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A  
DETECTION  
OF THE  
AFRICAN COMPANY.



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**D E T E C T I O N**  
 O F T H E  
 Proceedings *and* Practices  
 O F T H E  
**D I R E C T O R S**  
 Of the ROYAL  
*AFRICAN COMPANY*  
 Of ENGLAND,

From their first Establishment by Charter in the  
 Year 1672, to the present Year 1748.

W I T H

REMARKS on the Use and Importance of the *British*  
 Forts and Settlements on the Coast of *Guiney*, and  
 the Necessity of speedily putting them upon a  
 proper Establishment.

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*Quod si quam Audaces sunt ad conandum, tam essent obscuro  
 in agendo, fortasse aliqua in Re nos aliquando fefellissent:  
 verum hoc adhuc per commode cadit, quod cum incredibili eorum  
 Audacia singularis Stultitia conjuncta est. . . . Atenim hæc  
 ita commissa sunt ab istis, ut non cognita sint ab omnibus.  
 Hominem esse arbitror neminem, qui Nomina istorum audierit,  
 quin Facta eorum nefaria commemorare possit, ut mihi magis  
 timendum sit, ne multa Crimina prætermittere quam ne qua  
 in istos fingere existimer.* CICERO.

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M D C C X L I X.

[Price One Shilling].



*To the British Merchants trading to Africa, and the American Colonies.*

*Gentlemen,*

**T**HE following Sheets were written, not only to detect the iniquitous Practices of the *African* Directors, but likewise to shew the Utility of our Forts and Settlements on the Coast of *Guiney*, when put upon a right Establishment; and therefore can be addressed to none so properly as to you.

The Plan I have laid down, for rendering these Forts most subservient to the Trade, is simple; and the Expence small: It necessarily excludes all Jobbing, and renders embezzling the public Money

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Money extremely difficult. For these very Reasons I expect to hear it decried by *Those*, and the Tools of *Those*, who, though *African* Directors, are yet ignorant of the Importance of their own Possessions, never having seem'd to consider them in any other Light (if we may judge by their Writings) than as Means to draw Money from the Parliament, and put it into their own Pockets. In all those Pamphlets which they have publish'd, where the Falshoods are as numerous as the Pages, the great Argument for maintaining our *African* Settlements is not once, that I have seen, so much as hinted at. The Motives of these People in Writing were not to promote any general Good; their Doctrines, and their Demands, were always inconsistent with the Interest of the separate Traders: Hence that perpetual Opposition to the Company, which always will subsist, till the Dread of raising a new Joint-Stock be intirely vanished.

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The Company's Stock, as well as Credit, being now exhausted, their Forts must necessarily be abandoned this Year without your Interposition. Should the *French*, who are resuming their *Guiney* Trade with Vigour, become our Successors on the Gold Coast, why should we expect better Usage from them there than we met with on the Gum Coast? With the Forts, we must lose that Trade on which the Prosperity of our Sugar Colonies chiefly depends.

It is therefore your Interest to petition the Parliament, that speedy and effectual Measures be taken to prevent the Loss of this valuable Branch of our Commerce. If you neglect this Opportunity, it is more than probable you will never have another; and should a Diminution of your Fortunes ensue from such Neglect, you can with no Decency complain, as you are warn'd of your Danger. Trust not to the weak and selfish Efforts of a Bankrupt Company, whose Credit with the Legislature

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flature can be no greater than with yourselves, but shew that you are really solicitous about your own and the Nation's Welfare, and you cannot fail of Success. Wishing you may pursue the Measures most conducive to the general Good of the *African* Trade, I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most humble Servant,

The AUTHOR.



A  
DETECTION  
OF THE  
Proceedings and Practices  
OF THE  
DIRECTORS  
OF THE  
AFRICAN COMPANY.

THE first Traders to the Gold Coast of *Africa* found the Natives ignorant and barbarous. The advantageous Barter of *European* Commodities for Slaves, Gold, and Ivory, first induced the *Portuguese*, and, after them, the *English*, *Dutch*, *Danes*, and *Brandenburghers*, to enter into Treaties with the Natives for Liberty to build Forts at the different Landing-places,

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in order to trade in the Absence of Ships, and to secure their Persons and Goods, against any Attempts on either. The Expences of building and supporting these Forts being too great for private Merchants, Companies were every-where erected with exclusive Privileges. These Companies either defrayed the Expence of the Forts out of the Profits of their own Trade, or by the Taxes they levied upon private Adventurers.

After the Exchange made betwixt *Portugal* and *Holland*, of the Continent of *Brazil* for the Gold Coast of *Africa*, and the erecting the present *Royal African Company* of *England*, the two Companies of *England* and *Holland* became the great Rivals in this Commerce. The Number and Trade of the Forts increased; the Negroes of the adjacent Countries, whose Genius led them to Traffick, went and settled under their Protection. These People, as Brokers and Interpreters betwixt the white Men in the Forts, and the inland Merchants (for which they had a small Commission on each Barter) soon became numerous and rich: That raised the Envy of their inland Neighbours, who often made War upon them; but being protected by the Forts they could not be come at, and the Interest of all Parties, that the Trade should not be interrupted, soon obliged them to make up their Differences.

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The Negro Towns, which lie under the Guns of *European* Forts have so long enjoyed their own Laws and Government, that they are now looked upon as so many separate independent States, and are treated with accordingly. It is neither to their Numbers nor Riches they owe their Security, but to the Protection of the Forts alone. Were they abandoned, they must fall a Prey to the Avarice and Barbarity of their inland Neighbours, who have long envied their Security, and want only a Probability of Success to attack them (1). Therefore the *English* and *Dutch*, who are

(1) The Conduct of *Cumby*, known to *Europeans* by the Name of *John Cabes*, King of *Commenda*, fully proves the Truth of this Reasoning. He was the most powerful Negro on the Gold Coast, having a large Quantity of Gold Dust, and near 3000 Men fit to bear Arms, mostly his own Slaves; yet, upon quarreling with the *Dutch*, and being refused their Protection, he had no Way left to save himself from Destruction, but to invite the *English* to build their present Fort at *Commenda*, towards the Expence of which he largely contributed, and had it finished in a very short Time. After he found himself secure, he set the *Dutch* at Defiance, and was highly respected by all his Neighbours. He now lies buried in the Fort there. In his Grave is a Parcel of Gold, to the Amount of several hundred Pounds, which can never be touched by his Family, except in Times of the last Extremity. If we should abandon that *sacred Deposit*, we can never expect to be forgiven.

I appeal to such as are acquainted with this Coast, if our Forts are not absolutely necessary for the Preservation of the following People: *Dixcove* and *Succondee* protect the *Hantahs* against the *Ashantees* and *Warsaws*: *Commenda*

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are possessed of Forts in that Country, must either keep them or give up all Connexions with the Inhabitants, who, on our leaving them, would be obliged to call in the *French* to their Assistance. The abandoning *Those* whose Ancestors have been buried in our Forts, or under our Guns; whose Education has led them to worship, as Deities, the Rocks, the Woods and Lakes around the Places of their Nativity; who, from their Infancy, have been taught our Language, and are acquainted with our Manners; who have been accustomed to the Wear of our Manufactures, and the Use of our Liquors, and forcing them to claim the Protection of a Nation, to whose Speech and Customs they are utter Strangers; I say, the obliging them to This, cannot fail of proving fatal to a Commerce, on which the Welfare of our Sugar Colonies chiefly depends. The Resent-

*menda* guards its Town's People against the same Enemies. *Cape Coast* defends the Town, which is very large; and, if Need were, would likewise afford Shelter to the *Fetues*, and *Saboes*, from the Attacks of the *Fantees*. *Winnebah* guards the People under it from the *Acroans*, *Fantees*, and *Akims*. *Accra* has under its Protection the Remnant of some inland Nation, differing in Laws and Customs from all the Negroes around it. These poor People have been so furiously attacked by the *Akims*, that the *English*, *Dutch*, and *Danes*, who have all Forts here, were hard put to it to defend them.

All these little Nations whose Names I have mentioned, cannot bring 15000 Men into the Field, which is not above one Tenth of the Force the King of *Ashantee* would attack them with, were our great Guns out of his Way.

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ment of the Negroes must be proportioned to the Danger they would be exposed to by our forsaking them, and as That, without the speedy Interposition of some other *European* Power, must terminate in their utter Ruin, so we could never expect Forgiveness from them, while any Memory of so fatal a Step remained. The *French*, who doubtless would be our Successors, might easily avail themselves of the Hatred of the Blacks, and prompt them to cut off such *English* Long-boats as went ashore for Water. The Fear of Punishment for such Outrages would prevent any Canoes from going aboard our Ships; thus might we be effectually excluded from all Intercourse with the Negroes on this Coast.

