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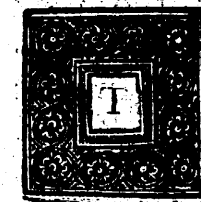
SOME X
THOUGHTS
 ON THE
Interest of MONEY in General,
 And Particularly
 In the **PUBLICK FUNDS,**
 WITH
R E A S O N S
 F O R
 Fixing the same at a lower **RATE,** in both
 Instances, with Regard especially to the
LANDHOLDERS.



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S O M E
 T H O U G H T S
 O N T H E
Interest of Money in General,
 And particularly
 In the P U B L I C K F U N D S, &c.



THE Proposal for redeeming the publick Funds, and reducing the Interest of the Debts charged on them, from 4*l.* to 3*l.* *per Cent.* which was offer'd to the House of Commons in the last Sessions of Parliament, was a Matter in which the Public was so greatly concern'd, as well as the private Proprietors of those Debts, that 'tis no wonder it became the common Topic of Discourse, and engag'd all Parties, both in Town and Country, in the Dispute on one side or other. In the City of *London*, or from some People there, it met with an unkind Reception, and such a sort of Treatment as neither the Scheme nor the

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Author,

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ness of the Necessaries of Life, which already have, or hereafter may come to pass, have such an Influence on Fee-Simple Lands, that the Proprietors will have an immediate Advantage, by an Advance in the Price if they sell their Interest, and if they keep it by a Rise in their Rent; tho' this Latter may require some Time, and proceed by Degrees not easily perceptible. The Author illustrates his first Position by some easy and familiar Instances, and from thence proves the Truth of it, I think, in a very plain and obvious Manner; but as the Consideration of the Interest of Money, and the Influence it may have on the Value of Lands of Inheritance, either in the yearly Rent or total Produce on Sale, was not the Point which the Author had principally in View, I intend here purposely and more largely to consider that Matter, and have something farther to offer, which, as I apprehend, puts it beyond all Contradiction. If the Premises are true, and the Difference of the Price of the Necessaries of Life, in different Ages, depends on the intrinsic Value of the current Money, and the Premium to be given for it on Loan; I shall make no doubt about the Inference, that the Decrease of the Value of Money in its intrinsic Worth, or in its Premium on Loan, will advance the Price of Land, both in its annual and total Value; for the same Cause will produce the same Effect.

That the Price of these Things is greater now than it was, suppose, in the Times of
Henry

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Henry the Fourth, or in any Reigns precedent, when a Pound of Money in Tale was a real Pound of Silver in Weight, or something near it, is a Fact that no Man will controvert; and is supposed, or otherwise there could be no Debate about the Causes of it. The Author of the Essay asserts then, that one of the Causes of this Variance, is the Difference between the real Value of a Pound of Money in Specie now, and in former Times; and since in a Pound of Money in the present Specie, there is only a third Part of the Silver which was in the ancient Money; that the Price of Things on this Account must vary in an equal Proportion. But as this Variance in the Specie, can operate no farther than to make the Price of Things now to be treble the former Price, he accounts for the rest of the Increase, from the Difference in the Interest of Money at the one Time and the other. He computes then, on a Supposition that the Interest of Money was at 15 *l. per Cent.* in the Times of *Henry* the Fourth, and now at 5 *l.* that the Interest being then three Times as much as it is at present; that the Price of Things now must be at treble the Rate at which it was formerly on that Account; and in the whole be at nine Times the Rate. As to the Change in the real Value of the Coin of the Kingdom, at the several named Periods of Time, it having been in a treble Proportion, there can be no Doubt but it must have alter'd the Price of Things, of which it was the Measure, in

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that

that or the like Proportion; otherwise we must say that one Pound of fine Silver is not as good as another Pound of fine Silver; or that when it is cut into 62 Pieces 'tis of more Value than when cut only into twenty. But as to the second Cause, or rather Measure, of this Difference in the Price of Things, *viz.* the Decrease of Interest from 15 *l.* to 5 *l. per Cent.* the Author has more Adversaries than perhaps he was aware of when he wrote his Treatise, more at least than he has thought fit to take notice of. I have added here, that the Decrease of Interest is the Measure of the Increase in the Price of Things; for that the Cause of the Decrease of Interest, whatever that be, may more properly be said to be the Cause of the Increase in the Price of Things; and the Decrease of one to be the Measure of the other: Whether the Author had not seen Mr. *Locke's* Discourse on this Subject; or whether he thought that Gentleman's Notions not inconsistent with his Position, or that his Way of Reasoning was not conclusive against it, I need not say; let that be as it will, I intend here, (after I have alledg'd what I think proper to confirm and corroborate the Author's Position,) to consider the Notions of that Gentleman, and his Arguments to support them, so far as they do, or may seem to, contradict the Author's Position.

The Position in the Place before cited, is this: That the Decrease of the Interest of Money is one Cause, or rather Measure, of the

the Increase in the Price of the Necessaries of Life; from the Times suppose of *Henry* the Fourth, or from any other stated Time to this, or to any other stated Time; and that they always accompany and are in Proportion to one another. In Consequence of this, supposing the Silver Money current in *Henry* the Fourth's Time, in Tale and Weight to have been the same, and the Money in Silver now current, to be in Weight only a third Part of what it then was; that the Increase in the Price of Things arising from thence must be treble; and, supposing the Interest of Money then to have been 15 *l. per Cent.* and now to be 5 *l.* only, that the farther Increase in such Price must be treble the Second; and the present Price in the whole be nonuple the Ancient one.

Let us examine now whether the Matter of fact, or how far the Matter of fact is agreeable to this Computation; and here we shall make use of, and rely upon Bishop *Fleetwood's Chronicon Preciosum*; where we have a very particular Account of the Price of Corn and other Necessaries of Life, collected from Manuscripts as well as printed Books, for the 600 Years last past; and his Authority in this Matter, I believe no one will contest. His Lordship, having the Times of *Henry* the Sixth in his View, is more exact and particular in that Reign, and tells us, *p.* 104, that about the Year 1434, 5 *s.* 4 *d.* seems to have been the usual and common Price of a Quarter of Wheat;

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and *p.* 105, that from the Year 1440 to the Year 1460, he never found Wheat above 8 *s.* the Quarter; and, *p.* 129, that the common Price of Wheat, at a Medium for the twenty Years between 1666 and 1686, was 2 *l.* 6 *s.* 3 *d.* and for the twenty Years between 1686 and 1706, was 2 *l.* 5 *s.* 9 *d.* I observe, that in 1434, and so on to 1460, which was in the Reign of King *Henry* the Sixth, a Pound of Silver in Weight, was coined into and current at thirty Shillings; and in 1666 and so on to 1706, such a Pound of Silver was cut into and current at 62 Shillings: And therefore, if the way of accounting for the Difference in the Price of Things assigned by the Author of the Essay be a right one, then the present Price to the former Price should be in the Proportion of two to one, on Account of the Variation in the intrinsic Value of a nominal Pound; and, supposing the Interest then to have been 15 *l.* and now 5 *l. per Cent.* the additional Price on the latter Account should be treble of the first advanced Price; and the present Price in all, should be sextuple the former Price: And this in fact appears to be the Proportion as near as can be. The former Price of a Quarter of Wheat was 5 *s.* 4 *d.* to 8 *s.* and if we take a Medium 'tis 6 *s.* 8 *d.*; six Times 6 *s.* 8 *d.* is 40 Shillings, as the Price of it now: And this, at a Medium and for common Years, may well enough be said to be the present current Price of it.

I must take notice here, that this which I have computed as the proportional Price of
Wheat,

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Wheat, is the very same at which the Bishop had stated it, for the two Periods of Time mentioned; and in Truth, I had made my Computation and fixed it at this Rate, before I had observed in what manner and at what Rate his Lordship had stated it. To this his Computation of the Price of Wheat, *p.* 166, he adds, that he has good Reason to believe that Beef, Mutton, and other common Provisions of Life, were six Times as cheap in *Henry* the Sixth's Reign, as they have been for these last 20 Years. In this Treatise he undertook only, and it was sufficient for his Purpose, to collect and compute what were in fact the Prices of Commodities, at these two different Periods of Time, and how far they differed one from another; for from thence solely he might conclude, as he does very justly, that 28 *l.* or 30 *l. per Annum* cannot now be accounted a greater Estate, than 5 *l. per Annum* was heretofore between 1440 and 1460; for the real Value of an Estate, is just so much as it will produce towards the Maintenance and Support of its Owner. 'Tis a Thing very probable, that a Parcel of Land which was formerly let for 5 *l. per Annum* might produce as much Corn, or feed as many Sheep and Oxen, as a Parcel which is now let at 30 *l. per Annum*, and then they are evidently of equal Value; for that is finally determined by the Quantity of the Fruit which the Land will yield, and not by the meer Rent which is computed by Pounds that are only nominal.

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The Bishop does not there consider, or attempt to account for the Causes and Occasions of this Difference in the Price of Things; and yet, though it was not purposely his Design, he has assigned one Cause of it in Effect, the very same, and in the same Proportion as I have done. He says, *p.* 166, that in the Reign of *Henry* the Sixth, there were 30 Shillings in a Pound of Silver, whereas there are now 62; that an Ounce of Silver was then at 2 s. 6 d., and is now at 5 s. 2 d.; so that 5 *l.* in Money did then contain 40 Ounces, and now does not contain full 20 Ounces; from whence he concludes, that 5 *l.* in the Reign of *Henry* the Sixth, was somewhat of better Value than 10 *l.* is in these Days. As for the rest of the Difference; or what should be the Reason why 5 *l.* in those elder Times, should be of equal Value not only to 10 *l.* but to 30 *l.* in our Times; for this he does not undertake to give any Account, but contents himself with alledging in fact, that the Price of the Necessaries or Conveniencies of Life is such, that we must now give the greater Sum for the same Provisions, which might in the former Times have been purchased by the less Sum.

The Case being this, that in *Henry* the Sixth's Reign, a Person might with 5 *l.* in Money in Tale, or 40 Ounces of effective Silver, have purchased a certain Parcel of the Necessaries of Life; and now, for a Parcel in Quantity and Quality the same, he must pay 30 *l.* in Tale, or 120 Ounces of effective Silver,

Silver, or somewhat thereabouts: Since this is evidently the Fact, the Author of the Essay has asserted, that this Part of the Increase in the Price of Things, is to be accounted for from the Decrease of the Interest of Money: And since the Increase of the one bears so close a Proportion to the Decrease of the other, I cannot but think that such Correspondence does strongly confirm the Assertion.

That this Part of the Increase in the Price of Things, has not proceeded from the difference between the real and nominal Value of Money at the different Times, is evident, because that Distinction, *quoad* this Part of the Increase is out of the Case, and we have supposed and shown, that three Pounds in real Silver, or something near it, are now given for the same Commodities, as were formerly bought for one Pound of real Silver. Besides, the Price of the common Necessaries of Life, has increased since the Times of Queen *Elizabeth*, though the Silver Coin has received no Alteration since her Reign; but the Interest or Price of Money, has decreased a Moiety since those Times. For this Reason the Advance in the Price of these Things, within these last 150 Years, may be imputed to the decrease of Interest, or to that Cause which has produced the decrease of Interest; but there's no room to impute it to the other, no such Cause having ever existed during that Time.

Having

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Having brought down the Matter to this Point, that three Pounds of real Silver now, will go no farther at Market, in the Purchase of the common Conveniences of Life, than one Pound of real Silver would have gone 300 Years ago; if we inquire from whence this Change proceeded, I believe it will not be controverted but that it has proceeded from a greater plenty of Silver; and I am of Opinion, that the very same Cause which has produced the lower Price of Silver, or which is the same Thing a higher Price of the Necessaries of Life, has in the main produced a lower Interest of Money. Silver, as a saleable Commodity, has the same Property as all other Things bought and sold, and the Price of it is governed by the greater or less Plenty of it; with this Difference only; that Silver does not, but most other vendible Things do, admit of great Alterations on a sudden.

'Tis very certain, since the discovery of the *West-Indies*, which was in the beginning of the Reign of our *Henry* the Seventh, that Silver and Gold has flown into all the Countries of *Europe*, so as to have caused a much greater Plenty of these Metals in these Parts of the World now, than there had been in the Ages precedent. Whether we in *England* have had such a share of them as to make the present Quantity of them, either in Bullion or in Specie, to be just treble the Quantity of them in former Ages, is a matter of much more Difficulty than I will pretend to determine. However,

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ever, since 'tis obvious that this must be the Proportion of the Increase of these Metals, if that Increase is the occasion of the Decrease of the Value of them, and 'tis evident, that the Decrease in the Value is in that or some such Proportion; it seems to be no unreasonable Conjecture, that the Increase of those Metals has been in the like Proportion.

Mr. *Locke* says indeed, that there is ten times as much Silver now in *Europe*, as there was the first of *Henry* the Seventh, and gives that as a Reason, why a Bushel of Wheat which was then sold for 6 *d.* is now sold for 5 *s.* 'Tis very probable he is mistaken in computing the Quantity of Silver in *Europe*, or at least in *England*; for if he is right, in supposing that a Bushel of Wheat the first of *Henry* the Seventh, was sold for 6 *d.*, 'tis certain he is mistaken in supposing that 6 *d.* of his Money, was only a tenth Part of 5 *s.* of our Money; for 'tis undoubtedly a sixth Part in effective Silver. A Pound of Silver in the Times of *Henry* the Seventh, was cut into 37 *s.* 6 *d.*, or 75 6 *d.*'s, and now is cut into 62 *s.* or 124 6 *d.*'s so that the real Silver in his 6 *d.* was in the Proportion of 75 to 124, or as six to ten; and in 5 *s.* of our Money, there is no more than six times 10 *d.*: Therefore his 6 *d.* to our 5 *s.*, *quoad* the effective Silver in each, was a sixth Part. And if the Price of a Bushel of Wheat in his Time was a Shilling, which from the *Bishop's Chronicon*, seems more likely to have been the Case, then the Price

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Price of it now, to the Price of it in his Time, in real Silver, is as three to one.

As Wheat is almost the universal Food of Mankind in these Parts of the World, and more a Necessary of Life than even Silver or Gold, it very much governs, and is therefore a good Measure whereby to judge of, the current Price of the rest of the Necessaries of Life; and where the Price of it is taken by a Medium of some Years, a Difference in it, especially if it be regular and constant, may be a good Rule to judge of the Variation in the Quantity of Gold and Silver in a Nation: Therefore, since the Value of Silver and Gold, when compared with Wheat, has Decreased within these 300 Years in a treble Proportion or thereabouts, 'tis a probable Conjecture, that the Increase of those Metals has been in the like Proportion. But whether Mr. *Locke's* Calculation or mine be nearer the Truth, matters not much; for mine is built on the same Foundation as his, that the Price of Wheat depends on the supposed Quantity of Silver in the Nation, at the different given Times.

That the Value of Silver and Gold, as they are Merchandizable Goods, or as the common Measure of the Price of such Goods, depends on the greater or less Quantity of those Metals in a Country, seems to me a Case very clear: But whether the Quantity of Money in a Nation, or of Silver and Gold of which it consists, be the Principle which governs the Interest of it, or whether the Variations in such Interest

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Interest can from thence be accounted for, may require a farther Consideration.

Mr. *Locke's* Opinion, and from him the common receiv'd Opinion is, that the Proportion of Time which the Quantity of Money ready to be lent, bears to the Quantity wanted to be borrowed in a Nation, governs the Rate of Interest: But my Notion is otherwise, and that the general Quantity of it in a Country, or what is in the Nature of and is equivalent to Money, regulates this Matter. I except here all sudden alterations of the Quantity of Money on one side and all extraordinary Demands on the other; and think that the Difference in the Price of it when let to Use, such I mean as is constant and permanent, arises from the same Cause, and is to be accounted for in the same Manner, as when we consider it as a saleable Commodity itself, or as the common Measure of Things bought and sold. That the Value of it, in these two last Respects, depends solely on the greater or less Quantity of it in a Country, without any Regard to the Demand for it will readily be admitted, since 'tis agreeable to Mr. *Locke's* Opinion; who says, that its Quantity alone is enough to regulate and determine its Value, without considering any Proportion to its vent. When we consider Silver in the other Respects, as capable of being let to Use and producing an Income, it remains still Silver, and is of the same real Value, whether it has or has not the King's Impression on it: And therefore, I should think

that the Price of it when let to Use, should be governed by the same Rule as when meer Silver only, *viz.* the greater or less Quantity of it in a Nation. For this Reason, when Mr. *Locke* says, that its Value, as put out to Use, depends on the Quantity of it in Proportion to the Demand for it, I think he must be understood to speak of temporary or accidental Variations in its Value; especially since he asserts, that a Law to lower Interest would be useless and not answer the Design of it, and gives this Reason for it, *viz.* that such a Law would not create a greater Plenty of Money; for this is a strong Implication, that if by such a Law or any other Means a greater Plenty was created, then a lower Interest would be produced by those Means.

