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TREATISE

OF

Wool and Cattel.

In a Letter written to a Friend,

Occasion'd upon a

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

The great Abatements of RENTS,

AND

Low Value of LANDS.

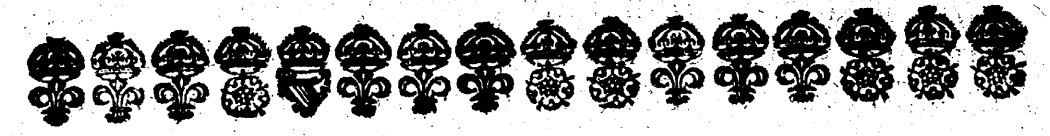
Wherein is shewed how their Worth and Value may be advanced by the Improvement of the Manufacture of our English Wool, and the spending of our Cattel.

And is farther proved; that Cloathing and Hospitality tend to the support of the Honour, Wealth, and Strength of our *English* Nation.

Licensed, *March 28. 1677.* Ro. E'strange.

LONDON: Printed by J. C. for Will. Crook, at the Green Dragon without Temple-bar. 1677.

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A LETTER written to a Friend,
OCCASIONED
Upon a DISCOURSE
Concerning the great Abatement of RENTS,
And the Low Value now upon LANDS.

S I R,

Were it not for discovering my self in that Nature which I am altogether averse to, I would here make a Dedication of this to your Name, and thereby let the Nation know, how truly and vigilantly you concern your self for the Publick Good and Welfare of your Country. But your Actions shew that, as well as your Loyalty to your King, which can only render you the more fit for Publick Employment.

Sir, You may please to remember, upon the Discourse we had on this Subject, that it was your desire I would give you the Heads and Substance thereof against the Meeting of the Parliament; that as you found a convenient opportunity and compliance with you herein by some of your Fellow-Members, with whom you did intend first to advise, you would accordingly proceed in it for the Publick-Good.

Sir,

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Sir, I have perform'd my promise, and done my endeavour; which, considering the shortness of the time I had for the expressing my thoughts, I hope you will excuse the rude dress it comes to your hands in: the plainer *English* it speaks, the better it suits with, and most agreeable is to its designe. But I judge it will meet with many squeamish and outlandish Stomacks, that cannot digest our *English* Food; and many others that must wear finer Cloath than can be made of their own Wool: for these I except against, they are the chief persons concern'd, and their Evidence is not to be taken in their own Cause. For as they bear no part with us but in the general Loss, so we will leave them, till their own experience makes them sensible what enemies they have been already to themselves and the whole Kingdom, and what they will be to the Ages that succeed them. But the true-bred *Englishman* is the person here to be discours'd with, who I am sure will willingly put to his helping hand to restore his Lands to their former Value and Worth again. And although many Offers have been made of late years for *Englands* Improvement, which shews that we are sufficiently sensible of our decaying Condition, if we could but tell how to help our selves, yet it is a great Question, Whether several of these Designes might in the end prove for the real Good and Benefit of this Kingdom: As to endeavour the Planting of several Foreign Commodities, whereby to engross the Manufacture of other Nations to our selves; for the saving, as we alledge, many thousands of Pounds at home, which they cost us abroad: And the cutting of so many Rivers, to make them Navigable through the very heart of most parts of the Kingdom to *London*, whereby all our Trade

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Trade and Carriage might pass up and down without Waggon and Horses, at far cheaper rates than now they do by them, with several other the like Projects, that carry with them fair pretences of Thrift and Good Husbandry; while on the other hand it might easily be made appear, that many of those designes would prove so disadvantageous to us, notwithstanding the specious shew of profit, that our Lands, which are already fallen a third part, would not then in most parts of the Kingdom yield the one half, especially the Pasture and Meadow-grounds. For it is not the having all things of our own growth on the one hand, and the saving of our Money on the other, can make us rich; neither can our increase and plenty in some sence be said to be our Wealth, if we have not a suitable Vend and Consumption thereof: Besides, Nature hath otherwaies provided, and so furnisht each particular Part of the World with something which the rest want, whereby to preserve a Friendship and Commerce together.

Sir, I have hinted at this, that the following Discourse might meet with the less prejudice, when the designe of it shall appear, That it is not for the prohibiting any Forraign Commodity, or for the ingrossing all within our own growth; but that which we call our own Growth and Manufacture may be spent, if not by others abroad, yet among our selves at home: And this I think is so reasonable, that no Nation in the World but will allow us that liberty.

Let us now proceed to that which is intended in this following Discourse, and in the first place to shew how much our Estates and Rents are fallen from their former Value within these few years, and what may probably

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bably be the Causes thereof ; with some ways and means that may be conceived necessary to restore them to that value and esteem again.

First then, that our Rents are abated, and that the Value of our Lands are so fallen, most mens particular experience will justifie me in the truth hereof: For from Twenty years purchase, the usual rate not many years since, they are now sunk to 18 at the highest, and in some places 16 or 17 Years purchase is the selling rate, and these very same Estates too at a low under-value. So that if we sum up what an Hundred Pound a Year, the Rent well paid, was worth 30 or 40 years since, in the beginning of our late Rebellious Wars, we shall finde that the real value of our Estates are a third part less than they were then, and but two parts of three of what Money they would have yielded then, can now be raised, where any man hath occasion to sell. For Example, Let an Hundred Pound a Year be the Standard; the just value then this Hundred Pound a Year would have yielded at 20 Years purchase, is Two Thousand Pound: Now there is twenty Pound a year with the least, and in many places thirty Pound a year abatement in Rent out of this 100: we will touch the fore as easie as possible, and allow but 20 *per Annum* abatement, so there remains but 80, which at eighteen Years purchase comes to 1440 *l.* So that at this rate here is near a third part lost of the real value what the Lands and Estates of the Kingdom were formerly worth. And this we may believe the present Parliament are very sensible of, witness their many Debates in their late several Sessions, about raising Money for his Majesties Supplies, and the great care the Houses then took in all those Debates, that none of those Supplies should

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should be provided for by a Land-Tax, whilst there could any other way possibly be found out or thought upon. And those small helps, as the Excise on the Law, &c. which are so long a raising, but a very inconsiderable Sum at last, cannot be lookt upon to stand the King or Kingdom in any stead, should there be any extraordinary occasion for Money. If we should expect any supply from the Merchant and from Trade, they will tell you, That there is as much Custome and Excise laid upon all sorts of Commodities, as the Trade is able to bear: this shall be the general Answer of the whole body of Merchants and the Whole-sale Dealers throughout the Kingdom, especially in *London*; so that little help is to be expected from them. What encouragement then have we to take all the care imaginable to preserve that which will stand us but in little stead, and to neglect that which must be our only support and stay in our greatest necessity? Have we not reason then to endeavour the restoring our Lands and Rents to their former value and esteem, when we have hardly any other way left for the preservation of our Lives, Estates, yea and our Trade too? For should there be any extraordinary occasion for a present Supply of Money, when all Heads and Wits are puzzel'd which way to raise it, there can be no speedier way possibly found out, than by a Land-Tax, (or Subsidy) which is much the same, provided our Lands and Rents may be raised to their former value and esteem.

