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REFLECTIONS
ON THE
PRESENT LOW PRICE
OF
COARSE WOOLS,
ITS IMMEDIATE CAUSES,
AND
ITS PROBABLE REMEDIES.]

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TROS, TYRIUSVE MIHI NULLO DISCRIMINE HABETUR.

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REFLECTIONS, &c.

THE properest, and most natural Method of treating this Subject seems to be,—First, to state the Fact;—Secondly, to enquire into the Cause or Causes thereof;—Thirdly, to propose the most probable Cures, or preventive Remedies;—and, Fourthly, to consider the principal Difficulties, or Obstructions against carrying such Schemes into Execution. This is the Author's Plan: And he intends to pursue it invariably;—unless in such Instances, where the Subjects necessarily run into each other, and by that Means prevent him from treating them in a distinct and separate Manner.

FIRST, the FACT.

Wool is one of those raw Materials, whose Quantity may be encreased, and
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Quality improved by human Art and Industry, to a considerable degree. That is, the Wool-grower, by a proper Exertion of Skill and Diligence, may visibly enlarge the Breed of his Sheep as to Size, and encrease them as to Number. And he may also, by good Management, render their Wools much finer [which We experience to be the Case with respect to the *Urchinfield* Wool in *Herefordshire*] and certainly much cleaner, and more free from Dirt and Filth, than otherwise they would have been. But whether *English* Wool, by the greatest Exertion of Art and Industry, could ever be brought to such a Degree of Fineness and Goodness, as to equal the first, or even the second Sort of *Spanish* Wool, which some Authors have taken upon them to assert, is a Point which I dare not maintain, till confirmed by much stronger Evidence than has hitherto appeared. By *Spanish* Wool, I mean that, which is usually imported into *England* under that Denomination: For as to those coarse Wools of some Provinces of *Spain*, which are brought chiefly into the South of *France*, and manufactured principally at *Carcassonne*, *Lodeve*, &c. There is no Doubt to be made,

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but that some of our best *English* Wools greatly excell them.

Whether any of our former Kings made a Present of *English* Sheep to a King of *Spain*, is a Fact not very well authenticated; —and yet not so easy to be disproved. But whether so, or not, the present Fineness of *Spanish* Wool can be no more ascribed to that Cause alone, than the Strength and Goodness of *Stire* Cyder can be ascribed to one particular Sort of Apple, independent of Soil and Situation. For the *Stire* Apple will not produce *Stire* Cyder, when transplanted into *Kent* or *Essex*. In short, both Animals and Vegetables are found, by Experience, to change their Qualities, some more some less, by Transplantation into different Soils and Climates: And not always for the better. The *French* in Times of Peace buy Multitudes of *English* Horses: They also now and then procure some *English* Bull-Dogs, and the best of *English* Sheep, by means of our numerous Gangs of Smugglers. But nevertheless the Breed of each, in a Course of Years, never fails to alter; so that in the third or fourth Generation, they can hardly be distinguished from those of true original *French*

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Extraction. It may be greatly questioned, Whether *Spanish* Sheep brought into *England*, and fed in *Lincolnshire*, would produce the same kind of Wool, which they produce in *Spain*.

But be this as it may, certain it is, that the coarse Wools of *England* have been sinking in Price for some Years, till at last it has fallen so low, as to give an Alarm to all Ranks of Men. The Wool-grower is the first affected; because he finds his Rent, his Income, and his Profits to be greatly decreasing, at a Time, when every Tax, and the Weight of every Burden are encreasing upon him. He therefore will throw the Load off from his own Shoulders if he can. The Kingdom in general is deeply interested therein; because, let Individuals ease themselves how they can, the Public must bear the Burden at last. And if the Wool-grower should not find his Interest in promoting the Growth of Wool (and therefore should become desperate, or unconcerned about it) the same Misfortune may attend an Over-plenty of Wool at present, which has attended a Super-abundance of Corn in former Times, when *no Exportation was allowed*, namely, *A Famine*. For the

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the Self-Interest of the Wool-grower, as well as of the Woollen Manufacturer must be consulted in this Affair;—so far at least, that the former may always find his own Account in promoting the Growth of Wool, as well as the latter in manufacturing it—It being evident to common Sense, that Men will neither grow Corn, nor Wool, nor any thing else, knowingly and designedly to their own Loss.

SECONDLY, the CAUSE or CAUSES.

These seem to me to be the four following, all co-operating together to sink the Price of every Sort of coarse Wools much below the Standard, to which it ought to be kept up.

1st. The stoppage of the Exportation of our coarse Cloths, coarse Blanketing, Ruggs, Serges, &c. to foreign Countries, and particularly to *America*, on Account of the War, is usually assigned as the *only* Cause of the present Deadness of the Price of coarse Wool.—A considerable Cause it certainly is, but far from being the only one, or even the principal. The Home Market of any Article of general Consumption is much greater, and indeed ought to be much greater

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greater than any Exportation that can be supposed of the same to a foreign Market. This is a Circumstance of Importance, not sufficiently attended to. Take for instance the Case of Wheat, which is the common Food of the *English* Nation. Yet were it to be imagined, that the good People of *England* should become so delicate and fantastical, as to prefer the Use of *Rice*, or of any other far-fetched Food to that of *Wheat*, the Consequence would be evidently this, that the Price of Wheat would in a Manner sink to nothing,—notwithstanding there should be a greater Call for that Article to be sent abroad than ever had been before. In short, in all Matters of general Consumption, and according to the regular and natural Course of Things—They are only the *Over-flowings* of the Home Markets, after the Natives have been supplied, which should be, or will be exported abroad:—*Not vice versa.* Wherefore,

