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CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
TRADE TO AFRICA.

TOGETHER WITH
A PROPOSAL for securing the BENEFITS
thereof to this NATION.

For Fixing and Ascertaining the Capital Stock of
the ROYAL AFRICAN COMPANY of ENGLAND.

For Uniting the CREDITORS and PROPRIETORS
thereof in One Joint, or Common Interest.

For raising the Sum of Two Hundred Thousand
Pounds to be employed in the Trade and Service
of that Corporation.

And (by Means of a Parliamentary Allowance) for
Establishing their AFFAIRS, both at Home and Abroad,
upon a SOLID and LASTING FOUNDATION.

In a LETTER to a Noble LORD:

With whom that PROPOSAL was left for his Consideration
the last Year, but with no Sort of Intention that it should
ever appear in PRINT.

AND

A POSTSCRIPT:

Containing, amongst other Things,
The AUTHOR's REASONS for Publishing the same
AT THIS TIME.

By Mr. O'CONNOR.

'The Goodness of every Thing is measured by its End and
Ufe.'

TILL.

LONDON:

Printed for J. BARNES, at the London-Gazette, Charing-Cross.

M.DCC.XLIX.

Price One Shilling 1



CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

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A LETTER to a Noble LORD.

My LORD,

LONDON, Aug. 10, 1747.



N all complicated and difficult Affairs, wherein the Publick Interest is found concerned, or which stand in need of being amended, or redressed; the Countenance and Protection of some great Man of Parts, and proper Ability, is always necessary; and that false, or fallacious Arguments, may not mislead his Judgment, or impose upon his Understanding, he should be void of all Prejudice, and well qualified to draw fair and equitable Conclusions from the Matters and Things submitted to his Consideration.—But, my Lord, there are few of our Nobility whose Education will allow them sufficient Time to be rightly instructed in the Niceties which attend the different Branches of our Trade and Commerce.

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If I was not sensible that the Subject would prove very disagreeable to your Lordship, I might, in this Place, be allowed the Liberty of enlarging upon the Topick of your extensive Knowledge, accompanied with that agreeable and happy Turn of Mind, which is so distinguishable throughout the whole Scope of your Conversation.—But, my Lord, I shall decline trespassing on that Score, and, without further Digression, endeavour, according to the best of my weak Capacity, to lay down some general Heads concerning the Trade to *Africa*; and take Occasion, at the same Time, to treat, in a more particular Manner, of the Means for recovering and preserving it; which, when your Lordship shall have duly examined and considered, you will be pleased to communicate to the Ministry, recommended in such Manner as the Facts shall appear consistent with your own Sense of the Reasonableness and Justice of the several Propositions contained in the following Sheets. But to proceed.

WHEN the Merits of the *African* Company's Petition was debated in the House of Commons, some short Time before the last Dissolution, a Right Hon. Gentleman there, for whom I have the highest Esteem, expressed his Desire that some proper Scheme or Proposal for settling the Affairs of this Company should be prepared for the Consideration of Parliament at their next Meeting; it being then too late,
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in that Session, to afford the Petitioners any Aid or Assistance whatever.

CONFORMABLE to that Declaration, and agreeable to my own Desire of being, in any Shape, serviceable to our commercial Interest, I applied my Thoughts towards examining into the real Cause, why a Company of the greatest national Use of any now subsisting amongst us, should not prosper, and draw considerable Advantages to themselves, from the Trade and Settlements they stand possessed of; being withal from some Experience, and the common Reason of Things, convinced, that if the Prejudices, which prevailed against them, could be traced, and laid open to impartial View, proper Remedies might be found out, and applied, for restoring this useful Corporation to its former Vigour, Strength and Utility.

BUT before I enter upon the necessary Means for attaining this End, and for securing effectually the Benefits of that Trade to the Nation, it will not, I presume, be improper for me, in the first Place, to lay before your Lordship a brief State of the Rise and Progress of that Trade, and of all the different Pretensions, which, from the Beginning, had been form'd by our own, as well as by other Nations, in order to secure a Share and Property therein: And this Method, my Lord, will save you the Trouble of minute Examinations into the Writings and Compositions
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of such Persons as have already, on various Occasions, treated on the Subject-Matter before us.

THE first Accounts, therefore, that we are furnished with, of Ships being fitted out from *England*, for the Coast of *Guiney*, was about the latter End of the Reign of King *Edw. VI.* when the *Portuguese* (at that Time the most considerable Navigators in *Europe*) were possessed of all the Settlements there, and, as first Discoverers, claimed the sole Right and Property to that entire Trade; by Virtue whereof, they took and confiscated all the foreign Ships and Vessels which fell into their Hands: The *English*, nevertheless, being from their natural Genius, and enterprising Temper, fond of new Adventures, would sometimes hazard all in visiting and frequenting that Coast.

IN the Reign of Queen *Mary*, and in the Beginning of the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, divers other Adventurers also undertook those difficult and precarious Voyages.

QUEEN *Elizabeth*, in the Year 1585, granted a Patent for a Term of Years, to several of her Subjects, for extending, and improving that Trade, with Prohibition to all others, from trafficking to any of the Ports, or Places, from the most Northern Part of the River *Senegal*, to the most Southern Part of the River *Gambia*; but as the *English* Nation, in those early Days, were

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were not in Possession of any Settlements in the *West-Indies*, and therefore in no Want of Negroes, their Traffick to the Coast of *Guiney*, was confined to the native Commodities of that Country only, such as Gold-Dust, Ivory, Dying-Woods, &c.

IN the two succeeding Reigns, and during the Usurpation, some of our Merchants, were in like Manner encouraged to trade with other Parts of *Africa*; but all their Endeavours to protect themselves against the many Hazards and Difficulties which daily occurred, proved ineffectual; until at length, being from their own, as well as the Experience of past Times, convinced, that it was a Thing impossible for them to succeed in this Commerce, without Forts and Settlements, they erected a Fort at *Cormantine*, on the Gold-Coast, and another on the River *Gambia*, on the North-Coast, which were the only Places of Strength possessed by the *English* in *Africa*, at the Time of the Restoration.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the Encouragement which had been given by the *English* Government to public Societies for the Improvement of this Trade, yet such was the Spirit of Envy, added to the Temptation and Hope of Gain, which, in those Times, prevailed here at Home, that several Merchants, in their private and abstracted Capacities, frequently fitted out Ships for the Coast of *Guiney*, from whence those Adventurers

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venturers obtained the Name of Interlopers; an Appellation, long since set aside, or rather exchanged for a softer Term, as that of the separate Traders.

A *West-India* Company, with exclusive Privileges, extensive Powers, and a large Capital Stock, having been, in the Year 1621, established by Charter in *Holland*, they equipped and sent out a considerable Armament for the Coast of *Guiney*, determined (tho' at that Time in Peace with *Portugal*) to acquire, at all Events, a Share in that Trade: Nor were they wanting, but upon different Principles from the *English*, to execute their Purpose with Diligence and Success; for without any sort of Ceremony or Delicacy, concerning the equitable Part of such an arbitrary Proceeding, they indiscriminately fell upon the *Portuguese* Settlements, and, in the End, became Masters of the greatest Part of them; which illegal Conquest they retained in their own Hands, until the whole was afterwards, in the Year 1641, granted to them by Treaty with the Crown of *Portugal*.

