

222-1



0306

A  
S U P P L E M E N T  
T O T H E  
Graſier's Advocate, &c.

W H E R E I N

Is attempted to be computed (in a *new* and more *ſatisfactory* Method than has hitherto been offered) the *leaſt Quantity* of Wool, that may be ſuppoſed to grow yearly in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*; the *Quantity* of it, that *now is*, and the *moſt* of it that probably *can* be manufactured within the ſame; how much, conſequently, is, at preſent, Exported unmanufactured.

Shewing further,

The Neceſſity (*beſides preventing that illicit Practice*) of ſome temporary Expedient, at leaſt, on Behalf of the WOOL-GROWERS and LAND-OWNERS.

W I T H

Some Thoughts, on that Head, offered to the Conſideration of *Gentlemen* in the *Landed Intereſt*, and particularly to ſuch of them, as are

M E M B E R S O F P A R L I A M E N T.

---

*Probability is, to Us, the Rule and the Guide of Life.*  
Dr. SOUTH.

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the *Oxford-Arms*, in  
*Warwick-Lane.* MDCCLXII.

---

A  
S U P P L E M E N T  
T O T H E  
Graſier's Advocate, &c.

**I**N an Affair, ſo difficult and intereſting, as is that of concerting proper Means, not only to prevent the illicit Exportation of Wool, but *ſo to prevent it*, as to put the fair Dealer, in every Branch thereof, upon a Foot that ſhall be quite equitable; however, ſo as not to be particularly injurious to any; it is not to be wonder'd at, if, out of many Schemes offered, no one ſhould meet with general Applauſe, or, indeed, be approved, in every Part, by almoſt *any one*, who is not himſelf the Author of it. It will be very well, if from all that hath or ſhall be wrote and ſaid upon the Subject, the Legislature ſhall receive Light enough, and collect Hints ſufficient, to form a tolerable good one; the very beſt they may, at laſt, pitch upon, will, I fear, afford Room for Amendment; as it is to be hoped that ſecond Thoughts, and particularly Experience, may, in Time, bring the Deſign to a reaſonable Degree of Perfection.

And,

And, if *Country Gentlemen*, in this Case, would trust more to their own Reason, and less to the Dictates of *some*, who, notwithstanding their Opportunities of superior Knowledge, yet (as lying under the Prejudice of false Maxims, and the Biass of private Interest, different from the common publick Good) may hope to find their Account by misleading *others*, this great Affair would have a better Chance of succeeding, to the Wishees of all whom it most nearly concerns, and whose Interest, at the same Time, is the true Interest of these Kingdoms.

What seems to be most embarassing in it, is *Uncertainty*, as to the Truth of some material Points *alleged*, and *Danger* from the proposed Expedient, leading to a more exact Knowledge of them. But where Certainty is not to be had, Probability must be accounted a good Guide; and, upon all sufficient Occasions, a justifiable Ground to proceed upon.

The Points I speak of, as, altho' uncertain, yet very material, are

1. The Quantity of Wool grown yearly, upon an Average, in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.
2. The Quantity, at present, exported unmanufactured.
3. The Quantity we may be supposed capable of manufacturing, vending, and consuming.

And these are Points very fit to be considered; because if the *first* should, upon Enquiry,

quiry, be found to exceed the *last*, to any Degree, no Arguments are necessary to shew that it will deserve the Notice and the *Care* of Parliament. This Subject, and these Points have been treated of already \*, according to some Assertions and Calculations †, as if they were as undoubtedly true, as they have been, without Hesitation, affirmed; and from thence have been, I think not illogically, drawn some Conclusions of no little Consequence ‡.

*Which Assertions* are, 1,000,000 Packs of Wool, or thereabouts, grown yearly, upon an Average, within these Kingdoms.

500,000 of them, at present, smuggled into foreign Parts, to the Injury of our woolen Trade, in Proportion.

The *Calculations*, — 20,000,000 Souls the extreme Number of *British* and *Irish* Inhabitants.

