Peace, and most of those gallant Men, who fell soon after in the dreadful Battle of *Blavagnies*, had been now able, to be an Ornament, as well as a Defence to their Country: Such Measures might also then have been taken as would have effectually prevented so many illustrious Families in *Britain*, from mourning at present Misfortunes of their Friends and Relations in banishment Abroad, not to mention the unhappy Fate of those who publicly lost their Lives at home: But present Advantages and future Dangers were both equally slighted, because the *French* King could not become such an Apostate to humane Nature, as to comply with the rigid Demand of the *British* Ministry, in behalf of the present Emperor, and turn his Arms and the whole Power of *France* against his own Grandson, and a gallant and generous Nation, who had so cheerfully received him for their King, and so loyally and steadfastly maintained his Interest, and continued their Allegiance to him, even in his greatest Dangers and Misfortunes. Surely when the Emperor pleases to reflect seriously upon this Circumstance, and the timely Assistance of his Majesty KING *GEORGE* sent him to the *Mediterranean*, at the Expence of the *British* Nation, and the Hazard of his own Crown, as it had like to have proved afterwards, he will see the Obligation he lies under to *Great Britain*.

The unfair, and I may justly say, the ungentlemanlike, way of reasoning in a great many of the Imperialists, has obliged me to take notice of several Things, which the profound Respect

spect I shall always bear to the most August
 House of *Austria*, would have otherwise inclined
 me to pass by: His Imperial Majesty's personal
 Piety and Justice, have render'd him as illustri-
 ous as the Crown he wears, and the Rank he
 holds among Mankind: But as no Man can
 possess Perfection, the justest Prince upon Earth
 may be surprized into Errors and Mistakes, by
 ambitious crafty Men, who want to cut out
 Work and Employments for themselves and
 their Creatures. This really is the Case of most
 Princes who Act amiss, in regard either to their
 own Subjects or their Neighbours; and I am ful-
 ly perswaded, that, were the Emperor made tru-
 ly sensible, how incompatiable the Company of
 Commerce, he has lately established in the Low-
 Countries is, with the Obligations he lies under
 to the *English* and *Dutch*, both by Treaties and
 the Services they have render'd him; and the
 Train of Inconveniencies it must infallibly draw
 after it to his own Dominions, he would have
 more regard to the Representations of his old
 fast Friends and Allies, than to the late Remon-
 strance of his new Subjects the *States of Brabant*;
 who, by the manner in which they charge their
 High Mightinesses, the *States General* of the U-
 nited Provinces, with breach of Faith, in regard
 to the Alliance they made with *Spain*, the 30th
 of *August*, 1673, the Stile of their Remonstrance,
 and the Advice they give his Imperial Maje-
 sty in the Conclusion of it, can have no other
 View than really to set about ruining not only
 the *Dutch*, but the *English* Commerce, as much
 as possibly they can; or else to drive Matters to
 such a Head, as they may have an Opportuni-
 ty

ty of returning once again to their old Sub-
 jection.

Out of the most submissive and profound re-
 spect I have for all Crown'd Heads, and Majesty
 in General, I thought to have passed by that old
 Topick of Universal Monarchy, which has so
 often been successfully made use of, to ease *Brit-
 tons* of their superfluous Wealth: But as such
 Condescension would only leave room to unge-
 nerous Disputants, to employ the Terrours of it,
 against what I have already advanced, in relation
 to the Obligations the House of *Austria* lies un-
 der to *Britain*, I shall humbly beg leave to con-
 sider a little, what the Consequence of dethrone-
 ing the Emperor *Leopold* would have been to
Europe.

To begin this Argument, I suppose the Em-
 peror to have been in no manner of Danger,
 but what he brought upon himself in pursuing
 his Pretensions to *Milan*, &c. And I make no
 scruple to acknowledge, that had the War been
 successful to *France*, the Duke of *Bavaria* had in
 all probability been made Emperor for the good
 Services he had render'd to his most Christian Ma-
 jesty: But I must affirm at the same time that
 his Electoral Highness was a Prince of too much
 Honour, and had too great a Soul to stoop to
 any thing that might really endanger the Liber-
 ties of *Europe*, or become a Tool to any De-
 signs of establishing Universal Monarchy. He
 always had the Character of a Prince of most
 excellent Sense and Penetration, and his own
 Safety and Interest would never have permitted
 him to enter into such measures, since he him-
 self

self must of course have fallen with the rest of the Powers of *Europe*. All that *Louis* the XIVth aimed at was the securing the *Spanish* Monarchy for his Grandson, who by by proximity of Blood and the King of *Spain's* *WILL*, had undoubtedly a better Right than the House of *Austria* could pretend; and the Duke of *Bavaria* was too great a Statesman not to know, that the *Spanish* Monarchy in the Possession of the Collateral Line of the House of *Bourbon*, could no more endanger the Liberties of *Europe*, than it in the Collateral Line of the House of *Austria*.

Consanguinity among Princes is but a slender Tie of Friendship where their Interests are in Question; which has been evident in the Conduct of the late Regent of *France*. It is not the first time that Cousin Germans have sat upon the Thrones of *France* and *Spain* without any Consequence at all to the Liberties of the rest of Christendom; and if *Naples*, *Sicily*, the *Milaneze*, and *Flanders* too had remained annexed to the *Spanish* Monarchy, with a sufficient Barrier for the *Dutch* (which their most Christian and Catholick Majesties would at any time have consented to with all their Hearts, could they have been secured of the Friendship of their High Mightinesses the *States General*) it had been so far from turning the Ballance of Power, that it had rather preserved it; for the more powerful *Spain* is, the better match he will always be either for *France* or the Emperor, which is the true Interest of *Europe*; tho' some intreating mercenary Statesmen, have, for their own sinister Views, been pleased to think and say the contrary.

contrary. There is a political Opposition of Interests in those Nations, which nothing can ever effectually unite to the prejudice of *Britons*, but a corrupt Administration in *Britain* it self.

Notwithstanding the *French* King had caused the *Chevalier* to be proclaimed in pique to King *WILLIAM*, he would have omitted nothing to oblige Queen *ANNE* and the *British* Nation, had she given him no Disturbance in behalf of the Emperor: And had she entered into any Treaty with his most Christian Majesty, there is all the reason in the World to believe that he would inviolably have kept his Word with her. He had but too often experienced the Power and warlike Genius of *England* to provoke it, if he could any way handsomly avoid doing so: He was grown old, and, no doubt, was very desirous of Peace, if with it his Grandson could have kept the Crown of *Spain*: On the other hand, the Emperor must have sat still, if he had not engaged *Great Britain* and the *United Provinces* in his Quarrel. As to the Liberties of *Europe*, 'tis visible they had been in less Danger than they are at present. *France* and *Spain* had been just as much disunited as they are now, and the last as powerful as she ought to be: The Emperor would have been kept within those Bounds, which served the House of *Austria* well enough for the safety of *Europe*, untill the Year 1701: The *Dutch* would have had a good Barrier, without the Danger of losing their Commerce; and *England* had not only been out of Debt, but Rich, and, by being so, better able to defend, not only her own Liberties in

Particular, but the Liberties of *Europe* in General against any Invader whatever. Though War, and Necessity obliged King *Philip* and the *Spanish* Nation to submit themselves to be governed by *French* Councils, yet, had *Britain* let him live in Peace, and mind the Affairs of his Kingdom, he would have been as jealous of Universal Monarchy and the Power of *France*, as any other Prince in *Europe* could be, except we are stupid or disingenuous enough to believe, that he would have had more Regard and Complaisance for his Brothers Children, than Care and Affection for his own. In short, Sir, nothing proves the unadvisedness of that War more than the Consequence of it: We have been fighting to put the Emperor in Possession of great Territories and Revenues: And his Ministers, in return, are projecting how to ruin the Trade of *Great Britain*.

