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MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSALS

FOR INCREASING OUR

NATIONAL WEALTH

TWELVE MILLIONS A YEAR;

AND ALSO FOR

AUGMENTING THE REVENUE

WITHOUT A NEW TAX,

OR THE

FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE EXCISE LAWS.

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By JOHN DONALDSON, Esquire.

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L O N D O N :

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M.DCC.XC.

0444

TO THE  
MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN,

THE FOLLOWING

PROPOSALS FOR A NEW BRANCH  
OF REVENUE, &c.

ARE MOST HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

London, June 28, 1790.

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## INTRODUCTION.

**I**T must be disadvantageous, especially to a new scheme, not to have it fully and fairly stated to the public. If they are but little acquainted with one part of a complicated system, how is it possible for them to judge aright either of the nature of the whole or the fitness of that part? It is not my design, in the present situation of this business, to communicate the method how this plan is to be carried into effect, or how the monies are to arise to defray the expence; but to endeavour to show what may and can be done for the general good of the nation, as well as the particular advantage of every individual in the kingdom. It is not founded on theory alone, but from ex-

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perience

## [ ii ]

perience in some of the different branches of this proposed plan, every part of which is demonstrative, and which I am absolutely certain can be done.

No person has a right to say that any new plan is impossible, unless he know the principles on which it is formed, and the manner of conducting it, and can prove the principles to be erroneous, or the conducting of it impossible; neither of which can be said of this, as the whole secrets remain with myself, I never having communicated any part of them to any one, neither is it my intention to do it, until I have the honour and happiness of my request being complied with, which is only to have the conducting of the business, and to bar others from reaping the benefit of my labours without my consent, as mentioned in the proposals.

Finding

## [ iii ]

Finding some of the proposals I had given amongst my friends had been misunderstood, I have been advised to print them, and also to mention several things that may help to make the utility of it more evident, and likewise in hopes that some public-spirited person or persons may now offer me their assistance in bringing forward a plan of such magnitude and national advantage.

Unless the inventor of a new plan is permitted to conduct it, it will be in vain to expect success; no person, however clever, can carry another person's schemes into execution so well as the inventor.

My father, to whom I am indebted for the knowledge I have acquired of different improvements, schemed the improvement of the linen manufactures in Scotland, about seventy years ago, and was the first who

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built

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built a house for that purpose at Edinburgh, and to whose abilities, unwearied attention, and perseverance, the nation are indebted for so useful, permanent, and profitable a branch of manufacture and commerce, which has brought in so many millions to the country.

Perhaps some of my readers may object to part of my proposals in their present state; but when the whole is laid open, I am persuaded they will be approved of, as popularity and public utility are the chief principles on which they are founded.

The inventor of any improvement has an undoubted right to profit by it, and the law has provided a security for that purpose, by giving the sole and exclusive right for a term of years, which I lately availed myself of, by obtaining a patent for an improvement in

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candles,

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candles, by which invention the public now have candles that give a better light with less smoke than other candles, which look neat, and burn pleasantly, not being apt to spark, gutter, or flare. Though they are a small matter higher in price, yet, when their real merit is considered in every point of view, which is in the power of all to do by making a comparative trial of the luminators or patent candles with those now in use, they will find one elliptical candle gives a better light and less smoke than two round ones of the same size, and that round ones of the same invention with one wick will last about a third longer than other candles, besides burning steady, and having the appearance of wax; there are also small ones for the night, which are preferable to rush-lights, as they bear to be snuffed, or carried about.

Luminators

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Luminators, or patent candles, are likewise made of wax and spermaceti on the same improved principle. Simple and self-evident as this improvement is, yet it met with great opposition from many tallow-chandlers, whose objections to it were selfish and absurd.

Some of my agents who first made them spoiled them in the making, from their inattention, or fault of their servants, which justly occasioned complaints. However, as I was fully convinced of the invention being founded on good principles, though I never pretended to any knowledge of the making of candles, I continued to persevere in the pursuit of better agents, and have been so fortunate as to find several, who have entered into it with spirit, and make them to give universal satisfaction. I doubt not of its being in time very general over the coun-

[ vii ]

try: they only need to be known to recommend themselves.

As I design to appoint more agents over the kingdom in such a way as not to interfere with each other, and at the same time have the public conveniently supplied with patent candles, those who incline to become agents may apply personally, or by letter, post-paid, to Mr. Richardson, No. 12, Panton-square, London. However, I must request that none will give themselves that trouble but such as have spirit enough to go into a new thing, and whose character, &c. will bear enquiry.

The luminators, or patent candles, are sold by the following agents:

Mr. *Heath*, Market-street, Newport-market, London.  
Messrs. *Marsh* and *Witchurch*, Salisbury.  
Mr. *Bridges*, Holwell-road, Bristol.  
Mr. *Clark*, Radcliff-street, Bristol.  
Mr. *Boley*, Peter-street, Bristol.  
Mr. *Coles*, Northgate-street, Bath.  
Mr. *Lomer*, Southampton.  
Mr. *St. Barbe*, Lyminster.

