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SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
IMPORTANCE
OF THE
WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES,

BY

Which will appear, the Necessity of immediately putting an effectual Stop to the carrying off our WOOL unmanufactured to *France*.

By JOHN LONDON, of Tiverton, Merchant.



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THE
P R E F A C E.



I AM very sensible that what I have advanced concerning the Products of the Woollen Manufactures may to many Readers seem incredible, and to most very surprizing. It is so long since we have enjoyed the Advantages of them, the Remembrance of them is almost forgotten by us, and the justest Calculations will appear Chymical, only for want of being understood. But one would think it should be no difficult Matter for those who understand Figures to make a Computation for themselves, and thereby Estimate the Loss which we sustain yearly, by not manufacturing our Wool, and the Gains acquired by France, from the Manufacturing it. It requires no deep Knowledge in Trade to comprehend, that the Riches of a Nation must arise from the Labour of its Inhabitants in working up such Goods as it can vend to other Nations for Specie. Nothing more therefore is required, but to know how many Packs France probably has of our Wool yearly; how many Pounds a Pack of Wool contains, and how much a Pound, upon an Awaridge, the working it comes to. Mr. Webber and I differ in our Estimates. He sets it at 3 s. and 4 d. a Pound, but I say it comes to 5 s. as he has acknowledged to me that it does, though he thought it more prudent to set it lower for fear of being thought Romantick. But take his Estimate of 3 s. and 4 d. a Pound, and see what the Manufacturing of 500,000 Packs (the Quantity which France is supposed yearly to have of our Wool)

The P R E F A C E.

Wool) will amount to; And so much, the Nation loses yearly, while France gains so much, and almost twice as much more, because, with one Pack of our Wool, they can work up two of their own: And our Loss, and their Gains are augmented, when considered relatively, forasmuch as they get what we lose. For if I lose a Penny and my Enemy gets it, there will be Two-pence difference between Us in the Comparison. The Matter is so very plain, I cannot possibly account for such a general Ignorance about it. ——— But for fear such seemingly improbable Calculations should not be credited, I have shewn the Truth of them, in a great measure, by undeniable Instances: However Men may be disposed to squabble about the Quantity of Wool produced in Great Britain, or the Value of Labour in manufacturing it, I defy any of them to dispute, whether those Countries and Cities where our Wool was manufactured were so greatly enrich'd thereby, and whether those very Countries and Cities, when they ceased to Manufacture our Wool, did not proportionably grow poor and weak; or to deny the Consequence, viz. that We must increase, or decrease in Wealth and Strength in proportion to the Quantity of our Wool manufactured by our selves for the Supply of Foreign Markets. If the Reader will make but a short Tour with me through Flanders, I'll engage he shall return fully convinc'd.

I must beg my Reader's Excuse for the Meanness of my Dress, which however homely, I preferred to any borrowed Ornaments of Style and Language. I could have got my Pamphlet made more elegant and accurate, but I thought its native Simplicity would give Authority to its Truth, though it will not be so entertaining to delicate Criticks; and I publish my Thoughts not for the Amusement, but Information of my Countrymen, in Points immediately affecting their Welfare and Safety.

SOME



S O M E
C O N S I D E R A T I O N S
O N T H E
I M P O R T A N C E
O F T H E
W o o l l e n M a n u f a c t u r e s , & c .



HE establishing and bringing to Perfection the Linnen and Cambrick Manufactures in Ireland, is doubtless a laudable Undertaking, and worthy the great Encouragement it hath met with. But

'tis melancholy to reflect that while we are planting the Dutch and French Manufactures there with so great Difficulty and Expence, and helping them thereby to Wealth and Plenty, our Neighbours, at least the French, that politick designing Nation, whom we have so much Reason to be afraid of, and to guard ourselves against, are supplanting us in, and running away with our Woollen Manufactures, which were with much greater Difficulty and Expence at first established among us, and which have been improving and bringing to Perfection now about Two-hundred Years; a Manufacture of greater Importance to us than, not the Manufactures of Linnen and Cambricks only, but
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than all other Manufactures of these Kingdoms added to them; as it singly would employ more Hands than they altogether; as it is a Manufacture which most other Nations, being accustomed to wear Cloaths, cannot be without; and as no other Nation, if we prevent our Wool from being carried off unmanufactured, can Rival us in: Whereas in other Manufactures, particularly Linens and Cambricks, Foreigners having Materials growing among them to work with, they will by hard Living and low Wages undersel or oblige us to the same. But this can never be the Case of the Woollen Manufactures of these Kingdoms, provided we ourselves do not suffer that inestimable Produce, almost peculiar to us, to be carried off unmanufactured. For the Wool of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland* is of such a Nature (as is Universally allowed) that it only, of almost all other Wool, can be manufactured alone to any Perfection, as some of it may to the greatest Perfection: This accounts for what many cannot comprehend, who imagine, that the more our Wool is bought up and sent Abroad to be manufactured, the greater Price what remains at Home must necessarily bear; whereas the contrary is evident to Reason, and hath been always confirmed by Experience. For if all those Nations whose Climates oblige them to be clothed in Woollen wore that only which was manufactured of the Wool grown here, our Wool must needs bear a much greater Price, than if all the Nations before-mentioned were clothed with that of our Countries mixt and work't up with that of our neighbouring Countries also. To illustrate this to us by an Example parallel to it. There have been of late Years great Quantities of Corn exported to *Spain*, *Portugal*, *France*, *Italy*, and elsewhere; which hath kept up the Price of it here