To doubt that this new Company established in *Flanders*, will prejudice the Trade both of *Great Britain* and *Holland*, would be to arraign the Sense and Judgment of the *British* Parliament as well as of the *States General*. But to make the Thing appear still plainer, it does already prejudice it, and will continue to do so, more and more every Day, as the Company finds it self in a Condition to extend its Views and enlarge its Commerce, in proof of which I humbly beg leave to acquaint you, with a few of the Observations I made during the eight Months I staid at *Ostend*.

In

In *Flanders* there is as little Encouragement as possible for the Importation of *British* Manufactures: A great many People, who to my Knowledge, tried their Industry that way, in several Sorts, were very often losers, and at the best, always gained (as they assured me) One *per Cent.* more by the Guineas in their Pockets, than by the Goods they brought over. Now, as *Great Britain's* Objects of Commerce are under such Discouragements, the Manufactures and Merchandize of *Flanders* and *Brabant*, are consequently purchased every Day with *British* Gold; to bring which, there are about fifteen *English* Sloops, from Fifty to Twenty Tun, continually plying betwixt *London* and *Ostend*, and make at least Ten or a Dozen Trips a Year each, and sometimes more if the Winter proves favourable: They never leave *London* without a good Number of Passengers, who are all Traders that carry hardly any thing with them but Specie, either to go to Market with, or to pay the Debts they last contracted in *Flanders*. So that, including what the Masters of those Vessels themselves carry over by private Commissions, there is not one of those Sloops, but what at a Medium, imports into *Flanders* Twenty Thousand Pounds *Sterling* a Year. This, I have heard several of the Masters themselves acknowledge, and boast at the same time, that for every Ounce of Foreign Gold which they used to declare, they always brought with them five times the weight in Guineas and other undeclared Specie. If this be true, Sir, as I am very well satisfied it is, here are at least *Three Hundred Thousand Pounds*.

Pounds Sterling, carried out of Great Britain every Year, which never go back again but in Tea, Coffee, Arrack, and all sorts of India Goods, Flemish Linnen, Lace, &c. from whence arise Three great Abuses; Britain is robb'd of her Specie, her East India Company extremely hurt in her Trade, and his Majesty defrauded of his Duties, by running those Goods which are enterable. Such Practices as these, have in a great measure contributed to those great Deficiencies in the Funds which have every Year been made good by some other Tax, that has but too often lain heavy on the Poor, and proved a great Discouragement to honest Industry.

Notwithstanding the measures lately taken to prevent the smuggling Trade, so pernicious to the Nation, the Effect can never cease until the Cause be entirely taken away. You will never be able to prevent the running East India Goods upon you from Ostend, until that Company be suppressed, and private Adventurers debarred trading to the Indies. For, as soon as a Ship clears out from London to Dublin, or some other convenient Port in Ireland, she sails away directly to Ostend, pretending to be forced in by contrary Winds, or some other misadventure: There she lays out a good large Bag of Guineas, upon which she gains above three and a half per Cent. and takes in a sufficient Quantity of counterband Goods not only for her intended Port, but also to smuggle with as she Coasts through the Channel. This is a very frequent Practice and not one of the least considerable Vents for the Flemish East India

India Goods, for which you may rely upon my Word.

If the States of Brabant, in their Remonstrance, make such a heavy Complaint, to see their Money going every Year to Holland for Spices, Drugs, Sugars, Salt Fish, &c. of all which they stand in need to be supplied, and have had them hitherto from their Neighbours, without making the least Complaint; Great Britain has certainly much more Reason to be dissatisfied to see herself robb'd every Year of such prodigious Quantities of her Specie, to purchase such Goods in the Austrian Netherlands as are so absolutely destructive to her own Commerce.

But this mustering up of the particular Species of Merchandize, which the Brabanters take at present from the Dutch, is not only to let the Emperor know how much Money goes every Year out of his Dominions upon that Account, and to tell him that they hope to make such a Profit by the Company, as may counterballance that Loss for the future, but to insinuate likewise (*en passant*) to his Imperial Majesty that if he continues his Protection to them they will, by Degrees, be in a Condition not only to furnish themselves with most of those Commodities, but to have even to spare for Foreign Markets. Sir, I dare boldly affirm this to be the true meaning of that Paragraph in the Remonstrance, which they durst not express in plainer Terms for fear of leaving no room for their Friends in England to act for them underhand. Whatever Moderation, the Flemings pretend at present in their Designs, you will, to my

(32)

my certain Knowledge, very soon see a considerable Colony of them established in the *West-Indies*; they likewise intend to attempt a Fishery, and to come in for a share with us in the Woollen Manufacture Trade to *Portugal*. I must confess they are modest enough not to expect to equal *Great Britain*, in the fineness of her Cloth, but they hope to come so near it, as, with the King of *Portugal's* Protection and Friendship in the Case, to attempt the Trade with Success.

But still there are some People, who from a strange way of thinking, and want of Knowledge of the Directors, maintain that the *East India* Trade, carried on by private Adventurers from *Ostend*, would be more prejudicial to *England* and *Holland*, than when managed by a Company, which must, by a multitude of Officers and Servants, always be subject to a great many Expences and Disbursements, as well as Frauds, that particular Adventurers would not be exposed to. Were this true, as it is not, it would make nothing to the Purpose; for all Companies that have no Right, as well as private Adventurers, ought to be debarred from Trading to the *Indies*: But to try the Force of this Argument, it ought to be considered that the *Ostroy* has, with the utmost Care and Precaution, not only provided against any possibility of Abuse in the Management, either in the Directors themselves or their Under Officers, but has also given the Company all manner of Encouragement that could be thought of. There are but seven Directors, whose Salaries, taken altogether, amount but to
Twenty

(33)

Twenty Eight Thousand Florins a Year, and I am pretty sure that the rest of the home Management, does not amount to much above Twenty Eight Thousand Florins more: Thus the whole Expence of Salaries and Contingencies falls under six Thousand Pounds a Year or thereabouts; against which it is but reasonable to consider what Gifts and Presents Ministers of State, Courtiers and other People (who are always ready to bleed a Man's Pockets upon such Occasions) used to receive from the private Adventurers for Permission and Passports for the Ships they fitted out. This Article alone, upon a fair Enquiry, would be found to amount to much more than the Company's Expences at home.

The Choice of the present Directors has also been another mighty Advantage to the Company in its Infancy. As they are all of them Men of great Capitals, and greater Integrity, and are to continue for a Term of Years, they are under no Temptation or Necessity to enrich themselves at the Expence of the Proprietors, which has been the Misfortune of most Company's in the Beginning. The Butcher, Baker, Brewer and other Tradesmen will furnish Provisions and all sorts of Materials, one or two *per Cent.* cheaper to them, than to other Persons, for the sake of being constantly employed, (an Encouragement which private Adventurers could never assure them of) And it is well known that the three Ships sent from *Ostend* to *India* and *China* last Spring, were Equipped and Armed out considerably cheaper, both
E in

(34)

in respect to Wages and Victualling, than either the *English* or any private Adventurer's ever were. By such Frugality and Oeconomy if they are suffered to go on, they cannot but succeed, and consequently will be able to undersell both *English* and *Dutch*, in any Market in *Europe*. There is no extravagant Privilege allowed to the Officers and Seamen on Board their Ships: The Captains and Chief super Cargoes themselves, are each allowed but a Chest of Six Foot long, Three Foot broad, and Three Foot deep; so that as the Proprietors are at all the Expence, they will receive all the Profit: And thus by increasing their Capital, by the Returns of their Trade (the Dividend being in the Power and Discretion of the Directors from five Years to five Years) they may in time be able to form more Projects for encroaching upon several other Branches of our Commerce, which is worth rescuing and preserving from so ominous an Invader, let the Terms be never so hazardous.