IN this Situation, my Lord, Matters stood with respect to the Interest and Pretensions of all the contending Parties for Power on the Coast of *Africa*, in the very Infancy, as it were, of our *American* Colonies; when his Majesty King *Charles II.* at the Instigation of his Brother the Duke of *York*, granted a Patent, with ample

ample exclusive Privileges, to a Company of Royal Adventurers, for the further and more certain Security of that Trade. But the *Dutch*, by Vertue of their Charter, and in Consequence of the Possession which they had by Force wrested from the *Portuguese*, as above, pretended to claim the sole and absolute Property of, and in that Trade from the Tropic of *Cancer*, to the Cape of *Good-hope*, or from Cape *Palmas*, to Cape *Lopez*, comprehending the Gold-Coast, and *Whydah*, being an Extent of about 500 Leagues; and without paying the least Regard, either to the Establishment, or to the Acquisitions of the *English*, who as we have seen, had, in Truth, and beyond all Contradiction, a prior Right to them both as to Possession and Trade; they exercised many Violences, and committed great Disorders in Support of such their ill-got Title; having for that Purpose, employed a sufficient Number of stout Cruizers to seize and confiscate our Shipping, with a View to engross this whole Trade, into their own Hands, and to exclude the *English* from having any Share, or Interest therein.

THOSE unwarrantable Attempts and Proceedings, drew the serious Attention of the *British* Ministry, in the End, towards the State of Affairs on the Coast of *Africa*. The King ordered Remonstrances to be made in the strongest Terms for Satisfaction to the injured Merchants, whose Loss, on that Occasion, amount-
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mounted to between 6, or 700,000*l*. The *Dutch*, nevertheless regardless of all that was urged, or offered, grew rather more outrageous, and carried their Depredations to a great Excess. *De Ruyter*, their Admiral, with a Squadron of Men of War, attacked the *English* Shipping and Settlements in *Africa*, and threw all the Men they could meet with there into loathsome Prisons. This Proceeding, not only alarmed, but highly incensed the Nation; and that Trade being then considered as an Object of too much Importance, to the Prosperity and Welfare of this Realm, and of our Plantations in *America*, to be neglected, or suffered tamely to pass into the Hands of such dangerous and powerful Competitors; his said Majesty, after a tedious and fruitless Negotiation for Redress of Grievances, and in Compliance with an Address of both Houses of Parliament, found himself, at length, necessitated to declare War against the States General of the United Provinces, and accordingly, on the 22d of *February*, 1664-5, War was declared in Form against them.

AND afterwards it appearing that the Company so established as aforesaid, had sustained heavy Losses, and had been great Sufferers by the War, by Captures and otherwise, and therefore became incapable of surmounting the many Difficulties which fell to their Share; they, in Consideration of a certain Sum of Money, agreed to be paid them by a Set of new Adventurers, did surrender their Charter to
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the Crown, and transferred their Interest and Property in *Africa*, and elsewhere, to the new Company; his Majesty, the better to secure the Rights and Properties of his People to that Trade, and in Justice to the Sufferings of the old Company, approved and accepted of those Conditions; and by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of *England*, bearing Date the 27th of *September*, 1672, did erect and establish the present Royal *African* Company, and did give and grant to them, and to their Successors, for the Term of One Thousand Years:

ALL and singular the Lands, Coasts, Countries, Havens, Roads, Rivers, and other Places in *Africa*, from the Port of *Sally* in South *Barbary*, to the Cape of *Good-Hope*, with the sole, entire, and only Trade and Traffic into, and from, those Countries and Places; with strict Prohibition to all other his Subjects, to visit or frequent the same, without the Licence and Consent of the Company first had and obtained; with such further Powers as were then judged necessary and expedient for enabling and encouraging them to build Forts, and to enlarge and extend their Trade for the common Benefit of these Kingdoms.

THE Company thus established, laid out considerable Sums of Money; in renewing Alliances with the *African* Chiefs; in purchasing Fort *Fredericksburgh* from the *Danes*; in Repairs; in additional new Works; in Manning
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their Forts and Settlements, and in furnishing the same with Merchandizes, Stores, and all other necessary Materials; nor were they at any Time wanting to exert the utmost of their Strength and Power, in securing the Benefits of this Trade to the Nation, and in preserving their own indubitable Rights on that Coast.

THE *French*, in 1673, erected a *Senegal* Company for trading to *Africa*; and they, after the Example of the *Dutch*, pretended to claim all that Part of the Coast, which extends from Cape *Blanco*, to the River *Gambia*, being more than 500 Miles in Length; and in the Year 1681, they attempted to hinder the Royal *African* Company's Ships from trading there; but not being then in a Condition to contest that Point, they dropped their Pretensions until the Year 1685, when they renew'd the same against our *African* Company, and the Possessions they had acquir'd on that Coast; from which Time they frequently interrupted our Commerce, until at last a War broke out between the two Nations.

It would be endless, my Lord, to enumerate the many Obstacles which were thrown in the Way of the *English African* Company, and the Losses they sustained both before and after this War, and during the Course of their tedious

ous Struggles with the *Dutch*; the Chiefest of all was the Loss of their principal Fort in the River *Gambia*, which was taken in 1695, by a Squadron of *French* Men of War, and the Fortifications demolished and razed to the Ground; yet notwithstanding all their Disappointments, they, by Means of another Fort on *James* Island in the same River, and of divers Factories which they had established a great Way up on both Sides thereof, fortified and maintained themselves so well, and improved and extended their Commerce so effectually, that they became qualified to supply the *British* Colonies and Plantations in *America*, with large Quantities of Negroes, at a very cheap Rate, and their Affairs in general, all Things consider'd, were in a thriving Condition, when the *British* separate Traders, grown envious of the Company's Success, and then no longer in the same Danger, as formerly, of being molested on that Coast, flocked in far greater Numbers than ever to the *African* Markets; and by supplying the same with large Assortments of our *European* Commodities, they, by that Means, broke in upon all the Measures which had been concerted for the Benefit and Advantage of the Company.

HENCE it arose, that the Price of Negroes (a Commodity which, in this Process of Time, became useful and valuable to the Cultivation and Improvement of our *American* Colonies) was,

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was, to a surprizing Degree, enhanced on all Sides : That the Goods and Merchandizes, which lay ready for Barter or Sale, in the Company's Warehouses Abroad, were, by being kept long on Hand, either damaged, or oftentimes sold to great Disadvantage ; that the Company reaped only in Part the Profits which they might otherwise reasonably have expected from the Fruits of their long Labour, Hazard, and Expence : And, in a Word, that after all, they were left to consider whether, in Fact, they sustained more real Injury and Damage in their Dealings and Commerce on the Coast of *Africa*, from the *Dutch* and *French*, their avowed Enemies and Competitors, or from the separate Traders, their domestick Rivals, Countrymen, and Fellow-Subjects.

FROM this short, and impartial Review of the State of the *African* Trade, it appears unquestionably evident, that the *British* Commerce to that Coast, was altogether dangerous, precarious, and very uncertain ; and must have been inevitably lost to the Nation, if these Forts and Castles had not been erected, supported, and duly maintained ; and also, that from this ungenerous Treatment of the separate Traders, in breaking in upon the Rights and Privileges of the Company, without having contributed One Shilling towards the Expence of the Settlements, arises all their Misfortunes, and is, in Reality, the sole Cause of their present

sent low Condition, and the chief Reason why they stand in need of any Aid, or other Assistance, from Parliament.