This being then the true state of the Case, and the condition we are fallen into since the beginning of the late War, let us now proceed to examine the Causes of this great Mischief, to make way for remedying the same; and these (with submission to better Judgments) may

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may be summ'd up into these Two grand ones.

First, The low price our Wool now bears, which at this time is not worth above 7 *d.* a pound: the same a few years since was worth 12 *d.* and in the very height of our War was worth 16 *d.* and 18 *d.* a pound; and as the price of this one Staple-Commodity did abate, so we may easily satisfie our selves that our Rents did accordingly fall, and by consequence Land did by degrees loose its esteem as to the years purchase.

Secondly, The laying aside that Hospitality and good House-keeping (which was the Glory and Honour of this Nation) whereby our Cattle so much increas'd upon us, that many of them stood us in little other stead, than to spend our Grass and Hay, that it might not rot upon the Ground, or lye upon our hands: And was the occasion of that Irish Act, the consequences whereof we are something sensible of, though not so much as another Age perhaps may be; quite contrary to the practice of former Ages, when we were forc'd to keep Lent, chiefly to preserve our young Cattle for a breed.

These are the two chief and principal Commodities, (to wit) our Wool and Cattle, the low Rates of which we may conceive without dispute to be the great Causes of the abatement of Rents, and low value now upon Land: And these brought to the prices they were formerly at, we may hope to see our Kingdom as flourishing as in former Ages, as full of Plenty and Peace at home, and as much honour'd and fear'd abroad as ever: What *English*-man is there that would not rejoyce to see that day? And let but each particular person, upon examining this Discourse, set to his helping hand according to his Quality, and the Capacity he is in,
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we may see a fair progress towards it in few years.

Let us enquire in the first place into the Reasons of the low Rates and Prices of our Wool, and we shall finde that we may bring them under these few chief Heads: For I shall not concern my self with the factious humours of many, and I fear a great part of our Clothiers and Traders, and their designs too, in falling the price of our Wool; which in time together with their Factions we hope may wear out.

1. *First* then, The great quantity of *Spanish* Wool sold here at very low rates, and that made into Cloath, and a good part of it worn by our selves, is a very great Cause of the abatement and low price of ours.

2. *Secondly*, The not wearing and otherways using the Cloath made of our own Wool, both by our selves at home, and by our People in our several Plantations abroad, may be lookt upon as another Cause of the great abatement of the price of our Wool.

3. *Thirdly*, The decaying condition of the Merchant-Adventurers, and *Hamborough*-Company, who did formerly send away so many of our *English*-Cloaths into *Germany*, and all those Eastern parts of *Europe*, more than they now do, may be reckon'd another Cause of the low price of our Wool.

4. *Fourthly*, The not making our Cloath of that size and substance as it ought to be, as by several Statutes to that purpose it may appear, and for which the *Alnage*-Office was at first establisht.

5. And *lastly*, The great Abuses and Cheats of late years put upon our Clothiers, by the Brokers and Factors at *Blackwell*-Hall, to the breaking and undoing of many of our young Clothiers, especially if their Stocks be small. These may be accounted some of the chief

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Causes

Causes of the great abatement and low price of our Wool.

We will examine them in their order ; and first concerning the *Spanish* Wool. If we look no farther back than 1660, the Year of his Majesties happy Restauration, we shall finde that the Superfine *Spanish* Wool (as they term it) was sold for 4 s. and 4 s. 4 d. the Pound, and the other sorts at 3 s. and 3 s. 6 d. the Pound, according as it was in goodness: And our Wool at that time was sold for 16 d. and 18 d. the Pound. Now this present year 1676 the Superfine *Spanish* Wool is not worth above 2 s. or 2 s. and 2 d. the Pound, and the other sorts at 20 d. and 22 d. the Pound; and our Wool will not yield above 7 d. or 8 d. a Pound. So that in 16 Years time, our Wool is fallen the one half and more; and so long as the *Spanish* Wool is sold at this low rate, it is not likely that ours can advance in price: And if so, then our Rents, especially those Farms that depend most upon Corn and Sheep, must continue at this low ebb they are now at, if they fall no lower. The removal then of this great Mischiefe, is the next thing we are to consider; and herein I must content my self to receive the Censures of several Persons of the contrary party, I mean those persons whose fortunes and employments lye principally in the buying, not growing of this Commodity; but they are not so many.

First then, *Spanish* Wool must of necessity advance something towards the price it was formerly at, when our Wool yielded 16 d. and 18 d. the Pound: For that being so much finer than ours, and bearing but a low price, we cannot expect ours should rise: and if this advance of the *Spanish* Wool is not to be expected from

from abroad, then we must endeavour what can be done at home.

If some Duty or Custome were laid upon it (I shall not presume to propose the Sum) so as to bring it to bear a considerable Rate; His Majesty by this means would receive a good addition to his Customes, and our own Wool would be brought to a considerable price. As for the prohibiting this or most other forrain Commodities, we may finde upon examination, and by experience too, that that way will not so well answer our designe, as the laying a sufficient Duty upon them, more or less, according to the quality of the Commodity. I will instance only in the *Irish* Act: if 20 or 30 s. more or less upon a Bullock, and 5 s. upon a Sheep, or thereabout, had been laid as a Duty upon them, instead of prohibiting them; we had not only continued still our Trade and Commerce with them, but His Majesty had received ere this many a Thousand Pound for his Custome. For as the case now stands, the King receives no advantage by them; His Officers in all Ports where they are landed (being not obliged by their Office, take no notice of them) do rather help the concealing them, than any way endeavour a seizure: which if otherwise, they were then all bound by their Offices to receive his Majesties Duty; and then each Bullock and Sheep paying so much Custome, they could not under-sell us; which was the great designe of that Act, viz. The keeping up the price of our *English* Cattle. So that an Impost upon this, as well as all other Commodities, will better answer our Interest and Designes against them, than a Prohibition; for here can be no other shift, if the Officers be honest and careful, but the paying their Money.

But here will arise an Objection.
If this should be so, that a Duty should be imposed upon the Spanish Wool, then would the Dutch and other Nations get away our Trade, by underselling us in all places where Spanish Cloath is a Commodity: For if we must pay dearer for our Wool than they, we cannot expect to have any Trade (with them) where this Commodity is vended: For neither will our Clothiers make it, or our Merchants buy it, if they cannot see some probability of Profit and Advantage: Besides, the Spaniard will take it amiss if he should suffer by it; and we must not differ with him, with whom we have at this time so great a Trade.

To the first part of this Objection; We must believe that the *Dutch* are a people that will loose no opportunity of profit where they can get it; and if they could vend more *Spanish* Cloath than they do, we must also believe they would make more if they could, they having the same liberty to buy the Wool as well as we. But there is little danger of their getting this Trade from us this way. For they have their hands as full already, and do make as much Cloath as they have people to imploy about it, with respect to their other business and Manufactures.

