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OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
MANUFACTURES,  
TRADE,  
AND  
PRESENT STATE  
OF  
IRELAND.

By JOHN LORD SHEFFIELD.

— Non Hostem, inimicæque Castra  
Argivum, vestras Spes Uritis —

PART THE FIRST.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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**T**HE following Observations consist principally of materials, which were intended to be employed in another work. Such reputation as might have been acquired by attention to style, ornament, and arrangement, is sacrificed for the sake of stating, while it is not too late, to the People of Great Britain, as well as to those of Ireland, some facts, very interesting to them, and the knowledge of which possibly may be of service with respect to the questions that are immediately to come before the Legislature.

## ii      A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

As it is the management of these times to conceal from the Public the measures that are intended, and as Ministers are satisfied with carrying certain questions through Parliament without troubling themselves about farther considerations, the Author can only reason on the general notoriety of those measures; and he shall be happy if at least part of that, to which it is said the Government of the two kingdoms is pledged, may not prove true. A wish to serve both countries could alone have induced him to undertake as disagreeable a task as has ever fallen to his lot; and when he adds, that he is sensible how much of what he states is likely, till well understood, to be displeasing to many in both countries, and unlikely to suit their prejudices, he, on those accounts, hopes he may claim some sort of merit. The Manufacturers of Britain will not be satisfied

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satisfied with all his doctrines; but in this he must acquiesce for the present, as the experience of mankind tells us, that he who does not go every length with those who are interested in a question, unavoidably risks their good opinion.

In respect to Ireland, it is painful to him in an extreme degree, to seem even to the most prejudiced and unreasonable, to take a part against her in the proposed arrangement with Britain, although it be only in the single point relative to the alteration of the Navigation Act; (for he cannot consider Protecting Duties as the wish of that country at large;) but he is convinced that the generality of the People of Ireland are not aware of the whole extent of what has been desired on that head. He thinks them more reasonable than to form such a wish, and is

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sure that when the consequences of the proposed alteration are laid before them, that generosity of character, for which they are distinguished, must prevent their continuing to ask it; and it is only by stating the case of Britain strongly, that they are likely to see how unreasonable their claim is. If he were even to consider the matter merely as an Irishman, who only cared for one part of the empire, without the least regard for the good and advantage of the whole, he would not wish the measure to take place; because, if Britain should be surpris'd into it, and the alteration which is desired should ignorantly and inconsiderately be made, he knows she must reclaim the concession she had made. He most ardently wishes that such a mortification may be spared to Ireland, and that the consequences which would result from it, may be prevented; and it is from this wish

## A D V E R T I S E M E N T.      v

wish he is induced to take a part in the question. If merely from the fear of risking the unfavourable opinion of the People of that Country, he should withhold the information which is in his power, or decline to state matters which they ought to know, he should feel himself unworthy to belong to them; and he should think it dishonest, in the highest degree, to enter on the subject, without the resolution to treat it with the utmost impartiality. If he had prejudices, they would probably be in favour of Ireland; and perhaps their foundation might be traced to the indignation he has formerly felt on the treatment of that country. He is, however, equally interested in the welfare of both countries; and if he could suspect himself of partiality to either of them, he most assuredly would have avoided the subject. His situation in respect to both, may and ought

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ought to prevent his being prejudiced; at least it is such as has served to give him some knowledge of the interests of each. He can have no motive for taking part against either; his desire was to represent the real state of Ireland, as far as he could; to prevent mischievous, idle, or unavailing clamour, and to counteract the designs of those whose object is to mislead and dupe the people.

It will give him great satisfaction, if now, or in future, these Observations should lead to cool and dispassionate examination, and in the end, to the mutual advantage of Great Britain and Ireland. He has stated many facts; he has freely observed upon those facts; and he hopes what he has remarked will give rise to reflections more useful and important.

The

## ADVERTISEMENT. vii

The Tables will give a more correct idea of the state of Manufactures and Trade than could have been formed without them. A greater detail relative to parts of the Fisheries, to particular Manufactures, and to the trade to some countries, which, however, may not at present be of much consequence, should have been given, if there had been more time; but it being declared, that the very business, which is the principal object of these Observations, is immediately to be discussed, the information herein contained, such as it is, if delayed, would have come too late. If there had been leisure for the purpose, the author would have informed himself more fully on some other points, and the whole of what he now offers, might have appeared in a more finished state.

The



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scious, it may be hoped, not only to them, but to the prosperity of the whole British empire, of which they form a considerable part. Ireland had been placed by the hand of Providence in an advanced situation between the two Continents, with excellent harbours towards the prevailing winds, and with the blessing of a fertile soil, and temperate climate; but she had nevertheless long laboured in an inefficient and helpless poverty, under a system of restraints equally pernicious, unwise, and unjust.—It is natural, that the minds of her people should be elated on the emancipation of their industry and activity; and perhaps a considerable period must elapse, before they settle sufficiently, either to ascertain the intrinsic value of their late acquisitions, or to adopt the means of applying those acquisitions to the best effect: the best habits of exertion are not suddenly to be expected, though they may gradually be formed by the natural progression of a free commerce, and the fostering attention of a wise and settled government.

From such attainments alone can result that increase of stock and capital, which will

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will be essentially necessary, before Ireland can avail herself of half her advantages. In the mean time, many of her people seem disposed rather to seek farther speculative and theoretical claims, than to cultivate the solid benefits which they actually possess; whilst others are risking and prejudicing the principal staple of their country, by forcing its weak capital into too many and new branches. These unsteady and extravagant attempts have a tendency not only to check trade, but to provoke retaliation.

It is now well known among commercial nations, that manufactures, forced, and supported by bounties and prohibitions, cannot long thrive, and are not only a loss to the community, in proportion to their expence, but are farther pernicious, by tempting away hands from the thriving manufactures. By aiming at too many things at once, Ireland will succeed in none; but by pursuing certain staple articles that best suit her, she may bring them to that perfection which will command the markets. A country, of the extent of Ireland, cannot expect to prevail in every manufacture; she may trifle in many,

but she can excel at foreign markets in few; and those, under proper management, may be amply sufficient to give both employment and affluence to her people.—It is the abundance of a manufacture, and the general establishment of it in a country, that makes it both cheap and good.