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Mr. *Broadfoot*, Honiton.  
 Mr. *Shortridge*, Broad-street, Worcester.  
 Mr. *Walker*, Kidderminster.  
 Mr. *Greatrex*, Bull-street, Birmingham.  
 Mr. *Cauldwell*, Bull-street, Birmingham.  
 Mr. *Whittem*, West-orchard, Coventry.  
 Mr. *Barnsley*, Rotheram.  
 Mr. *Cocks*, Butchery, Hull.  
 Mr. *Peter Berry and Co.* Manchester.

The wax and spermaceti luminators, by Mr. Barrett, in the Hay-market, wax-chandler to his Majesty; Mr. Bick, wax-chandler, in Mansion-house-street, London; also by Mr. Bell, wax-chandler, Hull, and all my other agents.

Mr.

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*Mr. DONALDSON's Proposal for a new Branch of Revenue, that will be popular and productive, extend the Trade and Commerce of the Nation, and be advantageous to Government without Expence, or laying any new Tax on the People.*

I. **H**E proposes to find employment for convicts, vagrants, and other idle and disorderly people, whether old or young, and of either sex.

II. To put the fisheries on a solid and lasting foundation.

III. To put an end to smuggling.

IV. To prevent house-breaking, and all other acts of violence and depredation.

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V. To



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V. To supply the navy on any emergency with many thousands of able seamen without pressing.

VI. To prevent the emigration of manufacturers and others, by making it their interest to remain in this country.

VII. By these and other popular means to increase the revenue, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, without laying any additional tax on the people, without making the penal laws more severe, or putting government to any expence.

All persons, of whatever description, will be enabled to follow their lawful business or amusement in safety, and sleep in security, their persons and property being protected.

The wealth and strength of a nation being generally allowed to consist in the number  
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and industry of its inhabitants, the finding employment for them must produce this effect.

Mr. Donaldson is so confident of his plan being successful, that he does not desire any other reward than to be empowered to conduct it, and secured in a small share of the profits for forty years. In case the whole of his plan is adopted, he is to retain one tenth part of the profits as a consideration for the utility of his plan for the first twenty years, and he will be satisfied with one half of the above profits, that is, five per cent. for the other twenty years. If only a part of his plan is adopted, he is to receive at the rate of double the above profits, that is, one fifth for the first twenty years, and one tenth for the other twenty years. An annual account to be made out and laid before parliament, and the public share of profits

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will

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will be at their disposal. In case of Mr. Donaldson's death, the plan still to go on under the direction of those gentlemen he had assisting him at the time (who are never to be superseded but for a fault in office), like a partnership trade carried on for the benefit of the deceased's heirs, &c: at the end of forty years the whole to be at the disposal of government. It will then form a productive branch of revenue, as distinct from all the rest as the Customs, Excise, Stamp, and Post-office are from each other; besides, it will be popular.

Mr. Donaldson humbly hopes that the security he requires will be given him, as the nation have much to receive, and nothing to lose, if the plan is adopted. However mysterious it may appear at first sight, it is as clear to himself as any proposition in Euclid, and he cannot doubt of its being

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so to others when explained; which he means to do by printing and publishing the principles on which it is formed, the manner of conducting it, with the reasons which make him so confident of success in this business, which he has been studying these forty years, and was first led to think of by seeing the books of the great fishing company in 1720, when two millions were subscribed for carrying it on; which books, with the original articles of partnership, and the signatures of the nobility, gentry, &c. were all left with his father, who was one of the principal managers, and who not only gave him the books, but also a full account of all their schemes and transactions, with the cause of their dissolution. He hopes to comprise the whole in one volume octavo; and all who read it will not only see the many advantages of this plan fairly stated, but also the possibility of its being carried

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into

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into effect in a new way, and the necessity of publishing the whole, as no partial communication can give a proper idea of it: but he is obliged to delay this work till he has such a security as Sir Archibald Macdonald, Mr. Erskine, and Mr. Richardson shall approve, so that neither himself or his heirs, &c. may be deprived of any part of the management, or the small share of the profits proposed in his plan. When he has the honour to receive this, he will immediately set about printing the book, which will show that an act of parliament will be necessary to empower him to proceed in this affair; so that it will lie entirely with the Minister to adopt all or any part of this plan as he shall think proper. The only advantage that Mr. Donaldson means to receive from the security requested, is to bar others from reaping the benefit of his labours without his consent: the powers he wants are only  
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for a limited time, and such as are necessary for every person to have who proposes to introduce a new branch of business or revenue.

This plan is singular, in offering not only to the nation at large, but to every individual, many desirable benefits, and without a new tax exhibiting a new branch of revenue.

In case it should not be thought a proper time to go into this proposal of printing the book, Mr. Donaldson will give in a plan for an improvement of several branches of the present revenue, without laying any additional tax or duty, provided he is secured in the conducting of that plan, and in a share of the increase of the duty, in a proportion similar to that which Mr. Palmer enjoys from his improvements in the Post-office.

B 4 N. B. Some

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N. B. Some copies of the above propofals were given amongst my friends, but from their being mifunderftood they are now printed with the following additions.