These are not idle Surmises, but must be the necessary Consequences of abandoning our Forts. The Negroes could not better express their Desire, that we should remain among them, than by their Behaviour to the Company's Servants, when reduced to the utmost Distress, of which take the following Specimens:

*Cape Coast Castle*, the *Royal African Company's* principal Fort on the Gold Coast, where they keep their Magazines (when they have any) has been so void of Ammunition within these Seven Years, that the Negroes have lent Gunpowder, to enable the Agents to salute one of their Brethren who was leaving the Coast, as can be attested by Mr. *Gregory* now in Town.

By



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By the Company's Neglect to send out Goods, the Agents at *Cape Coast* have been reduced so low as to borrow Money of a Negro to defray the ordinary Expence of the Castle. This will appear by *Cudjoe's Account* in the *Cape Coast Books*.

An absolute Want of Naval Stores has forced the Company's Servants to have Recourse even to the Boatswains of Men of War, who have been brib'd to embezel the King's Stores, which, upon Search, have been actually found both in the Company's Warehouse at *Cape Coast*, and aboard a Ship of theirs in the Road, commanded by Captain *Bruce*, who is now at home, and ready to attest the Truth of this Fact.

As these are sufficient Proofs of the Distress of the Company's Servants, so likewise are they undeniable Evidences of the Attachment of the Negroes to us; and shew, that they look upon our keeping the Forts as absolutely necessary for their own Preservation. They could easily have taken a Fort, in which there was no Ammunition to defend it. But instead of taking Advantage of our Situation, and rebelling against us, they generously supplied our Wants, desiring nothing more than to continue under our Protection.

I hope what I have said, sufficiently evinces the Necessity of preserving our *African* Settlements, as they are inseparably connected with the Trade of those Countries where they are

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are situated. I shall next inquire, whether the *African Company* deserve to be any longer intrusted with the Care and Management of these Settlements.

This *Royal African Company* had their Charter from King *Charles* the Second, in the Year 1672. with the sole Privilege of trading on the Coast of *Africa*, from *Salée* to the *Cape of Good Hope*, for the Term of 1000 Years. They continued till the Reign of King *William* with great Loss to the Proprietors, and no Advantage to the Nation, though they had the Duke of *York* for their Governor. This Prince, when he came to be King, made such Stretches of his Prerogative, in favour of the Company, that several Merchants were sent to Prison, as Persons obnoxious to his Government, for no other Crime, than endeavouring, in a legal Way, to recover Satisfaction for the Damages sustained by them from the Conduct of the Company's Agents at *Cape Coast*. These Agents, while their Masters had Power and Money, were the Scourge of Interlopers, who, when taken by the Company's Cruisers, were treated worse than Pirates. Indeed, if one was to judge from Appearances, there is room to suspect, that the Company and the Pirates had entered into an Alliance to ruin the Merchants; for what else could induce their Agents to remain idle Spectators while they attack'd and took *English* Ships from under the very Guns of our Forts, whither



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ther they had fled for Protection? However that be, neither the exclusive Privileges of the Company, nor the harsh Exercise of their Power, could save them from Ruin (2). The Interlopers, notwithstanding all the Difficulties they had to encounter, carried on the Trade to a much greater Extent than the Company, and supplied some Colonies with Slaves, which otherwise would have been quite neglected (3). Therefore the Parliament taking this Affair into Consideration in the Year 1697. voted, that the *African* Trade should be free and open to all his Majesty's Subjects, and laid a Tax of 10 *per Cent.* for 13 Years, on all Goods exported to *Africa*, to defray the Expence of the Forts. After this the Company went on spending the 10 *per Cent.* and above 30,000 *l.* of their own Money annually, which the Directors raised upon Bottomry-Bonds, at

(2) In the Petition of the Company to the House of Commons, *January 2. 1696.* when they were in full Possession of their exclusive Privilege, they represent, that *they are reduced to the last Extremity, and cannot longer maintain the Forts and Settlements.* In another Petition, *January 16. 1696.* this Distress is attributed to the *Interlopers underselling them.* *March 11. 1696.* they applied to Parliament for Liberty to sell their Forts to Persons in Amity with this Crown: But the Petition was rejected.

(3) The *Virginia* and *Maryland* Merchants and Planters, in their Petition to the House of Commons, *December 7. 1696.* complained, that the Company seized all the Ships and Effects of the separate Traders, who used to supply these Colonies with Negroes, and would not send so much as one Slave thither themselves.

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25 *per Cent.* Discount, and by Calls upon the Subscribers. In 1710. their Stock was quite exhausted, and Queen *Anne*, upon an Address of the House of Commons, sent out a Supply of Men, Provisions, and Stores, to preserve the Forts. In 1712. the Company owed 298,000 *l.* which they paid by adding new Shares to their Stock, and giving them to their Creditors, who, by Act of Parliament, were obliged to take them. Not satisfied with paying their Debts in this manner, they made a *By-Law*, which obliged every Person possessed of a Share to pay in 3 *l.* to the Company, or forfeit his Share; many of the Creditors paid the Money, and lost it as well as their whole Debts.

From 1720. to 1723. the Company raised 524,000 *l.* by new Shares. An *eminent Peer* was made a Director; Ships were fitted out, loaded with Goods and Miners. They fell a Trading, and digging through Mountains, in Search of Gold. Their Trading-Stock was soon spent; no Gold was found; and a great Hole in the Side of a Hill alone remains, as an everlasting Monument of their Industry.

In 1726. the Company made an Attempt to procure a Monopoly of the Trade of the Gold Coast; but were so effectually opposed by the separate Traders, that nothing was done for them till 1729. when the Parliament granted them 10,000 *l.* for the Support of their Forts.

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From 1729. to 1743. the Company had 10,000 *l.* annually; but that Year they represented, by a Petition to the House of Commons, " That the 10,000 *l.* was so far from  
 " defraying the necessary Expence of the Forts,  
 " that they had totally exhausted the Trading-  
 " Stock they were possessed of when that  
 " annual Allowance was granted; so they  
 " confessed themselves no longer able to sup-  
 " port them for 10,000 *l. per Annum.*"

By a *Manuscript*, in my Custody, which came from the *African House*, and has been handed about by the Directors, as a complete Justification of their Conduct, I find that Mr. *Edward Sparke*, Accomptant to the Company, was the *chief Instrument* in procuring his Masters the 20,000 *l.* voted in 1744. Tho' by his Address and Management he saved them for that Time, and received the Reward due to his Dexterity (4), yet as I have had Opportunities enough to make myself acquainted with their Proceedings, and am under no Necessity of justifying any Man's Behaviour, I shall take the Liberty of making a few Remarks upon this Paper, which will shew the Conduct of the Directors in a quite different

(4) This Gentleman, for his Behaviour in 1743, had his Salary advanced from 100 *l.* to 200 *l. per Annum.* He had likewise a new Salary of 50 *l. per Annum*, for his Trouble in making out the Accompts of Castle Charges, which was made to commence from 1737, and was paid 400 *l.* out of the Supply granted in 1744.

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Light from that in which their *Accomptant* endeavoured to make them appear.

In order to this, I must observe, that the Company have Eight Forts on the *Gold Coast*, and only one situated on an Island in the River *Gambia*, about Ten Leagues from the Sea. The Expence of supporting *Gambia* is, to the Expence of the *Gold Coast* Forts, as about 1400 *l.* is to 7400 *l.* If this Proportion be not observed, and more Goods sent to *Gambia* out of the public Allowance than are necessary for its Support, 'tis plain these Goods are sent as a Trading-Stock, which is contrary to the Intention of Parliament in granting the 10,000 *l.* more especially as sending an extraordinary Supply to *Gambia* must leave the *Gold Coast* destitute of Necessaries.

Mr. *Sparke* acknowledges, that the Company, in the Space of Twenty-six Months, from *June 1739.* to *August 1741.* exported to *Gambia* 9914 *l.* 8 *s.* 2 *d.* which is charged by them to the Public, as sent to defray Castle Charges. But he makes no Mention of the Returns from thence in that Time, which amount to 9167 *l.* 6 *s.* 2 *d.* all got by trading with the public Money. So that, in Fact, the Expence of *Gambia*, for these Twenty-six Months, instead of costing the Company at the Rate of 4576 *l. per Annum*, as he would make the Reader believe, amounts to no more than 373 *l.* 11 *s.* *per Annum.* But if I was to take in to this Accompt the Returns received from thence in

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January 1742. which amount to 7000*l.* it would appear, that *Gambia*, instead of being any Expence to the Company from 1739. to 1742. was the Means of putting several Thousand Pounds into their Pockets. This Method of accounting with the Public, in charging every thing sent out, and giving no Credit for Returns, purchased with the Money intended for the Support of the Forts alone, is unjust in the highest Degree.