2dly. The *principal* Cause of the present Stagnation of the Demand for coarse Wools, is, beyond all Controversy, the prodigious Difuse of coarse Woollen Goods throughout every Part of this Kingdom, if compared with the State of Things
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in former Times. Females of all Ages and Conditions hardly use any Woollens at present, except those of the finest Texture, and made of the finest Wools. Silks, Cottons, and Linens, combined in a thousand Forms; and diversified by Names without Number, are now almost the universal Wear, from her Grace in the Drawing-room down to the lowest Scullion in the Kitchen:—Not to mention great Quantities of Chints, and other prohibited Goods, which perhaps are the more eagerly sought after because they are prohibited. And as to Males, even they wear ten times the Quantities of Cottons and Silks, under one Denomination or another, more than was usual for them to do.—Respecting Ruggs, and other coarse Articles, they are in a manner banished from all Houses in Towns and Cities;—and are scarcely to be found any where but in country Cottages. These being notorious Facts, is it possible for Us to be at a Loss, to account for the present low Price of coarse Wool?

But though the Existence of the present Evil may thus be accounted for,—the Magnitude and Extent thereof remain still to be considered. In a Nation consisting at least

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of 7,000,000 of Souls, it is but a very moderate Calculation to allow, that 2,000,000 of these may have abandoned the Use of Woollens in their Garments, Bedding and Furniture, to that Degree, as to consume annually 5 lb. weight per Head, at an Average, *less* than their Grand-fathers and Grand-mothers were wont to do. Now this seemingly trifling Quantity of Wool respecting each Individual, amounts in the whole to 10,000,000 of lb. weight! And surely, surely, were ten Millions of Pounds Weight of coarse Wool now to be bought up [no matter on what Occasion] there would be no Complaint, that this Commodity was a Drug, and bore no Price. But this is not all: For,

3dly. Those home Customers for coarse Wool, on whom We might absolutely depend, because they are not in a Capacity to wear any other Kinds of Garments, are diminishing in Number every Day;—I mean *Cottagers* in Country Villages. These poor People, without whom it is impossible for us to subsist, yet have perpetual War made upon them by two Sorts of cruel, and relentless Enemies, the Parish-Officers, and the Association for preserving the Game: The one, least any of them should become Pau-
pers,

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pers, and the other, least they should kill an Hare, or a Partridge. With respect to the latter of these, I leave it to the Affociators themselves to determine, being no Sportsman myself, Whether they have found by Experience, that this Mode has answered their sanguine Expectations?—And whether the Out-skirts of great Towns and Cities have not furnished more *Poachers*, and those more dextrous, and more difficult to be convicted, than all the Cottages scattered up and down the Country, which they have been the Means of pulling down. With respect to the former of these, namely, the Possibility of their becoming Paupers, I will borrow the Words of a very worthy Friend to express the Ill-Policy and Cruelty of such a Proceeding; a Gentleman, who from his own Experience, (having been an active Justice of the Peace for many Years, and for several Counties), bears his Testimony against the Conduct of Parish-Officers in the following Manner.

“ Many more Reasons might be urged in Favour of the intended Bill [for preventing unnecessary, and vexatious Removals of the Poor]; but I shall only mention
“ one, which is, That as the present Law

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“ is

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“ is now too often, and too generally made
 “ Use of for removing Persons, upon a *Pre-*
 “ *sumption*, or *Possibility* of becoming charge-
 “ able, it is very unfavourable to Matri-
 “ mony; an Institution that has ever been
 “ strongly encouraged and promoted by all
 “ wise and politic Nations. But it hap-
 “ pens to be the mistaken Policy of most of
 “ our very wise Parish-Officers, that as soon
 “ as a young Man is entred into that State of
 “ Life, which is most likely to make him a
 “ good and useful Member of Society, to en-
 “ deavour to get him removed to the Place
 “ of his legal Settlement, out of Pretence,
 “ or perhaps for some worse Reason, that
 “ He may soon have a Family, that may
 “ *possibly* bring some Charge upon the Pa-
 “ rish. Young Men intimidated by fre-
 “ quent Examples of such Severity, and
 “ apprehending, that they themselves may
 “ meet with the same cruel Treatment,
 “ are afraid, and unwilling to marry; and
 “ instead of doing so, too often seduce,
 “ and debauch young Women, get them
 “ with Child, and then ungenerously leave
 “ them to shift for themselves, in a very
 “ helpless Condition. Thus, having de-
 “ serted the Place of their Residence and
 “ Employ,

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“ Employ, and being afraid, from the
 “ certainty of Expence and Punishment,
 “ ever to return there any more, they soon
 “ get into an unsettled, debauched Way of
 “ Life, acquire an Habit of Idleness and
 “ Strolling, and never more become useful
 “ Members of the Community.” [An
 Address from *William Greaves* of *Fulborne*,
 Esq; to both Houses of Parliament, Pages
 16 and 17.]