As to the other part of the Objection that concerns the *Dutch*, *That if we give more for Spanish Wool than they, then we must of course be undersold by them, and so by consequence loose our Trade.*

We must first be inform'd what sort of *Spanish* Cloath it is they chiefly make, and where it is vended, to do us this mischief. As for the sorts of Cloath they make, they are most blacks, and many of them sold here, and worn by our selves; and this I hope may be remedied: but

but for the *Medlies*, I suppose they make but few, for the *French* and others, with whom we trade for them, cannot be furnisht by any other Nation in the world but by us; so that if we raise the price of them among our selves, we shall not be in danger to be underfold by the *Dutch*.

And as to that part of the Objection concerning the *Spaniards* receiving a prejudice by our laying a Duty upon their Wool, I cannot see where that can be: For if we buy it not, and that the *Dutch* and others are able to Manufacture it, we only loose our trade, but we do the *Spaniard* no injury at all: But if we are the people that can make this Cloath as well as our own, and that the *French* and others cannot have those sorts of *Medlies* but from our hands; then those that trade with us for them, must advance their price according to what they will stand our Clothiers in, when a Duty shall be laid upon that Wool,

But what is all this to that which we have to say for our selves? here is a third part of the real value of our Kingdom within these few years lost, and that principally by the fall in price of this one Commodity; and we have no way possibly left to raise Money upon any urgent occasion, but by our Estates. And have we not reason then (as I said before) to endeavour out uttermost to restore them to their former value and esteem again? Which way had it been possible for the Nation, in the late War, to have maintain'd so many vast Armies in all parts and corners thereof, had not that War begun upon us in the very height of our Wealth and Plenty, when our Wool at that time was worth three times the price it now yields, with a full Trade for our Cloath, both at home and abroad, especially into *Germany*, *Sweden*, and all those *Eastern* Countreys? And our

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our Cattle then paid sufficient profit both to the Breeder and Graſier, and Gold was as plenty with us then, as it was in *Jerusalem*, in the reign of King *Solomon*. There was no throwing of Farms into the Landlords hands, no complaining of hard Rents, every Commodity of ours then yielded a profit, for we had a consumption for them: and the poor could not want for Victuals, when the Kitchen was accounted the best Room in the House. But of this, when we come to the other part of this Discourse.

The *second* Cause of this great Abatement of the price of our Wool may be this, *viz.* The wearing and using of so much *spanish* Cloath our selves, both at home, and in our several Plantations abroad; whereas if we were but injoynd to wear, and otherways to use no Cloath but what is made of our own *English* Wool, we should finde some alteration in the price of it in few years: and I doubt not but our Clothiers could pick out enough, of the finest sort of it, to make Cloath very little inferiour to the *spanish*. And it is easie to be made appear, that we spend as much *spanish* Cloath in our own Kingdomes, and Plantations belonging to the Crown of *England*, (and a great part of that too not manufactur'd by our people, as *Dutch* Blacks, &c.) as is worn in any other Kingdome of the World besides, if not more. So that if any shall object against the laying a Duty upon the *spanish* Wool, I hope they will give us leave to enjoin our own people to wear no Cloath, but what is manufactured by our selves, and made of our own Wool. And if this consumption of our Cloath at home be added but to that Trade we have yet left abroad for it, we should soon finde an increase in the price of our Wool. And I know no reason that the

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Spaniard, or any else, should be offended with us for endeavouring our own interest and advantage, the general designe of all Nations: neither can this spending of our own Cloath among our selves, hinder any thing of our Trade abroad.

And that this may appear to be no new or upstart Project, the Statutes of 11 *Edward* 3. Cap. 1, 2, & 3. may sufficiently satisfy us. In which Kings Reign it was, that the Manufacture of our Wool began to be our National Employment: [*As N. B. in a Book call'd The Historical Discourse, observes.*] For among all our Staple Commodities, Wool had at that time the precdency, as being the most principal and ancient Commodity of the Kingdom, wherein the generality of the people were deeply concern'd: And the Manufacture of it, though of long use among our selves, yet it receiv'd but little encouragement for a Trade into Foreign parts till these times; the *Flemings* having the principal Manufacture then, by the continual supply of Wool that they receiv'd from hence.

But the Wisdome of this great Prince soon discern'd of what unspeakable Value the Manufacture of our own Wool would be to the Trade of this Kingdom; who, like a provident and careful Father, looks farther than his present time; and who, being well acquainted with the *Flemings* affairs, by a Joynt-engagement with them in the War with *France*, had therein gain'd so good an opinion amongst them, that he might adventure to change a Complement for a Courtesie. The Staples where our Wool was sold being now taken clean away, and by the Statute of 11 *Edm.* 3. Cap. 1. made Felony to carry any Wool out of the Realm; He now prosecutes his designe for the setting of the
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Manufacture at home, and represents to those *Flemings* the danger they were in by the bordering Wars with *France*, and the peaceable condition of *England*, and Freedome of the People that are Subjects here; propounds an Invitation for them to come over hither, wherein he promises them the same Priviledges and Immunities with his own Subjects: which they accepted, and came over and brought their Manufacture with them, which could never after be removed hence. So as now the Manufacture and our Wool were joynd together; and so long as they agree together, both will thrive: but if they once part (as the *spanish* Wool at this time puts fair at it) they will both be loosers in the conclusion.

The Manufacture of our Wool being brought to this settlement at home, this Heroick King *Edward* the Third makes this other Statute in the same 11th year of his Reign, *That no Merchant, Forrain nor Denizen, nor any other, after the Feast of St. Michael, shall cause to be brought privily or apertly, by himself, nor by any other, into the said Lands of England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland within the Kings Power, any Cloaths made in any other places than in the same, upon Forfeiture of the said Cloath, and further to be punish'd at the Kings Will as is aforesaid.*

But because this Nation formerly had been, and still is too much wedded to the wearing of Forreign Manufactures, the importing of which did hinder the using of our own home-made Manufactures; (for too much of them make our own a drug, our Nation poor, and our People to want work :) As a cure for this disease our own *English* Cloath is enjoyned by a Law to be worn by all persons under the degree of a Lord; and then

then the wisdom of the times thought fit to provide for the true and perfect making of Cloath; several Statutes were made in this Kings time, *Richard* the Second, and were also confirm'd by Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James*, but especially in the 5th year of *Edward* the 6th, *Cap.6.* for the Length, Breadth, Weight, and Goodness of all sorts of Cloath, with several Provisoos to prevent Frauds and Abuses both in the Making and Selling thereof. Such care our Ancestors have had in all former and later Ages, for the improvement of this our Woollen Manufacture; by which we may plainly see, of what absolute necessity it is to be encouraged and advanced: shall it now by us (after so much Care and Industry used by them, to settle and bring it to our doors, and into our very houses) be neglected, and scarce thought worth the entertainment, for fear of I know not what Jealousies of disobliging some forrain Nation? Shall their Wisdome and Prudence that judg'd this Manufacture, and Trade for it, the great Support and Glory of our Nation, be call'd in question by our Carelesnes? And shall we suffer our selves to be thus cheated of it? When we are as well able to maintain and defend it as they, and by experience finde, that it is our chiefest, if not only Manufacture, and Support of the Strength, Honour and Wealth of our *English* Nation. For which way can we continue a Trade long, that have no Money of our own growth, but only what is brought unto us for Commodities? And if we can finde nothing of our own to barter and exchange for, we must in short time sink our Trade abroad, if we intend to keep our Money at home. Our Staple Commodities must therefore of necessity be advanc'd and encourag'd, to enable us, by the return thereof, to hold a Commerce with those parts

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of the World that must supply us: For if Trade be maintain'd barely out of the main Stock, the Kingdom in time must needs be decay'd, and so brought to penury, it being our Magazine.

