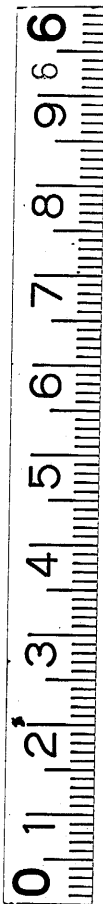


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THE
C A S E
As it now stands, between the
CLOTHIERS, WEAVERS,
AND OTHER
MANUFACTURERS,

With Regard to the
Late RIOT, in the County of WILTS.

CONTAINING
REMARKS on a *Libel*, entitled *an Essay on Riots*,
printed in the *Gloucester Journal*, December 19,
1738; some Observations on the Prices of Labour,
in the WOOLLEN MANUFACTURE and
HUSBANDRY; Considerations and Reflections
on the Act for Maintaining the POOR, shewing
the *Disadvantages* and *Injuries*, which arise to *Society*
from it; Proofs of the Necessity of reducing the
Price of Labour in our MANUFACTURES, in
order to keep and extend our *Foreign Trade*.

THE WHOLE
Interspersed with Remarks on the Advantages arising from
TRADE, to the Landed GENTLEMEN; the Burden
which would fall on *all* by the Loss of *it*.

ALSO
Some OBSERVATIONS on the Conduct of Gentlemen
and Magistrates towards *Trade* and *Manufacturers*.

IN A
LETTER to a MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

By PHILALETHES.

LONDON:
Printed for the AUTHOR, and Sold by T. COOPER,
at the *Globe*, in *Pater-Noster-Row*.
MDCCXXXIX.

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*The CASE as it stands between the
CLOTHIERS, WEAVERS, and other
MANUFACTURERS, with regard to
the late RIOT, &c.*

S I R,

Remember when I had the Honour of being in your Company last, you insinuated, that you could not be easily brought to believe, that the *Clothiers* behaved with common Humanity towards the *Manufacturers* they employed. You rather looked on them as a Body of *Oppressors*, who rush'd thro' every Bond of Pity, Compassion, Tenderness, Honesty and Justice, in order to arrive at that Pitch of *Greatness* their vain *Ambition* had set up; or to amass such a Heap of *ungodly Mammon*, as their wicked *Avarice* had suggested.

AS I also remember you hinted, that you were induced to believe this was the true State of the *Affair*, from the Representations in the *Gloucester Journal*; from the common Apprehensions of those out of the *Manufacture*; and from the *Riot* itself, which seem'd to shew the *Manufacturers* were oppressed,

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pressed, otherwise they would not have acted in so furious and violent a Manner: For *Solomon* himself declares, *that Oppression would make a wise Man mad*, and therefore no wonder it should precipitate the *head-long Mob* into such Fury and Outrages. You signified also, that you apprehended the Populace, or People in general, were disposed to live in Peace, provided they were not treated inhumanly by their *Governors*; nor squeezed and oppressed by their *Superiors*. The Histories of almost all Nations, as well as the celebrated *Mr. Gordon's Discourses on Government*, prefixed to his Translation of *Tacitus*, very plainly shew'd, that the galling Yoke of Oppression was the principal Cause of Riots, Tumults, Insurrections, and Revolutions in States and Communities.

I WAS heartily sorry to find so judicious a *Senator* entertain such Notions of *Clotbiers*; as well as to find you pronounce Sentence so rashly, who never used to come to any Conclusion, without the closest Examination, and maturest Deliberation. I must return you my Thanks for the kind Sentiments you entertain of myself, and the Exception from the rest of the *Clotbiers* you were pleased to compliment me with. But tho' I have no Occasion to vindicate my own Conduct, or say any thing on the Affair upon my own account, yet I cannot but think it the Duty of every honest Man, as far as in him lies, to endeavour to remove the Prejudices of Mankind, purge them of their Errors, and diffuse Truth.

WHEN we hear Mutiny, Riot, Sedition and Calumny open their Mouths wide against the *Innocent*, it is the Part of an honest Man to stand up in their Defence, and oppose the Torrent of Injustice and Defamation. When we see the *Press* spew out
Incentives

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Incentives to Tumult and Confusion, to irritate and fret the Minds of the People to Faction and Riot; when we see *Ignorance* and *Vanity*, or *Malice* and *Knavery*, stand up as Champions for a licentious Rabble, (patronized by a Magistrate who ought to suppress them) and endeavour by false Glosses to impose on the *Weak* and *Unthinking*, and deceive the *Judicious* by bold Assertions, groundless Clamours, and unjust Aspersions; I hope you will think, that Man deserves some share of Applause, who but attempts to undeceive Mankind, and furnish them with an Antidote against such destructive Poisons, pestilential Doctrines, and pernicious Harangues.

I KNOW you, Sir, have for many Years courted *Truth* in every Shape, have hunted for her thro' all Mazes and *Meanders*, and therefore will not be offended, if I should take upon me to be your Guide, and endeavour to bring you to the beautiful *Goddes*, thro' all the Clouds of Dullness and Impertinence, which the Author of the Essay on Riots has thrown round her. Such Writers are a Sort of *Poachers*, who mud the Stream to catch the unwary blinded Mutes, that inhabit it.

BUT whilst the *Clotbiers* are in the Hands of this *Grand Inquisitor*, who proudly sits on his Tribunal examining, and censuring their Conduct, and calling in the Aid of the Secular Arm to punish them; whilst he is exercising all his Malice, and spitting his *Venom* on them, they may draw some *Consolation* even from his very Poison;

*As we from Asps a lenient Drug compose,
And tame the Poison to a healing Dose.*

This they may do by considering that they stand in the same *Investive* with the *Court*, the *Parliament*;

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the *Justices*, and the whole *Magistracy* of the Nation, who have all felt the Fury of the same *Asses Heels*, and had their Ears invaded with the dissonant Elocution peculiar to those *long-ear'd* Animals.

I KNOW I have no Occasion to make any Apology for my Attempt to a Gentleman of your Character, therefore I shall come immediately to the Execution of my Design, and consider the Allegations which have been advanced against the *Clothiers*, and deliver the true State of the Case, as it stands between the *Manufacturers* and them.

IT has been boldly asserted, without producing one Instance, that the *Clothiers* oppress the *Poor*, by detaining their Wages, and making exorbitant Demands on them, under illegal and unjust Pretences of Damages, &c. by taking Advantage of bad Times of Trade, pinching and giving them such low Wages, that they are starving by Thousands; by Combinations to lower their Wages, and by trucking or imposing Goods on them at a high Price, in lieu of Money; each of which Reproaches I shall consider in the Course of this Letter, as well as make some *Remarks* on the *Essay on Riots*, as they shall fall in *a propos*, with the particular Subject I am treating of. To begin with the first Charge, *viz.* Oppression.

THE *Clothiers* have all in a Body been charged with Oppression. If there have been some among them, who have been guilty of oppressive Actions, they ought to be pointed out, they alone ought to bear the Reproach of their own ill Conduct. To stigmatize a large Body of near 150 *Traders*, in the three manufacturing Towns of *Bradford*, *Trowbridge*, and *Melksham*, and the Parts adjacent to each,

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each, with the Faults of a Few, would be the highest Injustice and Cruelty. Perhaps there never was a Body of Men of any Sort in the World, who all deserved the Epithets of *Just* and *Honourable*. If this be the Case, there is no wonder in finding *Some* among such a large Body, who may not behave to the *Poor* with that Humanity and Tenderness they ought, who may not have so strict a Regard to Justice and Honesty, as might be wished: Those Men ought to be marked out, and bear their own Iniquity: But the *Essayer*, like a wild *Indian*, runs *a-muck* at every one without distinction.

THE Cause of the *Poor* is popular, and apt to bias many thinking and judicious Persons, who have not much to do with them. The World would have a quite different Opinion of the manufacturing Populace from what perhaps they have, if they were acquainted with their *Insolence*, *Idleness*, *Debauchery*, *Frauds* and *Disbonesty*, so well as the *Clothiers* who employ them.

THE *Clothiers* challenge the *Manufacturers* and others to produce Instances of the Oppressions they clamour about. If they do not bring Matters of Fact, and Names of Persons, they and their Adherents ought to be looked upon by every honest Man as a Body of *Villains*, who have forged Lyes, and trumped up Falshoods, in order to render the *Clothiers* odious, palliate their own *Guilt*, and have a Plea for their own *Wickedness*.

IT is true, formerly some of the *Clothiers* behaved with intolerable Insolence towards their Servants. As I have been informed, it was a common thing in Time past for a *Clothier*, who is now in the C—m—s—n of the P—c—e, *viz.* *Tarquinus Superbus*,

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Superbus, to kick, cuff, beat, and abuse his Servants of every Rank and Degree, and treat them with the most insufferable Pride and Haughtiness; as well as stop their Wages, and defraud them in the most base and flagrant Manner: but this Man was *Rara Avis in terris*, though perhaps his very Conduct gave birth to the *Opprobrium* which is very often and very unjustly cast on the Body of Clothiers now. This Gentleman, like a true *Patron* of the Poor, has taken care to prevent such Abuses since; and I presume, by way of Recompence for his own base Conduct, has indulged 'em in every Fraud and Insolence towards the *Clothiers* of late Years. But such Conduct as this Gentleman was guilty of towards the *Manufacturers*, has not been known of for many Years past.

BUT to consider this Matter of Oppression a little farther, which ought to be looked upon as a general Charge on the whole Body of Clothiers:

IN the 13th Year of King George I. an Act of Parliament was past, empowering the Justices to determine all Disputes between *Clothier* and *Manufacturer* according to their Discretion; and to adjudge the Party aggrieved such Damages as they should think reasonable. The Act we speak of might be shewn perhaps to be very deficient, and want many Amendments. *This is no wonder, when we consider who have boasted that they suggested it, and took on them to direct the Legislature, and dictate in that Affair. But this by the bye.*

THIS Act puts it out of the power of any *Clothier* to oppress or defraud any *Manufacturer* in any shape whatsoever.

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IF a *Clothier* stops or detains the Wages of a *Manufacturer*, under Pretence of bad Workmanship, Waste or Embezzlement of his Materials; Stains, Rents or Damages of any kind, the *Manufacturer* may have Recourse to a *Magistrate*, to summon him before the *Sessions*, who never fails to do the *Manufacturer* perhaps more than Justice. The *Manufacturers* are desied to produce an Instance, where they had not Justice done them. The *Clothiers* about *Trowbridge* have scarce ever a *Summons* from the Justices on such Occasions; being sensible of the Partiality of a *certain Person*, and unwilling to suffer the *Chagrin*, and Mortification of seeing their Servants triumph in their Frauds and Abuses. Therefore they generally leave the Reparation they think in justice due to them, to the Servant's own Conscience, or they pay him his full Wages, and discharge him; *which last is always done by most Clothiers in the common Course of their Trade.* The *Clothiers* then will leave the World to judge how just the Charge against them of Oppression is. Truly those Persons must have but little Knowledge of the Power of the Justices, or the Privileges of the *Manufacturers*, who can suppose they can be oppressed or defrauded in this Respect.

THE *Manufacturers* themselves are so sensible of the Partiality of a *certain Man*, that after the Determination of a certain Affair some Years ago, in which the Master was grossly abused, the *Manufacturer* came up to his Master's Teeth in an audacious and insulting Manner, and said to him; "Damn you, you see you can do nothing with us, if we have a mind to stand Trial with you. I could have told you before the Trial came on, that I was sure to have my Money, and not to allow you any Damage."
"mage."

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“*mage.*” The Clothier asked him, “*How he could tell that?*” The Manufacturer replied, “*That a Friend in Court was Money in Purse; and that he had got so much Money through it by G—d*.*” But the Clothiers think this Matter deserves a little farther Consideration.

