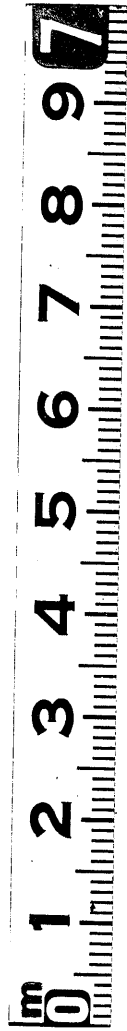
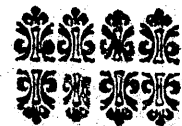


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CONSIDERATIONS
UPON THE
TRADE
TO
GUINEA.



LONDON;
Printed in the Year 1708.

NO body can doubt that Trade is absolutely necessary to the Well-being of *Great Britain*; 'tis the only Source of our Riches, the only Medium of our Greatness, the single Means of our being or our continuing to be a considerable Nation: By virtue of which we have made such a Figure in *Europe* of late years, and have had so large a share in great and publick Transactions. 'Tis that by which we subsist at home, and carry on the War abroad: in short, 'tis our All. No wonder therefore if our best Endeavours are constantly us'd to carry on this great Concern, and if all Hands and Heads are at work to improve and inlarge it. And notwithstanding the incredible Expence of the present War, could Men be persuaded to study the publick Profit more, and their private Gain less; would they be so honest as not to countenance or engage themselves

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themselves in a way of Trade or Commerce, whereby the Whole loseth, tho particular Persons get; we might still hope to carry on the War, till the Event should crown the Expectations of all honest Men, by a safe and honourable Peace.

Now the greater the Concern is to us, the greater ought our Care to be to preserve and improve it. In a long Course of War with a Prince potent at Sea, 'tis impossible to preserve without Loss all the Branches of our Trade, which extends it self in some measure to all Parts of the known World. Some of these Branches, of the greatest Import and Consequence, are cut off from us by the Union of the two Crowns: and we have suffer'd so much of late by the Consumption of our Bullion, and our Losses at Sea, that 'tis a matter of just Admiration that we are yet in a Condition to carry on any Commerce of Value, or to turn the Ballance of any Nation we deal with to our Side. But if a particular Branch can be found out where the Ballance is with us; if this Ballance can be augmented; if this Trade can be improv'd

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prov'd to a great height, and made a Bank and Supply to our Bullion, a great Advantage to the Merchant, and highly beneficial to the Publick: then surely this part of our Trade ought to be indulg'd and cherish'd, and all due Means and Care should be taken to cultivate and improve it; and our Legislators will make it part of their Care and Concern to encourage and protect it, and, if occasion be, to emancipate and set it free from any Clogs or Impediments; to inquire into the Constitution, Circumstances and Nature of this valuable Article, and to amend and regulate the Errors and Mistakes, and the gross and weak Management it labours under at present, so far forth as the *African* Company is concern'd in it. I must be understood to point all this while to the *Guinea* Trade, to which I shall intirely confine the present Discourse; and doubt not to make out what is hinted above concerning its Value and Advantage to *Great Britain*. In order to which I shall reduce what I have to say chiefly to the two following Heads, *viz. First*, In what respects the Trade to *Guinea* is or

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may become so valuable and advantageous. *Secondly*, By what Means or Methods this is to be effected.

1st. To find out in what respects this Trade is of advantage to us, it will be necessary to take a View of the several Parts it consists of; and under this Consideration must be reckon'd the Commodities exported, the Navigation, the Number of Ships employ'd in the Trade, the Value of the Freight of such Ships, the Import from *Guinea* and our *West-India* Colonys, and the Merchants Profit.

The Commodities exported from *England* to *Guinea* are chiefly of our own Produce: Of our Woollen Manufactures we export yearly *Thirty Thousand* Pieces at least, and all these fully wrought, dy'd and dress'd; as also large Quantities of wrought Iron, Guns, Swords, Knives, Gunpowder, Brass and Pewter: the working up of which employs vast Numbers of our People in several Parts of *England*. With these, to compleat the Cargo for *Guinea*, are intermix'd some trivial Merchandizes from *India*, the *Mediterranean*, *Holland* and *Sweden*. And thus the

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the yearly Value exported, in time of Peace, will, by a very modest Computation, amount to *One Hundred Thousand Pounds*.