Where we speak only of a temporary or occasional Variation of the Rate of Interest, there the present Demand is certainly an Ingredient in the Price of it; for the natural Interest of Money, or the Price of it, as well as the Price of any other Necessaries or Conveniences of Life, depends on the greater or less Plenty to answer the present Demands for it: But when we speak of such Difference in the Price of it, as has or may arise in the compass of an Age or a Century, there I apprehend that the Demands for it, where they are ordinary ones only, have no Part in the alteration, but is meerly the effect of the Change in the Quantity of it. In the Necessaries of Life, an accidental Plenty or Scarcity in a Market,

or in some one Year, or a greater or less Demand, will vary the Price of them, and yet there is something of a general and constant Price of those Things in one and the same Age; and since this Price will not alter, at least not sensibly and with a Continuance, but by an Increase or Decrease of Money, and this alone will alter it; and as I have met with no Arguments that do at all satisfy me of any Difference in the Cases, I must be of Opinion, that one and the same Thing, *viz.* a greater Plenty of Money, will sink the Value of it, without any Regard had to the Demands for it, extraordinary Cases excepted, in whatever Views we consider it.

The Rate of Interest in *Henry* the Fourth's Time, suppose, was 15 *l. per Cent.*; in *Queen Elizabeth's* 10 *l.*; and in *Queen Anne's* 5 *l.*; and was constantly and regularly so in those Reigns, except an extraordinary Demand made an occasional Variation: But then such Variation might be one or two *per Cent.*, but never so great as to make the Rate in *Queen Anne's* Time so high as 15 *l.* or as 10 *l.*, or in *Henry* the Fourth's Time so low, I suppose, as 5 *l.* or as 10 *l.*: And therefore the smaller Variations which arise accidentally in the same Age may arise from the Change in the Proportion between the number of Borrowers and Lenders, or the Quantity of Money to be lent, to the Demand for it, comparing one Time with another; but the greater Alterations, such as I have mentioned, must

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have proceeded from another Cause; for I doubt very much whether an Alteration in these Proportions ever makes any such great Changes in the Rate of Interest, at least to have a Continuance.

If one were to ask, how it comes to pass that Money cannot now be let for more than *5 l. per Cent.* and hardly for so much, when in Queen *Elizabeth's* Time it might have been let for *10 l.*; this Answer, *viz.* that the Number of Lenders to the Number of Borrowers, or the Quantity of Money to be let to the Quantity of it to be hired, comparing those Times, was altered in a double Proportion, will hardly be admitted to be in Fact a true one; for most People think, and I doubt very truly, that the Number of Borrowers and the Quantity of Money wanted to be hired, has at least kept Pace with the Increase of the Number of Lenders, and the Money ready to be lent: that is, the Demands for Money have increased, as fast as the Supply to make them good.

With Regard to Land, Money let out on Use has a great Resemblance to Land let out upon Rent, if the same Question were asked, How it comes to pass that Land now lets at double the Rent which it did in Queen *Elizabeth's* Time, for that I suppose is the Difference, or somewhat thereabouts; it will not be a good Answer, because in Fact not true, that it arises from the Change of the Proportion of the Number of Hirers to the
Number

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Number of Letters, or of the Quantity of the Land to be hired to the Quantity to be let, comparing one Reign with the other. The Quantity of Land in *England* is the same now, as it was 150 Years ago; and if an Improvement has been made of some of those Lands within that Space of Time, so as there are more profitable Acres of Land now than formerly, as most certainly there has been; this should, and does, decrease the Rent of Land before let, because it increases the Quantity of lett able Lands. The Quantity of Land at the one Time and the other, being supposed to be same or near it, the Change of the Proportion must lye wholly upon the Tenants, or those desiring to be Tenants, of Land; and yet, let the Number of them be never so great, they would all of them in their Offers have Regard to the ordinary Price of the Land to be let, and how far it was likely to yield such a Produce as should answer their Rent and their Labour. The proper Answer to the Question, so far as regards the Rise in the Rent of Land, is, that Necessaries of Life, which the Land under a proper Management may produce, will sell at the common Market for double the Price, that is for double the Quantity of Silver and Gold, which they would have done an 150 Years ago; and therefore the Landlord may expect, and the Tenant may afford to give a double Price, that is a double Quantity of Silver and Gold for the Land to be hired.

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A Bushel of Wheat, for Instance, in Queen Elizabeth's Time, taking a Medium of some Years and a Market Price, might have been bought for 2 s. 6 d., but now is sold, by a like Medium, at 5 s.: And the Price of Wheat, being the first and grand Necessary and Staff of Life, has a governing Influence in the Price of all other Things, which are the common Produce of Land. From hence it will follow, if this, or something near this, be the true state of the Price of Things in these two different Ages, that the Money of the Nation, or the Silver and Gold of which it consists, or something which is equal to and supplies the Place of them, is double now to what it was 150 Years ago. The true Value of a Bushel of Wheat, of a Pound of Beef, or of a Yard of Cloth, is the same now, and, if exchanged with one another, would be exchanged in the same Proportion, as an 100 or 500 Years ago: For the Measure of the Value of these Things in the last Resort, is the *quota* Part which they contribute to the Support and Maintenance of Life. If these Things are to be sold, and measured by Silver and Gold as a common Medium, if that Medium be so increased in Quantity in a Nation, as to be double in one Period of Time to what it is in another, the Price or nominal Value of those Things will alter in the same Proportion; and therefore, where the Price or nominal Value is alter'd in a known Degree, 'tis a fair Conclusion

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Conclusion that the Medium is increased or decreased in the same Degree.

This Way of Reasoning is applicable to the Use or Price of Money on Loan: For if at one given Time there is double the Quantity in any Nation, of what there was at another given Time, a double Quantity must be employed to have an equal Return; and on the reverse, if a double Quantity in Fact is so employed to produce such equal Return, it may reasonably be infer'd, that the real Quantity of Money in a Country is then double. To the Question therefore, What makes the Rate of Interest now to be 5 l. only, which an 150 Years ago was 10 l.; the Answer is, a double Quantity of Money in the Nation, in Respect of the ordinary Use for it; or, Money compared with Land, or what the Land produces, is now but of half the Value as formerly.

By Money here, where I speak of the Value of it at Interest, I don't mean meerly the current Coin of the Kingdom in Silver and Gold, but also Bank Bills, Bankers Bills, and all good Notes payable on Demand without Interest; nay even the Money in the Public Funds will be of Consideration, as being easily and readily convertible into Money, so as to answer any Demands for it of this Kind. Since then the Value or Price of Money, when we consider it as let out for and producing Use, or as the Measure of the Rent of Land between Owner and Tenant, or as the Medium by which the common Necessaries of Life are

bought and sold, or as the Silver and Gold of which it generally consists is a saleable Commodity, is now a Moiety only of what it was 150 Years ago; and a third Part only of what it might be 300 Years ago: And since the Variations in these Matters have in Fact accompanied and kept Pace with one another, or something very near it, and if the Reason of the Thing is, that they should do so; the first Proposition, *viz.* that the Price of Things, comparing one Age with another, will be in that Proportion which the real Silver in Money and the Price of it on Interest, bear to one another, at the different given Times, is well grounded and well proved.

The second Proposition, *viz.* that the Rent of Land and the Price of the Things which that Land produces, always do, and necessarily must rise and fall together, is so plain and evident as to want neither Proof nor Illustration.

The Conclusion from these Premises, is, that a Decrease in the Interest of Money, must be attended with an Increase in the Price of Land, both in its Rent and its Purchase. The Author of the Essay before-mentioned, does not there enter into the Distinction between legal and natural Interest, but observing in general, that it was fallen in Practice below the legal, and taking notice of the common Expectation that it would fall still lower; he must be supposed to mean such Interest as proceeds from natural Causes, there being no Law for establishing it at such lower Rate.

And

And since the Decrease which in Fact has happened, and that which may be expected, is supposed to arise solely from such a State and Circumstances of the Nation, as naturally produce such Effects on the Price of Money in Use; the same Circumstances of the Nation will naturally produce the like Effects on the Price of Land, either to let or to sell.

Against this Conclusion many Objections and Surmises have been raised, by those who have opposed the late Scheme for redeeming the Public Funds, and for support of them Appeals have been made to the Authority of Mr. *Locke* in his Treatise before-mentioned. One of his Assertions, which the Gentlemen in Opposition to the Scheme have called in to their Aid, is this; that lowering Interest from 6 *l.* to 4 *l. per Cent.* will not raise the Price of Lands from 20 to 30 Years Purchase: For which he gives this Reason, because it does not increase the Quantity of Money to be laid out in Land. I cannot think this by any Means a fair and candid Manner of stating the Matter; for that it may be true that the Rise in the Purchase of Land will not be at the Rate here fixed, because 'tis not the Proportion in which such Rise should be; and yet it may be true that there will be a Rise in the Purchase, and that it will be in the just and proper Proportion. When the Rate of Interest is 6 *l. per Cent.* the Price of Land in the common and ordinary Way of computing it, is 16 Years Purchase two thirds, at 5 *l. per Cent.*

Cent. is twenty Years, and at 4*l.* is twenty five Years Purchase; and this Author himself so states it. Now surely it will not be said, that the Price of Land will not rise in the Purchase according to these Proportions, or something near them; since 'tis contrary to daily Experience, and even to common Sense; for 'tis in Effect to say, that in laying out Money in Land, where the Security is the strongest and the Hazards least, you may make greater Profit of your Money than in disposing of it at Interest, where the Security is less and the Hazards greater.

Mr. *Locke* indeed is of Opinion, that the Rate of Interest is not the Measure of the Value of Land in the Number of Years Purchase, for which the Fee is sold: by which, if he means only that the Use of Money and Price of Land will not be in a Proportion to one another, so near as 99 to 100, or as 19 to 20, it will easily be admitted, yet the one may govern the other in some Degree, though not absolutely; and his Arguments does not prove, that they do not keep Pace with one another to a great Nearness, though not perhaps with the Exactness to which he would fix it. It may be true, as he says, that neither in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth* or King *James* the first, when Interest was at 10 *per Cent.* was Land sold for ten; or, when it was at 8 *l. per Cent.* for 12 Years and a half Purchase, or any Thing near the low Rate that high Use required; any more than
Land

Land then yielded 25 Years Value, because a great Part of monied Men would then (when he wrote) let their Money upon good Security at 4 *l. per Cent.* The Practice in the more early Periods here mentioned, does indeed prove, that the Rate of Interest is not absolutely the Measure of the Price of Land; for in this Instance the Price of Land exceeded the proportionable Rate of Interest: And indeed that is almost always the Case, and must be so, because of the supposed greater Security in disposing of Money in the Purchase of Lands, than in placing it out to Use; but does by no means prove, that on a Decrease of Interest the Price of Lands did not Increase with it and in some Proportion to it. In Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, when Money was at 10 *l. per Cent.*, the Rate of Land might not be upon the par with the Use of Money, that is at ten Years Purchase, because perhaps the natural Interest might be lower than the legal; and that, together with the great Security by investing it in Lands of Inheritance, might make the Price, in that Method of disposing Money, to exceed the Price in any other Method: and the Practice in these Times shows, that these Suppositions are not without Grounds. The legal Rate of Interest is now five, but the Rate current for Sums of any Largeness, or Securities of reasonable Goodness, is not more than four; and in Proportion to that, we find that the Purchase of Lands in the worst Countries is at 23
to

24, and in the best Countries from 26 to 27 Years Value, and not readily to be had even at those Prices if the Estate be of any Bigness and good Conditions: Which exceeds not only the Proportion of the legal but the natural Rate of Interest. And if the Land was now as free from the Tax on it, and all Apprehensions of it, as it was in good Queen *Elizabeth's* Days, I make no doubt but the Price of it would exceed the Price of Money in as great a Proportion as it did in her Days; for the Reason of the Thing is that it should be so.

The same Author, in the Place before cited, says that in his Time, monied Men let their Money at 4*l. per Cent.*; and intimates, but does not affirm, that Land was not then sold for 25 Years Purchase; but by his own Time I think he must mean the Times of King *Charles* and King *James* the Second; for in 1691 and 1692, when his Treatise was published, which by the way was long after it was written, it can hardly be credited that Money was put out or continued at Use at so low a Rate, when 8*l.* or 10*l. per Cent.* was to be had by dealing with the Exchequer. In the Reigns of King *Charles* and King *James* the Second, I believe it might be true that Money was frequently let at 4*l. per Cent.* because I find it confirmed by Dr. *Davenant*, who tells us, that between the Years 1666 and 1688, much more Money was lent out at 4*l.* and at 4*l.* and $\frac{1}{2}$ *per Cent.*, than at 5*l.* or 6*l.*: But then he adds, that within that Time the Price of Lands in the best Countries was come from

from 20 to 26, and 27 Years Purchase; and in those Parts where it was formerly sold for 14 Years Purchase, it yielded 17 or 18. This latter Representation of the general Practice of those Times seems to me the more probable, because we must otherwise suppose the People in those Days to have lost their Understanding; for so they must have done who would invest their Money in hazardous Securities, when they might have had as good or better Return for it in the best and strongest Securities; or they had some particular Reasons and Views in their Case, and then their Practice is no Rule. Where from the Practice in any former Time upon any Occurrence happening, we would form a reasonable Conjecture of the like Practice on the like Occurrence at another Time, the Humours, Prejudices, or Particularities of some People are nothing to the Purpose of one side; nor, on the other side, is the Conclusion a very sure one, that People did act in this or that particular Manner in any Age, because the most prudential Part was, so to act: And yet in Matters of Money, and where a great deal depends merely upon Numbers and Figures, this may go a great Way; for People don't usually bely their Interest, and it don't require a great Measure of Understanding to know the common Operations of Numbers and Figures.

But to leave the Practice of People in King *Charles* or King *James's* Times to shift for itself:

itself: This we are sure of, we who have lived to see the Reign of Queen *Anne*, and King *George* the Second, have seen that the legal Interest in the Queen's Reign was 5 *l. per Cent.* and the natural somewhat higher, and then the Price of Lands in the best of Countries was not more than 21 or 22 Years Purchase, pick and choose; and now, in the present King's Reign, the legal Interest is the same, and the natural Interest about one *per Cent.* lower; and the Price of Lands is risen, in the worst Countries from 19 or 20, to 23 or 24, and in the best from 21 or 22, to 26 or 27 Years Value. That this has been the Practice of late no one will deny, and 'tis apparent that the Increase in one has bore a very near Proportion to the Decrease in the other; and 'tis not pretended it will hold to a minute Exactness, any more than 'tis possible to fix the Rate of natural Interest to a Mathematical Point.

To confirm this domestic Practice, I mean that the Price of Land does not correspond with the Rate of Use, we have Instances brought from abroad; and are told that, in *Holland*, when Money was at 6 *l. per Cent.* the Purchase of Land was at 25 Years value; and in *France*, the best Land at 34 or 35; and ordinary Land at 25 Years Value, when Money was at 7 *l. per Cent.* But what do all these Instances, either domestick or foreign, prove? Do they prove that the Price of Land is ever below the current Rate of Interest which corresponds; or, when the Use of Money

Money sinks, that the Price of Lands does not rise, but stands still till the Rate of Use overtakes, or exceeds the Price of Lands? They show that Land is at 20 Years Value, or above, when Use is 5 *l. per Cent.*, at 25 or above, when Use is 4 *l. per Cent.*, and that in Fact is our present Case; and if Use at the common Rate were only 3 *l.* we should certainly find the Price of Land as commonly at 33 Years Value and above; nay, if it were at one only, the Price of Land wou'd be at 100 Years Value: But when did Rents certain, or Lands producing Rents certain, sell at a lower Rate than Use? 'Tis contrary to common Practice, and wou'd be contrary to common Sense to suppose any such Thing.