4thly. Whilst coarse Wools are grow-
 ing into Disuse among Us, and whilst
 Parish-Officers and others, through mistak-
 en Policy, are thinning the Number of
 those, who, by their Rank and Class in
 Life, are in a manner the *only Customers* to
 be expected for coarse Wool,—the Quanti-
 ty thereof is considerably encreased. The
 Breaking up of waste Grounds, formerly
 over-run with Heath, Furze, Brush-
 wood, &c. also the Draining of Moors and
 Marshes; [on all which Grounds the Sheep
 could hardly get a Bite, excepting in the
 three or four Summer Months.] Moreover
 the Sowing of Turnips, Clover, Saint-foine,
 and other artificial Grasses, have enabled
 most Farmers to keep greater Stocks than
 heretofore. Add to this, that the Animals
 themselves,

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themselves, by having a greater Plenty of Food in their Bellies, both Winter and Summer, throw out longer and stronger Fibres on their Backs: That is, they have heavier Fleeces than they used to have: And their Wool is both longer, and coarser. Now, as the Prices of all Commodities whatever depend on the Quantity at Market, and the Demand for the same;—it must therefore follow, that when the Demand decreases, and the Quantity encreases, the Price must fall;—and *vice versa*.

Were it necessary to add any thing, by Way of Illustration, to what has been said, it is this:—That as the Quantity of fine *Spanish* Wool must have necessarily decreased, on account of the Interruption given to our Trade with *Spain*, during the War;—the Demand for the finest of our *English* Wool, viz. that of *Urchinfield* in *Herefordshire*, hath proportionably encreased; because *Urchinfield* Wool comes the nearest to the *Spanish*, though still of an inferior Quality, of any which is produced in this Kingdom. And as the Rage for fine Cloathing is not at all abated,—it therefore comes to pass, (all the Premises being duly weighed) that the Price of fine *English* must necessarily

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necessarily rise, and the Price of coarse *English* Wool must as necessarily fall during the present Juncture:—fall, I mean, unless some new Markets can be opened for the Vent of our Surplus coarse Wools.

THIRDLY, REMEDIES and CURES proposed.

It having been made to appear in the foregoing Pages, that We have lost the usual Markets, both foreign, and domestic, for the Consumption of our coarse Wools;—the only rational Scheme now to be attempted, is, to endeavour to find out new Markets abroad, [where that is practicable] and also to create new Markets at home, by raising up another Generation of Men, Women, and Children, who may, and must be the Users and Consumers of our coarse Wools, and *of them only*. I call this the only *rational* Method; because I hope We are not now so mad, as to think of laying heavy Penalties on the Wearers of Silks, Cottons, or Linens, [similar to some of our absurd, ill-judged Laws made within this Century]; or to hire Persons to inform against the Spinning and Weaving of Silks, Cottons,

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Cottons, or Linens in this Kingdom, in order to encourage the Consumption of coarse Woollens.

I. REMEDY, OR MODE OF CURE.

Permission ought to be granted for the Exportation of Raw Wool, under a certain Duty, suppose of one Penny per lb.—which, with the Addition of Merchants Profits, Agency, Port-Charges, Freight, and Insurance, would amount to at least 25 per Cent. on the Price of the raw Material, against the Foreigner, and in Favour of the British Manufacturer: An Advantage fully sufficient, to ensure the *Staple* Trade of Woollen Cloths to himself, unless it be his own Fault. And the Monies arising from these Duties, be they more or less, ought to be applied as a *Bounty* on the Exportation of coarse Woollens and Worsteads of our own Manufacture. Such a Regulation would, like a two-edged Sword, cut both Ways: The more the Quantity of Raw Wool was thus exported, the greater would be the Reward to be given for exporting our own Manufactures, made out of the same kind of Wools. So that the Evil, [so much dreaded, or apprehended],

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prehended], viz. the Exportation of the raw Material, would operate as a Premium in Favour of the *English* Manufacturer at a foreign Market.

However, as self-interested People, (who will not forego the least present, and personal Advantage for the sake of a distant, public Good) can at any time conjure up Spectres and Apparitions to terrify weak Minds, and in no Case so easily as in Trade and Politics;—and as the principal Manufacturers, are every where sounding the Alarm Bell against any Scheme for admitting Raw Wool to be exported, under any Modification whatever; perhaps it may be advisable to wave this Scheme, however just and reasonable in itself; and to endeavour to substitute another, more agreeable to their own Taste, and which will better tally with their own Views and Intentions.

II. REMEDY, OR MODE OF CURE.

The Peasants, or common People in the North of *Europe*, and particularly on both Sides of the Shores of the *Baltic*, stand in great Need of warm Cloathing during their long and severe Winters: Nor are they as yet arrived at that Pride and Luxury, as to

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disdain to wear the coarsest of Woollen Manufactures, had they the Means of procuring them, and did they know where to purchase them at such Prices, as would not exceed their Abilities.

First Proposal on this Head.

Proposed therefore, that a small Bounty of three half-pence per Yard, [*the Value of the Cloth not to exceed one Shilling and Six-pence per Yard, and the Breadth to be not less than 28 Inches*] be granted on the Exportation of coarse Woollens and Worsteds to any of the Ports within the *Baltic*, similar to that which is now paid, and payable [*viz. three half-pence per Yard*] on the Exportation of coarse *English, Scotch, and Irish* Linens to *America*, and the *West Indies*.

Many Circumstances seem to concur in fixing, or limiting this *first Essay* to Ports within the *Baltic* only.