Let us now follow Mr. *Sparke* to the *Gold Coast*, and observe how he glosses over the Company's Management there. It seems Captain *Wyndham*, who commanded a Man of War on the *Guiney Station*, had asserted, "That no Goods were sent to *Cape Coast* from August 1740. to August 1742." To which Mr. *Sparke* replies, That there remained at *Cape Coast*, at the End of June 1740. Goods to the Amount of 4267*l.* 3*d.* prime Cost, but he does not think proper to say what kind of Goods these were. If he had owned that they were made up of useless Guns, Pistols, Cutlasses, Hangers, rotten Perpets, and Long Ells, stringless Beads broken, and barrelled up, all transmitted from one Warehouse-keeper to another, on purpose to swell the Accompt of the Company's Effects, that they might not appear to keep Forts without Goods; I say, if he had owned this, and that out of the 4267*l.* there were not 500*l.* Value in Goods, at prime Cost, saleable, he would only have

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have told Truth, though indeed in that Case he might have lost his Gratuity.

From July 1740. to July 1742. he says, 6940*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* in Goods, were sent to the *Gold Coast*, which small Sum, no doubt, was taken for granted to be all intended for the Use of the Forts, and he is careful not to discover the contrary. These Goods, if they be paid for yet, were paid out of the 10,000*l.* granted by Parliament, and a Part of them to the Amount of 3355*l.* 5*s.* 2*d.* were sent out in pursuance of a Contract entered into here by the Company, to supply the *French* with a certain Number of Slaves (1); and their Agents, by their Instructions, declared that no Part of them was intended for the Support of the Forts. The Company's Servants, instead of *English* Goods, were obliged to take *French* Guns upon their Pay, first at Fifteen, then at Ten Shillings, when no Negro Trader would take them at Two Shillings; nay, they sometimes even refused them in Presents. The *French* Wine was, if possible, worse than the Guns, being four, insomuch that, if the Company had plotted to poison all their Servants, they could not have recommended a more proper Potion.

(1) This iniquitous Bargain had all the bad Consequences it deserved. The Company, by not performing their Covenant, incurred large Damages, which were paid to the *French*, out of the Parliament's Allowance for supporting the Forts, while the *English* Creditors, who sold their Goods on solemn Promises of Payment from that Fund, could not get a Farthing.

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If I reckon no more than 1500*l.* prime Cost, lost by this Barter on the Coast (besides Damages paid here) it will reduce the Value of Goods sent to *Cape Coast* in two Years to 5440*l.* instead of 19,439*l.* 6*s.* received neat from the Exchequer during that Time.

But that I may not weary the Reader in detecting all the little Artifices made use of to defend a very bad Cause, I shall at once state the Account of the Directors Management from 1729. when the Parliament first granted the Company the 10,000*l.* per Ann. down to this present Year 1748. charging them with every thing they have received, and giving them Credit for what Goods and Stores they have sent out.

Dr. *The Directors of the Royal African Company,*

	l.	s.	d.
To the Parliament's Allowance, received since 1729.	170,000	0	0
To Returns from <i>Cape Coast</i> , from 1729. to 1736.	24,577	7	4
To Returns from <i>Gambia</i> , from 1729. to 1742.	39,163	7	10
To Returns from <i>Gambia</i> , since 1742.	12,000	0	0
To 100 Oz. Gold from <i>Whydah</i> , in May 1733.	360	0	0
To Value of the Ship <i>Unity</i> recovered	2,498	19	10
To the Estate of <i>Gambols</i>	525	0	0
To Debts contracted since 1729.	105,000	0	0
	354,124	15	0

<i>from Decem. 31. 1729. to Decem. 31. 1748.</i>	Cr.
	l. s. d.
By Goods on the Coast when the public Allowance was granted	5000 0 0
By Goods and Stores exported to <i>Cape Coast</i> from 1730. to 1743.	77,438 4 9
By D <sup>o</sup> . in 1744.	14,000 0 0
By D <sup>o</sup> . exported to <i>Gambia</i> from 1730. to 1743.	44,905 17 3
By D <sup>o</sup> . in 1744.	11,000 0 0
By D <sup>o</sup> . in 1746. taken by the <i>French</i>	236 3 9
By D <sup>o</sup> . in 1747.	2118 6 2
By D <sup>o</sup> . to <i>Whydah</i> from 1738. to 1746.	3521 16 1
By Expence of Ships for the Fort's Use for 18 Years at 500 <i>l.</i> per Ann.	9000 0 0
By Fees paid at the Exchequer	4765 19 0
By Balance to be accounted for	182,138 8 0
	354,124 15 0

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This Account is so very interesting to the Directors, that I make no question but they will use their utmost Endeavours to destroy its Authenticity, as their Estates are deeply concerned in the Event: On the other hand, I hope the Reader will excuse me, if I go over the Articles of which it is composed, and shew, that where I am not absolutely tied down to exact Sums by the Company's own Books, I have given every Estimate in Favour of the Directors.

To begin then with the Debit Side of the Account.

The Parliament's Allowance since 1729. appears by the Votes of the House of Commons.

The Returns from the Gold Coast from 1729 to 1736. and from *Gambia* from 1729. to 1742. are taken from the Company's Books. The Returns from *Gambia* since 1742. are guess'd at, because the Directors have, these Two or Three Years last pass'd, transacted every Thing among themselves so secretly, that their Cash-Book is not to be come at. These Returns are about 250 Tons of Gum and Bees-wax, by the *Loyal Judah*, Captain *Cowey*. A Cargo of Bees-wax and Elephants Teeth shipped by Captain *Bruce*, of the Company's Sneau *Expedition*, aboard a Man of War; and the Cargo of a small Vessel, arrived last Year, called the *Trimmer*.

All these Returns were consigned to the Company; but, to prevent their Creditors from

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from seizing them, the Directors indorsed the Bills of Lading to one Mr. *James Goddard*, who entered the Goods at the Custom-house as his own Property, and sold them. The Produce of these Goods is not yet entered in the Company's Books; but, I dare say, the Directors will not deny that I am much below the Truth, when I charge only 12000*l.* for the Whole.

The Value of the Ship *Unity* received from the *Office of Claims*, is taken from the Company's Books, as is the Sale of *Gambols*. The Estate of *Gambols* in *Antigua*, the Residence of the late General *Park*, and one of the finest Plantations in that Island, fell into the Company's Hands, at the Death of Mr. *Chester*, who owed them a large Debt. Though it was many Years in their Possession, yet they always pretended they could get nothing from it, and therefore in 1739. sold it for 500 Guineas. I am no great Judge of the Value of *W. India* Estates, but cannot help thinking that they must be worth rather more than *Four Months Purchase*, as This is said to make above 150 Hogheads of Sugar a Year, worth in *London* 1500*l.* I know that an *Antigua* Gentleman, now in *England*, has often declared, that he would have given 10,000 Guineas for that Estate, and thanked the Directors into the Bargain.

It is not through Ignorance of the Fact, but because I cannot state the exact Sum, and to

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shew the Directors how little I am inclined to overcharge them, that I do not bring their Sale of *Montserrat* Debts into the Account. They received about 1500*l.* for above 5000*l.* of as good Debts as any in *America*.