*Three* Packs of Wool Employment for near 600 Persons a Week; consequently, by a reasonable Computation ||, the whole Wool of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* Employment for about 5,000,000 Persons.

Whence was inferred, “ That unless *One* “ *Fifth*, at least, of the whole Number of “ Persons, could be set apart for the Manu- “ facturing of Wool; the illicit Exportation “ of it being stopped, as proposed, by a Re- “ gistry (and as, in all Reason, it should be) “ a Share

\* *Graier's Advocate*, &c. † *London Draper, Gee*, &c.  
‡ *Graier's Advocate*, p. 15, 20. || *Ibid.* p. 18.

[ 8 ]

“ a Share of it, without some Remedy, or  
 “ Contrivance to help it, must be unfold, to  
 “ the Detriment of the Grower and Land-  
 “ owner, in Proportion, as the *superfluous*  
 “ *Part* should be to the *whole Quantity* of  
 “ Wool grown. — But that if a *Fifth* of  
 “ our Hands was really necessary to manu-  
 “ facture the Whole, and not a *Tenth*, or  
 “ however not more than a *Tenth*, could be  
 “ spared for that particular Work; we should  
 “ in that Case have immediately twice as  
 “ much Wool grown as we could manufa-  
 “ cture, be our Demands abroad, for wollen  
 “ Goods, what they would; the certain  
 “ Consequence of which would be, that the  
 “ *Growers* (without the Aid of Parliament)  
 “ must, half of them, the very first Year,  
 “ not sell their Wool at any Price; the rest,  
 “ only at what Price the Buyer should think  
 “ fit to give them.

*This Conclusion* (admitting the Premises to be true) being at once so *certain* and *important* too; as they don't admit of *direct Proof*, at the present, one Way, or the other, I propose to try the *Probability* of them, as they shall fall in with my Design of reviewing this Subject, under these three Heads; *viz.*

*The Necessity of any new Laws for preventing the illicit Exportation of Wool.*

*The Expediency of an universal Registry, for that End; and the Propriety of some Schemes proposed for that Purpose.*

The

[ 9 ]

*The probable Consequences of a Scheme effectual to the Design.*

The Necessity of *new Laws*, for preventing the illicit Exportation of Wool, supposes, not only the *Inefficacy* of the *old ones*, but, in general, the Unfitness of exporting Wool unmanufactured; it supposes Quantities to be *clandestinely* exported, to the Injury of the Nation; that Injury to be indicated by a real Decay of the woollen Trade; not only as vouched by Clothiers, &c. of this or that Place, but confirmed by the Testimony of credible *British Merchants* (*for such Evidence may reasonably be insisted on*) who have found themselves (*as is alledged*) rivaled and under-fold, at foreign Markets, by woollen Goods, of foreign Manufacture, though made up with a Mixture, at least, of *British* or *Irish Wool*.

For, if that is not the Case, and the woollen Trade is not under a real Decay; the Nation is imposed upon with false Representations, and the Grower greatly abused, in the Price of his Wool; which, for some Years last past, has been at a lower Ebb than before was ever known: *So far we are certain*; and what renders it *probable*, to those who are not in the Trade, that present Complaints, about it, are too well founded; and that the Suspicion entertained, of great Quantities of Wool being exported unmanufactured, is not groundless, is, because, *bad* as the woollen Trade has been reported, for some Years last past, *low* as the

B

Price

Price of Wool certainly has been, for the same Term, *the Wool of England has been, nevertheless, from the Grower, as universally, and almost as early bought up, as when it sold at a much better Price.*