For 1st. Were the Experiment even to miscarry, (which it is not likely to do) the Expence of such a Trial would be a Trifle, and could hardly be felt: Whereas the Advantages would be very great, if it suc-

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ceeded;

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ceeded; and would be every Day encreasing. And then, if such a Scheme was found to succeed on a smaller Scale, it would be very easy to encrease it, and even to make it become general to all Countries, if judged expedient.

2dly. As great Frauds have hitherto been committed in the Affairs of general, undistinguishing Bounties, this Limitation to the *Baltic* only, will go a good Way towards correcting such an Evil, and of watching over the intended Abuses with a stricter Eye;—especially when it is further considered, that all *English* Ships going in, must stop at *Elsneure* to pay the *Sound Duties* to the King of *Denmark*; at which Place therefore they may likewise exhibit their Clearances from the *British* Custom-houses to the *English* Consul there residing; and may receive such Certificates, and Descriptions of Bills of Parcels from him, as may serve to be further Checks on Frauds and Impositions.

3dly. Our Trade up the *Baltic* has greatly encreased, and is still encreasing. And as vast Quantities of *English* Goods have found a Vent in these Countries, especially at *Riga, Norway, and Petersburgh*, (*viz.*

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Manchester-Manufactures, Birmingham and Sheffield Wares, and Burton Ale) it is to be hoped, and it is not unnatural to expect, that such Goods may by Degrees, and with proper Encouragement, introduce other Goods of an inferior Quality, though of a much superior Use,—were the Necessities of Mankind, and not their Vanity, to be made the Standard on such Occasions. Fact it is, that very few coarse Woollens and Worsteds, comparatively speaking, have as yet been introduced into any Part of the *Russian* Empire: [An Empire much larger in Extent, than ever the *Roman* was in the Times of its highest Glory; and a Country peculiarly calculated respecting Climate, and the Wants of the poorer Natives for the Wear, Use, and Consumption of coarse Woollen Manufactures]. Yet so it is, that very inconsiderable Quantities have been hitherto introduced;—principally owing to two Causes. First, the common People of all those immense Regions (and likewise of *Poland* and *Lituania*), are but just emerged, as it were, out of a State of the most abject Slavery; and they are now only beginning to taste the Sweets of their own Industry, and to know and feel the Use

Use of Money, and the Conveniences it can procure. Secondly, our great *English* Factors and Agents at *St. Peterburgh*, and other Places, disdain to stoop so low, as to aim at cultivating a Trade with the poorer Sort of Inhabitants; whilst they can get 40, 50, and 60, per Cent. Profit on other Articles, calculated for the Use of the Court, and the Grandees;—by which Means, they live in such Splendor, as to have separate Coaches and Six, for themselves and Families, with numerous and brilliant Attendants, and do give those magnificent Entertainments, which are fitter for sovereign Princes, than for private Men. In one Word, the Profits on the Sale of coarse, low-priced Woollens and Worsteds are too mean and trivial for supporting such enormous Expences, as they have been accustomed to. Here therefore let it be noted, that the *English* Agents and Factors in all these Countries have a Monopoly against the *English* Manufacturer at home, in every Branch, by Means of the Charter of the *Russia* Company;—a Charter first granted by our famous Queen *Elizabeth*, of monopolizing Memory, and continued in Force, with very few Amendments, ever since.

For

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For by Virtue of this Exclusion, no Goods can be *consigned* to any Person, but to a Member of the Company;—no; not even to a Native *Russian*, though He were to engage, as He easily might, that by his Knowledge of the Country, and his extensive Correspondences in it, He would cause TEN TIMES the Quantity of *English* Manufactures, and particularly of coarse, low-priced Goods, to be vended in the distant Provinces, to what there now is. Yet all this must pass for nothing; and the Interest of the Monopolizer ought always to be attended to, in Preference to the public Good. Hence therefore, when a few Native *Russians*, some Years ago, petitioned our Parliament to be naturalized, in order to become Members of our *Russia* Company, for the very Purpose of carrying on a more extended Trade, their Petition was rejected: And the precious Reason then assigned was, that were such Practices to be allowed, the Profits of the *Englishmen* in *Russia* would be lessened, and the *English* Factor could no longer be a *Great Man*. After such an Affront put on the *Russian* Government in the Persons of its Native Subjects, [so impolitic in itself, and so *particularly* injurious to our

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own Interests] is it to be wondered at, that the Empress should have forbidden, as She has done, by Way of Reprisal, the erecting of any *English* Factories in the interior Provinces?—Or that she should have laid heavier Duties on several of our Manufactures, than were laid on before;—finding the immense Profits, by their Stile of Living, which the *English* made on the Sale of their own Merchandise? Such an Indignity offered to one of the greatest Sovereigns upon Earth, might perhaps have justified still greater Severities.—Nay, certain it is, that the *English* themselves would have been the last People to have submitted calmly, had such a Case been their own. But to proceed.

Second Proposal on this Head.

Proposed therefore, that an Act be obtained for repealing this Monopoly, as far, at least, as coarse Woollen, and Worsted Goods *receiving a Bounty*, are concerned:—Or in other Words, that it may be lawful for the Exporter of such Goods from any Port of *Great Britain*, or for the Master of the Vessel, or Super-cargo, or any other Person

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son interested in the same, to sell, or consign them to whomsoever He shall please, whether He be a Native of *Great Britain*, or not, and whether free or not free of the *Russia* Company;—and to take and receive in Return, or for Payment of the same, whatever Goods, Merchandises, or Commodities he lawfully may, by the Laws of *Russia*.

Third Proposal on this Head.