The Irish have been represented as being lazy, and not disposed to labour: they are, however, of an active nature, and capable of the greatest exertions; and of as good a disposition as any nation, in the same state of improvement: their Generosity, Hospitality, and Bravery, are proverbial: intelligence and zeal in whatever they undertake will not be wanting: but it has been the fashion to judge of them from their outcasts. The Highlanders of Scotland, in their state of nature, are also said to be indolent. That men who have very little to do, should appear to do little, is not strange; but who thinks them indolent, when brought into situations where they can act? The Highlanders, indeed, have still less reason for indolence than the Irish; the country of the former with difficulty

culty can subsist them, while the plentiful soil of Ireland encourages idleness.—Perhaps the cheapness of the common food, potatoes, may be justly deemed a cause of idleness, and consequently detrimental to manufactures; a small garden of potatoes will subsist a family. Few countries have become completely industrious, till the price of provisions was comparatively high. In how many towns, even of England, where the manufacturers can acquire a subsistence, without daily labour, do numbers of them consume the Monday and Tuesday in idleness? The common people of Ireland have not had the encouragement they might have had, if an unfortunate difference of religion had not prevailed, and if it had not been thought a necessary policy, not to bring forward the mass of the people who differed from the reformed church, but more especially because their principles were supposed to be hostile not only to the established religion, but to the established government. Lately, the severe laws against Roman Catholics have been repealed, and many unnecessary restraints removed; Restraints which had shamefully lasted too long, and can only be accounted for by the acrimony



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acrimony of the times in which they were imposed. At present, perhaps, the improvement of Ireland is as rapid as any country ever experienced, nor will any thing check it, but the weakness of human nature, an ill-founded dissatisfaction, and an extravagant disposition to innovation and change.

Jealousies in trade between England, Scotland, and Ireland will ever occur. Such jealousies in some respects stimulate useful competition, and in the end improve manufactures, and promote trade. In the fermentation and progress of such jealousies, appeals will frequently be made to the Legislature, and the interference of the Legislature, when obtained, will generally prove mischievous to the great interests of commerce, without giving satisfaction to any of the contending parties. In such instances, however, much good may be done by wise and diligent Ministers, who think it their duty to watch, to inquire, and fully to inform themselves. Prejudices may be removed, mistakes may be exposed, and sometimes useful regulations may be introduced. This remark has been suggested by the present circumstances of  
Ireland :

## PROTECTING DUTIES. 7

Ireland: it has been already hinted, that she aims at more than her capital can possibly support, or in which she can possibly succeed: some of her people have been ignorantly eager in professing an unfriendly disposition to British manufactures, and perhaps persuade themselves, that under the term "Protecting Duties\*," they can conceal their real meaning — the introduction of a plan of prohibitory duties. Happily, a considerable proportion of the country thinks differently; and her Parliament, after a full investigation, rejected the measure, by a great majority. Yet, many still retain the disposition to occupy themselves, and disturb others, with attempts to introduce the mischievous system. A war of protecting duties and bounties, would answer to neither country; it would be extremely prejudicial to both; it would be ruinous to Ireland. The duty proposed would be prohibitory. If Ireland prohibits the staple manufacture of Great Britain, measures of a similar tendency would inevitably

\* The duties proposed were so high as to be prohibitory of British, and therefore protecting Irish woollens.

and

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and soon take place, respecting the staple manufacture of Ireland. Even by doing much less, the great article of trade, on which Ireland depends, her linen manufacture, would be ruined; merely the placing Irish linens on the same footing as foreign, would almost entirely prevent the use of them in England, and be ten times more prejudicial to Ireland, than her prohibition of English woollens would be to Great Britain. Measures, too, might be pursued in that line, which would forward and assist the interests of Great Britain, in the north of Europe.

But while prohibitory duties might bring real evils on Ireland, they would fail of answering the end intended: they encourage contraband trade; and no laws could prevent the smuggling of British manufactures into Ireland: the near neighbourhood and great intercourse give a facility, which could not be obviated; nor could non-importation agreements last long. Ireland would soon be tired of the impositions of her own manufacturers, who would immediately avail themselves of the opportunity, and who have raised the clamour for the purpose of exacting

No. I.

TOTAL VALUE of all Commodities exported from Ireland to Britain for Ten Years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, distinguishing each Year, and the separate Value of Linens, Linen Yarn, Wool, Worsted, and Bay Yarn.

Years	Value of Linen.			Linen Yarn.			Wool.			Worsted and Bay Yarn.			Total of the foregoing Articles.			Other Articles exported to Britain from Ireland.			Total Exports to Britain.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1774	1237121	11	0	175166	0	0	503	11	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	95880	16	8	1508671	19	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	605177	19	0	2113849	18	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
1775	1458543	15	0	183592	15	0	1003	12	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	118345	11	8	1761485	14	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	615031	18	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	2376577	13	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
1776	1435110	16	4	216015	5	0	529	14	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	129790	15	0	1782346	10	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	765114	3	5	2547460	13	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
1777	1387584	5	5	178190	0	0	867	6	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	170054	15	0	1736606	6	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	810435	18	1	2547132	5	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1778	1542748	13	1	168653	0	0	832	12	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	184134	0	0	1896368	5	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	816124	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	2547132	5	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1779	1335043	4	0	214020	10	0	1939	5	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	151409	3	4	1602412	2	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	650564	9	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	2252976	12	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1780	1219921	0	0	254219	15	0	1082	7	5	127321	0	0	1602544	2	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	778600	15	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	2381234	18	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
1781	961455	13	0	223215	0	0	582	7	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	122786	3	4	1308009	4	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	872206	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	2180215	7	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
1782	1646138	2	8	169126	10	0	1482	8	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	125732	8	0	1942479	9	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	757346	4	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2699825	13	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1783	1014197	18	0	214877	13	0	1031	10	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	100015	15	0	1330122	16	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	659167	19	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	1980290	16	9

## PROTECTING DUTIES. 9

exacting an additional profit from the consumer; she would soon find she cannot supply herself, and that efforts which may fall heavily on her in other respects, will serve her in no respect, but would greatly raise the price to her people of that essentially necessary article, cloathing.

Those who examine with a jealous eye the advantages resulting to Great Britain from her supplying Ireland with certain articles, should observe the prodigious quantity of linen with which Ireland supplies Great Britain; the value of which, in the year ending the 25th of March, 1782, exceeded all the imports into Ireland of the growth, produce, and manufacture of Great Britain: it amounted to 24,692,072 yards, value 1,646,138l. 2s. 8d. Irish money\*; besides

\* See the table No. I. The author inadvertently took the year of the greatest export; but the average of four years, ending the 25th of March, 1778, and previous to the exports of Ireland being hurt by her non-importation agreements, (which they were) was in value 1,455,999l. 7s. 5½d. In consequence of those agreements, and other circumstances, the value of linen exports

to PROTECTING DUTIES.

fides linen yarn, to the amount of 169,126l. 10s. In the same year, all the imports into Ireland, of the produce and manufacture of Great Britain, amounted to 1,486,317l. 2s. 4d.; of which the quantity and value of woollens was as follows, and it happened to be the year of the greatest import :

	Yards.		£.	s.	d.
Old drapery, -	362,824	- Value	253,976	0	0
New drapery, -	547,336	-	68,417	0	0
			<u>322,393</u>	0	0

And it is farther worthy of notice, that, in the same year, when Ireland exported

	Yards.		£.	s.	d.
To Britain - -	24,692,072	value	1,646,138	2	8
She exported to all the rest of the world only - -	278,231	—	18,548	14	8
And coloured linens	113,655 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	5,984	9	9
Total export -	<u>25,083,958<math>\frac{1}{2}</math></u>				

ports fell, in 1781, to 961,455l. The next year, 1782, however, as usually happens on such occasions, it increased, and to the great amount above mentioned.