This is a material Circumstance; and thus therefore, I think, we may fairly reason about the Matter. If the woollen Trade was so good to consume our Wool, without exporting any Part of it unmanufactured; not only the Manufacturer could have no Cause of Complaint, but Wool must have been and continued at a much higher Price, than, of late Years, it has been sold for. On the other hand; If it was really bad, and our Wool, though not manufactured, was not exported; the Stock of it, long before this, must have been such, as would have reduced the Price of Wool much lower than it has been. Nay (as is sometimes experienced in the Case of Hops) a great Share of it would not have been saleable, at *any Rate*. I may add to this, That Wool, having, within these two Months, advanced in Price, at the same time that Worsted and Yarn is said to be as much a Drug (at least) as before; it follows from hence (all things considered) that Quantities of it, *unmanufactured*, are *probably* exported, and particularly to *France*; because, besides the Credibility of the Thing, That is generally alledged. How great that Quantity is, and whether or no Accounts, of that Sort, may

may not have been exaggerated, is another Consideration, depending upon the *Quantities grown and manufactured* within these Kingdoms, *Guernsey, Jersey, &c.* For, *as much as the latter falls short of the former, so much* (as we have seen) may we fairly conclude, one Year with another, to be exported, *unmanufactured*. — But then, in order to know how much that is, we can, as the Case stands, only have Recourse to *Probability*.

Now, whether the whole Quantity of Wool grown within these Kingdoms, upon an Average, is more or less than 1,000,000 Packs; however, what is the exact Quantity, nothing less than an universal Registry can ascertain; and yet there are other Means, by which we may arrive at such a Degree of Certainty, as, that, tho' we can't determine the exact Quantity, we may be morally assured, persuaded, at least, that there does grow annually a *certain, particular, very large Quantity*, at the least, whatever more. In order then to come to a certain Degree of Knowledge *in this Kind*, I ask myself — If the Wool of *Great Britain* is equal to the Land Tax, now that it is at *4s per Pound*? And answer, not only in the Affirmative, that I think it is, but that I think it more than equal. I must confess that I argue here from my own Ideas, and that my Knowledge, in this Case, is not the most extensive. — But so far as it does reach,

I know few Villages (for most of them have Sheep) where the Value of the Wool grown and shorn, is not more than equal to the Land Tax; while, in many of them, it exceeds it, *many Times*, from *two to seven or eight fold*; and that too, in a Part of the Kingdom, where they are supposed to be *highest rated* to the Land Tax. And with Regard to *Cities* and *great Towns* paying largely to it, tho' depasturing few or no Sheep, I consider the vast Number slaughtered there for the Subsistence of the People; the Skins whereof, with other Skins of Sheep brought to their Markets, valuable *chiefly* for the *Wool* of them, amount to a large Sum, probably, not much inferior to the Sum of the Land Tax charged on such *Cities* and *Towns* respectively. And therefore, computing the Wool shorn, in the Villages of each County, with the Wool of the Skins of Sheep slaughtered in the *Cities* and *Towns* of the same, and those brought to their Markets; I think the whole Wool of each County equal to the whole Land Tax of the same; however, for the most part. And, by the same Way of Reasoning, that altho' the whole Wool of *some few particular Counties* should be thought to come short in Value of the Sum of the Land Tax, on those Counties; there are *others* wherein it so notoriously exceeds it, as that, putting them all together, throughout *England* and *Wales* (*Middlesex, London,*

*London, and Westminster* excepted) the whole Wool of them must be more than equal to the whole Land Tax upon them. Indeed the Case of *Middlesex, London* and *Westminster*, with the Inns of Court, and Palaces of *Whitehall*, and *St. James's*, is very particular, as paying 326146*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.* near a sixth of the whole Land Tax of *England* and *Wales*, without depasturing, perhaps, a single Sheep, or, however, very few in Comparison. Nevertheless the annual Slaughter of Sheep and Lambs there, I have seen computed at 2,025,000, the Skins whereof, if valued for their Wool, at 1*s.* each, (which I think no extravagant Computation) amount to 101250*l.* which Sum, tho' it is not a full third of the Land Tax, the Deficiency we shall see amply made up from *Scotland*, where (if there be any Truth in the *Draper's* Computations particularly) grow annually 182,000 Packs; rating which at a Price I shall pitch upon, at a Medium, for the whole Wool of *Great Britain*, it will, in Value, be found to exceed *Scotland's* particular Share of the Land Tax of *Great Britain*, by above 700,000*l.* which is more than twice the *whole Sum* of the Land Tax charged upon *Middlesex, London* and *Westminster*. Whence, upon the whole, I conclude the Growth of Wool in *Great Britain* to be considerably more than equal, in Value, to the Sum of the Land Tax of *it*, which, now that

