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A
S P E E C H
Without Doors
CONCERNING
EXPORTATION
OF
W O O L.

Printed in the Year 1704.

A Speech without Doors, &c.

IT will certainly surprize not only most part of this Nation, but also our Neighbours, to hear that an Act allowing the Export of Wool, without any Restriction, should be brought in, and meet with Encouragement from this present Session of Parliament, where so great Forwardness and good Inclinations to promote the Interest of their Country, have already appeared: But since the Interest of the Country is the pretence of both Parties; before any Opinion be received, the Members of Parliament are bound, both by the Obligations they ly under to their Country, and by their Oath taken in Parliament, seriously to consider such a weighty Affair, and the Arguments that are used, both for and against the same: And as it will be acknowledged by every reasonable Man, that this Affair is not a privat, but a General Concern; so, let all those who do signalize themselves for good Country-Men, lay aside their private Interest, and embrace that which is the undoubted Advantage of their Country in General, and thereby they will Act with safe Conscience, and have the Applause of all good Men.

It may be thought, to offer any Arguments *without Doors* in this Affair to the Parliament, is both Needless and Impertinent, since they are certainly more Capable to afford Arguments in their Reasoning on this Affair *within*, as any that can be offered *without*; but the design of this, is to incite the Members of Parliament seriously to reason and consider so National a Concern, rather than to expect, that what is weakly here offered may have great Effect: And in order to Treat briefly on this Subject, I do affirm for a Truth, *That the Exportation of Wool is highly prejudicial to the Interest of this Nation, and no true Hearted Scots Man will desire it.*

Before I enter to prove this Proposition, it is to be remembred, with how much Deliberation and general Applause the Act anent the Discharge of Export, was made in the Parliament 1700, and with how much Struggle it was obtained, when it might have been Expected, that the Wool-Masters had a much greater Interest in the Parliament than now: And so far did they prevail, that altho the Reasons against the Export of it, were unanswerable; yet the Law was to continue only for Five Years, which was the least time to discover the Advantages that might accrue to the Nation by that Law; and this was all the Favour the

(4)

Wool-Masters then asked: But it seems now, they begin to Repent that the time is too long, and altho it be determined by the then Parliament, that Five Years was the least time to be allowed for Experimenting the Advantages or Disadvantages the Nation might receive thereby; and that on the Faith thereof, several Persons have erected Manufactories; yet notwithstanding an Act is brought in, allowing the Export of Wool, which if it shall pass, may be of most dangerous Consequence, and is unprecedented, either in this, or any other Nation. But that I may prove my foresaid Proposition by undenyable Reasons; I must beg leave to Establish these Principles, *imo.* In every National Concern, *Private Interest*, in so far as it is prejudicial to the *General*, ought not to be regarded by the Parliament. *2do.* Any Man that will desire the *Prejudice* of his Countrey in General, upon the account of some private Concern, cannot be esteemed a *true Hearted Countrey Man*. These two Propositions, it is hoped, will be easily granted by all rational Men; so that to Reason upon them, were but to darken them.

The only Argument made use of, or that can be invented for the Wool Masters, of any import in this Affair, is, That their Rent, and whole Product of their Countrey, consists wholly in Wool; and it is experimented, that the Nation cannot consume the half of their Wool, because some of them have just now two Years Wool upon their hand, which cannot be got sold; so that since the Manufactories can be sufficiently served, and Wool sent abroad also, they think it the hardest thing in the World why their Estate should be Forfaulted upon some vain Imaginations of the Interest or the Nation. This Argument is clearly founded upon particular Interest, so that if it shall be found to be prejudicial to the General Interest of the Nation, no regard ought to be had thereto, conform to my first Principle: And to prove it prejudicial to the General Interest of the Nation, it must be observed, That the most considerable Nations in *Europe*, have, and presently do esteem the Manufacturing of Wool a great Advantage to their Countrey, and for that end have given all the Encouragement imaginable thereto: Our Neighbours of *England* are a sufficient Example of this; yea, even these who have no Wool of their own Growth, do find it their interest to give Encouragement to the Manufacturing of Foreign Wool: Witness the *Dutch*, who have lately ordered all their Regiments to be clothed with their own Manufacture. Now if the Example of these two flourishing Nations can have any influence upon us, we must hereby think, to Manufacture our Wool is a great Advantage; and consequently, the carrying it out Unmanufactured, is to frustrate us of that Advantage. But next, it is the Interest of every Nation to improve their Natural Product to the best avail; and