The next Article to be valu'd is the *Navigation*, which can only be fix'd by way of Computation. It appears that since the Trade to *Guinea* has been laid open, there have been in War time about sixty Ships every year, and in time of Peace about one hundred, employ'd directly in this Trade; and that we may err safely, we will make the Computation so low, that the Value must necessarily exceed what we put upon it. We will suppose therefore that each Ship employ'd carries one hundred Tun, and that each of these Ships carries to the *West-Indies* two hundred Negros; the Freight of these Negros, in number *Twenty Thousand*, at Ten Pounds per Head, the usual Price, must amount to *Two Hundred Thousand Pounds*: and if we compute the Freight of these hundred Ships from the *West-Indies* at *One Thousand Pounds* a-piece, this will amount to *One Hundred Thousand Pounds* more. Besides, we im-

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port considerable Quantities of other Commodities from *Guinea*; as Camwood, Elephants Teeth, Wax and Gold, which in time of Peace may be valu'd at another *Hundred Thousand Pounds* per ann. And if we may be allow'd to take into this Account a year's Value of the Labour of Twenty Thousand Negros in our own Plantations, at Ten Pounds per Head; this will amount to *Two Hundred Thousand Pounds* more. Nor is this all: for it must likewise be consider'd that the first Hundred Ships, employ'd in transporting the Twenty Thousand Negros to our Colonys, cannot bring home half of the Sugars and other Commodities purchas'd by the Sale of these Negros; but that there must be employ'd at least another Hundred Ships of like Burden to assist them in this Service, the Navigation of which will also amount to another *Hundred Thousand Pounds* per ann. and the Merchant's Profit to the same Value. I might observe in this place the absolute necessity our Colonys are under to make use of such Numbers of Blacks in their Service, the *Europeans* not being able

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able to indure the Labour and Climate of those Countrys. I might take into this Estimate the Advantage we receive, by our being supply'd with Sugars, Tobacco, Cotton, Indico, and other *West India* Merchandizes, at lower Prices than our Neighbours can be; as likewise what Quantities of Gold and Silver we may gain by selling Negroes, and with them other Commodities to *New Spain*; and the Number of Ships employ'd to export from *England*, what we can spare of these Commodities, to our *European* Neighbours: and very considerable Articles these must needs be, and greatly do they contribute to the Ballance of Trade, and Support of the War; and all of them intirely depend on the Trade to *Guinea*. But I think this Trade, as above stated, considerable enough, without these Advantages, to recommend it self to the Care of the Publick; and shall therefore only subjoin the Account of the yearly Profit it affords us from the first mention'd Heads in the following State.

Exports

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Exports to <i>Guinea</i> —————	100000
Freight of 20000 Negros————	200000
Freight of 100 Ships from the } <i>West Indies</i> —————	100000
Teeth, Wood, Wax and Gold } from <i>Guinea</i> —————	100000
Merchants Profit and Insurance,	100000
Labour of the 20000 Negros in } the Colonys—————	200000
100 Ships from thence for } Freight only —————	100000
—————	
Amount of the yearly } Profit,—————	900000

And thus I hope the Valuableness of this Trade is sufficiently made out; nor do I in the least doubt but they whose Experience has given them any Insight into the Matter I am treating of, will judg this Computation to be much short of what the thing will bear, especially if we consider it under a Capacity of Improvement, freed from the Incumbrances it labours under, and set upon a new and enlarg'd

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enlarg'd Bottom: And how this may be effected, is the Subject of the second Inquiry, and the other Head of my Discourse. But before I dismiss the former, I crave leave to make one Observation on this Trade, which will greatly add to its Reputation, as well as to its Advantage; and O how happy should we be, if I could with the same truth affirm it of some other Trades carry'd on to a great height in this Nation. The Exports here are not Bullion and melted Coin, but the Produce of our own Country Manufactures, which employs thousands of Hands before we part with them; and the Imports are all useful, necessary and advantageous, and in no respect opposite or destructive to the Produce or Labour of our own People: which is a peculiar Glory to this Trade, and cannot be taken notice of without Pleasure and great Satisfaction of Mind to those who are engag'd in it. But I return to the second Point; wherein is to be consider'd, by what Means and Methods this Trade is to be carry'd on and improv'd.