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IF my propofal was of that nature that I could carry it on independent of government, I fhould have taken out a patent fome years ago; but as I cannot do it without the affiftance of adminiftration, neither can adminiftration do it without me, I thought, by making an offer of giving government fo large a fhare of the profits, it would fhew that the love of money was not the chief thing I had in view, as appears by the following ftate. Suppofe I had a patent according to the following draft, which is the common tenour of all petitions for patents:

To

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To the KING's moft Excellent MAJESTY.

The Humble Petition of

JOHN DONALDSON,

Esquire,

Sheweth,

THAT your Majesty's petitioner has, with great expence, and after more than forty years ftudy and labour, found out and invented a method of employing convicts, vagrants, and other idle and diforderly people, whether old or young, and of either fex: To put the fisheries on a folid and lafting foundation: To put an end to fmuggling: To prevent houfe-breaking, and all other acts of violence and depredation: To fupply the navy on any emergency with many thoufands of able feamen without preffing: To make it the intereft of the manufacturers and others to ftay at home. By thefe and other popular means

to

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to increase the revenue, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, without laying any additional tax on the people, without making the penal laws more severe, or putting government to any expence.

That your petitioner being anxious to preserve to himself the benefit of the said invention, most humbly prays your Majesty that you will be graciously pleased to grant your royal letters patent to the petitioner, his executors, administrators, and assigns, for the full, sole, and exclusive privilege of using and exercising the said invention within your Majesty's kingdom of Great Britain, for the space of fourteen years, or for such other space, and for such terms as to your Majesty may seem proper: And your petitioner shall ever pray.

Supposing this patent produced 1000 l. a year, and at the end of the patent, which is

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14 years,

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14 years, I should have got in all 14,000 l. and government, or none else, got any thing, by the offer I have made, the first term of 20 years, at 1000 l. is — £. 20,000  
The 2d term of 20 years will yield at least double, or — £. 40,000

Total profits for 40 years	£. 60,000
Deduct 10 per cent. for the first 20 years	£. 2,000
Deduct 5 per cent. for the second 20 years	£. 2,000
	<u>£. 4,000</u>

There would remain of balance to government — £. 56,000

and proportionably for any other sum:

For which they advance no money, only giving their aid, countenance, and protection, as they now do to the Customs, Excise, Stamps, or Post-office; while I, who have all the trouble of scheming and conducting this

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this infant business, have not one third part of a patentee's profit. Some of my friends thought I should do enough if I were to divide the profits with government; which advice I would have followed in my proposals, did I not expect it to be so very productive, that, in another century, it will not be inferior to the present revenue of the Post-office; besides answering all the other benevolent purposes of the plan so completely, as to enable government to take off, or at least to lessen, some of the taxes which are most oppressive to the poor.

By comparing my proposals with the above sketch of a patent, I humbly hope it appears evident that my request is reasonable, and something similar to what is done in the petition for patents, which makes no discovery of the secrets or mysteries of the invention; but the patent, when granted, obliges the patentee to give in a specification  
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of the whole invention. Following the same method as near as possible, I agree to give in a full and particular account of the whole plan for the Minister's approbation; but when published, I should not be put in a worse situation than in the case of patents when the petition is rejected, which is sometimes the case.

Supposing the worst, that the Minister, when he sees the plan fully explained, declines to make trial of it, yet the public would be in possession of the whole mystery whenever they thought it worthy their attention. Ministers may change their mind, or they may have successors who wish to make the experiment; and those I leave it to, in case of my death, will be ready to treat with him, as they are to be benefited by it for forty years after it is adopted. On my receiving the security required, I would instruct some friends in this business, who are younger and better able to carry it on than myself,

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myself, who would be encouraged by the instance of the present Ministers adopting the plan for the consolidation of the customs, which was given in about fifty years ago to Sir Robert Walpole, by the late George Drummond, Esq. of Edinburgh, and was then thought impracticable, but is now justly deemed a wise measure.

It may be objected that this scheme consists of so many different parts, that it will be impossible for them to answer, there being no affinity in their nature: for instance, what connection is there between convicts and fishing, or the parallel roads and preventing house-breaking, &c.? No proper answer can be given to these or any other objections to the secrets or mysteries of this plan, till once they are printed and fully explained, with my reasons for so doing; and, when the whole is fairly and candidly

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candidly considered, it will appear an eligible scheme, and much for the advantage of the nation as well as the revenue.

The chief cause of people being against new things is owing to their forming a judgment upon what they are not fully acquainted with; but when they are better informed, or after trial, they see their error.

A convincing proof of this we have in the Spinning Mills, which were for years thought a foolish scheme, to lay out such large sums in buildings and machinery, when the present mode was so cheap and convenient; yet the advantages are now so evident that none can doubt of them, and I am confident it will be so with my plan when I have a fair hearing.

Some have objected to my request, being  
for

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for a period of forty years, when the common term of a patent is only fourteen. To this I beg leave to answer, That the fourteen years has been found too short a term. Since the time of granting patents, the author of any book has a right for fourteen years, and eventually to another fourteen, in all twenty-eight years; and the engraver of a print to twenty-one years; and, in some instances, the parliament have extended the patent right beyond the fourteen years. When these facts are considered, I hope my request will appear reasonable; more especially as I do not even then reap the same advantage as of a patent, where the patentee has the whole of the profits. But here the public have the greatest benefit; for, besides the annual advantages, they are ultimately put in possession of the whole for ever. Were it a patent, I, or my heirs, &c. would have an equal right with any other

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of his Majesty's subjects to carry it on; and, being in possession of the trade so long before the patent-right expired, they would still have a great advantage over all others, and, with proper management, retain their superiority for many years. I can, if necessary, produce several instances of it.