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to a tolerable Height, and hath brought in much Wealth among us, though all those Nations have in part been supplied, not only with the Corn of their own Growth, but with that of other Countries also. But suppose those Nations had had no Corn growing among them, and could not have been supplied but from *England* only, then the Price must have advanced much higher at Home. Not a barren Spot of Land, or what seems to be so now would have been left uncultivated, that we might have been able to answer the great Demand. Those vast Sums paid by the Government to encourage the Export of it would have been saved, and much greater Wealth must of Necessity have flowed in upon us. But were these Nations to have their Food from *England*, only, instead of Raiment, it would not be of so great Advantage to us, since Husbandry could not then employ the Multitude of Hands here as the Woollen Manufacture would do. Nay, 'tis evident, that it is the latter that hath improved and made the former flourish among us, by the numerous Inhabitants it hath brought over and employed. For a certain *French* Author who wrote between two and three Centuries since, when all our Wool was suffered to be sent Abroad to be manufactured in *Flanders*, in describing *England*, says, that it was then a Country very thinly peopled, and a Spot of Land so barren, that it produced no Wheat for the Use of its Inhabitants, who drew what they did eat of it from *Flanders*, *France*, and *Spain* at that Time cultivated and made fruitful by the industrious *Moors* who were in Possession of a good Part of it, tho' since their Expulsion from thence, it hath returned in a great Measure to its former Barren and infertile State. Now, whether what this *Frenchman* advances is strictly true or not in the whole, there is great

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Reason to think that it is so in Part. For in a Country, now, where the Manufactures still are, and once greatly flourished, I have been informed by ancient People among them that no Wheat grew thereabout within these two Centuries, and that the then Inhabitants had no Bread but what was made of Rye to eat; they imagining that their Lands were of too cold a Nature, and too Barren to produce it. In Confirmation whereof, in pulling down old Houses, in order to rebuild them, the under Thatch which was laid on at first to cover them with, is found to be of Rye Straw only, whereas that of Wheat greatly exceeds it for that Use; and at present there is no Rye growing in that Country, nor hath been for an Age past, but it is one of the most plentiful Countries in *England* for Wheat, the best of its Kind which is generally all consumed among themselves. Nay, in part of the same Country where the Manufactures have not reach'd, they still sow Rye and Rye mixt with Wheat, and have no Bread for common Use but what is made thereof. Now to what can this be owing, but that when our Wool was not manufactured there, all their Fore-fathers were obliged to feed on Rye, whereas, if the Manufactures are preserved among us, we and they, and our Posterity shall always have Wheat in Plenty. Wheat other Nations may have as well as we, but *Wool* fit for manufacturing Cloaths to any Perfection, alone, they have not of their own Growth, and consequently cannot make such Cloaths without our Consent. Accordingly, nothing is more certain than that, when *France* hath not been able to come at our Wool at all, or but in small Quantities, then they have not been able to carry on their Manufactures, so as to supply their own Consumption; or when their Manufactures have not been admitted into other Countries,

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tries, as in Times of War or Pestilence, then our Manufactures immediately begun to flourish, and theirs always decayed; and no less certain is it that the greater the Demands for our Woollen Manufactures, the higher was the Price of Wool at Home, the greater was the Merchant's and the Manufacture's Profit, and the Labourers had the higher Wages. But on the contrary, when the *French* Woollen Manufactures flourished most, and they had the greatest Quantities of our Wool unmanufactured, then our Demands always grew less, the Price of Wool always fell proportionably; the less Profit the Merchant and Manufacturer enjoyed, and the Workers in it became poor for want of constant Labour, and by being oppress'd in their Wages, and became so burthenfome to the Parishes, that nothing is more common at such Times, and particularly at present, in Countries full of Inhabitants brought there by Manufactures formerly establish'd and flourishing there, than to hear Persons not well acquainted with Trade, wish that none were planted among them; for then, say they, our Lands would not be thus burthened with Poor and Rates made to support them; whereas they do not consider that the Multitude of Inhabitants are the Strength and Riches of a Nation, provided they can be *employed* so as to earn their Sustenance, much more when they can provide for themselves a plentiful Subsistence. For what is a King without Subjects? Or Lands without Inhabitants to consume the Produce of them? Accordingly, in some Countries in *England*, where the Lands are naturally barren but full of People, brought thither by the Manufactures, those Lands have notwithstanding been so cultivated by Art, in order to find Food for its numerous Inhabitants, as to render them more fruitful and to yield a better

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better Rent, notwithstanding the great Expence of manuring them, than Lands in other Countries naturally fruitful, but without such Manufacture, and the Numbers of People to consume their Produce. *Devonshire* is an Instance of this; a County full of Manufactures, once flourishing, where the Lands, generally mountainous and naturally barren, are by Art with great Expence so cultivated as to enable them to sustain its numerous Inhabitants, infomuch, that it is become one of the most plentiful Counties of *England*, and their Husbandry a Pattern for all the rest to copy after, *Devonshiring* Land being become a Term of Art. Their, once uncultivated Lands, many Thousands Acres of which formerly did not yield Half-a-Crown an Acre yearly Rent, now Lett for Twenty-Shillings; Hills so thinly covered with Earth as scarce to hide the Rocks and Stones of which they consist, by Art produce Crops in continual Succession without Intermission, equal to those of rich Lands in other Counties; where they are wont, after a certain Number of Crops, to let their Fields lie fallow, till they naturally recover Strength sufficient to bear Crops again. However incredible it may seem, yet certain it is, that Hills which produced nothing but Furze, Thorns, Brambles and Briars, and their Fruits, Hys, Haws and Slows, are rendred fruitful and made to produce the best of Wheat, Turneps, and Barley, three Crops in the Space of two Years, and in the two following Years Clover; and so are kept on from four Years to four Years, always producing the same Crops over again without Intermission. That once barren and worthless Hills should be cloathed in as beautiful a Dress and produce as rich Feed as the finest Meadows, such as Clover and Turneps certainly are; all this