I come now to the last Article of the Debit Side of the Account, which is the Company's Debts. It appears by the Balance of above 180,000*l.* due by the Directors, that they could have paid their Debts, which have therefore arisen from their Misapplication of the Parliament's Allowance, and of the Returns from the Coast. Here I cannot help observing that the Company's Debts have been greatly augmented by the Directors, who, while they had any Reputation as *Directors*, lavished it away in seducing unwary Tradesmen to credit the Company, and the Parliament's 10,000*l.* was the annual Bait to take them in. Was I to give a History of these *flagitious Proceedings*, I could fill a Volume sooner than make them feel any Remorse (2). The Consequence of these Practices was, that

(2) That I may not be supposed to accuse the Directors without any Facts to support me, I shall produce one Instance as a Specimen of their Behaviour: In 1744. a *Butcher* had Orders from some of the Directors to provide their Ships with Beef, who desired him to charge it very low as he was to be paid upon its Delivery. The poor Man, not having Money of his own to complete the Order upon the best Terms went and borrowed what was necessary. When the Beef was shipped, he went to the *African House* for Payment of his Bill, but he was told, *the Money is all gone*. In vain did he represent their Breach of Faith,

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that nobody would trust the Company without charging their Goods 15 or 20 *per Cent.* higher than what they sold them for to private Merchants. Therefore the Directors ought in Justice not only to be charged with all the Debts contracted since 1729. but likewise with whatever the Goods and Stores sent to *Africa* have been charged higher than they could have been bought by private Merchants of good Credit. This would, at least, make them accountable for 20,000*l.* over and above what I have charged them

In the Account of the Company's Debts there is one Circumstance which really astonishes me. *December 31st 1743.* they owed 72,640*l.* Since that Time they have received from Parliament, and from *Gambia* 42000*l.* and have sent out to *Africa* in Goods and Stores, only 27,354*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.* yet are their Debts increased 32,360*l.* Though they had charged the Public with the whole Expence of the *African House* (which they deny they

Faith, the Ruin of himself and Family; that he must shut up Shop and go to Gaol. These Arguments how pathetic soever, were too weak to move such an Audience. He was put in Gaol and ruined. His Wife went to the Door of the *Court of Assistants*, praying the Directors, that since no Motives of Justice could prevail on them to pay the Debt they would so far extend their Charity as to give her Alms, to prevent her Children from starving. The poor Woman broke her Heart, and is since dead; as is their own Servant Mr. *Tasker* from the same Usage, and I am told his Children are now a Burden upon some Parish, though the Company owes them several hundred Pounds.

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ever have done) yet that would only have amounted to 13,360*l.* (3). Consequently there remains 33,646*l.* of Debt contracted in Five Years without any apparent Reason at all.

Having gone through the Debit Side of the above Account, I come now to the Credit, in which there are only two Articles not taken from the Company's Books.

The first is 5000*l.* Value of Goods upon the Coast in 1729. when the Parliament granted the 10,000*l.* On the 31st of *December* 1729. the Company valued all their Effects on the Coast, except the bare Walls of their Forts at 30,182*l.* and in the Year 1743. when they confessed, in their Petition to the House of Commons, that their Trading-Stock was quite exhausted, they valued the same Effects at 38,697*l.* Both these Accounts are made up of

(3) The annual Expence of the *African House* is 2672*l.*  
*viz.*

	<i>l.</i>
Court of Directors - - -	1000
Mr. <i>Sparke</i> Accomptant - -	200
Mr. <i>Spence</i> Secretary - -	130
Warehouse-keepers - - -	100
Surveyors of Shipping - -	137
Accomptant's Clerks - - -	140
Secretary's Clerks - - -	60
Porters - - - - -	105
House-Rent - - - - -	200
Contingencies - - - - -	600
	<hr/>
	<i>l.</i> 2672
	<hr/>

*honey-*

*honey-combed* Cannon, old Stores, and unsalable Goods, kept upon Inventory, and charged at prime Cost: Likewise all their Cattle Slaves valued at their own Prices. As there were no Artillery sent out from 1729. to 1743. except a few Cannon, which could not swell the Account much above 500*l.* and as the Company cannot pretend that they had above 5000*l.* of saleable Goods in 1743. (there being almost no Goods on the *Gold Coast* at that Time) 'tis very evident they could not have near so much in 1729. because the Amount of their Effects in 1743. exceeds the Amount of their Effects in 1729. by 8515*l.*

The Second Article, not taken from the Company's Books, is 500*l.* *per Annum*, for the Expence of Ships carrying Materials for the Repairs of the Forts. I know the Company charge 1000*l.* *per Annum* on this Account, and likewise 2026*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* for Freight, and Insurance of Goods, sent out to maintain their Forts, both which Articles I reject, for the following Reasons:

The Company charge the Public Freight and Insurance in the Invoices of all Goods sent out to *Guiney*, whether intended for the Maintenance of the Forts, or to trade with at *Gambia*, for the Emolument of such Directors as have Interest enough to share the Returns. Consequently when they have Credit for the full Amount of these Invoices (as they have in my Account) they are allowed Freight and Insurance.



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furance. Therefore charging them again by themselves is absurd.

As to the Company's Charge of 1000 *l. per Ann.* for Ships and small Vessels attending the Forts, which their *Accomptant* says, he is well assured is less than the Truth. I answer, whenever a small Sloop or Schooner has remained any Time upon the Coast, the white Men aboard have been slipped into the Account of Cattle Charges, and charged to the Government as Soldiers at 27 *l. per Ann.* each, to swell that Account. When the white Men aboard such small Vessels died, their Places were supplied with the Company's Slaves at about Seven Shillings *per Month.* I have known one of them attend all the Forts on the *Gold Coast,* and not cost the Company above 60 *l. per Ann.* Therefore Mr. *Sparke* is in the Right not to descend to Particulars, for if he had, he would have fallen short, in some Years, at least 800 of his 1000 *l.*

From these Remarks on the above Account, I hope it will appear to every unprejudiced Reader, that I have been very far from exaggerating the Charge against the *African* Directors. On the contrary, had I free Access to their Books, I could state many Articles to their Debit, of which I have now but an imperfect Knowledge, and therefore have omitted them intirely. Yet from the most favourable Light in which I have represented the Management of those Directors, the Creditors may be con-

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convinced, that it was never owing to any real Distress of the Company, but to the insatiable Avarice of the Directors, that they have not all along been regularly paid.

It would not be difficult to point out the Methods by which a great Part of the Company's Debts were contracted, and to shew how some Men rose from 70 *l. per Ann.* to 20 or 30,000 *l.* Capital, without ever being in any other Business than that of the Company. The high *Premium* allowed by the *Court of Assistants* to one another, for advancing Money to the Company, will appear by their Books. The Practice of buying up the Company's Bonds at 30 or 40 *per Cent.* Discount by Brokers employed by the *leading Directors,* and then paying themselves out of the Parliament's Money, or the Returns from *Africa,* is well known to *some* who have felt it to their Cost. The Secrecy and Caution observed by cunning Men, to prevent their being detected in such iniquitous Transactions, must render it extremely difficult to convict them in a Court of Justice; yet I dare engage, that these Transactions, *dark* as they are, shall be fully detected to the Satisfaction of the *House of Commons,* if ever that *Honourable House* appoints a Committee to inquire into the Conduct of the Directors.

Though I could have wished that the Prayer of the Creditors Petition to the *House of Commons* had been for an Inquiry into the Conduct

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duct of the Directors, yet that Defect will certainly be supplied, as it is almost Treason to suppose, that the Parliament will load the Nation with any Burden to pay the Company's Debts, merely to save themselves the Trouble of an *Inquiry*, or yet that they will disregard the Complaints of *unfortunate Sufferers*, who desire nothing but Justice from *Those*, who, sheltering themselves behind a *Royal Charter*, are not to be come at by the Laws of the Land.

One would imagine that the Directors, conscious of all that I lay to their Charge, and finding their Reputation as low in Parliament as in the City, would at last give up a Trust they have so long abused. But this is inconsistent with their Character. *Some* have gone so far, that retreating may be dangerous: *Others*, and *Those* too of no small Importance in the present Direction, trusting to *that Impunity* to which, from Experience, they have found their *Folly* has intitled them, think they may go any Lengths. So that instead of disqualifying themselves, as they are always threatening one another; they have, by their Acquaintance with a Person (4) formerly an *Under-Manager* of the late *Charitable Corporation*, got a Scheme which is to enable them, if it takes

(4) Mr. Richard Wolley voted no Object of Compassion by the House of Commons April 1733. has had 200 l. from the Company for his Scheme, as will appear by Mr. Spence's Book of contingent Expences.

Effect,

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Effect, to abuse the Nation for many Years to come.

They expect to have an Act of Parliament for laying a Tax of 4 *per Cent.* upon the Profits of all *Pawn-brokers*, and the Produce of That to be appropriated to the Service of the Company for the Term of 32 Years. This Tax they compute at 26,000 l. *per Ann.* neat; 6000 l. of which is to be applied to the Payment of their Debts by Annuities for the said 32 Years, proportioned to the Sum due to each Creditor. The remaining 20,000 l. is to go for the Support of the Forts.

Whether or no this Tax be proper, is the Business of Parliament, not mine, to determine. But the Pretence of the Company, in asking so large a Sum, which is to set on Foot a Subscription for a new Joint-stock, is a proper Object of Inquiry.