Secondly,

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Secondly, And here I need not take up much time in Amusements and Projects, and in labouring a Point, which is so plain and obvious to a common Understanding. 'Tis well known, that in the Year 1672. when the *African* Company was erected, the Patent intrusted them with the sole Trade to a Coast of more than 6000 miles in extent, exclusive of all others. How they manag'd that Trust, may partly be evinc'd by the continual Complaints and Dissatisfaction of this Kingdom, and the Plantations, which they could not supply with a third part of the number of Negroes they wanted. These Complaints were so general, that they drew on an Examination of the matter in Parliament; and in the Year 1697. an Act pass'd for settling that Trade: whereby liberty was given to any of her Majesty's Subjects to trade within the limits of the Company, paying a Duty of 10*l.* per Cent. for this Privilege; which Duty, together with a third part of the Forfeitures, was to be apply'd to the maintaining their Forts and Castles only. And upon this foot, the Trade at present stands. Whether this
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is a right Bottom for so extensive a Trade, remains to be examin'd. In the mean time it is worth observing, that since the passing of this Act there has not been any Complaint from the Plantations, either of the Scarcity or the excessive Price of Negroes: To whose Care and Conduct this is to be imputed, will be seen by and by. But it is our task now to consider by what means this great Branch of Trade may be carry'd on, and improv'd to the best advantage. And here I shall lay down three Propositions, which I hope will determine the whole matter.

1st, That the present Company ought not to be intrusted with the sole Management of this Trade, nor any considerable Branch of it. Nor,

2^{dly}, Ought any other Joint-Stock Company to enjoy that Privilege exclusive of others. But,

3^{dly}, The Trade ought to be laid open, and a liberty given to all her Majesty's Subjects to ingage in it indifferently; the Incumbrance of 10*l.* per Cent. taken off, and the whole put upon an equal foot. Or if it should be thought proper to establish

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blish it under a Company, it must be such a one as that which deals to *Turky* or *Russia*; where every thing relating to the Trade is concerted and manag'd by the whole Body of Adventurers, and not by select Committees; where the whole advantage is understood, and the whole Profit accrues to each Adventurer, according to the Proportion of his Interest in the Trade; where there is no Mystery nor Stock-Jobbing; and where no Art can be practis'd, to the prejudice of the most Ignorant. And thus this Trade may be secur'd, carry'd on, and improv'd to the utmost pitch it is capable of. Under such an Establishment, *Great Britain* would always afford us Adventurers in abundance; the Stock would be as great as the Trade could admit, and the good Effects of it so visible, so certain, and so sudden, that I doubt not but a few Years would enable us to add several *hundred thousand Pounds* to the yearly Profit above computed.

1st, As for the present Company, they are so far from being in a Capacity to be intrusted with the sole Management of
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this Trade, or any considerable part of it, that if the Scripture Instance is to be follow'd, *even what they have shall be taken from them*: so unfit are they to manage the Whole, that they have forfeited All; and so unfaithful have they been in the little they possess, that I hope they never will be made Ruler over many things. We are told of Facts so strange, that if they be true, a Man would rather fancy they were Commissioners for *Tangier*, than Trustees or Managers of the Trade to *Guinea*; that their business was to demolish, not to build up; and to annoy, rather than to protect themselves and others. What else do they mean, when they suffer their Forts and Castles to lie expos'd to all manner of Insults, without Men, Ammunition, or Provisions; notwithstanding the great Fund appropriated to that purpose by Act of Parliament? What else is meant by their Agents being protected, if not rewarded, for open Piracys upon the *10 l. per Cent.* Ships and Cargoes? And what else by the Instructions given to their Servants, to hinder and disturb these Ships in their Trade,
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which they are bound to encourage and protect? Nay, even to deny them the Use and Protection of their Forts, which they have so good a right to both by Law and Purchase? But above all, what else is the meaning of Intrigues, nay even of Contracts and Leagues, made and carry'd on with an open Enemy and common Disturber of *Europe*, in a State of War with her Majesty and her Allys? I am abash'd to mention such dangerous Practices, the Guilt and Consequences whereof might make some Men blush for shame, and quake for fear. They engross the sole Advantage of their Forts to themselves, and yet provide not Goods and Merchandizes for their own Factors; but suffer very advantageous Parts of the Trade to be lost, and given up to Foreigners. 'Tis a shame for them to reflect upon the Condition they have brought themselves to, by their piteous Management and their undue Methods; how they are outdone, at least three parts in four, by those that allow them 10 *l. per Cent.* for their Liberty to Trade, notwithstanding their manifold Advantages above the other;