But that *Britons*, may still have clearer Idea of the Dangers with which they are threatened by this Company, let them reflect upon the mighty Figure the *United Provinces* make at present, not only in *Europe*, but all over the World: Let them look upon the vast Acquisitions of this prodigious Commonwealth in all Parts of the Globe, and then let them contemplate the Difficulties she had to struggle with in the Beginning. When they do so, they will find all this Grandeur, all this Power the mere Consequence of an insurmountable Courage, an indefatigable Industry, and a strict Probity in their Dealings.

(35)

Dealings. When the *Dutch* threw off the Duke of *Alva's* Yoke to assert the glorious Cause of Liberty, and to become the Progenitors of Free-Men, they had all the Disadvantages, all the Discouragements to labour against, that any Nation or People ever met with. They were continually harassed to defend their Country and their Liberties, from the perpetual Attacks of two dreadful and merciless Enemies, an encroaching and devouring Sea on the one side, and the Rage and Ambition of the greatest and most powerful Monarch then in *Europe* on the other; yet notwithstanding all these Difficulties they carried their Point; and in spite of all *Philip* the Second's Armies, and of all his old experienced Generals and Officers, (Men always used to Success and Victory upon every other Occasion) they not only maintained and secured their Liberties, but also established a Commerce to almost all Parts of the Earth, in the midst of the Clamour and Confusion of that long and dreadful War.

If the *Dutch* surmounted all opposition, and performed such Miracles in such astonishing Circumstances, we ought reasonably to apprehend that the *Flemings* may tread in their steps in respect to Navigation and Commerce. The *Flemings* are a brave, industrious, frugal, honest People, and instead of those Obstacles which the *Dutch* met with, they have the Protection of their Prince and are supported by his Ministers. They are in the peaceable Possession of Three Harbours, which

E 2

they

(36)

they resolve to clear and improve to the best Advantage, and for their Encouragement the Emperor allows, and appropriates part of the Duties arising to him by their own Commerce to that very use. These are Encouragements which in time may render them no despicable Confederates to *England's* Enemies, should they ever change their Lord. It is not only very possible but very probable that there may come a time when the *Austrian Netherlands* may be in an Interest very opposite to that of *Great-Britain*; but it must be the fault of *Britons* themselves if ever the United Provinces are so. Wherefore I humbly presume that it would be a great Error in Politicks to suffer the *Flemings* to grow Rich and Powerful by such means, as must of course in a few Years impoverish *Great-Britain* and *Holland*, and perhaps reduce them to depend for Assistance and Protection upon those very Powers which they have so long protected and supported. I could push this Argument much further, but I wave it for Reasons which you will easily perceive, and I hope will approve.

That *Britons* cannot keep too watchful an Eye on their Commerce at this Time, I appeal to the Proceedings of the *Flemings* themselves, who are now striving to bring a Project to bear, which if successful, will in all probability prove fatal in a few Years to the Repose of *Great-Britain* and the security of his Majesty's Family; and to which their late Remonstrance is but an Introduction. They have made no scruple upon several Occasions, to tell the World that their Sovereign neither could nor can make any Treaties with

(37)

with Foreign Princes prejudicial to their civil Rights, founded, as they say, upon the universal Law of Nations, as well as their own Laws and Customs, nor is obliged to stand to any such Treaties made by his Predecessors. But Sir, what a Confusion would this Argument, which has deep and dangerous Views, produce in the Affairs of *Europe*, should it once gain Ground? There is not a Prince, if he has a mind to quarrel with his Neighbour, but can find Engines enough to animate and stir up his Subjects to cry out and exclaim against the last Treaty, as injurious to their civil Rights and the Honour of their Country. This would quickly render all Treaties as precarious as the Treaty of *Madrid* proved, between the Emperor *Charles* the Fifth, and King *Francis* the First of *France*, and make it almost impossible for Princes to treat with one another for the future, but in such Terms and Forms as must by Degrees strip them of their sovereignty and render them subject to their People.

If the *Netherlanders* are suffer'd to go on unmolested in their Projects three or four Years longer, they will have settled their Company and establish'd their Commerce in such a manner, as to encourage the People by the Returns of their Trade, the Indolence of *Great-Britain*, and the success of this first Undertaking, to enter heartily and unanimously into all Projects and Enterprises that may have any appearance of encreasing the Commerce and Riches of their Country. And if they succeed in their Endeavours to surprize the *British* Ministry

(38)

Ministry into their Interest, by measures, which might look like ill nature and Revenge in me to mention, after the Quarrel I have had with Mr. *Walpole*, they will soon take off the mask, and attempt to open the Navigation of the *Schelde*, let the Undertaking be ever so difficult, and the Danger and Expence ever so great. They are now preparing as good reasons to produce for it, as any they have yet given for carrying on a Trade to *India*, and are ready to tell the Emperor that he is under equal Obligations to support and protect them in both, since both tend to establish his good and faithful Subjects in the exercise of a Right due to them by the Law of Nature and Nations, and confirmed to them by the 13. Article of his Majesty's joyful Entry; (as they express it in their Remonstrance) which Right they say they have never renounced. As these Words carry in them a very extensive Meaning, there is no doubt, Sir, but they will employ your Thoughts: By them the *Brabanters* have assumed to themselves a Power and a Right to examine all Treaties made with the *Dutch* since they first took up Arms in defence of their Liberties: There is not an Article in any of those Treaties that stands in the way of the Views and Designs of the *Austrian Netherlands*, or serves as a security for the Commerce of the United Provinces, but what the *Brabanters* will immediately interpret to be an encroachment upon that Civil Right of theirs, which they assert they have neither renounced, nor their Princes had any power to give away by any Treaty, or upon

(39)

upon any Account whatsoever. That being done, and all Things ready, should there be occasion for even Ten Millions of Florins, that Sum, as considerable as it is, would quickly be raised, and offered as invincible Perswasives to the Emperor's Ministers, to represent to his Imperial Majesty the Justice and reasonableness of his Subjects Complaints, and the Obligations he lies under, in Honour and Conscience, to relieve and redress them. Money will never be wanting, nor People to receive it upon Occasion; and, whatever Notions some Men artfully pretend to have to the contrary, *Antwerp*, notwithstanding all the Discouragements it has so long labour'd under, to Trade, is still one of the richest Cities in *Europe*, and both able and willing to contribute vast Sums towards the carrying on any Enterprize, that may make her once again the Center of the *Netherland* Commerce, especially when the Advantages of the Trade to *India* and *China* are added to it.

Sir, you know so well what the Consequence of such a Step would be, that I need not enlarge upon it: The *Dutch* would quickly feel the Effects of so fatal a Change: The Commerce and Riches of one of the Bulwarks of the Protestant Interest would be thereby transferred to augment the Strength of a *Roman Catholic* State. Less Beginnings have laid the Foundation of mighty Empires and destroyed others, and those active Spirits may not be the worst Politicians in the World, who have been so long labouring to persuade his Imperial Majesty, that to reduce the *Dutch* to Terms of submitting to his Government

(40)

ment, by drawing all their Trade to his Austrian Netherlands, would be a valuable consideration for surrendering to Spain his precarious Tenure of Naples and Sicily.