Before I go further, I must observe, that the Forts in *Africa* can be supported for 10,000 l. much better than the Company has kept them for 15 Years past, at least. And the asking 10,000 l. more than enough, when we consider the past Conduct of *Those* who ask it, will convince an impartial Man, without any other Argument, that the Directors intend nothing but a *Jobb*, and look upon the Public, as their everlasting Dupe.

As to a new Company; The *English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Danes, and Brandenburgers*, have all tried to carry on the *Afri-*

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*can* Trade by Joint-stock Companies, and have all had the Mortification to miscarry. The Companies of *England* and *Holland* stood it out the longest, and made the greatest Figures. The *Latter*, by the great Tax upon *Portuguese* Ships; and the *Former*, by I do not know what *Fascination* in the Directors, who found fresh Subscribers, by lowering the Value of the Stock, till it was annihilated. These Companies, while they had any Trading-Stock remaining, were perpetually quarrelling. The Nearness of their Castles to one another, and the Avarice of each to ingross the whole Trade, kept up the Animosity. Both Parties applied to the Negroes, who sold Themselves to the highest Bidder, and made War, even to the Depopulation of several Countries near the Sea Coast, and, consequently to the great Prejudice of the Trade in general. During these Wars, such Crimes were perpetrated, as even to this Day the Negroes relate with Horror (1).]

Though

(1) The *Dutch* invited the present *King of Warsaw*, then a young Man, into their Castle at *Elmina*, in the most friendly manner, with an Intent, as they afterwards confessed, to murder him, in order to ingratiate themselves with his Enemy, the *King of Ashantee*, before whose Army he was flying. But, happily for him, his Counsellors would not suffer him to accept the Invitation.

The *English*, as they were the Rivals of the *Dutch* in Power, so were they resolved to be superior in Perfidy and Cruelty. The Company's *Director-General* had the Weakness, and the Wickedness, to invite a *Negro Prince*, who had fought our Battles, and was victorious over the *Dutch*,

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Though Loss of Money and Reputation was all that either Party got by these Wars, yet I should not be surpris'd to see the same Plan pursued by a new Company. The Spirit of ingrossing the whole Trade of the *Gold Coast*, would lead it to exterminate every black Nation whose Interest it might be to oppose such a Design. The Method of embroiling the Blacks with one another is still the same, and always practicable, whenever Those are found who will wantonly lavish away Money among them for that Purpose.

The National Advantage propos'd by the Advocates for a new Joint stock Company consists in this: That by having large Assortments of Goods at every one of the Forts, they will be enabled to buy Slaves much cheaper than Ships, as they can afford to give the

*Dutch*, to *Cape Coast Castle*. The poor Negro knew not that his Enemies at *Elmina*, to whom he had done infinite Mischief, had by their emissaries persuaded our General, that he was going to change Sides; a thing he never dream'd of. He therefore accepted the Invitation, was kindly entertained at Dinner by the General himself, who took his Leave of him in the most affectionate manner, and at the same time had Soldiers standing at the Stair-foot, to murder him whenever he should come down. These *Ruffians* obeyed their Orders, to the Scandal of the *English* Name, and Disgrace of *human Nature*. This Man's *Skull*, with some others presented us by our *black Mercenaries*, in these Wars, are yet preserved in our Castles, as Trophies of our Victories, and could they be sold for what they cost in getting them, they would enable the Company to do Justice to their Creditors.

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Negro

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Negro Merchants those very Goods which they require. Such is the Nature of this Trade, that Goods in Demand will, in the inland Markets, sell for more than double the Price of those very Goods when they are not wanted. Therefore, by giving the Negroes only Goods in Demand, the *African* Commodities may be purchased 50 *per Cent.* cheaper at Forts than by Ships, who carry an Assortment of every Thing, and must make one Article put off another.

I confess this Argument appeared so strong to me, when I first turned my Thoughts to this Subject, that I was fully convinced that carrying on this Trade by a Joint-stock, was most for the Advantage of the Nation. But when I became possessed of the *Materials* which compose this *little Essay*, I soon found Reason to alter my Opinion. Private Adventurers, who have large Fortunes embarked in this Trade, and close Connexions with Merchants in the Colonies, cannot easily give it up. If they should have a Joint-stock Company to contend with, their Ships must give higher Prices for Slaves, by which Means the Nation will lose by the Trade of the Ships, whatever is saved ashore, and consequently receive no Benefit by any such Company.

The *Bristol* and *Liverpool* Merchants, who are the principal *Guiney* Traders of *Britain*, always have, and ever will oppose the erecting a new Joint-stock Company. These People have,  
from

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from Experience, found themselves more or less oppressed, as the Power of the Company on the Coast increased or diminished. The diametrical Opposition of their Interest must always keep them at Enmity: And as the Directors never chose to do any thing by Halves, they have carried their Inveteracy against the separate Traders even to a *treasonable Height* (1).

If the present *African* Company succeed in their Application to Parliament, and raise a large Joint-stock (for a small one will not serve to keep their Warehouses thoroughly assorted) to carry on the Trade, what Reason can be assigned why they should not have the same Fate of all Companies hitherto erected? The Company from 1672. to this Time, have spent 1,434,737 *l.* 9 *s.* 11 *d.* They have had every Privilege which the extensive Power of the Crown, before the Revolution, could bestow. The Trade upon the Coast was in its Infancy when they were erected; the Advance upon every Article of *European* Goods was very great, yet nothing availed. Even during their exclusive Charter, they became Bankrupt, and

(1) In Queen *Anne's* War, our Company entered into an Alliance with the *French Company*, and agreed to give them Notice of any *English* Traders going into the River *Gambia*, that they might take them, which they did. In *Lord Godolphin's* Time, the *French Agent*, who concluded this Treaty, with the Directors, was sent to *Newgate*, and lay there about Four Months: It was with the utmost Difficulty that the Directors themselves escaped going along with him.

petitioned

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petitioned the Parliament for Liberty to sell the Forts to Foreigners. They tried every Method of carrying on the Trade, but without Success. While they sent Slaves to some Colonies, others were intirely neglected, inso-much that the *Virginia* and *Maryland* Merchants and Planters, as I have observed before, complained to Parliament in 1696. that the Company seized all the Ships and Effects of the separate Traders, who used to supply these Colonies with Negroes, and would not send so much as one Slave thither themselves. Their Slave-Trade was conducted according to the private Views of the leading Directors, who, sharing the Commissions with the Agents in the *West Indies*, suffered them to cheat the Company with Impunity. When weary of trading to the Colonies, they entered into Contracts here to furnish Slaves upon the Coast, but these were never fulfilled on their Part, occasioned sometimes by Wars among the Coast-Side Negroes, fomented by their own Agents, which put a Stop to all Trade, or by Wars among the inland Kings, which produced the same Effect. In short, nothing throve that they undertook, and by a Series of plundering, Misfortunes, and bad Management, both at Home and Abroad, they are most deservedly sunk to their present contemptible Situation.

What I have said has, I hope, sufficiently proved the following Propositions:

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That our Forts and Settlements on the *Gold Coast* must be kept, if we would preserve our Connexions with the Negroes, and carry on any Trade there.

That the *Royal African Company*, from their Incorporation to the present Time, have so grossly misbehaved as not to deserve any further Aid from the Public.

That a new Joint-stock Company might, while it subsisted, distress the separate Traders; be a *Jobb* in the Hands of a few Directors; turn Bankrupt in a little Time, and leave the Forts in as defenceless a Condition as at present.

I shall now endeavour to point out some Method to free the *Guiney* Merchants from all future Apprehensions of a new Joint-stock Company; to secure the Possession of the Forts to the Nation; to preserve the Trade free and open every-where to all his Majesty's Subjects, as well ashore as aboard Ships, and to reduce the Expence of all the Forts to about one half of what the Company now ask for that Purpose.

All this may be accomplished by committing the Care and Management of the Forts to the whole *Board of Trade and Plantations*, or to some of the *Lords of Trade* specially commissioned for that Purpose: That these *Commissioners* be empowered to erect that Form of Government upon the *Coast*, which is most likely to promote the general Interest of the Trade;

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Trade; to name proper Persons to go out and take Possession of the Forts: That these Persons be under their Orders, and be liable to be called Home, and legally proceeded against, when they shall neglect or act contrary to their Instructions: And lastly, That these *Commissioners* receive the Parliament's Allowance; vest it in proper Goods and Stores to be annually sent out to the Coast, at the easiest Freight.