In order to defray the Charges or Expences attending this new-intended Bounty, be it further proposed, that one-third of the Bounty now given on exported coarse Linens, be withdrawn, and applied to this Use;—also, that one-third of the Bounty allowed on the Exportation of Corn and Grain, be likewise withdrawn, and converted into a Fund for the same Purpose. These two Articles, coarse Linens and Corn, have been at Nurse for many Years; and the Nursing, [I mean, of the Exportation of them] hath cost this Nation many Millions Sterling, some Part lawfully and properly earned; but the greater Part obtained through horrid Frauds, and Perjuries. It is now high Time, that the nursing

nursing Care of the Legislature should be applied to some other Branches of Manufacture, hitherto in their infantine State;—though I own not without a very jealous and watchful Eye, in order to prevent similar Frauds and Impositions. — And none seem to demand our nursing Care so much at present, as the Exportation of our coarse Woollen Goods.

R E M A R K S.

A Measure, called *Arshine*, equal in Length to 28 Inches *English*, is that whereby Cloth is measured in *Russia*;—at least it is that, by which the Duties are paid at the *Russian* Custom-houses. These Duties are payable in Copecs and Roubles. A Copec is one Half-penny *English*, with a very small Fraction; one hundred of which make a Rouble, so that a *Russian* Rouble is from 4s. 2d. to 4s. 4d. *English*. By the general Tariff of 1766, the following Duties on *English* coarse Woollen Goods, were fixt and ascertained; which I shall endeavour to express by *English* Yards, and in *English* Value.

1. Broad Bays, coarse and napped, 7 Copecs the Arshine, which make almost

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most 6d. per Yard, *English* Measure, and Money.

2. *English* ordinary Cloth of all Colours, the Breadth not specified, 17 Copecs the Arshine, that is, almost one Shilling per Yard *English*.
3. Ordinary Estamens, 3 Copecs per Arshine, that is, almost 2d. per Yard *English*.
4. Flannel, plain and striped, broad and narrow, 3 Copecs per Arshine, that is, almost 2d. per Yard *English*.
5. Woollen Felts, or Sled Covers, [perhaps this may mean, a kind of warm, large Covering for their Sledges] each Piece to pay 30 Copecs, or about 1s. 3½d. *English*.

Moreover it must be acknowledged, that the Duties on Felt Hats, Woollen Caps, Stockings, and Gloves, are very high. Nevertheless, it ought also to be observed, that several Articles, and particularly *English* Beer, and *Burton* Ale, are much higher

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taxed in Proportion, than any of these; which yet have found their Way into the remotest Parts of this vast Empire. So that high Duties alone ought not to discourage Us from attempting to open a Trade, when free in itself, and unfettered from the Shackles of Monopoly;—more especially when the Bounty proposed is taken into the Account: A Bounty of more than 12 per Cent. Profit on the prime Cost in most Instances, and not less than 20 per Cent. in some. Such Encouragements would surely go a great Way towards removing every Difficulty or Impediment.

Add to all this, that the Province, to which such a Trade ought more particularly to be directed, affords the most flattering Prospect of Success.—It is the *Ukraine*; a Province not only the most fertile, and particularly abounding with excellent Materials for the *English* Market, but also the richest in respect to Wealth, and the freest in regard to Liberty, of any within the *Russian* Dominions. For the *Ukrainers* enjoy many Privileges, to which the rest of the Empire are utter Strangers. This has occasioned a great Af-

flux of Inhabitants from the other Parts; so that their Numbers, together with the Value, and Rent of their Lands, have more than doubled within half a Century.

The raw Materials of the *Ukraine*, and of the Provinces adjoining [whether in *Russia*, or in *Poland*] are generally brought to two Ports in the *Baltic*, *Narva* and *Riga*, to be shipped for *Great Britain*. If for *Narva*, the Goods are trained on the Snows, during the Winter, several hundred Miles, till they are brought to the Borders of the great *Peipus* Lake; and from thence, in the Summer, by Water-carriage to *Narva*. If for *Riga*, the like Journey is performed by Land, and in the like Manner, till they arrive at some Part or other of the River *Dwina*, where it becomes navigable; [running such an immense Length] and from thence the Goods are Water-borne to *Riga*. By these means numerous Bands of two Sets of Men, Land and Water Carriers, are employed; To each of whom coarse Woollens and Worsteds, if reasonably cheap, could not be unwelcome Things. And as both Sets would be glad of obtaining *Back-freights*, in order to encrease their Profits, it is extremely probable, that not only Woollens,

lens, but also great Quantities of other low-priced *English* Manufactures might obtain a Vent, the Carriage being so cheap, were native *Russians* to be permitted to buy the Goods at the *first Hand*, or rather, were such Goods to be permitted to be *consigned* to native *Russians*, or *Livonians*, at *Narva* or *Riga*, without passing through the Hands of any Member of a Company: And moreover, were such Agents or Factors, Natives of the Country, to establish Factories at *Plescow*, and other Places on the *Peipus* Lake,—and at *Ula*, and other Towns and Villages on the *Dwina*, in order to communicate with the more distant, interior Provinces. Were such a Chain of Correspondencies to be established, it is not unreasonable to suppose, nay, it is very natural to imagine, that such a beneficial Commerce might be carried on, to such a Degree, as would, in Time, extend itself even to the Confines of the *Caspian*, and the *Euxine* Seas.