A third Cause of the great abatement and low price of our Wool may be this: (*viz.*) The decaying condition of the Merchant-Adventurers and *Hamborough-Company* within these few years; a Company that vended many thousands of our *English* Cloaths yearly: For after that our Staples for Wool were taken away, and the Manufacture of our Cloath settled among us, this Company also had their Motion from *Flanders* through *Holland*, until at last it came to be fix'd, for the conveniency of those *Eastern* Countries, at *Hamborough*. And it would not be needless, if the discreetest of them were advised with, to know the Reasons they can give of this loss or decay at least of their Trade into *Germany*, and all those adjoining Kingdoms: For a Trade of so large extent and vast concernment to us, ought not thus easily to be parted with. And there may possibly, upon such an enquiry, something appear, that a great cause of this decay of that Trade proceeds from our selves; which if so, there may then be some way found out to recover that antient Company of the Merchant-Adventurers, their Trade, Credit, and Esteem again; the only Company that transported most part of our *English* Cloath. And we may more than probably guess, that the two following and remaining Causes of the low price of our Wool which I propos'd, to wit, the not making of our Cloath of that size and substance as it ought to be, and as it was order'd in former times to be made, as by the several Statutes before recited may appear; and the Cheats and Abuses of the Brokers and Factors at *Blackwel-hall* (a

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fort of people never heard of there before the beginning of the late Rebellion; and in those times there settled, that their Masters, who first granted them their Charter and made them a Corporation, might have the more time and leisure to attend their other Employments of more weightier and publick concernment) might be a great means to help ruine this our Trade. But for the regulating a business of so great a concern, I shall not presume to propose the method; there will be application sufficient from all parts of the Kingdom, were there a Committee appointed purposely for this business, whereby we might have some hopes and encouragement that our *English* Cloath may be a Commodity again. And upon their Arraignment, there will be Bills plenty enough brought in for their Conviction: For from men not worth much when the device began, they are now many of them worth 5 and 10000 *l.* a man; while many of the lower Rank of our Clothiers daily break and run away; those men, by their wiles and tricks creeping into their Estates: for they have brought the Trade to that pass, there shall not now be a Cloath sold in a Market-day at *Blackwel-hall*, by many of our Clothiers, if these men have not the selling of it; and it would grieve a mans heart to see how harmlesly the poor Clothier waits at the heels of his Factor all the day-long whither he please to lead him; and when he puts into a Drapers shop, he hears of nothing but of bad Trading, uncomfortable news, and no Money stirring: for they are both agreed to send the poor man out of Town without selling a Cloath himself; neither shall he, perhaps, hear in a long time what is become of his Cloath, whether sold or not, until it be for the Factor's convenience to give him an account, or until a Draper or a Cloath-Merchant or two break; and then 'tis ten to one but he may

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have an account that some of his Cloath is gone that way: So that as the Manufacture of our Cloath is now managed wholly by private interests and designs, were our Trade abroad for it never so good, it is not probable (lying in such hands) it should ever be restored to its ancient credit and esteem. It therefore begs, and that earnestly, if we value the strength, honour, and wealth of our Nation, that we would use our utmost endeavour to advance it to its just worth and reputation again, by freeing it from this great Monopoly; and to set it at that liberty, that the laborious and careful Clothier, who not only spends his time, but hazards his Stock and that small Fortune he began with, for his own Maintinance, and those many he doth employ in his Trade, may have so much favour as to sell his own Cloath himself; that what honest profit can be made thereof, he who only deserves it may receive it, to the encouragement of that Manufacture which must help the price of our Wool, which must help the advancement of our Rents, &c. and not the lazie Factor, who sucks the gains from the honest Clothier, through the very heart of himself, his Family, and all the Poor therein employ'd; and thereby ruins our Trade, the great cause of the abatement of Rents, and the impoverishment of our Kingdom. There would such another generation of men be brought to the Bar from *Smithfield* too, who put as great injuries and abuses upon our young Graffiers especially, by buying and selling of Cattel there, and yet Butchers by their Trade, who can either dull or raise the Markets at their pleasure: So that we may see into what hands the two great Commodities of our Kingdom, of late years, are got. But this later only by the by. We will go on with our Woollen Manufacture, which

which being once more retriv'd, let the *Alnange-Office* have a whet, and be strictly lookt into, that they should not only receive their Fees, but perform their Duty, that we may rightly know how far short our *English* Cloath will come to the *Spanish*, when well and truly made; that by this means we may recover it that Credit and Esteem it once had both at home and abroad. For methinks we are all asleep; we see a Trade snatch'd from us to our ruine, and yet seem to be unconcern'd; Nay, which is worse, we help forward with it our selves. And though we are taken notice of sufficiently, and jeer'd for the *French* Apes, an *English* man pictur'd with a piece of Cloath under his Arm, to chuse his Fashion, yet I thought it had been always understood to be Cloath made of his own Wool.

Having now given some particulars that may be great Causes of the low price of our Wool, with some ways and means for the restoring it to its former value and use again, which each particular carries along with it; I shall winde up this first Part with that Act of Parliament made some years since, for the burying in Woollen: and he that will but read that Act, may very well satisfie himself, that the Parliament were sufficiently sensible of the great Loss we were like to be at, if some way or other were not found out to consume our Wool. And certainly they were worthy Patriots for their Countrey that first moved for, and afterwards pursued it to an Act; however it hath not been received or obeyed, as it worthily deserv'd. We will therefore examine, and give some guess, how much Wool might have been buried, since that Act of Parliament was first made, without any disparagement to the Dead, or to the surviving Friends of the Deceased; and we shall finde, that

that a very great part of the Wool now in the Kingdom, I speak as to the quantity, out of Cloath, had been at this day under ground.