Persons of such Rank intrusted with the Care of the Forts, could not be influenced by any private Views of their own, and therefore, in all Probability, would act with more Impartiality, than Merchants interested in the Trade. One *Clerk* or *Secretary* to answer Letters, give Orders for Goods and Stores, and see them shipped, would take off all the Drudgery of the Business, and yet not find Employment for half his Time. In short, this is the simplest Way of putting an End to this *troublesome Affair*; and would not only be attended with the least Confusion, but, according to the best Informations I have been able to procure, would be most agreeable to the Inclinations of the *Bristol* and *Liverpool* Merchants, whose Opinions ought to have great Weight with the Public, in every thing relating to the *African* Trade.

But if, notwithstanding what I have said, it should not be thought proper to put the Forts under the Care of the *Lords of Trade*, the  
next

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next best Method of disposing of them is, to commit the Management of them to *Those* most interested in their Preservation. For which Purpose all the *Guiney* Traders of *London*, *Bristol*, and *Liverpool*, may be incorporated into one Company, every Member paying a small Fine, not exceeding *Forty Shillings* at his Entrance: That the Members of this Country, at each *Town*, choose Three Directors, to be joined by Three nominated by the Crown, not *Guiney* Traders, to serve as *Moderators* in any Dispute, where the Interest of one *Town* may seem to interfere with that of another: That the Directors at the Out-Ports have Days to consider of any Measure before they give their Opinions; and have Liberty to vote by Proxy: That the Power of *this Company* be the same with that proposed to be vested in the *Lords of Trade*.

Either of these Methods would answer the National Purpose of preserving the Forts, which, as I have proved, is chiefly to prevent their falling into the Hands of our *Rivals* in Trade. But the present Directors of the Company, and their Friends, endeavour to represent the erecting an open Company as a chimerical Project, contrived by *Somebody* unacquainted with the Coast, and which can never be carried into Execution, for the following Reasons:

1. That an open Company, without any Trading-Stock, is incapable of making the *necessary Alliances* with the powerful inland  
F *Princes,*



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*Princes*, to secure to the Nation a Share of the Trade proportioned to the Number of our Forts.

2. That the erecting such a Company is contrary to the Practice of the *French* and *Dutch*, who intrust their Forts to *Trading Companies*, with sufficient Encouragement to support a *Military Establishment*, which they are left to adjust to the peculiar Circumstances of the Trade; but never suffer an independent Military Force to interfere in the Government of their Forts.

3. That the different Traders at the Forts, each endeavouring to get as much Trade as possible to himself, will raise the Value of *African*, and sink that of *European*, Commodities.

4. That the People at different Forts may have separate Interests, and can never be brought to act in Concert, as if they were all the Servants of one *Joint-Stock Company*, carrying on a Trade under one Direction.

To consider these Reasons against an open Company, in the Order they stand, I shall begin with the Alliances of inland *Princes*.

The *African Company* has made no Alliances with inland *Princes* in the Memory of any Man I ever conversed with. Indeed, when the *Dutch Company* and *Ours* had Money, they entered into Treaties with the Negroes living near the Coast Side, and paid them for cutting one another's Throats, to the great Detri-

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Detriment of the Trade in general. There is no King of great Power behind the Gold Coast, except the King of *Ashantee*, and if either the Board of Trade, or an open Company, was to lay out 50 *l. per Ann.* on some trifling Present to be sent him, they would find themselves more closely allied to him than any Joint-stock Company ever was. The Sound of *Alliances* with inland *Princes* may have some Weight with such as are Strangers to the Affairs of this Coast; but, for my own part, I know no good Purpose they can serve. No Treaty will prevent the Negroes from carrying their Commodities to the best Market. To be civilly used, and honestly paid, is all that they require: The Servants of the Government, or of an open Company, by having the whole Profits of their own Trade, would have greater Inducements to bear with the Caprice and Insolence of the black Merchants than the Servants of a Joint-stock Company, who by having large Salaries, and small Commissions, are not solicitous about the Increase of the Trade, but too often give way to their Passions and Resentments, and thereby banish the Negroes from the Forts, by their ill Usage.

As to the second Objection against an open Company, that it is contrary to the Practice of the *French* and *Dutch*, I answer, That the bad Success of all their Joint-stock Companies is a good Argument against our ever erecting another. The *French*, in 55 Years, had Seven



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*African* Companies, most of whom became Bankrupt soon after their Establishment; and perhaps they had had Seven more, and these all ruined too, by this Time, if Mr. *Law* had not united the Last, in 1719. to the great Company of the *Indies*. The *Dutch* Company have now no Trading-stock, their Forts are supported by a Tax on such *Portuguese* Ships as go upon the Coast, and by some Revenues they have in the *West Indies*. They grant *Liberty of Trade* to all their Factors, and therefore are in fact an *open Company*, and have been so for many Years, without finding any Inconveniencies attending such a Constitution.

If the Directors of our Company had ever paid the least Attention either to the Good of their Country or their own Characters, they would long ere now have followed the Example set them by the *Dutch* in this Particular. Instead of that, though they have had no Stock of the Company's to trade with for many Years, yet have they hitherto exacted an Oath of all their Agents and Factors, not to trade for themselves on any Pretence whatsoever, and agreed to pay their Salaries in Gold. But when these poor People went upon the Coast, they soon found, that, instead of Gold, they must take such unfaleable Goods as could be afforded them. The Goods given the Company's Factors for their Pay, are seldom so much in Demand, as even to purchase Slaves, with-

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without a Mixture of other Sorts: And when they have got Slaves in Barter, the Ships to which they must sell them can afford to give only a small Part of the Price in such Goods as will sell for Gold to purchase *European* Provisions. With the Remainder they must either buy more Slaves, or throw them away. This is the State of the Case when the Company supply the Forts with Goods: But, within these Eight Years, they have been without Goods upon the Coast, and the Factors were put to their Shifts, each to maintain his own Fort, which otherwise must have been abandoned. These People, when they came home, instead of being paid the Money so laid out, were obliged to go to Law with the Company, who defended themselves till sued to an Execution, then paid the Costs, and granted Bonds; by which means the Expences of the Forts swelled above 50 *per Cent.* higher than if the Parliament's Allowance had been honestly applied for that Purpose.

By this Oath, the Company's Servants were obliged to remain idle Spectators, while the *French* (settled at *Annamaboe*) and the *Dutch* ran away with the whole Trade of the *Gold Coast* during the late War. This Proceeding rendered us despicable in the Eyes both of *Europeans* and Negroes, insomuch that our Company's Servants were insulted by the *Dutch*, who could not conceal their Contempt of us, notwithstanding the great Advantages

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vantages arising to them from our Inactivity: Nay, even the very Masters of *English* Ships did not think their Gold and Elephants Teeth safe in the Custody of the Company's Agents at *Cape Coast*, but left them with the *Dutch General* of *Elmina* to be shipped home in the first *English* Man of War for Security. But to return to my Subject.

In Answer to the next Objection against an open Company, that it tends to sink the Value of *European*, and raise that of *African* Commodities, by proving greatly too much it has no Weight at all. It may be made use of against the manner of carrying on every open Branch of our Commerce. If all the Trade of *Britain* was in the Hands of Joint-stock Companies, with exclusive Privileges, foreign Nations must pay those Companies their own Price for such *British* Manufactures as they could not be without; while in Return they would receive rather less for their *own Produce* than at present. But what would be the Result of all this? Foreigners would chuse to have as little to do with us as possible, by which means our Navigation, and consequently our Naval Power would decrease, as these are inseparably connected with a free and extended Commerce.

In Answer to the last Argument against an open Company, that the People at different Forts, having separate Interests, can never be brought to act in Concert, like the Servants of

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a Joint-stock Company under one Direction; I reply, that the Servants of the *Dutch* Company are now in the same Situation. Every Person among them endeavours to procure as much Trade as he can to the Fort where he resides, and they find no Inconvenience nor Confusion attending it. They have a Council established at *Elmina*, consisting of the *Director-General* (who has a Commission from the *States* as well as from the Company) the *chief Merchant* or *Warehouse-keeper*, and five of the principal Factors of the Out-forts, which *Council* has Power to manage all their Affairs upon the Coast. Whenever any of their Factors at the Out-forts acts contrary to his Duty, a Complaint to the Council *cashiers* him, and puts it out of his Power either to do more Mischief, or to advance his Fortune.

Having obviated the Objections against an open Company, I shall now endeavour to shew by what Methods either the *Lords of Trade*, or *such a Company*, may govern the Forts more for the Interest of Trade in general, than any Joint stock Company has ever yet done.