IF a *Manufacturer* wastes, embezzles, works bad, or injures the Manufactures committed to his Care, instead of working them up faithfully, is it not reasonable that the *Clothier* should have Reparation for the Damages he has sustained? It is necessary that the Manufacturer or Servant should be under the Obligation of Law to work faithfully, and to deliver the Manufactures perfectly wrought, otherwise the *Clothier* would lie exposed to all manner of Injuries and Abuses; and the Reputation of the Manufacture would soon be ruined, as well as the Clothier himself. If a *Sailor* do not bring his *Ship* home safe, he receives no Wages, tho’ it was out of his power to ward off the Violence of the Winds and the Waves, and preserve her.

SUPPOSE a *Gentleman* employs a *Taylor* to make him a Suit of Clothes, and the *Taylor* should rob him of his Cloth and Lace, and instead of making a Suit fit for himself, make it only fit for a *Dwarf*; would not the *Gentleman* think the *Taylor* not only unworthy of his Wages, but also that in Justice he ought to take the Suit of Clothes on himself, and provide him with other of equal Goodness, fit for his Use? What Difference is there between the *Taylor’s* Robbery and the *Manufacturer’s* Embezzlement; the *Taylor’s* spoiling the Clothes

* This Manufacturer is now in Prison, having been a Ring-leader in the late Riot.

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and Lace, and the *Manufacturer’s* tearing, staining, or otherwise damaging the Goods committed to his Care? What Difference is there between base Workmanship in the *Taylor*, and bad Workmanship in the *Manufacturer*?

I HAVE been a little prolix in the Use of the above familiar Comparison, in order to illustrate the Matter, and bring it down to the meanest Capacity, as well as in some measure to apply it to every Man’s ownself.

BUT always between the *Clothier* and the *Manufacturer* there is a *Contract* either expressed or implied; which is, “You shall perform such and such Parts of the Manufacture well, and receive such and such Prices for it.” If the Contract is not perform’d, how can the Reward be expected? But if the Servant retracts from a Part of the proposed Price, because he knows the injured *Master* ought to have Redress, how can this be called Injustice and Oppression in the *Master*? If the *Master* aims to oppress the Servant, he may immediately have Recourse to the Magistrates, who from a Principle of Envy are generally forward enough to scourge the *Clothier*, and exceeding partial to the Labourer. How stupid and silly is it then to complain of the *Clothier’s* oppressing the poor *Manufacturer*?

IT is very plain from what has been said, that there can be no such thing as Oppression by Stoppage of Wages, &c. or any thing of that kind.

THE chief Thing which remains to be examined, in which the *Clothiers* are liable to be charged with Oppression, is in the Article of Price.

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THIS ought to be considered in a two-fold Manner: First, What Wages are given by the Clothiers in good Times and bad: And in the second Place, How far the Clothier may proceed in falling the Price of Labour in bad Times, without incurring the Odium of pinching and oppressing the Poor.

THAT the Wages given by the Clothiers are greater than those given in Husbandry, will appear past all doubt to every Person who will please to examine into, and reflect upon, the Matter. The Luxury and Populousness of the Clothing Towns and Hamlets abundantly shew This. If a thinking Man would but ask himself, why the Clothing Towns increase in People and Buildings; how the Rents came to be raised both of Houses and Lands which lie contiguous to those Towns; how their Lands came to be improved, and the Soil to be enriched and meliorated; what must the Answer be? but these arise from the Trade and Manufactures carried on in those Places.

BUT Trade and Manufactures will not draw a Concurrence of People to any Place, unless there are better Wages to be made, and more constant Employ to be found. It is absurd to think that a Father would put his Son an Apprentice into a Town, or to a Manufacture where there were not Hopes of his obtaining better Wages, and more constant Employ, than in his own Village or Occupation.

IF the Poor flock to those Towns, what is it for? but because they know they can serve themselves by it.

THIS is the Reason why so many Persons push into those Towns in an illegal Manner, whom we cannot

cannot keep out by any Methods, Laws, or Stratagems whatsoever. This is a Truth well known to every Parish - Officer in those Towns where the Clothing Trade is carried on. A judicious Author says*:

“ LET them see how the People gather about
“ the Manufacture, how they crowd into the
“ Clothing Countries, however barren and remote:
“ And on the contrary, how thin of Inhabitants,
“ compared to those populous Parts, tho’ other-
“ wise populous too, are the other Parts of the
“ Country; some of which are much more fruitful
“ and fertile, the Soil richer, the Situation more
“ agreeable, and the Air milder and wholesomer
“ than those that are so populous? But where the
“ Trade is, there are the People, there the Wealth,
“ there the great Markets and large Towns; and
“ in a word, there the Ready Money: For it is
“ Trade that has made the common People rich,
“ as it is Pride has made the Gentry poor.”

THIS Concurrence of People raises the Rents of Houses, and the Value of Lands; and this last upon a double account, both as by those Means the Products of those Lands sell at a greater Price †, and are more easily disposed of; and as the Number of Inhabitants produce Composts and Manures to enrich and improve them.

ABOUT 60 or 70 Years ago a certain well-built House in the Town of Trowbridge was offer’d to be lett to any Tenant who would pay the Chimney-Tax of it; which House within these few Years

* Vide the Plan of the English Commerce, pag. 80.
† The Rise of Provisions here bears no Proportion to the Wages given.

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has been lett at 20*l. per Annum*: And I believe the Lands in the Parish of *Trowbridge* are worth near twice as much as they were 60 or 70 Years ago. This is not owing to *draining, burn-baking,* or any Improvements of those Kinds, but to the Number of Inhabitants, whereby, as I said before, their Products yield more, and from whom large Quantities of *Soil* and rich *Manures* have been drawn at a cheap Price for their Improvement.

IN the *Districts* and *Towns* where the Woollen Manufacture is carried on, proper Employment is to be found for every Sort and Size of People: The *Blind*, the *Lame*, the *Impotent*, the *Aged*, the *Children*, find some Sort of Work or another adapted to them. Blind Persons card, spool, or wind Quills; the Lame do the same, or spin and scribble. Now what an Advantage is it to the Poor to be born under the Influence of a *Clothier*, who, like the Sun, scatters Life and the Supports of it to every one round him? What a Happiness is it to the Poor to be planted in such a Situation, that they are capable of earning a comfortable Subsistence, even in Circumstances *unfortunate*, and to the Poor in other Places *destructive*?

AGAIN: In the Woollen Manufacture in these Parts, the Wages are much greater, and the Employment more constant, than in most other Occupations. Let us in the first place consider the Wages made by the *Weavers, that restless turbulent Body of Men, whose wicked Conduct* gave Occasion for this *Undertaking*.

THE Weavers in general are the most feeble, weak and impotent of all the Manufacturers. A Male Child perhaps is found on a *Dunghill*, nursed up by the Parish, thro' Negligence and want of proper

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proper Care is weak and sickly, and at the Age of 8 or 10 Years is put an Apprentice to a Weaver: A Parent has a Child infirm, deform'd, sickly, weak and distorted; he considers his Constitution, and how easy the Employment of a Weaver is, and puts him an Apprentice to that Trade, in which he knows his Child can acquire a comfortable Subsistence, without the *Requisites* in other Occupations of a healthy Body, and a strong Constitution. The Father is sensible in this Craft his Son is not exposed to hard Labour, to the Inclemencies of the Weather, to travel from Place to Place for Employment, &c. He knows if his Child is dull, Sagacity is not required; if weak, that Strength is not demanded; if sickly, Hardships are not incident; if slow and unactive, Agility is not necessary in the Occupation of a Weaver: And that by putting him to that Trade, he puts him into a Capacity of obtaining a comfortable Subsistence, with scarce any human Abilities.

IT is a Trade so easy in itself, that formerly it was deemed the proper Employment of a Woman, as we learn from *Homer*, from the Story of *Penelope*, and where *Hector* parts from *Andromache**; as also from *Ovid*, in the Story of the famous Contest of *Arachne* and *Minerva*.

BUT perhaps some Persons may say this is meer Assertion, Declamation and Harangue, without the Face or least Appearance of Proof. To silence all Dispute, and prove to the World, that the Weavers are not hardly dealt with by the *Clothiers*, but

* As thine *Andromache!* thy Griefs I dread,
I see thee trembling, weeping, Captive led,
In *Argive* Looms our Battles to design,
And Woes of which so large a Part was thine.

POPE.
have

have great Prices for their Labour, I will consider the Manner of their Trade, and the Wages which they generally acquire.

FROM what has been said above of the Abilities and Qualifications necessary for a Weaver, a Man with a very small share of Understanding will at first sight conclude, that it would be almost Impudence for such Persons in such Circumstances, and such a Trade, to expect to make *great Wages*; such as a Man might reasonably ask in a Business or Employment that requires Strength, Genius, Ingenuity, Sagacity; that exposes Life, and lies open to the Severities of the Weather; that wears, tears, and destroys a Man's Apparel, and wastes his Spirits.

AS I hinted before, the Trade exposes to no Hardships, and requires scarce any human Abilities*. Most of the Weavers live in Cottages, erected on waste Lands in the *Villages* and *Hamlets* near the Clothing Towns, or near the Habitations of some principal *Clothiers*. When a *Lad* has served out his Apprenticeship, in a little time he may either acquire a Loom by his Industry, or, if he is a Person of any Reputation, hire or be trusted with one. When he has proceeded thus far, he soon meets with a Boy; sometimes from the Parish

* *Homer* sets even *Helen* a weaving in the following beautiful Lines :

Mean time, to beauteous *Helen*, from the Skies
The various Goddess of the Rainbow flies :
(Like fair *Laodice* in Form and Face,
The loveliest Nymph of *Priam's* Royal Race)
Her in the Palace, at her Loom she found,
The Golden Web her own sad Story crown'd :
The *Trojan* Wars she weav'd, (herself the Prize)
And the dire Triumphs of her fatal Eyes.

POPE.
with

with a Sum of Money; sometimes from his Friends, who comes as an Apprentice to him. This *Boy* in a very little Time acquires Skill and Abilities enough to perform a Part of Work in the Loom with his Master. When he is advanc'd to 12 or 13 Years of Age, this Boy and his Master (if the Master is as diligent as he ought to be) shall perhaps fill a Medly Cloth in three Weeks, for which the Master shall receive of the Clothier 1 *l.* 19 *s.* 3 *d.* or 2 *l.* 1 *s.* clear.

IT may be observ'd here, that I have reckon'd three Weeks for filling a Medly Cloth of 36 Yards, at 15 *d.* per Yard, as a *Medium* of Time necessary for compleating such a Piece of Workmanship. Work is not always alike, and therefore I have pitch'd on that Time as a *Mean* upon an *Average*. Tho' it is very common for a Loom in the medly Cloth way to fill a Cloth in 16 Days, and in the white Cloth way in less than three Weeks.

WHILST the *Weaver* and his Apprentice-Boy are employ'd in the Loom, if the *Weaver* has a Family, a Child of four Years of Age shall perhaps quill to the Loom, and earn 6 *d.* per Week; another of six Years of Age shall acquire perhaps 1 *s.* 6 *d.* per Week by spinning; whilst the *Wife* makes her Wages 2 *s.* 6 *d.* or 3 *s.* a Week by the Spinning-wheel also; and at the same time performs all necessary Offices in the Family. Many Instances might be given of Weavers, who in this manner have acquired Fortunes from 100 *l.* to 500 *l.* I would be understood to speak here of the *industrious Poor*, not of the *idle* and *debauch'd*; not of the drunken *Punk*, the *tattling Gossip*, or of the idle vociferous *Fuddle-Cap*; such will be always poor, in spite of Providence. Whether these are starving Wages, or the Weavers may be supposed from this

to

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to be in distressed Circumstances, we must leave the candid Reader to judge. If upon considering all these Things, the Weavers should be pronounced in a starving Condition, and the Clothiers Oppressors, I am afraid such Judges will be found to have but little Sense, and less Honesty; yea, less than the Clothiers themselves!