As to what particularly followed, in reference to the Contest which the Encroachment of the separate Traders occasioned between the Company and themselves, or concerning their Disputes about Monopoly, exclusive Privileges, and the like ; or for or concerning the Reason which induced the Parliament to lay that Trade subject to a Duty of 10 *l. per Cent. ad valorem*, open for the Space of 13 Years ; these Matters being too copious for my present Purpose, I shall, in a great Measure, pass them over in Silence, and resume the Consideration of Things as they relate only to the immediate Design which I have in Hand.

IT is, I find, an established Fact, agreed upon by every experienced Judge of Commerce, that the Trade to *Africa*, properly supported, would be, of all others, the most beneficial to this Nation ; because the Exports consist wholly of *British* Manufactures, which maintain the People, and of *India* Goods, the Use whereof are prohibited here ; and the Returns are made entirely either in Negroe Labourers, without which the Colonies and Plantations in *America*, and all the Benefits with respect to the Revenue, Navigation, Manufactures, &c. arising from the Trade to the *West-Indies*, must soon be

be lost; or in Gold, Ivory, Dying-Woods, Bees-Wax, and such like valuable Commodities, which we cannot do without.

BEFORE the extream Intervention of the separate Traders, and the Suspension of the Company's exclusive Privilege in the Year 1697, by Parliament, they, as appears evident from authentic Papers, and Accounts of undoubted Credit, dealt considerably in all those Articles, having introduced sundry Sorts of our *English* Manufactures into their Settlements abroad, for the Use and Consumption of the Natives; and, amongst other Things, brought home, in Lieu thereof, a larger Quantity of Gold than had been ever known, or imported before: But from that Period of Time, down to this, the Company's Affairs have generally declined, in-somuch that the necessary Charge of their Forts and Settlements (chiefly borne for so long a Course of Years at their own Expence) hath not only totally exhausted their Trading Stock, but also occasioned their incurring a Debt of about 100,000 *l.* which now actually subsists, and stands out against them.

WHILST this last heavy Incumbrance remains (which as the Trade is left free and open, must be the Case, until the Parliament shall agree to settle an Allowance upon the Company, adequate to the Charge of supporting the Forts or Settlements, or that some other

other Provision shall be made for them, &c.) it will be found impracticable to retrieve their Affairs, or engage any Sett of Merchants or money'd Men, how well soever otherwise inclined, to unite with them for the Improvement and Enlargement of this Trade, to the Degree or Extent it requires, and is capable of; or even to subscribe towards raising a Stock upon any Conditions, until all their just Debts and Demands shall, in the first Place, be paid and satisfied; several Essays and Experiments having for those particular Purposes been already made, but without the least Success or Effect.

THE *Dutch* and *French*, we find, being from Experience made sensible of the many national and private Advantages arising from this Trade, have, by sundry Bounties, Exemptions, and Privileges, encouraged and supported their *West-India*, and *African* Companies, so liberally, that their Colonies have been greatly improved, and their Subjects enriched thereby; whilst our Interest and Credit on the *Gold-Coast* has sunk and daily declined, in Proportion as the Company languished and lost Ground: Thus there was not, for some considerable Time before the Commencement of the present War, one fourth Part of the Ships and Vessels engaged in Trade on that Coast, that used formerly to be employed by us therein; for as the Welfare of the *French* Colonies then, through wise and prudent Management, grown opulent and flourishing, depended altogether upon their being well

were supplied with Negroes from those parts; so they not only secured a powerful Interest amongst the Natives, where the Companies Settlements lie, but also made several illegal Attempts, and open Infringements, on their Trade and Property there; more particularly at *Anamahoe*, the most considerable Mart for the choicest *Blacks*; where, as well as at *Whydah*, they, by dint of Power, Application, new Alliances, and the under-selling our People in their Goods and Merchandizes, so largely contributed to enhance the Price of Negroes, that the *British* Traders could seldom afford to deal in them; but (as the Company was in no Condition to curb the Progress of the *French*) were under the Necessity of repairing to the *Bight of Angola* and *Calabar*, where a worse Sort only of these Labourers are to be had.

THAT Method of proceeding constantly protracts the Voyages of our Traders, frequently occasions Sickness, and often a Mortality amongst their Negroes; which consequently brings a heavy Charge upon the Back of even the most indifferent, and the most ordinary Sort of them to Market; to the great Detriment and Disadvantage of the *British* Subjects throughout the Extent of all our *American* Colonies, but more particularly to that of the Sugar Planters, whose Hardships, in that Case alone, abstracted from all other Considerations, require the speedy Interposition of the Legislative Authority; that so by passing some salutary Law

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Law for the Recovery and Preservation of this important Branch of the *African* Trade, the Price of Negroes may be reduced, and not suffered continually to increase upon their Hands; when Numbers of these invaluable Subjects (who cannot, as Matters now stand, with respect to burthensome Taxes, the high Price of Labour, heavy Duties, and the bad Condition of their Plantations, support themselves) will be diverted from prosecuting a destructive Scheme, which, of late Years, has dwelt warmly upon their Minds and Hearts; I mean, that of quitting their present Possessions in *America*, to go in Search of new Establishments amongst the Settlements of our Rivals and Competitors; where, doubtless, they will meet with Encouragement adequate to the additional Strength and Advantages which they shall carry along with them, and to the just Value that all wise Governments should evermore put upon such beneficial Acquisitions.

THIS Affair, your Lordship will perceive, is of a dangerous Tendency, and ought not to be overlook'd, deem'd chimerical, or treated with Indifference. For the Truth of the Case before us is, that several of our *West-India* Merchants and Planters, have already taken the pernicious Step of purchasing Plantations in the *Dutch* Settlements at *Barbacie*, and at *Isquebe*, adjoining to *Surinam*, on the Continent of *South America*; and that others are, in reality, preparing to follow their Example. A sad

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Consideration this! to see these industrious People forced into the Arms of Strangers, from whose Bounty they are to receive far better Encouragement than their own Mother-Country would bestow on them. May we not, my Lord, expect from the Attention, Vigilance, and Rivalship of the *French*, who seldom lose Sight of their own proper Interest, or the Means of forwarding and promoting it, that they will, so soon as Peace shall be restored, encourage the *British* Sugar-Planters to remove and settle in their Colonies also? more especially if they should remain possessed of *St. Lucia*, and the other adjacent *neutral Islands*?

BEFORE I depart from this Subject, I must beg Leave to trespass a little upon your Lordship's Patience, by observing further, that all the Evils and Mischiefs arising from the Decay of this most valuable Part of the *African* Trade, from the high Price of Negroes in the Plantations, from the Secession of the *American* Planters, and from the unhappy Circumstances of the Company, is not more the Work of Care and Precaution in our Enemy, as the same is owing to our own unaccountable Indifference and Neglect. 1st, In not supporting a Commerce of such great Weight and Consequence, in a Manner, equal to the Worth and Value thereof. 2dly, In being deluded with erroneous, and false Notions, concerning the Method to be observed, for the Preservation of it. 3dly, In having been amused and diverted from the main Object, by the en-

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envious Clamours of the separate Traders, against the Company, without duly observing, that those Disputes, in themselves, are of no Consequence at all, it being the same Thing to the Nation, what Set of *English* Subjects shall prosper, by serving their Country, in the Improvement of this, or even any other Trade; those only being preferable, who are most likely to carry that important Point best into Execution. 4thly, In suffering ourselves, for Want of furnishing the necessary public Supply for that Purpose, to be deprived of the natural Benefits, and just Rights, which, by Priority, and as principal Proprietors, we ought to enjoy from the Effects of our extensive Settlements on that Coast. And 5thly, in permitting the *French* to settle under our very Nose, upon the most valuable Part of our legal Estate and Possession in *Africa*; by which, we not only render our Title to that Trade disputable, precarious, and uncertain, but we also, at the same Time, make those Encroachments of the *French* advantageous, in all Points, to their own Dealings and Commerce, both at Home, and Abroad.