Money may be considered in two Respects; either as the common Measure of Things bought and sold, or as producing a certain Income by Use; and it may possibly at some Times and for a while be dear *quoad hoc*, and cheap *quoad illud*, but that it shou'd be cheap, and not cheap *quoad idem* at the same Time is a Contradiction. Money as the Measure of Things purchasable is now dear, if we judge of it by the present low Price of the common Provisions of Life, tho' how long that may continue God alone knows; but if we consider it as producing an Income, 'tis cheap enough; and in this view 'tis one and the same Thing, whether we let the Money itself to Hire, in order to produce an Income, or lay it out in Land, and let the Land to Hire for the same Purpose. In this View, and as dispos'd of to produce

produce an Income, there can be no Difference in the Value of Money at the same Time, any farther than may arise from the greater Hazard and less Trouble in putting it to Use, and less Hazard and more Trouble in laying it out directly in Land. As Persons have more or less Regard to these Circumstances, they will in some Measure be influenced in the Disposition of their Money; but the *Quantum* likely to proceed from the one or the other Way is the Rule which commonly determines this Matter. Here in *England*, and we see in other Countries, the usual Practice has been to prefer the less Income attended with the less Hazard, to the greater Income attended with the greater Hazard; and 'tis past my Understanding to find out a Reason why the Practice shou'd alter, so far as to make the less Income with the greater Hazard to have the Preference; and that it will so far alter, *credat Judeus apella, Non ego.*

To this Position, that the Decrease of Interest will increase the Price of Lands on sale, we have another Objection from the same Author; who says that the Difference in the Price of Lands in different Countries demonstrates that a Law which regulates the Rate of Interest will not regulate the Price of Land, because the Price of Land shou'd then be uniform all over the Kingdom, as well as the legal Interest. Observing here that he speaks of legal, and I of natural Interest; I say that the Price of Land is one and the same, or near
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the same, all the Kingdom over; and that the Difference, where we compute by the Year's Purchase, is merely nominal; so that his Demonstration is founded on a wrong Supposition. He that gives 20 Years Purchase for Land in one Country, may pay as dear for it as he that gives 25 in another; for the true worth of Land as well as any other Thing, is, how much Money it will bring; and where two Persons buy Land in different Countries, or one buys Houses and another buys Land, he that buys in the worse Country, or the worse condition'd Estate, tho' he has a fifth Part abated in the Price, where we reckon by the Year's Value which he pays on such Purchase, may find his Bargain no better than the other's; because his real Income at the End of the Year, or of a Number of Years by a Medium, after necessary or customary Drawbacks are made, may fall short of the other's in the same Proportion as the Price did in the Purchase; and the neat Income is the true measure of the real Value of each Estate. That this is the Case, or something very near it, where Comparison is made between Lands in one Country and another, as well as where 'tis made between Houses and Land, is so obvious and plain as to need no Proof; and as this is only a nominal Difference in the Price and not a real one, since each of the Parties has one and the same Return for an equal Quantity of Money laid out in their several Purchases; the Rate of Interest may be the Rule, notwithstanding

withstanding this seeming Difference, whereby such Purchases are governed. Agreeably to this; as the Fall of Interest within these twenty Years has been one *per Cent.* or a fifth Part, or somewhat thereabouts; so the Rise in the Purchase of Lands of Inheritance, either of the best or worst Sort of Estates, has been near in the same Proportion.

This being the true State of what in Fact has happen'd in these Matters in our own Time and Memory, and by natural Means without the Interposition of the Law, I shall not contend much about the Effects which a Law might have which shou'd fix Interest at a certain Rate, and especially if it shou'd screw it down much below the natural one. This Matter being doubtful at least, I wou'd rather admit that the Price of Lands wou'd not rise in their Purchase, in Proportion to such lower Interest as shou'd be settled by Law and compulsive Means merely; and where the Quantity of Money is not increased, or not likely to be increased; and farther than this Mr. *Locke's* Arguments, when the most is made of them, do not carry the Matter. But then this Way of reasoning is ill applied where 'tis made use of to prove that the Price of Lands will not rise where such Decrease of Interest proceeds from natural Causes, that is from a greater Plenty of Money; and in Fact it does not prove it, since daily Experience demonstrates that it does rise.

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To urge, as some have done in Opposition to the late Scheme, if Interest on the public Funds were reduced from 4*l.* to 3*l. per Cent.* that the Price of Land wou'd not rise to 33 or 34 Years Purchase, is not a fair Way of arguing; because such a Reduction does not necessarily suppose, nor wou'd it necessarily make, the natural Interest to be only 3*l. per Cent.* and 'tis not pretended that Lands wou'd be at 33 or 34 Years Purchase, unless common Interest were there or thereabout; nor does it by any means follow, if Lands shou'd not rise in their Value to such a Degree, therefore they will not rise at all: And yet possibly the Author may be mistaken in his Surmise; for if such a Reduction were carried into Execution by the voluntary Consent of the Proprietors, and without such Consent it cannot be done, it wou'd have a very strong Influence on the rest of the Money in the Kingdom; and this Reduction, together with a regular Application of the Surplus of the *Sinking-Fund* to the Discharge of the Principal, in all probability, wou'd bring natural Interest to the same, or near the same Rate. And as the Price of Lands of the best Sort, and in the best Countries has risen, and in a great measure kept Pace with the Price of publick Stocks; I suppose the Experience of what has already happen'd, may give Grounds to expect the like Event in the Price of Land, on any farther Alteration of the Price of Stocks; and I doubt not but that they will both of them rise in their Price, if the

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Times continue in their present State of Tranquility, whether this or any other such Proposal ever meets with success or no.

If the Price of Land wou'd rise on the Decrease of Interest, a Question is ask'd, what Purpose will it answer, or what Benefit will it be to the Publick, or to any private Person in particular? They that do not sell their Land, are not concern'd in this Event; and those who do sell merely to convert their Land into Money, and to live on the Use of it, will loose on one Hand just as much as they gain in the other; and with regard to the Community, 'tis one and the same Thing, whether *A.* or *B.* is the Owner of Land: So that the only Persons who will be Gainers by it, are the luxurious and extravagant Men, who have run their Estates into Debt, and the Publick has no Reason to do any Act in Favor of them. Where the Rise in the Price of Land is considered singly, and by itself, they who do not sell cannot be better'd merely by such Rise; but I suppose lowness of Interest either to be the Cause of, or necessarily to accompany such Rise, and then they who keep their Lands may have a Benefit from thence, by having a more ready Opportunity, and a greater Encouragement, to improve those Lands. They who treat this Matter in a ludicrous Manner, show only that they want Arguments to disprove the Advantages to a Country arising from such Improvements; which *Mr. Locke* is very far from doing, however he may be represented,

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for he only laughs at those who wou'd feed People with fine Notions of improving Land, without helping them to a Farthing of Money to do it withal. Most certainly, an Increase in the Produce of the Lands of *England* will be of Advantage to the Kingdom; because such increased Produce will either maintain a greater number of Inhabitants, or supply the Merchants with more Goods for Exportation, or both; and either of them necessarily tend to enrich a Nation.

'Tis absurd to suppose, because in Fact 'tis not true, that all the Morgages and Debts on Land in the Kingdom, have been contracted by the Extravagance of the Owners or their Ancestors, for many to be sure have been created for honourable Purposes, and by more reputable Means. Some have been brought upon Estates by the Misfortunes of the Proprietors, and not a few by the immense Sums which have been raised out of Land by the public Taxes within these last fifty Years. Tho' the Community have no Reason to regard the luxurious and extravagant Part of Mankind, yet it may be very right to do any reasonable Act for the Advantage of those who have bore the Toil and Burden of the Day these many Years, and are likely to do so for many more: And it will be thought very hard measure to withhold a Favour from those who deserve, and have just Reason to expect it, merely because it may redoun'd equally to the Benefit of those who do not deserve it, or have not any

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Reason

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Reason to expect it. Plentiful Seasons, prosperous Times, and the Blessings of Peace, are alike beneficial to the Just and the Unjust; to those who do, and to those who do not make a right Use of them; but this Way of reasoning excludes all Mankind in the Gross, from all Benefit of these Gifts of Heaven; for there always were, and always will be some People who do not deserve such Acts of Grace from the Hand of God.

Having sufficiently considered, and, I think, established the first Branch of the principal Conclusion, *viz.* that the Decrease of the Interest of Money, where 'tis supposed to proceed from natural Causes, will be attended with the Increase in the Price of Land on sale; I assert, secondly, that it will be attended likewise with an Increase of the Rent, or annual Value. This to be sure must proceed from a Rise in the Price of the Produce of Land, and the common Provisions of Life; but I do not mean here that the Fall of Interest is the immediate Cause of the Increase of Rents, or of the Price of the Necessaries of Life, but that there is such a Connection between them that they will accompany one another; so that the Cause, whatever that be, which produces the one, will necessarily draw the other after it.

The true and real Value of the Necessaries of Life, is in Proportion to that Part which they contribute to the Maintenance of Mankind; and the Value of them when they are exchanged the one for the other, is regulated by

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by the Quantity of Labour necessarily required, and commonly taken in producing them; and the Value or Price of them when they are bought and sold, and compared to a common Medium, will be govern'd by the Quantity of Labour employ'd, and the greater or less Plenty of the Medium or common Measure. Water is as necessary for Life as Bread or Wine; but the Hand of God has poured out that upon Mankind in such Plenty, that every Man may have enough of that without any Trouble, so that generally 'tis of no Price; but when and where any Labour must be used, to apply it to particular Persons, there the Labour in making the Application must be paid for, tho' the Water be not: And on that Account, at some Times and in some Places, a Ton of Water may be as dear as a Ton of Wine.

Many of the Necessaries of Life, as Victuals and Drink, are in Part the Produce of the Labour of Men, and partly the growth of the Earth; and yet even the Price of these, for such Part at least as exceeds what the Earth does naturally and spontaneously produce, is governed by the Labour employed in producing them; and the Labour makes much the greatest Part of such Price, for the Produce of Land in *puris naturalibus* and uncultivated, is of small Value. The Labour required to plow and to sow an Acre of Ground, and to gather the Fruits of it, is much the same whether it yields two or four Quarters of Wheat; and if the ordinary Produce is two

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Quarters

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Quarters and the common Price 5 s. *per* Bushel, the two supernumerary Quarters are of the Nature of Water, the Gift of God and of a plentiful Season, and they should be sold for nothing, or the whole Quantity be sold for 2 s. 6 d. the Bushel. But, as the same Labour and Land in a subsequent Year, may yield only one Quarter, and then the Bushel should be sold for 10 s., the Farmer, taking the Advantage of the Plenty of one Year, makes a Reserve to supply the possible Deficiency of a subsequent Year; so in a Year of Plenty does not sell at the lowest Price, and by such Reserve is enabled in a Year of Scarcity, to sell at a Price below the highest; by which piece of Management it comes out, that we seldom see Wheat at the highest or the lowest of these Rates, though sometimes not far off of each extreme, when the same sort of Seasons, either more or less favourable, has continued for some Years.

Hence it comes to pass, though the Price of Wheat, or any other the common Provisions of Life, may vary in this or that Year, according to the Quantity produced; yet the ordinary Produce in most Countries, being, generally speaking, equal to the ordinary Consumption, and if we compute for a number of Years and by a Medium, we may in some sort fix a standing Price of those Things in a given Period of Time, and we shall find that the standing Price of such Things and of the Labour producing them, to have a near Correspondence,

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spondence. In the more antient Times, when Commerce was carried on merely by bartering one Commodity for another, I apprehend no other Rule could be made Use of in exchanging one Thing for another, but the Quantity of Labour severally employed in producing them. One Man has employed himself a Week in providing this necessary of Life, and for his Pains deserves just as much as will Maintain him for a Week; and he that gives him some other in exchange, cannot make a better Estimate of what is a proper Equivalent, than by computing what cost him just as much Labour and Time; which in Effect is no more than exchanging one Man's Labour in one Thing for a Time certain, for another Man's Labour in another Thing for the like Time. In bartering one Commodity for another, 'tis always supposed that he who gives a Thing in exchange, has more than enough to supply his own present Use, and that he who takes it in exchange wants it. A greater Quantity of that Thing in one Hand, or a greater Want of it on the other, at one Time more than another, will make a Variance in such exchange, but this is only *pro hoc & nunc*; and such Variance supposes some common Rule to govern such exchange, when the Dealers are upon an equal Foot.

In process of Time, as Commerce grew more frequent and further extended, People found it necessary or more convenient to make Use of some common Medium, and Silver and Gold

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being found to be Metals of great Duration and small Bulk, in comparison to their Value, and not subject to very sudden Variations of Increase or Decrease, they fell into a Way, as it were, by common consent, to make Use of them as the common Standard to regulate their Exchanges. As these Metals have this Property in them, that the Quantity of them in a Country does not diminish very fast by common Use, either in Coin or in Plate, nor can be augmented at Pleasure and by quick Steps, they become a very good Measure for these Purposes; for by this Means the Price of Things as depending on them cannot vary greatly on a sudden, which would much embarrass and bring insuperable Difficulties upon this Way of dealing. Since this has been the Manner of carrying on Trade in the World, and Money which is made of Silver or of Gold has been the Measure of it, the Price of Things, in exchange, depends on the greater or less Quantity of Money, or of those Metals of which it consists, in any Country.

From hence 'tis easy and obvious to collect; on comparing the Price of Things in different Periods of Time, if we find that it has alter'd, and such higher or lower Price is a constant and regular one, taking a Medium of some Years; since the ordinary Produce of Land is generally answerable to the ordinary Consumption of those Things, we may conclude that the common Medium or Standard by which they are measured, is altered; that is, if the Price

Price is lessened, that Money which is the common Measure is diminished, and if the Price is increased that the Money is so likewise. They who labour, and these make up the bulk of Mankind in all Countries, labour for their daily Bread, and if the Price of Bread be raised for a constancy, the Price of Labour must be so too; and on the other side, if Labourers raise the Price of their Wages, the Producers of Bread must raise the Price of that too in their Turn, or else they cannot get a Livelihood by their Labour, or the Proprietor of the Land must sink his Rent and his Share of what the Land produces; for if the one or the other cannot get Bread by their Pains, they will not, nor can it be expected that they should, work only for their Landlords. It behoves them therefore, and very greatly too, to consider and contrive that the Produce of the Farm, Corn and Wool, Beef and Mutton, may be at such a Rate as that their Tenants may get a Maintenance by their Industry, if they expect to keep up their Farms to their old Rents and have them regularly paid; And that the Labourer by his daily Labour may get that which he works for, his daily Bread.

Where I speak of an Alteration in the Price of the Necessaries of Life, I don't mean such a Price as may be occasioned by an accidental Plenty or Scarcity of some one Commodity, for we see sometimes very quick Turns in some particular Instances, but I mean the general

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general and more constant Price, and which affects most Things; and this I say will not vary but by a Variance of the Proportion of Money in a Country or the Silver and Gold there, which must be the Work of Time and of Trade. And yet, if we could suppose such a Thing to be done on a sudden and in a Year's Time, which in an ordinary Way might take up an Age to effect, *viz.* that the Money in the Nation, or something equivalent to it, was made double to what it is now, and there were no change in the Trade or Business of the Kingdom to take off any Part of it; we should see the Price of Things double to the present Price, as certainly as if such Increase of Money were effected in an Age, and there were no Augmentation of Trade. But as such Increase of Money must proceed by gradual Steps and at the same Time, and together with it the Trade and Business of the Nation must Increase in some Proportion; some Part of such Increased Money will be diverted into that Channel, and so the Necessaries of Life may not Increase in Price just in the same Proportion as the Money may have done; and it may be difficult to fix the Proportion to an exactness; but that the one will affect the other seems to me a Case very clear.

As the Sense of Mr. *Locke* upon this Subject will have Weight in it, let us hear what his Notions are. His main Position is; that the Value of Money, in respect to the Necessaries
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and Conveniencies of Life, depends solely on the Plenty or Scarcity of Money in Proportion to the Plenty and Scarcity of those Things; and to prove this is the professed Design and Purpose of the whole Treatise. To shew how closely and exactly this Price is regulated by the Quantity of Money in a Country, we have this Instance. In the 1st of *Henry* the Seventh, a Bushel of Wheat might probably be bought for 6 *d.* as he says, and he supposes now for about 5 *s.* and the Reason he gives for it is, because the Plenty of Silver now in the World, since the Discovery of the *West Indies*, is ten Times greater than formerly, and the Worth of it $\frac{2}{10}$ Times less now than then. His Conjecture of the Price of a Bushel of Wheat in *Henry* the Seventh's Time is doubtful at least, and more probably it was higher; and his Computation of the Increase of Silver, is beyond the Proportion which is necessary to be made to prove his Position; for that 6 *d.* in Silver Coin in *Henry* the Seventh's Time, was equal to ten Pence in Silver of our Money, and therefore a quintuple or at most a sextuple Increase in Silver, would have raised the Price of a Bushel of Wheat from 6 *d.* to 60 *d.* or 5 *s.* but let that pass: He supposes the Price of Wheat to have risen in a decuple Proportion, and assigns as the Reason of it, an Increase in the Quantity of Silver, and a Decrease of the Value of it in the same Proportion: therefore, whenever and wherever there is an Increase in one, there must according to this Way
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of Reasoning be an Increase of the other, in the same Proportion.