Moreover

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Moreover it may be observed, that Ireland does not grow a sufficiency of wool of a proper sort, if she should manufacture the whole of it, to supply her own consumption of woollens; and that she could not get the same articles cheaper from any other country than from Great Britain. At the same time, a great proportion of the linens which Great Britain takes from Ireland might be got cheaper from the north of Europe: and Ireland should remember, that, of all her exports in the same year, viz. 1782, Britain alone took 2,699,825l. 13s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. How trifling, comparatively, the remainder of her exports, will appear under the head of her general trade.

The year 1783 was not exactly the period when we should have expected the woollen manufacturers of Ireland to be most clamorous, and that they should enter upon the most violent measures. Unprejudiced people, at least, will think that the complaints were ill timed; and the following account of the exports of woollens\* will prove it. It

\* Exclusive of frize, flannels, stockings, and mixtures of woollens, and hats.

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should be remarked, that the export was allowed only during a small part of the year 1780.

Old drapery exported from Ireland, year ending the 25th of March,

		Yards.
1780	—	494
1781	—	3,740
1782	—	4,633
1783	—	40,589

New drapery exported from Ireland, year ending the 25th of March,

		Yards.
1780	—	8,653
1781	—	286,859
1782	—	336,607
1783	—	538,061

And as a farther proof of the increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, it appears that the export of wool, woollen, and worsted yarn had decreased above half. The average export of the last, which is the principal article, for seven years, ending the 25th of March, 1770, was 142,890 stones. The average of the same number of

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of years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, was 66,679 stones.

It should be remarked, that at the time Ireland, on the opening of her ports for exportation of woollens, made an effort to send the above quantity to foreign markets, she increased her imports of woollens. This helps to shew an advantage in taking away that unreasonable restraint, and should convince us, that the more Ireland exports, the greater her necessity will be of importing from England. Ireland was enabled to work up her wool in those articles which best suited it, and to the greatest advantage, for foreign markets, instead of employing it to disadvantage, and increased the importation of such woollen articles as England could furnish cheaper than she could make them.

On an average of four years, from 1763 to 1767, Ireland imported,

		Yards.
New drapery,	-	281,557
Old drapery,	-	196,047

On

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On an average of four years, ending the 25th of March, 1783, Ireland imported,

	Yards.
New drapery, -	390,095
Old drapery, -	281,406

But the increase of the importation of the principal article, new drapery, was only about one fifth of the increased manufacture for exportation.

	Yards.
Increased quantity of new drapery imported, - - -	108,538
New drapery exported, year ending the 25th of March, 1783, -	538,061

And the export of the latter article, the same year, exceeded the import near 120,000 yards. And farther it should be remarked, that, in the very year when so large a quantity of Irish woollens were able to meet British at foreign market, a duty was asked on British to enable Irish woollens to meet them at the markets of Ireland.

It should be observed, however, that the manufacture of woollens was not so much increased as appears from the stated export of the four last years: a certain proportion of

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of those articles, which now appear in the exports, were smuggled from Ireland previous to 1778, at which time the prohibition to export was taken off with respect to the British plantations in America, or the West Indies, or any British settlement on the coast of Africa. Before that time, woollens could not be mentioned in the Custom-house state of the exports of Ireland; but now that the export is opened to all the world, by the acts of 1780 and 1781, it is found that two thirds of her woollens go to Portugal, to which place she probably sent nearly as much before. The importation, however, of most of those articles into Portugal, both then and now, was, and is, supposed to be prohibited by Portugal: and it should farther be remarked, that as woollens are not subject to duties on export, the vanity, and other motives of merchants may have induced them to enter greater quantities for exportation than they have really sent.

But some of the violent *friends* of Ireland say, we will have non-importation agreements, protecting duties, prohibitions, &c.  
If

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If you don't take our linens, we will not only refuse British, but also foreign and colonial commodities from Great Britain, and the two last amount to near 800,000l. yearly\*.

It will be answered, that Great Britain gives to the principal manufacture of Ireland every advantage in every part of her dominions, and may most reasonably expect that her own principal manufacture should, in return, have equal advantages in Ireland, which they have not. The linens Great Britain takes from Ireland are five times the value of

\* Some of these pretended friends of Ireland, who, whether actuated by an honest and zealous ignorance, or by worse motives, are likely to prove her greatest enemies, have been driven, by the absurdity of their pretension, into the most contradictory mode of reasoning: for, on some occasions, they treat as a separate kingdom, not only independent, but utterly unconnected; on others, they claim as a part of the empire, entitled (according to an inauspicious phrase) to a reciprocity of equal rights. For the sake of fairness in argument, it is to be wished they would chuse one predicament or the other. The attempt to blend both characters, is not calculated to promote either candour or perspicuity.

the

## PROTECTING DUTIES. 17

the woollens taken from Britain. Ireland takes nothing from her that she can get cheaper or better elsewhere, except the commodities of the British West Indies; and, in return, she has an advantage in her share of the monopoly of the West-India markets, and she has no pretension to trade with the plantations on any other principle. Whatever else she takes of colonial or foreign articles, is for her own convenience; and before Ireland cuts off all commercial intercourse with Great Britain, it may be worth her while to consider the proportion of the exports of Ireland taken by Great Britain, as already mentioned: it will appear that her exports to all other parts did not, in the same year, much exceed, in value, the twentieth part of her exports to Britain, and in that part are included the exports to the British plantations, which would be found no small part, but which would be also lost, as such proceedings on the part of Ireland would naturally tend to interrupt all commercial intercourse with the British colonies and empire. Great Britain has found it possible to exist, and to maintain, her commercial affluence against the combinations and inter-

D ructions

## 18 PROTECTING DUTIES.

ruptions of many principal markets in both Continents; but Ireland has not yet made the experiment, how she could exist without the markets of the British dominions: and when Ireland shall be so madly advised, neither fleets nor armies, nor any extraordinary expence, will be necessary, on the part of Great Britain, to convince her she is wrong; hurtful it may be for a time; but in the end, and soon, Great Britain must prevail: Ireland cannot: for it does not appear where she will get what she wants, and that she has credit with other nations to the amount she would require; or where she will dispose of what she has, if she should have no intercourse with Great Britain or the British colonies. It will be found, that it is the intercourse with the British dominions that enables Ireland to trade in any considerable degree.