In order to this, the first Step necessary to be taken, in my Opinion, is the erecting a Council at *Cape Coast*, with the same Power of the *Dutch* Council at *Elmina*.

That, immediately upon the Arrival of *Those* who shall be sent out to take Possession of the Forts, they shall assemble all the Negroes in every Town under our Protection, and, in the

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Presence of the *Officers* of the Men of War on the *Guiney Station*, and of the *Masters* of such Merchant-Ships as shall be there at the Time, declare, in the most solemn Manner, that the *African Company's* whole Right to all the *English Forts* on the Coast, is either vested in the *King*, or in an *open Company* (as that shall be settled), and that every *British Subject*, for the future, has full Liberty to trade where he pleases at all the Forts, whether ashore, or aboard Ship; and that all the *Officers* at these Forts, of what *Denomination soever*, are expressly forbid to do any thing tending to restrain *that Liberty*.

I appeal to all Men who ever lived on the *Gold Coast*, and who know how tenacious the Negroes are of their Privileges, and how fond of drawing every *little Concession* made them into a *Precedent*, whether such a Proclamation would not instantly render the Trade as free to *English Ships* at every one of our Forts, as it is now at *Annamaboe*, which is the Mart of the *Gold Coast*, and owes its Greatness chiefly to the impolitic Conduct of the *English* and *Dutch Companies*.

A *free Intercourse* betwixt our Ships and the Blacks living under our Forts, must necessarily produce a great Increase of Trade. The large Profits made by the Coast-side Negroes, as *Brokers* betwixt the Ships and the inland Merchants, would not only enrich them, but prove an Inducement to others to settle in our  
2 Towns,

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Towns, that they might enjoy the same Privileges, and have the Slaves, Gold, and Elephants Teeth, of their Relations in the Country, consigned to them. By this Freedom of Trade, more than by any new Joint-Stock Company, should we unite the Negroes of all the inland Nations to favour our Interests. Even the Blacks settled under the *Dutch Forts*, unless they were put upon the *same Footing*, would soon desert them, and come under our Protection. Thus, by the Greatness of our Negro Towns, the Consumption of our Manufactures and Rum would be so increased, that, exclusive of the *Slave-Trade*, the Public would be sufficiently compensated for any Allowance *it* might grant to support the Forts. These Towns would answer all the *commercial Purposes* of *British Colonies*, without ever becoming the *Graves* of any Number of *British Subjects*.

By this Constitution, the great Flow of Trade, which has been for many Years to *Annamaboe*, would be divided into as many different Channels as we have Forts, and consequently would lay the *French Trade* to this Coast under greater Disadvantages, than if we erected a new Joint-Stock Company, which would treat our own separate Traders as if they were *Frenchmen*, and would become Bankrupt in a few Years (7).

I cannot

(7) By a Report made to the *House of Commons*, November 26. 1690. it appeared, that while the Forts on the Gold Coast

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I cannot conceive any other Objections to an open Company with a public Allowance, or to the Government's taking the Management of the Forts into their own Hands, unless it be said, that the *Negroes in the Towns*, and the

Coast were in the Hands of the *English East India Company*, before granting the Trade in the Year 1663. to a Company with a joint Stock; and afterwards, when managed by that Company, after the Manner of a regulated Company, granting Licences to all Ships that would, to trade there; there were many more *English* Ships employed in that Trade, more of our Manufactures exported, and the *American* Colonies more plentifully supplied with Negroes, and at much lower Rates, than they have been when the Trade to *Africa* hath been carried on by a joint Stock.

While the *English*, in general, were thus at Liberty to trade to *Africa*, they did so undersell the *Dutch*, that the Factors at *Elmina* confessed, if that open Trade continued to the *English*, they should not be able to support the Charges of their Castles out of the Profits of their Trade, and must take other Measures, or leave the Coast. But since the Trade has been carried on by the *English* in a joint Stock, exclusive of all others, the *Actions* of the *Dutch* Company are risen to four times the Value to what they were when the Trade was open, and all the *English*, in general, permitted to trade there.

These Reasons produced the following Resolutions of the House of Commons.

RESOLVED,

“ That the Trade to *Africa* is best for the Benefit of the Nation to be carried on by a regulated Company.

RESOLVED,

“ That Forts are necessary for securing and carrying on the Trade to *Africa*.

ORDERED,

“ That a Bill be brought in upon the said Resolutions.”

But the Company, by their Intrigues, got a Stop put to any further Proceedings.

Vid. *The printed Journals of the House of Commons.*

*Factors*

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*Factors at the Forts*, will run away with all the Trade; and therefore the whole Scheme only tends to promote the Interest of a few *Individuals*, at the *public Expence*.

To this I reply, Whoever knows the Importance of the Gold Coast Trade to the Sugar Colonies, and attends to what I have said of the Necessity of keeping our Settlements there, to prevent any other Nation from taking Possession of them, and thereby driving us out of the Trade, must allow, that it is for the Interest of the Public to support and maintain them, tho' there should be no Trade carried on at any of them. It has likewise been shewn, from the Experience of past Times, that there is the highest Probability of a new Joint-Stock Company's oppressing the separate Traders, and in a little time sinking as low as the present. Then may another be proposed, and another; and so on, from *Jobb* to *Jobb*, till the Colonies have no further Occasion for Slaves. Whatever the Trade of the Forts or Negro Towns might be, it would serve to enable our Ships to finish their Voyages in a shorter Time, and would only interfere with the Trade of the *Dutch*, who would buy all Slaves, Gold, and Teeth, in the Absence of Ships, were we out of their Way. Likewise all the Profits made either by the Factors, or the Negroes, in trading with Ships, would centre here at last.

G 2

I have,

[ 44 ]

I have, at the End of this *little Essay*, annex'd an *Establishment* for every one of our Forts, except *Whydah*, which I am clear for abandoning. By being situated 3 Miles from the Sea, it is absolutely in the Power of the King of *Dahomy* to starve it into a Surrender when he pleases. This Man, by his Avarice and Cruelty, has almost depopulated his Country, and consequently destroyed the Trade. What little of that remains, is chiefly in the Hands of the *Portuguese* (8). These People have, from Experience, found, that the *Whydah* Slaves live longer in their Mines in *Brazil* than any others; and therefore have raised the Price of them above what is paid for Slaves in any of our Colonies, in order to prevent the *French* (who have a Fort there also), or us, from buying any, except such as they refuse. This they can easily afford to do, as a good Slave is worth 50 *l.* in *Brazil*, exclusive of the *King's Duties*. The *English* have not sent a Ship to purchase a Cargo of Slaves, at this Place, these 12 Years; and, as the Price still rises as they grow more scarce, 'tis probable we shall never send another; therefore all that remains for us to do, is to endeavour to get off the Company's Slaves, and abandon the Fort.

(8) The *Portuguese* have a Fort at *Whydah*, belonging to, and supported by, the King of *Portugal*, who grants Liberty of Trade to all his Subjects, each for himself, without any Company.

In

[ 45 ]

In my Establishment, I have allowed a sufficient Number of white Men in each Fort, to make it respected by *Those* who live under its Guns, and to defend it against any sudden Attack, but hardly enough to withstand a great Body of inland Negroes, though even that, as they have no Cannon, requires but little Force. By such an Establishment, not only the Lives of white Men, who die fast in *Guiney*, may be spared, but the Expence to the Public lessened, and the Forts rendered dependent upon each other for their Preservation, as they must all be upon that of *Dixcove* for their Repairs.

When an inland Prince intends to make War upon any of the Towns under our Protection, all the World is apprised of his Design at least Six Months before he puts it in Execution; therefore the People at *Cape Coast* have sufficient Time to send every thing necessary for a Defence. Besides, in these Cases, the Town's People go into the Forts, and assist in firing the great Guns; and they may always be depended on, as the Loss of the Fort *would involve them in utter Ruin*.

These Wars do not happen once in 10 Years, and the keeping up a great Number of Soldiers at all the Forts, on their Account, would only be throwing away Money, and Mens Lives, to no Purpose.

This some of the *African* Directors know so well, that, I dare say, though they had got the 50,792 *l.* which they once pretended was necessary

fary for the annual Support of the Forts, their Establishment would never in reality have exceeded mine, how formidable soever their *Master-Rolls* might have appear'd at the *Exchequer*.

In 1744. and 1745. the Directors made two Estimates of the annual Expence necessary for supporting their Forts, which were both sign'd by *their Accomptant*, and differ'd in the Sum of 9891 *l. 17 s. 6 d.* which is *more* than the whole Amount of my *Estimate*, and plainly shews they are either so ignorant of the State of their own Forts, or pay so little Regard to what the World thinks of them, that they are not at the Trouble even to *save Appearances* with the Public.