I WILL now speak a few Words with regard to our *Shearmen* and *Scriblers*, who work in the Clothiers own Houses: These Men, if they apply closely to Labour, may earn from 8 to 10 or 12 *s.* per Week. They have also the Advantage of constant Employment, warm Rooms, and are never exposed to any Hardships, or Severities of Weather, or any thing that wears or destroys their Apparel. Upon an *Average* take all the Year round, they do not work above four Days in a Week; and find Provisions and Necessaries of Life (*tho' the Government is reproached with their being loaded with Taxes*) so cheap, that those four Days Labour furnish out the *Requisites* for being drunk the other three. And yet these Men think that they are injur'd because they have no better Wages, and mutiny'd with the *Weavers*, because they could make no better Price of their Labour.

IT may be observ'd, that their Wives and Families at home often earn 6 or 7 *s.* per Week more, which added to their Husbands *Acquisitions* abroad, makes not only a comfortable, but an almost extravagant Sum, when compared with the Wages of the Husbandman and his Family, in many Parts of this Kingdom.

THE following is no mean Proof of the high Wages as well as the *Luxury* of the *Manufacturers*. In the Town of *Trowbridge*, where the Inhabitants have

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have been computed about 3000 Men, Women and Children, there are near 2000 *Hogsheds of strong Beer* drunk in a Year, as appears from the *Excise Books*: Yet we have no Market but for Meat, Roots and Greens; and have no great *Thorough-Fare* from or to any Place. To this we may add, that they say there are near 30 or 40 *Gin-houses*, where the Poor *rendezvous* and debauch themselves with that *infernal Liquor*, in spite of the Vigilance of the *Excise Officers*; and they are so sincere and faithful in Support of the Means of their *Debauchery* and *Ruin*, that the Officers can procure no Informations against any Person for selling those Liquors, tho' it is constantly done*.

AS it appears from these Calculations, beyond all Contradiction, that the Poor have such high Wages, as furnish them with the Means and Instruments of *Luxury* and *Idleness*, how absurd and ridiculous is it then for the Author of the *Essay on Riots* to attribute the Miseries of the Poor to the Taxes on the Necessaries of Life? But if he can find out any Pretence, however silly, to libel his Prince, irritate the Minds of the People, sow Sedition and Disloyalty, foment the Spirit of Riot, and defame the Clothiers, out go his Froth and Venom in a Flood.

WHEN I look over the *Essay on Riots*, I cannot help considering the Author as a Sort of a *Proteus*; sometimes he appears in one Shape, sometimes in another, and always inconsistent. One while the Miseries of the Poor are owing to *Taxes*, another while to the *Luxury* of the Poor, another while to the *Oppression* of the *Clothiers*. These

* Nunc patimur longæ Pacis mala: Sævior armis
Luxuria incubuit

(18)

Things are incompatible! Let us examine a little the Contradictions of this shifting Animal, who, like the *Skuttle-Fish*, endeavours to hide himself, and blind others with *Mud* and *Pollution* of his own raising.

IF the Poor can acquire enough in a Part of their Time to be luxurious, and debauch the rest, certainly their Wages cannot be low, nor can they feel any Burden from Taxes; for whilst they are spending, they generally lose the earning of as much as they spend, and so have a *double Loss*; and notwithstanding find Wages high enough, and Plenty enough to support their Debauches.

* EVERY one who hates the present Establishment, cries out against Taxes: The Reason is plain, *because they have no Share of them*; let them come in for a *Snack*, and their Mouths will soon feel the Influence of the *Golden Padlock*.

TAXES have been a String harp'd upon by every Enemy to the present Administration, from the specious Pretence of having a *great Regard for the Poor*, and a *tender Concern for the Miseries they groan under*; whereas I believe 999 Poor out of 1000 never think of any such Thing. I have Opportunities of hearing many of their low humorous Dialogues, without their knowing it: And tho' I have conversed with and heard thousands of them utter their Sentiments freely drunk and sober, yet I never heard a Complaint of that kind from them in

* If the Poor were taxed here, as they are in *Holland*, they would have a more specious Pretence for inveighing against Taxes, where, as Sir *William Temple* tells us (as I remember) a single Dish of Fish has paid 30 *Excises* before it came to Table.

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my Life. Their paying 8 *d. per Annum* to the Highways is esteemed a greater Burden than all the Taxes they pay besides. They are very sensible, that *they have the Means of Luxury*, and so have not the Impudence to complain of their Prince on that account. *By the bye, this Hint ought to convince the Author of the Essay on Riots of the Stupidity of raising Taxes by way of Poll.*

IF every Tax in the Nation, which affects any thing directly or indirectly, which the Poor consume, was to be taken off, I dare aver they would be more riotous, and more miserable than they are now; I mean the *Bulk* of the manufacturing *Populace* would be so. If they could purchase all the Necessaries of Life for one quarter of the Money they do now, the *Price of Labour* would soon rise, *Idleness* would increase, *Drunkenness* would be more diffusive, *Licentiousness* would stretch a wider Wing, *Insolence* carry a bolder Face, and *Riot* wear a longer Sword: Such Measures would be the way to plunge us into Anarchy and Confusion; and every Man who reflects on the Pravity of Human Nature, and has been acquainted with the *ungovernable Appetites* of the manufacturing *Populace*, will justify these Observations.

BUT suppose, according to this *Schematist*, that all the Ale-houses in every Parish were to be put down, excepting two or three, the Consequence would be, those licens'd Houses would be for ever crowded with roaring *Bacchanals* and drunken *Revelers*. Nay, if a Stop could be put to such Proceedings, and every Ale-house were to be pulled down, *common Brewers* would set up, many are set up already, and *Drunkenness* would flourish in the manufacturing Towns as much as it does now: And if *Brewers* themselves were not permitted,

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Gin-Shops would be frequented in spite of Law, as we daily see; and the most pernicious Sort of Drunkenness would reign still among the common People, whilst Wages could be acquired necessary to support it.

THE only way to make the Poor sober, industrious and obedient, is to take away the Means of Idleness and Intemperance, such as high Wages, and that *Asylum*, or *Refuge*, which made the Beggars sing,

Hang Sorrow, cast away Care, &c.

I may also add to this, that an Act to prevent the Importation or drawing of Spirits, and making Malt, would contribute very much also towards keeping the Poor from Intemperance and Debauchery! This last *Hint* is such a judicious Turn, that I would humbly offer it to the *Author of the Essay on Riots, &c.* to plant in his Garden along with the rest of his *Flowers* and *Exoticks*; or if he please as a *Thesis* to write a future Essay on.

TO shew that these Things are not the bare Assertions of the *Clotbiers*, but that the thinking Part of Mankind join in the same, I beg leave to make a few Quotations from the Author I mentioned above. This Author says,

“ IN the unemploy’d Counties you see the
“ Women and Children idle and out of Business;
“ these sitting at their Doors, and those playing in
“ the Streets; even in the Market Towns, and the
“ most populous Villages, where they may be sup-
“ posed to be employ’d, the Poor by the Rich,
“ even there it is the same, much more in the single
“ scattering

“ scattering Villages, where they have no Business
“ but their own:

“ WHEREAS in the manufacturing Counties,
“ you see the Wheel going at almost every Door,
“ the Wooll and the Yarn hanging up at every
“ Window; the Labourers, the Winders, the
“ Combers, the Carders, the Dyers, the Dressers
“ all busy; and the very Children as well as Wo-
“ men constantly employ’d.

“ AS is the Labour, so is the Living; for where
“ the Poor are full of Work, they are never empty
“ of Wages; they eat while the others starve, and
“ have a tolerable Plenty, while in the unemploy’d
“ Counties it goes very hard with them.”

I THINK it plainly appears from what has been said above, and the Calculation of the Wages a Weaver and his Family can make in the *Woollen Manufacture* of fine Cloth, that such a Family may subsist, as well as the Poor do in many Counties in *England*, by only working one half of their Time. It is no wonder therefore we see so much *Drunkenness*, *Idleness*, and *Debauchery* in the manufacturing Towns. To illustrate this a little farther, let us consider what Wages are given in the Countries where are no Manufactures, and how the People subsist in Husbandry.

A HUSBANDMAN in the Winter has in general but 4 s. 6 d. per Week for his Labour in most Counties in *England*, unless the *Woollen Manufacture* happens to be near; in this Case the Husbandman finds the Benefit of it, and shall be capable of acquiring better Wages, by being only in the *Neighbourhood* of such a *Blessing*. But if he is at a great Distance from the manufacturing Towns, 'tis very

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very rare also that his Wife or Children get any Employment. If there is some small Employment to be gotten, such as making *Bone Lace*, *Straw Hats*, or *knitting Hose*, the Wages in these Occupations generally amount but to a Trifle. At the City of *Wells*, in the County of *Somerset*, where there is a small Manufacture of *Stockings*, I have been credibly inform'd, it is a common thing for a Woman to knit 18 Hours a Day for 1 s. a Week; and it must be a very good Hand that can acquire 18 or 20 d. And yet the Poor in that City make better Wages than they do in some other Places, being near the great Trading Town of *Skipton-Mallet*, which employs many of their Hands.

THE lowness of an Husbandman's Wages is not the only Disadvantage he has to grapple with; for he is often expos'd to the Severities of the Weather, to toil and moil in Water and Dirt, to wear and tear his Apparel, and many times wants Employment, or is forced to seek it at a great Distance; and expend himself in travelling for it, as well as to be absent from the Care and Government of his Family, which is a matter of Importance; all which Inconveniencies a *Weaver* in general is free from.

BUT suppose that a Husbandman's Family acquires at home 2 s. 6 d. per Week, whilst he is expos'd to all the Severities I have mentioned abroad, this 2 s. 6 d. added to his own Wages makes but 7 s. per Week; certainly then the Husbandman must be in a much worse Condition than the Weaver, even tho' you were to suppose the Weaver and his Family had Employment for only four Days per Week, for in that Time he would acquire near 13 s. as will appear from the Computation above. These Calculations are formed on the Prices given
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in the worst of Times; for in good Times much greater Wages are to be made. To corroborate what I have said, I beg leave to extract a Passage from the Author above-mentioned:

“ A POOR labouring Man that goes abroad to
“ his Day-Work and Husbandry, Hedging, Ditch-
“ ing, Thrashing, Carting, &c. and brings home
“ his Week's Wages, suppose at 8 d. to 12 d. a Day,
“ or in some Countries less; if he has a Wife and
“ three or four Children to feed, and who get little
“ or nothing for themselves, must fare hard, and
“ live poorly; 'tis easy to suppose it must be so.

“ BUT if this Man's Wife and Children can get
“ Employment, if at the next Door, or at the next
“ Village there lives a Clothier, — he sends the
“ poor Woman carded Wooll every Week to spin,
“ and she gets 8 or 9 d. a Day at home; the Wea-
“ ver sends for her two Children, and they work
“ by the Loom, winding and filling Quills, &c.
“ and the two bigger Girls spin at home with their
“ Mother, and these earn 3 d. or 4 d. a Day each;
“ so that upon the whole the Family at home gets
“ as much as the Father gets abroad, and generally
“ more.

“ THIS alters the Case extremely, the Family
“ feels it, they all feed better, are clothed warmer,
“ and do not so easily and so often fall into Misery
“ and Distress; the Father gets them Food, and
“ the Mother gets them Clothes; and as they grow
“ up do not run away to be Footmen and Soldiers,
“ Thieves and Beggars, or sell themselves to the
“ Plantations, to avoid the Gaol and the Gallows,
“ but have a Trade by which every one can get
“ their Bread.”

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IF this is a true State of the Case, which to deny would be the highest Impudence, with what Face then can the *Gentlemen* and *Farmers*, who give such low Wages, revile the Clothiers, who give Prices for Labour so much superior, and that too in the worst of Times?