Having thus far given you a Sketch of the Injustice of this Undertaking, as well as of the Danger with which it threatens the British Commerce, I shall now humbly venture to propose the Means to secure Great Britain from the latent Designs of the Netherlanders, and her other secret Enemies, and to give the Imperial Ministry juster Ideas of their Master's Interest, and the Faith they owe to Treaties.

Were the Austrian Netherlands blessed with the like Productions and Objects of Commerce that France is, they might have somewhat more Reason for talking and acting so *en Maitre* as they are instructed to do. Wine, Oil and Fruit were made for the Service and Comfort of Mankind, and that Country which is so happy as to produce them, will never want a Market to send them to; but why so much of the Money of Great Britain should be carried every Year to Flanders, to purchase such prodigious Quantities of Useless Linnen and Lace, why we should take her Manufactures, which we can very well be without, when she slight and refuses Ours, is what deserves the Consideration of every honest Briton. Scotland and Ireland if encouraged, as in Justice and good Policy they ought to be, would very soon be able to furnish England with sufficient Quantities of both, and for the Curious, the Dutch can continue to supply

(41)

ply them at present. The Brabanters stand in need of Spices, Druggs, Sugars, Salt, and Fish both fresh and salted, and which no other Nation can so easily supply them with as the Dutch, yet they very boldly desire the Emperor to give his Minister, Plenipotentiary at Brussels, power to break off all manner of Trade and Commerce with the Subjects of the States General, in case they should attempt to give any Disturbance to their new Company: And surely Britons will not shew less Resolution, when their Interest and Self-Preservation so loudly calls upon them to exert themselves, which they can do, without falling under any of those Inconveniencies the Brabanters cannot avoid, by ceasing to Trade with Holland and Zeland. Spain has, not long since, forbid the wearing of Flanders Lace, though the Flemings take every Year great Quantities of her Productions, as Oranges, Lemons, Figgs, Raisins, Wine, Oyl, Olives, Salt, Wool, &c. And I believe when Things come to be fairly understood, Great Britain will be found to have much more reason to do the like, and to Prohibit their Linnen also.

By this I don't presume to give my Opinion positively, that it would be for the Interest of Great Britain to break off all manner of Commerce with the Austrian Netherlands, but I think I may venture to say, That Trade wants to be put under a better Regulation than it is at present, even though the Trade to India were not in dispute.: The doing so would quickly make the Flemings and Brabanters very weary of their India Company, and I can assure you upon my own

F

Know-

(42)

Knowledge, that it is what the most understanding Merchants amongst them apprehend and dread very much.

If * * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

In my humble Opinion, which I shall always submit to yours, if some such Methods as these were fixed upon, and executed with the disinterested Vigour and Resolution becoming a *British*

* These Asterisks supply the Place of a Scheme sent to a certain great Man, which is not thought proper by the Author, to communicate to the World.

(43)

tish Ministry, the *Flemings* and *Brabanters*, would make as many Remonstrances and Supplications to the Emperor, to break the *Odroy*, as they now do to support it: For, should they lose their Trade to *Great Britain*, and the *Streights*, they could neither subsist, nor wait the ripening of their other Projects.

But some People, through a timorous Disposition, some through Complaisance to the Emperor, and a View to their own private Interest, some through Hatred and Spleen to the *Dutch*, for the Assistance they gave King *WILLIAM*, in the Year Eighty Eight, and the Readiness and Regard to Publick Faith, with which they made good their Engagements to his present Majesty and *Great Britain*, in the troublesome Years 1715 and 1719, and some through a most refined and dangerous Policy to the State (which I shall take notice upon a proper Occasion) cry out that the Nation, by an Act of Parliament, has already done it's Part, and that there remains nothing more, except it be to enter into a downright War with the Emperor, which, they say, they are not obliged to do, to promote the Interest of the *Dutch*. Thus do his Majesty's and the Nation's secret Enemies make Use of several Stratagems and Arguments to betray and sacrifice the Honour and Interest of both!

I hope, Sir, I have already sufficiently proved that the Interest of the United Provinces, is, in this Case, inseparable from that of *Great Britain*: If I have not proved it, I am ready to

(44)

to do it whenever I am allowed a fair Opportunity; for, a great many Things may be proper to be spoken, that are not to be committed to Writing, especially when one cannot entirely depend upon the Fidelity, Honour, and Generosity of every Man whose Station and Function in a Ministry entitles him to have a sight of what is written. I have not only been long enough abroad, but have had likewise Opportunities enough, to know what hopes and expectations Great Britain's Enemies entertain from the Success of this Company: And, I believe, from the Knowledge you have had of me, and the good Opinion you were pleas'd to express of my Parts, when I declined the generous Offer you made me in Paris, of interceding for a Privy Seal for me to return home, you will allow me to be a pretty good Judge in this Matter. The Act of Parliament already pass'd, that no British Subject shall enter into the Service of the Netherland Company, will never hinder the Progress of it in the least, but rather serves at present to give Credit to a very strange Report which I have often heard in Brussels and Antwerp, and (what surpriz'd me most) even in the Mouths of Men of Distinction and considerable Employments, that the British Ministers had already sent private Assurances to the Court of Vienna, that they intended to give no material Obstruction to the Affair in Question; tho' to please and amuse the People they were oblig'd to make as much Noise about it as their Neighbours: I cannot deny but that several Circumstances in the Ministry's Proceedings seems to give a Sanction to this Report, and the Netherlanders by their Conduct

(45)

Conduct give them all the Room in the World to exert themselves in their favour. They have refus'd several British Subjects of known Merit and Abilities, who (notwithstanding the Act of Parliament) offer'd to go to India either as Captains or Super-Cargos; and this they have done either to show Britons how little they value their Service or Assistance, or (as I have already hinted) by so cautious a Proceeding artfully to avoid the Clamour of true British Patriots against them, and to give their Friends in Britain the better opportunity secretly to sustain and assist them.

Were the Cardinal Dubois now alive I would say something, which his Death prevails upon me at present to conceal; the very Day I left Paris, he was call'd away to give up his black Accounts, and that accident, as soon as I heard of it, oblig'd me to alter my Measures; but however I cannot defer any longer doing Justice to that great Patriot Sir Robert Sutton; the Cardinal after having used all his Arts and Finesses with him, found him of too inflexible an Integrity in the service of his Country, and too great a Judge of the true Interest of Britain either to be over-reach'd, or surpriz'd into his Eminency's Measures, or in the least to connive at them, and for that very reason, and no other, he must be removed at any rate: That crafty inhuman Minister set his Engines to work, and Sir Robert was not only recalled from his Embassy in France, but when there were some Thoughts afterwards of making him Secretary of State, he mis'd of that Employment

(46)

Employment also for the same Reason that he left *Paris*: That is because he was too honest a Man, and too much an *Englishman* for the Cardinal to have any thing to do with him: If any one Man of Consequence and Character, pleases to dispute the Truth of this Assertion, I will undertake to demonstrate it as fairly, and as undeniably, as any thing of this Nature can bear a Demonstration. It is not, Sir, to revenge my self on the Cardinal's Memory for the crying injustice he did me, that I publish this Transaction, but merely to obey my Conscience, which calls upon me to make Sir *Robert* a reparation for the Injury I have done him by concealing it so long. Nor do I mean in the least to glance any Reflection at the *French Nation*; the Injustice of my Enemies, and the stupid Ingratitude of some Men who ought to have been my Friends, have engaged my eternal Obligations to that Country for the sake of some few illustrious Persons in it; and as far as it is compatible with the Safety, Honour, and Interest of *Britain*, I shall always wish for the Prosperity and Happiness of *France*. The Cardinal's Memory is as odious amongst all true *Frenchmen*, as amongst the rest of Mankind, and he that had no Bowels for his own Country, but sacrificed her to his Ambition in the Ruin of Mr. *Law*, who then stood in his way to be first Minister, would make no scruple to break his Word with *Great-Britain*, whenever he found his Account in it, or to ruin a *British* Minister that was active and vigilant

(47)

gigant for the Honour and Interest of his Country.