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other; how they have wasted their Stock, till they are reduc'd even to an Incapacity of Trading: And how should it be otherwise, when additional Stocks are voted so fast, one upon the back of another; and then these Stocks divided by unequal Distributions in Bottom-Rec Bonds; till at last they are forc'd to pay more yearly Interest for the Sums they have borrow'd, than the Stock they trade with amounts to? And if this be their Case, and such their Management, how unfit must it be to intrust the Concern of so valuable and necessary a part of our Trade to their hands?

2. Nor, Secondly, ought this Trade to be entrusted to, or manag'd by any other Persons whatsoever in a Joint-Stock Company: First, Because in that case there would be but one Buyer of all Commodities for Exports. Now the Exports to *Guinea* consist of such Variety of our own Productions, and so great Numbers of her Majesty's Subjects are employ'd in the Woollen, Brass, Pewter, and Iron Manufactures, and the Shipping that exports them; all which depend upon

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This Trade; that it must needs be highly imprudent to expose the Livelihood of so many People to the arbitrary Pleasure of a Joint-Stock Company, who in the Article of buying act as one Man, and in whose power it would be to ruin as many thousands of useful Hands as they please, by turning them out of Employment at once, upon any Caprice or Design of their own. Nor is this a groundless Supposition; for do but once grant it to be the Interest of such a Company to trade low, which may very well happen, what is now remark'd will certainly follow of course: Nor will that be the only ill consequence of the matter; for our profitable Exports and Imports, and our Navigation too, will at the same time be postpon'd, neglected, and laid aside, as often as it is their Interest to have it so. Now to put so great a part of our Navigation into the power of one Company, with the sole Trade of a Country of six thousand miles extent, a Trade capable of so great Improvements, and which, since it was laid in some manner open, has been so much enlarg'd, even in a time of War;

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a Trade, upon the enlarging and improving whereof depends the Welfare of our *West-India* Plantations, and our Trade to *New Spain*: Further, to capacitate and enable a Company of Men, by setting extravagant Prices upon Negroes in the Plantations, to advance the Price of the Produce of those Plantations; and thereby to set a general Tax upon such of those Productions as are and must be consum'd in the Queen's Dominions; and which is yet worse, by these means to hinder their being exported to our *European* Neighbours, as well as to lessen and sink the Customs: I say, to put all these Consequences, and many others, into the power of a Joint-Stock Company, is a *Mistake* that I trust we shall never fall into a second time. It has been try'd once already to our cost, in the time of King *Charles*; but we hope for better things in the Reign of Queen *ANNE*. Secondly,

This Trade ought not to be committed to a Joint-Stock Company, because of their Management. And waving for the present all others, let us here take

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a short View of the Managers and Management of the late and present *African* Company ; and we shall find how very diligent some of them have been to get the power of managing into their own hands ; and the use they made of it shew'd that they wanted only this single Opportunity to carry on their private Interest : nor could they be stop'd in this Pursuit by the Damage thereby occasion'd to their Body, as well as to the Publick. And we are not much to wonder at this. The truth is, where such great Trusts are plac'd, there will be great Opportunitys of private Advantage ; and where the Carcass is, there will the Eagles be gather'd together : and if these Trusts be not devolv'd upon uncommon Persons, and Men of self-denying Principles, the Temptation will be too strong to be resisted, and Conscience must truckle to Gain. Thirdly,