The Proposal is now laid in *full View* before the Reader. And on the whole of this Plan for opening a new Market to distant, foreign Countries, for the Vent of *English* coarse Woollens, I have but one Remark more to make: *Viz.* that the greatest Objection

tion against it, remains yet to be mentioned: Which, however, I ought not to conceal from the unprejudiced Reader. It is this,—That as there would be NO COLONIZING in the Case, there would of course be no Charters to be granted,—no Fees or Perquisites for Clerks to receive,—no Governments, no Places, or Sine-cures for Ministers to bestow,—no Disputes about Privileges, no Grievances, no Remonstrances, no unalienable Rights for Patriots, to declaim upon—no Hopes of succeeding to the Places of those, who should be turned out,—no Food for inflammatory Paragraphs in Newspapers,—no Jobs for Contractors;—and no Monopolies for selfish Traders, and Manufacturers:—Therefore the Scheme, however feasible in itself, and how much soever calculated for the Public Good, is in great Danger of miscarrying;—unless more public Virtue should be exerted in this Case, than has been usual on the like Occasions.

N. B. No mention is made in the *Russian* Tariff of 1766 [which I suppose is the last] of Rugs, or Blankets. But at Page 84, there is a general Rule, “ That all Kinds of
“ Goods,

“ Goods, or Merchandise not specified in
“ this Tariff, or not similar to such Arti-
“ cles, as are specified, shall pay, *ad Va-*
“ *lorem* per Rouble 30 Copecs.” — That is, supposing the Goods to be valued at one Rouble, or 4*s.* 2*d.* *English*, the Duty, or Tax, would then be 1*s.* 3*d.* Perhaps coarse Frizes may come under this Description. We may thank ourselves for most of these high Duties.

III. REMEDY, OR MODE OF CURE.

The Common, and middling People of this Country being, for the most part, above the Use or Wear of our own coarse Woolens and Worsteds,—We must, if We expect any considerable Market for *Home-Consumption*, [which ought to be the greatest] endeavour to raise up such a Generation of Men, Women, and Children, as shall be obliged, by their Station in Life, to be clad in such Garments, as are made out of coarse Wools, and to use such Sorts of Goods for their Bedding and Furniture.

Now this, I apprehend, can no otherwise be accomplished, than by establishing a Police for the Creation of Cottages on
Waste

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Waste Spots of Land, near Turnpike Roads, on a new Plan, and with new Resources. The Particulars of which Scheme shall be set forth hereafter. In the mean Time We must attend to an Objection, or two, which, if not removed, will go near to demolish the whole Superstructure.

The first Objection is, that the Families of such Cottagers, sometimes the Males, but oftener the Females, may become *Paupers*, and thereby add to the Burdens of the Poor-Tax [already too high] in those Parishes, in which the Cottages shall be situated. And the second, that there is a Danger, that some of the Males may turn *Poachers*, and even dare to kill an Hare, and perhaps a Partridge.

With regard to the first Evil, it may be tolerably well guarded against, after the following Manner:—Let the Cottages and Gardens belonging to this new Foundation, be exempt from all Taxes, Duties, Rents, Tithes, serving Parochial, or other Offices, serving Apprenticeships to Trades, and from every kind of Imposition whatsoever;—excepting a Poor-Tax of * 10s. a Year to be

* Note.] The 10s. might be raised to 20s. if found necessary. But 10s. is enough to begin with.

paid

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paid to the Parish, in which this Cottage shall stand;—and excepting serving in the Militia:—Which service it is intended, that the Male Inhabitants of these Cottages shall always perform, unless when superannuated, or disabled through Sickness. According to this Regulation, no Man, and no set of Men will have just Cause to complain. Not the Parish; for they will receive an Annual Rent, or Poor-Tax of 10s. per Year, from that spot, from which otherwise they would have received Nothing. And this Tax will probably amount to more, than would have been assessed on a little Farmer of 20l. perhaps 30l. or in some Places even 40l. a Year, Rack-Rent. Not to mention, that the Farmers, Landholders, Traders, and Manufacturers, and the Parish at large, would receive a constant Benefit from the Labours of this new Family in their several Branches of Carding, Spinning, Knitting, &c. and of Hedging, Ditching, Reaping, Mowing, Threshing, &c.—without much Danger of any of them demanding Relief, beyond what the Accumulations of their own Money [the 10s. a Year Poor-Tax] would be sufficient to supply. As to the Loss of Herbage from a

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void

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void Spot of Ground, less than an Acre, and near a great Road, no Man in his Senses would so far expose himself as to complain of such a Loss. Sure I am, that no honest Jury would allow him, if it could be brought to a Trial, one Penny Damages. And the Cottagers themselves will still have less Cause to complain: Their only Rent would be 10s. a Year, free from every other Burden or Expence: [And themselves at Liberty to exercise what mechanic Trade they please]. So that by a moderate Share of Industry in the Cultivation of a large Garden, and by the Sale of its Produce, also of Poultry and Eggs, Ducks and Pigs, they might fairly neat three or four Pounds a Year, besides supplying their Families with Garden-Stuff, and enjoying a comfortable House to live in. As to the Lord of the Manor, He cannot be injured by having that Spot rendered fertile, and converted to a good Use, which in its barren State brought him in nothing. On the contrary, his Tenants, if He has any, will be benefited, and consequently himself, by the Accession of a Family, the Profits of whose Labour and Industry must ultimately center

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center in the Vicinage of his Estates, and without additional Burden, or Expence.