But to return from this necessary Digression: It is from the Behaviour of our Ministry, that *Britons* can only expect their security in the present Conjuncture, or owe their future Slavery and Misery; for while there appears any, even the least Symptom, that it is not steady and disinterested in its Conduct, Foreign Powers will not only make their Advantage of it, but turbulent and designing Spirits at home will lay hold of every occasion to put their Schemes and Projects a Working, to divide *Great-Britain* and the United Provinces, as the most effectual Means to enslave *Europe* and ruin their Country.

It must be allowed, that those base Passions, Avarice and Hatred, make strong Impressions upon the Men who are so unhappy as to be subject to them, and upon all Occasions not only furnish very plausible Arguments to support whatever they instigate, but prove highly dangerous to a Commonwealth whenever they are found in a Man in Authority. An Eloquent Mouth and a corrupt Heart, where they meet together in such a Person, are the greatest Plague that any Nation ever was curs'd with, of which the *Roman* History furnishes us with a most melancholly and memorable Example, and which, in my humble Opinion, painted by a Masterly hand on the Ceiling of the House of Commons just before the Speaker's Chair, would be of infinite use to *Britain*

(48)

Britain for the future ; at the same time that it would strike a damp into the Soul of every audacious, Mercenary, or revengeful Man, it would be a great Encouragement to Virtue, and give a conscious Pleasure to those honest Gentlemen, whose Tongues were never prostituted to servile Ends, or employed in that illustrious Assembly but for the service of their Country, by daily viewing themselves in a Light so opposite to that of the Traytor there represented. When all the Power of *Rome* could not withstand the Arms of *Carthage*, one voluble Villain in the *Carthaginian* Senate did the Work, and out of Malice to *Hannibal*, and Envy and Hatred to his Virtues and Merit, brought on the Ruin and Destruction of his Country. I could produce some Instances in our own History that *England* has been very often in danger of running the same Fate of *Carthage* by the same sort of dishonest Practices, but God forbid that it should ever be her Case again ! And if this Affair of the *Netherland* Company should once more fall under the Consideration of a *British* Parliament, I hope we shall neither find a *Hanno* there, nor hear of any more *false Reports* made upon matter of Fact to the Honourable House of Commons.

The various Reflections a Man cannot avoid making upon so copious a Subject, had like to have made me forget two Arguments which have gained a great deal of ground amongst the unthinking Part of *Britons*. The Enemies to our Constitution, under a mask of Friendship, and to earn the Pensions and Bribes which it very proba-
ble

(49)

ble they receive from abroad, argue that the most effectual way to ruin the *Ostende* Company would be to leave it to its own Management for five or six Years, for say, they, in that time it cannot fail to destroy itself. But why have not the *Dutch* and *English* Companies destroyed themselves ? There never was greater Probity in their Management than is visible in the *Flemish* Company, for their Directors have not yet called in all the Money upon the Subscriptions, either to employ it to their own private Advantage, or to let it lye rusting in the Company's Coffers. But I have already said enough on this Head. To let the Company go on unmolested five or six Years longer would be to confess a Right in it to trade to *India* and *China*, and it might then be too late to revive the Dispute : When you have let them establish and fortify themselves in the *East* and *West-Indies* (a thing which no private Adventurer could ever pretend to think of) it may not then be an easy matter to dispossess them, and they may by that time take such Measures both at home and abroad, as to put it out of your Power to do it. The next Argument is also to lull your Apprehensions asleep : They tell you that this Company is only a Stratagem in the Emperor's Ministers to get a good large Sum of Money into their Hands by seizing it's Effects when all the Payments are made. But his Imperial Majesty's personal Justice and Probity are too well known for this Insinuation to gain any Credit among Men of Sense, and I wish that *Britons* may not suffer themselves to be amused by either of these Arguments, which mean nothing more
G than

than to wheedle them into a neglect of their own Interest.

If Trade has always been esteemed the Vitals of *Great-Britain* and the United Provinces, and they the Bulwarks of the Protestant Religion and the Liberties of *Europe*, your Enemies can never hit upon a more ingenious, or more effectual Method to destroy you than by sapping and undermining it; nor *Britons* ever have more reason than at present to be upon their Guard against such crafty Attempts. While *Britain* preserves her Trade free from Encroachments, her Independency on the rest of *Europe* is indisputable: But should her Ministry, through Weakness, or any private Considerations, or through (what has ever been the Bane of the Subject) Reasons of State, permit or connive at any Establishments amongst her Neighbours, which may interfere with, or diminish her own Commerce, she may from that Moment conclude herself lost. Private Considerations may one day or other make those Neighbours her Enemies, and as they encrease in shipping and Seamen, she will, in proportion, decrease in both: Trade will take another Course, her Manufactures will be at a stand; and her Artificers and Tradesmen famished for want of Employment: Nothing less than a general Convulsion will seize the whole Constitution, and *Britons* must then become a Prey to Foreigners, and be stripp'd of that Liberty and Property, for which their Ancestors

fo

so gloriously Fought and Bled for so many Ages.

Were it not that Courts and Ministries have sometimes Views and Interests directly opposite to the Publick-Good, and Welfare of the People, Kingdoms and Empires could hardly ever come to decay, or be oppress'd by their Neighbours. If we trace the downfall of Empires, and the Revolutions which have happen'd in the greatest Monarchies in the World, we shall find them in the main owing either to Tyranny or Imbecility in the Prince, or to Avarice or Corruption in the Minister. Where there is a Prince who makes the welfare of his People his peculiar Care, or a Minister, who, without any Mercenary Aims, equally studies the Honour of his Sovereign, and the Interest of his Country, such a Nation may be truly said to be Happy, and may despise the Attempts and Intreaques of her Enemies. The immortal *Walsingham*, is a glorious Pattern of Probity in this kind, for all Ministers of State to follow, and his Great Mistress will stand to the latest Ages a shining Example of all those Royal Vertues which gain Princes the Affections of their Subjects. Instead of enriching his Relations, and heaping up immense Treasures for his Family, at the Expence of his fellow Subjects, *this Sincere Upright Minister* spent his own Fortune in the Service of his Queen and Country; and tho' he built no Pallaces to leave Monuments to Posterity of his Power and Greatness, yet his Memory smells sweet in the Nostrils of all Honest *English* Men. As this good Patriot and faithful Servant had

G 2
no

(52)

no-interested Views of his own to pursue, no Vanity to be cajoled and flattered by Foreign Courts, his Mistress and his Country were well served: The *English* Name and Arms were then revered and dreaded by all *Europe*: *Spain* trembled; *France* courted her Friendship; and the *Dutch* found the Benefit of her Assistance. Such were the Blessings of that glorious Reign; such the Effects of that honest Administration, which has been so faithfully and so happily Copied by the late Earls of *Godolphin* and *Stanhope*!