NOW suppose we were to compare the Body, Constitution, House, Habit, and Family of the poor diligent Husbandman and the debauch'd Manufacturer: The first a Man would imagine could not be in very good Circumstances, but his *Parfimony* and good *Oeconomy* supply the want of high Wages: You will see better Accommodations in the poor Husbandman's House, than in the Manufacturer's, tho' the last is much better paid for his Labour.

IF you will consult the Body of one, you will see rosy Health bloom in the Face, and sinewy Force reign in the Body, thro' his *Temperance* and *Exercise*, whilst the other is pale, wan, and stew'd by his *Excesses*, *Sottishness*, and *Debauchery*: One shall have a good warm Freeze Coat on, while the other appears as ragged as a *Scare-Crow*: One shall have his House well furnished with plain Bedding, and all the Utensils provided by the *Potter* and *Turner*, whilst in the others you shall see nothing but Rags, Nastiness, and bare Walls: One shall have a Variety and Plenty of Provisions, such as *Bacon*, *Wheat*, *Cheese*, and *Beer*, whilst the other has not a Crust in his Cupboard, nor any thing but the pure Element in his Vessels: The Family of one shall be clean, warm, and full of good wholesome homely Food, such as the old *Romans* fed on,

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on*, whilst the Family of the other are poor, empty, and shivering with cold. Such is the Difference between the high-paid, idle, debauch'd *Manufacturer*, who perhaps works only two Days out of seven, and the low-paid diligent and sober *Husbandman*, who labours constantly.

THESE are Truths, not imaginary Calculations and Representations; and we defy the whole Body of Weavers, Farmers, and half-thinking Gentlemen (*which last is a very large Body, God help us!*) to shew we have advanced one Falstity, or that we have exaggerated, or extenuated one Circumstance to make our Case appear better than it really is. The Computations above are stubborn Facts, not to be sneered away or confuted.

UPON the whole, I think it is manifest from what has been said above, that the Advantages of a Family's being seated in a manufacturing Town are very considerable: That such great Wages are given in the *Woollen Manufacture*, that they are rather the Supports of *Idleness*, and *Luxury*, than

* *Juvenal* says of them,

— Sed magnis fratribus horum
A scrobe, vel sulco redeuntibus altera cœna
Amplior, et grandes fumabant pukibus olla.

Gigantic Hinds as soon as work was done,
To their huge Pots of boiling Pulse would run;
Fell to with eager Joy on homely Food,
And their large Veins beat strong with wholesome Blood.

Such a Race (instead of a puny one) we should have of Manufacturers, if it were not for the Instruments of Luxury and Excess.

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necessary for the Poor to live comfortably, and happily; and that whoever instigates the Poor to abuse and maltreat the *Clothiers*, are their worst *Enemies*. These Considerations ought to induce the Manufacturers to behave with Reverence and Respect to the Clothiers, who are the sole *Source*, under God, of almost every *Blessing* they enjoy, and every Pleasure they feel.

WE come in the second Place to consider how far, and in what Circumstances, the Clothier may fall the Price of Labour, without incurring the *odium* of oppressing the Poor.

IT is a Truth, that every Man of Humanity must concur in, that every Person, who is born into the World, has a Right to the Necessaries and Support of Life. Our Laws are so tender of the *Poor* in this Respect, that where a Man cannot support himself and his Family by his Labour, Provision is made by the Legislature, that he shall receive all Necessaries from the Landed Gentlemen and Traders, who shall be rated for that Purpose.

BY several Judicious Persons this Law has been condemned, as being very injurious to the Society; and as tending to make the Poor, careless, luxurious, and idle. I beg leave to quote here a few Paragraphs from a judicious Author or two, for the Satisfaction of those who have no Opportunity of turning to them.

I SHALL begin with Mr. *Wood*, who says,
 " It is thought by many, and not without good
 " Grounds, that the Act for the Maintenance of
 " the Poor, may be the Bane, and Destruction of
 " our *Manufactory*, as it encourages Sloth, and
 " Beggary; and also as it makes the Parishes of
 " *England*

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" *England* fearful of entertaining any Persons, but
 " such as are well to pass; but so long as the Pa-
 " rish knows they are to be burthen'd with all the
 " Poor, that shall obtain Settlements upon them,
 " whether such Poor will work or not, they will
 " keep out all such Persons as have nothing to sub-
 " sist on but the daily Labour of their Hands to
 " maintain themselves, and their Wives and Chil-
 " dren. This and other Things he says has drove
 " Multitudes into *Holland* and *Prussia*; as well as
 " *Picardy* and *Languedoc* in *France*." Mr. *Gee*, ap-
 plicable to the same, says as follows:

" THE *Dutch* have brought their Poor under
 " such Regulations, that there is scarcely a Beggar
 " to be seen in the United Provinces; for that no
 " Nation may underwork them, they take all ima-
 " ginable Care to keep all Materials for Manufac-
 " tures as low as possible, and lay their Taxes upon
 " such Things as the People cannot subsist without,
 " as *Eatables*, *Firing*, &c. very well knowing that
 " Hunger and Cold will make People work to sup-
 " ply their Necessities. *Flanders* and *Hambourg*
 " pursue the same Measures, for suppressing Idleness
 " and Beggary." The Spectator, so well known for
 his judicious and polite Writings, says much to the
 same Purpose in the Character of Sir *Andrew Free-
 port*, whom he introduces arguing thus:

" BESIDES, I can see no Occasion for this
 " Charity to common Beggars, since every Beggar
 " is the Inhabitant of a Parish, and every Parish is
 " taxed to the Maintenance of their own Poor. For
 " my own part, I cannot be mightily pleased with the
 " Laws which have done this, which have provi-
 " ded better to feed than employ the Poor. We have
 " a Tradition from our Forefathers, that after the
 " first of those Laws was made, they were insulted
 " with that famous Song,

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*Hang Sorrow, cast away Care,
The Parish is bound to find us, &c.*

“ And if we will be so good-natured, as to maintain
“ them without Work, they can do no less in re-
“ turn, than sing us the *Merry Beggars*.”

SINCE I wrote the above, I met with the following Passage :

“ * IT may be thought a strange Motion from a
“ Bishop, to wish that the Act, for charging every
“ Parish to maintain their own Poor, were well re-
“ view'd, if not quite taken away ; this seems to in-
“ courage idle and lazy People in their sloth, when
“ they know they must be maintain'd : I know no
“ other Place in the World, where such a Law was
“ ever made. *Scotland* is much the poorest part of
“ the Island, yet the Poor there are maintain'd by
“ the voluntary Charities of the People : *Holland*
“ is the perfectest † Pattern, for putting Charity
“ in a good method ; the Poor work as much as
“ they can ; they are *humble* and *industrious* ; they
“ never ask any charity ; and yet they are well re-
“ liev'd. When the Poor see, that their Supply
“ must in a great measure depend on their Beha-
“ viour and Industry, as far as it can go, it will
“ both make them better in themselves, and move
“ others to supply them more liberally ; and when
“ Men's Offerings are free (and yet are called for,

* *Burnet's History of his own Times*, Vol. II.

† Every *Sunday*, in the midst of the Sermon, the Minister pauses, and makes an exhortatory Digression upon Charity ; whilst select Persons go from Pew to Pew with a long Stick, on which hang a Bell and a Purse : into this Purse every one, Men, Women, Children, and Servants, put something for the Relief of the Poor. Thus all are initiated and bred in the Exercise of this *Christian Virtue*, which by time becomes a Habit excellent in itself, and exceeding useful to the Community. *Vide Atlas Geographicus*.

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“ every time they go to Church or to Sacrament)
“ this will oblige those, who distribute them, to
“ be exact and impartial in it ; since their ill Con-
“ duct might make the Givers trust them with
“ their Charity no more, but distribute it them-
“ selves. If a Spirit of true Piety and Charity
“ should ever prevail in this Nation, those, whose
“ Condition raises them above the Drudgery of ser-
“ vile Labour, might employ some Years of their
“ Life in this Labour of Love, and relieve one
“ another in their turn, and so distribute among
“ them this noble part of Government. All this
“ must begin in the House of Commons ; and I
“ leave it to the Consideration of the wise and
“ worthy Members of that Body, to turn their
“ Thoughts to this, as soon as by a happy Peace
“ we are deliver'd from the Cares of War, and
“ are at leisure to think of our own Affairs at
“ home.”

THESE Gentlemen we see were of opinion, that Necessity is the best Spur to Industry, and is the Mother of *Diligence*, as well as *Invention*. When there is nothing but a Prospect of starving without Industry and Providence, this will make the Poor frugal, diligent, and provident. If the Poor had no Laws to rely on for support in their Extremities, they would behave in a more decent and becoming manner to their *Masters* and Superiors ; knowing that their good Behaviour would be the only thing which could recommend and entitle them to the Commiseration and Charity of their Neighbours, when in distress.

WHAT is given to the *Poor* now, they look on as a legal *Due*, and give no thanks to any one for ; whereas if the Poor were supported by voluntary Charities, this would be a means of producing a mutual

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tual Harmony between their Superiors and them. The Poor would look with Reverence and Esteem on their Benefactors, who supported them in their Extremities; and this grateful Behaviour in the Poor, would beget *Pity, Tenderness, Commiseration, and Benevolence* in the Rich: whereas by the present Methods of Charity, all those mutual Ties and Endearments are lost. We might remark here, what an Obstacle this Law is also to one of the chief of the *Christian Virtues*; but as this belongs to the *Clergy*, we shall leave it to them to expatiate more largely on it.

I can't leave this Digression, which is not altogether unapplicable to the present matter in hand, without making a Remark or two, by way of inference.

HOW different is the Policy of the *Dutch, Hamburgers*, and the Sentiments of the Gentlemen above-quoted, from the Opinion of the *stupid Author* of the *Essay on Riots* in the *Gloucester Journal*? *Dutch Policy* taxes all the Necessaries of Life to make the Poor *diligent and sober*: Our *Politician* is for taking off all Taxes which affect the Poor, tho' they have already the means of *Luxury and Idleness*, as has been demonstrated beyond all Contradiction: *Wretched Politician!* But one may easily see, that his Rancour against the present Administration precipitated him into this Gulph of *Stupidity: Venomous Libeller!* But this *Writer* and his *Patron* seem to tally in all respects, like *Ralpho* and *Hudibras*; and never were a Pair more equally match'd in *Stupidity and Nonsense*.

HAVING premised thus much by way of Introduction, I come more immediately to consider

* A certain Justice of Peace in the Neighbourhood.

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the thing proposed, viz. *How far, and in what Circumstances the Clothiers may fall the Price of Labour without incurring the odious Character of oppressing the Poor*. But first I shall answer a few Objections, and remove some *Rubbish* out of my way.

JUDICIOUS Authors, who have wrote upon Trade, have been of different Opinions with regard to increasing our Trade, by working up our Manufactures cheap. Some say that the falling the Price of Labour would sink the Price of Provisions, by lessening the Consumption, and of consequence the Price of Lands, whereby the landed Gentlemen would be injured: That you must make your way to foreign Markets by Dint of Perfection not Cheapness; therefore you have nothing to do but to keep up the Goodness of your Manufactures.

SOME of these Arguments at first sight seem specious and conclusive: but on stating the Case in a true Light, I doubt not but I shall make it appear, that they are very defective and injudicious.

ONE of the Arguments against lowering the Wages of the Poor, is built on a Presumption that no Nation will ever arrive at the same Perfection in manufacturing Cloth as ourselves, and therefore we shall always have a Market, tho' other Countries manufacture, and sell much cheaper. This appears to me to be an egregious Piece of Vanity. We had our Knowledge and Skill in the Manufactures from the *Lorainers, Burgundians, Flemings, and Netherlanders*; and why they and the *French* should be for ever incapable of arriving at the same Perfection in manufacturing as ourselves,

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must appear to every thinking Man an inscrutable *Mystery*. There seems to be many very good Reasons to think the quite contrary.