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this is owing to the *Woollen Manufactures* so much planted among them. They brought Inhabitants there and a prodigious Flow of Wealth for them to live plentifully upon, and that put them upon contriving Means to make their Lands produce sufficient to supply them with it. I grant, that Inhabitants without Employment for them to earn their Subsistence by are a Nuisance and a Burthen, as is too much the Case at present in most Parts of this Nation, and of that Country in particular, occasioned by the *Decay* of the *Woollen Manufactures*, as that Decay is to our Wool's being suffered to go abroad unmanufactured without Restraint: Whereas were that Practice once suppress'd, the Inhabitants would be so far from wanting Employment, as some have argued, that we should not then have Hands enough in the Kingdom to manufacture it: In effect, as often as the Manufactures of *France* have been interrupted by the Reasons above-mentioned, the numerous Inhabitants of the above-named County who have long been, but especially of late Years, a Burthen to the Landed Interest for want of Employ, were found, through the greatness of the Demands of *Woollen Goods* from Abroad not able to answer them; but when we consider how many Parts of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*, are without Manufactures, and how many Hands there have but little to do, that the Manufacturers will extend themselves where Labour is to be had, and that where Money is to be earned and Wages high; there will be no want of Hands, for we shall scarce be able to prevent too many of our indigent neighbouring Nations from crowding in upon us. Then the greater Demand there is for our Manufactures the greater Wages are always given to our Workers; and the more they earn the

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the more plentifully they will live; and the more they will spend, which will in proportion occasion the cultivation of Lands and raise their Value, not only by causing the Produce of them to be taken off at a good Price, but by reducing the Poor also to such small Numbers that there will be scarce any to provide for. Whereas, at present, there never was so much Occasion for Provision, nor so great complaining in our Streets, for want of it. Evident it is, that the higher Wages our Workers can earn in our Manufactures, the more Money from Foreigners will be brought in among us, and the more it will circulate to the Benefit of all Ranks, Degrees and Professions among us. Nor can the highness of the Wages hurt our Manufactures, if confined to our selves; for the Difference of them, whether high or low, is but a Trifle on a Suit of Cloaths, even to the poorest Person. But were it otherwise, Cloaths must and would be had. Yet, though it doth not affect a Person singly, yet where Millions are concerned, there the Sum, together, is considerable. But should our Labourers be obliged to work at such low Rates as the *French*; should they submit with them, to wear wooden Shoes stufte with Rags, or Straw, without Stockings even in Winter, and go without Shoes or Stockings, or scarce Cloaths to cover them in Summer; should they be content to feed on a few Herbs pick'd in the Fields and boiled in Water to a Surep maigre on Snails and Frogs, which every Hedge and Ditch affords, or on dry Bread and Salt, with nothing but pure Water and Cyder mixt with Water to drink; should, I say, our Manufacturers be contented to live thus, our Lands will then lie uncultivated for want of their Produce being taken off, and must sink proportionably in Value; and
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after all, the *French* will under sell us still. For our Manufactures go abroad in Ships, and are of such Bulk as not to be got into other Countries without paying the Duties laid on them, which are generally very high; but the *French*, having many Nations on their Borders, find Means to run in their Manufactures without any Duty, which is 8, 10, nay 12 *per Cent.* on some of ours difference in their Favour. So that *Flanders*, whose Inhabitants in King *William's* and Queen *Anne's* Wars (when the *French* could not have our Wool, or but in small Quantities) were wont to take vast Quantities of our Manufactures, not only for their own Consumption, but that of the *French* also, into whose Country they were wont to smuggle them, now are almost wholly supplied with the *French* Manufactures, smuggled in like Manner in among them; and if they do so in *Flanders*, as I my self can testify, they doubtless do the same into *Germany*, *Spain*, and those other Countries which lie contiguous to them; and this great Advantage they cannot be deprived of by us, but by keeping our Wool from them, which would soon render them incapable of carrying on any Woollen Manufacture, and consequently of supplying their own Consumption, much less other Nations, and under-selling us by such Practices.

But some doubt, should we keep our Wool at Home unmanufactured, whether we should have Demands for it manufactured. Let such consider, that it is all continually consumed now, notwithstanding so much Foreign Wool is work'd up with it; and that when *France* could not have our Wool, but all of it was work'd up here, then the Sort that now sells for no more than 4 *l. per Pack*, yielded 16 *l.*— So far should we be from having our Wool lie on hand, I doubt we should not have
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enough to supply our Demands, but be obliged to fetch in the best of our Neighbours from them, which would be far from a Disadvantage to us, as would at first Sight seem; for the Labour of a Pack of Wool, take the finest Sort with the heaviest Sort of Manufactures, is computed at a Medium, to amount to 40*l.* — I say, at such a Price when the Manufactures are flourishing. Now a Pack of Wool sells at present but for 4*l.* — and suppose it imported so, and when manufactured sent again to that Nation from whom first drawn, all the Labour at least would be gained to us who manufacture it, which deserves the greater Attention; for by it will appear the great Loss the Nation suffers by permitting Wool to go Abroad unmanufactured, as it hath reduced the Price of it from 16*l.* — to 4*l.* — and our Labourers, considering how much they sit still for want of Work, and how much they are oppressed in their Wages that the Makers may be enabled to afford their Goods as near the *French* Markets as possible, have not more than half Wages; and the Labour of 500,000 Packs with which they can work up about a Million and half of Packs of their own is lost to the Nation, so much being computed to be carried off unmanufactured: All which together is so immense a Sum to our Detriment, that one may well stand amazed to consider we should be so infatuated as to suffer so great a Blessing, which the Almighty hath so signally favoured us with and distinguished us by, to be so horridly abused and disregarded by us. This will better appear by a little Calculation what Advantage it might be to us, and what it now is, one set against the other, as follows,