It is now industriously reported, for what Reason it is not difficult to *guess*, that the annual Charge of the Forts in the Hands of the Government would swell to above 80,000 *l.* But I hope the *Time is near*, when such little Arts will no longer protect the Directors against the just Complaints of their unhappy Creditors; when the *Cries* of the *Widow* and *Fatherless*, who have been exposed to Misery by their *insidious* Conduct, shall reach *Those*, who have a Right to inquire, and a Power to punish such as shall be found *Delinquents* in a *Manner* suited to their *enormous Crimes*.

*And*

*An Estimate of the annual Charges of supporting and maintaining the British Forts and Settlements on the Coast of Africa.*

In the River of *Gambia*.

JAMES FORT.

	<i>Sterling.</i>
1 Director, Paymaster, and Warehouse-keeper, } 200	
per Ann. - - - - - l.	
1 Deputy and Accomptant - - - - -	100
2 Clerks - - - - -	120
1 Surgeon - - - - -	100
1 Surgeon's Mate - - - - -	60
Table (Provisions being very cheap) - - - - -	200
1 Gunner and Armourer - - - - -	50
1 Carpenter - - - - -	50
1 Mason - - - - -	50
1 Cooper - - - - -	50
1 Lieutenant - - - - -	60
2 Sergeants - - - - -	60
20 Soldiers - - - - -	400
20 Men Slaves for the Use of the Fort - - - - -	120
10 Women Slaves - - - - -	30
Lights for the Fort's Use - - - - -	12
	1662

These Salaries to be paid in Goods, or in Gold, or Elephants Teeth, purchased with Goods at 70 per Cent. Advance (clear of all Charges); therefore in *Sterling* they amount to } 977

*General Charges in Sterling Money.*

1 Sloop of 20 Tons, and 1 Long-Boat to carry Water - - - - -	200
Gunpowder, Military Stores, and Castle Flags - - - - -	130
Medicines and Surgeons Instruments - - - - -	25
Tradesmens Tools - - - - -	10
Soldiers Cloaths, at 1 <i>l. 4 s.</i> per Suit - - - - -	24
Stationary Ware - - - - -	8
	397
The whole Expence of <i>Gambia</i> - - - - -	l. 1374
Carried forward, - - - - -	1374



[ 48 ]

Brought forward	-	-	-	Sterling.	1374
<i>On the GOLD COAST.</i>					
<i>Dixcove, from whence is carried the Timber for repairing the other Forts.</i>					
1 Chief	-	-	1. 100		
1 Writer	-	-	60		
1 Surgeon	-	-	60		
1 Carpenter	-	-	50		
1 Gunner and Armourer	-	-	50		
Sergeant	-	-	36		
8 Soldiers	-	-	1. 27	216	
12 Canoe-men	-	-	1. 6	72	
50 Men Slaves, Carpenters, Sawyers, and Labourers	-	-	1. 6	300	
10 Women Slaves	-	-	1. 3	30	
Linguist	-	-		12	
Lights for the Fort's Use, and Palm Oil for the Sawyers	-	-		12	
Canoes at Gold Price, 1 eleven hand, 1 five hand	-	-		16	
				-	1014
Sterling at 60 per Cent. Discount (clear of all Charges)					634

*Succondee.*

1 Chief	-	-	100		
1 Writer	-	-	60		
1 Gunner and Armourer	-	-	50		
1 Sergeant	-	-	36		
8 Soldiers	-	-	1. 27	216	
7 Canoe-men	-	-	1. 6	42	
10 Men Slaves	-	-	1. 6	60	
6 Women Slaves	-	-	1. 3	18	
Linguist	-	-		12	
Lights for the Fort's Use	-	-		6	
Canoes, 1 seven, and 1 three hand	-	-		10	
				-	610
Sterling at 60 per Cent. Discount					381

*Commenda.*

1 Chief	-	-	100		
1 Writer	-	-	60		
1 Surgeon for this Fort and <i>Succondee</i>	-	-	60		
1 Carpenter	-	-	50		
1 Gunner and Armourer	-	-	50		
1 Sergeant	-	-	36		
10 Soldiers	-	-		270	

Carried forward - - - - - 1.626 1.2389

[ 49 ]

Brought forward	-	-	-	Sterling.	2389
<i>Commenda brought forward</i>					
7 Canoe-men	-	-	61.	42	
15 Men Slaves	-	-	61.	90	
10 Women	-	-	31.	30	
Linguist	-	-		12	
Lights for the Fort's Use	-	-		6	
Canoes, 1 Seven Hand, 1 Three Hand	-	-		10	
				-	816
Sterling at 60 per Cent. Discount					510

*CAPE COAST CASTLE.*

1 Director and Paymaster	-	-		300	
1 Deputy and Warehouse-keeper	-	-		250	
1 Secretary and Accomptant	-	-		200	
Surgeon	-	-		150	
Table for These and Strangers	-	-		500	
7 Writers to supply the Forts in Case of Death	-	-	1. 80	560	
2 Surgeon's Mates	-	-	1. 80	160	
1 Armourer to act as Gunner	-	-		60	
1 Mason to inspect the Repairs of the Forts	-	-		80	
1 Smith, 1 Ship Carpenter, 1 Caulker, 1 Cooper	-	-	1. 50	200	
1 Lieutenant	-	-		80	
1 Ensign	-	-		60	
2 Sergeants	-	-	1. 36	72	
2 Drummers (Negro Slaves)	-	-	1. 6	12	
40 Soldiers	-	-	1. 27	1080	
1 Bom-boy	-	-		50	
Linguist	-	-		60	
3 Messengers	-	-	1. 9	27	
36 Canoe-men	-	-	1. 6	216	
100 Men Slaves, Tradesmen and Labourers	-	-	1. 6	600	
50 Women	-	-	1. 3	150	
Lights for the Fort's Use	-	-		40	
Canoes, 1 Thirteen Hand, 2 Eleven, 1 Seven, 1 Five, and 1 Three	-	-		50	
				-	280
Entertainment of black Visitors					5207

Sterling at 60 per Cent. Discount 3255  
*Annamaboe*, if the Negroes will suffer it to be rebuilt on good Terms (which I have the highest Reason to believe they will not) the same as *Succondee* } 381  
 H Carried forward 6535



[ 50 ]

	Sterling,	
Brought forward	6535	
<b>TANTUMQUERRY, a small Fort, or Factory.</b>		
1 Chief	100	
1 Sergeant and Gunner	36	
6 Soldiers	1. 27 162	
5 Canoe-men	1. 6 30	
10 Men Slaves	1. 6 60	
5 Women	1. 3 15	
Linguist	12	
Lights, for the Fort's Use	6	
1 Five-hand Canoe	5	
	—426	
Sterling, at 60 per Cent. Discount	266	
<b>WINNEBA,</b>		
The same as <i>Succondee</i> , with the Addition of a Surgeon	419	
<b>ACCRA, situated in the Neighbourhood of the Dutch and Danes.</b>		
1 Chief	100	
1 Writer	80	
1 Surgeon	80	
A Table, as this is an expensive Place	80	
1 Carpenter	50	
1 Gunner and Armourer	50	
1 Sergeant	36	
12 Soldiers	1. 27 324	
Linguist	12	
7 Canoe-men	1. 6 42	
20 Men Slaves	1. 6 120	
10 Women Slaves	1. 3 30	
Lights for the Fort's Use	6	
Canoes, 1 Seven and 1 Five hand	12	
	—1022	
Sterling at 60 per Cent. Discount	639	
<b>P R A M P R A M,</b>		
The same as <i>Tantumquerry</i>	266	
	L. 8125	

[ 51 ]

	Sterling.
Brought forward	8125
<b>GENERAL CHARGES on the Gold Coast, in Sterling.</b>	
Gun-powder	300
2 Sloops of 30 Tons each	600
Military Stores and Castle Flags	200
Medicines, and Surgeons Instruments	100
Soldiers Cloaths	150
Ground-Rents (instead of 450 l. charged by the Company)	125
Stationary Wares	40
Furnishing Limestone for Repairs of the Forts	250
	— 1765
Total Expence of all the Forts	L. 9890

About 2500 l. Sterling will be required at first, to supply the Forts with Artillery and Stores. But after the above *Establishment* is once complete, the *Savings*, by the Death of *white Men*, in this unwholsome Climate, will defray all the Expences of keeping it up.

F I N I S.

0204

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