A GENTLEMAN who now resides at an *English Factory* at *Lisbon* told me, that their House had consign'd to it as good *fine French Cloth*, made of *Spanish Wool*, for 13 s. per Yard, as they could buy from *England* for 15 s. or 16 s. That the *Portuguese* prefer'd the first on account of its Cheapness, from whence they were obliged to import the *French Cloth* on *British Bottoms*, and sell it as *English* in order to have something to do. Thus the *French*, by Dint of low Wages, are running away with our Manufactures; while we are buoying up ourselves with vain Boasts, and empty Imaginations, that we out-trade and out-sell every one.

PRACTICE and Experience brings Art to its highest Perfection. Temperance and Obedience to Superiors, Reverence, Regard, and Esteem for Masters, bid fair for raising Manufactures to their *Achme*; whereas Licentiousness in Servants, and Contempt of Masters, which appear flagrantly among the woollen Manufacturers in this Country, seem to prognosticate the Downfall and Ruin of the Manufacture. We cannot reasonably expect to keep pace with our *neighbouring Nations* in the Goodness of our Manufactures, when both Magistrates and Gentlemen foster and cherish (at least connive at) the *Insolence, Disobedience, Disregard, and Contempt*, which Manufacturers discover towards their *Masters* and *Superiors*; we cannot reasonably expect to keep up the Perfection of our Goods, when *Frauds, Embezzlements, bad Workmanship*, and Waste of Materials, are countenanced by the very Persons the Law has constituted to do justice to the *Clotbier*, as well as plead the Cause, and protect the Rights of the *Poor* and *Needy*.

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IT is a melancholly Truth, that if a *Clotbier* have but the Reputation of acquiring something by his Trade, he has the Misfortune also to acquire the Envy and Jealousy of some of their *Worships* the *Justices*, as well as some of the unthinking *Gentlemen* who live round him. When a *Clotbier* makes Application to the Justices at their *Petty Sessions*, and complains of an Injury received, either by imperfect Workmanship, by Imbezzlement of his Materials, by Waste made of what he delivers out to be manufactured, or by Damages done in manufacturing; instead of receiving Redress, he is generally dismiss'd, after a great deal of Fatigue and Expence, with a Reprimand for having given their *Worships* so much Trouble; and a Declaration, that they in their *great Wisdom* cannot see, that he has received any Injury, though the *Reverse* is as clear as the *Sun* at *Noon-Day*. Sometimes they know nothing at all of the Affair before them, and refuse proper Information; but if there should happen to be some of them, who understand the Nature of the Trade, they are generally borne down (for the sake of *Uhanimity* and *Peace*) by the assuming Air, and over-bearing Arrogance of *Tarquinius Superbus**, who, from his
Pride,

* This Magistrate's Conduct in encouraging the Spirit of Riot, he being a sort of Servant of the Crown, has given Occasion to some few Persons, who were not so well disposed to the Administration as they ought to be, to surmise, that some of the Gentlemen in the Interest of the C——t, secretly, and sily spirited on the Manufacturers to Riot, by Order from above, to have a specious *Plea* for a *St—d—g Ar—y*. This is a barbarous Return for his Majesty's Care in protecting us; but we may infer from hence, what Injuries wrong-headed Magistrates may do the Interest of their King and Country,
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Pride, Envy, Spite and Prejudice, will never order a Clothier any Reparation, unless he happens to be a couchant *Spaniel* of his own, who furnishes him with *News* and *Scandal*.

I WOULD not be understood here to condemn all the *Justices* and *Gentlemen*: no; I am so far from it that I should be as unjust as the *Wretch* characterised above, if I did not declare that I know many of them to be *wise, judicious* and *impartial* Magistrates, as well as friendly Companions, and kind and hospitable Neighbours. I think myself obliged here, in Duty and Gratitude, to mention the worthy Magistrates, *John-Ivory Talbot, Roger Holland, John Thrasher, John Eyles, Francis Eyles, — Montague, jun. Esqs;* as being of this honourable Number, who used their utmost Efforts, Care, and Diligence, to suppress the Riot, and detect the Offenders, even at the hazard of their Lives. The *Clothiers* will always entertain grateful Sentiments of their Services, and be always ready to support and espouse the particular Interest they shall engage in, provided it is compatible with their Duty to their *Sovereign*; the contrary of which they have no Reason to expect will be advanced by any of them. Happy was it for the *Clothiers*, that *Tarquinius Superbus* was absent at the time of the Riot, who perhaps might have opposed their prudent Measures, betrayed their Resolutions and Counsels, and have encouraged the Spirit of Riot to have proceeded to universal Defolation among them.

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which they are delegated to serve, by their absurd and wicked Behaviour.

*Inde iræ faciles ————— mensuraque Juris
Vis erat. —————*

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BUT the Misfortune is, that sometimes one haughty, proud, insolent, partial, unjust and overbearing Magistrate, shall poison a whole *Bench of Justices*, and plague a whole Neighbourhood of *Clothiers*. This he shall do, perhaps, to terrify them into Obedience to every unjust Measure he shall propose; and to advance his Power and Influence in a *Parochial* way; but true it is, *Partiality, Pride, Insolence, and Spite* deprive him of all his Power by rendering him odious; so odious, that the *Clothiers* put up with any Injuries, rather than apply to such a partial despicable *Wretch* for *Redress*. This is so just and true a Charge, that I believe there is scarce an Instance to be given in a Course of *ten Years*, of a Clothier of *Trowbridge*, who receiv'd Reparation for Damages done him by the Manufacturers by order of the *Justices*; notwithstanding the many Injuries they may be supposed to receive from the Thousands they employ, who are the very Dregs of Mankind. For my part, I verily believe that the sly *Innuendo's* and partial Conduct of this * Magistrate were the primogenial Causes of the Riots and Tumults in those Parts.

I WOULD humbly offer it here to the Consideration of the present Administration, whether a Magistrate who countenances, and is a Patron of the Author of the Essay on Riots,

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printed

* *Vidi ego jactatas mota Face crescere Flammas
Et rursus nullo concutiente mori.*

When Riot's Torch is shook by Envy's Power
The curling Flames to Heav'n's high Summits tower:
Strike out the *Faux*, who wakes the dying Fire,
The Tumults cease, the raging Blasts expire.

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printed in the *Gloucester Journal*, December 19, 1738; whether a Magistrate, who seems by his Conduct to encourage Riot, Mutiny, Discontent, Fraud, Insolence and Dishonesty, among the manufacturing Populace; whether a Magistrate, who nurses up a Spirit of Contempt towards Masters, and a Disregard to all *Superiors* but himself, is a Friend to the present Government, to his Country, to Mankind, or is a proper Person to be in the *Commission of the Peace*, to dispense Law and Justice to his Neighbours: whether a Man of no Influence, of no Authority, who is hated by the *Mechanic*, laughed at by the *Rich*, despised by Men of *Sense*; whether a Man who is inhospitable, mean, avaricious and despicable; I say, I would humbly ask the Gentlemen at the Head of Affairs, whether they think such a Magistrate can be an Honour to the Power that delegates him, or is capable of serving any Party, any Interest but that of the *Father* of Lyes and the *Author* of all Evil?

CERTAINLY such Measures, such Conduct, as I have been speaking of above, naturally tend to make Servants careless, haughty, insolent, dishonest and unfaithful. When once they see their Negligence and Fraud overlooked, and pass with Impunity, they contract bad Habits, become debauched Hands in their several Crafts, and *licentious* and *immoral* in their Behaviour and Conduct. From time to time the Evil spreads, *vires acquirit eundo*, 'till at last it ends in Riot and Plunder. Without due Regard, proper Reverence and Respect towards *Masters* and *Directors*, no good Government, or *Oeconomy*, can be kept up either in Manufactories, private Families, or publick States and Communities.

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SUBORDINATION is necessary in the Universe: A Variety of States and Conditions is as necessary in the Harmony of the World as a Variety of Notes to Harmony in *Music*. When once a Contempt of *Officers*, and Licentiousness in *Soldiers*, arise in an Army, thro' want of strict Discipline, Mutiny and Confusion presently break forth. When Contempt of a Parent or Master arises in a Family, Murmurings and Discontent, Disorder and Anarchy quickly appear. When Disregard, Contempt, Fraud, and Insolence towards Masters are nourish'd by *Superiors*, who will wonder to see Riots, Tumults, Houses pull'd down, and a licentious *Rabble* march off triumphant with the Plunder, and boast they have done no harm? But here I would hint to these *Gentlemen*, what *Solomon* did to jealous Husbands, "Be not jealous of the Wife of thy Bosom, nor teach her an EVIL LESSON AGAINST THYSELF." When the Spirit of Riot gets into a People, no one knows the Consequence. The *Mob* have already got this *Maxim*, "That *Adam* made no *Will*; they are his Sons, and ought to have a Share of their Father's Possessions:" And nothing was more common in their Mouths, than "If they wanted, damn it, they would take it where they could find it."

IF some Redress of these Grievances cannot be found, what will become of the staple Manufacture of this Kingdom? If the landed Gentlemen do not take these Things into their Consideration, and endeavour, by all honest and prudent Methods, to support the trading Interest; they may one Day repent of their Prejudices, when it is too late to redress their Misfortunes. When they see the *Poor* a Burthen on their Estates,

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Estates, the Farmers break, and the Value of Lands sunk to eighteen or twelve Years Purchase; it will be too late to cry out, "*Who could have thought it!*" Unkind Behaviour, and envious and disrespectful Sentiments, with regard to the trading Bodies, arise from Ignorance, and the Want of a thorough Knowledge of Things, as well as of the true Interest of the landed Gentlemen. The *wisest* and greatest of Men have always entertain'd kind Sentiments of the trading Bodies. The famous *Monfieur Colbert* was of different Sentiments from those Gentlemen, who are always ready to squint a Reflection on the trading Part of the Nation.

NOTHING can more plainly discover the Ignorance and Stupidity of the Country Gentleman, than his looking on the Trader, and his Acquisitions, with an evil Eye. The *Lewis's XIII.* and *XIV.** were so sensible of the Advantages arising from Trade, that they establish'd several Ordonnances, whereby it was constituted, that Persons of the highest Blood in *France* might enter into Trade, without derogating from their Nobility. In *Bretagne*, even a Retail Trade does not degrade a Man of his Quality.

IN *Italy* several Princes are at the Head of Silk Manufactories, in the same manner as the *Clothiers* are at the Head of the Woollen Manufactories here. Many of them do not disdain to make Magazines and Warehouses of their *Palaces*, to deposit Merchandizes and Manufactures in.

THERE

* Vide *Chambers's Cycloped.* under the words Commerce, Navigation, Merchandize, &c.

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* THERE was a Law among the *Athenians*, by which any one might bring an Action of Slander against him who disparag'd or ridicul'd any Man or Woman for being of a Trade. And another, by which it was instituted, that he who gets the best Repute in his Profession, and is reckon'd the most ingenious in his Way, should have his Diet in the *Prytaneum*, and be honoured with the highest Seat. Which is the most worthy Animal, a Gentleman who hazards his Neck after a *Fox* all his Life, or a Clothier who employs and surveys the Work of Thousands?

TO Gentlemen of Genius and Capacity, it is needless to say any more on the Advantage of Trade, and the Respect Tradesmen, who are at the Head of Manufactories, merit. A little Consideration, and Reflection, will furnish such with honourable Notions, and kind Dispositions, towards the trading and manufacturing Bodies. A Man might preach upon this *Topick*, till his Lungs were worn out, to *wrong-headed Magistrates* and *country Fox-hunters*, and they would never be the better or wiser for it; such I have no Hopes of reclaiming, nor for such do I write. My Contempt rises here, and I can't help saying, with *Horace*,

Odi profanum Vulgus.

*Hence ye Prophane; I hate you all,
Both the great Vulgar, and the small.*

COWLEY.