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<p>A Million Packs of Wool, (for so much is computed to be grown here) as sold, when confined to our own Manufactures, at 16<i>l.</i></p>	<p>16,000,000 <i>l.</i></p>	<p>As now sold, suffered to go abroad</p>	<p>4,000,000 <i>l.</i></p>
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<p>The Labour and Profit in working it at such Times at 40<i>l.</i></p>	<p>40,000,000 <i>l.</i></p>	<p>The Labour and Profit of 500,000 Packs manufactured here under the Disadvantages mentioned, at half Wages, 20<i>l.</i> per Pack *</p>	<p>10,000,000 14,000,000</p>
<p>56,000,000</p>		<p>42,000,000</p>	
<p>Is to our Disadvantage</p>			

Whereby it appears, that the Nation loses no less than Forty-Two Millions Sterling yearly, besides what the Landed Interest suffers by Poor, and Rates made to support them, which by the further Decay of our Manufactures will in Time, become so numerous that the Revenues of all the Lands together will not be found sufficient to maintain them. On the other hand *France*, by getting over 500,000 Packs of our Wool can work up a Million and Half of theirs, it being on all Hands agreed, that one Pack of ours is sufficient to work up Two of theirs. And suppose we reckon but 35*l.* per Pack for their Labour in working

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* Even our Manufactures yielded twice the Price formerly as at present.

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working it, then the Labour of a Million and Half of Packs, at 35 *l.* per Pack, amounts to Fifty-two Millions and Half Sterling. And that they do work up so much may well be supposed, for they certainly will import no more of our Wool than is absolutely necessary for them.

But all our Wool and Labour together, as now suffered to go Abroad, amounts to but 14 Millions Sterling, besides the many other Advantages lost to us and gained to them by it, to illustrate which would fill a Volume, and require an abler Pen than mine. It is what that Nation is sensible of, as appears by their setting us at Variance with *Spain*, whereby our Commerce with them hath been so long interrupted, and is at last prohibited, while they enjoy it uninterrupted; and by affecting a Neutrality, hurt us thereby more than a War with them could do, since that would stop their Manufactures, and then they as well as *Spain* must have ours.

With so great Reason hath the honest and experienced Author of a late Pamphlet * said, that the great Source of Wealth and Strength of this trading Nation, which are the Safety of it and the Support of the Government, as establish'd in the present Illustrious House, are our Woollen Manufactures, the total Decay of which must be attended with the Ruin of the Kingdom, and Subversion of the Constitution; and that the Exportation of our Wool to *France* is the chief Cause of their Strength and our Weakness. To what else, than to the Decay of our Trade and Manufacture, can it be attributed that, whereas it hath been often confidently asserted, within these Twenty

* *Mr. Samuel Webber's Five Letters.*

Years

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Years, that the Nation never was more rich and flourishing, nor strengthened with more powerful Alliances than at that Time, now we should be reduced to such a miserable Condition, that so far from holding the Ballance of Power in *Europe*, we have been lately told from the same Quarter, that we are too weak to go to War being without Money, or Allies. No wonder then, if we are become so poor and weak that we are despised, and not supported, but trampled upon; for Poverty and Contempt, whether in Kingdoms, or private Persons, are inseparable Companions.

However, still let us try, perhaps 'tis yet not too late to retrieve our Circumstances. If we will but act like Men, we have the Ways and Means to it chalk'd out to us by our Enemies and Rivals themselves. For what hath been proposed to advance them to the Height of Glory and Grandeur will effectually carry us to it, if pursued before it be too late.

The Ways and Means I hint at were proposed by the Author of an admirable Scheme, calculated entirely for the Benefit of his Country, some Extracts from which the *Craftsman* gave us in *December* last; which Scheme the *French* Ministry seem in reality to govern their Conduct by, where he Addresses his King to this Effect, "let but
" your Majesty encourage the Manufactures and
" the Commerce of your Industrious Subjects,
" instead of Oppressing them with Taxes, in order
" to extend your Dominions by War, such
" Wealth will then flow in upon them that you
" will always find Money wherewith to buy from
" Time to Time Provinces from your necessitous
" Neighbours upon easier Terms, get them on
" a safer, and secure them on a more lasting Foundation,
" than what you can do by Conquest. By
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“ pursuing these Measures also you will be enabled to fit out and maintain such a powerful Fleet, as will be sufficient to humble those haughty Islanders, who believe and call themselves Kings of the Sea, and oblige them to pay the first Honour to the *French* Flag.” But what Manufactures have they so considerable, besides those carried on with our Wool, by which they draw to themselves the Wealth of *Spain*, with whom they had little or no Commerce thirty Years since, though now they have almost engross’d it to themselves, as the *English* had before they were thus supplanted. Nor have they any Commerce but what, so long as we remain Masters of the Sea, we may greatly distress and ruin. In order to both which, the Author of the Five Letters before taken Notice of, hath propos’d an admirable Scheme, which, when fully explained, will be found not only effectual to prevent our Wool from being carried off unmanufactured (so often attempted to be done, though hitherto never effected) but so far from being designed for the monopolizing of Trade, or enriching himself and his Associates by oppressing their Fellow Subjects (as some would maliciously insinuate) that nothing can be better calculated for the Welfare and Prosperity of all the Community, to make the Master and the Servant always at Peace with each other, without Oppression on the one Hand, or Riotous Disorders on the other; both equally ruinous to the Manufactures and the Nation. Moreover, to prevent that great Grievance, so universally complain’d of, to wit, Labourers going off and leaving their Families to the Parish for a Maintenance, whilst they in another part of the Kingdom wallow in Vice and Luxury. These are some of the beneficial Effects which this Scheme, if put in Execution,