(5)

it is certain, to Manufacture Wool, is to improve it to a Triple value; for the coarsest of Manufactured Wool will at least yield Triple what the Wool thereof would yield in any place, which being an Improvement without any Coast to the Nation, must surely be esteemed a National advantage. And *Tbirdly*, If more Money can be brought in to the Nation by Exporting the Woolen Manufacture in a Year, when the Wool is not Exported, than can be brought in by the Wool and Manufacture when both is allowed to be Exported; then it is the Interest of the Nation rather that the Manufacture should be Exported than both; for both can never be got Sold, seing the only places that takes our Manufacture, takes also our Wool; and if they can get our Wool, they will never take our Manufacture: But it may be made appear to any that will examine it, that at one Port in this Kingdom, there has been Exported in a Year 20000 *lib.* Sterling worth of Woolen Manufacture, which is intirely stopt when the Wool is allowed to be Exported: And after inquiry it cannot be found, that ever Wool was Exported in one Year, to the value of 20000 *l.* *Serb.* And I dare appeal to all the Wool Merchants in *Scotland*, if they can contradict this; so that the Export of the Manufacture Exported, even at one Port, exceeds the Export of the Wool in a Third part: And it is certain, there are Goods from more than one place, & many more would be Exported, if the Wool would become Cheaper, & the Wool-Masters obliged to Manufacture; and consequently the Nation in general is so much Gainer by that way of Traffick more than the other. My design of being brief will not allow to Enlarge upon this subject; for even granting that the Ballance of Trade by the Export of the Wool and Manufacture were the same, yet still the general advantage of the Nation would follow the Manufacture, because by that perhaps a Hundred People would be mantained, which by the other might Starve, and all the Advantage accresse to one Man: And *a fortio-re*, when the Ballance of Trade to be greater is demonstrable. Now from these it appears to me, that the Export of Wool is prejudicial to the general Interest of the Nation as evidently, as that Two and Three makes Five: And because the Wool Masters will certainly deny the matters of Fact herein represented, the Members of Parliament are earnestly desired to make inquiry, before they take up a prejudice.

It must be acknowledged, That by the Discharging the Export of Wool, the Heretors thereof are so far prejudged, as not to get such good Rates for their Wool as formerly; but how far this can prevail as to the general interest of the Nation, is evident; for the design of discharging the Export, was partly that it might be bought easier, and thereby our Manufactured Goods Sold at easier rates both at Home and Abroad, which would make greater Quantities of it go off, and thereby the Nation advantaged: For if the Wool of this Countrey could be had

(6)

had at as easie Rates as in *England* or *Ireland*, and our own Countrey Men once perfectly Educate to Manufacture it, there is no doubt the Manufactured Goods of this Nation may and will be Sold Cheaper than in *England*; and the reason is apparent, because our Workmen can live upon less wages than the *English*: And if our Materials can be furnished as Cheap, the Ballance will certainly be upon the least Coast in the Manufacturing. But it will be Answered by some, who lay no stress upon reasonable and probable advantages to be expected, That we find by Experience the Nation is imposed on by Manufactories, and our Goods both worse and dearer than formerly; but this is an Argument altogether founded upon Self-interest, and nothing in it that is National: For the only use of Manufactories is to breed the Countrey, and we cannot expect to Reap the Fruit of these good Laws, till all Manufactories be Managed by private hands, and not Societies, which will surely come to pass, if ye will but have a little patience; and altho the Goods be dearer, the Money is kept at home, and it will encourage more to set up, that they get Profit, who do Manufacture: And certainly it is better to give Profit to those that spend what they receive amongst us, than to such as take it to a Foreign Country, since every Privat Member must have their advantage of the Moneys circulating. And this may be brought in the same Class with the Argument used for the Wool Masters, and both of them may be compared with an imaginary example. And it is this, I suppose some few Noblemen and Gentlemen who have Estates and are Natives of this Countrey, are employed by a Forreign Court to obtain an Act from this Parliament, Rescinding some good Laws made in favours of the Countrey, and dispensing with several Privileges and Revenues of this Nation in favours of that Forreign Court, for which these worthy Persons employed, are to get a considerable Reward. When they come to apply, they find out some Sophistical Arguments to promote their design, but finding that that will not do, they make a great deal of clamour, & fairly discover that their interest will be mightily prejudged if it do not pass, for they will lose a considerable Reward which is promised them: Perhaps amongst their Friends there might be some out of Love to their Interest, others from an expectation of some privat advantage, who would be engaged to assist them: But I am confident, they would all be thought very ill Country-men, and their Argument with just and honest men in Parliament would not much prevail. Now pray, let the Example be compared, and it will be found exactly parallel: For there is no rational uninterested Man, but let him allow some time to consider, whether the export of Wool be a prejudice to the Nation in General or not; and he will find, that where one man is advantaged by it, Forty are losers; yea may starve, and the ballance of Trade in General prejudged. And if the Wool-master's small loss of not getting a higher price for their Wool, be well considered, it may be thought but to be of equal force with what might be made use of by the Forreign supposed Bribes: Yea rather less, since their Reward coming from a Forreign Court, brings in money to the Nation, & the other takes out: So that the desire of both, and the Arguments seem to be equal. And if the complaint of the Wool-masters were seriously considered, it would be found to be but groundless: For their Wool is never yet sold at such easie Rates, as either in *England* or *Ireland*, and that they have so much of it unsold at present, may be attribute to that Cause; for till it be sold at lower Rates, their complaint is of no weight; since it may be supposed, that they kept the price high, of purpose to get a Liberty for Exporting of it; and if that Expectation of theirs were crushed, it may easily be believed, they would be obliged to sell it cheaper, or fall upon some way to Manufacture it amongst themselves. It is alledged by some, that the Manufactories should be obliged to take all their Wool, or otherwise, they have a Liberty to export it: But this cannot be founded on by any thinking Man; for the Manufactories (I only call such as are founded upon Joint-Stocks, and have more Owners than one,) make use of but a small quantity of our Wool; the poor People of the Country and privat Families, are only those who consume our own Wool, and by whose Manufacture the Nation is bettered, the coarsest Goods being the only Goods Exported as yet; and to oblige these to take the Wool, is impracticable. But *est*o it were, why should one part of the Nation be obliged to work and fatigue themselves, to keep the other part idle? For if the Parliament should encourage Manufactories, it would be easily found, That that idle part of the Nation would lay down their hands as well as others; but while they can get an easier way of living, tho to the prejudice of the Nation, they will never choise to fatigue. But further, granting all the Wool Masters were prejudged, and no remeid left them; yet it is undeniable, that the rest of the Nation are ten times the number of those concerned in Wool; and they certainly have a visible advantage by the Wools being kepted at home, and in all differences, the plurality is reckoned in place of the whole; so that we are obliged to know, both by Scripture and Reason, *That it is better a part of the Body suffer than the whole*: And consequently, tho these few Men have an advantage by the Export of Wool, yet it is highly prejudicial to the Interest of the Nation in General; which is the first part of my Proposition, and the last part of it does necessarily follow.