This hostile mode of argument is, however, very improperly brought on by Ireland. It would ill become either kingdom to encourage even the discussion of such propositions; and the seat of empire could never adopt the measures hinted at, unless  
unavoidably

## PROTECTING DUTIES. 19

unavoidably driven to them. Under the present enlarged and free system of commerce, there is demand and trade enough in the world to occupy the utmost industry of both countries. This kind of scrutiny, then, should not take place; but if Ireland will force it forwards, the investigation will not prove either beneficial or flattering to her. She might at least be satisfied until she finds herself in the situation of being able to say to Britain, My ports shall be open to all your manufactures, free of all duties, on condition that your ports shall be open to mine in the like manner. — Ireland is hardly in the situation to agree to that proposal; and the generality of Englishmen would probably at first object: but there is nothing in it which should alarm them. Great Britain could undersell Ireland in most manufactures: such is the predominancy of superior skill, industry, and capital, over low-priced labour, and comparatively very few taxes. — Many would object to the extension of this idea to raw materials, as well as to manufactures; but even the permitting English wool and fullers' earth, charged with inland carriage, freight, com-  
D 2 mission,



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miffion, &c. to go to Ireland, need not alarm, on the ground of giving a superiority to the latter\*. Let it be remembered, that England underfells other countries even in the manufacture of Spanish wool. The wool grower in England, who submits the monopoly of his wool to the manufac-  
turers,

\* The English woollen manufacturers will fay, the export of wool from England to Ireland must greatly reduce the price of wool in the latter country, and, with the low price of labour, enable the Irish manufacturers to underfell them, and of course will urge the same objections as they do, to the export of wool to France. On the other hand, the wool growers of Ireland will oppose the reduction of the price, which is from 3s. to 4s. per stone higher than in England: and it is said, until mutton becomes a more common food in Ireland, and the price consequently rises, it would not answer to keep up the present number of sheep, if not encouraged by the high price of wool. The increase of tillage in that country, it is supposed, will naturally decrease the number of sheep, unless, by a mode of agriculture superior to the present, and a more general introduction of artificial grasses, turneps, &c. she should be enabled to keep a greater stock. Yet the following account of the great fair of Ballinasloe, in Connaught, seems to prove that the number of sheep was increasing in Ireland. Tillage, however, has made, comparatively, very little progress in that part of the kingdom.

ABSTRACT

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turers, might receive some relief. This, however, is a nice point, and does not require any discussion at present.

ABSTRACT of WOOL sold at the different Fairs of Ballinasloe, from July, 1771, to July, 1778, inclusive.

Date.	No. of Bags	No. of do.	Total.
	fold.	unfold.	
1771, July,	— 1492	— 15	— 1507
1772, —,	— 1286	— 11	— 1297
1773, —,	— 1550	— 33	— 1583
1774, —,	— 1623	— 25	— 1648
1775, —,	— 1574	— 61	— 1635
1776, —,	— 1857	— 64	— 1921
1777, —,	— 2004	— 70	— 2074
1778, —,	— 1359	— 553	— 1912
Total No.	— 12745	832	13577
Yearly average	1593	104	1697

N. B. The failure in 1778 arose from the stagnation of credit, and a decrease of the demand for bay yarn from England.

SHEEP sold at the said Fair.

Date.	fold.	unfold.	Total.
1771, Oct.	— 51950	—	— 51950
1772, —	— 53632	— 50	— 53682
1773, —	— 55242	— 6390	— 61632
1774, —	— 60796	— 5302	— 66098
1775, —	— 63904	— 1020	— 64924
1776, —	— 66873	— 639	— 67512
1777, —	— 63792	— 12743	— 76535
1778, —	— 44894	— 31588	— 76482

2

EQUAL

## EQUAL DUTIES.

Instead of protecting or prohibitory duties, which would not answer the purpose of the promoters of them; or an entire removal of all duties between the two countries, for which, it has been already observed, Ireland is not yet ripe; perhaps to lower the British inoperative duties to the Irish, would be the least exceptionable measure: it would leave the trade nearly on its present footing; and it is the interest of the British manufacturers that the duties should be equalized, rather by lowering them here, than by raising them in Ireland.

To this many of the English woollen manufacturers would object: but if Great Britain should take off the heavy duties on the importation of Irish woollens into Britain, it would not be of the advantage to Ireland that she imagines, nor a material check to the British manufacturers of wool. On the part of England and Scotland, it may be worth while to consider, that lowering high duties to the scale of the Irish, while it will take away the arguments, and may suppress

suppress the clamours of the discontented in Ireland, cannot hurt their own manufactures. The heavy duties on the importation of Irish manufactures into Great Britain are prohibitory: they are in general unnecessary; and only serve to irritate and keep alive prejudice and false notions. For while Great Britain can undersell Ireland, even in the home markets of the latter, in almost every manufacture, charged with land carriage in Britain, freight, duties on landing, and commission; and notwithstanding the bounties given by the Dublin Society, or Parliament; Ireland surely could not sell any quantity of manufactures at British markets, or much more to foreign countries, than she does now. She may, indeed, be able to export, in the course of trade, and to assort in cargoes, to a certain extent, some articles which she cannot make cheaper than England, but not in quantities to prejudice the latter. Perhaps, one of the strongest objections at present to opening the British markets to the Irish manufactures, is the danger of smuggling cargoes from the Continent of Europe.

Ireland, it is said, can afford some broad stuffs, durants, shalloons, and shags, cheaper than

than Great Britain : her flannels are as good, if not the best : her blankets are as cheap : and in hair plush and druggets, she can rival France : but, if it be true, she has not a sufficiency of wool to carry those manufactures to any great extent. The very price of that article, which is generally 3s. or 4s. at least per stone of 16 pounds higher than in England, as already mentioned, must prevent her ; for it was the low price of labour alone which enabled Ireland to send woollen or worsted yarn to Britain\*.

It is, therefore, really the superior quality and cheapness of British manufacture, that prevents import from Ireland. Mr. Arthur Young has inquired, why give in linen what you deny in other fabrics ? Irish linen has all the advantages of a freedom from a great variety of excises, which the manufacturers of English linen labour under, and yet the English manufacture, so burthened, thrives, from there being a difference in the fabrics, and as great a difference would be in other fabrics. The fixed trade, capital,

\* It appears from the Table, No. I. that the quantity of wool she sent was trifling.

and

and skill of England, at present at least, bid defiance to the no excises of Ireland. If Ireland cannot meet English manufactures in her own markets, notwithstanding her advantages at home, how can she meet England to any great extent at foreign markets, without those advantages. New fabrics require new capitals, new establishments, and new exertions.