In *London* is buried one year with another (when no Plague or other *Epidemical* Distemper reigns) about twenty Thousand; which by observation of some, bears a Seventh part with the Kingdom; so there dyes in *England* an Hundred and Fourty Thousand yearly: and we will allow four Pounds of Wool for a Shrowd, one with another; which amounts to Five Hundred and Sixty Thousand Pound of Wool yearly buried; so that in ten Years we shall spend, this way, Fifty Six Hundred Thousand Pounds, a good proportion of one years growth; but with this advantage to our poor, that it is first made into Cloath. So that had that Act of Parliament been duely observed, as it was our Interest so to do, we may plainly perceive what quantity of Wool we had by this buried in our own Kingdom of *England* (for I have not reckon'd either *Scotland*, *Ireland*, or any of our Plantations into this account.) But if all could be brought within the compass of this Act, and the charge of seeing it punctually performed in Towns by sworn Searchers, and in the Countrey by the Churchwardens, or the like, under a good penalty, who may make their Returns when and to whom it shall be judg'd convenient; we shall not only spend in all these Kingdomes and Islands belonging to the Crown of *England*, a most incredible quantity of our own Wool manufactur'd by our selves, but save above Threescore Thousand Pounds Sterling a year of our Money, which we lay out for Linnen-cloath purposely for that use; as may appear by examining this charge by the former Rule. Equivalent to a Story we have of one of our Kings,

Kings, who finding a great glut of Cloath in the Kingdom, beyond their Vent and Trade for it, bought it, and caus'd it all to be burnt. And the *Dutch*, those subtile Traders, as it is generally reported of them, when their Ships are freighted with their Spices in the *East-Indies* for that years provision into *Europe*, they return the rest in Smoak, by causing the overplus of that years growth to be burnt at their own Factories. So that the consumption of every years growth of our Wool is of absolute necessity towards the improvement of our Rents, and for recovering that Third part of the real Value of our Kingdom, now lost since the fall and low price thereof.

But before I conclude with this Cloath-Trade, the chief and only Manufacture of this Kingdom, I shall premise something, by way of *Quere*, as a Remedy to this great mischief; and whether it may prove of advantage to the Growth, Manufacture and Trade of this Commodity, I shall leave it to far better Judgments to determine.

Suppose there were a Company of Merchants of this Staple settled by Patent or Charter, as such Companies there are, the *East-India*, *Turkey*, &c. that should buy up in *Spain* every years growth of the *Spanish* Wool themselves, and thence transport it, or as much as they should judge convenient for our Trade, hither, to be manufactur'd by us, where a Duty should be impos'd upon it according as it should be judg'd the Trade would bear, in order to the advancement of our own, for there lyes the bottome still of the designe; I ask the question, Where would the Inconveniencies arise? For the truth is, a business of this nature is more fitter to be discours'd of by a Committee, than meddled with by any

any private person; I say, if such a Company were set up, what would be the Objections against it? For

First, the *Spaniard* can receive no prejudice by it; we shall by this means rather advance something the price, than any way abate it.

And *secondly* for the *Hollanders*, I suppose we should make no scruple of getting the Trade from them; For this Cloath-Trade is our antient Right, and did always belong to our Nation, and no other People in the World could in reason pretend to the Manufacture of it, the Staple growing upon our own Soil. And since there is now another sort of Wool started up within these few years, which proves to the prejudice of ours; I see no reason against me, if we can compass to make both our own and that too, but that we may justly ingross it if we can, without offering any Injustice to our neighbouring Nation. And then what is their Growth and Manufacture, as Linnen-Cloath and the like, if they will quietly desist, and yield up this to us as it is our Right, we may, I presume, be persuaded (I speak only for my self) to do the like by theirs.

But if we examine this business a little further, we shall finde that there may be a necessity for the ingrossing this *Spanish* Wool; and that it will be impossible, while the Trade is free, and that every man may buy and make what he please of this sort of Cloath, that ever our Wool should advance in price: For as the Rates now go, unless the *Spaniard* raise the price, our Merchants will not; and our Clothiers drive the old designe in buying as cheap as they can; so that between them they will keep down the price of ours: For one man, in a Fair or Market, may beat down the price of what

what he deals in, by under-selling his own Commodity. But where is all this *Spanish* Cloath made that doth us this mischief? were it the Manufacture of the whole Nation that kept all our Poor at work, there might be something said for it; but it is all made (I mean the Medlies) in the corners of two Shires (to wit) *Somerset* and *Wiltshire*, and that within the compass of 20 miles & less; and not a hundred (I speak with the most) principal Clothiers concern'd in the making of this *Spanish* cloath. What damage can the ingrossing then of this *Spanish* Wool do the Nation? It is very true, there are many that call for the Liberty of the people, that every man may buy and sell as he please. And it were well if these men would consider themselves as well in their Relation, as in their own personal Concerns: For if every man were Independant, his liberty were so too; but so long as any man is a Member of a Kingdom, his liberty must likewise depend upon the good of the same Kingdom. And if it be not good for a Nation that every man should buy and sell as he please, he must not think himself injur'd, if his Liberty as an *English*-man be confin'd, so long as his Countrey hath an Interest in his Commodity and Trade for its safety and welfare, as well as himself. So if the Trade for *Spanish* Wool, which is now at liberty, were ingrossed into the hands of one particular Company, it would not then lye in the power of any private persons to sink the Trade and Manufacture of our Wool, as now they can. For certainly a Liberty for a private Trade, in some Cases, may bring that mischief upon the publicque concern of a Nation, not easily to be removed again: I will only instance one passage, which may be fresh in every mans Memory, that had then any concern in Wool, to shew what command the great

D Clothiers

Clothiers and Merchants have of that Commodity and the Trade for it.

When the Peace was last made with the *Dutch*, about three years since, by the Mediation of the *Spanish* Embassador, and the *French* left wholly out in that Agreement, the price of our Wool in less than a Moneths time did rise from 18 s. and 19 s. to 25 s. and 26 s. the Weight, that is, a quarter part more than it would yield a week before the news of that Agreement with *Holland*. But the Scene quickly shifted: for the Parliament being soon after Prorogued, our Wool did not so fast advance before, but now it came tumbling down, so that it return'd not only in a week or fortnights time to its former price it past by without any stay or stop, until it was almost impossible to run lower.

What should be the reason of this? Was there more Wool now discovered, or was there like to be less Trade? Certainly there was as much Wool in the Kingdom of our own growth an hundred years ago as now: we have no increase of Sheep; for all those Lands that now feed (to wit) our Downs and Sheep-pastures, could never be employ'd to other use. Then it must be in the Trade: and if so, then we may see where the command of that lyes; as those Dealers like the motions of the times, they shall either advance or sink it at their pleasure. For the Trade lies fullen, and must be rows'd; it hath been so long manag'd by some particular persons, that they now look upon it not so much the Staple Manufacture and chief Commodity we have to support the Wealth and Honour of our Nation, as a business only for some few men to gain Wealth and Estates by. But to proceed.