This Trade seems by no means to be calculated for a Joint-Stock Meridian. 'Tis plain the Company can make nothing of it, and their Stock and the Trade it self had gone together, and been
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lost long ago, had they not been supported by their best Friends, the 10*l.* *per Cent.* Men, of whom, together with their own Duty, they have receiv'd 100000*l.* for the last eight or nine years Trade ; and yet they cannot hold up their Heads, nor is their Stock really worth one Farthing *per Cent.* Now to what a condition must our Plantations have been reduc'd for want of Servants, had they wholly depended upon the Company for Supplys ? And on the other hand, what Advances have the private Traders made, in Exports and Navigation ? And how seasonably and effectually have they supply'd the Plantations with Servants, under the Difficultys of a War, and the Opposition of the Company, with the Charge of 10*l.* *per Cent.* upon their Exports ? insomuch as that the Proportion of Trade carry'd on by the Company, and the private Traders, will upon Examination appear to be no more than as one to four or five. Which plainly shews that an open Trade has as direct a tendency to inlarge and improve, as the other has to cramp and

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destroy whatever is valuable in this Article. Besides, it would not seem impolitick only, but very hard and injurious, to exclude so great a number of Men from a Trade, to support and advance which, they have run such Hazards, and suffer'd so great Losses. Nor can it be imagin'd that any of these Persons, whose Experience has taught them better things, will ever be persuaded to come into a Joint-Stock, where their Estates are to be manag'd by People that neither know nor design any thing, but how to pursue their private Profit, and cry up their Stock in *Exchange-Ally*. And how little soever these sort of Men lay to heart the Good of the Publick; when the *Government* once begins to take the matter into their Consideration, when the *Legislature* interposeth in the Dispute, let the Men of Art and Trick appear, dress'd up in Bear-Skins, or in what other Garb they please, and with all the Numbers they can muster; I conceive they will scarce adventure to expose themselves before such a Tribunal, or to provoke the Men they have injur'd to prove what they have
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laid to their charge, at the peril of such Costs as are proper to be tax'd in this case. Fourthly,

There is yet another Reason why this Trade may not be carry'd on by a Company, exclusive of others; I mean, that common Justice and Respect we ought to pay to our Brethren of *North-Britain*, and her Majesty's Subjects in the Plantations, and indeed to the People of the United Kingdoms in general. Can it be imagin'd, that the *North-Britons* had not an especial eye to the Advancement of their Trade, when they united with *England*? And must the first material Step taken, after the Union, be to tie up their Hands, and deprive that Nation of a possibility of trading to *Guinea*, and consequently to the *West-Indies*, to any good purpose? Or is it consistent with Justice and the Reason of the thing, that the rest of the Subjects of *England* and the Plantations, who now trade thither, should be excluded from the Benefit of it? Why? What Evil have they done? How have they forfeited this Right? I hope at least they shall not be depriv'd of it in

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complaisance to the *Royal African Company*, who are modefter Men, I dare say, than to ground so general a *Bill of Exclusion* upon the rest of Mankind, on the account of their *Merits* and *Services* only. In short, were Trade to be thus confin'd, thus cramp'd and manacled, to what purpose should the Gentlemen of *England* put their Sons Apprentices to Merchants, and give large Sums of Money with them, to teach them the Art and Mystry of Merchandizing, when all the profitable Branches of it are lock'd up from them by Monopolys, and intrusted to the Management of Joint-Stock Companies; in which an Old Woman may manage her Concern with equal advantage, and upon the same foot with the most knowing Merchant? No, no, we have had enough and too many of these Experiments already; and surely the Traders of *England* are now old enough to act for themselves, without the Incumbrance of such *Trustees* and *Guardians*. And for these Reasons it is humbly hop'd the Trade to *Guinea* will never be entrusted to such hands.

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3dly, It remains now to proceed to the third Point, which seems to be evident enough, and consequent from what has been said, *viz.* That this Trade ought to be laid open, and a liberty given to all her Majesty's Subjects to ingage in it indifferently, and upon an equal foot, as the Trade to *Turky* or *Russia* is carry'd on.