All seem to agree that I ought to have the sole management for life; but some have said that my successors may not be qualified for it, and therefore it would be wrong to give them a power which perhaps they might abuse. In answer to this, I would be at pains to instruct them in every mystery of it; besides it would be for their interest to have it properly conducted in every respect. However, they must not be continued in the management longer than they act right, and always subject to the controul of the British parliament.



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New schemes have been very differently introduced. In the year 1621, Sir Giles Montpeffon and Sir Francis Michel had a power to grant licences to public-houses for their own emolument.

The late Ralph Allen, Esq. who planned the cross-posts, farmed them for several years. Both these are now considerable branches of revenue.

If we look into the progressive increase of some taxes, they seem incredible. Who would suppose that so large a revenue could arise from tobacco, when there are millions in this country who never use it? Sure, every hint for the advantage of the nation should be attended to, and all schemes have a fair hearing.

I. To find employment for convicts,  
vagrants,

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vagrants, and other idle and disorderly people, whether old or young, and of either sex.

As it would be impossible to find employment for all idle and disorderly people in any one business, I have many ways to give them full employment, and at the same time not interfere with the industrious, who are at present capable of doing all the business of their different professions.

In the first place, I propose to improve the inland navigation, so as not to hurt the coasting trade, that nursery for seamen; but chiefly for carrying of coal, lime, dung, and other heavy articles, into the interior parts of the country, for the purposes of agriculture, &c.: and those heavy articles being conveyed by water, the roads will be

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less

less hurt, and the passengers not incommoded.

2ndly, As many towns, villages, and lands are at present very badly supplied with water, either for themselves or cattle, especially in dry seasons, I propose to give them a plentiful supply; and in time it would be a productive branch of revenue, besides affording employment for many people.

3rdly, I propose to make straight roads through Great Britain in a new way. In place of one broad road, to have two narrow ones, with a foot-path on each side, to run parallel through the country. That all carriages and horses, &c. go one way and return the other, and the foot passengers to observe the same rule; so that all who choose to travel on business or amusement, may

may go from the one end of the road to the other, and also return, without meeting any obstruction whatever; and if they are not inclined to ride or drive so fast as those behind them, it is only drawing to one side to let them pass. This will be very agreeable to all travellers, but particularly to the ladies who ride on horseback for an airing. It is only going out the distance they incline, and then turning into the other road, and so return in safety and comfort. It will entirely prevent all the shocking accidents that so frequently happen, by horses and carriages running against each another; and be a check to highway and footpad robberies.

The marching regiments, and those who walk, will have a commodious footway, and no person to meet them; as those who go the contrary way will be on the other  
C 3 foot-

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foot-path, having two great roads between them.

I would propose to make those roads as straight as possible, without regard to the present roads, bridges, &c. For instance, if a road were made from London to Edinburgh in a direct line, I believe it would be found to be about seventy miles shorter, or 330 miles in all. Several new inns will be needed, in building of which attention will be paid to the shortening of long stages, so as to make them as near to ten miles each as possible. It will be necessary to make improvements in the inns; and particularly at the turnpike gates, where proper people will be always ready to assist travellers of all descriptions who make their complaints there, and deliver them out of the hands of insolent or drunken drivers.

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As the people pay cheerfully for any thing that is of advantage to them, a considerable revenue may be expected from those parallel roads and the inns, which it is humbly proposed should be the property of government.

The roads will not only be made of better materials than are commonly used, but also kept in good repair; the bridges wide, with foot-paths on each side: the roads being made level, and the stages short, will be a great saving of horses.

By the roads being straight there will be less road to make, and less to keep up; and, by having good foot-paths, the farmers will not be troubled with passengers getting into their fields. There will be no necessity for the mail-coaches leaving London before 12 o'clock at night, so that there will be

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plenty

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plenty of time to answer letters, and the passengers have four hours less travelling in the dark, more time for refreshment, and will not be so liable to meet with interruptions and accidents on their setting out.

These rough outlines of the inland navigation, supplying cities, &c. with water, and the parallel roads, I only mention to give some faint idea of my plan. But any abstract or partial communication of a new plan cannot be so well understood as seeing it connected with the whole. It is impossible to mention any thing but what may be objected to; yet I trust when my scheme is printed it will have more advocates than enemies.

Though the parallel roads, &c. will take many years to complete, yet some other parts of the plan may very soon be carried  
into

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into effect; particularly increasing some of the branches of the present revenue, without the farther extension of the Excise laws, preventing house-breaking, robberies, &c. and establishing the fisheries.