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tion, will be found to afford; Effects so absolutely necessary to the advantageous carrying on of the Manufacture, that the Welfare thereof entirely depends on its being accepted and put in Execution. But this is not all the Benefit he proposeth shall be reaped thereby, for he likewise engages by it also to bring into the publick Treasury, yearly, a Million, Sterling, clear of all Charges, and that from Foreigners only, without laying any Tax on Wool, or the Woollen Manufactures, and without any one Inhabitant of *Great-Britain* or *Ireland*’s paying towards it a single Farthing.

And this Million may, if the Exigency of Affairs should require it, be increas’d to many more within a few Years after the Wool shall be effectually stop’d from going off unmanufactured, without prejudicing them in the least. Besides, the still much greater Advantages, which all Ranks and Degrees among us will farther enjoy. By it also the Wealth of *Spain* will be made again to return to its former Course and flow up the *Thames*, from which it hath been so long diverted. For, they, as well as the *Portuguese*, are only Slaves to dig the Mines for that Nation, who can best supply them with the Manufactures of a Fleece more valuable than Gold itself. And as Money is undoubtedly the Sinews of War, by it we shall likewise be enabled once more to humble our ambitious aspiring Neighbours, who, if the Measures which have already been too long pursued are continued, will bind us in such Chains as, tho’ made of our own soft Wool, will be insupportable to a People born Free and unaccustom’d to the Yoke. What enabled us to support the long and expensive Wars in King *William* and Queen *Anne*’s Time in order to preserve our Liberties, then so much valued, but not more threatn’d, and in greater
Danger

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Danger of being lost than now at this Time, and to lay the Honour and ambitious Designs of the grand Monarch in the Dust, but the Woollen Manufactures? *France* itself, for Reasons already given, was all that Time obliged to supply themselves with those Goods from us, and in Return, to furnish us with that Money which so much contributed to their own Destruction. And what hath reduced us, after having enjoyed a longer Peace, without having lost one Battle, or been visited with any Calamities by the Hand of God or Man, but what we might and ought to have prevented by supporting our Manufactures and protecting our Merchants; What I say, hath reduced us to such a pass, as to be ready to lay our Necks under the Feet of the insidious and base insulting Foe, but the Decay of our Manufactures and of our Commerce and the flourishing Condition of theirs, who are sily bringing about by *Policy* what they were sensible they could not do by *Force*; agreeably to that favourite Maxim of the *Jesuits*, the Support of that Society, and by them made the Rule of all their Undertakings?

It is high Time then for the *British Senate* to interpose and prevent their Country's Ruin before it be too late, by enacting Laws worthy of themselves; not such as at the same Time as they were made are never designed to be put in Execution; or if put in Execution, are not sufficient for the Ends proposed, contrived only to amuse and stop the Clamours of a People starving for want of an Employ, while their Enemies are suffered at the same Time to run away with it, or perhaps to make them believe that the crying Evil is remediless. No, I hope they will make such Laws as cannot fail of being effectual, and that they themselves will every Sessions examine strictly whether they

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they are put in Execution, severely punishing those who dare to offend against them. They often do it justly in Matters which are, in Comparison of this great Concern, mere Trifles, and they will not think much to do it in this Affair, which is of so great Importance that nothing can more deserve their strictest Regard and Attention. But, if, after all, Words are not sufficient to expose this pernicious and destructive Advantage which our Enemies have at present over us, and the Ruin it will unavoidably bring on us, if they are any longer suffered to enjoy it, let us try whether Examples will be more prevalent and more effectually awaken us out of that Lethargy which we are sunk into. The same Causes will naturally produce the same Effects; and happy are they whom the Miscarriages and Misfortunes of others make wise in their own Respect. *Flanders*, once incredibly opulent, populous and fertile, arrived to that happy State by our Wool being permitted to be carried over and work'd up there, they paying for that Liberty vast Duties which our Kings laid thereon. By this were founded those numerous, large, regular, and well built Cities wherewith it abounds, full of magnificent Churches, adorned after their manner with exquisite Paintings, and rich Ornaments of inestimable Value; of great and stately Abbys, Monastries and Convents so richly endowed, that some of their Revenues equal that of Princes; of superb Town-Halls and Magazines, for the Accommodation and well Management of these Manufactures, which strike one with Wonder and Surprize in contemplating their Sumptuousness and Grandeur; of Canals of vast Breadth and Length, for the easier Conveyance of Goods, and Communication of one Town with another, furnished with Locks, where requisite, so as to raise