Taking the year of the greatest export of woollens from Ireland, viz. 1783, we find, the quantity of wool, woollen and worsted yarn exported, greatly decreased; and that the whole quantity of wool exported, was - - - 2063 stones, 10 lbs. and the whole quantity of woollen yarn, - 440 stones. worsted yarn, - 66677 stones.

It is clear, that even if these quantities had been of the sort of wool fit for making the woollens that Ireland imports, it would not have been sufficient; for, in the same year she imported near 800,000 yards, viz.

	Yards.
New drapery, -	420,415 1/2
Old drapery, -	371,871
	E and

and until Ireland becomes a country of shepherds, and prefers sheep-walks to tillage, and depopulation to population, she cannot import much less. She has grown rich, and more populous; her demand for woollens has increased, and is likely to increase much more: Great Britain, therefore, has little to apprehend; but the consumer in Ireland must pay whatever additional expence is thrown on woollens imported; he must pay the extraordinary expence of smuggling, or whatever duty may be laid.

Equal duties must be low; if high, they would be protecting or prohibitory duties against England. It is obvious, that whatever they are, they must fall on the consumer in Ireland, who must have these articles in some shape.

As to the system of no duties in either country, if that should be proposed, Ireland will dread the extinction of some of her present manufactures of woollen. She will recollect the effect of the Methuen treaty with Portugal, by which British woollens were introduced, and the Portuguese manu-  
factures

factures of wool, which had been established above twenty years before, were crushed; for although that treaty, on the face of it, appears simple, and the principles of it not reciprocal\*, its object was as now stated; it was understood so at the time, and it succeeded. The conduct, however, of Portugal was not impolitic. It was not possible for her to carry her woollen manufacture to any great extent, or nearly to supply her people and colonies. She got a great advantage, as to her wines, by the treaty; and her people were supplied cheaper with the necessary article, woollens.

Ireland, perhaps, had better be content to remain as she is: her duties on her imports, which are 5 per cent. on the custom rate, and 5 per cent. more on the rate for import excise, give advantage to her own manufactures. Her import duties consist of customs payable like the British, and also of an

\* British woollens were not to be admitted on better terms than those of other countries, although the wines of Portugal were to pay in England lower duties than any other wines,

excise, called import excise, which is bondable until the goods are taken out for consumption, when it is to be paid, and has therefore got the name of excise. Draperies, however, from Britain, do not pay the import excise, only the custom.

The manufactures of wool certainly have increased, and are increasing, under their present circumstances; and a sufficient quantity is manufactured, to shew that extraordinary measures are not necessary. The clamour on this subject has been nearly confined to Dublin, the most improper place for the manufacture, and where it is much to be wished it may not flourish; where a disposition has appeared rather to riot and insult the Legislature, than to cultivate, with industry, the benefits of an enlarged and free commerce. The seat of expence and licentiousness is not a fit place for the principal branch of the woollen manufacture, or for any other, except slight fabrics, which depend upon changeable fashion, and must be under the eye of the shopkeeper.

A good

A good deal has been already said, relative to woollens, which applies to the general requisition from Ireland, that the manufactures of both countries shall be liable to equal duties on import into each other. The British duties, when compared with the Irish, will not, by any means, give to an indifferent person the impression of fairness and equality, or even of utility; they have, however, in truth, little or no effect, except to cause uneasiness, to irritate, and seemingly to justify the idea of protecting duties. Whilst similar British commodities command the markets of Ireland, from their superior quality and cheapness, though charged with the Irish duties, what chance of sale have the same articles of Irish manufacture at British markets, even without a duty? An alteration, therefore, would benefit Ireland, or prejudice Britain, much less than is imagined. This argument, perhaps, it will be said, may answer for the year 1785, but may not apply to the probable future state of manufactures in Ireland in 1800—that the progress of manufactures in the two countries, one of which pays taxes, to the amount of fourteen millions, and the other  
of

30 EQUAL DUTIES.

of one million only, little or no part of which can be said to fall on manufactures, is not likely to keep an equal pace. To which it may be replied, that the price of labour, and expences of all kinds, will undoubtedly increase with the increase of manufactures in Ireland; that one million of taxes is less disproportionate to the wealth of that country, than may appear to those who have not examined their comparative riches, and that if Great Britain makes no improper sacrifices, she will maintain her present superiority. It merits, therefore, the consideration of the British manufacturers, whether the sale of their goods will not be much more hurt by the dissatisfaction of Ireland, and non-importation agreements, (although the latter will not be effectual or lasting) than by a reduction of the duties on the import of Irish manufactures. The duty on woollens, imported into Britain from Ireland, amount to a prohibition. At the same time Ireland has laid duties equal to a prohibition in favour of England, on draperies from all other countries; they are also in favour of her own woollen manufacture.

SCHEDULE

EQUAL DUTIES. 31

SCHEDULE of DUTIES on the under-mentioned Articles in both Countries.

Import Duties payable in Britain.			Import Duties payable in Ireland.			
£.	s. d.		£.	s. d.		
2	0	6 $\frac{4}{10}$	{ All woollens or old drapery, per yard, — — — — }	0	0	5 $\frac{10}{10}$
0	5	11 $\frac{10}{10}$	{ Stuffs of all kinds, made or mixed with wool, or new drapery, per yard, — — — — }	0	0	1 $\frac{10}{10}$
29	15	10	{ Cotton and linen manufactures, and cotton mixed, for every 100l. value, on oath, — — }	9	18	5 $\frac{8}{10}$
65	10	10	{ Linen cloth, printed, for every 100l. value, on oath, — — }	9	18	5 $\frac{8}{10}$
65	10	10	{ Leather manufactures, for every 100l. value, on oath, — — }	9	18	5 $\frac{8}{10}$
0	3	11 $\frac{13}{10}$	{ Checks, the piece not above 10 yards, besides in Britain, for every 100l. value, on oath, — — }	0	1	3 $\frac{10}{10}$
5	6	9 $\frac{10}{10}$	Sugar, refined, per cwt. — — — —	1	13	11 $\frac{10}{10}$
4	12	1 $\frac{10}{10}$	Starch, per cwt. — — — —	0	6	5 $\frac{10}{10}$

Many other instances might be added, not less remarkable: and Ireland does not a little complain of want of reciprocity on the subjects of malt, beer, &c.

Average

52 EQUAL DUTIES.

Average of three years, ending Christmas 1777, of the duties arising on all goods and merchandize exported from England into Ireland:

	£.	s.	d.
British goods, -	9136	16	8 $\frac{3}{4}$
Foreign goods, -	719	18	5 $\frac{3}{4}$

Average of the same years of the duties arising on all goods, &c. imported from Ireland into England, - £. 6490 11 1 $\frac{1}{2}$

Average of three years, ending the 5th of January, 1778, of the duties arising on all goods, &c. exported from Scotland into Ireland, - £. 602 0 7 $\frac{1}{2}$

Average of the same years of the duties arising on all goods, &c. imported from Ireland into Scotland, - £. 585 13 1

It may be observed, that the larger sum is received in that country, where the markets in general are open to the other upon low duties, and that the balance of the general interchange is in favour of Ireland.