that it is 4s. per Pound, is the Sum of 2,038,080l. 3s. 5d. And, if so, from the Knowledge of that Sum, and from the known Value of Wool, may be induced the Quantity of it, (*the Thing wanted to be known*) so far as to be able to say, there is, *probably, so much, whatever more there may possibly be.*

Now considering the Prices, at which the Growers, for several Years last past, have sold their Wool, I think the extreme Price, at a Medium, to have been 4l. 10s. a Pack; consequently, the Wool of *Great Britain* (so far as this Method of computing, by the Land Tax, is any Rule) will be found not less in Quantity than 500,000, *certainly*; but *more probably* 600,000 Packs, or upwards.

Here let me observe, that, if I have over-rated the Wool at 4l. 10s. a Pack, the Consequence will be, that the Number of Packs are just so many more, by how much it is over-rated. On the other hand, if I have under-valued it, thence it follows, that the Proportion of long and high priced Wool exceeds that of short and a *lower Price*, which is an Argument of still *more Wool* in *Great Britain*; forasmuch as, where it most excels in *Quality* (generally speaking) there it abounds most in *Quantity*, and most over-runs the Land Tax; altho' the Tax, in Consequence of a higher Rent in those Places, amounts to the largest Sums, Acres, &c. compared. And as the

the Draper, with other Calculators, have supposed the Wool of *Ireland* not to be much less than 400,000 Packs; hence may be inferred, with a good Degree of Probability, as has been asserted by several \*, 900,000, or 1,000,000 Packs in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, upon the lowest Computation.

If then *Great Britain* alone probably produces more Wool, than is now manufactured, within the three Kingdoms (which is a Point I desire to take for granted at present, till I have Occasion to shew the *most* we probably *can* manufacture) it is next to Demonstration, that a very large Share of Wool, *British* and *Irish* (to the Amount of 500,000 Packs, or thereabouts) is, at present, yearly exported *unmanufactured*; which, being contrary to many known Laws, as also to the Interest of the Nation, implies the Necessity of some new ones. And because the old are very strict and severe, and yet have proved, *so far*, ineffectual; hence may be deduced the Expediency of an *universal Registry*.

Such a REGISTRY, in short, to make it answer the END of preventing the *illicit Exportation* of Wool (considering what a happy Genius some have for eluding the Laws of their Country, which improves upon them, in proportion to the Advantage to be had by so doing) as shall take *all* the Wool of the

Three

\* The Draper, Gee, and others.



*Three Kingdoms* to publick Account, immediately from the Grower, and from the Felmonger, &c. and keep this Account in so exact and so strict a Manner, as to be able not only to know, if all the Wool grown is fairly wrought up; but so far as it is not, to see from time to time, that the Remainder is forth-coming, and where it is not forth-coming, to know at whose Door the Blame lies; and there to fix an irremissible Penalty accordingly. To this End, some Schemes have been proposed; One (Mr. Gee's) a Survey and a Registry conducted altogether, in the Way of the Excise; another (*from the Lords of Trade, &c.*) said \* to have borrowed many of its Regulations from the Excise, and all that is valuable or rational from Mr. Webber's Plan; the Author of which *modest Remark* seems to insinuate, that nothing, analogous to the Excise, can be tolerable, in a Scheme, for this End, nothing valuable or rational, which is not a Part of Mr. Webber's.