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Vessels,

Vessels, sometimes 30 or 40 Foot perpendicular, the whole dug out and erected at such vast Expence, that it almost exceeds all Belief. All this, however, was done and still remains, though at present but little used, effected by the immense Profits brought into their Country by manufacturing our Wool. The Dukes of *Burgundy*, their Sovereigns, were sensible of the Source from whence all this Wealth flowed, and always in Alliance with our Kings that they might not by disobliging them, put them upon seeking Means to interrupt it; and our Sovereigns on the other hand, were contented to suffer it, as well on Consideration of the vast Revenues it brought them, as because by it they also rendered almost dependent on them an Ally so powerful, that by his Assistance it was, that they from Time to Time were enabled to scourge ambitious *France*, and even to conquer it. The Value that the before-named Princes set on this Jewel could not be better exprest than by this, that one of them instituted the Order of *The Golden Fleece* in Honour of it, and as an Acknowledgment of the mighty Advantages he received by it; which Order of Knighthood afterwards descended with his Dominions to the Crown of *Spain*. The Order it still retains, but the Dominion it hath long since irrecoverably lost, by oppressing the Inhabitants in their Liberties; who, invited by that wiser Princess, Queen *Elizabeth*, came over in great Numbers and settled here, bringing with them the Manufacturers also and settling them, for the first Time, effectually in this Nation. But this was not easily effected, nor did they leave their Country without great Reluctance. For after all other Means were used without Success, the Nobility and Gentry went in a Body to petition their Governess that their Grievances might

might be redressed, and their Privileges restored. She, surprized to see such Numbers come about her, and neither understanding their Language, nor sensible of their Grievances, which had been artfully concealed from her, ask'd the Prime Minister who they were, and what they would have? He told her in Answer, That they were only a Parcel of *Sturdy Beggars*, and as such, they were dismiss'd without Redress: Upon which the whole Country revolted, and Seven of the Provinces were irrecoverably lost, and the other Ten, who returned to their Obedience, were ruined. For the Woollen Manufactures decayed immediately, and their Cities with them. So that *Antwerp*, which had at that Time a more extensive Trade than *London*, from the Model of whose magnificent Exchange that of *London* and *Amsterdam* too were built, (which latter City owes all its Grandeur, at present, to *Antwerp's* Decay, as their whole State doth to the Plunder of the *Spaniards* during 40 Years War, in which they disputed their Liberty) the City of *Antwerp*, I say, by Decay of the Manufactures, and for want of being under a Prince able to protect their Trade, is at present reduced so low that their Houses are almost without Inhabitants, and Grass grows on the open Area of their fine Exchange, which is kept continually weeded out for want of Merchants to frequent and walk on it; and their River, capable of admitting Ships of any Burthen, hath not been sailed on by a Ship for more than a Century past. See another Instance in *Ghent*, a City at that Time so full of Manufactures of Wool, that a stately Tower called the *Belfry*, still remaining, was built there purely to place a Bell therein, which was wont to be rung Morning, Noon and Night, when the Workers went to and returned from

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from Labour, to give Notice of it that all other Persons, and what ever else might crowd the Streets, might withdraw and be taken away at that Time, that they might pass without Lett or Hindrance. Their Labourers were in such Multitudes that there would not have been room enough without it; nay, so populous was it that *Charles the Fifth* walled into their City, and fortified, at an immense Expence, a vast large Tract of Land for their better Accommodation, which he had good Reason to think would soon have all been built upon; but his Son and Successor, driving away the Manufacturers (as hath been already said) he was therein mistaken, the greatest part of what was so inclosed being made use of at present, only for Gardens and for Fields to bleach Linnen in, for Pasture and for Tillage, the City itself being very thinly inhabited, though still better than *Bruges*, once so haughty by reason of its flourishing Manufactures and Commerce, that when the Emperor *Maximilian* (to whom it with the rest of the *Netherlands* came by his Marriage with the Daughter and Heiress of the last Duke of *Burgundy*) not accustomed to govern a free People, such as the *Flemmings* once were, was resolved to humble them by breaking in upon their Privileges; and having gained over some of their Magistrates by Corruption, he sent his Son, the King of the *Romans*, among them to countenance and support the Design. But the Inhabitants apprised thereof, and zealous for their Liberties, took up Arms, seized their Prince, and confined him in Prison, from whence they would not release him till he had drop't the Design, and promised never to engage in the like again. This large, well built and once rich and populous City, is now so much deserted and without Inhabitants, that a great House there
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may be rented at the same Price as a small one. In a word, the Inhabitants of this whole Country, once so remarkable for Luxury and Excess, by reason of that immense Wealth which flowed in upon them, that they were stiled by their Neighbours *the drunken Flemmings*, are so far from it now as to have scarce Bread to eat. What supports them, besides some Remains of a Lace and Linnen Manufacture (which is every Day leaving them) is those numerous, and nobly endowed Foundations of Religious Houses laid by their Fore-Fathers in the Time of that Golden Age already described, and an immense Wealth which still Remains in private Families among them, and which the continual Wars the Country sustained for a Century and half, and the Decay of their Manufactures have not yet been able to drain them of, though some of the best Families of the Country have suffered so much by it, as to be reduced to Want even the Necessaries of Life. Such sad Consequences are arbitrary Measures attended with, and so ruinous and destructive both to Prince and People, when made use of to deprive of their Liberties a People born Free. Whereas, even under arbitrary Governments, where the *Manufactures* and *Trade* are encouraged, there it hath notwithstanding quite different Effects; of which we have an Instance in that part of *Flanders*, which is under the *French*.