As I hope, Sir, I have succeeded in my Dutiful and Honest Endeavours to shew you the Injustice of the Imperial Ministers in the Establishment of the *Netherland* Company: The enormous Abuses in carrying on the Trade at present betwixt *London* and *Ostend*, by the Yearly loss of our Specie, and the great Damage done by it to our own *East India* Company and the fair Trader; and lastly the Means effectually to prevent those Abuses and Damages, I shall humbly beg leave to examine a few Points which here naturally present themselves to View.

It will perhaps be objected, that though what I have offered, be reasonable enough in it self, yet all Circumstances considered, the Means proposed are no way practicable. First, Because while there is a *Pretender* to his Majesty's Crowns and Kingdoms, it is neither prudent nor safe to provoke any of his Neighbours, especially

(53)

pecially so near and so powerful an one as the Emperor, who might thereupon take the *Chevalier* into his Protection. And Secondly, His Imperial Majesty has so often and so solemnly given his Word to the *Brabanters* and *Flemings* to stand by and support his *Obtroy*, that he cannot in Honour recede from it; consequently that it would be unreasonable, unjust, and cruel in *Great Britain* to press him to do it: Since it is equal to her whether the *Dutch* or the *Flemings* bring home those *East India* Goods with which so great a part of the North is supplied.

As to the first Objection, it is so poor and so pitiful an one, that I would not have taken Notice of it, had I not often heard it used with wonderful Approbation and Success: If any Maritime Prince in the North is disobliged, then immediately his Ministers mumble between their Teeth, *Bremen* and *Verden* and the *Chevalier*, with a great many broken Speeches and Sententious Hints, accompanied with a Multitude of Winks and Nodds: If any thing politick ought to be undertaken for the preservation of our *British* Commerce, or the Honour and Interest of the Nation, then the *Chevalier* is lugg'd in by Head and Shoulders to prevent it, and the People are filled with dreadful Apprehensions of his coming: But if any new fangled Project or Attempt is set on Foot that can really provoke an old Friend and Ally, or irritate a Neighbour who is either willing or powerful enough by his Situation or Strength, to give him a fair

Chance

(54)

Chance for the *British* Throne, than all Hands to Work to forward it; then our Ears are stunn'd on all sides with the Noise of our Mighty Power, our floating Castles, the Walls of *Great Britain* and Depth of her Ditch: Such a Contempt appears every where of the *Pretender* and all his Friends, that a reasonable thinking Man, in spite of all his Senses would be apt to believe himself once again in the Reign of King *James* the Second, and to mistake the the *Chevalier* for that great Hero the Prince of *ORANGE*. But Respect and Prudence obliges me to drop this Argument, and in the room of it humbly to propose the following Queries, that you may see how far the Methods I have proposed would engage *Great Britain* in a Quarrel with the Emperor, and what the Effects of such a Quarrel would be.

Whether his Majesty and the Parliament of *Great Britain* have not as much Power and as much Reason to prohibit any further Commerce with the *Austrian Netherlands*, or to lay the Trade thither under the Restrictions and Regulations I have mentioned, as the Emperor has to forbid his Subjects to Trade with the *Dutch*, if they will not submit to the Encroachments made upon them?

How such a proceeding can lead them into a War with the Emperor: Or how he can take it ill, that *Great Britain* should upon occasion take Example from the Advice the States of

(55)

of *Brabant* has given his Imperial Majesty in their late Remonstrance relating to the *Dutch*?

If the Emperor should take it ill, what Advantage can he propose by it, or what Success can he hope for in a War with *Great Britain*, which it is much more her Interest to begin, than his to provoke her to it?

Whether the same Fleet that helped to Conquer and Defend *Naples* and *Sicily* for his Imperial Majesty, might not in Case of a War, help the *Spaniards* to take them from him and re-annex them and the *Spanish Netherlands* to the Crown of *Spain*?

Whether supposing (what can hardly ever be supposed in this Case) if *France* should side with the Emperor, the changing the Succession of that Crown in favour of one of the Sons of *Spain*, together with the foregoing Considerations would not be sufficient Motives to his Catholick Majesty to engage heartily in the Interest of *Great Britain* and the United Provinces, rather than set Neuter, or enter into the Emperor's Measures, who, in such Circumstances, could never hope to purchase his Friendship, against *England* and *Holland*, but by giving up *Naples*, *Sicily*, and the *Milaneze* and the exposing *Sardinia* to a Conquest?

Whether

(56)

Whether Policy and Self-preservation would not oblige most of the Princes of the Empire to enter into a League with *Great Britain* and *Holland*?

Whether in Case of a Rupture between the maritime Powers and the Emperor, the *Turk* would not very soon find the way once again into *Hungary*?

Whether the Emperor, if he saw *Great Britain* really in earnest, would venture upon so desperate an Undertaking, which must for ever after render the House of *Austria* a Dependant upon the Courtesy and Generosity of the House of *Bourbon*?

Whether the Prince, who so wisely Conducts the Affairs of *France*, would, by siding with the Emperor, in Defence of an Undertaking, which *France* has already taken Umbrage at, be so unjust to his own Interest and Family, as to hazard the Chance he has to succeed to the Crown, by provoking the two Maritime Powers who are the best Guarantees of the Succession settled by the Treaty of *Utrecht*?

Sir, I believe these Queries are sufficient to shew that his Majesty would have nothing to apprehend from the *Chevalier* through any Assistance the Emperor might be disposed to give him. His Imperial Majesty has no Fleet at present, nor can he ever have any except
Great

(57)

Great Britain impolitickly permits him, and until that happens (which is probable enough it may) or that he can find out the Secret to fend an Army over upon the Clouds, there is nothing to be feared from that Quarter. I remember, that when I had the Honour to pay my Duty to you in *Paris*, - near seven Years ago, the *Chevalier's* Affairs made a part of our Conversation, and amongst the many Arguments which your Humanity and good Nature prevailed upon you, to make use of to perswade me into a Sense of my own Interest, and to return Home, you told me that there was no moral Probability that he could ever make any thing of his Pretensions. I must confess, Sir, that I was very much, though not altogether, of your Opinion at that time: But the Event has fully justified your Wisdom and Penetration. If his Affairs were so bad so long ago, the most unaccountable Management of his Ministers and Agents ever since have render'd them infinitely worse, and so perplexed them, that as long as you preserve the Friendship of *France* and *Holland*, it is impossible for him ever to get into *England*, but by the very same steps in the Ministry, by which his Father was obliged to quit it.

The first Objection then carrying little or no weight with it, I shall proceed to the second. I have already proved that it is not equal to *Britain*, whether the *Dutch* or the *Flemings* bring home those *East India* Goods, with which so great a part of the North is supplied, and shewn how highly it concerns *Britons* not to let
H

(58)

let the *Austrian Netherlands Trade to India*: I shall now come a little nearer home, and see how far King *WILLIAM*'s Conduct in relation to the *Scots Settlement at Darien*, ought to serve as an Example for his Imperial Majesty to follow in regard to his *Netherland Subjects*.

When the *Scots* settled at *Darien*, they had not only King *WILLIAM*'s Letters Patents in the most ample and authentick Manner that could be imagined, but they had also two Acts of Parliament passed in *Scotland* for their Security, and all the Encouragement besides, that they could either expect or wish for, which I hope will upon all Occasions be allowed equal to his Imperial Majesty's *Ordroy*: And the Honour and Royal Word of a *British King* be deemed as Sacred and as Inviolable at all times as that of any Emperor whatever.

There is, no doubt, but that when King *WILLIAM* granted those Letters Patents, and passed those Acts of Parliament, he was fully perswaded that they might do it without any Prejudice to the Alliance then subsisting between him and his Catholick Majesty King *Charles* the second of *Spain*; but upon the pressing Remonstrances of the *Spanish Court* against that Undertaking, and the Humble Address of both Houses of Parliament in *England*, shewing how prejudicial it would be to the *English East India Company*, he withdrew his Protection from the *Scots*.