Though I have only mentioned the road from London to Edinburgh, because it is a great distance, and by which the two capital cities would be brought about seventy miles nearer together, yet similar advantages would arise from the making of parallel roads to other places of the kingdom. In this way travelling will be rendered not only safe, pleasant, expeditious, and commodious, but free from robbery; as it would be impossible for any person to commit any act of depredation on these roads without immediate detection.

I am aware that it may be objected that  
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the parallel roads will take up too much ground: but when the plan is printed, with the reasons for these improvements, I trust they will far outweigh any objection that can be brought against them. However, if I should be mistaken, that or any other part of the plan can be left out that is not approved of.

Besides making the parallel roads, canals, and establishing the fishing, I propose to employ many people in prosecuting the further improvement of our agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. Though these have been much improved within these few years, yet they are capable of far greater improvement: with a view to this, I would humbly propose to give great encouragement to all ingenious people; as there are many who have much knowledge in their heads, and not one shilling in their pockets. All who have anything  
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of public utility to propose would be immediately assisted with money, and proper conveniences, to make a fair trial; and if it be found to answer, they should have every further assistance necessary for carrying it on. In this way new branches of business will be introduced, and additional employment provided for an increasing people, and no kind of useful invention lost or kept back.

Those methods already mentioned for employing idle people more particularly respect the men: but I have many ways of employing women profitably, which shall be fully stated when the whole plan is printed.

From what trial I have made of new things, I am certain it would be better for the country to be at the expence, than to let it fall on individuals, as is frequently the  
case.

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case. I was at a good deal of trouble and expence in bringing flax-seed from Egypt, and I believe the only person in this country who ever did it: my other engagements at the time put it out of my power to give it a fair trial, which obliged me to leave it to the care of others. It happened to be, in general, a bad season for flax, so that it did not answer; but it was the best flax-seed I ever saw, and think it would be worth while to try it again. Many other things might be tried with much advantage to the nation.

Though every improvement is of national benefit, yet they ultimately tend more to the advantage of the landed than the mercantile interest; besides, the landed man is under a necessity of remaining in this country: if he were to sell his lands, and retire to another kingdom, he would lose his consequence; but

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but if a merchant, manufacturer, or tradesman, carry off his property to another country, he will be kindly received, as by the addition of his property and future industry he increases their wealth.

I therefore hope that all proprietors of lands will see it their interest to promote every scheme of national improvement, and, by making this country the most comfortable place in the world to live in, keep all its inhabitants at home.

It is high time that something was done for the relief of the lower class of people, who pay more taxes in proportion than the rich. If we cannot bring this country nearer to the sun, we have it in our power to give them a plentiful supply of coal, and at a reasonable price; and to make good foot-paths at the sides of the great roads, which in bad weather

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ther are almost impassable for people on foot, every step they take being over the shoe. I hope, when this is considered, the House of Commons will make a resolution to receive no bill for making or repairing a turnpike road but what contains a clause for making and keeping in good repair a foot-path feet wide: when this is done, I believe the stage-coaches will not be overloaded with outside passengers.

Without good roads, navigable canals, and a plentiful supply of water, the cultivation of lands must go slowly on. In some places the expence of doing any of these three would be more to individuals than would be prudent for them to lay out. As there is nothing that money can do but may be done by the British nation, though it will be attended with expence, yet not by any new tax, as those who are proposed to do the work will be

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clothed and fed with our manufactures and produce, not one shilling of it will go out of the country, and the idle people be thus profitably employed. Before the roads are begun, the ground should be surveyed and measured, an estimate of the expence made out, and, on weighing the advantages with the expence, it would soon appear whether it ought to be gone into or not.

II. To put the fisheries on a solid and lasting foundation.

In order to accomplish this, I propose, amongst many other things, to have a large stock of salt, casks, and other materials and necessaries, ready for the adventurers at all times, and upon such advantageous terms as cannot fail to be acceptable; also to provide proper remedies for the present difficulties to which they are now subject. And clearly to show that, by following up this plan, the fisheries

( 32 )

fisheries may be perfectly established over the whole kingdom, and that those concerned in them will find it profitable, I shall here take the liberty to add the 9th Article of the agreement made in 1720, with an abstract of the list of partners of the great fishing company alluded to in my proposals.

ART. 9. " That no copartner that now is, or shall be hereafter assumed, shall be bound for a greater sum towards the use of the copartnery than three thousand pounds sterling, or for a lesser than one hundred pounds sterling, and that one hundred pounds shall be deemed and called one share in the copartnerhip; and that no copartner shall be capable of enjoying or holding any greater share in the copartnerhip than what may correspond to the sum of three thousand pounds; and that no copartner shall be capable to be chosen a manager who shall not be vested in the right of

ten

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ten shares, or one thousand pounds in the copartnerhip stock."