I am not insensible, my Lord, that foreign Trade, by the Improvements and Increase of the *Spanish West-Indies*, of the *Portuguese* Settlements, of the *Dutch* and *French* Colonies, and of our own Plantations in *America*, is become more extensive and general; wherefore those Labourers are more wanted, in greater Use, and must for that Reason be much dearer

dearer at these several Markets. But granting all this, and as much more as can be urged on that Side of the Question, yet it must, on the other Hand, be allowed, that, if the same Encouragement had been given by the *British* Nation in Support of this Trade, which our Rivals and Competitors have all along drawn for their Aid and Assistance, the Superiority which they, by that Means, have gained and acquired over us on the *Gold-Coast*, would infallibly have been vested in us; when our Colonies could not have failed of being, at this Day, in a most flourishing Condition; the industrious Planters would, in that Case, have been in no Danger of removing with their Stock to foreign Settlements; the *African* Company's Affairs would have been in a prosperous Way; the separate Traders from Custom, Use, and the natural Equity of Things, must have stood contented with their Share in that Traffic, and, without any manner of Exaggeration, the best Sort of Negroes would be sold now, in the *British* Plantations, for less than half the Price they actually bear there.

By this State and Deduction of Things, we see the Danger to which our Interest in that Commerce stands exposed. We have powerful Rivals to contend with, who, as soon as their Hands are free, will not fail to streighten and distress us on all Sides. Our *African* Forts and Settlements have, of late Years, been most miserably supported, and remain still in a ruinous Condition, ready to

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be abandoned for want of Repair, Men, Stores, and Necessaries of all Sorts: The most valuable Part of this Trade, is in the greatest Danger of being entirely lost to the Nation, and the Company's Credit quite destroyed; the good Intelligence and friendly Correspondence that formerly subsisted between them, and the Natives, is now interrupted and broke in upon; nor are they, without the immediate and effectual Assistance of the Legislature, in any Shape qualified to retrieve, or regain it.

THE Guardians and Conservators therefore, of the *British* Liberties and Properties, if they are not already sufficiently convinced of the Necessity the Nation lies under to restore and preserve the entire Benefits of this Trade, cannot, in my humble Opinion, bestow a Part of their Time better, than by examining carefully into the Merits of that whole Affair. But, my Lord, I must presume to say, that if this Enquiry be not undertaken early in a Session of Parliament, before the current Supplies are voted, the Event will shew, that the same Fate, which has, for several Years past, attended all other Applications of this kind, will also fall to the Share of that now proposed. But, if this necessary Work shall be entered upon, with that Candour and Strictness, which a Matter of such high Moment requires, all that is wanting towards the Recovery of our Property in this Trade, will follow, and be most certainly accomplished: For from the Nature of those Proceedings, the House cannot fail of being

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ied into a right Understanding of the Errors and Mistakes which have been committed both as to the saving Doctrine of the public Money, and the temporary Expedients, that have, from Year to Year, been made use of, to prevent the *African* Company's receiving any Allowance, or annual Appointment, from Parliament.

IN the Course of those Deliberations, wherein all particular Prejudice, will be laid aside, Gentlemen cannot fail of being furnished with a fair Occasion of forming and fixing upon some judicious and proper Method (if that which I am about to propose, shall be deemed wanting, or insufficient) for the Preservation and future Improvement of this Commerce; because the Merits of the whole national Interest and Concern therein, will fall under their Cognizance; and for that they may from the Testimony of impartial and experienced Merchants, receive full and ample Satisfaction, touching all these Matters and Things: When it will demonstrably appear, that this Trade can never be recovered and supported as it ought to be, in the Way we are in at present, nor at any Time, without the Assistance of Forts, Castles, and Settlements, properly maintained at the public Expence, and supported by a large Joint Trading Stock. That the separate Traders cannot secure the Benefits thereof to the Nation, or pretend to remove the Impediments which obstruct the Prosperity of the *British* Colonies in *America*, or contribute to the Relief

lief of the Sugar Planters, so as to reduce the Price of Negroes, and thereby prevent those meritorious People from withdrawing with their moveable Stock to foreign Settlements: That it is an Office altogether incompatible, as well as inconsistent with the Occupation or Calling of Persons, whose Thoughts and Attentions must be always employed and taken up in the constant Exercise and Pursuit of their own particular and private Traffick, to oppose or disconcert the secret and open Attempts of the *Dutch* and *French West-India*, and *African* Companies.

IF these Things are so, (than which nothing can be more certain) the Force of all the Arguments that have, or may be offered in Favour of preferring the Interest of the separate Traders, to the general Welfare of the whole Community, must cease and fall to the Ground: I say, therefore, my Lord, that agreeable to sound Policy, and the right Reason of Things, the Result of such an Enquiry must, in one Shape or another, provide for the Recovery, and future Support, of this Trade; in which Case, the Nation will regain its former Superiority on the Coast of *Guinea*, and will soon feel the good Effects arising from so wise and so happy a Change.

THE supporting of this Commerce, in that Manner, will sufficiently distress the *French* Colonies, and beat them in Point of the Negroe

groce Traffic on the *Gold Coast* and at *Gambia*; otherwise they must hold the Ballance, and be the perpetual Mart for Sugar and Indigo; as they will be industrious to improve and increase their Shipping and Seamen, the better to keep Possession of all the Advantages which they have gained over us in that Trade. But as the Profits arising therefrom to *Great-Britain* are at this Time solely vested in the Hands of the separate Traders, who, by Custom and Indulgence, claim an unbounded Property thereto; so it must be expected that they will, according to Custom, strenuously oppose all Change of Measures; being sensible, that any Variation in that Commerce must interfere with their own private Purposes, and break in upon the darling System established amongst them. We may expect, therefore, that the usual Cry against relieving the *African* Company, will be revived and sounded from that Quarter in the Ears of Parliament, whenever they shall set about to rectify or new-model that Trade.

BUT whoever considers this Affair impartially, cannot but condemn the Conduct of those Gentlemen in that respect, both with regard to the eminent past Services of the Company, and to the national Interest and Concern in that Traffic: For though it be readily allowed and acknowledged, that Merchants of all Denominations, or Traders to foreign Parts, merit our utmost Regard and Esteem,

Esteem, yet this I take to be conditional only, when their Dealings and Commerce are circumscribed by Rules of Justice; and not when, at any Rate, they use their utmost Efforts to oppose the equitable Measures of other People, or infringe upon their Properties, with a sordid Intent of enriching themselves by preferring a transient, present, great Gain, to a long Train of certain, and durable Advantages.