But, besides that all who think, in any Degree, regularly, about a Thing of this Kind, must fall into one another's Sentiments in some Points; are we, in this Case, to be governed by *Sound* or by *Sense*? By the latter surely, as it happens to be a Case of Importance. If then we regard *Things* rather than *Names*; we shall find all that is truly valuable,

\* Gentleman's Magazine, March 1742.

valuable, for the Purpose, in Mr. Webber's Scheme, or in any other that has been, or shall be offer'd, must partake strongly of the Nature of the Excise Rules. For what is it we are to understand by Excise, more than a Duty? but a Method of taking and keeping publick Accounts; a Method, perhaps, the most exact and best regulated that can be; in the Execution of which, not an Officer can neglect his Duty without being discovered; nor be discovered without being punished: The very Method, therefore, which ought to be taken for guarding our Wool, if we are, *in earnest, desirous to prevent the Runnage of it.*

But the Objection is, That Excisemen are said to be *Tyrants, Spies, Intruders, &c.* Nor can any Institution be wholly unexceptionable; at least, there can be none, at which some or other will not take Exceptions. What Mr. Webber's Moderation might prove, in the Course of his Administration, I pretend not to say; should be sorry to see (what he contends for) the *Executive Power*, though in the single Article of Wool, for a Time limited, transferr'd from our *Sovereign Lord the King to Him and Company.* He graciously condescends indeed, to be willing to be under the Inspection of Parli-  
C ment,



ment, as often as the Parliament is so disposed. And which, I pray, of his Majesty's greatest Officers is not so? *His Scheme* gives all manner of Latitude to *Spies*, that greatest Objection to the Excise; inasmuch as the whole of his Proceedings, which must comprise the whole Account of every Person's Dealings (particularly of his Stock, &c.) is to lye open to the Examination of all Persons indiscriminately; provided they do but pay Rates to the Poor. Supervisors in Abundance! Intrusion indeed he in some Measure disclaims; and because that is to be avoided, as far as it is possible, I should be for adopting a Part of his Scheme for that very End and Purpose, and grafting it into which soever shall take Place.

To secure the Fidelity of Officers, and the Attention of the Government, in the Management of a Registry; Mr. *Gee*, and some others, have been of an Opinion, for laying a Duty upon Wool. A Duty also, and that a very large one, no less than 5 s. per Pound, Mr. *Webber* would have charged upon it, immediately from the Grower; not indeed to be levied, except in Case of undue Secretion; but *in Terrorem*, to secure the Fidelity of Growers and Dealers in Wool. I think then this Point might very well be compromised between the two Projectors last men-

mentioned. Let Wool (according to Mr. *Webber*) upon registering, from the Grower, be charged with a Duty of 5 s. a Pound, and, when first sold, pay (according to Mr. *Gee*) v. g. 1 d. per Pound, remaining charged with 4 s. 11 d. When reduced into Yarn or Worsted, the like Sum again, and stand charged, suppose 4 s. 10 d. and, when completely manufactured, be fully discharged; and, upon Exportation, if that shall seem needful, receive a Premium equal to what it paid in Wool and Yarn. Here would be a real mutual Check, by which the *Honesty* of the *Dealer*, the *Vigilance* of the *Officer*, and the *Attention* of the *Government* would be sufficiently provided for; and all the unpopular, disagreeable Part, of searching, intruding, &c. render'd, in a Manner, unnecessary; inasmuch as it would be greatly incumbent on the *Traders*, to expose their Dealings in *such a View*, as should convince the *Officers* that all was *right* and *fair*; on the *Officers*, only to take Care, not to be deceived by *false Appearances*.

Thus, in Conjunction, with other good Rules, such, for Instance, as have been delivered from the *Board of Trade*, &c. arriving at a *SCHEME effectual to the Design*; Our Eyes turn next, in Course, to the Consequences of it; which depend upon the

*Quantity of Wool grown, and the Quantity we are capable of manufacturing.* If the former is more, by one third, at least, than the latter, it requires no great Sagacity to see, what must be the Consequence (without some special Provision) of absolutely preventing the Exportation of it unmanufactured. Either all Rules must be broke through, and the whole Design frustrated, or the Country, the grasing Part, most of them, undone, to the very great Injury, if not the Ruin of Multitudes besides.