Thus far as to the first Objection:—With respect to the second—The Difficulties attending it, will be effectually cleared up, it is to be hoped, when the Scheme itself comes to be explained. For the present, We must request to have Credit given on that Account.

The EXPLANATION of the SCHEME.

In *Sweden* they have had a very antient Institution, which allots to their common Soldiers, small Parcels of public Lands for them to cultivate, and Hutts or Cottages to reside in, with their Wives and Families, when not actually upon Duty;—instead of crowding them together, as our Manner is, in great Towns and Cities, where they are necessarily exposed to every Scene of Vice and Debauchery. In the Electorate of *Hanover*, We are assured by the truly patriotic *Monf. De Luc*, that *real Friend* of Mankind, that they have lately established an excellent Police, which bids fair, in a course of Years, to fill the vast Heaths of *Lunenburg* and *Zell*, and the Marshes of *Bremen*, with good Cottages, and a numerous,

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warm-clad Peasantry. As far as these two Examples can be imitated here in *England*, why should We disdain to learn Wisdom and Virtue even from foreign Nations? And why refuse what is for our own Good, though it should not originate from Ourselves? In fact, if the Consideration of our own Interest could be any Inducement to copy after so laudable Examples,—perhaps it might easily be made to appear, that the present Circumstances of *Great Britain* require a Multiplication of Inhabitants at home, [instead of Emigration to the Colonies]. And a Creation of Markets for the *internal Consumption* of our own Commodities, much more than the Circumstances either of *Sweden*, or of *Hanover*. This being the Case, I now beg Leave to offer the following Propositions to public Consideration;—after having just observed, that the Author has no manner of personal Interest in the Adoption of them; nor shall sustain any Loss by the Reprobation of them.

I. PROPOSAL,

Let an Act be obtained for appointing Commissioners in each County, to mark

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out as many Lots of Ground, on different Wastes and Commons, near great Turnpike Roads, as shall equal the Number of Militia-Men required by Law to be raised in that County;—whereby each private Man, and Non-commissioned Officer, may gain a comfortable Settlement, if He chuses it, within the Space of thirty or forty Years, and perhaps in less time, if this Scheme should succeed. The Quantity of Ground for each Lot, should be rather *more* than half an Acre, and yet should *not exceed* an Acre:—The Reasons for which Limitations shall be assigned hereafter. As to the total Quantity, or aggregate Sum, it is apprehended, that every County in *England* and *Wales* hath Wastes, Heaths, and Commons, bordering on great Roads, much more than sufficient for answering this Purpose. Indeed it would not be adviseable to place *very many* of these Cottages together, on one single Common, even though there were Room enough for so doing. A Regard to good Husbandry, and to the Reparation of the public Roads, [for which such Men would be ready on the Spot], not to mention other Reasons, require, that these Militia-Cottages should be dispersed, as
much

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much as possible, throughout every Part, and every Parish of the County, where it may be done.

II. PROPOSAL.

The next step to be taken, is, to provide a Fund for erecting these Cottages, and for enclosing the Grounds appropriated to them. A Guinea-Lottery, to be drawn in each County, one-half to be divided into Premiums among the Adventurers, and the other to be reserved as a Capital for building these Cottages, &c. would amply supply every Purpose of this Nature, — unless shameful Embezzlements should prevail. As to the Danger, that such a Lottery would not fill, — considering the strange Propensity of Mankind towards every gambling Project, I really think, there is no Danger on that Head: Therefore I shall make no Apology. — Rather I would wish to apologize for having Recourse to any Scheme, whose Principles cannot be defended, and whose Example is so contagious. The only Excuse I can make, is this, That it having been found by long Experience, that Men and Women are become

so

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so corrupt, that they *will gamble*, under one Denomination, or other, in Spite of all our Laws, — Therefore the best Use that can be made of this national Infatuation is, — to draw Good out of Evil, and to turn this general Insanity into a public Benefit.

III. PROPOSAL.

Supposing any given Number of these Cottages to be annually erected by virtue of standing Contracts, [Say, 100 in a Year in the larger Counties, till the whole was completed, and 20, 30, 40, or 50 in smaller ones], the next Question is, Who shall nominate, or elect to these Benefices? — The natural Answer to which seems to be this, — The Lord Lieutenant, the Deputy Lieutenants, together with the whole Corps of Commissioned Officers, shall have the Power of electing, by means of a Ballot, at their general Meetings: — Proper Notices, or Summons to attend such Meetings being first publicly given.

IV. PROPOSAL.

The Candidates for these Places must be married Men, (their Wives actually residing with

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with them) at the Time of their being chosen. And the Man, who has the greatest Number of young Children, not able to provide for themselves, should have the Preference;—unless something very immoral be objected to his Character.

V. PROPOSAL.

Every Militia-Man so elected, shall engage to serve for Life, if the Service should so require; and constantly to reside in this Habitation, when not absent on the Militia-Duty. Moreover He should also engage to keep the Cottage and Mounds in sufficient Repair, and to cultivate the Ground in an Husband-like Manner.

VI. PROPOSAL.

On his performing these Covenants, the annual Rent, or Poor-Tax of his Cottage should be paid by the Adjutant of the Regiment, or by the Pay-Master of that Battalion, or Corps, to which He belongs, and charged as a separate Article in the general Account. But if He should commit any Fault, so as to be expelled the Regiment; or if He refused, or neglected to perform

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perform any of the Covenants herein specified, he should be expelled his Cottage by the same Power, which elected him, and another chosen in his Room.