Amongst the subscribers were the dukes of Argyle, Athol, Chandos, Hamilton, Montrose, Queensbury and Dover, and Roxburgh; the marquises of Annandale, Carnarvan, Lothian and Tweeddale; the earls of Bute, Caithness, Dalkeith, Findlater, Glasgow, Galloway, Haddington, Hopeton, Hyndford, Ilay, Kintore, Lauderdale, Loudon, Rothes, Rutherglen, Stair, Strathmore, Sutherland, Weemyss and Wigton; also lord viscount Garnock, lord Henry Bridges, lord Johnston, Alexander lord Polworth, James lord Torphichen, lord Lovat, lord Elibank, lord Forrester, lord Blantyre, Richard lord Irving, George lord Rac; the lord President, eight lords of session; Mr. Dundas, then lord advocate, and father of the present treasurer of the navy: and amongst

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the ladies, the duchess of Argyle, countess of Forfar and countess of Hyndford, who all subscribed three thousand pounds each; the countess of Roxburgh one thousand pounds, and lady Sophia Hope fifteen hundred pounds; lord John Leslie, Charles Master of Cathcart, Charles lord Bining, lord David Hay, and lord William Hay, subscribed two thousand five hundred pounds each; the earl of Dalhousie, earl of Roseberry, lord Alexander Hay, lord George Douglas, lord William Johnston, lord George Johnston, lord James Murray, John lord Carmichael, lord Hope, lord Garlis, Alexander lord Salton, lord Desford, sir John Anstruther of that Ilk, sir Robert Dalrymple, advocate, sir William Gordon of Inver-Gordon, sir Robert Sinclair of Longformachus, sir John Inglis of Cramond, sir William Johnstone of Westerhall, sir Richard Steele, sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto,

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Minto, John Baird of Newbaith, Mr. Robert Craigie, advocate, Mr. Duncan Forbes, advocate (these two last were afterwards lord president of the Court of Session), John Forbes of Culloden, Mungo Græme of Gorthy, colonel Francis Charteris, Patrick Haldane, esq. Mungo Haldane, member of parliament, the laird of Ulbster, sir Alexander Cairns, sir James Livingston, sir James Hall, and sir David Hamilton, Mr. Wedderburn, grandfather to lord Loughborough, with many others, two thousand pounds each; besides those, several who were in Edinburgh at the time the subscription was open, subscribed for themselves and friends, by giving in a list of them. The earl of Glasgow's list stands thus: David earl of Glasgow three thousand pounds, and for Charles duke of Queensbury and Dover three thousand pounds, and for lord George Douglas two thousand pounds, and for

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Mr.

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Mr. Charles Boyle, my son, one thousand pounds.—William Nisbet of Dirleton's subscription for himself two thousand pounds, and for sir John Home of Blackader, two thousand pounds, and for Walter Nisbet, esq. his second son, one thousand pounds, George Drummond, afterwards lord provost of Edinburgh, for himself two thousand pounds, and for 36 others, making in all 60,600 l.; Robert Wightman, for himself 2000 l. and for 47 others, making in all 56,400 l.; James Nimmo, for himself 2000 l. and for 21 others, making in all 28,700 l.; John Hogg, for himself 2000 l. and for 108 others, making in all 67,300 l.—Robert Robertson, junior, merchant in Perth, for himself 2000 l. and for 81 others, making in all 40,400 l.; Mr. Alexander Garden, for himself 2000 l. and for 20 others, making in all 24,900 l.; Alexander Arbuthnot, for himself 2000, and for 22 others, making  
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in all 25,500 l.; Mr. William Hall, for himself 2000 l. and for 25 others, making in all 43,200 l.—Amongst those abroad, I see John Law, esq. director of the Royal Bank of France, subscribed 3000 l. and William Gordon, merchant in Paris, 2000 l. I shall finish this list with Mr. Dempster of Dundee, grandfather to the present worthy member of that name, whose subscription was 1500 l. The subscription was closed in six days, and from the respectable names and large amount, it stands unequalled in the history of this country. It was upon their wisdom and experience that I first went: I know the cause of their dissolution, and also how it can be carried on now with certainty. When this is made known, I trust that our nobility, gentry, &c. will see it their advantage to imitate their predecessors in promoting the fisheries, &c. of this nation.

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III. To

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## III. To put an end to smuggling.

The principle upon which this is founded cannot be particularly mentioned at present; I shall only say, that the fair trader will have some advantages and privileges over the smuggler, which he does not at present enjoy.

## IV. To prevent house-breaking and all other acts of violence and depredation.

It must be evident to all, that printing a full and particular account how this is to be done, would not only be improper, but in a great measure defeat the intention of my design; though a great part of this must be kept from the public eye, yet no part of it will be withheld from those who ought to know it. Therefore all I can now mention is, that if the first proposal is properly conducted,

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conducted, by providing work for all idle and disorderly people, there will be none left to break houses, &c. and should such a thing happen, they will be immediately detected.

## V. To supply the navy on any emergency with many thousands of able seamen without pressing.

It is my intention, though not mentioned in the proposal, to supply the army as well as the navy with volunteers. This I propose to do by providing better for them and their families in time of peace, and particularly for their wives and children in time of war, more especially for the widows and children of such as are killed in battle, or lost at sea: when this part of the plan is perfectly known, I can have no doubt but that such numbers of volunteers will offer

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themselves as to render pressing unnecessary.

VI. To prevent the emigration of manufacturers and others, by making it their interest to remain in this country.

As nothing works more effectually on the mind of man than his own interest, I am certain my plan will show to our manufacturers and others, that they will have such encouragement at home as they nowhere else can get; besides they will be enabled to live more comfortably than in any other country.