THE Public, my Lord, will, in the End, be obliged to settle this Trade upon the Basis of some parliamentary Plan; when a large Latitude of Commerce will be opened and extended for the Benefit of the separate Traders (in Case they have to do with no other domestic Rivals than the *African* Company;) wherein, from the vast Transactions that must necessarily be carried on with the native *Africans*, with (in due and proper Time) the *Spanish West-Indies*, the *Brazils*, and with our own Settlements and Colonies abroad, they will find a constant and profitable Employment, without doing the least Injury or Injustice to the Property of their Neighbour; and by cultivating, preferable to all other Methods, a good Understanding with the Company, their mutual Interests, under proper Regulations, may be made subservient to each other.

FRANCE will then, and not before, stand deprived of the Advantages which her Subjects may enjoy from having engrossed the

as the Company will set due Bounds to all their Encroachments, by compelling them to withdraw out of the Limits of our legal Possessions, which they have usurped, and whereby alone they are become formidable and dangerous to the *British* Interest and Commerce on the Coast of *Guinea*.

LET us now, my Lord, examine what Care and Precaution the *Dutch* and *French* Governments have taken to avoid the Evil which we have fallen into; and to render their own Schemes, for the Preservation of that Trade, safe and effectual.

THE *Dutch West-India* Company, besides the Benefit of an exclusive Trade, receive annually, for their Support and Maintenance, by Bounties and Duties, the Sum of } 24,000 l.

AND the *French African* Company, with the same Advantages, and by Bounties and Abatement of Duties on their Plantation Products, have, *per Annum*, upwards of } 44,600 l.

By those Accounts, my Lord, we see a wide Disparity between our Way of judging and acting with respect to the Method of supporting the *African* Trade, compared with the

the measures instituted for that Purpose, by such our powerful Competitors.

BOTH these foreign Companies, over and above the annual Allowances allotted for their Support, are possessed of the sole Benefits of that Commerce; have no private Traders, saving such as are furnished with Licences from them, to contend with; are clear of all Incumbrances, and stand well qualified to exert their Power and Affluence amongst the native *Africans*.

OUR *African* Company, on the contrary, has no settled Appointment: They are not only greatly indebted, but in want of a Trading Stock: Nor can they afford to keep even the bare Possession of their Forts and Castles, much less to secure any Interest or Advantage to themselves from their Commerce; and the Trade itself is left free and open for the *British* Subjects in general.

FROM a cursory View of Affairs taken in this Light, one might be induced to conclude, that either we are Strangers to the Maxims, and true Springs of Trade, or that our Rivals are superior to us in Skill and Judgment, as to the Manner of improving and conducting of it.

THE Strength of the Argument, from the Effect of Things, as they appear thus clearly before

before us, is most certainly against us; and from hence we are, at first Sight, furnished with sufficient Matter to attract and raise our Admiration; more especially as our Conduct, in that most interesting and essential Point, is altogether inconsistent with the high Character we do, or ought to bear as a Trading, and Warlike Nation. But when, upon due Reflection, we consider the different Opinions which prevail, and divide the Sentiments and Judgments of our Leading Men, both within, and without Doors, our Wonder on that Head will soon be at an End.

To illustrate this Matter: Some, for Example, would have those Settlements kept and retained barely as Marks of Possession, or *British* Property, at a small, or inconsiderable Expence to the Nation.

OTHERS again think that Ships of War constantly stationed on that Coast, would perform this Service best, and answer all the good Purposes of Forts and Castles.

WOULD Gentlemen, inclinable to adopt such Notions as these, but seriously reflect upon the absolute and necessary Weight of regular Settlements for the Protection of Trade, in distant and barbarous Countries, where an inland Commerce must, with great Care and Industry, be cultivated and improved, the which cannot be conducted and perfected to any Degree of Profit

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Profit and Security, without the immediate Aid of established Factories, Officers and Agents, properly protected, and residing constantly upon the Spot, ready for transacting and negotiating all Manner of Business; they, I am firmly persuaded, would soon change Sentiments in that respect, and concur in Opinion with all good Judges of Trade, more particularly the eminent Sir *Josiah Child*, who is very clear and explicit in what he writes, and advances, on this nice and delicate Subject: His Words are,

“ IT has, for many Years, been a moot
“ Case, whether any incorporating of Mer-
“ chants be for public Good, or not.

“ FOR my own Part, I am of Opinion,
“ 1st, That for Countries with which his Ma-
“ jesty has no Alliance, nor can have any by
“ reason of their Distance, or Barbarity, or
“ Non-Communication with the Princes of
“ *Christendom*, &c. where there is a Necessity
“ of maintaining Forces and Forts, (such as
“ *East-India* and *Guiney*) Companies of Mer-
“ chants are absolutely necessary.

“ 2d, It seems evident to me, that the
“ greatest Part of these two Trades ought, for
“ public Good, to be managed by joint
“ Stock.”

I will not deny, my Lord, but that Ships of
War

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War, properly appointed, and regularly relieved, might, in some Measure, perform the Work of guarding this Coast and Trade. But, to come at the Expence of that Service, I shall, for Argument's Sake, form a short Estimate thereof, and allot *six Ships only* for that Employment, *viz.* one of 50, three of 40, and two of 20 Guns each, whose Compliments, added together, make 1310 Men; which, according to the ordinary Estimate of the Navy, amounts to 5240 *l.* per Month; or to the Sum of 65,120 *l.* per Annum, exclusive of Officers, Soldiers, Artificers, and military and other Stores, for the particular Use and Service of all the Forts, Castles and Settlements.

ANOTHER Way proposed for the Preservation and Management of this Trade, is to throw the future Conduct thereof into the Form of a regulated, or open Company, like that of our *Turkey Company*, wherein the separate Traders, if they shall see proper, and others, may become Adventurers: And that for the Maintenance of the Forts and Castles, the Parliament do allow them a certain settled annual Allowance; making, at the same Time, some Compensation to the Proprietors and Creditors of the present Company for their Interests and Debts.

THIS Method, my Lord, may doubtless be practised with Success in Places where trading Cities and Towns are built; where Factories can

can without Difficulty be established; where Protection is to be found for the Government of Commerce; and, in fine, where the Laws of Nations operate, are in Force, and bind the Parties to an exact Observation of them: All which Advantages and Institutions we find, more or less, perfected to Hand in the Exercise and Pursuit of our Trade to *Russia*, *Hamburgh*, and *Turkey*; but can never hope or expect to meet with Benefits of that Kind from any Dealings or Commerce with numerous uncivilized Negroe-Princes and Chiefs residing in *Africa*; who, generally speaking, are torn to pieces by intestine Wars in the Bowels of their own extensive Kingdoms, which (*without the Aid of Settlements*) renders a regular national Trade with them impracticable. The principal Source however of all their Traffic in Negroes, arises from such their frequent Hostilities; and these Servants, together with the other Commodities of that Country destined for Sale, are brought to Market chiefly for the Use of those who can value themselves most upon their Power and Affluence; the common Standard whereby the *Africans* are, at this Time, governed in their Dealings and Commerce with Strangers: For from the Knowledge and Experience which they, by a long Intercourse of Trade with the *Europeans*, have acquired, they are become a subtle, cunning People, sensible of their own Interest, and not easily managed, unless held in a

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State of Awe and Dependency ; a Thing morally impossible to be effected by Means of the open Company in Question.

BESIDES which, the Diversities of Agents from *London*, *Bristol* and *Liverpool*, that must necessarily be employed on that Occasion, all acting under different Interests and Principles, must breed Confusion, Jealousy, and Distrust, and will prove an invincible Bar to the Improvement and Prosperity of this Trade.