Whether these Proportions will hold so exactly is very doubtful; and I rather think, and it is more agreeable to Mr. *Locke's* Way of thinking, that the Increase in the Price of Things, will be in Proportion to such Part of the Increased Silver, as shall be converted into Money or shall circulate in Trade; for it is not the Possession of meer Silver, or the having of Money which will add to the Price of Things vendible, but the Currency of it in Trade, and the Application of it in buying those vendible Things, which augment their Price; for the Silver which is in Plate and in the Owners Buffet, or in Coin but in his Coffers, can operate nothing in this Respect.

And yet, notwithstanding this his plain and positive Assertion, and his undeniable Proofs to maintain it; some there are who are very fond of, and rely much upon his Authority, or wou'd be thought to do so, who contradict this Position. They say then that the Fall of the Interest of Money will lower the Price of the Necessaries of Life, and the Rents of Lands which produce them; and quote him, as saying, that as the Interest of Money falls, the Rents of Land, and Price of Provisions must, in some Degree, fall with it; People having less to lay out in Cloaths and Eatables. But where does he say so; or what is this to the Purpose? I have look'd with all the Attention I am Master of, and can discover nothing

in his Treatise which has so much as a Tendency that Way; and it would be matter of wonder if I shou'd, since 'tis his avow'd Principle, and the Point he labours to prove, that the Rise or Fall of Interest has no Effect upon the Value of Money in Reference to Commodities; and gives this Reason for it, because it makes neither more nor less Money, nor any other Commodities in *England*, than there were before. And if he has any general Expression which might be construed by a willing Reader into their Sense, 'tis not applicable to this Purpose; for he speaks of the Fall of Interest which is effected or intended to be effected, by Law and compulsory Means, and they are speaking, if they say any Thing to our present Case, of such a Fall of Interest as has proceeded in the Course of Things, and by natural Causes; that is, the Fall of Interest meant by one is such an one as will not create a greater Plenty of Money, and by the other, such a Fall as must have arisen from a Plenty of Money, and can have arisen from nothing else. The Short of the Matter is this. Mr. *Locke* has said, that the Rate of Interest lower'd by Law only, will not make Money more cheap, or the Necessaries of Life more dear, because it will not make Money more plentiful; and these Gentlemen wou'd infer, where the Interest of Money is fallen, and by natural means, and Money in Fact is more cheap, that the Necessaries of Life are not more dear, or wou'd not be more dear; which is a very strange Consequence,

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since the Cheapness of Money, and the Dearness of the Necessaries of Life are really one and the same Thing, or necessarily attendant on one another.

'Tis indeed most common to say, on Things bought and sold, that they were cheap or were dear, as the Case happen'd; by which we mean that we gave little Money for many Goods when we bought cheap, and that we gave a great deal of Money for few Things when we bought dear; but it wou'd be as true and as proper to say, that the Money was cheap if we gave a great deal of it for a few Goods, or dear if we bought many Things with a little of it. Nay, in some Cases, and in some Respects, it wou'd be more proper to say that the Money was cheap or dear, than it wou'd be to say that the Things bought or sold were so. Where we compare the Price of Things in the present Times, with the Price of them 300 Years ago; and if we suppose a Bushel of Wheat to have been then sold for 10 Pence, and now to be sold for 60, it wou'd be more proper to say that Money was now six Times cheaper or less worth than formerly, than it wou'd be to say that Wheat was six Times dearer or more worth; for in Truth 'tis the Money which has changed its Value and Worth, and not the Wheat. A Bushel of Wheat will go as far to the Sustenance of Life now, as heretofore, and no farther; and if compared or exchanged with a Yard of Cloth, or a Stone of Beef, is of the same Value

Value at all Times, accidental, greater or less Quantity or Demand excepted; and therefore 'tis not so proper to say that Wheat is grown dearer, as it is that Money is grown cheaper, since the one has, and the other has not varied. Upon the whole; the Dearness of the Necessaries of Life, and the Cheapness of Money are synonymous Expressions, and upon the Matter signify one and the same Thing.

It may be alledg'd perhaps, that Money, when let out at Interest, may be cheap, and yet at the same Time be dear as applied to buying and selling the Necessaries of Life; and that such in Fact is our present Case. Money at Interest is low, being under the legal one, and yet the Necessaries of Life are cheaper than when Interest was higher; therefore the Cheapness must come from a less Consumption, and such less Consumption from the less Use now paid on Money, than in Times precedent. If we distinguish here between the Times when Mr. *Locke* wrote or published his Treatise, and the very present Year, we shall find that the Fall of Interest had certainly no Influence on the Fall in the Price of the Necessaries of Life, or in the Rents of Land in his Time; and probably not much, if any, in our Days. In his Time there was no great Quantity of Use paid, on publick Securities, and what was paid was sufficiently high; and the Change of Use in private Securities, cou'd make no Change in the Quantum of the Expences of the whole People, because the Borrower

rower must have just so much more to spend as the Lender wou'd have less. Mr. *Locke*, who was a Man of too much Penetration not to see this, amongst the Causes which he enumerates of the Fall of Rents in his Time, does not assign this as one; but his main Cause is, a general Scarcity of Money. In the present Time, 'tis admitted that the Rents of Land have fallen, or are in a falling Condition; that the common Necessaries of Life are at a lower Price than they have sometimes been, and that the Use of Money is likewise sunk; but possibly this Fall in the Rents of Land, and in the Price of Provisions, may have proceeded from other Causes, than the Fall of Interest. The great Decrease in this was by the Reduction of Use on the publick Debts in 1727, and we will compute here what Effect this might have in this Matter. The annual Expence of the whole People of *England*, has been computed by Dr. *Davenant*, or rather by a Friend of whom he borrowed the Computation, to be 41 Millions; and as this Computation was made in 1688, and for *England* only, if we shou'd state the Expence of the whole Kingdom, *North Britain* included, to be now 50 Millions, the Computation will be a very modest one; for it supposes the whole Number of the People to be about seven Millions, and their Expence about 7*l.* per Head: And at this Rate Sir *William Petty* stated such Expence for the Times of King *Charles* the Second; and Dr. *Davenant* or his Friend stated it

it at 7*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.* for the Year 1688. The Interest of the publick Debts which were comprehended in the Reduction of 1727, was about 2,500,000*l.* and the saving made by it therefore came to 500,000*l.* annually or thereabouts; so that the Decrease of the annual Expence of the whole Kingdom, which might possibly arise from such Diminution, if we cou'd suppose all this to fall on *Great Britain*, wou'd be no more than an hundredth Part of the whole Expence. Now I cannot think that such a Decrease in the annual Expence of the whole People, and I may be very confident that I have stated it at the highest Extent, can have any great Influence on the Rents of the Lands, or on the Profits in Trade, of the whole Kingdom.

They who complain of Dulness of Trade in *London*, mean I suppose domestick Trade, and in Native Commodities; because I don't conceive how the Fall of Interest can have any Influence on foreign Commerce, to the Prejudice of the Nation: If they mean that such Fall has caused a less Consumption of foreign Commodities, that there will be so far from a Reason to keep up, that it will be a good Reason to lower Interest even still farther; for very few People but the particular Dealers in those Goods will think a less Consumption of them to be any great Grievance to the Nation. Whether there be any such Decay of Trade in Town as is complain'd of, or in what Branches, I am not able to say; but

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but he who sees the fine Cloaths, and gay Equipages in and about it, will hardly be induced to believe that the Expences in those Articles of Life are diminished. The Fall of the Rents of Houses, and the Want of Tenants, in many Places in the Town, do by no means prove a general Decrease of Trade; because this is plainly to be attributed to the Multitude of new Houses, almost in all Parts, but especially in the Skirts of the Town. If there have been added to the *City* ten Thousand new Houses within these twenty Years, and only one Thousand new Families to occupy them, nine Thousand of the new or of the old ones must stand empty, and the Rates of the rest be lessen'd in some Measure; and yet the Rents of the whole which are tenanted, may be greater now than 20 Years ago. To the *City* in general, or to the Trade of it; what does it signify, whether the Family of *Cork-Cutters* live in *Watling-street*, or *Broad St. Giles's*; or if the Dealers in *Old Cloaths*, in *Monmouth-street*, or *Long-lane*, shou'd move off their Wares and carry them to *Rag-Fair*, or *Rosemary-lane*? This will affect particular Places and Persons, but not the whole; because what is lost by one is got by another; but common Traders, or other Hirers of Houses, will never complain of a Multiplicity of them, any more than a Buyer of Goods of too many Shops to go to; or an Hirer of Land or Money, of too much of either of them to be let.

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I will admit, however, that there's a Deadness of Trade in *London* at present; because I will not suppose an universal Complaint of it without some Foundation; and since a great Share of the Property in the publick Funds belong'd to People living in and about the Town, I will admit that the Decrease of the Profits arising from thence, has in some Degree, affected Trade there, and in the Places adjacent; but then this shou'd have had its Operation immediately after such lower Interest on those Funds took Place, and the Complaint of Decay of Trade is of later Date; and the Fall of Interest on private Securities, tho' of later Date, has, as I observ'd before, been merely changing the Property and Expence from one Hand to another. If we make a Computation for this *City* in particular, as we did before for the Kingdom in general, we shall see how far the Fall of Interest on the Funds might lessen the Consumption of Goods there, and whether it cou'd be in any such Proportion as cou'd be sensibly felt there. The Number of Souls within the Bills of Mortality, if we take in the many Villages adjacent, may be stated perhaps at 800,000; and I know some have computed them at a Number much greater, and the Expences of them by the Head may be stated at 8*l. per Annum*; and, when the dear Article of House-Rent is included, this will be thought a low Computation; and according to this Way of reckoning, the annual Expence of the whole Number will be

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6,400,000. The Reduction of Interest on the Funds in 1727, made a Diminution of the Income in the total 500,000*l.*; and if three fifths of this fell upon such Inhabitants, their Income would be 300,000*l.* less now than before, and if the Want of Consumption were in the same Proportion, neither of which is at all probable to have been so great; yet when these Suppositions have been made, the less Consumption is no more than 21 Parts of the whole; and this I think could never have occasioned such a Decay of Trade, as should be sensibly felt in this Town; and if it be sensibly felt, we must look elsewhere for the Cause of it, for this by itself will never account for it. When People grow Poor, or rather, where I speak of *London*, when they do not grow Rich so fast as they used to do or expected to do, when fewer Customers come to their Shops than formerly, and those who do come take very long Credit or make close Bargains, they are naturally led to inquire into the Cause, and conclude, and so far very rightly, that Scarcity of Money makes a Scarcity of Customers, or of good ones; but when they lay the Want of it in their Shops on the general Want of it in the Town, and that upon the Diminution of Interest in the public Funds, they are sure enough wide of the Mark.

And if it be alledg'd, that many of the Proprietors in the public Funds, on lowering the Annuities payable to them, have or will retire from

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from this Town, and live in the Country; this may be an Argument in *London* and *Westminster* against the former, or any future Diminution of them; but it happens unluckily to be good for nothing, when we are got out of Town as far as *Barnet*, because it matters not to the Community in general, whether the Interest arising from the Funds be spent in *London* or *West Chester*, though it does a great deal whether it be spent in *England* or in *Holland*.

'Tis not said, nor is it true, that all or most of the Conveniencies of Life are now cheap, but this lowness of Price is chiefly confined to the common Provisions and Produce of the Farm; from which one would suspect, that there were some Particularities attending them which differenced them from other Things. A greater Produce than usual of these Things, as well or rather sooner than in any others, when the Consumption continues the same, will lessen the Price of them at Market, as certainly as a less Consumption, when the Produce is the same; therefore a less Price may be the Effect of a greater Produce, as well as of a less Consumption. Such greater Produce of Land may be the Gift of God in some Years, or may proceed from the Art or Industry of the Producer; but if the present low Price of these Things does really proceed from a less Consumption of them, and such less Consumption from a Fall in the Interest of public Stocks; it may be

truly said that the Proprietors of them, having sunk one *per Cent.* on such their Securities, have made Reprizals on the poor Farmer, by sinking the Price of the common Provisions of Life. And, as they have terrified him with Threats of farther Reprizals, if Interest be farther sunk on their Securities, if they make their Threats good; it will be true to say likewise, that the Money which must be raised to pay the Debts of the Nation, which remain unpaid, as well as that which has been already raised and paid, comes out of the Farmer's Pocket or his Landlords.

If then the present Cheapness of Provisions, may have proceeded from a Succession of several plentiful Years, those may be succeeded by Years of Scarcity, for Times and Seasons are not in our Hands; and therefore, the Price of them taken at a single Point of Time, or in any one Year, is an uncertain Rule to determine the general Price of them; and if that were stated by a Medium for a Number of Years, it may come out not to be so very low as at this Instant it appears to be. Meats and Drinks, and the common Provisions of Life, are most of them in their Natures perishable, and not reservable for a future Market, and therefore must be sold at the first which they are brought to; where, if the Buyer will not come up to the Price demanded, the Seller must go down to the Price offered. When and where the Quantity of these Things to be sold is augmented, whatever the Cause of such Augmen-

Augmentation may be, and the Quantity call'd for is in the usual Proportion, the Price of them must sink *pro hac Vice*: But whether this or that may be fixed as the general Price of them, cannot be judged by one or two Days, nor indeed by one or two Years Market, because a temporary Plenty or Scarcity may greatly alter the Proportions, but it is to be done by the Constancy and Permanency of such a Price for a Number of Years. 'Tis therefore not right, to pronounce peremptorily and to draw Conclusions, from Matters which are Subject to so great and sudden Variations, as that a small Time, the Compass of a single Year, shall destroy the whole Reasoning.

On the other Hand, Commodities of foreign Growth, which Luxury or the Fashion of the Age have made Conveniencies of Life, are many of them such as do not immediately perish, but can wait a distant Market; and as the Nature of the Goods, so the State of the Merchant's Purse or his Credit, give him Room to keep them till he can have his own Price, and the Profit he proposed, for them. Besides, the Merchant can make some sort of Computation in his Way of Dealing, what Quantity of Goods his own Trade shall take off in a Year, and can furnish himself accordingly; but in the common Produce of Land, as Beef, Mutton, Corn, &c. 'tis impracticable for the Farmer to make any such Computation; and if he could make such, he cannot cut out and carve for himself, what shall be the Produce

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of his Farm in those Instances, but must be content with such as the Time and Season shall afford. On this Account he can take no Measures, so as to have such a Stock only of these Things, as shall be proportioned to the probable Consumption of them; and neither the Condition of his Goods nor of his Pocket, give him Leave to defer the present Market Price. Since then, the Price of foreign Commodities, in very few Instances at least, is not fallen, I think the present low Price of those of Native Growth, may be attributed to a greater Plenty of them, more properly, than to a Scarcity of Money, which should affect them all equally.

If it be contended, that a greater Plenty of these Things has contributed nothing to the low Price of them, but that a less Consumption has wholly produced this Effect, we are very little advanced in our Proof, that this less Consumption is to be ascribed to the fall of Interest on the public Funds; since if the less Expence occasioned by such fall, were confined solely to these Things, the less Consumption would be only an hundredth Part of the Expence of the whole Kingdom, and the want of Consumption in such a Proportion, could never make any sensible Difference in the Price of these Things. Since then, this supposed less Consumption and low Price of these Things cannot have arisen from the Fall of Interest, it matters not much whether I can assign

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assign any of the true Causes of it; and yet probably the modern Way of Living and House-keeping may have some share in it. 'Tis visible to every one who lives in this Town, that the Expences in Cloaths, Equipages, and Furniture of Houses are greatly Increased within these few Years; and he that lays out more than formerly on his Back, has just so much the less to put into his Belly. If a Landlord lives upon Fish, Wild Fowl, and Ragouts, and drinks only Burgundy and Champagne, and perhaps visits his Estate only to collect the Rents of it, 'tis no wonder that his Tenants who deal only in Beef and Mutton and the common Produce of his Land, are forced to lower the Price of their Commodities, or that they call for an Abatement in their Rent, upon the Absence of the Market for their Goods.