VII. By these and other popular means to increase the revenue, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, without laying any additional tax on the people, making the penal laws more severe, or putting government to any expence.

I humbly

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I humbly think the revenue may be increased in various ways without the further extension of the Excise Laws. It is evident that by our people staying at home, and being fully employed, our manufactures and commerce will be much increased, and with our increasing trade the public revenue will be more productive without any new tax; the public put in possession of a large and growing revenue arising from the parallel roads, public canals, and the supplying the towns, villages, and fields with water, without expence.

Nothing appears to me more worthy of attention than the state of our prisons, those great nurseries of vice and wickedness; and I trust, with God's blessing, I shall be able to point out how they may be rendered almost unnecessary in time. This will be clearly seen when my plan is completely printed.

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printed. What an advantage it will be to the country in general, by the preventing of house-breaking, robberies, &c.! The house-keeper will be free from the trouble of criminal juries, the judges saved the disagreeable part of their office, in trying and passing sentence on criminals, and his Majesty that painful part of his function of signing dead-warrants; besides, a great expence will be saved to the country.

The imprisonment for debt may be easily prevented, with great advantage to the creditor, the debtor, and the nation, by erecting towns and villages in proper places for fishing, and also on some of our commons and waste lands, where they will be under proper regulations, and put in a way of maintaining themselves and families, paying their creditors, and serving their country. I would also humbly propose that all such as are now  
abroad

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abroad should be permitted to come home, and settled in the same way: by this means we should have more inhabitants, our fisheries and agriculture promoted, many families, now a burthen to the state, made useful and paying taxes; besides, by thus preventing our tradesmen from going abroad, the secrets of their respective employments would remain at home, and the money now spent in a foreign state circulating amongst ourselves.

The great objections to this, as well as the other parts of my proposals, are, first, that it would be impossible to find money; and the second, that I propose to alter the laws of the country.

As to the first objection, I am ready to show how the money is to be got, and also fully to explain the whole business agreeable  
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to my propofals, when I get the security therein propofed: a fairer and more advantageous offer cannot be made, and as it cofts nothing, fure it can do no harm to know it.

As to the fecond objection, I by no means intend to fay that any part of my plan fhould be gone into without due confideration. Parliament are the proper judges what is beft to be done. I fuppofe there are none fo wedded to the laws of the country, but would be for amending them where neceffary. But I humbly think an act might be fo framed, in cafe my plan is approved of, as to impower me to carry on this bufinefs, by fufpending, for a limited time, fo much of any general or local law as may be thought neceffary, in order that it may have a fair trial. I believe objections are feldom or ever made to the temporary  
fufpenfion

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fufpenfion or alteration of any law that is for the general good. I have been told that the conductors of the mails have a power, in cafe of need, to take horfes wherever they can find them, except out of a plough.

When acts of parliament were firft paffed for the making of turnpike roads, they had a power to make all coaches pay a certain fum; but when the mail was carried in a coach, and an act paffed to exempt them from turnpikes, I do not recollect that it met with any oppofition, though there is no doubt but they damage the roads much, when it is confidered that in place of a fingle horfe paffing with the mail three times in a week, there is now a coach and four horfes going fix times a week.

It is not neceffary, in order to eftablifh the fifhing, prevent fmuggling, increafe the  
revenue,

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revenue, and answer several of the purposes of my plan, to employ convicts, vagrants, &c. as some of those advantages would more easily be obtained without their aid than with it. But I cannot provide for them, and prevent those evils I hope to remedy so effectually and with so little expence as by including them in this general plan; for unless I provide work, or maintain all that are in want, it would not be answering the intention of this plan. I therefore propose to have houses of refuge established in proper places for the reception of all who choose to come, and such as preferred an idle and disorderly life would be taken up, and prevented from following their bad courses; all who chose to come would be kindly received, and treated with tenderness. Here the unfortunate women, who have been deceived, and abandoned by their seducers, will find an asylum, so that the plea of

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want of bread will no longer be an argument to continue their wicked course of life. From every observation I have been able to make, the fair sex, in point of ability, are in no respect inferior to men, of which we have many proofs. I humbly think, if this plan is adopted, the inhuman practice of child-murder will be prevented, and that none of our own species will ever perish in the streets or other places for want, of which I could give many recent instances.

The way I propose it should be conducted is to have one office in London, and another in Edinburgh, where there will always be proper people to advise with, and to assist me in the business, and to extend the plan to all places where they wish to have it, upon application to either of those offices. It is not intended to introduce any part of this plan but at the request of the people of  
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the cities, towns, &c. who desire it; and in case of the misconduct or neglect of the agent or agents to whom any part of this business is entrusted, they will be immediately superseded, as every new thing requires great attention at the first, and especially to manage the convicts, &c. without using severity.

There is one description of gentlemen, many of whom I think would make good agents for some parts of this business; I mean the half-pay officers: what they might receive from this business would make an agreeable addition to their present income, and prevent some of them from living abroad, or going into foreign service; it being a leading principle in my plan to keep as many people at home as possible, by this means to promote our agriculture, fisheries, manufactures, and commerce. The best way

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way to accomplish this is to make home comfortable to all, by encouraging the good and virtuous, and reclaiming those who are otherwise, always taking care in the extension of one branch of business not to do it to the prejudice of another.