WHETHER the *Turkey* Company has, or has not, found their Account in pursuing the Scheme under Consideration, I shall not take upon me to determine ; but I will venture to affirm, that by a few Years Practice and Experience of it on the Coast of *Africa*, in Case a Method of this Kind should ever take Place, the Public will have the Mortification of being disappointed in their Hopes of Success from the Execution thereof ; and if, during the Course of that Experiment, no other worse Accident happens to the *African* Settlements, the Nation will certainly be constrained to new-model the whole System of this Traffic, let the Expence be what it will ; or submit to see our *West-India* Trade, the only Foreign Commerce that we can, at this Time, with any Reason boast of, quite ruined and destroyed.

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AND further, to render the Matter of supporting these Forts and Castles still more difficult and perplexed, the Interest of the separate Traders (who, in Fact, without being at any Expence towards the Support of the Forts and Castles, enjoy all the Advantages resulting from a free and open Trade) is upon all Occasions, brought upon the Carpet ; cried up, and substituted by Way of fundamental Argument, in direct Opposition to every Remonstrance, Petition, or Application, that has at any Time found Way either to the Ministry, or to the Parliament, in Relation to the Distresses of the present Company, or concerning their frequent Representations, touching the State of this Trade ; as if they, the separate Traders, had been the Sacrifice, Sufferers, and the real Preservers of that Commerce to the Nation. Nay it has, in some popular Debates, been strongly urged, *that those Gentlemen ought to be consulted and advised with*, before any previous Step should be taken for the Relief of that very Company, who at the Expence of above a Million Sterling of their own proper Money, first of all acquired, and afterwards secured the Benefits thereof to these Kingdoms ; and from whom, to say no more, those Adventurers have all along drawn continual Advantage, Aid, and Protection, at least so far forth, as their Ability reached or extended.

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HOWEVER extraordinary the Scope of all the Arguments thus made use of, may appear to an impartial Bye-stander ; yet, my Lord, I am far from believing, or imagining, that the Gentlemen, who reason after this Manner, can be prejudiced in Favour of the seperate Traders, contrary to the Interest of the Nation, merely for the Sake of being so ; but rather conceive, that they have been imposed upon by the Artifice of some plausible designing Men, on whose Veracity they have placed too great and implicit a Confidence, without examining minutely into the Merits of all their Views and latent Designs, or of the Things misrepresented by them.

As for my own Part, and herein I appeal to your Lordship, as a Person who has some Knowledge of my Integrity, I declare that I hold not the least Ill-will in the World, to any one of the Merchants concerned in this Trade ; nor do I regard the Existence of the *African* Company, as such, in any Shape whatsoever. All that I aim at, labour, or contend for, is the Preservation of this Commerce, in its full Extent to the Nation ; and therefore my sole Intention in deducing, or recapitulating, the different Sentiments and Opinions of all those who argue about the Method of supporting this Trade, is with no other View, than that the same, with my own Observations, may stand connected in one succinct Chain, or
Relation

Relation, for your Lordship's more immediate Consideration ; and, if you shall see proper, to that of the Ministry and Parliament : I think it therefore, needless to descend into any more Particulars, concerning Matters, that cannot, to my Way of thinking, be better explained, or understood, than by considering every Argument, *Pro* and *Con*, in the Order wherein I have thus placed and laid them down ; I beg Leave however, my Lord, in general to observe, that the seperate Traders, together with the *West-India* Merchants, the Planters, Owners of Ships, and Dealers in Woollen, Linnen, Paper, Copper, Brass, Iron, Pewter, Lead, &c. are all essentially interested and concerned in the Preservation of this Trade, and in preventing it from being vested, or continued in the Hands of the *French*, whose extensive Projects have hitherto prevented their visiting us, on that Coast ; otherwise they might long before this Time have seized upon our *African* Settlements.

WHAT would, in that Case, my Lord, become of our Trade to the Plantations ? Or can it, with any Colour of Reason, be denied, that the Expence of even one naval Expedition to regain these Settlements, would not cost the Nation infinitely more than the Fee-simple of an Annuity sufficient to recover that Trade, and to protect it, with great Dignity, for many Years to come.

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I AM, in the next Place, my Lord, to demonstrate, that the *African* Trade cannot be so well supported, and at so cheap a Rate, to the Public, as by Means of the Charter and Company now subsisting; and this will appear obvious from the following, amongst many other, Considerations.

IF the Government should be of Opinion to take these Settlements into their own Hands, the Charge of a military Establishment there, (supposing that Form of Management consistent with the Affairs of a mercantile Company) would far exceed any settled Appointment the Company, in their trading Capacity, can ever expect from the Bounty of Parliament for that Service. The annual Expences attending the Garrisons of *Mahon*, *Gibraltar*, and *Anapolis-Royal*, will serve for Examples to vouch the Truth of this Assertion. Or should it be alledged, that this Trade could be carried on, and protected, yet much cheaper under the Direction of some one of our opulent Companies (in either of which Cases, the present Company must be allowed and paid a reasonable Price for their Charter, Forts, Castles, and Effects) is it not to be apprehended that such Company would, in the first Place, and with Reason too, insist upon, and make good Terms for themselves; and that afterwards, on some emergent Occasion, they might not be tempted to aim at something more than

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a bare parliamentary Allowance; and thus, by Dint of Interest and Power, become, at length, absolute Masters of an exclusive Trade to the Coast of *Africa*, notwithstanding all the Arguments that could be used on behalf of the separate Traders, who then, too late, would repent of their mistaken Policy in opposing, as I have already observed, every Expedient which had at any Time been offered in Favour of supporting the Interest of the present Company.

THE granting of a new Charter cannot avail, or rectify the Evil complained of, as that now in being, on changing Hands in the Manner herein after described, will to all Intents and Purposes answer full as well, and create a Company of itself, attended with all the favourable Circumstances, that can be reasonably wished for, or desired.

FROM all which Considerations, Matters, and Things, your Lordship, I make not the least Doubt, will stand fully convinced of the Necessity this Nation lies under of restoring and preserving the *British* Trade to the Coast of *Guiney*.

HAVING thus briefly, my Lord, and as plainly, and faithfully as I could, touched upon the State of this Trade, and upon such Arguments as occurred either to myself, or which I have occasionally met with from others, for or against the Support thereof, and of the present Company; I shall now, with Pleasure, proceed

ceed to point out the Means whereby all Matters, relating to the State and Condition of the one, and to the Distresses of the other, may, in my humble Opinion, be settled and adjusted to the Satisfaction of the Ministry (through whose Hands this Scheme should pass, and whose Approbation it ought first of all to receive to that of the Parliament) to the great Security and Advantage of the separate Traders, and, finally, to the Benefit and Satisfaction of the respective Proprietors and Creditors of this Corporation; more especially as it provides a sure and certain Compensation to be made those Sufferers; a Prospect, which for many Years past, they have been utter Strangers to.

IN SHORT, the CLEAREST, the CHEAPEST, and the MOST REASONABLE METHOD for accomplishing these several ENDS and PURPOSES, is, by Means of an UNION or COALITION between the CREDITORS and PROPRIETORS of this CORPORATION.

UPON these two *Suppositions*, which I take for granted to be true;

THAT the Capital Stock of this Company is about 300,000*l.*

THAT the Debts of the Company amounts to 100,000*l.*

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IT IS PROPOSED,

I. THAT the Capital Stock of the *Royal African Company* of England be, for the future, fixed and ascertained at eight hundred Thousand Pounds.