VII. PROPOSAL.

The Public or State being the sole Proprietors of this Cottage and Garden, and not the Inhabitant [who pays no Taxes, and is in Law no other than an *Usu-fructuary*], it therefore follows, that the Premises cannot entitle him to vote as a Free-holder: No bad Circumstance this either for himself or for the Public: Nor will he be entitled to sell, mortgage, or alienate the same, or to raise any Money upon it, or lease it out either for a longer, or a shorter Time.

VIII. PROPOSAL.

Yet in Order to give due Encouragement to Persons to behave well, and to reward the Deserving, Be it ordained, that the poor Man, who is worn out by long Service, or who has received any Hurt in the same, so as to render him incapable of serving, shall be permitted to dwell in his Cottage to his Dying-Day: The Public, as usual, paying the Poor-Tax. And for still greater Encouragement

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agement, it may be right also, in Case He shall have a Son a Militia-man, [as He probably will] or if his Daughter should marry a Militia-man; that in these Cases, the Son, or the Son-in-law, should have the Option of taking to their Father's Cottage and Garden, after his Decease, in Preference to all others.

R E M A R K S.

The Sketch, or Outlines of this Plan being now given, it is natural to suppose, that Time and Experience will suggest many Improvements;—and that several good Politicks may be grafted on it, in the Course of Practice, which are hitherto undiscovered. The Things, which appear the most obvious at present, are the five following:—

1st. It appears, that as the Militia Cottager will never have more than one Acre, perhaps not so much, by virtue of this Plan, He will not have more than what He and his Family can well cultivate at spare Hours, without defrauding any of those of his Time, who should hire him as a Day-labourer. Whereas, when a Cottager begins to be possessed of three or four Acres of Ground, He is rendered unfit, in a great

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Measure, to be a Day-labourer, and yet He is not elevated into the Rank or Condition of a Farmer. He neglects the Business of those [whether Farmers, Gentlemen, or Tradesmen] who employ him the greatest Part of the Year, in order to attend to his own little Harvest of Corn and Hay, let their Affairs be ever so urgent. And when his little Stock is consumed by his Cow, his Horse, or his half a dozen Sheep, during the Winter,—What is he to do? And how is he to support them during the Spring, and till the Month of *May*?—The Answer is obvious: He will be strongly tempted to steal from his richer Neighbours for their Subsistence, rather than see his live Stock perish. And that will lead him on to the Commission of still greater Crimes. Therefore, paradoxical as it may seem, a truly charitable and compassionate Man, if at the same Time a Man of Understanding, would not wish, that the Domain of a Cottager should be of larger Extent, than just sufficient for raising good Quantities of Garden-stuff, and for maintaining a few Poultry, a few Ducks, and a breeding Sow:—I say, he would not wish him to enjoy more than this, because he would not willingly expose him

to those Temptations, which it is not probable he would resist.

2dly. The nearer, in Reason, these Cottages were to be placed to great Turnpike-Roads, the easier, the cheaper, and readier would be the Conveyance of any Articles to, or from the neighbouring Towns, by means of those Acquaintances, which would be formed with Stage-waggoners, Stage-coachmen, &c. frequenting those Roads. And as the Male Inhabitants of such Cottages would, generally speaking, be on the Spot, during the very Time, that those Roads would chiefly want mending, viz. during the Spring and Autumn, it is very probable, that they would undertake to mend the Roads at a cheaper Rate, and to rake and cleanse them, &c. on better Terms, than are usual on such Occasions.

3dly. The Persons of these Militia-Cottagers being better known, than those of most other Men, both on account of their public Services, when on Duty,—and of the public Situation of their Dwellings near Turnpike-Roads, and of their Employment in mending these Roads;—would, on all these Accounts, be the most unfit, and therefore the most unlikely of all Men living, to turn

Poachers.

Poachers. A public Crier could hardly turn Thief, if he would, because his Voice, his Garb, his Gesture, and every Thing would help to betray him. Not to mention, that as these Militia-men would be more under the Command of their Officers (Gentlemen of Fortune, and Sportsmen in the County) than any other Set of Men whatever:—This Circumstance alone, if there were no others, would render them the least desirous of any to transgress.

4thly. The present Difficulty of getting Substitutes, and the great Expences they now occasion, which are daily growing greater, would probably not only be lessened, but would, in a Manner, totally cease by virtue of this Institution. For the Sons, or Sons-in-law of the Militia-Cottagers, so far from esteeming it an Hardship, as at present, would rather make Interest for it as an Advantage, to serve as Substitutes;—this they would do, because it would entitle them to many Privileges, which they could not otherwise enjoy, particularly that of working at any Mechanic Trade, without serving an Apprenticeship;—and also because it would qualify them to be Candidates for the Militia-Cottages, when Vacancies should happen.

5thly.

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5thly and lastly; Such an Institution would considerably multiply the human Species; [The present Mode is the Destruction of it in every View.] and the Multiplication of the lowest Class of Mankind, Cottagers and Day-labourers, would be the Creation, not only of an hardy and brawny Race, fit for all Duties both of War and Peace, but also of a new Market for the home Consumption of our coarsest Wools; —a Market not only very desirable in itself, as being an internal one, but also as not being subject either to the Non-importation Schemes of ungrateful Colonists, or to the Caprice and Intrigues of foreign Courts and wily Politicians.

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