Now what quantity of Wool grows yearly in *Spain*,
how

how much of it comes for *England*, and what for *Holland* and other Countries, will be worth our enquiry: For if we do now spend between us all the Wool of the growth of *Spain* yearly, or the greatest part thereof, then there can be no prospect of any loss to such a Company that should ingross it; and we may then bring it to bear that price that may advance our own. I am sure it is not many years since, that *Spanish* Cloath of the same fineness they make now, was sold for 23 s. and 24 s. the yard by the Clothier; which he now sells for 13 and 14 s. the yard: so that if by this means it be raised again to 18 or 20 s. the yard, those that bought it and wore it then at that high price, would in short time be prevail'd with to give something more than they do now.

There may be many instances of this nature, to prove that it is not the dearness or rising of a Commodity that makes it a Drug, and not to sell; as in our Wines of all sorts, which within these 30 years are double the price they were then at, and yet as much sold now, if not more than was then. And so in Salt, and several other Commodities, how oft have we them rais'd upon us, and yet we refuse not to trade for them? But if the worst should happen, that we should have but little vend and small profit for the present (which cannot last long) the Kingdom had better be at the Charge to supply the Loss to the Merchants and Clothiers, after the example of the *Dutch*, than suffer the chief Staple-commodity and Manufacture of our Nation thus to decay: For it is of absolute necessity to put some new face upon our old Friend. And by this Experiment (as by the Philosophers Stone and many others) though the main thing design'd and aim'd at be not presently effected and obtained, yet there may something or other happen that

may prove of great benefit and advantage to us, and let in such a Trade that we cannot easily divine. However, it will still lie in his Majesties hands to let loose the Reins, and set it at liberty again when he shall please.

The second thing propos'd, which may occasion this Abatement of Rent and Low value of Lands, may be this: viz. The laying aside that Hospitality and good House-keeping, which was look'd upon in former times to be the glory and honour of our *English* Nation, wherein we exceeded our Neighbouring Kingdoms, and other remote parts of the known World, so that we were admired, if not envi'd, by them for it; and which in truth was our Strength, as well as our Honour: For hereby the mouths of the people were stopt, that they had no leisure between their Meals to plot Faction; no laying of Heads together then, unless for a Nap after a full Dinner. We may observe that after a good *Christmas* well kept among our Neighbours, while the Relish of it remains in their mindes: its observance thus continu'd by the plentiful House-keeping of the Nobility and Gentry, as in former days, would be a perpetual *Christmas* throughout the year; and we might see that the good House-keeper would gain the love of his Neighbours. And should there be occasion for the Nobility to shew their strength by the number of men they could raise for his Majesty's service, we should finde them frankly and fully attended.

Let us but examine some of the Inconveniencies arising from hence, which if rightly considered, should make our Nobility and Gentry take delight in their Country-seats as well as City.

As first, the loss of their Strength, Honour, and Esteem in the Country, which is considerable, and which their

their Ancestors had a high value for, and made it their whole care to preserve, and in this way of living to outvie one another; which Custome now is by many turn'd into Rich Coaches, fine Liveries, and a House *A-la-mode*, with a Kitchin turn'd out of Doors.

Secondly, The diminishing of their Estates by their extraordinary Expences of Lodgings, House-rent, and Provisions; which indeed may enrich the City: but their Tenants in the Country must go farther to Market, and not sell so much Provisions, or else keep better Tables with paying little Rent; which in conclusion must prove as injurious to the Tenant as Landlord. We may inform our selves of the truth of this, out of our old *Roman* Authors, who have honour'd *Agriculture* by their Writings, that their Lands as well as Houses were not more improved, nor yielded more profit to their Lords, than when they were their own Tenants, and had more Stock as well as Ingenuity to manage their Estates.

Thirdly, Another Inconvenience may be considered, that the Rents being so much return'd up to *London*, Money must needs be not so plentiful in the Country, and what the Farmer hath to sell, much the cheaper; the Issue of which must tend to the Abatement of Rents, and the Loss of so considerable a part of the real Value of our Kingdom.

And it farther may be considered, That the Gentry spending the greatest part of their time in the Country, it will promote Religion and good Manners; the *Non-conformists* may be reduced by their good Examples, and the increase of Separatists hindred. It may encourage also and improve our Clergy, by having a better Auditory, as well as reform the Laity by their Imitation, both as to Pious Devotion and Civil Manners.

Now

Now as a Corollary to illustrate part of our former Discourse by Examples, it will not be amiss to take a view, before we leave this Subject, how our Nobility formerly Lived and were Attended; that we may see how we are degenerated, and how far short we now come to the Honour and Glory of those Ages.

Stow in his Survey of London saith, That he saw in the Record of Pontfract an Account by Henry Leicester, Cofferer to Thomas Earl of Lancaster, for one years Expence in the Earl's House, from the day next after Michaelmas, in the Seventh year of Edward the Second, until Michaelmas in the Eighth year of the same King, viz. in the Pantry, Buttery and Kitchen, 3405 l.

- For 184 Tuns of Wine, &c.
- For Grocers Ware 180 Pounds.
- For 6 barrels of Sturgeon.
- For 6800 Stockfish so called, and for dried fish of all sorts, as Ling, Habberdine, &c.
- For 2319 l. of Tallow Candles for the Household.
- For 1870 of Lights for pacis Candles call'd Peachers.
- For expences on the Earls great Horses 486 l. 4 s. 3 d.
- For 159 Cloaths for Liveries against Christmas: viz.
- For one Scarlet Cloath for the Earl himself.
- For one Cloath of Ruffet for the Bishop of Anjou.
- For 70 Cloaths of Blew for the Knights, as they were then term'd.
- For 15 Cloaths of Medlies for the Lords Clerks.
- For 28 Cloaths for Esquires.
- For 15 Cloaths for Officers.
- For 19 Cloaths for Grooms.
- For 5 Cloaths for Archers.
- For 4 Cloaths for Minstrels.

Now

Now follows the Provision for the Summer-Liveries.

For 65 Cloaths of Saffron-colour for the Barons and Knights in Summer.

For 12 Red Cloaths for Clerks.

For 26 Cloaths Ray for Esquires.

For 1 Cloath Ray for Officers Coats.

For 4 Cloaths Ray for Carpets and in the Hall.

For Saddles for the Lords Liveries in Summer, 51 l. 6 s. 8 d.

For 168 yards of Ruffet Cloath, and 24 Coats for poor men, with Money given to the Poor on Maundy-Thursdai. Here is almost 300 Cloaths a year for one Family; a sufficient Customer for one Clothier.

In the 14th Year of the same King, Hugh Spencer the Elder was condemn'd by the Commonalty and banish'd the Realm, at which time it was found by inquisition, that the said Spencer had in sundry Shires 57 Mannours; he had 28000 Sheep, 1000 Oxen and Steers, 1200 Kine with their Calves, 40 Mares with their Colts, 160 drawing Horses, 2000 Hogs, 300 Bullocks, 40 Tun of Wine, 600 Bacons, 80 Carcases (not Briskets or Ribs only) of Martlemas Beef, 600 Muttons in Larder, 10 Tun of Cyder. Which Provision for the Household shews a great family there to be kept.

To come neerer to our time; in the 36th of Henry the 6th, the great Estates of the Realm being called up to London, (for it seems they lived in the Country in those days) the Earl of Salisbury came up to London with 500 men on Horse-back, not in Hackny-Coaches.