BOUNTIES.

BOUNTIES AND DRAWBACKS. 33

BOUNTIES.

As to bounties, Ireland complains of that given by Great Britain on the export of sail cloth to Ireland; she finds it extremely hurtful to her fabric, and complains with double force, as it is a branch of her linen manufacture. She will be justifiable in counteracting, by duties or regulations, all bounties given on export to Ireland, where she has similar manufactures: but the British act adds to the bounty now given, as much more as at any time Ireland shall impose as a duty on the import of British sail cloth into Ireland. The mode of contest may become ridiculous.

DRAWBACKS.

As to drawbacks, it is desired that Great Britain shall allow a full drawback on all commodities she exports to Ireland, on the principle, that the country which consumes the article, should have the use of the revenue raised upon it. Refined sugar and hops are

F put

34 NAVIGATION ACT, &c.

put on that footing. It is not unreasonable, and it is encouraging to trade. It should always be remembered, that whatever part of a duty is not drawn back, is a tax on the carrying trade.

NAVIGATION ACT,

*Colonial and Foreign Commodities, &c.*

Exclusive of the several difficulties respecting the interchange of native commodities and manufactures, new pretensions are brought forward, relative to the commerce resulting from the intercourse, which has been opened to Ireland, with the British Colonies, Plantations, and Settlements, and also relative to the interchange of Asiatic, African, and American produce. Ireland desires that the construction of the navigation laws may be altered, so as to admit Colonial and foreign commodities from her warehouses into Great Britain, in like manner as they pass from thence into Ireland.

The

NAVIGATION ACT, &c. 35

The objections to this, on the part of the people of Great Britain, are numerous and strong. It is said, that the advantage in question is the only one she has reserved to herself, as head of the empire, for the vast expence of supporting foreign connections, establishing, maintaining, and protecting colonies, which alone belong to her; that when she gave the participation of all other advantages, she reserved this alone; which if she yields, there are few other points in which the navigation laws will be of service to her, relatively to Ireland. It is the only commercial part of them that is of consequence; it is the single privilege, which leaves any gleam of hope to Great Britain, that she shall weather the consequences of the war, to which Ireland contributes nothing. In fact, the very operation in question of the navigation laws, is the only barrier remaining against the migration of her manufacturers and merchants. The preamble of her navigation and other laws, give the reasons for confining Colonial and foreign trade, viz. "Not only for the sake of employing and increasing English shipping and seamen, and securing a vent for woollen and other

F 2

"manu-



36. NAVIGATION ACT, &c.

“ manufactures ; but also to make this king-  
 “ dom a staple of the commodities of those  
 “ plantations, as well as of the commodities  
 “ of other countries for the supplying them ;  
 “ (it being the usage of other nations to  
 “ keep their plantation trade to themselves)  
 “ and farther, if Colonial commodities  
 “ should be taken from any part but the  
 “ plantations, that the trade of them would  
 “ thereby in a great measure be diverted  
 “ from hence, and carried elsewhere ; His  
 “ Majesty’s customs and other revenues  
 “ much lessened, the fair trader prejudiced,  
 “ and this kingdom not continue a staple  
 “ of plantation commodities, nor that vent  
 “ for the future of the victual and other  
 “ native commodities of this kingdom.”—

Such was the declared principle of the navigation act \*, and such certainly was the principle of those acts † which passed explanatory of it ; and the act which repeals so much of the navigation laws, as prevented a direct

\* 12th Charles II.

† 15th Charles II. and the 22d and 23d Charles II, confirms the intention of the 15th, to prohibit importation of, &c. from Ireland, and restrain it to Britain.

intercourse

NAVIGATION ACT, &c. 37

intercourse between Ireland and the British  
 plantations, does not repeal the 12th Geo. III.  
 chap. 55. \* which prohibits the import from  
 Ireland into Britain, of rum, sugar, coffee,  
 and other American and Asiatic goods : nor  
 can it be said, that it appears from the act,  
 which extended the trade of Ireland, to have  
 been the intention of the Legislature to make  
 any alteration in that respect. The custom-  
 house practice has continued the same since,  
 as it was before the passing the act, and during  
 upwards of a century, viz. not to admit the  
 articles in question from Ireland. Nor can  
 it be objected as inequitable, that Britain de-  
 clines to take from Ireland commodities  
 which that country takes from her. Ireland  
 takes them from the mother country of the  
 colonies ; and, strictly considering the mat-  
 ter, she has no rightful claim to get them

\* Although this act was passed to bind both countries, and those parts which purport to have an internal operation in the levying of forfeitures or penalties, or are directory to the officers of the Irish revenue, may now be considered as a dead letter ; yet, the spirit and intention of this act is clear, and that part which was intended to bind Britain, and which prohibits importation of the produce of Asia, Africa, and America, from Ireland, is still in force.

in

## §8 NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c.

in any other way from any colonies, except through the indulgence of the mother country of those colonies. Ireland takes little from Britain of any kind, that she can get cheaper elsewhere: she takes as it suits her, and she cannot object to Britain the price she pays for West-India commodities, or the giving the monopoly of her markets to the produce of the British plantations, as in return she has her share of the monopoly of their markets. It would be an extreme folly in Great Britain to maintain settlements at an immense expence of public money, and to confine herself to the purchase of their produce at an unreasonable price, and to the private detriment of individual consumers, and then to put it in the power of another country to purchase, with the manufactures of that country, the produce of such settlements, and to retail them afterwards in the British market. The mischiefs connected with that point alone are too obvious to be insisted on. It is farther to be observed, that trade is of so delicate a nature, that it is almost impossible to conjecture, how restraints either laid on, or taken off, will operate—that it is prudent to apprehend every evil, of which

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 39

which there is any probability, however distant—to fear the effect of a concession, the whole extent of which it is at least difficult to foresee—and that it is unnecessary to risk the consequences of the measure in question. The maintainers of these objections will add, that Great Britain was greatly benefited by being the depot of American, Asiatic, and African produce; and she has reason to expect, that she will still be so in a very considerable degree. The mere mercantile gain is an inconsiderable object, when compared with the various advantages of the exchange of commodities; with the value and quantity of industry, which the above system of trade diffuses throughout the community; with the employment given to an incredible number of people; with the various expences incurred from the time of the arrival, until the re-exportation of the commodities, in landing, storing, assorting, re-packing, portage, re-shipping, &c.; but above all, the increase of shipping, and of seamen. The value of trade is best ascertained by the quantity of employment and maintenance given to the industrious part of the community. In short, it would be entering into a wide field,