II. THAT new Books be opened, and a Subscription taken for the same, on the following Terms, that is to say,

1. THAT the present Proprietors in Consideration of annihilating the present Stock of 300,000 *l.* be entitled to 100,000 of the said Capital at 50 *l. per Cent.* } 50,000*l.*

2. THAT the Creditors of the said Company for, and in Consideration of, their Debts and Demands, be intitled to subscribe for 200,000 *l.* of the said Capital, at 50 *l. per Cent.* } 100,000 *l.*

3. THAT New Subscribers be intitled to 500,000 *l.* the rest and Residue thereof at 40 *l. per C.* } 200,000*l.*
New Stock or Capital, will be }
300,000*l.* at 50*l.* and 500,000*l.* at } 350,000 *l.*
40 *l. per Cent.* making 800,000 *l.* }

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4. THAT

4. THAT the Payments on the said 500,000 *l.* be made at the following Times, and in the following Proportions, *viz.*

20 *l.* *per C.* at the Time of subscribing, 100,000 *l.*

10 *l.* *per Cent.* at six Months, - - 50,000 *l.*

10 *l.* *per Cent.* at twelve Months, - 50,000 *l.*

40 *l.* *per C.* on 500,000 *l.* amounts to 200,000 *l.*

5. THAT if Cash shall, at any Time, be wanting for the Service of this Company, after the new Subscribers shall have paid in their 40 *l.* *per Cent.*, as above, the same be raised upon the whole Capital Stock of - - 800,000 *l.*

III. THAT if should be objected, that this Capital is too great for the New Company, (a Thing scarce possible to be imagined, considering the vast Dealings and Traffick wherein their Stock can be employed) the same may be reduced to 400,000 *l.* in which Case, the Proprietors and Creditors of the old Company, will be admitted at Par, and the new Subscribers, at 80 *l.* *per Cent.*

IV. THAT for and towards enabling the new Company to support and maintain a sufficient Number of Forts and Castles, for the Protection of all his Majesty's Subjects trading to *Africa*, the *Parliament* will be pleased to settle an ANNUITY of 20,000 *l.* for the Term of 21 Years upon the said new Company; without which, and a JOINT TRADING

ING STOCK, no Scheme whatever, can be rendered *practicable* upon the *Foot* of an open Trade.

V. THAT immediately after the said new Subscription shall be compleated, the Company do proceed to a new Election of the Court of Assistants, and other Officers, when their Affairs must consequently undergo a thorough Change, and be put into the Hands of Gentlemen, in all Respects, qualified for that Charge, who will leave no Room for future Jealousies, or Distrusts of any Kind, either with respect to the Application and Disposition of the Public Money, or the Management and Improvement of the Trading Stock hereby proposed to be raised.

VI. THAT none but such as shall have a large Property and Interest in the Fund of this Corporation, may be elected into Office. The Governor, for the Time being, shall *have*, and *hold* 8000 *l.* the Sub-Governor and the Deputy Governor 6000 *l.* and the respective Members of the Court of Assistants 4000 *l.* Stock each, in the Books of this Company.

VII. THAT a Committee to consist of three of the present Proprietors, and three on the Part of the new Subscribers, be appointed to take an Account of the Company's Debts and Credits; and that a reasonable Time be allotted for the settling of, and allowing the same

same, that so strict Justice may be done to all Parties.

VIII. THAT upon closing and perfecting the said Accompts, a proper Body of Bye-Laws, for the better Government of the Affairs of this Corporation, be prepared and approved by the general Court; to contain, amongst other Things, a particular Clause, whereby their Dealings in Negroes, destined for the *British* Plantations in *America*, shall thenceforward be discontinued, and left entirely for the Benefit and Advantage of the separate Traders; on Condition, nevertheless, that they shall find Means, to take from the Company, a certain Number of these Labourers, within reasonable Periods of Time, to be limited and appointed for that Purpose; with such further Orders and Regulations, concerning that Point of Commerce, as shall be deemed equitable and expedient.

— END of the PROPOSAL.

YOUR Lordship, from what has been thus offered and laid down, will be pleased to observe, That by the Conditions of this UNION, the Company will, without paying any Money whatsoever, be discharged from all their Debts and Incumbrances. And that the Trade, vested in the new Subscribers, will be still continued, and carried on, under the present Charter. For in Case any other Method be taken, such as placing these Forts and Castles in the
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Hands of the Government, or throwing them into any other Channel, every equitable Person must allow an Equivalent, in some Degree, reasonable, to be due to the present Proprietors and Creditors. This Equivalent cannot be less than 150,000 *l.* or a perpetual Annuity of 6000 *l.* equal to the Interest of 150,000 *l.* at 4 *l. per Cent*; which Annuity will be absolutely saved, or at least must be considered as a Deduction from the proposed Annuity of 20,000 *l.* to be granted by Parliament, if this Proposal takes Place.

THE Necessity of recovering, and preserving this Trade, has appeared, and is a Matter confessed. The Manner of supporting it in the cheapest and most effectual Way for the Benefit of the Nation, is the Point to be determined; concerning which, there cannot be the least Dispute, but that the Terms of this Proposal, is the fittest and most eligible for that Purpose.

AND your Lordship will farther observe, that ample Provision is, at the same Time, made by this Proposal, for admitting the new Subscribers upon fair and reasonable Terms, into an adequate Share and Proportion of the Company's Settlements, and of this profitable and well established Trade, wherein the Money they are to advance will be effectually employed: And as the Voyages directly to the Company's Factories in *Africa*, compared with

with other tedious Navigations, require no great length of Time to perform them, the QUICK STOCK of 200,000 *l.* to be raised on the new Subscription, being fortified and supported by such a parliamentary Allowance, and kept in a constant Course of Circulation, may, before the Expiration of 21 Years, be made to realize the whole capital Stock of this Company, and then the appropriated annual Allowance to be granted by Parliament, will cease, and revert to the Public.

WHEN the Terms and Conditions of this Plan shall be approved and enacted, in such Manner as shall best appear to the Wisdom of the Legislative Authority, your Lordship will allow, that there can, upon such a solid Foundation, be no Difficulty in raising the trading Stock of 200,000 *l.* in Question; or even any other Sum that may be wanted for the Service of this new Company; but if there should be the least doubt concerning that Matter, I can, from good Authority say, that the same will thereupon, without any Sort of Delay, be readily subscribed for.

THE *African* Company, poor and disabled as it is at this Day, will, upon such Occasion, soon lose the odious Appellation of a Bankrupt-Company, and become well qualified to assert and preserve the just Rights of the Nation, as well as their own Property on that Coast.

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ALL former Animosities, and Misunderstandings which prevailed between them, and the separate Traders, will cease, and determine in mutual Acts of Friendship and Benevolence. Those Gentlemen will then no longer be drove to the Necessity of beating the Coast, and waiting the Event of uncertain Times, and precarious Markets, as they will be continually supplied with good and robust Negroes, to compleat their Cargoes, from *Anamaboe*, *Whydah*, and the Company's Factories. By these Advantages the Affairs of the separate Traders will be forwarded; nor can any Thing contribute more amply to the Success of their Commerce and Navigation, as they, by that Means, can get away expeditiously to Market, without the common Obstructions attending their Traffic at this Time; when the Price of Negroes must consequently be reduced, and those Servants, to the great Emolument and Satisfaction of the Sugar-Planters, will be delivered at our Colonies in *America*, much cheaper, and in far better Order and Condition, than could, in the course of many Years last past, be undertaken or afforded.