That Rents in some Places, and of particular Farms, have fallen of late Years, is too notorious to be denied; but the Complaint I believe is more general than the Practice is, for it is not true that they are universally or more commonly fallen; on the contrary, I believe that the Rental of the whole Kingdom, is greater now than 20 Years ago. In all Times, and in all Reigns, down from Queen Elizabeth's to this Time, there were always some People, and we meet with Writers who have complained of the Fall of Rents in their Times; so that if from thence only, a Man was

was to form a Judgment of the present Rental of the Kingdom, he must conclude that it is not above half, when it is certainly double, of what it was in her Days. The Fall of Rents within ten or twenty Miles of *London*, where it has been as great and more talked of than in any other Part of the Kingdom, is easily to be accounted for from hence. The Practice of raising the Rents, on the Advance in the Price of Provisions, or on the Change of Property, has prevailed more there than elsewhere; and therefore on the Fall of such Price, if to the old Rate only, must make the Land to fall likewise to its old Rent. Many of these may have already fallen, or possibly will fall, even below that; because Places more remote, by the present Conveniency of the Roads leading to this Town, have made this their Market for their Provisions; and as the Farmers at a greater Distance sit at a lower Rent, they can afford the Produce of their Farms at a cheaper Rate, which must by Degrees sink the Price of the Provisions, and the Rents arising nearer the Town.

The Fall in the Rents of particular Farms may be attributed much to the same Cause; that is, many of them have been heretofore raised above a holding Rent, and now are sunk down again; and others have consisted of rich and unimprovable Lands, and whilst poor and barren Lands by Manure and Dressing, have been made to yield a greater Produce,

duce, the richer Lands have been at a Stand; and such Improvements of one must have depreciated the Value and Rent of the other; for the Value and Price of the Lands and the Provisions arising from them, all taken together, will be no more than before, unless the Mouths to consume them or the Money to buy them, have Increased in Proportion to the Increase in the Produce. If a Farm of richer Lands would produce so much Fruits as should maintain twenty People, and be equal to a Rent of 100 *l. per Annum*; and a Farm of poorer Lands produce so much as would maintain ten People, and be equal to a Rent of 50 *l. per Ann.*; when the poorer Land is improved and made to produce Fruits equal to the richer Land, if the Number of Persons to be maintained is the same, and there's no foreign Market to take off such superabundance, the Persons would indeed live better and more plentifully on such increased Produce, but the Value and Price of the present greater Produce would be no more than of the former less Produce; and the Rent of both Farms put together would be no more than 150 *l.*, that is, each of them 75 *l. per Annum*.

If the Fall of Rents were more general, or if the Dilatoriness in paying the Rents on good Farms, which is almost equivalent to a Fall of Rent, was universal; which may in great Measure be admitted, if we confine it to the Compass of a few Years; and if the
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Lowness in the Price of the common Provisions of Life, is not rightly accounted for by the Causes which I have assigned, and if such low Price should continue for any Number of Years, I agree it is not rightly so accounted for; it remains that such low Price must be attributed to a Scarcity of Money, circulating in such Sort of Things; for the Cheapness of them cannot possibly proceed but from one or other of these two Causes, either a greater Plenty of the Things to be sold, or a less Quantity of Money to buy them with.

If we consider the several Ways in which Money in *England* is employed, we shall discover perhaps, whatever Plenty there may be when applied to some Purposes, yet that there is little enough where it is wanted for other Purposes; the Quantity in the whole not being sufficient to answer the Demands in the whole; and that the Plenty of it is not such as to have reach'd the Farmer and his Concerns. Money may be consider'd in a double Capacity, either as the common Medium by which Things are bought and sold, or as a Commodity let out to Use to bring in a certain Income: And there may be a Scarcity of it with regard to the first, though there be Plenty enough for the last Purpose. The Money here in *England* may be said to be of two Sorts; the real Money of Gold and Silver in Specie, and the fictitious Money in Paper, consisting

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consisting of Bank Bills, Bankers Notes, India and South-Sea Bonds, and the public Securities in general. Now it is obvious, that this fictitious Money readily answers the Purpose of putting out Money to Use, and I doubt not but the great Quantity of it is the Cause of the present low Interest, because Plenty will always create Cheapness. 'Tis as plain on the other Side, that no Money will go at Market to buy Beef or Mutton and the common Provisions of Life, but Gold or Silver in Specie; and if those Things are at a low Price, and there be not a greater Plenty of them than formerly, 'tis evident that a less Quantity of Gold and Silver is now current in that Channel than heretofore. What is become of the Specie that was in the Kingdom, suppose, ten, twenty, or thirty Years ago, when the Price of these Things was higher, is not easy to determine: If 'tis gone abroad, it must have gone to pay Debts on the Balance of Trade; for nothing but Gold or Silver will answer those Purposes, and then 'tis no wonder that the Price of these Things has diminished; and it may be true that the Balance of Trade is against us, at the same Time as the Interest of Money is sinking, for that may depend on our fictitious Money which cannot go abroad. If it remains still in the Kingdom, it must be got to this Town, and then a Man may easily guess where it is lodged: But it is evident, that

that in the Country there is not a proper Proportion.

The Case of the Farmer then seems to be this, that he suffers from a Scarcity of real Money, or because a sufficient Quantity does not circulate in the Commodities he deals in; and at the same Time he reaps no Benefit from the Plenty of the fictitious Money; for tho' there may be Money enough in the Kingdom to be let out to use, yet a very small Share of it falls to his Lot, and upon hard Terms. That there is Plenty of Money ready to be employed in the public Stocks, is evident from the great Price given on such Purchases, and the small Return on them; for the Interest made of Money in that Way, cannot well be computed higher than 3 l. at an Avarage, as I shall shew hereafter. That there is no Want of Money to be lent on Morgages appears from hence, that an Interest much below the legal one, especially if the Securities are good and the Sums are large, is readily accepted; but for smaller Sums and on personal Securities, 5 l. per Cent. the legal Interest, is most commonly expected and given; and such are the Sums which the Farmer wants, and such the Security which generally he can give. And this is not all the Difficulty he meets with in this Affair, for even upon these Terms, he cannot easily procure the Money he wants. A common Country Tradesman and Shop-keeper can have Credit, and it is the usual Practice

Practice for the Superior Dealers to give him Credit, for a great Part of the Stock he trades in, and if he wants Money to supply the rest, he may hire it on his Bond, and the Lender in such Case, runs no greater Risque than other his Creditors do; but the Farmer cannot have Credit for Goods in Husbandry, nor is it usual or reasonable to expect it for such Things as he wants, and if he must borrow Money on such Security as he can give, which is commonly no other but his Bond, the Lender may be apt enough to tell him, and he may very truly tell him, that he runs a greater Risque in lending to him, than to any Man living; for that his Landlord, if there should happen to be a Failure, will be first paid; and though he is stinted by Law in some Instances to a certain Degree, viz. to a Year's Rent, yet it commonly happens that by taking the first, he sweeps away all the Stakes.

The Farmer too may reasonably enough complain, although his be the most necessary and most useful Trade in a Country, and of the largest Extent, yet that 'tis the last which is regarded, by those who talk so loudly about encouraging Trade. On the contrary, if the Price of Wheat happens to be at 5 s. the Bushel, we have Riots in the Country, and an Outcry is presently raised in this Town, as if this tended only to plump up and fatten the Farmer, though every one knows that 'tis no more than a middling Price to the Consumer,

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sumer, and a living one to the Producer: And even this Price, though no extraordinary one, was occasioned wholly by a Scarcity abroad; so that foreign Countries must bear the Loss, and our own reap the Benefit of it. Nay this is not all; for there was an Appeal to the LEGISLATURE, whilst Sitting, to restrain the Price of it, at least for home Consumption; I suppose for fear the Farmer should grow fat and foggy, and the Landlord be paid his Rent. But is not this to take away or set a Price upon Peoples Property, or when some Persons make a Clamour about invading Property, do they mean any more than that of their own dear Selves? A great Concern for the Poor was the Pretext for fixing a Price upon Wheat, but if it be a right way of proceeding with regard to Corn, then if Wool or the Manufacture of it should rise in its Price, though it were by a Demand for it at a foreign Market, it would be right to stint the Price of them too, for home Consumption; for Wool is as necessary to cloath the Naked, as Bread is to feed the Hungry: And where then shall we stop?

I suppose, they who talk of encouraging Trade, do not mean to exhort us to spend our Money in Masquerades, Balls, Ridottos, Frescos, Operas, Plays, &c.; but I am not sure they don't call upon us to frequent Taverns, Ale-houses, Punch-houses, Chocolate-houses, &c.; for in the List of the good People of *England*, to whom an Address has been made,

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made, I find the Masters of public Houses are inserted: And among Traders, I suppose, we may put in the old Gentleman who cries Cabbage-Nets or Card-Matches about the Streets, and Mother *Wrinkle*, that sells Apples and Ginger-Bread upon a Bulk; for they are of the Fraternity of Trade too, and we know who would give them the Title of Merchants. If some Persons will consult and pay any Regard to the great Author, whom they so often quote, they will not find in his List, even the Woollen-Drapers, Linnen-Drapers, or Mercers; nor the Druggist, Tobaccoist, or Grocer; though they are Traders of the first Magnitude: For he confines his Incouragement of Trade, to the Merchant, the Manufacturer, and Husbandman; but of common Shop-keepers, he says something so hard that I shall not repeat it.

The Affair is this; the Notion of encouraging Trade has of late Years prevailed very much, and very rightly where we speak of foreign Trade; and the first Promoters of the Notion meant no others, but from thence we are descended to all Trade, domestic as well as foreign, and the Cry of it is so common, even amongst the Vulgar, that I have heard my Landlord, who keeps a petty Ale-house in a Country Village, harangue it with great Eloquence; and with a grave Air complain, that Trade was not sufficiently encouraged, when he meant the Trade of Ale-draping and Smoaking Tobacco. And if domestic Trade were to have

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Encouragement, and I have nothing to say against it, where the Expence is proportioned to the Income of the Consumer, the Farmer has a better Title to his Share of this, than any other Trader in the Kingdom; because the Goods he deals in, are wholly the Produce of his native Country and his own Labour; and few Tradesmen have so much to say for themselves. And as he must be looked upon, and ought to be treated as a domestic Trader, so he should as a foreign one too, or a Promoter of it, for the Foundation of our Exports come from his Hands, as the first Producer.

There is one Thing in this Affair, which I confess I cannot well reconcile; that is, how we shall order Matters to encourage Trade, and at the same time not multiply the number of Traders, and thereby spoil Trade. If Riches or an handsome Maintenance are seen to be got by Trading, and unless this be the Effect of such Encouragement it signifies nothing, People will naturally fall into it; and I don't know how we can get rid of the super-numerary ones, unless we transport them to *Georgia*. If Traders are multiplied, and the Consumers not multiplied in Proportion; the Gains in Trade to every Individual must lessen, because the Gains in the whole are supposed to be the same, and to be divided into more Hands. Nay in Truth, the Gains in the whole will be less than before, for there being many more Shops to go to, the Sellers may
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be contented with less Profit; so that at the same Time and by the same Means, by which we encourage Trade, or mean to do so, we shall spoil it. It was forgot indeed, that the number of Buyers in the Kingdom, may be ten times the number of Traders and Sellers; and therefore this Reason may be a very good Reason for the Buyers and Community in general to encourage Trade, because in the Event it might be a Benefit to them, since there would be just as much saved to the Consumers as is not got by the Venders: And if this should ruin Trade, it is not very seasonably asked for, by those who are for promoting it. If this were the Case, and undoubtedly by encouraging Trade, we shall multiply Traders and lessen the Gains of Individuals; the Consequence of this would only be, that instead of large and very great Estates being got in Trade by a few, there would be Room for many to get a compleat Maintenance and moderate Fortunes; and in this there would be no Inconvenience to the Nation.

Since this Notion and this Practice of encouraging Trade, has increased the Stock of Traders, both in Town and Country so greatly, that they are become a Burden upon the Family, and we have spoiled or soon shall spoil all Trade, in some People's Opinion, instead of promoting it; 'tis Time to turn the Tables, and give a helping Hand to the Farmer. At present, the old patriarchal Trade of Cow-keeping is at a very low Ebb, and
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the Business of following the Plough and the Cart under much Disreputation; for the Politeness of the Times have made so many fine Tradesmen, that we have hardly any plain Husbandmen left. The Way to do them Service is the same to be sure, as is taken to help any other Tradesman, *viz.* by promoting the Consumption of such Species of the Provisions of Life as he deals in. I would not be understood here to recommend Extravagance in these Things, though of our own Production; for Frugality, Oeconomy at least, is the Foundation of Riches in the great Family of the Public, as well as in the small Family of a private House: I mean only that they should have a Preference to some Things which might be named, at least that there might be some room left for them in a House. According to the modern Fashion, a Table, where there is reckoned to be good Eating and Drinking, shall be covered with Plates of Rarities and Kick-shaws, and if a Joint of Beef or Mutton makes its Appearance in the Dining-Room, it must not pretend to a better Place than a Side-board or second Table. It was not so in good Queen *Bess's* Days, when her Dames of Honor wore their Grogam Gowns and dined on plain *English* Victuals; and King *Charles* the Second had a better Taste and a greater Respect for a Sirloin of Beef, than to treat it in that manner. At such Tables as these, where there is Plenty enough, if a Glass of well-brew'd Ale or Beer

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was to be had, when called for, as well as Claret or Burgundy, it would not be at all the worse, either for the Master of the House or for his Friends, and a great deal better for his Tenants. People may think such Things as these of small Importance to a Farmer, but we see where Customs are taken up by the Nobility and Quality, the Gentlemen too will fall into them, and every one desiring to have the Appearance of Gentility will follow after; and by Degrees such Customs grows common; and then a Grazier may feed and fatten his Oxen and his Sheep, and when he has done so, he may e'en kill them and eat them himself, for there's hardly any Body to buy them who can afford to pay for them. 'Tis not to be supposed that this should be universally the Practice, and that the good old *English* Dishes of Beef and Mutton should be banished all our Tables; but yet so far as they are disused, so much less Gain must be coming to the Breeder and Feeder of them. I am quite of Opinion, that this Mode of House-keeping, which gets Ground in some Degree in the Country, and in this Town very fast; and another Practice which is coming upon us too, contribute not a little to the present low Price of the common Provisions of Life. Where a Person's Circumstances are such, that he cannot well bear the Charge both of Splendor in Cloaths and Equipage, and of a well-spread Table, he is surely in the right to retrench the Expences of one of them;

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them ; and since he is at Liberty to be saving on which Article of the two he pleases, we see the more common Practice is to shorten the Table. Whether he makes a good Choice in so choosing, matters not, nor do I meddle with it, but so the Practice is; and in Tables, where the Expence is not diminished but possibly augmented, there the Fashion is to introduce Made Dishes, as they call them, made of something no Body can taste what, instead of the old plain *Englisk* Dishes: And yet such Landlords expect, though I am sure they do not deserve to have their Rents as well paid, as he that lives in the ancient Way, on the Produce of his own Farm, and of his own Country.

Persons of Quality and Distinction, though they live in *London* great Part of the Year, may alter this unprofitable Fashion in some Measure, and it would not be at all the worse for their Healths, and a great deal better for the landed Interest in general; and with regard to their own Tenants in particular, there is another Thing to be recommended to them, that is, to see their Faces a little oftner, and stay a little longer with them, than is just necessary to make up their Account and receive their Rents. For want of a little of this Piece of Management, we have known some Gentlemen, who could not only get any Rents of their Tenants, but even could not get their Votes at an Election to Parliament, unless they hired them; And whence comes this? Why their Land-

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lords let their Estates at a Rack-rent, and contribute no more towards inabling their Tenants to pay those Rents, than any other Man in the Kingdom of the like Condition does; and so at the End of seven Years, when it becomes the Tenants Turn, the Tenants let their Votes, as their Landlord lets his Land, for the best Price they can get for them. These are some of the Things which it might be convenient for Landlords to do, in order to raise the Price of the common Produce of Land, for herein lies the Gain to the Landlord, and without this 'tis in vain for them to expect their Rent should be regularly paid, or kept up to their old Rate.

Besides these Things, there are some requisite to be done on the Tenants Part, towards procuring the same Effect: That is, Industry to produce a proper Quantity of Goods, and Frugality in disposing of them; for if he spends more with one Hand, than he gets with the other, there can be nothing left to pay Rent. It will not be thought necessary that a Farmer every Time he goes to Market, should spend his Bottle of Wine, when Ale or Beer may be had at a much cheaper Rate, and probably much more wholesome too; nor, if his Wife or Daughters want Cloaths, that he must lay out his Money in Silks and Sattens, when Cloth or Stuffs may be bought for half the Money and do twice the Service; nor will his Landlord con him any Thanks for his Use of Tea and Coffee, when his Farm at

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Home

Home affords him as good a Liquor, and one not quite so chargable. In such Practices as these, if any such there be, there is *Lucrum cessans* as well as *Damnum emergens*; for he misses a Gain by the less Consumption of the Goods of his own Growth and Manufacture, and he loses so much as he pays extraordinary for such Exotics; when his own Commodities would serve the same Conveniences of Life, and probably are more suitable to his Circumstances.