If

(59)

If we look into the Affairs of *Europe*, as they stood in those Days, we shall find that the *Scotch Nation* had highly deserved from King *WILLIAM* all the Favour he could possibly shew them, since it is demonstrable that he could never have kept the Crown of *England* had they continued attached to King *James*. They appeared very early for him at the Revolution; they had a great share in all his Battles and Sieges afterwards; and manifested their Zeal and Affection to him upon all Occasions both at home and abroad: But notwithstanding they had so much Merit to plead, and that the King still stood in need of their Allegiance, Service, and Assistance; notwithstanding that his Royal Word was engaged to them in the most solemn manner, and that they brought the most solid Reasons and Arguments to justify their Undertaking, yet his Majesty would suffer no further Progress in an Affair that gave such Umbrage to his Allies abroad, and threatened the Damage of his *English Subjects* at home. King *WILLIAM* was allowed by the generality of Mankind to be a Prince of nice Honour and inviolable Integrity in all the Actions of this Life; And he looked upon the withdrawing his Protection from the *Scots Company*, so far from being an Injustice, that he thought it a piece of Prudence, and a Step absolutely necessary to prevent a greater Inconvenience. It will be no shame then, Sir, for the Emperor to imitate the great Example of this glorious Monarch, to whom the House of *Austria* had such signal Obligations: The *Flemings* have

H 2

not

not in any measure such just Pretensions to the Emperor's Favour and Indulgence that the Scots had to King *WILLIAM's*, nor are the strongest Arguments they make use of to shew the Justice of their Undertaking, in any respect equal to those brought in by the Scots to justify their settling at *Darien*.

As here is a fair way shewn for the Emperor to retreat with Honour and recede from his *Obroy*, should his Imperial Majesty, instead of doing so, still continue inflexible in his Resolution to support it, you may then be assured that the *Netherland* Company is but a Cloak to deeper Designs: *Britons* ought then to look to themselves in time, and no longer to doubt a Conspiracy, first against their Commerce, and then against their Liberties. They cannot purchase the Preservation of either at too dear a Rate, nor give too much Attention to the Adrels of the two *English* Houses of Parliament already mentioned. For their greater Satisfaction I have transcribed the first Paragraph, and part of the second Verbatim, wishing they may make a right use of it, by imitating the Example of that illustrious Parliament and breathing the same Love for Liberty and their Country.

The



The Humble ADDRESS of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament Assembled.

Die Veneris, 13 Decembris, 1695.

“ WE the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in Parliament Assembled, Having taken into our Consideration, the State of the Trade of this Kingdom do find, that besides many other Disadvantages and Difficulties it now lies under, an Act of Parliament that hath lately received your Majesty's Royal Assent in your Kingdom of *Scotland*, for erecting a Company Trading to *Africa* and the *Indies*, is likely to bring many great Prejudices and Mischiefs to all your Majesty's Subjects that are concerned in the Wealth or Trade of this Nation: And therefore in all Duty, to your Majesty, and the Care we ought to have of this Kingdom we do
“ humbly

(62)

“ humbly represent to Your Majesty that
 “ the said Act does provide, that all
 “ Ships, Merchandize, Goods, and other
 “ Effects belonging to that Company
 “ shall be free from all manner of Re-
 “ straints, or Prohibitions, and of all Cu-
 “ stoms, Taxes, Cesses, Supplies, or o-
 “ ther Duties imposed or to be imposed
 “ by Act of Parliament, or otherways,
 “ for the Space of One and Twenty
 “ Years; And further, that the said
 “ Company, whole Members, Officers,
 “ Servants or others belonging thereto,
 “ shall be free both in their Persons,
 “ Estates and Goods employed in the said
 “ Stock and Trade from all manner of
 “ Taxes, Cesses, Supplies, Excises, Quar-
 “ tering of Soldiers, Transient or Local,
 “ or Levying of Soldiers, or other Im-
 “ positions during the space of One and
 “ Twenty Years.

“ By reason of which great Advantages
 “ granted to the *Scots East India Com-*
 “ *pany*, and the Duties and Difficulties
 “ that lie upon that Trade in *England*,
 “ a great part of the Stock and Ship-
 “ ping of this Nation will be carried thi-
 “ ther; *And by this Means* Scotland
 “ *be made a free Port for all East-*
 “ *India Commodities; And consequently*
 “ *those several Places in Europe which*
 “ *were*

(63)

“ *were supplied in England will be furni-*
 “ *shed from thence much cheaper than can*
 “ *be done by the English: And there-*
 “ *fore this Nation will lose the Benefit*
 “ *of supplying Foreign Parts with those*
 “ *Commodities, which hath always been*
 “ *a great Article in the Ballance of*
 “ *Our Foreign Trade: Moreover the*
 “ *said Commodities will unavoidably be*
 “ *brought by the Scots into England by*
 “ *stealth both by Sea and Land to the*
 “ *vast Prejudice of the English Trade*
 “ *and Navigation, and to the great De-*
 “ *triment of your Majesty in your Cu-*
 “ *stoms. And when once that Nation*
 “ *shall have settled themselves in Plan-*
 “ *tations in America Our Commerce in*
 “ *Tabacco, Sugar, Cotton, Wool, Skins,*
 “ *Masts, &c. will be utterly lost,” &c.*

MATTH. JOHNSON

Cleric. Parliamentor.

Now

Now, Sir, I appeal to any Man in his Senses, whether the Scots Company could do England more Damage than the Netherland Company is likely to do. The Emperor's *Ostroy* has provided as many Privileges and Advantages for the *Flemings* as the abovementioned Act of Parliament did for the Scots. *Ostend* and *Newport* lye much more convenient for sending *East-India* Goods by stealth into those Parts of *England* where they are most in demand, than any part of *Scotland* does; and those several Places in *Europe*, which a few Years ago were supplied in *England*, can be, and already have been, furnished from *Flanders* as well and as cheap as they could have been from *Scotland*, and no doubt much cheaper than from *London*. In short, Sir, this Address contains in a few Lines more than I am able to say in a great many Pages, and if you will but allow me that the Parliament knew what it said and did at that time, I will undertake to maintain, that there is not one Article or Circumstance urged against the Scots, but what with much greater Justice stands in full force against the *Flemings*. When the Scots settled at *Darien*, and began to Trade to the *East-Indies*, then all the Cry was, that such a Trade would ruin the *English* Company; but now that the *Flemings* have established an *East-India* Company in the *Netherlands*, and that private Adventurers have for above these seven Years past smuggled into *Great-Britain* and *Ireland* *East-India* Goods from *Ostend* to near the Value of half a Million Sterling, there is no other Notice taken of it, but the hopes some Incendaries endeavour to buoy ignorant People up with, that it will ruin the *Dutch*.

Whence

Whence this Partiality, Sir? Whence this Malice to the *Dutch*, this Indulgence to the *Flemings*, and this Cruelty to *Briton*? How strange a thing will it appear in the Eyes of *Europe*, (I mean such Parts of *Europe* as are not in the secret) to see *Englishmen* complementing the *Flemings* with one of the best Branches of their Commerce, and yet would not let their own Brethren, Neighbours and Friends the Scots, tho' Subjects to the same Prince, come in for even the least share with them? But the Nation, it seems, is now so artfully intoxicated with mighty Expectations from *Greenland*, that it has no time to look to the *Indies*.