Now it is certain, that (except what is made into Hats, which is a Sort of Wool, the Draper particularly has not brought into his Estimate of 1,000,000 Packs yearly grown) we can manufacture no more than we can spin. And spinning of Wool, whether into Yarn or Worsted, is a Work peculiar to the lower Class of People; chiefly to Women and Children; and that chiefly in Villages. And, though the Work may be forwarded or hinder'd, there is a certain Pitch, beyond which it cannot be strained. Other necessary servile Offices, for Instance, must not be forsaken, or neglected for it. Persons are not to be pressed into the Service, nor tasked in *this Work*, as the Children of *Israel* were, in theirs, by the *Egyptians*. If Wages are too much lowered, the Work  
flags;

flags; if they are too much advanced, it defeats the End (which is, to carry cheap to Market, so as not to be underfold by Foreigners) and instead of promoting Dispatch of Business, would be found only to procure the Workers a larger Share of Holidays. So that *Nature*, in *this Case*, will not yield so far to *Art*, as in *some others*.—But they, whose Situation and Circumstances make the Employment of Spinning proper for them, may, with reasonable Usage be kept to it; and further it cannot be carried, to answer any Purpose.

*Twenty Millions* are, by all Accounts, the extreme Number of Souls in *Great Britain* and *Ireland*; few, I think, carry their Computations so high by two or three Millions at least. It has been said \*, that a *Tenth* of the People cannot be spared; and I verily think they cannot (from other Employments, all which it is impossible to enumerate, and that great one of Husbandry unnecessary to particularize) to the Business of the woollen Manufacture. — But if a *Tenth* could be supposed to contribute some Part of their Time that Way, I think I may say that a Part equal to a *Twentieth* is the most that can be afforded; however, that 7 or 800,000 Spinners, or the Work of so many as are  
equal

\* *Grafiar's Advocate*, p. 19.

equal to that Number, is the most that can possibly be accounted of; and Four Pound *a Week*, upon a Medium, as much as may be expected from each Spinner (considering how many of them will always be Children and Learners); which Number, at which Rate, accounting, by a reasonable Computation † of 40 Weeks complete Work, upon an Average, in the whole Year, will be found not to dispatch a much larger Quantity than about 500,000 Packs in the Year.

Although then there is no arguing minutely about Things, wherein we are so far from mathematical Certainty; the Probability is, That *Great Britain alone* does not only produce more Wool yearly, by 100,000 Packs, or more, than is now manufactured within the *Three Kingdoms* (which is what I had before taken for granted; and the Consequence of which is, according to what has been said above, and agreeable to the Assertions ‡ of other Writers, 4 or 500,000 Packs smuggled, at present) but that it produces, in Reality, *full as much*, at least, as we can hope to work up within the *Three Kingdoms*; the Consequence of which is, to speak within Compass, and to make large Allowances for Miscomputing, a Surplusage of

† Grazier's Advocate, p. 18.  
‡ The Draper, Gee, &c.

of 300,000 Packs, beyond what we can probably work up by *proper Hands*. For it would be a Jest to think of banishing other laborious Arts, equally useful and gainful too, from the mechanick Parts of these Kingdoms, to make room for enlarging the woollen Manufacture beyond its natural Extent.