It will be said perhaps, if by these or any Means the Price of the common Provisions of Life are raised, that the Poor will suffer by it, and Labour will come dearer to the Farmer himself and likewise to the Manufacturer; so that in the Event this mighty Project will produce nothing that shall be beneficial to the landed Interest, since the extraordinary Charge of the Poor and of common Labourers must be born by the Landholders; and we shall ruin Trade by the Increase in the Price of our Manufactures, which is already full high enough. Whether the Charge to the Poor would be heighten'd by an Advance in the Price of Provisions, is a very great Question; for sure I am, the Poores Rates in many Places are higher now than 20 Years ago, when common Provisions where at a greater Price than now; the Reason of which may be, because the poorer sort of all live a little on their Labour, but chiefly on the Gleanings of the richer; but if the Rich are pinched in their Circumstances,

stances, the Poor will feel it in their Turn, and in the End must come to the Parish. As to Labour, in Husbandry or Manufacture, it has been observed, that it is always dearest when Provisions are cheapest, because People in low Life, who work only for their daily Bread, if they can get it by three Days Work in a Week, will many of them make Holiday the other three, or set their own Price on their Labour. If a greater Price of Provisions should oblige them to Work one Day in a Week, or one Hour in a Day more, or rather play one Day, or one Hour less than they now do, which would not very much hurt them; the Pay of that Day or Hour would more than make an amends for the Advance in the Price of such Things as they commonly live on; and those who employ them might very well afford to set the Industrious to Work, and pay them better Wages too, since their Profit would be augmented in a Proportion much greater.

I know 'tis frequently a Subject of Complaint that Labour is dear in *England*, and from thence that the Goods of the Growth or Manufacture of this Country, come dear to a foreign or domestic Market; but I think that the Dearness of them arises rather from the multiplicity of Brokers, who intervene between the first Producer and the last Consumer, and the great Profit which is made by those intermediate Dealers. The very smallest of Abatements made in the Gains of the Manufacturer,

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turer, that is the Employer, the Factor, the Shopkeeper, or Merchant, would make a vast Advance in the Wages of the Labourer and first Workman. I doubt therefore the true Reason why Merchants of some foreign Countries do undersell ours, is because our Goods run too long a Circuit before they come to the Consumer, and the several Agents through whose Hands they go, eat up a great share of those Gains which should belong to the first Producer and Manufacturer; and neither the Factor nor Dealer is content with so small a Profit as in other Countries; and not because the Goods, when they come out of the first Hands, are dearer here than in other Places.

There are some other Things which perhaps would more effectually relieve the poor Landholder, but they are not in his Power, as such, to come at: *viz.* fixing the Interest of Money at the present natural Rate of it, as far as it can be estimated; and taking off some of the Duties of Excise which lye on the Produce of the Farm, or on such Things which a Farmer must of Necessity make Use of; and from hence, even the poorest in Life would receive some Advantage. I have before observed, though there may be Plenty enough of Money in the Kingdom, ready to be put out to Use, and such a Quantity of it employed in some Branches of that Business, as to make the Rate of it much under 4*l.* per Cent. and in others at 4*l.* or a little more; yet
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legal Interest being 5*l.* and the Sums which the Farmer wants being small ones, and the Security he can give personal only, the Benefit of such Plenty has not reach'd him; and I doubt cannot be made to reach him, any otherwise than by fixing the legal Rate of Money at the same Price with that, which in other Instances is the natural one.

Most of the People who engage in this Way of Business, are, at first setting out, of small Substance, for those of better have been spirited into Trade, and if they cannot have Credit, which in their Way of Dealing is not to be had, nor can borrow Money at an easy Rate, they must under Stock and ill Husband their Land, and then they are soon ruined; and if some are of better Fortunes and can weather this Point, yet even these for want of ready Money to answer their Landlords or other Demands, cannot always wait the best Market for their Goods. 'Tis well enough known in the Country, that soon after Harvest and about *Michaelmas*, when Labourers are to be paid their Wages, and Landlords are calling for their Rents, there is a glut of Farmers Commodities at Market; and the Dealers in them taking the Advantage of the Number and their Necessities, put the Price upon them accordingly. Nay sometimes, for the sake of Money advanced; draw them into Contracts for a certain Quantity or the whole Produce of a particular Commodity, at the same low Price; And thus the Necessities of
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some, set the Market Price for all the rest of their Neighbours.

Whether it may be convenient or advantageous to a Country, to limit the Rate of Interest by a Law, may be Matter of Controversy, among some People; but Mr. *Locke's* Reason on the affirmative side of the Question, seems to me to have determined it: *viz.* Since there will always be want of Money, either to supply the Necessities of some Persons, or for young Men to begin Trade with; that there will be no Danger in doing this, that monied Men may not have too unbounded a Power to prey upon their Ignorance or Necessities. He is not therefore, as he has been commonly understood, absolutely against stating Interest, since he not only gives this Reason for doing it; *viz.* to prevent Extortion and Oppression: But goes on to consider what is the proper Rule to regulate this Matter; and since his Rule as well as his Reason for doing this is a very good one, I crave Leave to insert it.

He says then, that the current Price of Land ought to be the Measure of the Price of Money; but in Regard the Landed Man's Security is better, and his Income from thence (in his Days) more certain than the monied Man's is, because the Security of the latter may prove bad, and his Money sometimes lie dead in his Hands, he thinks that the monied Man should be allowed to make a greater return from his Money, than the landed Man has from his Land: And that Land in his
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Time being about twenty Years Purchase, and bringing in *5 l. per Cent.*, that Money might reasonably be stated, as it then was, at *6 l. per Cent.* This is the Substance of his Reason and his Rule in this Matter; and if we apply it to the present Circumstances of Things, it will appear that Money at *4 l. per Cent.* Use, would make a better Return than Land does at the present Rate of Purchasing, and that the Excess is much in the same Proportion as he thought a reasonable one for his Time; for if a Man buys Land at 25 Years Value, and he cannot buy a good conditioned Estate at so low a Price, he will hardly see *3 l. 6 s. 8 d. per Cent.* for his Money, and yet that Sum bears the same Proportion to *4 l.* at Use, as *5 l.* on Land does to *6 l.* at Use. If we make a Computation on Fee-farm Rent, or any other such Estate, out of which there is no Draw-back but the Land-Tax; and if we state that at *2 s.* in the Pound; if we suppose it to be bought at 27 Years Value, the Interest which the Purchaser will get for his Money, will be exactly *3 l. 6 s. 8 d. per Cent.*; but where is the Purchase of such an Estate now to be had at that Rate?

To apply this Way of Reasoning to the Case of Husbandmen: Who are they that at first setting out in the World so much want Money, and are so liable to Oppression? What is that way of Living which is so full of Drudgery and Toil, and returns so little Profit to themselves? What is that Trade which is
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so necessary, so profitable, to a Country, and employs so many Hands? A Man may say very truly, that in all these Respects, it is equal to all the Trades, Professions, and Businesses in a Kingdom, put together; for the annual Income of the whole Kingdom of *England*, is computed by Dr. *Davenant*, to be 43 Millions, and of this the Value of the Produce of Land is stated at 22 Millions and above; and the Income of all the rest, exclusive of the Rent of Houses and Land, is nothing near half that Value: And the annual Income from Use Money, on public and on private Securities, all together, does very little, if at all, exceed three Millions; which, though it makes a great Noise, makes but a small Figure in 43 Millions.

One Objection to stating the Rate of Interest, is, that you take away Peoples Property or set a Price upon it, whereas every Man ought to be left at Liberty to make the best he can, as well of these as of any other his Possessions. To this I say; that it has been the Policy of all Ages, and almost of all Countries, to fix the Price of this sort of Property, and since in different Countries and in different Ages, the Occasions of doing this might be various, it may be difficult to assign the particular Reasons and Grounds for such Practice. That which Mr. *Locke* has given, and has been already mentioned, is a very good one; and I suppose might be the Reason why among the *Jews*, at least between those
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of their own Country, Usury was totally forbidden; *viz.* that the Rich one might not grind the Face of his poor and needy Brother. To his Authority, I take leave to add that of another great Man, Mr. *Puffendorff*; who, after having largely discussed that Point, whether Usury was lawful, and having determined, I think very rightly, in the Affirmative, concludes with this; that those municipal Laws are by all Means to be commended, which do not leave it to be exercised at the Lust of private Persons, but limit it within certain Bounds.

In Countries, which by Situation are adapted to Trade, the Government may have thought it proper, by Subtracting from monied Men part of the Profits of their Money at Use, to force as it were their Subjects into Trade; for, since their usual Income by this Means would be lessened, they might be induced to help themselves by engaging in Trade, or if they cared not to adventure, others might, by a Prospect of a greater Gain, which would arise from borrowing their Money at a cheaper Rate than before. It may be true, that in the natural Course of Things Trade produces Plenty of Money, and Plenty of Money produces low Interest; yet it may be true, and we see in Fact 'tis so, that low Interest multiplies Traders, and that makes Things come cheaper to Market. This may not turn to the Advantage of particular Persons trading, unless Trade itself as well as Traders
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increase, yet it does to the greater Part of the Community, as the number of Buyers exceeds the number of Sellers; and where the Imports are sold cheaper, the Exports in the same or the like Goods, may be sold cheaper too, which will increase the Exportation. However, it matters not much, of the two, Trade or low Interest, which precedes and which follows, since they tread so close on one another's Heels; and if Trade has made Interest low, to fix it there by a Law, can do no Harm if it does no Good to Trade.

In other Places, there may be other political Reasons for this Practice; but I think the most reasonable Ground for it, is, that Foreigners who live and spend their Money in one Country, may not have an Opportunity of making an unreasonable Profit of their Money in another Country, and such I would reckon all to be, which is made beyond the current Interest. If there be no Injustice in fixing it between Subject and Subject at the natural Price of it, that is, such a Price as every honest and fair dealing Man would take for it, and surely it can be none to prevent the Rapacity of one from imposing on the Necessities of another; it may be convenient and even a Piece of Justice in a State to fix this Price, with a View to foreign Money, that the Subjects of one Country may not have it in their Power to impose upon the Subjects of another, by exacting a Rate above the true Value of it there.

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The Government here in *England*, in the Year 1717, lowered the Price of Guineas from 21 s. 6 d. to 21 s. and all other Gold Coins in Proportion, for this Reason; because, in taking Gold from Foreigners at that higher Rate, for the Gold so taken we gave in Silver or Merchandize that 6 d. more than the Gold was worth at the Market, and, according to the vulgar saying, bought Gold too dear. And as Gold or Silver may be bought too dear, so it may be, as 'tis Money, hired too dear; and this is a continuing Loss so long as the Use subsists: And whatever is so paid more than the natural Price of it, is not only so much loss to the Persons paying but to the whole Community, whereas between Persons of the same Country, though there be an Exaction in it, one gets what the other loses. For this Reason, it may be right and good Policy for a Government to prohibit and prevent their Subjects from hiring Money of Foreigners, at a Price above the Market, and to avoid doing it for its own Use unless on Necessities very urgent, and where it has been done to get rid of it as soon as the Credit of the State and of its Engagements will give leave. 'Tis not sufficient to say here, that the present State of Money in the Kingdom has already fixed or may fix the current Price of it at Use, and that 'tis therefore unnecessary to do that by Law, which the natural Course of Things has done or may do to our Hands; for in the other Case, of the Value of Gold and Silver, the Course of Trade

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the Plenty of one more than the other, had brought them into such Circumstances in *England*, and in all the neighbouring Countries, that a Guinea in Gold was not worth more than 21 s., and it may be something less; and yet we were here so unwary as to give for it 21 s. 6 d. in Silver, till we had not enough left to answer the common Market Affairs; and very probably, if the King's Proclamation had not prohibited, we should have continued to do so, till our Silver Money had been all gone, or there had been such a Scarcity of it as would have obliged us to do that, which the Law directed, to give a Guinea for 21 Shillings in Silver. And since Foreigners have great Sums of Money in *England*, and this may in some sort be the Case in regard to the Use of Money, there seems to be a Necessity that the State do the same Thing now in that Instance, which it did before with the Gold, *viz.* make the legal and natural Price to be uniform.

Times indeed may alter, and the Circumstances of Money be so changed, as that 4 l. *per Cent.* shall cease to be the natural Interest, though it may seem to be so now; and shall the monied Man be precluded from making use of such Opportunities as may be more favourable to his Interest? If the State of Money should so alter, as that it could not readily be had at 4 l. *per Cent.*, and it should continue so for any Time, it would be as reasonable and as right to throw it back to 5 l. as

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'tis now to fix it at 4 l. If the Difficulty of raising it at that Rate should be temporary only, from very great Demands by particular Persons on some extraordinary Occasions, few besides the Lender himself, would think that a sufficient Ground to alter the standing Rule. If any great and sudden Exigencies of State should inhause the Price of it, there would be still less Reason then to break into the Rule, because the Government is always at Liberty to take up Money for its own Use, at such a Rate as it can be had, whatever that be; and between Man and Man, the Landholder, who in the Event is the Borrower, will have Burden enough laid upon him by such extraordinary Charge of the State, without having an Addition thrown upon him by the Lender; whilst the monied Man, *quotenus* such, shall contribute nothing to this public Charge.

But who are they that complain of it as a Grievance that the Parliament fixes a Price on Money at Use; The monied Men and Persons who live in and about *London* chiefly; and yet with Regard to them I observe, and an Argument *ad Hominem*, is an Answer to an Argument *ab Homine*, that their chief Magistrate does every Week, or as often as he sees convenient, set a Price upon Property of another Kind, *viz.* upon Bread. This indeed he does for the sake of the Poor and Needy, that he may not be imposed on by avaricious and crafty Dealers, and I suppose makes the Market Price of Wheat the Rule for setting such

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Affize. I will suppose too, that the Parliament will make Use of the Market Price of Money, as the Rule for affizing it; and there are other Poor and Needy in the Kingdom, besides those who want their daily Bread, and who are as liable to be imposed on from their urgent Necessities, and their unwillingness at the same Time to make them too public. I must add farther, because it has a near Relation to the grand Article in the Farmers Business, that this Power of the Lord-Mayor, as it is strictly executed, has a great Influence on the Price of Wheat, in all Places at least within the Reach of *London* Market. The Affize indeed may be regulated by the Price of Wheat in the Market preceding, but will be a strong Rule to govern the Price of it in a subsequent Market; and, though it does not absolutely determine it, for then the Price could never vary, yet such Affize may be made Use of by Dealers to beat it down; and 'tis to me very evident they do so, otherwise I cannot conceive what should make *Bear-Key*, as it sometimes is, the cheapest Market in the Kingdom for this Commodity. If the Justices of Peace were to execute this Jurisdiction in the Country, which I suppose they have Power to do, I know what the Farmers would say of their Worships, something not very civil; and I can pretty well guess too how far the Bakers would observe their Orders, *viz.* so far as to keep down the Price of Corn; and possibly that may be the chief

chief Effect which it has in this Town. And this will appear no trivial Matter, when its considered that the Value of the annual Produce of Wheat only in the Kingdom, stating it at 5 s. the Bushel, has been computed at 3:500:000 l.; which exceeds the annual Produce of all the Money in the Kingdom at Use, both on publick and private Securities put together.