All who are entrusted with money to find undeniable security, so that neither the public or myself may suffer any loss.

Some of the advantages to arise from this plan.

When the canals and parallel roads have been carried on with attention for forty years, there will by that time be at least four hundred thousand fewer horses needed, which, at fifteen pounds a year each, makes six millions, and that what would maintain

E 400,000



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400,000 horses would be sufficient for one million of black cattle; and valuing the produce of their milk, flesh, and skin, only at six pounds each, will make other six millions; so that the annual saving to the nation on these two articles only would be twelve millions, besides making provisions plenty. The national taxes would increase with our wealth, the people would live more comfortably, having plenty of coal for fire, the timber would be allowed to grow for better purposes than fire-wood, which in the present way it is carried on is so hurtful to both landlord and tenant: frequently a horse-load of fire-wood is brought five or six miles through a hilly country and bad roads, and sold for about eighteen pence. In other places the farmer, instead of improving the ground, is employed in cutting and drying turf for his own use or for sale; but when  
supplied

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supplied with coals he will have a comfortable fire, and the time formerly spent in cutting and drying turf will be employed in cultivating the lands which his predecessors and he have formerly impoverished; besides, the women who now lurk about the hedges in idleness or in gathering of sticks will be brought up in honest industry.

Amongst the many reasons which will make this plan popular, I shall beg leave to mention the following:

That none will be compelled to go into it unless they choose, like the mail-coaches, as other coaches still continue to run. If the people do not prefer the parallel roads, &c. they will still have the present ones.

By the proposed improvements on the roads many horses will be saved, and those

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employed will last longer, as they will not be hurt by steep hills, nor will it be necessary to drive them so fast as at present, particularly the mail-coaches; at the same time, the merchants, &c. in London and Edinburgh will have four hours more time to answer their letters, and a proportionable time at all other places.

Those who walk will have good and pleasant foot roads, with short stages.

The army and navy will be supplied with men without pressing, and those men in time of peace provided with work.

But there is one thing in which it excels all other public schemes; that not only the trial may be made, but the business carried on without government money, or laying any new tax on the people.

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The following things are necessary in order to this plan being carried into effect:

1st. To give me a security something like a patent-right, or like the right given to authors, as by it I have entered this work in Stationers Hall, and have the property secured to me, my heirs or assigns, for 14 years, and eventually for 14 years more. I wish therefore that my right to all that is new in my plan may be as effectually secured.

2d. That I may have power to conduct this business, by means of such assistants, agents, or others, as I may from time to time find necessary; also to make regulations and bye-laws, and to alter and amend them from time to time, as may be thought best, the same as is commonly done by societies or companies.

By

By the multiplicity of machines, particularly in the spinning, many women are thrown idle, and by the high price of provisions it is difficult for people of small fortunes to live. I therefore mean to propose a method to provide work for the one, and relief for the other ; as it is hard upon those who have been in a better way of life, and reduced by misfortunes, to be placed in the parish work-house with the meanest of the people. But this, with many other advantages, will be particularly mentioned when the plan is printed.

The probable advantages that would have accrued to the nation had this plan been adopted a year ago.

Many thousands of able men would have been got without pressing, besides answering

ing the other benevolent purposes of the plan.

The robberies, &c. would have been prevented, and many who have been sent to Botany Bay might have become useful members of society at home, and our streets would have been cleared of idle and disorderly people.

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THE CONCLUSION.

THIS short and mutilated account of my proposals and plan is all that I think can be with safety communicated till my request is complied with, when the whole will be printed. A plan of such magnitude and public utility has never been exhibited before, every part of which is so connected

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and interwoven with the others, that it will require much explication, and when elucidated, every part will appear to be distinct from each other; at the same time it will be evident that, though one or more of those parts may be left out, yet the rest can still be carried on, but not with so much advantage as the whole being united together. For example, a farmer confined to cultivate only one sort of grain, would not find it so profitable and convenient as that of sowing such kinds and quantities as best suits the ground and the appearance of the season.

I trust none who have attentively considered my proposals, will think that I ought to have disclosed any of the secrets or mysteries of them, as it would be unjust to expect more from me than is done in the case of a petition to his Majesty for a patent, where a  
previous

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previous knowledge of the principles of the invention is not required before the patent has passed the Great Seal. I therefore hope that my proposals will be considered, as in fact they are, a petition for a kind of patent-right to do a great and public good; and I have chosen this as the best time to lay them before the public, that all who approve of my scheme might recommend it to their constituents to bring this important business before parliament at their first meeting; and if my plan is then adopted, I can and do promise, by God's blessing, to give such an effectual check to house-breaking, robberies, and other acts of depredation, the ensuing winter, as in another year such things will be rarely heard of.

If any cities, towns, or others, wish to adopt any part of my proposals, I shall be ready to treat with them, provided it does not interfere with the general plan.

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Such as please to honour me with any communications on this business, are requested to send them, post-paid, to the care of my bookfeller, Mr. Murray, No. 32, Fleet Street, London.

F I N I S.