## 40 NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c.

field, to enumerate the various advantages which centered in this country, in consequence of the trade in question; besides the great object of freight, which is just as much a part of commerce as import and export. It cannot, therefore, be expected, that Great Britain should create and establish a dangerous competition for objects of such essential importance to her; and in a country, which has peculiar advantages, from situation and other circumstances, which she herself has not. It is highly proper, that Great Britain should encourage the manufactures and other trade of Ireland: but there is great difference between such conduct and changing her whole commercial and colonial system; encouraging the migration of men, capitals, and trade, with their mercantile knowledge, their steadiness of exertion, their industry, and talents for commerce, to produce an unequal competition against herself. Ireland has her advantages—let her enjoy them: Great Britain will readily adopt and promote any measure, by which she can benefit Ireland, without materially injuring herself: but she cannot reasonably be expected to embrace measures tending to divert the colonial trade, and to tear  
from

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 41

from her own merchants, and from her own people, all the beneficial security of an important branch of trade, which so peculiarly belongs to her; of which only she has made any reserve or exception; and on which her continuing to be the staple for colonial and foreign articles depends, and also her naval strength, her population, revenue, and public credit:—She has entirely relaxed all navigation and colonial principles in favour of Ireland, except the point in question. She communicated every other advantage of import and export of colonial articles to the sister kingdom; but wisely abstained from giving the power of importing them from Ireland into her own market. She has given to Ireland the liberty of supplying herself, and any part of the world that will admit Irish vessels, with the produce of the British colonies; and it is surely very unreasonable that she should not be allowed the exclusive right of supplying herself with her own colonial produce. She cannot, therefore, without being regardless of her essential interests, promote still farther the export of colonial articles from Ireland, and encourage the Irish, or, rather, the British  
G merchants,

## 42 NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c.

merchants, who would gradually remove their capitals, to speculate largely to her disadvantage: and unless Great Britain should yield the advantage in question, and thereby furnish a new and near market, it will not answer to Ireland to speculate considerably in articles for which she has not ready and certain customers. She will fear a superfluity; and instead of being a dangerous competitor with Great Britain in the trade in question, she will not very speedily import a sufficiency even for her own demand and consumption. If Ireland could become the entrepôt, in a considerable degree, for Europe, which would naturally happen, if allowed for Great Britain, she would get possession of those articles, and those advantages, which would supply capital:— She would have the capitals and credit of other countries to surpass the mother country; and as there would be then no difficulty in importing into this country from Ireland, whenever the market suited, the merchants of Britain would be encouraged to avail themselves of the peculiar situation of Ireland, to carry on the whole of their re-export trade through that country, and they would

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 43

would find means of supplying three fourths, perhaps, of their cargoes from thence. They would fix houses in Ireland, transmit capitals, and, by degrees, migrate thither themselves. The tobacco trade would inevitably settle in Ireland. The towns that have the re-export trade in Great Britain will loudly complain; and Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, &c. will foresee and feel the approaching loss of their present local and other advantages. Such are the speculations of Ireland in forming the present requisitions! Her object is to become the mart in Europe for the trade of America, for which she is so well suited by her western situation, immediately open to the ocean, and accessible almost with every wind; her vessels often crossing the Atlantic in a shorter time than the shipping of London require to clear the Channel. In addition, her ships can be victualled infinitely cheaper; and every necessary of life being low, as well as public taxes, the general charge of conducting trade will be proportionably less. In considering this matter, we should look forward to the period when Ireland shall have

## 44 NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c.

attained a much more significant commercial situation than her present, and be able to trade on as good a footing to the western world as England. She would, from her situation and advantages, supply Great Britain with American produce — The gain of Ireland, by such a measure, can result only from the loss of Great Britain.

Some farther observations, perhaps, are worthy the attention of the British merchant, the colonial proprietor, and the ostensible servants of the Crown. The two first classes, as respecting themselves; the latter, as having a reference to the Public. The vast sums that are due from the Colonies to the merchants of Great Britain, surely should be considered. That this extensive credit was given on the strength of laws now subsisting, and which have hitherto been deemed as part of the colonial constitution. — That any material deviation may destroy that confidence which their immediate and exclusive connection with this country has inspired, the basis on which their credit has hitherto been built, and the

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 45

the best security to this country for the payment of their debts.

The planters, or colonial proprietors, should also be induced to reflect on the consequences of any innovation, should it appear, that, as Ireland may import many of the articles which are produced in our colonies from other countries, some of those articles may, through that medium, be clandestinely introduced into Great Britain, and thereby deprive them of the very great advantage they now derive from the exclusive supply of this country. Besides, it may be suggested, that if any regulations take place, which tend to lessen the security of the creditor, that the merchants of Britain will immediately call in their debts, and in future refuse lending such sums as they have heretofore done; which is so essential to the welfare and prosperity of the Colonies, that it is the event which, of all others, they ought most to dread. So far the interest of individuals, or rather of some particular bodies of men may be affected, should the import of colonial and foreign articles be allowed into England from Ireland.

In

## 46 NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c.

In the important article of Revenue, great consequences also are to be expected; which, though interesting to every person, applies more immediately to those servants of the Crown who have the direction of the public treasure, and whose duty it is to find equitable and adequate supplies for the exigencies of the State. These official servants of the public should reflect seriously on the consequences which may accrue from the enormous frauds that may be introduced by this means, to the detriment of so interesting a branch of national resource, as the import duties on tobacco, wines, rum, and many other articles. Notwithstanding all the regulations and restrictions which can be devised, it may in a great measure counteract those useful and beneficial arrangements, which have lately been made for the prevention of smuggling; and which, we are told from the highest authority, have succeeded so well. Should such an alteration take place, it will hold out every encouragement for the revival of that baneful and destructive mode of traffic. As the duties on the importation of most articles are much higher in England than in Ireland, it will induce the fraudulent trader  
to

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 47

to run the risk of introducing them into this country, more particularly, as the proximity of the two islands, and the number of ports constantly open to them, will afford every convenience they can wish, either as to forming deposits for their goods, or the readiest means of bringing them over hither.

One other circumstance it may likewise be necessary to mention, as being more favourable to the smugglers than any thing they have ever yet experienced, namely, the security they will derive from an exemption from seizure, unless they happen to be taken in the act of landing their goods; which is not very probable, on so wide and extensive a coast: for in that case, their vessels will be permitted, in the ports of Ireland, to clear out for Great Britain, with those articles on board; and of course, being admissible here, they will be exempt from seizure on their whole passage, as well as on their approaching the coast, even in the Thames, protected by clearances; and should they be so closely watched at any time as not to have an opportunity of landing their goods clandestinely,  
or,

or, in the event of bad weather, being obliged to seek the shelter of some British harbour; in either of these cases they will remain secure, and can always save their vessels and cargoes by bringing them to an entry, and paying the duty on those particular goods, so that, in the event most unfavourable to them, they will be on a par with the fair trader.