THUS

* See *Dr. Potter's Greek Antiquities.*

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THUS I have answered the first Argument against lowering the Price of Labour in our Manufactures; *viz.* that we have no necessity of lowering of Wages, because the Perfection of our Manufactures will always command a Market.

ANOTHER Argument against lowering of Wages is, that it would sink the Goodness of our Manufactures, by obliging the Poor to work quicker and slighter, in order to acquire a Subsistence by their Labour.

I must acknowledge, if Wages were reduc'd already so low, that the Poor could not subsist if there were a farther Reduction, that then this Argument would carry some Force in it; but this is far from being the Case. It is an Observation of the judicious Part of the *Clothiers*, that the *best Goods* are made in the worst Times. When Employment is scarce, every Manufacturer endeavours after Perfection in his particular Branch; not knowing where to meet with Employment, if his Master should discharge him; and very well knowing that less Wages are given in other Crafts.

IN a Scarcity or Dearth of Provisions it is just the same. If Wheat sells for ten or twelve Shillings a Bushel, the Manufacturers are obliged to work more, and debauch less. This has the same Effects as if the Manufacture were lessened, or the Number of Hands increased. When Corn was actually at those Prices, according to the best Information I can procure, no greater Prices were given for Labour at that Time, than were given at the Time of the Riot this Winter; or however,

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ever, not above one Penny in Sixteen-pence more; and yet I could never learn, that the Poor, at that Time, either starved or rioted. The Poor, in such Times, are sober, diligent and frugal; and in Time of Plenty, or when high Wages are given, they are loose, debauched, insolent, idle and luxurious: so that the Bounties of Heaven, instead of being a Happiness to them, prove a Curse; and are the *Instruments of Vice and Immorality*, as well as the Means of *imperfect Workmanship*, and bad Manufactures.

ANOTHER Argument against lowering Wages is, that the Poor hereby would be incapable to make such great Consumption of Provisions, and the Necessaries of Life; whereby Lands would sink in their Value, Farmers break, and the landed Gentlemen be reduced.

IT will be very evident, from the following Arguments, that these Objections are the Objections of *Theorists only* in Trade, who were never concern'd in Manufactures; or at least never closely examin'd the internal Springs, Wheels and Movements of Trade. Upon due Consideration, these Arguments will appear to be the superficial Observations of Persons who never closely attended human Nature, watched the Motions of the Passions, or examined the *Concatenation* of Events in a trading Nation, and among manufacturing Bodies.

IT may be laid down, as an incontestable Truth, that the Poor, in the manufacturing Countries, will never work any more Time in general, than is necessary just to live, and support their weekly *Debauches*. If the Manufacturer can acquire in two Days, by high Wages, enough to

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keep him drunk the other five, you may find him all that time rendezvousing in a Tipling-house; or, in the Summer-time, carouzing under a Hedge*, but never in his Occupation: all that time he shall be celebrating the *Orgies* of *Bacchus*, instead of pursuing the *Arts* of *Minerva*. In a Plenty, or in a Scarcity; in a brisk, or dead Time of Trade, you find the Poor always poor, especially in the manufacturing Towns: so that by reducing Wages, you would only make the Poor more laborious, more diligent, more virtuous; and not at all lessen their Consumption of Provisions and Manufactures.

UPON the whole, we may justly aver, that the Reduction of Wages in the Woollen Manufactures, would be a national Blessing and Advantage, and no real Injury to the Poor. By this means we should be capable to extend our *Foreign Trade* farther, to find out sufficient Employment for all our manufacturing Hands, to keep our Markets *abroad*, and keep up the Price of Lands at *home*; and should hereby reduce Idleness and Debauchery only, of which *high Wages* and spare Time are the *Nursers* and *Supporters* †.

IF

* *Puffendorf*, in his Introduction to the History of *England* says, 'This Nation loves to eat and drink extremely well: tho' there are some who will have it, that the *English* got their way of drinking so plentifully, from the *Netherlanders*, in the Wars of the *Low Countries*, and from thence brought that ill Custom over into *England*.

In his Introduction to the History of the *Netherlands*, he says, An *Englishman* is naturally proud, and loves to live well, whereas a *Hollander* minds nothing so much as his Gain, being satisfied, nor spends any thing idly; a *Hollander* can sell cheaper than an *Englishman*, and Strangers will always rather deal with the first than the last.

† *Nullum Crimen abest facinusque Libidinis, ex quo Paupertas Romana perit*

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IF a poor Person is not under a Necessity to employ all his Time to support himself and Family, that Time he has to spare lays him open to Debauchery, and spending his Monies in Intemperance in a Tipling-house, Part of which ought to be laid out with the *Linen-drapeer*, the *Haber-dasher*, the *Grocer*, and a Variety of other Trades, which prepare the Necessaries of Food and Raiment, and form domestic Utenfils; so that the Consequence of his Debauchery, and not being under a Necessity of always labouring, is an Injury to himself, and every Trader, but the *Vittualler* and *Maltster*.

LICENTIOUSNESS and Immorality, Idleness and Debauchery are not the only evil Consequences which attend the giving great Prices for Labour. The Loss of our Trade, the Reduction of the Value of our Lands, and universal Poverty will spring from the same Source, if not timely prevented.

TO endeavour to prove, that a Nation which keeps Pace with us in the Goodness of their Manufactures, and undersells us in Price, would run away with all our Trade, is as unnecessary to any Person who ever thought of Trade, as it would be to go about to prove an *intuitive* Truth, or a *self-evident* Proposition.

THE *French*, the *Dutch**, the *Flemings*, the *Irish* work much cheaper than we: they
G 2 live

* For it proves very disadvantageous to the *English*, that they love to eat and drink well, and that in great Quantity; and by reason of their Love of Ease, they are fain to employ double the Number of Seamen in their Ships, than the *Dutch* do. *Puffendorff Hist. of Eng.*

live, many of them, exceeding hard, and labour for very low Wages. Had not the Legislature intervened, the *Irish* would have run away with all our Woollen Trade long ago, meerly by the dint of manufacturing at low Prices. There is no Nation in the World consumes so much Flesh-meat, Strong-beer, &c. in Proportion to the Number of People, as we do. This Consumption is made by the Common People chiefly, for the Tradesmen and Gentry bear but a small Proportion to them. I beg leave here to make a few Quotations from the above-mentioned Authors.

Mr. WOOD argues thus, “* The Woollen Manufacture is undoubtedly by Laws, and all possible Care, to be encourag’d; but it is its Exportation abroad, and not the Consumption of it at home, that must bring Profit to the Kingdom: — And indeed the best way of promoting the Woollen Manufactures, is not to force its Consumption at home, but by wholesome and good Laws to contrive, that it might be wrought and manufactur’d cheaply, which only can enable us to command the Markets, and truly make this Kingdom a Gainer by it.

“ IT is certain no Country in *Europe* manufactures all Kinds of Goods so dear as the People of this Kingdom; which gives the *French* and other Nations a vast Advantage in carrying their Manufactures to Market, and enables them to become probably, if not in the Goodness, yet in the Cheapness of them, our Rivals in Trade, to almost all Countries.

“ THE

* Vide Wood's Survey of Trade.

“ THE Common People in *France*, in most Provinces, live upon Roots, Cabbage, and other Herbage; and the best of them eat Bread made of Barley, Millet, Turkey and black Corn; and they have no more than half the Price a Day for their Labour, as is given to the Common People of *Great Britain*.

SIR William Temple says, “* The Poor in *Holland* live upon Milk, Roots, and Herbs; and are industrious and parsimonious.” Where the People are thus frugal, they of course will increase their Trade, and extend their Commerce.

Mr. LOCKE says, “† The *Dutch* buy our Rape Seed, make it into Oyl, bring it back to us, and sell it with Advantage. The Reason of which is, the Industry and Frugality of the People make them content to work cheaper, and sell at less Profit than their Neighbours, and so get the Trade from them.”

THE *Spectator* argues thus. “|| It is the very Life of Merchandize to buy cheap, and sell dear. The Merchant ought to make his Out-set as cheap as possible, that he may find the greater Profits upon his Returns; and nothing will enable him to do this like the Reduction of the Price of Labour upon all our Manufactures. This too would be the ready way

* See his *Accounts of the Netherlands*.

† See his *Considerations on lowering Interest*, Vol. II.

|| *Spectator*, Vol. III. Paper 232.

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“ way to increase the Number of our foreign
 “ Markets: the Abatement of the Price of the
 “ Manufacture would pay for the Carriage of it
 “ to more distant Countries, and this Confe-
 “ quence would be equally beneficial to the landed
 “ and trading Interests.” — And again, “ It
 “ may seem (says he) a *Paradox*, that the Price
 “ of Labour should be reduced without an Abate-
 “ ment of Wages, or that Wages can be abated
 “ without any Inconvenience to the Labourer;
 “ yet nothing is more certain, than that both
 “ these things may happen. The Wages of the
 “ Labourers make the greatest Part of the
 “ Price of every thing that is useful; and if, in
 “ Proportion with the Wages, the Prices of all
 “ other things shall be abated, every Labourer,
 “ with less Wages, would be still able to pur-
 “ chase as many Necessaries of Life; Where
 “ then would be the Inconvenience?” — And
 “ further, “ Every Interest in the Nation will
 “ receive a Benefit from an Increase of our work-
 “ ing People. Here I would remark, that put-
 “ ting our Manufacturers under a Necessity of
 “ working constantly, would perhaps, in the
 “ Woollen Trade, amount to the same thing,
 “ as an Addition of one Third more of Peo-
 “ ple*.”

THE

* *Puffendorff Introd. Hist. of Eng.* says, They are also very dextrous in the Woollen and Silk Manufactures, which they learned chiefly from the *Dutch*; but after all, they are somewhat proud, and Lovers of Ease, and spend every Day some Hours in walking and smoking Tobacco, which is the Reason they do not so much Work as otherwise they might; and yet they expect to be paid for their idle Hours as well as the rest; which is the Reason why they sell their Wares at a higher rate than others, and that they envy such *French* Handicrafts-men who live among them, and are seldom diverted from their daily Labour, by any Pleasures.

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THE *Chinese* have the most extended Manu-
 facture in the World; and their Manufactures
 push themselves into all Countries, meerly by
 their Cheapness. The Price of Labour there is
 exceeding low, and the Common People very
 miserable. Their Wages would fright us to talk
 of it, and their way of living would raise a Hor-
 ror in us to think of it. Their Women draw
 the *Plough* instead of Horses; their Men perish
 and sink under the Weight of their heavier La-
 bour, because the Food they eat is not suffici-
 ent to support them, and the Wages they get can-
 not provide better Food for them; and yet
 their rigorous Task-masters lash them for-
 ward (cruelly too) as we sometimes do our
 Horses.

M. NIUENHOFF, in his Description of
China, gives such an Account of the Misery of
 the poor People dragging, or, as we call it,
 towing the Boats up the Stream of the royal
Canal there, the greatest in the World; and how
 their Drivers, like our Carters, whip them on
 'till the poor exhausted Creatures drop down and
 die under the Labour of it: I say, he gives such
 an Account as would make the Heart of a mer-
 ciful Man bleed to think of it; and their ut-
 most of the Wages for all this Labour does not
 amount to above *2 d. per Day Sterling*; and the
 like, no doubt, is the Case in their Manufacture
 in Proportion.

I DO not mention this as worthy of Imita-
 tion, for I abhor such Measures; but to mani-
 fest to the World how much happier the Poor
 of this Nation are, than the Manufacturers in
 other Countries. We are under no Necessity of
 reducing

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reducing the Price of Labour in this Manner; but we must have some Regard to the Prices given by our neighbouring Nations, or they will run away with all our *Foreign Trade*, and reduce in time the poor Manufacturers of this Nation to the utmost Poverty and Misery, by robbing them of all their Employments.