What then is to be done? *The Consumption of our Wool*, and the *Employment of our Hands*, though *two* distinct Points, ought to be considered but as *one*. The Master Manufacturer may indeed get Riches, while the Grower of Wool starves; but that would not turn to the Account of the *Publick*, in the End. The Nation is equally concerned for both. So far as we have Hands to work up our Wool, and can vend and consume it, when manufactured; so far the Exportation of Wool, upon any Terms, ought to be restrained; and the Smuggling Trade should, by all means, if possible, be suppressed. But if, after that, and all convenient Hands being employed, in the woollen Manufacture, the Surplusage of our Wool should yet prove considerable; it would be a very bad Circumstance, requiring some immediate Remedy; otherwise very great Inconveniences must ensue. It behoves *Gentlemen*, therefore, especially

cially the *Owners* of such Land as is properly grazing, or which affords Pasturage for any Number of Sheep, to consider well what they should *do* or *expect* in that Case. To expect Rent from their Tenants, would be to *require Brick without Straw*; and to receive none, would, perhaps, be imposing as hard a Task upon another Class of People; I mean, their Tradesmen; who, in course, must bear hard upon the Merchant; by which means, the Evil would soon become epidemical, diffusing itself through the whole Mass of the People of these Kingdoms.

But, surely, between two Extremes, there must always be some proper Medium. Though we can neither work up all our Wool; nor, in Policy, ought to let it go abroad, *at Pleasure*, much less suffer it to be smuggled; which is having *no proper Gage* upon, receiving *no due Advantage* from, it. Though it should not be thought true (what has been said \*) that the *French* can afford to give 78 *l.* a Pack, rather than not have it (which if they could, there would be no Doubt of their paying the high Duty mentioned † of 40 *l.* a Pack for it); yet as Foreigners

\* Gee's Impartial Enquiry, &c.  
† Grafier's Advocate.

(we may easily believe, from the *extraordinary Pains taken*, and *great Risques run*, for the sake of smuggling it to them) are willing to have it, at no small Price; nothing to me seems more plain, than that, *under the Circumstance* of a REGISTRY *exactly taken*, and *strictly kept*, a Quantity, permitted to go abroad unmanufactured, might be *so limited*, and the *Duty* upon it *so adjusted*, as that it should be no Injury to the *British* woollen Manufacturer; certainly, upon the Whole, no Injury to the Nation; but the best that could be done, all Circumstances considered; at least, a *good temporary Expedient*. For though it should be conceived possible, so to manage, in time, as to be able to manufacture *all*, or the greatest part of the Wool grown in these Kingdoms; considering that the Practice of smuggling Wool has been (as is said) growing upon us for some Years, and our woollen Manufacture declining accordingly in proportion; as many Hands, in every Branch of the Business, must be supposed, for that Reason, to have left the Work, for some other Way of Life, and, in a measure, to have unlearned what they before knew and practised; as many, for the same Reasons, must have been kept from learning and entering

tering into the Business, who, otherwise would have been bred up to it; it follows, that the sudden Revulsion of so large a Share of our Wool, as is, at present, not improbably, said to be exported unmanufactured, must throw so extraordinary and uncommon a Quantity upon our own Hands, as (if not helped by some means) shall be a *fatal dead Weight* upon the GROWER.

We have, indeed, from the Laws made from time to time, for preventing the Exportation of Wool unmanufactured, been so long accustomed to look upon it as a Thing absolutely pernicious; that, to offer any other Opinion, may be thought ridiculous, if not criminal. But though, so long ago as when we grew but 50,000 Packs, and sold it to the *Flemings* at 40 *l.* a Pack (a Sum equal to 200 *l.* now) it was judged, and really was great Policy, to keep it at home, and introduce Manufacturers, in order to reap the Fruits of their Labour; the Case, it may be considered, is very different *now* from what it was *then*. Our Quantity of Wool is greatly increased, and all manual Arts in proportion; *not so*, the People whose Situation is proper for spinning of Wool. For, though the People of *Great Britain* may have increased

creased equally with most other People in *Europe*; yet most *Villages* (in *England especially*) as well as many *Cities* and *Market-Towns*, the *first* particularly, have sensibly depopulated, to no small Degree, in this and the last Century. I say *sensibly*, and *in no small Degree*: Witness (as any one may recollect) the very great Reduction of the *Number of Houses*, and the Reduction of the *Number of Persons in Family*, in the remaining Farm-Houses of all perfectly inclosed Lordships; the proportionable Reduction in all Lordships *inclosed in part*; and even in Lordships uninclosed, the Memory or Tradition of a greater Number of Houses and Families than at present, confirmed by those infallible Tokens, the *Marks of the Plough*, upon large Tracts, converted from Arable to Meadow or Pasture Land. Whence it follows, that whatever the Increase of People is, in *this Kingdom*, it is chiefly *in and near LONDON*, where the cheap Work of spinning Wool cannot be carried on to any considerable Purpose, if at all.