Permit me, Sir, to tell you with an equal Mixture of Humility and Contrition, that while I was under the Prejudices of Education, and by consequence an Enemy to your Constitution and Government, I heartily wished to see things go just as they are now managed. I know the Plans that were then formed in Case of such and such Occurrences; but I have either said enough or said nothing at all. Notwithstanding that Self-Preservation and a long Alliance obliges *Britons* to look upon the United Provinces as their chief Barrier (next to their own Fleet, and Unanimity and Honesty amongst themselves) against any Foreign Intruder upon their Liberties, yet there are Thousands amongst them so fixed and rivetted in their Prejudices, and so insinuated in their Aversion, that without ever once reflecting upon the Consequence, they wish success to the *Ostend* Company merely because they hope it will ruin the *Dutch*: This puts me in mind of a very remarkable saying

(66)

ing of the excellent Queen *Elizabeth* upon as remarkable an Occasion, that the Destruction of *France* would prove the Eve of the Ruin of *England*; and I believe I may advance with as good Grounds, that the impoverishing of *Holland* will produce the beggering of *Great Britain*, with something else that I need not name.

As the Imperial Company of Commerce has, no doubt, numerous and powerful Advocates in *Great Britain* for the Wonders they hope it will produce in favour of their Schemes, I may reckon to receive but very little Thanks from them for this Letter; nor will they be better pleased when I assure them once again, that nothing but my Duty to *Great Britain* put me upon writing it, as well as some other Things which I shall communicate to the Publick before it be long. But whether I stand applauded or condemned by the Powerful and the Mighty for this Undertaking for the Service of the People, I am sure I shall have the Approbation of every thinking honest Man in *Britain*: And this Consideration, joyn'd to the Remembrance of those Favours I daily received from you when I was happy in your Patronage and Friendship, directed me to address my self to you upon so important an Occasion, as to a Patriot standing conspicuous in the Front of those honest *Englishmen*, whom neither Engagements to a Party, nor self Interest, nor Ambition, nor any other private Consideration could ever yet byass from the true Interest of their Country. If any Person

thinks

(67)

thinks I have been too busy by meddling with what, I confess, is, properly speaking, the immediate Duty of a Minister of State, he may please to consider, that every Member of a *Freeborn Society* has not only a Right, but is indispensibly obliged to do what I have done whenever he finds it necessary: Surprizing Accidents have happened in the Revolution of a few Years; and amongst Ministers of State, a more than ordinary Friendship and Condescension is but the Prelude to a Surprize, and an Introduction to a *Stab*: Men of Application, with but even tolerable Parts to direct it, find frequent Opportunities of coming at the Knowledge of several Things and Designs Abroad, which some sort of Ministers of State will never learn at Home, until it be too late to prevent them. I acknowledge, *Sir*, that some Men have most prodigiously found their Account in understanding the Forms and Rules of the House of Commons, in being wonderously skill'd in Elections, and finding out the weak side of a Member of Parliament of Figure and Interest in his Country. It has also been of singular Advantage in several Cases, to know how to pick and cull what was useful out of every one of the Multitude of Projects given every Year to a Treasurer concerning the Debts of the Nation, Supplies, laying new Taxes, and such like laudable Pieces of Service for the poor industrious Commonalty. But, alas *Sir*! such Talents in a Minister, without the other more important and necessary Ones to guide them, are more likely to betray and enslave his Country than to preserve it! A Minister who undertakes to hold

I 2

the

(68)

the Reins of *Great Britain*, and to dispose of the Lives, Fortunes and Liberties, not only of his Countrymen, but even of their Posterity, ought to have clean Hands and an upright Heart; he ought to be a despiser of Riches, a hater of Bribery and Corruption, a forgiver of his Enemies, a redresser of Injuries, and a lover of Mankind. He ought to be a Man of undaunted Courage; he ought to be impartial in his Favours and good Offices, and to reward and advance Men of Merit preferable to his Relations and Dependants who want it. Without having any sordid Passions of his own, he ought to be well acquainted with the private Passions, Morals, and Talents of every Foreign Minister he has to do with. But above all Things, he ought to understand perfectly well the Genius and History of all his Neighbours, and to know the Intrigues and Interests of all Foreign Courts, from the poorest Principality to the mighty Monarchy of *France*. *England* has sometimes been happy in such Ministers, three of whom *I* have already named; but she has had others too who have very often brought her upon the Brink of Ruin, either through want of Honesty in not laying hold of present Advantages, or want of Capacity to know when and how to take proper Measures to prevent future Dangers.

The Deliverers up of *Dunkirk*, and the Demolishers of *Tangier*, had, no doubt, as specious and as plausible Pretences, and as solid Arguments to offer in Justification of so vile and so scandalous a Conduct, as any that can be urged by

(69)

by the Favourers of the *Flemings* for conniving at the Settlement and Progress of the *Netherland* Company: Yet the want of those Places in the last War against *France* and *Spain* plainly shewed of what Importance the Possession of them would have been, and how little Foresight or Honesty the Ministry then had in parting with them: Inſomuch, that all the World must allow, that *Great Britain* would have had Leisure and Cause enough to lament and curse that Avarice and Weakness in her Ministers, had not Queen *ANNE*, by a wonderful Interposition of Providence, so timely conquer'd *Gibraltar* and *Port-Mahon*.

Thus far, *Sir*, *I* have endeavour'd to make some Attonement for my former Failings, and hope that my Behaviour for the future will once again entitle me to your Friendship and Esteem, in spite of my malicious Stars, and more malicious Enemies. If any Part of what *I* have offer'd proves of service to the Nation, *I* shall not only despise the Dangers to which it exposes me, but look upon my past Sufferings, as a Clue by which Providence led me into Opportunities of knowing such Things as may now be of Use to *Great Britain*, and her Friends. *Britons*, *I* hope, will find the Advantage of this Warning *I* have given them; since those who are now projecting their Ruin dare neither be so bare-faced, nor so expeditious in their Work, as they would otherwise have been. Nay, it may perhaps oblige them to lay their Scheme entirely aside. As to my own Sufferings, and the Dangers *I* have run through since

Mr.

(70)

Mr. Law left France, I most humbly conceive them to be such as may plead my Pardon before so merciful and humane a Prince as his Majesty; but for such Part of my Conduct as may have been contrary to his Interest since the Death of my Lord Stanhope, I hope his Justice and Care of the Nation will exact an Account of it from those Men whose barbarous Cruelty and inhumane Usage of me forced me upon it for Self-Preservation.

Yes, Sir, they doom'd me a Victim to their Malice and private Designs, at the same time that they were obliged in spite of their Teeth to follow several Advices I gave them for the Service of Great Britain: And gained by my Means, an *Eclat* with the People, while they were endeavouring to oppress and destroy me.

His Majesty's most gracious Mercy I never refused, when offered to me by his own Royal Consent, in the Beginning of the Year One Thousand Seven and Twenty One: But if I most humbly begg'd Leave to decline the Pension of Five hundred Pounds a Year annex'd to it, until the Conditions were explained to me upon which the said Pension was offered, that I might see whether I could accept it with Honour, it was a Delicacy, and a Virtue, that would have endeared me to any Set of honest Men upon the Face of the Earth. But when my Lord Stanhope died, His Majesty lost a faithful Servant;

(71)

vant; I lost a Friend, and the Nation lost a Minister, whose untimely Death they never can sufficiently lament. I am, with the most grateful, and most profound Respect, Duty, and Attachment,

S I R,

Your most Humble

and most Obedient;

most devoted Servant,

Amsterdam 24
October, 1724.

CHARLES FORMAN.