IF this Account be true, well might WHEN-G-WEN, the *Chinese* Officer, call his Salary, *the Substance and Blood of the People, and regret that he was to live on it.* But it is plain the *Author* of the *Essay on Riots* mentioned this, purely to throw an *Odium* on the present Great Men in Office, and the Prince who employs them. But how unjust and barbarous *is this?* Does not a Great Man who wastes his Spirits, spends his Time, and exerts himself for the Interest and Preservation of his Country, deserve Reward as well as a Poor Man does for his Labour? But this *Author* never discovers his Rancour and Spite against the present Government, but at the same time he betrays his own Ignorance and Stupidity.

BUT let us argue a little further upon this Matter of reducing the Price of Labour, and consider it as a *Domestic Affair* only, and not as a national Concern which regards our *Foreign Trade*, and future Weal, but as an Affair of *meum and tuum* between the *Clothier* and *Manufacturer*. Well then,

SUPPOSE the *Clothing Trade* should be so bad from a Glut of Goods upon Hand, and the Price of Cloth should be so far beaten down by the *Drapers*, who always take all possible Advantage from the Markets being over-stock'd, that

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that the *Clothier* should be indifferent to Trade; and having no Prospect of Sale for his Goods should resolve to drop the greatest part of his Trade, or manufacture his Goods at a lower Price, in order to compensate something for the dead Stock, which, by continuing his Trade, he will have on Hand; where is the Injustice and Oppression of such a Proceeding? Is not the *Manufacturer* intirely at his Liberty to seek out for Employment elsewhere? Does the *Clothier* compel the *Manufacturer* to serve him? Does the *Clothier* seek out after the *Manufacturer*, or the *Manufacturer* after the *Clothier*? Or is the *Clothier* obliged to carry on Trade to the Destruction of his Fortune merely out of Complaisance to the *Manufacturers*?

FURTHER, does a Gentleman or Farmer think it reasonable, that they should be obliged to employ all the Year the *Supernumerary* Hands, they set to work in Harvest to serve their Necessities, and reap down their Fields, while a warm Sun and a serene sky bless the Earth? No sure; as soon as the Harvest is over, they are dismiss'd to find Employment where they can.

BUT suppose that they should be incapable to get Employment any other way, and a Gentleman or a Farmer should represent to them,
 “ That he had many *fenny Lands*, and uninclosed
 “ Fields, which he had a small Inclination to
 “ improve, but it was a thing almost indifferent
 “ to him whether he entered on it or no;
 “ that the chief inducement to undertake such
 “ a Project (if he did) would be the Consideration of the Distresses and Poverty they
 “ would be in, now Harvest was over, for want
 “ of Employment; that he had calculated the

H

“ *Advan-*

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“ *Advantages*, which would arise from *draining*
 “ and *inclosing*, as well as the *Expences* which
 “ would attend them ; and that upon the whole,
 “ he found if those Men who took 1 s. 6 d. per
 “ Day of him in Harvest, would be content to
 “ work at 4 s. 6 d. per Week, it would answer
 “ for him to enter on his projected Improve-
 “ ment, otherwise it would not. ”

NOW give me leave to ask those Persons, whether or no they would not esteem it a great Hardship to be stigmatized with the odious Character of *Oppressors*, for making such Proposals to a Body of Men who would be starved without them, and who could not find Employment without some such generous Scheme ? Would not those Persons think it the most base Ingratitude, if their Houses should be threaten'd to be pulled down ; their *Wheat-Mows* and Barns to be burnt, or some Mischief to be done them, unless they would advance Harvest Wages for their proposed Improvements ?

THIS is a Case in point ; this runs parallel in every Circumstance of Moment. A good time of Trade is a *Clothier's Harvest*, a bad time his *Winter*, in which Compassion instead of *Lucre* often induces him to continue his Trade, and which Compassion, perhaps, will not be found to operate so strongly in Futurity, as it has done. It is very often the Case that the *Clothier* does not trade so much from a View of Profit, as from a Principle of Honour, or Honour joined with a tender (more tender than they deserve) Regard for his Servants, who he knows would be in most deplorable Circumstances, were he to drop so much of his Trade as the Rules of meer Prudence might dictate : if the Clothiers were to do
this,

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this, the landed Gentlemen would soon feel a Burden which they would be incapable to bear, and would then perhaps entertain kinder Sentiments of them.

IT is a certain Truth, however it may be doubted, that the *Price of superfine Cloth* in Proportion to its Fabric and Goodness is *not so great* as it was formerly ; or superfine Cloth does not sell so well as it did some Years ago. In some Branches a Cloth costs thirty or forty Shillings more the compleating than it did about twenty Years ago, and yet sells for a less Price, sometimes twenty Shillings less. To this we may also add, that from a false Notion of the great Profits made in the Trade, because formerly three or four large *Estates* were raised in these Parts by it, many Persons of various Occupations have push'd themselves into it ; whereby the Markets are so glutted, that a Man who employs two or three thousand Pounds in the Trade has often Cloth to that Value on hand. Nay, I believe Instances might be given of *Clothiers*, who have eight or ten thousand Pounds worth of Cloth lying as a dead useless Stock, whereas formerly Goods sold off as fast as manufactured.

IT may not be improper to remark here how stupid and foolish then the Observations in the Essay on Riots are. The *Essayer* would have the Profits of the Trade laid open, to induce more *Adventurers* to come into the Trade ; whereas the Truth of the Case is, there are so many in the Business already that they are ready to eat up each other. When few Persons are in a Trade, and drive large Trades, they can afford, in Proportion to the Extent of their Trades, to manufacture for less Profits ; all small Retail Trades
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have the greatest Profit in Proportion. This Addition of Clothiers, and Increase of the Quantity of Cloth made, has drawn more manufacturing Hands into the Trade than it can possibly support, and will draw a Train of pernicious Consequences after it.

IT appears at first sight, to a Person of the meanest Capacity, that a *Clothier*, in such a State of Trade, must labour under a vast Burden, and many Disadvantages unknown to his *Predecessors* in the Manufacture. Such a State of Trade necessitates a Man to pay large Sums of Money for Interest, and oftentimes to sell his Cloth for a low Price, less perhaps than it cost, in order to proceed in his Trade, and keep up his Credit. And such Proceedings are still productive of farther Mischiefs and a Chain of Evils.

IF the *Clothier* then labour under those Inconveniences, Burdens and Obstacles; if the Profits be so small, that it is scarce worth a Man's while to engage in the Trade, why should not the Manufacturer feel some part of the Distress, as well as the *Clothier*? How kind is it in the Master, when he feels the Effects of a good Trade, to be ready to raise his Prices, and let his Servants enjoy a Share of the Blessing. And how unkind is it, when Trade is bad, and the *Clothier* labours under a great Weight of Difficulties, for the Servant to withdraw his Shoulder, and refuse to bear a part of the Burden; and instead of doing *this*, desire high Wages to pamper himself in Luxury, and spend his Time in *Sloth* and *Sotishness*? * Is it reasonable that the same Prices should

* Mr. Locke says, If a *Clothier* finds want of Vent, he must either sell cheaper, or not at all; if he sells cheaper, he must also

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should be given for Labour now, as were given formerly, when the Profits of the Trade were double what they are now? With what Face can a *Manufacturer* ask it, or a *Gentleman* defend it? I will add one thing more, which may, perhaps, give some Weight and Force to the Arguments already made use of; which is, that within these fifteen Years past near twenty *Clothiers*, in and about the Town of *Trowbridge*, have broke or sunk their Fortunes in the clothing Trade; and have been obliged to quit their Business, or run the Hazard of dying in *Gaol*. *A fine Money-getting Trade truly!*

IF this be a true State of the Case, what remains to be done? But for the *Gentleman* and *Magistrates* to treat the *Clothiers* more respectfully, and speak more kindly of them for the future than they have done formerly. Also to aid and encourage them in the Reduction of the Price of Labour, so far as is consistent with the Laws and Principles of Humanity, and necessary for the Preservation of our *Foreign Trade*. We must, by some Means or other, reduce the Price of Labour, that our Manufactures may find a Vent in Foreign Markets; for it is on our Foreign Trade, or Exports, the Riches of our Nation depend. These things are worthy the Regard of every wise, benevolent and public-spirited Man, who looks into Futurity, and considers the Welfare of Posterity, or who has an Estate, and desires his Off-spring may be supported by it.

FOR

also pay less for Wool and Labour, Vol. II. where the Author of the Essay on Riots may find an Answer to all he and his *Great Man* has said about lowering Interest. But I suppose he will no more regard what that *Gentleman* has wrote on Trade, than what he has wrote on Government.

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FOR suppose we should lose but one half of our Trade, or Exports of Woollen Goods, which have been valued at four Millions * *per Annum*, the Value of the Wool unfold the first Year would be two hundred and fifty thousand Pounds; such a Quantity on Hand would sink the Price exceeding low, break the Farmer, and reduce the Rents of Lands. The Amount of the Labour of the People, which would be lost by this Loss of our Foreign Trade, would be one million seven hundred and fifty thousand Pounds, which at 6*l.* per Head *per Annum*, will maintain three hundred thousand Persons, who all will be without Employment, and become a Burden upon the Gentlemens Estates †.

FROM the Year 1600 to the Year 1688, our Trade improved our Lands one hundred and eighty millions of Pounds, and our Stock, such as *coined Silver, coined Gold, Bullion, Jewels, wrought Plate, Furniture, Apparel, Stock for Trade, Consumption, live Cattle, &c.* one hundred Millions, and this in ninety Years only. I mention this to shew what a watchful Eye we ought to have over our Foreign Trade, which has thus enrich'd us.

TO sum up all on this Head; by relating in what manner the Poor subsist in *France* and other Countries; by shewing how the Poor, out of the *Staple Manufacture*, and in Husbandry, subsist in this *Country*; by making it appear, that the Poor in the Manufactures can live by working

* Vide Dr. Davenant's *Accounts*.

† Vide Dr. Davenant: *Wood's Survey: Observations on the Mercator's Writings: Observations on the Treaty of Navigation and Commerce with France, &c.*

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working only a part of their Time; by shewing, that our *Foreign Trade* must be inevitably lost, unless we carry our Manufactures cheaper to Market; by proving, that the Lands would not sink in their Value, nor the landed Gentlemen be injured by this Scheme; and by demonstrating, that they will be burdened with vast Numbers of Poor, unless proper Methods are pursued to recover and extend our *Foreign Trade*: I say, I hope, by these things Gentlemen will be induced to make this rational Deduction and Conclusion, that the *Clothiers* may and ought to keep down the Price of Labour; that we may do it without robbing the Poor of a comfortable Subsistence; that the Prevention of their Distresses and Poverty, by the Loss of our *Foreign Trade*, which amounts to near four Millions *per Annum*, as I said; and that the Welfare of this Nation and the landed Gentlemen require it, are equally manifest from the Arguments before made use of.

BUT in order that nothing might be wanting to render the Body of Clothiers odious, and to draw the Resentment of the *Compassionate* on them, it has been most industriously spread about the Country, that the poor *Woollen Manufacturers* are starving. *Schemes for the Relief of the Miseries of the poor Manufacturers in Wilts*, have been spew'd about, from which a Man who knew nothing of the Case would be induced to think, that the Poor stalked about without Employment, with *Famine* in their Faces, *Poverty* in their Houses, and *Misery* in their Families.

TRUE it is, that the *Idle* and the *Debauched* are poor enough, and their Families bad cloth'd and bad fed; but this ought not to be imputed to their low Wages, or want of Employment, but

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but to their *Idleness* and *Debauchery*. I am apt to think that there is not an honest, industrious and skillful Manufacturer in the Parish of *Trowbridge* who wants Employment, or any Necessary of Life, unless reduced by Sickness or old Age; for both of which there is ample Provision, a comfortable Poor-House, where all the Necessaries of Life are provided for them.