The City of *Lisse* was so far from having any Woollen Manufacture there within these Forty Years, that it took off more of them from us than any other City in *Flanders*, supplying therewith a great Part of *France*. This City, though much enlarged by *Lewis* the XIVth, when he compleated their Fortifications, yet is now so closely built that they complain much for want of Room to build more, having already pulled down their old Wooden Houses, and built them again (to speak
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in their Phrafe) magnificently ; and all this effected through Means of *our Wool* brought to them by Way of *Dunkirk* in great Quantities, and workt up there ; where their Manufactures are now so considerable, that they boast of Receiving yearly from *Cadiz*, only for them, no less than three or four Million Sterling ; besides what they send into *France* and the *Austrian Netherlands*, from which they are but four or five *English* Miles distant. This brings in such a flow of Wealth on them ; and their Buildings and Manner of Life is such, that the *French* affect to call it *Little Paris*, and to think it as Rich as *Paris* itself, the Court and Nobility excepted ; and their Lands about it are Proportionably well cultivated, Green and Flourishing ; whereas, when you enter upon the *Emperor's* Territories contiguous to them, we see them, in Comparison to the other, neglected, withered and dry : In so much, that their Inhabitants wish for nothing more than an Opportunity of throwing themselves under the Protection of *France*. The City of *Antwerp*, which once so plentifully abounded in all Things, through the Decay of their Woollen Manufacturies, is now almost without Inhabitants or Commerce, their River without Ships, and their Exchange almost without Merchants. But to look nearer Home, into the once flourishing Metropolis of this Nation. It is surprizing to see how many Houses, in all Parts of it, are at present without Inhabitants, and even in the Heart of it ; whereas, about fifteen Years since, there was scarce an House to be hired for Money. Seeing then these Things are so, is it not high Time for the honourable and worthy Magistrates to exert themselves with a Zeal and Vigour equal to the great Importance of the Cause before us.

The severe Winter hath at Times made our Custom-house and Exchange desert almost, and also
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our Streets without those Crowds which were wont to throng us ; crowded often by none but poor People reduced to the utmost Distress for Want of Labour. But what the Frost hath done a Stagnation of our Trade, and the Decay of our Manufactures will in Time, as certainly effect ; and then, who shall support the Poor throughout the whole Nation, when, for want of Employ, they shall become too numerous to be provided for at all. It is high Time for the *Nobility* and *Gentry* of the Kingdom also to look about them and consider whether they can ever expect to enjoy those Blessings under a *French* Government, as they can under our present Constitution, and the Establishment of it in his Majesty's illustrious House. This entirely depends on this one Point, whether we will encourage *their* Manufactures, or our own. How affronting then, how even audacious is it for any one, how highly soever distinguished, in Defiance of the Laws, and on the most joyful Occasions, to come into his Majesty's Presence, and to approach his Royal Person dress'd in the Manufactures of *France*, as is so commonly done ; nay, so much the Mode is it become, that a *French Taylor*, who lately came over, impudently and insultingly boasted (though we hope without Truth) that he had received Orders since his Arrival here for no less than fifty Suits of Cloaths from some of the greatest Persons in the Kingdom to be made at *Paris*, entirely of the Manufacture of *France*, and sent over to be worn here. Not as that *French* Manufactures do, as yet, exceed the *English*, but if their Dress were not wholly *French*, they could not appear at our Court just in the Mode, as the *French* Nobility do at theirs. Now can any one be so stupid as to think that the *French* Court by our paying them such Compliments will be induced to support his Majesty
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on his Throne? No, certainly, they are no less the sworn Enemies of his Majesty in particular, than of the whole Nation in general. Certain it is, we have lost the Balance of Power, and it seems plainly to appear to have been by suffering our Manufactures to Decay, while theirs are so flourishing, as to gain to their Nation by Labour in it only upwards of Fifty-two Millions Sterling yearly, that Labour being reckoned at 5*l.* — *per* Pack cheaper done than the *English* would have workt it, which amounts to seven Millions and a half; a Sum which the Labour of manufacturing all the Wool workt up in *England*, at present doth not much exceed that immense Sum of Fifty-two Millions yearly, gained to them while we are losing, will alone incline the Balance of Power in their Favour; and 'tis too much to be dreaded, that they will not long be in Possession of it, without using it to our utter Destruction.

By this Time, I hope, the Reader is convinced of what Consequence it is to preserve our Trade, by keeping our Wool at Home; what vast Wealth and Power were the Consequence of manufacturing it; how *Flanders* flourished by the Means of it; how afterwards that Country sunk again as fast into Poverty and Weakness by the loss of it; how rich and powerful it made this Nation, while we manufactured it ourselves: Nor, while Rich we were esteemed, courted and feared by our Neighbours, I need not say, because every one knows, we were the Arbiters of *Europe*; since we have suffered our Wool to go Abroad unmanufactured, every one feels and sees into what Poverty we are fallen, with a Load of unemployed People to be supported while we have less Money to do it with. Into what Contempt we are sunk abroad, we are told by an experienced Person, who, as I observed, has assured us, that we have not *one Ally. France,*
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by getting our Wool has gotten our Trade from us. By Trade she has acquired great Wealth and Strength: Of her Wealth let any one Judge by the great Things she has been able to do; by the vast Sums she was able to throw away in the Affair of *Poland*; by the Vigour with which she carried on the War in *Italy*; by her Loans to the necessitous Emperor, by the Means of which she managed Intrigues so artfully as to have *Sweden* so much at her Devotion; by the Assistance she has given to *Spain*; at a Time too when she had an Army of near 200,000 Men to pay, vast Fortifications to keep in repair, besides the carrying on expensive Works for their Improvement, and the erecting of new Ports; and lastly, by her being able, notwithstanding all those great Demands, to put great Sums into our Funds.