It is the misfortune of this poor Nation, that we have so little inclination, to know the advantage of Trade for our present subsisting, and the most easie way to obtain that, is our only study: Every privat Man looks no farther than his own privat advantage, and will not allow himself

(8)

self to think upon the Interest of his Nation in general, but takes that for a Chimera, altho it is certain, that the general advantage or disadvantage must accresce to each particular Member; but we, whose destiny seems to be Poverty, will not allow our selves to give any time for a National Proposal, unless every Man presently enjoy of the advantage. With how much popular applause and alacrity, were these good Laws in Favours of Manufactories made in the Parliament 1700; but because every man does not immediatly enjoy of the advantage of them, they are by some reflected against, upon no other head but particular prejudice, and without considering the National advantage; And for the Parliament at one blow to crush all these good Laws, were to give but too good ground for our Neighbours to reflect on us.

There are several Objections proposed against my foresaid Proposition, such as, The Export of Wool brings in more money to the Nation, than when it is discharged: But this is contrair to what I have already asserted, and the truth of my Assertion will be demonstrable to any that will be at pains to enquire. 2^{do}. There is a general clamour, that our money in this Nation was never so scarce, as since these Laws were made, and therefore, they attribute the scarcity to the observance of these Laws. No body will regard this Objection, except such, who are not at pains to examize it; For it is certain, that the *Dutch* when they cannot get our Wool, will buy double as much Manufacture as the value of all the Wool Exported in the Nation; but whenever they can get our Wool, they will never buy our Manufacture. We have an Example of this of late, since the Skins with Wool upon them were allowed to be exported, the price of our Woollen Manufacture has fallen a Fourth part: And any Merchant that has occasion to Trade with *Holland*, will know, that at present our Wool is a drug at *Holland*, and there cannot be so much got for it as before the Exportation was allowed; so that it is a contradiction to think, that the Discharge of the Export of Wool the Cause of our scarcity, since more is Exported than can be got sold, and that the discharging the Import is the Cause, is equally contradictory to any man that will be at pains to consider, that our Import exceeded always our Export; so the ballance of necessity was carried out in specie: And that the saying that at home, is the Cause of our being scarcer, is an odd way of Reasoning. There might be several true Reasons given, why our money is so scarce at present, but it is sufficient for my purpose, that neither of these two offered can be Founded as such; and I shall leave it to a better Author to discover these. I shall only add, that by Her Majesty's Letter, the Commissioner and Chancellor's Speech, the encouragement of our Manufactories is Recommended: And if, to make an Act allowing the Export of Wool answer that design, or the good Expectations the Country has of this Session of Parliament; I leave it to any indifferent Man to Judge.