WHAT consummate Impudence must a Man then have to insinuate, that the Poor want Sustainance, and are languishing in Poverty and Misery? The Clamour that Thousands are starving, shocks a Man of common Humanity, and raises all the Emotions of Pity and Repentment. This designing *Knaves* know; and therefore use it as a *Cant Phrase* to amuse and prejudice the *Tender* and *Compassionate*, as well as to ripen the Passions of the Rabble for Riot, and animate the Multitude to Mischiefs and Plunder.

BUT it is not enough falsely to represent, that the Poor are starving, but the *Odium* of their starving must be thrown on the *Clothiers* also; who are represented as if they were a sort of *Caterpillars* or *Egyptian Locusts*, who had eat up every green Herb, and gormandized all the Provisions in the Nation. A Man would be induced to think by the Clamours set on foot by the *Essay on Riots*, that the *Clothiers* are a sort of *Monsters*, who devoured every thing, and were more savage than that slew by *Perseus*.

THAT the Poor have wanted Employment in the Parish of *Trowbridge* in general, is false, (as I hinted before;) however, I could never find it as a Truth. But suppose they did want Employment, how comes it that they are starving,
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when the manufacturing Towns are provided with Workhouses? where every Person who is incapable of supporting himself, may meet with a comfortable Subsistence, and a warm Residence.

IF any one be starving, whose Fault is it? Surely no one will have the Impudence to hint the *Clothiers* are in fault. What have they to do with it? Suppose the Poor want Employment, are the *Clothiers* obliged to find them Work? Are not the *Justices* of the Peace the *Guardians* of the Poor by Law? And is it not in the Power of a private *Sessions*, or single *Justice* of Peace, to order proper Relief to every necessitous Person? If there were Thousands starving, why are the *Clothiers* to be blamed any more than the *Farmers*? They may subsist on the *Farmers* *Wheat-Mows*, but they can't eat the *Clothiers* *Wool* nor *Yarn*; they would find it very poor Diet were they to make the Experiment. How wicked, foolish, stupid, venomous, silly and scandalous is it then, to lay the Charge of the Poor's starving on the *Clothiers*, or so much as hint it? Such Miscreants, such abandoned Fools, as can impudently and foolishly fix such a Charge on them, are ripe for any Wickedness, and fit to supply the Place of *Irish Evidences*, and attend infamous *Sallicitors* in *Westminster-Hall*, as *Knights* of the Post, ready to swear any thing in any Cause.

IT is a Maxim of *Machiavel*, that those who calumniate and clamour about unknown Crimes and secret Male-Practices, should be constantly compelled to become *Accusers*; and, if they prove the Charge, have fitting Encouragement; but when it appears groundless, false and malicious,
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they should be most severely punished, as was *Manlius Capitolinus*, who was hurl'd from the *Tarpeian Rock* for his base Calumny against *Camillus*. What a Tumble our *Autor* would soon have, if *Roman Censure* was to pass upon him!

I COME now to the Charge against the *Clothiers*, of combining together to lower the *Wages of the Manufacturers*. To this we must say, that we never heard of such a Thing or such a Charge, 'till we saw it in the *Libel* printed in the *Gloucester Journal* *. 'Tis but too true, that the *Clothiers* generally are too jealous of each other, and want Unanimity too much to enter into Combinations of any kind, even Combinations to prosecute those Villains who would have plunder'd them, and cut their Throats.

WHEN the *Clothier* can afford to give high Prices for Labour, he is forward enough to do it, most commonly too forward, and highly imprudent in this Respect. But this Happiness generally attends it, that when he gives the highest Prices he gets most Money; whereas when he gives the lowest, he often loses by his *Manufactures*.

IF there be any Combinations for lowering Wages, why are not the Authors prosecuted according to Law? The *Manufacturers* have Stocks raised by their Clubbing, sufficient to carry on Prosecutions of any kind, being several hundred Pounds Capital. They cannot surely plead Poverty and Incapacity

* *Pingere qui non visa potest* —————
————— *bunc tu, Romane, caveto.* Hor.

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Incapacity. Why not prosecute as well as riot and plunder?

BUT it is very evident these are only the Suggestions of the *Father of Lyes*, spew'd out by the *Manufacturers*, and ratify'd as Truths by the Abettors of Riots and Plunder, meerly to render the *Clothiers* odious, and extenuate their Villanies.

ANOTHER Charge laid against the *Clothiers* is, that they oppress the Poor, by imposing Goods on them, at a high Rate, in lieu of Money; or, paying them in Truck, as they call it. Nothing can be more pertinent to this Affair, than what has been lately said by a judicious Writer in the *Gloucester Journal*, which I shall beg leave to quote here, for the Information of those who have not seen that *Journal*.

“ I COME now to consider the Article of
“ *Trucking*. This I own to be a Practice not only
“ illegal, but scandalous, and injurious to Trade;
“ which is attended with worse Consequences by
“ far, to the fair Trader, than the Workman
“ that complies with it, and what we should be
“ glad to see an effectual Stop put to. But as we
“ can't call every thing that is illegal, oppressive,
“ I am fully persuaded that the Majority of the
“ Work-people have no Reason to complain upon
“ this Head; nor could this be the Cause of their
“ Rising. ——— For as the Workman knows,
“ before-hand, the Disadvantages on which he
“ takes Goods in Payment; so he knows also
“ that the Quality of the Workmanship accepted
“ by such Masters, generally repays him, with
“ Interest, for the Loss he sustains upon such
“ Goods,

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“ I WOULD not be understood here pleading for a Liberty of paying in Goods ; for
 “ I heartily wish our Laws were so strict, and
 “ the Execution of those Laws so effectual, as
 “ would remove every Ground of Suspicion and
 “ Complaint on that Head, as I am satisfied the
 “ Interest of the fair Trader consists very much
 “ in preventing all such clandestine Methods of
 “ manufacturing.”

BUT to consider this Matter a little farther. By a Law made in the twelfth Year of King George I. it is enacted, that if any Clothier shall be convicted of Trucking, or paying Goods in lieu of Money, he shall forfeit the Sum of ten Pounds ; one Moiety is to go to the Informant, the other to the Party aggrieved. Now, notwithstanding here is so great Encouragement given by Law against Delinquents, I never heard that ever a Clothier was convicted on this Statute ; or that ever above one Information was made before the Justices for such Offence, which was proved to be *false* and *malicious* ; and yet I never heard that the Informant was refused Work by any Clothier on that account. If the Practice of Trucking be so injurious and oppressive as has been insinuated, how comes it about that no Informations are laid, or Convictions made ?

WHY, they say, *they should render themselves obnoxious to their Masters, by informing ; and so are afraid to put the Laws in Execution.* It seems they are afraid to join in prosecuting the *Trucksters*, and yet are not afraid to join in Riots and Plunder ; they are afraid to put the Laws in Execution against *Delinquents*, and yet are not afraid to break the Laws, at the Hazard of their Lives.
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Might not they as well contribute towards maintaining an unemploy'd *Informant*, if such a thing should happen, as contribute towards supporting *Rioters in Prison* ? Their *capital Stock* is sufficient to support any Scheme for putting down Truck, if they had Inclination. From whence we draw this Conclusion, that *Trucking is no real Grievance to the Manufacturers, whatever they may pretend.*

BUT as many *Gentlemen* and *Farmers* have severely censured Trucking, I would beg leave to ask them, whether some of them never paid their Servants partly in Truck ? Whether Wheat, Cheese, Butter, Bacon, Beef, Mutton, &c. were never sold by any of them to their Servants, at a Market Price ; and whether they thought they injured the Servant by such Sale ? I do not make these Interrogatories as an Advocate for *Trucking*, and to palliate the Crime, for I abhor it, but to convince the World, that it is a common thing for some Persons to bellow against the Offences of their Neighbours, whilst they are guilty of the same criminal Conduct ; and to shew what an easy Matter it is for us to deceive ourselves, for want of Reflection.

I HAVE known very good *Manufacturers* leave Ready-money Clothiers, without signifying any Cause, to go to *Trucking Masters*. It is obvious, from the public Declarations of the Clothiers, that forty-five out of fifty abhor those mean Practices. *If they inform, they shall be unemploy'd, is their common Excuse* ; how do they know this, when they never try'd in ten Years past ?

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A CERTAIN *Clothier* of Probity declar'd, that he insist'd, that a Weaver who served a *Trucking Master*, as well as himself, should leave the *Truckster*, and weave both Looms to him, otherwise he would discharge him. The *Weaver* signify'd, that he was unwilling to leave him, and frankly declared, that the Loom employ'd by the *Trucking Master* would not do for him. Since the Riot, a *Clothier*, who formerly is suppos'd to have paid in Truck, put out a Chain to a Weaver, who shot it out of his Bag, and left his Master, because he refus'd to let him have Truck upon the credit of his weaving it. How can they pretend then to assign their being paid in Truck, as a Cause of their Rioting? I think it is manifest, from what has been said, that neither Oppression, low Wages, detaining of Wages, Combinations to lower Wages, nor Truck, nor all together, could be the Cause of their Rising. Therefore we must look for some other Cause; Hints of which have been interspers'd in several Parts of this Letter.

MANY more natural and congenerating Causes of this Event might be assign'd; to run through which, would swell this Letter to a very great *Bulk*; and therefore I shall pass them by, at least for the present.

TO trace the Writer of the *Essay on Riots* thro' all the Mazes of his Folly, would be a *Wild-goose-chace*, both disagreeable and unnecessary. He seems to be under the Influence of a Distemper call'd the *Cacoethes Scribendi*, or, Itch of Scribbling, which has seized his Head so strongly, that, without any Reflections on his Qualifications, it has precipitated him into an Affair

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fair he knows nothing of, and hurry'd him thro' all the *Labyrinths* of Dulness and Inconsistency. His Brain seems turn'd with his Disorder, and his Head to be full of incoherent Systems, contradictory *Reveries*, and enthusiastic Visions. I never cast my Eyes on the Essay, but it puts me in mind of *Hogarth's Bethlem*. Truly, I see so much Incoherence and Contradiction in it, that I should think it the Production of some Gentleman escaped from the *Lodge in Moor-fields*, were there not so much Dulness diffus'd thro it. But notwithstanding, it has one admir'd Quality, I mean that of being an *Original*; for I believe there never appear'd in the World before such an *Olio* of Folly, Venom, Ill-nature, Disloyalty, and Stupidity; and I was going to say *Lunacy*, but that I think the Author too great a Fool ever to be mad.

YOU may, Sir, perhaps object against me, that I have been a little too severe, and have discovered a little too much Animosity, in the Character I have drawn of *Tarquinius Superbus*, as well as in what I have said of the Partiality of some of the *Justices*, and Weakness of some of the Country *Gentlemen*. You may perhaps imagine, that this will rather serve to irritate their Prejudices, than conciliate their Affections.

IN answer to this, I must say, a *Satyrist* has always been esteem'd a necessary Scourge for bad Magistrates; and is of a very different Species from a *Libeller*: the one lashes the *Villain*, the other defames the *Innocent*; the one is a bold *Speaker*, the other a base *Calumniator*; what one says is *Scandal*, what the other advances is *Truth*; the one is a *Slanderer*, the other a *Reformer*: and if the Character I have painted be applicable to any

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any Gentleman, his Picture ought to be drawn, that all Men may see it, and detest him. If there be no Gentleman it will fit, it may be look'd on as an imaginary Character in a *Drama*, which cannot justly be esteem'd to do Injustice, or give Offence to any Man. And if any of the Gentlemen, upon Reflection on their own Conduct, find that I have charg'd them justly, they ought not to be offended with Truth, but to alter their Behaviour, and then comfort themselves with this Consideration, that they are wiser and better, and not fit Company for the *Contemptibles* they were formerly rank'd with, and I spoke of. If they have any Ingenuity, they will make this Reflection, with the * Cardinal de Retz, *that there is something nobler in acknowledging a Fault, than in never committing one.*

I am, S I R,

With the greatest Regard, and highest Esteem,

Your most Humble, and

Most Obedient Servant,

PHILAETHES.

* See his *Memoirs*.