And as this Method would effectually do the Business, so I humbly apprehend it need not any other Restrictions or Regulations than what those Trades are under. If I be mistaken, the Wisdom of our Legislators, before whom this Matter is like to be brought, will soon set me right. The Consideration of this Article of our Trade is of great concern and moment to the Publick; and I doubt not but all things relating to it will be maturely consider'd and adjusted, and finally settled to the satisfaction of all honest Men, by our Glorious Queen and Parliament. To them the Whole is humbly and freely submitted; to them must be refer'd the Pretensions of the Company, and the Assertions on the other side: To them likewise must be refer'd the Value of the

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the Company's Forts and Castles, which have made so great a Noise without Guns, and consum'd so much of their Treasure in *Africa*, that they have not a Penny left in *England*. The Use and Necessity of these Forts and Castles too will doubtless be consider'd, tho they have serv'd to no other purpose hitherto, but to hinder the *Ten per Cent*. Men from their lawful Trade, they not being in a Condition to resist an Enemy. The Report of the Lords Commissioners for Trade will likewise fall under a Parliamentary Consideration. And indeed those honorable Gentlemen have taken such Pains in this Matter, so nice and curious have they been in examining all the Allegations on both sides, and the Report is drawn up with such Exactness and Impartiality, that whensoever the Parliament will please to call for it, I dare take upon me to say, it will justify my present Undertaking, and verify the most, if not all the Suggestions and Allegations here laid down, and give such a Light and Insight into the whole Matter, that the Publick will be kept no longer in the dark about it.

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it. And when the naked Truth appears, this Report, and the Endeavours of honest Men encourag'd by the Parliament, will be happily instrumental to settle this Trade upon its right bottom, to the great Advantage of this Nation, to the Increase of our Exports, our Navigation, and our Wealth; and at length get us a more sure footing in the Trade to the *Spanish West-Indies*; which is of such mighty Concern to us, and which is not to be acquir'd, or possible to be attain'd, without putting that to *Guinea* under a right Management.

I should here put an end to the Reader's Trouble and my own, were I not given to understand, that some Persons of Consideration are not thorowly satisfy'd with the Legality of the Trade to *Guinea*; I mean that part of it which consists in the buying and selling of Negroes. It will not be improper therefore to inform these Gentlemen, that all the Blacks that are purchas'd by us, are either such as have by their Crimes, or their Misfortunes, forfeited their Lives or Libertys to the Government they are under;

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under ; no Person that is at his own Disposal, no Person that is able and willing to support himself, no Person that is *sui Juris*, is sold or bought for a Slave in *Guinea* ; such are there protected from that Fate as well as in other Countrys, it being strictly prohibited, and altogether unlawful, by the Laws of that Place, to buy or sell a Freeman, or any other Person that can support and maintain himself by his Labour and Industry. And if such a one should be trepan'd on Board, the Kidnapper is immediately hawl'd to Justice, and oblig'd to redeem the Injur'd Person, or to go a Slave in his room himself. Those therefore who are sold are such as either for their Crimes or for Debt are condemn'd to Death or Slavery by the Laws of their own Country ; for as they are very severe against Malefactors, so do they never fail to adjudg a Man to Slavery, if he happens to be so far indebted as to be unable to pay what he owes, or refuse to make Satisfaction to his Creditors. By these means, and by the multitude of Captives taken in War, vast numbers of Men
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are always under the Sentence of Slavery in those Countrys : and these are the Persons we buy in *Guinea*, and sell to our Plantations in *America* ; where they change their Country only, and not their Condition, unless it be for the better ; and that doubtless most of them do : for setting aside the Thoughts of Liberty, which few of them can attain to, and not many of them aspire after, in all other respects they are more free, and have more Ease ; they work less, and live better than Thousands of Labourers in *England*, or any other part of the Queen's Dominions. For my own part, I cannot but think it a charitable and commendable, as well as a lawful Undertaking, to buy a Slave in *Guinea*, where the Severity of the Government has subjected him to a Discipline, that Flesh and Blood can scarce go thro ; and to transport him to one of our Plantations, where he retains the Name of a Slave, but performs only the Work and Business of a Servant ; and from a Captive, a Criminal, or insolvent Debtor, forfeits his Liberty instead of his Head ;
and

and by this means being inur'd to Labour, at last, without injury to himself, he becomes useful and profitable to his Master, and beneficial to the Publick.

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F. I. N. I. S.

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