The construction of the Navigation laws now contended for, is, perhaps, the only point in which the interests of the two countries seem separate and distinct; and if Ireland did not expect great benefit, she would not so strenuously urge the claim; but this given up, England could not pretend to a competition with her in time to come. The matter in question indeed seems so self evident, that no man of the least commercial knowledge, who has talents or abilities to form an accurate idea on the subject, can hesitate in declaring the measure a blow, perhaps, but certain poison, to the commerce, manufactures, and population of Great Britain. In short, it is not the business of Great Britain to encourage the migration

gration of her merchants and people to situations of greater convenience, where all the articles of trade and manufactures are so completely unburdened. England in half a century would find herself more hurt than she has been by all her debts and all her taxes.

The advantage in question, is necessary to counterbalance the advantages of Ireland, and preserve an equality with her. The burdens of the country, and, above all, the taxes on the inland and foreign commerce, sufficiently counterbalance all local advantages which arise from the habits, and the manners of Great Britain. It is essential, that the capitals and trade of the empire should not center in that part which does not contribute to the expences of it. The point in question would give to Ireland all the advantages of an union, without her taking upon her, any of the disadvantages. Ireland does not at present dispute in which of the countries the seat of empire shall be; but that question would be as reasonable, and not of more consequence than the present. The affectation of saying that

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it is a point of no consequence, but that it will quiet Ireland, can only mislead the most ignorant or the most thoughtless. We do not in general observe, that malecontents, or people dissatisfied with or without reason, are apt to be quieted by unsubstantial favours. Ireland, indeed, has not been satisfied with great concessions. But if it were in truth a point of no consequence, those who urge it, are endeavouring to deceive the people of Ireland, and to prevail upon Great Britain to be accessory to the deceit. If it were in truth an unsubstantial favour, those who state it as such will cheerfully receive the refusal of it. It should not even be admitted, that the point remains to be settled — It is settled — It is a fixed principle, the most necessary to support Britain — It is the foundation on which her prosperity depends.

Besides these general objections, Great Britain has another of no small consequence. In the American and West-India trade, the great difficulty has been, and will be, to obtain payment for merchandize. The principal mode of payment has been, and must

## NAVIGATION ACT, &amp;c. 51

must be, by the produce of America and the Islands. If that produce should be admitted into this country through Ireland, much of it will go there in payment for provisions of several kinds, linen, woollens, and various articles of manufactures and cloathing. By so much as Ireland shall take of that produce to re-export into this country or elsewhere, to that amount will England lose of the best, and, in some cases, only mode of payment from America and the Islands; and Ireland, instead of paying England as heretofore, will send those very articles to her, by which alone she could expect to be paid by America for merchandize sent there. Other objections to the expectations of Ireland in this point will arise in multitudes; these are glaring and obvious. The depreciation of landed estates, and the ruin of stockholders, and of public credit, would be among the certain and inevitable consequences of such a concession; and however strong the declaration may appear, it is demonstrable, that an absolute and entire separation of the two countries would be less pernicious to the interests of Britain. If these objections appeared even less solid,



if they were but doubtful, or possibly in some degree founded on prejudice or jealousy, still any Minister would be hardy indeed, who should overlook them. On the other hand, it will be false patriotism to disquiet the two countries on a point, which one is not likely to yield, which the other has no rightful claim to press or insist on; which is not necessary to her, having already more ways of employing her capitals and people, and of growing rich, than she or any country now, or ever is likely to avail itself of; considering at the same time, that great concessions have already been made, and that others are still asked which are more reasonable, and more likely to be obtained, and not so prejudicial to Great Britain.

It is obvious, that the claim in question equally relates to East India goods; and it has been said in the Parliament of Ireland, that as she gives a monopoly of her consumption to the East-India Company, and takes from her in value to the amount of 350,000l. yearly, which is more than any other country, except Great Britain, she should be supplied

plied in the same manner, and have equal advantages. The Indiamen should have liberty to land their cargoes in Ireland; the Company should have warehouses, and attend their customers there. The India goods imported into Ireland, should be warehoused without duty, with a power of exporting to Britain; a fixed number of outward-bound Indiamen should visit Ireland, and there take their out cargo, and such manufactures for which there is a demand in Asia, &c. &c. &c.

The answer is, that Ireland has no better claims on the India Company, than she has on any other company of merchants in London; that she has East-India commodities as cheap, or cheaper, from the Company, than she could have them from any other quarter. She has no better claim to be waited on, and her manufactures taken from her door, than Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, Quebec, Halifax, &c. The remains of our Norman dominions have an equal right to the same advantages; and Jersey and Guernsey may equally claim to be waited on, and to see India ships in their ports. The charges of the transport of India goods to the distant

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parts of this kingdom, are fully as great as to the ports of Ireland; and the consumers in those distant parts pay heavy duties on these very articles, which go towards the expences of the empire, consequently towards the expence of maintaining the India trade, to which Ireland contributes nothing; for whatever duties are paid by the consumers in Ireland, go to the revenue of that country.

Besides the above, the objections to this claim are generally the same as to the other, for admission of colonial or foreign produce from Ireland: they are not the objections of the Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, but the objections of the people of Great Britain. — The restraints are as much against the Company as against Ireland; the Company might victual her ships cheaper there, and might have several advantages, by a direct intercourse between her factories and Ireland; but it would be inconsistent with the interest of England, and nearly in the same manner as already shewn on the subject of the other claim.

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The Great *Reciprocal* Commercial arrangement between Britain and Ireland, of which we have heard so much, consists, as we have reason to believe, of all, or most, of these expectations on the part of Ireland: how the reciprocity is likely to arise, does not appear; but the American treaty, although not quite so strong a case as this may prove, is the precedent on which to found pretensions. At least, these are the difficulties; — the sooner they are determined the better. Great Britain has to lament at this day, that so many great points have been conceded, without having this material one properly arranged; which, undoubtedly, in the years 1780 and 1782, she might have settled in her own way. We have now only to hope, that ministers will have the wisdom to determine this, and every other point, firmly and decidedly; so that Ireland may settle to industry, and that no commercial question may be again permitted to arise between the countries. Without such resolution, any discussion of the subject would be folly. The whole seems ultimately to rest on the expediency. The people of Great Britain think that Ireland is in the habit of making

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making successful requisitions, and that Great Britain is in the habit of inconsiderate concessions. The feeble Administrations of England, to avoid the mere difficulty of the day, are fond of expedients. The country has reason to be tired of them; it is time she should support herself; and there is not only more dignity, but policy, in firmness.

END OF PART I.

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The Second Part will soon be published.