But if it shall be said, that all Reasoning about the *Quantity* of Wool grown in these Kingdoms, and *what* we are capable of manufacturing, is too precarious to build upon; a safe Method, and in which there will be no Difficulty, seems to be a *short Bill*,

[ 28 ]

*Bill*, merely, for taking an Account of the Stock of Wool in Hand, and of this next Years Growth (in *Great Britain*) to be laid before the Parliament, at their next Meeting, in order to gain *one certain Point*, from which to form some Judgment about the whole Quantity yearly produced in *Great Britain and Ireland too*. Comparing which with the Exports of our woollen Goods, and our supposed home Consumption; thence may be, more assuredly, inferred the Quantity of Wool now ordinarily smuggled, and what Regulations, in that Case, the Nature of the Thing will bear. The Consequence of this need be a Delay, but for a short Time, of a Remedy; and that, in order to fix upon such a one, as shall be most effectual and proper to the Occasion, all Circumstances taken into Consideration.

Or, if nothing less will satisfy, than an immediate Registry, such as will, in effect, take all the Wool of this Kingdom so far into Custody, as that it must either be wrought up within the Year, or (without some other Expedient) lie dead upon the Hands of the Grower; I see but two possible Ways of securing him from that very great Inconvenience: *One*, by contriving and erecting a *Bank*, at convenient Distances, in every County, for purchasing all such Fleeces-  
Wool

[ 29 ]

Wool as shall remain upon the Hands of the Grower at *Michaelmas*, at some certain Price (to be fixed by competent Judges, Sworn Appraisers, for the Purpose) according to the comparative Goodness of it; as, suppose, from 10 to 18 s. or from 9 to 16 s. *per Tod*. *The other* (if this last should be thought to be attended with too many Difficulties to be carried into Execution) is that mentioned elsewhere\*, of suffering a *limited* Quantity to go abroad, at the *highest Duty* it will bear, in order to raise a Fund (besides other good Purposes) for buying up and destroying such remaining Part of Wool in the Growers Hands, as shall be found superfluous.

But, if it be said, that the Grower ought rather to take the Chance of the Inconvenience of one Year, till it is seen how the Thing will issue; depending upon Parliamentary Relief, if found necessary, for the future. I reply, that, although the Wisdom and Justice of the Legislature may, in this and all other Cases, very well be depended on;—yet, *such* are the Circumstances of *most Wool-Growers*, especially in *Countries properly grazing*, not to admit of the *possible* Inconveniences of *one Year*; for that the *poorer Part* (who are not a few) if they cannot dispose of  
their

\* Grazer's Advocate.

[ 30 ]

their Wool, at *some Price*, for ready Money (almost as soon as it is shorn) are in the utmost Distress, for want of such Money; and by much the major part of the rest (if they cannot receive Money for their Wool by *Michaelmas*) are disabled from *paying Rent* to *their Landlords* at that Season. Some indeed, in the largest Dealings, and best Circumstances, can trust their Wool to *Lady-Day*. — But, if these are disappointed, at that Time (I speak of the Generality) either their *Landlords* must be without Rent at *Lady-Day*, or their Lands be untenanted, or their Tenants without Stock; which, in Effect, would prove much the same to the LAND OWNERS; WITH WHOM, *therefore*, I rest *this Case of the Graziers, &c.* as a Matter of *no small Consequence* to — THEMSELVES.

F I N I S.