Does it not therefore appear demonstrably evident, my Lord, that this is the most natural, the most equitable, the least burthenfome, and the safest Method that can be undertaken, for the Security of this Trade, and for preventing our Colonies from being deserted by some of their most valuable Inhabitants?

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THE new Company, to put their Settlements, with Œconomy and good Management, into a defensible Condition, may, out of the Payments on their first Subscription, advance the Money that will, in the Beginning, be wanted for repairing, manning, and supplying the Forts and Castles with Stores, and all other Materials; which Sum they may afterwards replace by Degrees, and add to their trading Stock, out of the public Appointment, without anticipating any Part of that Fund.

I AM only to add, that the Princes and Natives, with whom we may have any Concern or Traffic on the Coast of *Guiney*, being once convinced of the Company's Power and Ability to protect and succour them, will soon regain Courage and Confidence to enter into new Alliances, and to deal more freely, and more openly with us, as they will then be under no Difficulty of withdrawing themselves from their present Engagements with the *French*; by which Means, we, in our Turn, shall obtain Plenty of the choicest *Blacks*, and of all those necessary and valuable native Commodities which, ever since our Settlements in *Africa* have stood neglected, we have been deprived of, and which has fallen to the Share of, and been transported in large Quantities, for the Benefit of our Rivals and Competitors. But to secure the Friendship of the *Africans*, and to leave no room of Complaint against either our Conduct, or Dealings with them, the Company, as well

well as the separate Traders, must find some proper Way of supplying these People with our Goods and Merchandizes, as cheap, at least, as the *French* have hitherto done; to the End, that they may be encouraged to adhere stedfastly to our Interest, and live always in perfect good Harmony with us.

THERE is, my Lord, beyond all doubt, a Difficulty attending the Matter of selling our Goods on that Coast so cheap as our Rivals have done, or can do, because their Shipping are fitted out and navigated at less Expence than ours; Insurance, Duties and Port Charges, not being so high with them; and, because Labour and Wages bearing an equal Degree of Proportion to their more frugal Manner of living, such Commodities as they manufacture, work up, or send abroad, must consequently be sold cheaper than we can afford to vend or dispose of the same Sort of Goods at Market. Though this is the general Argument made use of against us, and that it may be partly our Case, whenever we gain Strength sufficient to support a Competition of that kind, with our Rivals in this Trade, yet I am far from thinking that we cannot get the better, even of this material Obstacle, which I shall be ready to demonstrate in due Time, or as Occasion may require. But, my Lord, as there are many other essential Points concerning the future Management of this Commerce, that wants to be rectified and settled, I shall, for the present, postpone

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pone all further Particulars, and wait the Event of your Lordship's Judgement, and the Determination of the Ministry and Parliament, before I enlarge, or explain myself more fully on that Subject.

TO CONCLUDE,

SINCE the Preservation of the *African* Trade, stands so closely connected and interwoven with the real Welfare of *Great-Britain*, and the Interest and Prosperity of the *British* Colonies and Plantations in *America*, I hope, my Lord, that the future Support thereof, will now no longer be considered as a Matter of meer Indifference; but, on the contrary, as an Object of the highest Concern to the Happiness of this Nation, both at Home and Abroad.

AND Lastly, That what I have undertaken to advance on that Subject, will, upon due Examination, be found agreeable to Truth, Justice, and to the Title of this Proposal.

I HAVE the Honour of being, with the sincerest Sentiments of Gratitude and Esteem,

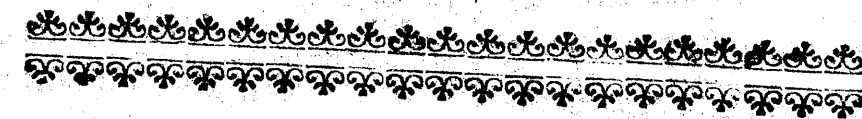
MY LORD,

Your LORDSHIP'S

Most obedient, and

Most humble Servant,

M. O'CONNOR.



P O S T C R I P T.

THE Noble Lord, to whose Judgment and Consideration the foregoing Proposal was, at the Time it bears Date, submitted, took uncommon Pains to arrive at a perfect Knowledge of all Things, relating to the Decay of the *British* Trade, to the Coast of *Guiney*, in our Hands; and having weighed and compared the *Nature* and *Circumstances* of the past, as well as the present State thereof duly together; his Lordship declared his Approbation of the *Terms* and *Conditions* thereby offered and laid down for restoring and preserving the *Benefits* of that *Commerce* to these *Kingdoms*; being of Opinion that the same is, in all Respects, the safest, the surest, and the most eligible Method of any hitherto proposed, with Regard both to *public*, and *private Interest*: And accordingly his Lordship enforced the Necessity of a new *Regulation* in that Trade: Several Persons of Eminence and Note, both in, and out, of the Administration, consulted on Ways and Means for compassing that important Point; but they all differed in Opinion, as to the Manner of executing a proper Scheme for that Purpose.

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 I CANNOT however help taking Notice, that afterwards a *Proposal* tending to regulate the Business of *Pawn-Brokers* within the Bills of Mortality, calculated for the Support of this Trade, and for Relief of the present *African* Company, was grafted on that which is herein before set forth, found Way to the *Ministry*, and underwent the Examination of two great *Men* in *Power*, who adjudged the applicable Part thereof, wholly *unconstitutional*; that Affair therefore was carried no farther, and the then Session of Parliament drawing towards a Conclusion, the *Committee* of the whole House, to whom the *Petitions* of the *Company*, their *Creditors*, and of divers *Merchants* belonging to *London*, *Bristol*, and *Liverpool*, stood referred, adjourned, without coming to any sort of Resolution, touching the Merits of the Matters then in Question, and which lay before them; thus the *African* Trade was left on the old Footing, altogether in the Hands of seperate Traders, and the Company remains still destitute of all Manner of Succour and Support.

FOR these Reasons, and not for the Ambition of seeing his Name in Print, the Author of this Proposal has thought fit to publish the same; to the End, that the Parliament, from the Lights thereby furnished, may interpose, and shape out such a Plan of Management, for the Recovery and future Preservation of this Commerce, as shall be consistent with the national Interest, and sufficient to extend and protect

(53)
 protect the *British* Property on the Coast of *Guiney*.

AND, as he writes neither for *Favour*, *Praise*, nor *Profit*, but meerly with an Intent to contribute his best *Endeavours* to the *Service* of the *Public*; so he is not in the least anxious about the *Cavils*, or *Misrepresentations*, of such *Persons* as may be offended at, or think themselves affected by the Liberty he has taken, of stating all the *Facts* relating to this *Trade*, which fell under his *Cognizance*, freely and impartially, according to the best of his *Judgment* and *Capacity*, and without regarding any other *Motive*, or *Consideration* whatsoever.

THERE has, indeed, of late, since the Conclusion of the Peace, some Rumours prevailed, touching the extensive Views of certain foreign Powers on this *Trade*, which seems to corroborate, in a great Degree, what this Author apprehended would be the Case on that Event; but, to avoid all Prolixity, he chooses to be silent on that Subject; submitting the Merits thereof, and of all that he has laid down, to the wise Determination of *Parliament*.

F I N I S.

ERRATA. Page 10, line 1, for *or* read *and*. Page 16, line 17, for *generally* read *gradually*.

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