The Citizens of *London* and Tradesmen may be apt to say; if we suffer the Interest of Money to fall, and the Consequence of this should be that the Farmer would raise the Price of Provisions upon us, we shall make a fine Rod for our Backs, and suffer on both sides; our Income less and our Expences greater. Why truly the best Way, and I believe the only Way to prevent this, is, for Men in Trade and Business, one and all by common Consent to shut up Shop, and leave off getting Money: So long as they continue to heap up Wealth, and each is striving to overtake or to get beyond his Neighbour, the Nation must grow rich and the Money of the Country increase. The Riches and Money of the whole Nation, is nothing more than the Riches and Money of the several Individuals who compose that whole, and if one Part grows Rich in a greater Proportion than the other grows Poor, the Nation will infallibly increase in Riches, and the Interest of Money will Decrease, whether the Parliament does or does not interpose in lowering the Price of it,

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either in public or in private Securities. Those who think a Fall of Interest will be attended with a Fall likewise in the Price of Provisions, on the supposed Authority of Mr. *Locke*, have no Reason to frighten themselves or others with a Consequence which they have made sure of never to follow. To those who may think, as I do, that the Price of Provisions would by Degrees rise with the Fall of Interest, and if such Fall were to reach the Farmer, this would be the Case, as certainly as Plenty of Money makes Money cheap; to them I say, that their Computations on these Heads are wrong. The Income of the Consumers in general, will not be lessened by the Fall of Interest; only the Hands will be changed; and the Borrower will have just so much more to spend, as the Lender will have less: And, though the Expence of the Trader will be raised in Proportion to the Rise in the Price of Provisions, yet in the whole Course of Trade, he will be a Gainer by the Change. If we should state such Rise at *5 l. per Cent.* or one in twenty, the Value of the annual Produce of the Lands in *England* being computed above twenty Millions, the Addition of Income accruing to the Farmer will be one Million, which will all of it be added to the Expence in Trade, in one Way or other. If we compute on the other side, what will be the extraordinary Expence falling upon Trade by such advanced Price in Provisions, we shall find it fall greatly short of the additional In-

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come on the Farmers Part. The annual Expence of the whole Body of Traders and Artificers, from the Merchant who Trades to the Indies, down to him who mends Shoes or wheels a Barrow about the Streets, is not more than seven Millions. More than one half of this Expence cannot be allotted to the common Provisions of Life, and if this half terminated wholly in the Produce of our own Country, though a great Part of it, much too great a Part, is consumed in Exotics; the additional Expence arising from the advanced Price in these Things, does not exceed *175,000 l. per Annum*: So that there would be *825,000 l.* clear Gain, left to be expended in the way of Trade. To this therefore, I mean, to the low Price of common Provisions, and the Produce of the Farm which has prevailed for these four or five Years last, may the decay of Trade be attributed, much better than to the Fall of Interest in the public Funds; though in and about this Town, the latter may have contributed in some Measure, 'Tis every one's Observation, that Trade of all Kinds flourishes most, when the Farmers Commodities go off quick and at a good Market; and indeed it can't well be otherwise, since his Effect make so considerable a Branch in the whole Commerce of the Kingdom.

Where Mr. *Locke's* Authority is made use of, against this Notion of fixing the Rate of Interest by Law at the natural Price of it; 'tis because his Arguments are not rightly un-

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derstood or not rightly applied. He says, *p. 17, Fol. Ed.*, that Money is capable of having a fixed yearly Rate set upon it by the Magistrate, because 'tis constantly the same, and by its Interest gives the same sort of Product throw a whole Country; and, *p. 6.* that it would perhaps, bring down the Rate of Money to the Borrower, and certainly distribute it better to the Advantage of Trade in the Country, if the legal Use were kept near the natural one; which is all I contend for, and for the very same Reasons. 'Tis evident from hence, that he was not absolutely against fixing the Rate of it, since he not only thought it practicable but that it might be of Service to the particular Purposes which I have mentioned, *viz.* to help People in the Country, and Beginners in Trade and Farming; and has also given the Rule for doing it, as I before observed; and the Rule admits, that the legal Rate might be stated even below the natural one, and if it were now fixed at *4 l. per Cent.*, I believe it would be thought very little if at all below the natural one. Therefore, whatever Difficulties or ill Consequences he mentions as attendant on lowering Interest, and whatever Arguments he urges against it, he must be understood to have pointed them against lowering the Rate from *6 l.* to *4 l.* by a Law, at a Time when he supposed the natural Rate to be even above *6 l.*; but are in no sort applicable to the present Circumstances in Money Matters.

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He says indeed, in the subsequent Paragraph, that Money, in respect of its varying Need and Necessity, is as little capable of having its yearly Hire fixed by Law, as Land itself; and gives this Reason; because to the quick Changes in Trades, may be added that Money may be carried away, and that be worth 6 or 8 this Year, which would yield but 4 the last. A Law which determines the Price of Money, on the Hire of it, to be sure does not determine the natural Price of it, because that depends on the present Quantity of Money in a Country, and if that is diminished the Price of what is left will be raised. The Supposition that the Rise in this Value may be from 4 to 6 or to 8, in the Compass of a single Year, either in Course of Trade or by any other Subtraction of Money, is made without any Grounds, for we must suppose one half or one quarter of the Money in a Kingdom to be withdrawn in that Time; and this is not to be supposed unless the Country be upon the very Brinks of Ruin. Sudden Emergencies of State, or particular Necessities of private Persons may sometimes vary the Price, but never in such a precipitate Manner, and to such a Degree as is here suggested. If they should, I am so far from thinking that the Possibility of such Contingencies is a Reason against regulating the Price of Money, that I count it among the Reasons for doing it. Where such Demand is of any long Continuance, the natural Price may be truly said to be

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be varied, and there may be Reason then to vary the legal one also; for it will answer no good Purpose to keep them far a sunder. However, since there is no danger in fixing the Hire of Money by Law, at a Price something near the natural one, as he himself says, and I contend for nothing more, a Law to state it within those Bounds, will be a guard against artful and colourable Variations. For real and permanent Variations, Provision may be made, when they happen, by another Law, for this Law is not like the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*, never to be varied; and there may be a Change in the Law, if occasion for it, within the Compass of a Year, as well and much more easily than there can be in the Price of Money, in so great a Proportion as is here suggested.

There is one Thing, which he complains of in his Time, which may have some Resemblance to the State of our Times, *viz.* that too great a Proportion of the Money of the Kingdom was gotten to *London*, so as the Country was almost destitute. Then indeed it was in the Hands of Bankers, and now it may be in the same or the like Hands; and too great a Quantity of it employed in the public Funds. As the Mischief now complained of is much of the same Nature, and as great as in those Days; the Remedy which was judged proper at one Time, may be no ill one at another Time: To put the legal and natural Interest of Money upon a Par, and to lessen the

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the Profits made of it in the public Funds, so far as is consistent with former Engagements, and may reasonably be acquiesced in.

For doing the latter, there is another stronger Reason to be given, and which may deserve a particular Consideration; *viz.* that the Debt of the Nation may be the sooner paid off, and with less Charge to those who are to bear it. That 'tis of great Importance to the Nation to be free from this Load of Debt, will hardly be disputed; though possibly some few upon particular Views, may think otherwise. There may be Difference in Judgment as to any special Scheme for affecting this; yet all must agree, that it is the Interest of those who are to pay it, to put it into such a Method as shall cost them least Money; and therefore whenever or in whatever Manner the Principal is paid, a Reduction of the Interest on the Debt from 4 *l.* to 3 *l.*, or any less Reduction, must be a saving to them in that Proportion; I mean here, if we consider only the Loss or Gain in the Case.

We will inquire then, out of whose Estates the Money must arise which is to discharge this Debt. The Author of the Essay which I before cited, *p.* 109, says, if Land Owners can and do prevent the Load of a Tax from falling directly and immediately on themselves, yet in the last Resort there it will fall, let them shift it seemingly as far off as they will

will in the first Imposition; and perhaps, just so much farther off from them as it is laid in the first Instant, and according to common View and Estimation, just so much the more heavily it comes upon them at the last. Mr. *Locke*, in the Treatise before mentioned, p. 29, says, it is in vain in a Country, whose great Fund is Land, to hope to lay the public Charge of the Government on any Thing else, there it will terminate. The Merchant, do what you can, will not, the Labourer cannot, and therefore the Landholder must; and whether he were best to do it, by laying it directly where it will at last settle, or let it come to him by sinking his Rents, let him consider. The Author of the *Essay* says this only *obiter*, without entering into any Proof of it; but Mr. *Locke* considers it largely, and argues very justly; if a Duty is laid on Commodities, that the Price of them must come so much the dearer to the Consumer, that this additional Price will fall on the Farmer, and Labourer under him, in Proportion to their Consumption of them, by which the Wages to the Labourers must be raised; so that from thence, and for the Maintenance of his own Family, the Expence of the Farmer must be increased. At the same Time, such Duty falling on the Consumer, he must retrench his Expences in some Article of Life or other, and this saving being most likely to fall amongst such Things as are the Produce of the Farm, this saving

saving will lower the Price of the Farmer's Commodities, so that his Income by that Means shall become less, as well as by the former his Expence becomes greater; and between both, it is no wonder if he expects an Abatement of his Rent, or runs away and pays none.

To this let me add, in Duties on native Commodities, there is Reason to fear that this is not all and the worst of their Case. The common Notion is, that the Consumer pays the Taxes of this Nature, and there is no Doubt but the last Retailer of excisable Goods, makes an Addition to the Price of them, equal to the Tax laid upon them; and yet I am afraid that the first Producer pays it likewise, so that in the Event 'tis twice paid. By the way, if the King receives the Duty once only, and 'tis twice paid, there is some Body between the first Producer and the last Consumer, who gets the Duty once; and then we need not be surprized to find some People not in haste for paying off the Debt of the Nation, and taking away the Duties. That the first Producer of excisable Goods, does in some Cases bear the Tax laid upon them, is evident; I think, from this Instance; Bishop *Fleetwood*, in his *Chronicon* before cited, having given us a Table of the Price of Wheat and Malt for 60 Years, from 1646 to 1705, at the Close of it states the Price of Malt by a Medium for the second Period of 20 Years, at 1*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*, and for the third at 1*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.* by the Quarter. I observe, that

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that there was a Duty of 4 s. by the Quarter on Malt, for eight or ten of the Years of the last Period, and yet the Price of it much the same as in the precedent one, when no Duty on it; And who paid it? Why certainly the Occupier of Barley Land, by selling his Corn 4 s. in the Quarter cheaper than before, or otherwise the Malster could not, nor would he, sell at the same Price as before. That this Identity in the Price of Malt in these two Periods, must have arisen from sinking the Price of Barley on the Farmer, and was so sunk upon him by the Artifice of the Malster, and not from any greater Plenty of the Commodity, is evident from hence; that the Price of Wheat in those two Periods of 20 Years, was the same within a Trifle, as well as that of Malt. To this may be added, that the Price of them, in all the three Periods of 20 Years, notwithstanding the Duty on Malt in one of them, bears very near the same Proportion to one another; so that the Duty added nothing to the Price in the Hands of the first Maker; but was taken off from the Price of Barley in the Hands of the first Seller.

The Duty on Lights, was charged and intended by Parliament as a Tax on the Tenants, and not on the Owners, unless they were Occupiers themselves; and yet the Custom in some Places, I may say in some Countries, is to throw it on the Owners, and they discount it as regularly as they do the

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the Land-Tax; and where the Tenant pays it, the Landlord, on ceasing of the Duty, might raise his Rent equal to the Amount of it, since it is all one to the Tenant, whether he pay the Value of the Duty to his Mesn. Lord, the Owner of the House, or to his Sovereign Lord, the King. In this Instance, we see how readily and quickly the Tax centers in the Landlord; from whence one would suspect that this is the Case in most of the excisable Goods, since the Pretext of the Duty is so good a Handle to beat down the Price of them in the Hands of the first Producer: And though the many windings and turnings in Trade may make it longer e'er the Tax reaches the Landholder, and may prevent our discovering how it takes its Course, yet there it must and does come at last. If then the Taxes of a Country, in the whole or by much the greatest Part, must arise out of Land, or there ultimately terminate; this shows most apparently, how deeply the Landholder is interested in them, and especially in those which are levied on Native Commodities. Whether these Taxes are laid for the present Service of the State, or are continued for Payment of Debts formerly contracted, the Case is one and the same; and yet we have been told, and in an Address particularly directed to the Landholder, that this Consideration, amongst others, should ingage him not to come into any Scheme to lower the Interest on the public Debt.

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This way of talking may be looked on as sneering the Landholder, and possibly may silence him, because he knows not how to help himself; but it can never be construed reasoning with him, or satisfy his Understanding in the Justice or Equity of the Thing. The Debt of the Nation, stating it at a round Sum, is 50 Millions principal Money; and this, with Interest for it, must be paid by Taxes to be raised on the Landholders Estate. The Interest payable for this Sum at 4 *l. per Cent.* is 2,000,000, and at 3 *l. per Cent.* is 1,600,000 but is this, *viz.* because he is to pay it, a Reason to him why he should choose to pay 20 rather than 16? That the greater annual Sum should be paid rather than the less, may be better for those who are to receive all and pay nothing; but it would be very strange if it should be better for those who are to pay all and receive nothing. There may possibly be Reasons why the Landholder, who is to pay this Debt and Interest, might submit or choose to pay the greater rather than the less Interest; but 'tis Nonsense to say that this is one of them, *viz.* because he is to pay it. The whole force of this Argument is this, and no more than this; some People can pay no Taxes, others will pay none; therefore, you Landholder, down with your Dust. Very well! But is it for his Advantage to pay 20, or will it be necessary or proper for him to pay 20, if he can and when he can make 16 do equally well, and the one Sum or the other

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is equally within the Terms of his Contract? To these Questions 'tis no Answer to tell him he always did and he always shall pay the Taxes, unless this be added, that he shall not be the Judge neither of the *Quantum* he shall pay; and then indeed the Landholder will feel the Weight of the Argument.

But if no other Reason can be given why the Landholder should pay all the Taxes of a Country, except what arises from the Necessity of the Thing; and Mr. *Locke*, who was as able and as willing as any Man living to have given a better, if any such were to be found, yet he gives no other; what if this Necessity is or may be in Part removed? Would it be unreasonable to take the Opportunity of making them contribute who are able enough, and can give no better Reason for not contributing, but only that they are not willing? However, the Thing proposed does not carry the Matter so far as to use Compulsion; for no more is intended by it, than that the Landholders, who are the Debtors in this Case, may be legally enabled in their public Capacity and with regard to the public Debts, to do that which every one of them in his private Capacity and with regard to his private Debts, has a Power to do, and would be thought an improvident Man if he did not do. I may be confident too, there is never a Man in the Kingdom who would not think himself ill used by a Creditor, who should tell him, that since you have borrowed Money of me at a certain Rate

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of Interest, though you have reserved to yourself a Liberty to pay it off when you will, yet I will make you keep it at that Rate as long as I please.

To what Uses the saving proposed by the Reduction might be appropriated, and in what Manner it should be applied, might be Matter of Dispute between one Landholder and another, but surely it could be none that both must be Gainers in Proportion to such saving. One might think of easing the present, another the future Generation; but it was ill contrived, so to order Matters, that neither the present nor the future Generation should have any Ease. This Part seems to me like a Quarrel, about the Manner of dressing the Chickens before they are hatched, whether they should be roasted or whether they should be boiled; and in the Quarrel the Hen is drove off her Nest, and there are no Chickens either to roast or to boil.

However, 'tis possible so many Inconveniencies would have attended the proposed Reduction, as might counterbalance the Gain which would have accrued from thence to the Landholder, and the Ease which might have been given to the Poor; but they must be very great ones indeed, if they should weigh down the Merits of the one, or the Sufferings of the other. The Landholder has paid all, or much the greatest Part of those immense Sums, which of late Years have been given and already raised for the Support of the Government,

vernment, and he must farther pay what shall be necessary to preserve it, and to discharge the great Debt which still remains unpaid, and some of the Taxes are very grievous and burthensome to the Poor; on which Account, surely they deserve all the Favour and Ease which the LEGISLATURE can show them, so far as consists with the public Welfare and Engagements. The monied Man has indeed advanced his Money for the public Service, and to maintain the Revolution; but he did it at some Times with so sparing an Hand and upon such Terms, as would tempt a Man to say that he had more Regard to his Money, than to their Majesties. At the same Time that the Landholder paid a fifth or a sixth Part of his Income to the Government, the monied Man by Interest and Premiums near doubled his. There was without Doubt, at some Times, a great Scarcity of Money in Proportion to the Demand for it, which of Course must make it dear; and it is well if it were not made scarce on Purpose to make it dear. But if such Dearness was to the monied Man, a justifiable Cause of making the best Market of it he could, the present Cheapness will be to the Landholder, a justifiable Cause to take the same Advantage of the Market, especially in Payment of Debts, which were in some sort created by the former extravagant Price of Money.

To those Objections against reducing the Annuities on the public Funds to *3 l. per Cent.* and fixing Interest on private Securities at *4 l. per Cent.*, viz. That such low Interest will induce some People to lock up their Money in their Coffers, by which the Circulation of it in Trade will be lost: That it will discourage Persons from entering into Trade or other Businesses, because the Profits which may arise from thence, will become of so little Value: That it may, on the other side, force so many into Trade, as that little or no Profit shall be made by it; which by the way, is not very well consistent with the preceding Objection: That the younger Sons and Daughters of the Nobility and Gentry will be destitute of a proper Maintenance, because their Portions in Money will yield so small an Income: To these and other Objections of the like Nature, the Answer is, that this in Fact and Practice is the Case now, though the Parliament has not yet interposed in the one Instance or the other.