But when we consider that a great Part of the *Woollen Manufactures* in *France* are carried on at the Expence, and for the Benefit of the Government, here is a visible Fund to answer all these Demands. A Fund that we might have, if we would but stop the *Exportation* of our Wool. This Degree of Wealth has given her the Arbitration of *Europe*, and must enable her to give Laws to it, unless a timely Stop be put to the Progress of their Manufactures, by hindering them from getting our Wool.

A Calculation concerning the Quantity of Wool growing in Great-Britain and Ireland.

That there are a Million Packs of Wool growing, yearly, in *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*, is calculated thus,

It appears by the Toll Books that there are brought into *Smithfield* Market for Slaughter, to serve *London*, within the Bills of Mortality, 36,000 Sheep and Lambs, weekly. Now allow 6,000 of these

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these, throughout the Seasons, to be Lambs, and that there are 30,000 Sheep slaughtered one Week with the other, then the rest of *England* is generally computed to contain about seven Times as many Inhabitants as *London*, within the Bills. But supposing it contains only six Times as many, and that accordingly there are 210,000 Sheep slaughtered in *England* weekly; and likewise, that 4 Years Sheep are kept for Stock, or that there are always in Being four Times more than are thus slaughtered, as is usual with Sheep Masters to compute, and allowing every Sheep one with another, to bear four Pound of Wool, and every Pack to weigh 240 lb. then the yearly Wool of *England*, according to this Computation only, amounts to

Packs 728,000

Now in the Country throughout *England*, People feed as much on Flesh as in Town, and drinking less they generally exceed them in the Quantity they eat.

Then, as *Scotland* is of less Extent and less Fruitful than *England*, admit there are but One Quarter part of the Sheep in it, and it amounts to

Packs 182,000

Then as *Ireland* is not One Fourth Part less than *England*, but is full as Fertile, and taken up chiefly with Feeding, it hath been judged by some who have taken great Pains throughly to inform themselves that it hath near as many Sheep in it as there are in *England*; but suppose we say, only Half the Quantity that *England* produces, viz. 364,000 Packs, the Whole amounts to One Million and Two Hundred and Seventy Four Thousand Packs.

Packs 364,000

Packs 1,274,000

I have already computed the Profit arising from the *Labour* of manufacturing a Million of Packs only, I shall here subjoin, a Calculation of the *Share* that *Foreigners* would pay of this Profit to us. Two-hundred and Fifty-thousand Packs of Wool, yearly, the fourth Part of the Growth of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*, will Cloath thirteen or fourteen Millions of People, one with another, which is more than the Number of our Inhabitants are supposed to amount to; so that three Parts in four of our Manufactures would be *exported*, and bring home *Money* in return, to the amount of no less than thirty Millions Sterling, for the *bare Labour* in manufacturing those Seven-hundred and Fifty-thousand Packs, besides the Value of the *Wool itself*, unmanufactured, which is reckoned at twelve Millions more, in all amounting to Forty-two Millions, all arising from one single Branch of our Trade, and far exceeding the Value of all the Branches of Trade, belonging to This, or any other Nation.

If therefore we were so wise and just to ourselves, as to preserve this Blessing, we might be the richest and most powerful Nation in the World, eased of our present Load of poor's Rates, and Taxes, and instead of being deserted and despised, again respected, dreaded, and courted by our Neighbours.

Sometime ago our Poor amounted to One Million and Four-hundred Thousand; the Decay of Trade since that Time and the Severity of this last Year may fairly be supposed to have encreased the Number to two Millions; if we go on thus encreasing our Poor, and lessening our Incomes by a farther Decay of our Trade, how shall we be able to maintain them? Almost every Thing is Taxed, and high too, if we go on to lose our *Trade*, how shall

shall the necessary Expences of the Government be supported? How shall Fleets and Armies, for the Defence of the Kingdom, be maintain'd? All the Land in the Three Kingdoms will not do it. Nothing but Trade, and nothing but the *Woollen Trade* can do it. Who then can suppose, what is reported to be true, viz. that a certain *Ministerial Gentleman* should declare, that nothing can be done this Session in the *Wool Affair*. Is it possible to be supposed that the Ministry will unnecessarily hazard the Safety of their Master and the Nation, by deferring an Affair of such absolute and pressing Necessity? Will not the Parliament set long enough? Why? Can they ever sit upon any Thing of such Moment to our common Safety? Is it to be supposed, that his Majesty will not suffer his Parliament to secure his Throne and the Welfare of his People? Or that our *Representatives* will, at this critical Juncture, neglect the Safety of their *Constituents*. Sir Robert himself has own'd to Mr. *Webber*, that his Scheme of a *Registry* is the best thing that ever was thought of; and it has appeared since, that the *Charter*, as well as the *Registry*, will be vastly beneficial to the Nation. How then can it possibly be supposed that he will oppose, or not forward the best Thing that ever was thought of? It will certainly be brought into the House this Session, and who will offer to throw it out that has (as no doubt all that Honourable House has) a true Affection for his Prince, a regard for the publick Welfare, or any prudent Concern for himself and Family?

F I N I S.