Richard Duke of York with 400 men.

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The two Dukes of *Exeter* and *Somerset* with 800 men.

The Earl of *Northumberland*, the Lord *Egremont*, and the Lord *Clifford*, with 1500 men. These were such Armies that were welcom'd where they quarter'd, and by whom the Inns and Country adjoining grew rich.

Richard Nevil Earl of *Warwick* with 600 men, all in Red Jackets embroyder'd with Ragged Staves before and behind, and was lodg'd in *Warwick-lane*, in whose House there was oft-times 6 Oxen eaten at a Breakfast, and every Tavern full of his Meat: For he that had any acquaintance in that House, might have there so much of Roast and Boyl'd as he could prick up and carry upon a long Dagger.

I shall omit the wonderful Attendance and House-keeping of Cardinal *Wolsey*, it being too large here to recite, and only give you a particular of some few more.

Nicholas West, Bishop of *Ely*, 1532. kept continually in his house 100 Servants, to every one of which he gave 4 Yards of Broad-Cloath for his Winter-Gown, and 3 Yards and an half for his Summer-Gown; he daily gave at his Gates, besides Bread and Drink, warm Meat to 200 poor People.

The House-keeping of *Edward* Earl of *Darby* is not to be forgotten, who had 220 men in Cheek-roll, his feeding above 80 aged persons thrice a week, besides all Comers, and thrice a week for his Dealing-days; and every *Good Friday* 2700 with Meat, Drink and Money.

William Pawlet Marquis of *Winchester*, kept a very great number of Gentlemen and Servants in Livery of *Reading-tawny*, allowing 3 yards of Broad-Cloath to each Coat.

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Edward Duke of *Somerset* was no way inferiour to the former, and so was *Thomas Audly* Lord Chancellor; and *Thomas* Lord *Cromwell* Earl of *Essex*, kept as great a number in Grey Liveries.

Also the Earl of *Oxford*, but in Queen *Elizabeths* Reign, hath been noted, when he came to *London*, to ride to his house by *London-stone* with 80 Gentlemen in a Livery of *Reading-tawny*, and Chains of Gold about their necks, before him; and 100 tall Yeomen in the like Livery to follow after him, without Chains, but all with the Cognizance of the Blue Boar embroidered on their left shoulder.

Many more instances might be added of the worthy House-keeping, Charity and Attendance of our antient Nobility and Clergy: And had we but an Account how many of our Nobility have continued their Hospitality and Attendance from those times downwards, to the beginning of our late unhappy Wars, we should finde, that even in that declining Age of Charity, the good Examples of those and others their Ancestors and Predecessors were not wholly forgotten by them. But I fear I have transgress'd already: I only wish that all those persons of Honour that are remaining of those worthy Families, would in some measure revive the Memories and noble Acts of their Ancestors; that those who for their Merits have since been rais'd to the same Honour and Place in the Kingdom, may be encourag'd to practice the same way of House-keeping and Hospitality, after the *English* fashion, by their Example.

And now by what may be observed from these few Instances, we may easily guess what was spent of our own Growth and Manufacture in those times, and how easily the Farmer then paid his Rent (for happy was that