That the Interest on private Securities, generally speaking, is not more than *4 l. per Cent.*, is well enough known and visible; and that the Annuities on the public Funds, at the advanced Price at which they are now bought, does not yield the Proprietors *3 l. per Cent.* clear Money as Interest, may be made as apparent. The annual Produce on them coming to the Proprietors purchasing at the present Rate, cannot be stated higher than *3 l. 14 s.* for every
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100 l., taking them at an Average and making the largest Allowance; but this *14 s.* annually paid to them more than the *3 l.*, will not reimburse and make good to such Purchasers the Difference between the Sum which they pay, and the Sum which they will receive when the Government repays the Principal, stating such Difference at the lowest Rate: And consequently the Interest neat coming to them, must be computed lower than *3 l.*, or Part of the Principal is sunk and lost. The gross Debt of the Nation, if stated at 48 Millions and at *4 l. per Cent.*, may be paid off by a Sinking Fund of 1200000 l. in 23 or 24 Years, and one Moiety in something less than two thirds of that Term, or in 15 Years; therefore an Annuity on the whole Debt, so annually discharged by a sinking Fund, is equal to an Annuity for 17 Years absolutely; an Annuity for 15 Years ^{ions} interest computed at *3 l. per Cent.*, is very barely worth 12 Years Purchase, and 12 Times *14 s.* produces no more than *8 l. 8 s.*: And yet, if the Proprietors of these Annuities Purchasing at the present Price, take to themselves *3 l. per Cent.* as the Interest of the Money laid out, this is the Sum total which they will receive, to make good the Difference between the Sum paid and the Sum to be received, when the Principal is paid off: And even this Sum, which is far enough from being equal to the Difference, is to arise from an accumulating Interest;

terest, which in Theory is very right, but in Practice stark nought.

This, I apprehend, affords a full Answer to the Question which is asked; if the natural Price of Money in public Annuities is at 3 *l. per Cent.* and under, how it comes to pass, when 3 *l. per Cent.* Annuities are at a 100 or above, that 4 *l. per Cent.* Annuities are not at 133 *l. 6s. 8d.* or above, which is the Price correspondent. The Answer is, though they may be called 4 *l. per Cent.* Annuities, the Proprietors who Purchase at an advanced Price, supposing it to be only 8 *l. 8s.*, can reckon no more than 3 *l. per Cent.* as the Interest of their Money, because the Sum, annually received above 3 *l.*, must be applied to reimburse the Principal, or so much of it will be sunk: And therefore for 4 *l. per Annum*, which such Proprietors receive and put to the Account of Interest for the Money laid out, they must and do pay 108 *l. 8s.*, and a third Part of that Sum more, *viz.* 36 *l. 2s. 8d.*, which in all is 144 *l. 10s. 8d.* for every 4 *l.*; and this I suppose is a Price sufficiently above Par to answer the Question. And yet, where Purchasers give above 8 *l. 8s.* advanced Price, and for South-Sea Annuities 'tis evident they do give so, whatever may be given in other Instances, there must be a farther annual Deduction even out of that 3 *l.*, or such Excess will be sunk and lost: And if the Government continue to pay off those Annuities previously to any other Debt of the Public, the Time in which the

the Principal will be discharged and the Annuities cease, will be much shorter than I have before computed it; and the Time in which the 3 *l. per Cent.* Annuities will be paid off and cease, may be at a Distance much greater; so that the Annuities of 3 *l. per Cent.* Purchased at 104, 5, or 6, may yield the same Interest as Annuities of 4 *l.* Purchased at 110, 11, or 12, *per Cent.*, where the Principal in both Cases is supposed to be reimbursed.

Since then the present Value of Money, either in public or private Securities is so low, and this Price has proceeded solely from the Iniquity (I suppose I must not say the Prosperity) of the Times, and not from any Law which has been made to produce it; and if the Times and Circumstances of Things continue the same, will go on to decrease, whether the Parliament does or does not interpose; where these or the like Objections are made, the real Grounds of the Quarrel are, that there is too great a Plenty of Money in the Kingdom to be let to Use. And if this be our Case, it is obvious, that the rich and the great ones must reap some Benefit from such Plenty; and it will be hard not to give the poor and low in Life some Taste of it.

Another Objection to this Reduction on the public Funds, arises from the Case of Widows and Orphans; for that their Income will thereby be much lessened, and they are not well able to relieve themselves. But many of these have other Means of Subsistence besides the

Money in the Funds; and about those who may not, there has been as much Clamour as if all the Widows and Orphans in the Kingdom were concerned in the Event of it, and as if there were no other Persons but those, who are Objects of Compassion. The Wives and Children of common Labourers and Artificers, may require some Consideration as well as the others; for, though their common Support, the Master of the Family be living, he can hardly by the Sweat of his Brow get them daily Bread. With regard even to Widows and Orphans, it is to be considered, that there will be a Family of them in the next Generation as well as in this, and the Government is to have Respect to the future as well as the present Age; and if this Reduction freightens those of the present Time, it may give room to make a better Provision for those of the succeeding one: And it is evident, that those who should futrely buy Government Annuities of *3 l. per Cent.* at Par, would have better Interest for their Money, than those who buy at the present advanced Price, and seem to have *4 l. or 3 l. 14 s. per Cent.*

But whatever may be the Case of Widows and Orphans, or of the common Annuitants; two of the great Companies will complain of this Reduction with a very ill Grace, for they borrow of others and pay no more than *3 l. per Cent.*; so that it is but giving them the same Measure which they have meted out to others. Why may not the Government take up,
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on *Exchequer Orders*, the same Sum, at the same Interest, nay of the same Persons too, as the *East-India* and *South-Sea* Company have done on their Bonds, unless we will say that the Credit of the Exchequer, is not so good as the Companies? If this were done, where would be the Injustice of applying the Sum so borrowed, to the Payment of the Debt to them, so far as it would go? The State of the Matter at present is this; the Companies borrow Money at *3 l. per Cent.*, and lend it out to the Government at *4 l.*, and gain the Difference; and if the Government resorted to the original Lender, it would then save that Sum which is now sunk in the Pocket of the Companies: And why may not the Community of the Kingdom have the Benefit of that Difference, as well as the Community of those Companies? And if it be impracticable or thought improper to pay off those Companies, the Money which might be taken up by the Government in such a Method at *3 l.*, might be applied to the Payment of some other Debts standing out at *4 l. per Cent.*, which might be proper: And the present advanced Price of Securities of that Kind, demonstrate that this Town would take off a much greater Quantity of them, than are now in Being.

Some have urged, that the proposed Reduction would induce Foreigners to withdraw their Money out of the public Funds; and, computing it at many Millions, they say such a Draught would lower the Price of Stocks,
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and be a Prejudice to Trade in general. Whether this would be the Consequence or how far it would, I will not pretend to make a Conjecture, but some probable Judgment might be formed, from a Knowledge of what was the Practice on former Reducements. I have heard others, on the other side, give this as a Reason for the Reduction, alledging, that the Nation would be a Gainer by saving the Exportation of such Money, as is annually sent abroad to pay the Interest. If no Part, or an inconsiderable Part, of such Money was withdrawn upon such Change, there is an end of the Objection; but that is not all, but then it becomes an Argument for the Reduction, since there is a saving of one *per Cent.* on all foreign Money in the public Funds, and that is all clear Gain to the Nation.

If the Quantity drawn away should be large, it might easily make a Fall in the Stoks; but that could be no Prejudice to *England*, because the Loss must fall on the Seller, who is supposed to be a Foreigner, and the Gain accrue to the Buyer, who must be an Englishman. Whether it be advantagious to *England*, to have the Use of Foreign Money depends on that Point: *viz.* whether the Profit made of it here, exceeds the Use which is paid for it, for if it does, such Excess is neat Gain to the Kingdom; and besides, engages the Owners in the Interest and Welfare of the State. If this Question be on the affirmative side; an Alteration of the Course of this Money, or any
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great Hazard of it, will be an Ingredient in determining the other Point, whether any Decrease in the Interest on the public Funds, in which such foreign Money is supposed to be mostly invested, be proper or not.

It would be better for *England* to be sure, if it paid no Interest for Money to Foreigners, just in the same Manner as it would be better for private Traders, if they had so much Money as to want no Credit; but if they are not so rich in Money within themselves as to supply all the Occasions of Trade, it would be imprudent to lose any Branch of it, merely because they would not accept of any supply from abroad, though Profit were to be made of it. And where it has been borrowed, some might think it Time enough to repay it, when the Use of it becomes near equal to the Profit made by it, and there is such a Plenty at Home as to supply the Place of it upon equal Terms. How far this is our Case in any of these Instances, I confess I cannot make any reasonable Conjecture; and there I leave the Matter.

Some Objections were made to the particular Scheme of Reduction, which was offered to the HOUSE of COMMONS, in the last Sessions; the most material of which, arises from the Privilege of Non-Redemption for 14 Years. If we take a View of it in the Shape into which it was at last formed and framed into a Bill, the Objection has Weight in it; for if this Privilege was as extensive as
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the Resolution of the HOUSE imported, it does seem to have made too large a Proportion of the gross Debt irredeemable for that Term; and consequently to have left too small a Part to be paid off and discharged within the Time. The Debts now redeemable must continue so; those which are standing out at an Interest exceeding 3 *l. per Cent.* and are now redeemable, might by the Act of the Proprietors have been made irredeemable for 14 Years; and therefore, neither the one nor the other could have been paid off within that Time; those which are at 3 *l. per Cent.* need not to have been redeemed or paid off; so that there seemed very little left to have been paid off and discharged within that Time. If this were the Case, the gross Debt at the End of 14 Years would have been much the same as it is now, only attended with a less Annuity; and the Money arising on the sinking Fund, must have been applied in Ease of the annual Taxes, for all or most Part of this Term.

The Sinking Fund, increased by the Reduction proposed, if none of the Duties had been annihilated, would have produced annually about 1600000 *l.*, which some might think, was too great an Income to be safely and prudently left unappropriated; and others might think, that an Application of it to the current Service of the Year, as it should arise, would have given too great a Proportion of Ease to ourselves, and left too great a Proportion of Burden on Posterity. Besides, this

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Sum thus arising, supposed to be applied during this Time to the Service of the Year, at the End of that Term would have ceased to have been applicable to that Purpose, and must have been applied in Discharge of the gross Debt, otherwise the Payment of such Debt must have been put off *sine Die*. To make good this Deficiency, the Taxes which are now commonly given for the current Service of the Year, must then have been revived; and as the Generation then in Being, might be as desirous of Ease as the present, and think it hard to raise new Taxes, for possibly they would so construe them, to pay old Debts; by this Means we should have entailed, or laid the Foundation of entailing, the gross Debt on the Kingdom for ever.

But when we look upon this Scheme in the Form in which, as I apprehend, it was first proposed, the Force of the Objection arising from this Privilege of Non-Redemption is taken off. This Privilege, by the first Proposal, was confined to South-Sea Annuities, and the Proprietors may one Time or other repent, that they did not look upon it in that Light; and then the Debt to the three great Companies, with some other smaller ones, amounting in the whole to 18 or 19 Millions, would have been left redeemable, and to have been discharged within that Term of 14 Years. By this Proposal too, it was intended that some of the Duties, which are most grievous and burthensome to the

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Poor, should have been annihilated, equal it may be to the saving which was supposed would have been made by the intended Reduction, and not to get an Abatement of 1s. in the Pound on the Land-Tax, which was invidiously insinuated, as if the Scheme had been calculated for the Ease of the Rich and not the Poor. Much to be sure might be said for such Annihilation, so that the Nation, and especially the poor Labourer and Manufacturer, might have some present Ease, and have a Taste at least, of the Blessings of Peace and Plenty; and on the other side it may be urged, that the Payment of the gross Debt must have been in some Measure thereby retarded, and we must have groaned under the Load of it so much the longer.

Whether this Scheme or the old one were the more preferable, might be Matter of Dispute, where we look upon them merely in the View of present Ease, or of greater Dispatch in the Payment of the Debt; and People would incline to the one or the other, as they prefer either present Ease or greater Expedition. But when we consider them in another View, *viz.* that by the new Scheme there is a saving of 400000*l. per Annum*, in the Interest, and in the other nothing; it is certain the Nation must have a Gain equal to that Value, whether it takes such Gain in the first 14 Years, or in a second, or takes it wholly by a greater Expedition in the Payment of the Debt. If no Regard be had to present Ease, and the whole of the Sinking Fund,

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Fund, and the supposed saving were applied solely to the Payment of the Debt, the same Debt (stating it at 48000000*l.*) would be paid by the increased Sinking Fund (stating it at 1600000*l.*) in 20 Years and a Quarter, and a little less, as would be paid by the simple Sinking Fund (stating it at 1200000*l.*) in 23 Years and an Half, and something less; so that by this saving, there would be got about three Years and a Quarter in Expedition. If present Ease were in some Measure considered, so that the Payment of the Debt were proportionably postponed; yet the saving of 400000*l. per Annum* in the Interest, must be computed equal to an Annuity of that Value, at least for 20 Years and a Quarter; and the Value of it, at 3*l. per Cent.* would be about six Millions.

If the Nation saves six Millions by such a Proposal as this, it will be alledged perhaps, that the Creditors of the Public must pay, or lose, that Sum in some way or other: That they have paid their Taxes in common with the Landed Men, and have contributed largely towards the Payment of the public Debts by former Reductions of Interest: And that this Project is no better than taking the Money out of one Man's Pocket to put it in another; or, if you please, *robbing Peter to pay Paul.* 'Tis certain enough, in this Case, that what is saved to the Community at large, must be paid by or lost, to the Creditors of the Public; but of this saving they will have their Proportion, unless they are no Part

Part of the Community, or pay nothing towards the Taxes which must be laid or continued if it were not made; and this saving is no other than what every Man in his private Concerns, and where he has Incumbrances upon his Estate, would make, and in Prudence ought to make; and yet 'tis to the Loss and at the Expence of his Creditor. The Share of the Taxes which the monied Man has paid, since the Revolution and for the Maintenance of it, has been in Proportion to his Expences, though I suppose not in Proportion to the Advantage he has made of it; but the landed Man, over and above his Part in the like Proportion to his Expences, has paid near 70 Millions neat Money out of his Pocket. The monied Man has contributed likewise towards discharging the great public Debt, though perhaps not quite so largely as he contributed towards making it so great; but this was his own voluntary Act, and I suppose upon prudential and valuable Considerations with respect to his own Interest; and if those Considerations will not move him to go any farther, to be sure he is at Liberty to make a stand, and expect the Terms of his Contract. If it be a Robbery by *Paul* upon *Peter*, to hire Money at the Market Price at a Time when Money is cheap, and that is all which *Paul* means to do, or can do in this Project; it was as much Robbery by *Peter* upon *Paul* to let at the Market Price when it was dear; and

and he committed the first Acts of Hostility; and I doubt, when those are ceased, and *Paul* has made all the Reprizals he can, it will be found that *Peter* will remain indebted to *Paul* upon the Foot of the Account.

Upon the whole, I cannot but think that the new Scheme is capable of being amended, by omitting the exceptionable Clause of Non-Redemption; or the old one of being improved by ingrafting on it the Advantage of a lower Interest, in the whole, or in Part, and as far as the voluntary Act of the People will carry it. If the Reduction formerly proposed, be thought too large a one to be made at one Step, to be sure it may be made less, with regard at least to those, whose Annuities are meer Annuities from the Government and nothing else; for the landed Man may very well expect that the present Plenty of Money and the Tranquility of the Times, shall produce something of this Kind, which may show him that he and his Concerns are not totally neglected and despised; and the Husbandman and Artificer may reasonably hope to see such Measures taken, when so good Opportunities offer, as shall give him some Relief in *presenti*, or at least a sure Prospect that the Produce of Land and the common Necessaries of Life shall not be everlastingly loaded with Taxes: And, since the Sense of the Majority of those who have Power to give Law to the whole, seems to have been such,

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that the present Duties are to continue till the whole, or the Gross of the National Debt be paid, there is no Doubt but this very heavy Load will press so hard and be so sensibly felt, as to keep some People always in Mind to use the necessary Means to get rid of it, with the utmost Expedition that is consistent with Justice and Honour: And to the Community in general, I suppose it matters not much, by what Scheme or from what Hand it receives Ease, so that it receives it with Effect.

F I N I S.