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person

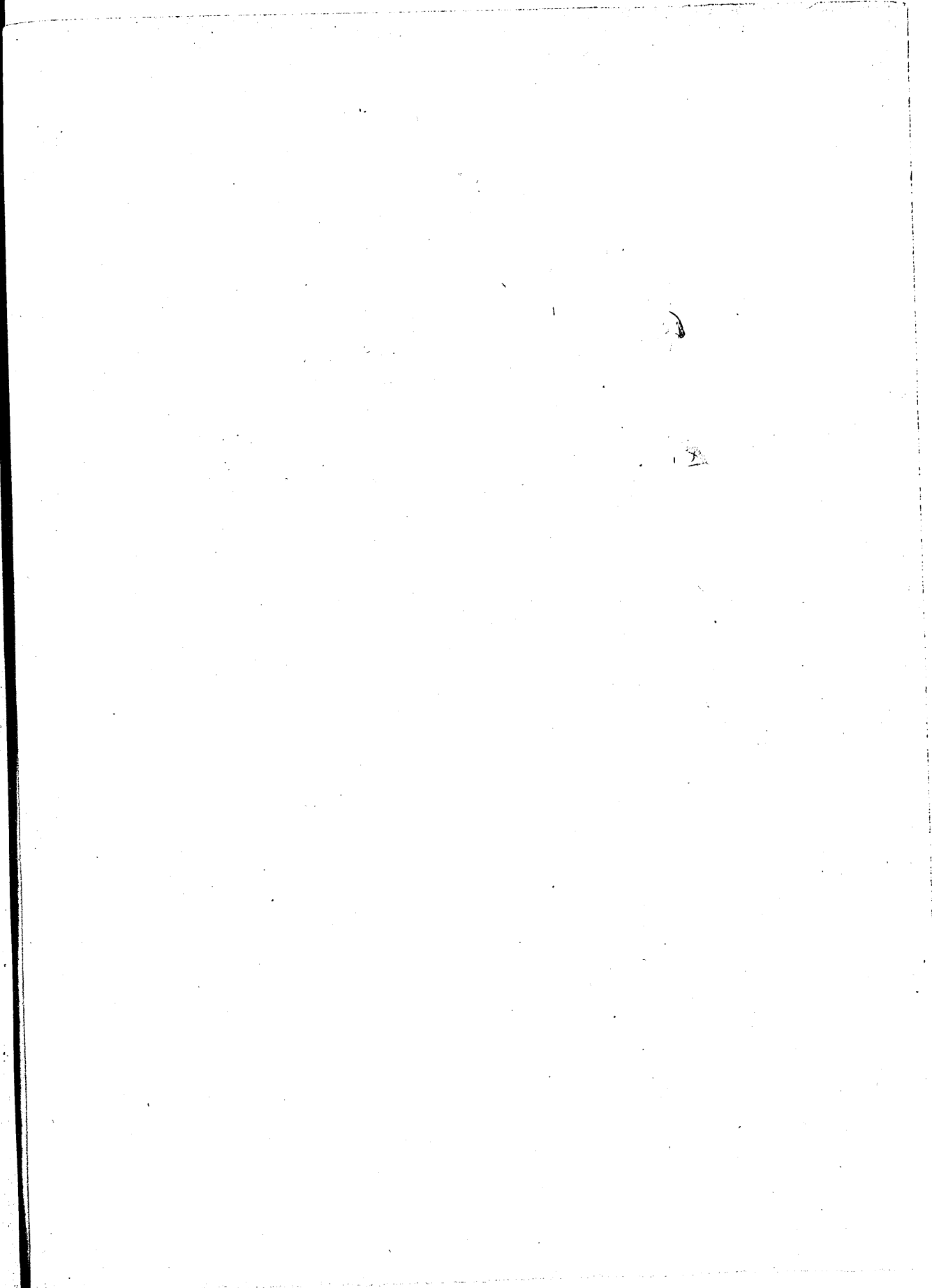
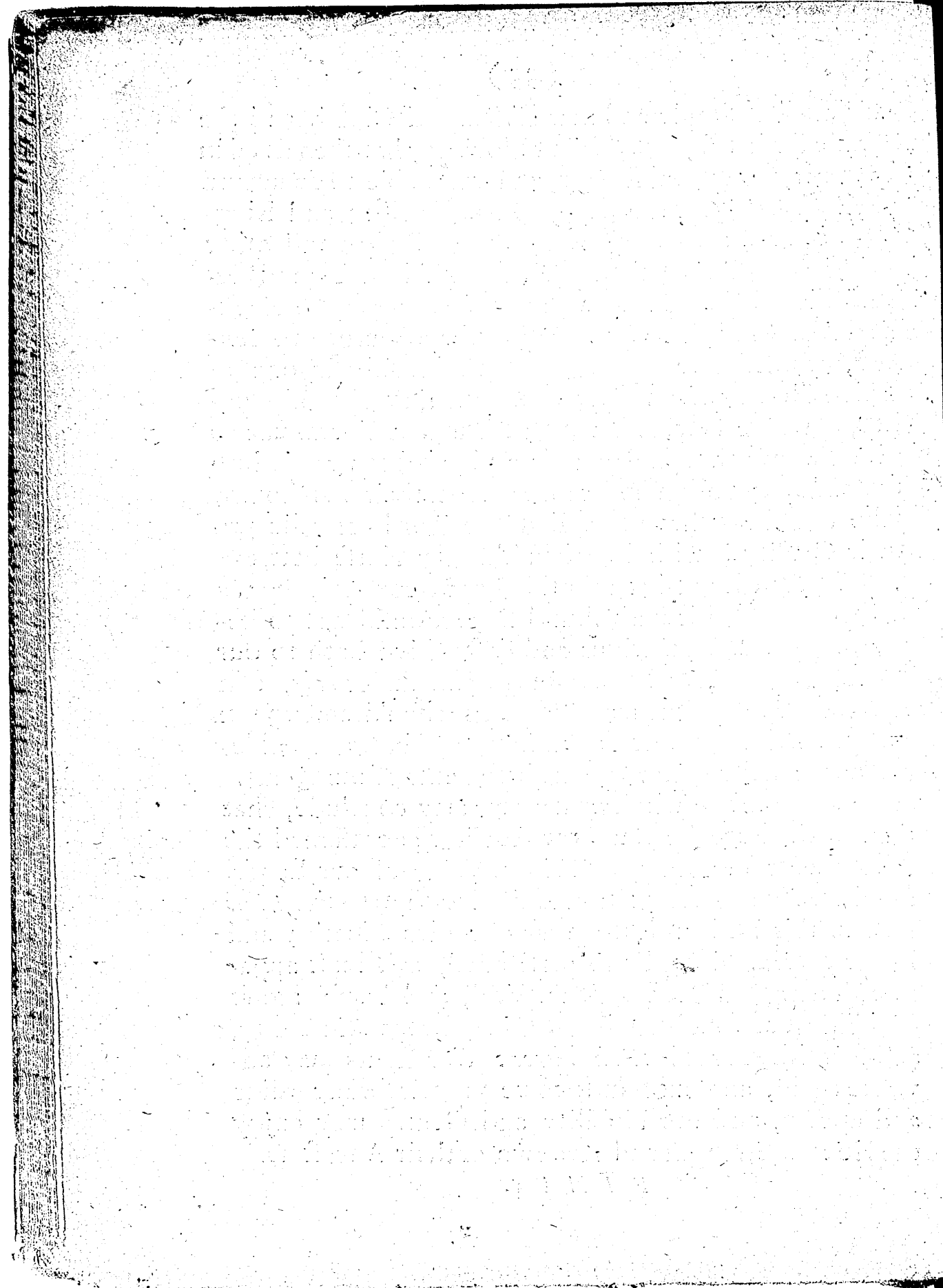
person that could then be a Tenant to a Nobleman. What Love and Charity among all, what Honour and Esteem the Nobility then had, and how capable by this way of living (their chiefest strength) to serve their King and Country upon all occasions! And from them no doubt every man took his Measures of living according to his Quality and Condition, with as little danger of spending their Estates, as now, wherein so much frugality in House-keeping is pretended. And should this new way of Retirement continue, what will become of that part of our Rents yet left, in some short time? Had we a Country so barren as would scarce feed our selves and our Cattel, and our people so numerous that we were ready to eat one another, then all these frugal ways of living were commendable and exemplary; but whilst we are seated in so fruitful and plentiful a Soil, where we rather abound with what was promis'd the *Israelites* in *Canaan*, than come short of their plenty; and are forc'd upon our guard to keep Cattel out of our Kingdom, our own bringing Thousands and Ten thousands into our Streets: And unless we spend the increase our selves, they must lie waste upon our hands; the only danger of a Famine, that we will not eat; What pretence can there be for this reserv'd and restrain'd way of living?

If we take but a view from whence all these Inconveniencies took their rise, and of what standing they are of, we shall finde what blessed effects the late Rebellion wrought, and what just cause the succeeding Ages will have to curse the very names and memories of those that were the first Causes and Promoters of it. A blessed Reformation! our Lands fallen a third part from the true real Value they were then worth; our

our ancient Staple and Manufacture of Cloath, and the Trade for it too, decay'd; our Nobility, that then lived in Honour, Glory, and Esteem, and were able to command their Country for the service of their King and Kingdom upon all occasions: Every Nobleman and other Gentlemans Stable then well furnish'd with good serviceable Horses. Now we are beholding to the Hackney-coaches if there be occasion for a Journey to *London*, or elsewhere, for this piece of thrift; in one of which I have known three Gentlemen, Persons of Quality, (whose Estates between them would amount to neer Twenty thousand pounds a year) been carried up to *London* a hundred miles distant from their own homes, who could not have travelled the Road according to their Quality, with less than Twenty Horse between them. Had it not been for this happy conveniency; a Project, though it hath found some Confidence to defend it, yet is so injurious and destructive both to our breed of Horses, and to all Inns upon the Roads, and at *London* too, that it may be well reckon'd among the publick Grievances of the Nation, and bears a considerable part in the fall and great abatements of our Rents.

So as upon the whole matter we may conclude, That such as these are the Causes which have occasioned the Abatements of Rents, and low Value of our Lands. Could we but therefore be prevailed with, as to the *First* Part of this Discourse, to wear our own Cloath; and in the *second* place, be so perswaded, as is most apparent, That good Beef, Mutton, Veal, and Lamb, are as good Meat as Combs, Gills, Pallets, Frogs Mushrooms, and such-like *French Kickshaws*: Our Rents may advance again, and our Lands come to their former value and esteem, and our Nobility and Gentry may enjoy the Honour, Strength and Renown of their Ancestors.

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