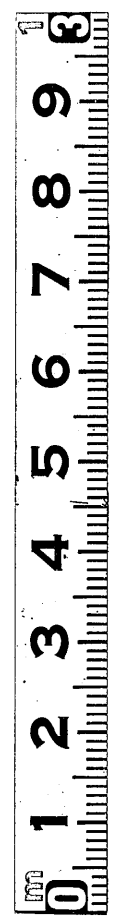


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**S P E E C H**

**PARLIAMENT**

Concerning the

**EXPORTATION**

**O F**

**W W O O L**

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By *E. C.* 22d. August, 1704.

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Printed in the Year, 1704.

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## A SPEECH in Parliament, &amp;c.

**T**HE Exportation of Wool, is a Matter of great Importance to this Nation; Foreigners will undoubtedly afford a greater price for it, than is given here at Home, and by that means, add to the Estate of the Wool-Seller. This inspires him with a passionate Concern to have it Exported, and gives the same Zeal to that great Body of People, who live by working of Wool, to oppose it. But the great Concern of the whole, should over-rule the Concerns of the particular Parts: And of this, those who have no immediat Gain or Loss by Wool selling or Wool buying, appear to be the most equal Judges. Of this Number I am one, the two Shires in which my little Fortune lyes, having no considerable Interest in either.

This Act receiv'd a first Reading at our last Sederunt, but I did not think, nor did I ever hear it advanc'd; that by giving an Act the first Reading, the Matter thereof was approv'd in General. As I take it, a first Reading is design'd for Information of its Tenor, that we may consider its whole and every Particle, and give our Assent or Dissent to either, as we shall judge fit: And if the Whole be unjust or unreasonable, it will be needless to debate it peice Meal. There is a considerable part of the Nation, desiring, that unwrought Wool may be Exported, but there being more than twenty Workers of Wool for one Seller in Scotland, by consequence there are twenty for one against that Exportation, tho' it's probable, that in this House they may prove not so very numerous as the other. I suppose my Lord, that 'tis possible for the few Wool-Sellers to gain amongst them all Ten thousand Pound Sterling, or (which is impossible) Twenty *per Annum*; yet there will remain a Man for every single pound, who shall want the subject of his Work, that is the means of his Lively-hood, and must of necessity or starve, or beg, or both. This being a certain Truth in point of Fact, let us first Consider it in Justice, and then in Prudence.

First, The far greater Number have a Native Right to Life and Lively-

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Lively-hood, tho' of a meaner and lower Rank, as well as the greater Few, and Law should be made with a due Respect to the first, as well as to the latter.

But if that major Part be in possession by Law, of a Right and Title, to what proves the support of their Lives. I must think, that to take that from them, in favours of, and to give a little increase of Wealth to the already Richer, seems to me apparently unjust. The Richer being *in lucro captando*, & *in non magno*, the other in *damno* & *maximo evitanda*.

The Wool Countries amount not as to Bounds, to the Twelfth Part of the Nation, and Land paying five lib. Rent in the Black-Cattel and Corn-Countries, will have a greater Number of People on it, than that which pays Twenty in the Sheep-Countries. Now all the Mean Families in Scotland being Wool-workers, by this Computation, there will be Fourty Losers for one Gainer, by this intended Act of Exportation.

These Fourty, as they have a Native Right to the Means and Benefit of Life in their Native Country, so they have likewise a legal Right and Title by Law and Possession to this mean of Lively-hood, *viz. That no Wool unwrought be carried out of Scotland*; by which means, the right of Working it belongs to the People of Scotland. They have Law no less Ancient than our earliest Records, but not to cite these so very old ones, allow me to mention some of a fresher date, not only as Statutes, but Statutes ratified from time to time, as the great Good of the Nation. By Chap. 113. Parl. 7th. Ja: 6th. *It is Statute, That no Wool be Transported out of the Kingdom, under the pain of Confiscation thereof, and of all the other Goods whatsoever, belonging to the Owner and Transporter; and that no Licence be granted contrary to this Act, and the purchasers and users of such Licence are to incur the same pain*: And by Cap. 151, Parl: 12. Ja: 6th. this is ratified, and Ca: 250. Parl: 15. Ja: 6th. *No Native or Stranger shall Export Wool, or Skins with Wool upon them, untill made in Work and put to best avail, under the pains foresaid*. And Cap: 40, Sess: 1. Parl: 1. Ch: 2. the same is of new Statute, Ratified, and all forestalling and keeping up of Wool to a Dearth strictly prohibited. But in this Act, 'tis unhapily provided by a Line in the close, *That the Exche-*

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never may Licence the Export of Wool and Skins, if they shall see Cause.  
 Before this Act, which was in Anno 1660, there was never any considerable quantity of Wool Exported, witness all our Custom Books, but thereafter sometimes with & oftentimes without Licence, considerable quantities of Scots Wool, as also of English and Irish, were Exported to France, Holland and Sweden, by which means, they were enabled to work for themselves in those Manufactures, which till then was furnished to them by Scotland; and thereby the value of the Scots Manufacture became exceeding low, and many Wool-workers were turn'd to downright Begging. In some of which evils, by Cap. 9th. Sess. 9th. Parl. 1. K. W. The Representatives of the Nation, tho' with great Opposition from the Wool-Masters in Parliament, not only ratif'd but renew'd all the former Acts against the Exportation of Wool and Skins aforesaid, whether Scots or Foreign, and that under stricter pains than the former Laws prescrib'd. Prohibiting likewise at the same time, the Export of Worsted or Woolen Threed, untill it were surder Improv'd, by working at home. By the Interest of VVool-Masters at that time; this Act was made but temporary, and for five years only, tho' all the former Laws were perpetual. On the Faith of this Act very many People laid out their Stocks on VVoolen Manufactories; but that one now given in, not only cuts off all the old excellent Laws, but two years yet to run of the former Act, at once to the ruin of these Manufactories, and the breach of the publick Faith, another hight of injustice, tho' more particular than the former.  
 And as the VVool-workers are founded in Law, so they were ever in possession of this Native Right; for untill the happy Licences crept in Anno 1660, there was never any quantity of VVool Exported from Scotland.

This much for the Interest of Persons and Parties, and of a Major part against a Minor: Now as to the National and Universal Concern, which being transcendant, shou'd both in Justice and prudence over-rule the others, by as much as a whole is preferable to the parts. It cannot be contraverted, but that Trade in a Nation whose Import exceeds its Export, must there die of a Consumption: Hence, 'tis the uudoubted Interest of every People, to encrease the value of their

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their Export, either in Natural or Artificial product, VVool when Manufactur'd, is in many things ten times the value of the VVool of which 'tis made, and in the Coursest Manufactures at least three or four times; and by consequence, adds to the value of our Export six or ten times more than VVool can do. Yea, we often pay for our own VVool when Manufactur'd by Foreigners, five times the value of what we receiv'd for the VVool it self.

In the next place, a vast multitude of poor People, who have their Livelyhood by working of VVool in Scotland, wanting that work, must want Meat; and *de facto* since the VVool was Exported, above Ten thousand in one Shire died, and all in one year: 'Tis obvious enough, they wou'd have got Meat had they been Masters of Money, but they had not that, because they wanted Work, and no Work, because the subject Matter Wool was Exported: Tho' at the same the Poor in Holland and Sweden earn'd their Livelyhood by working of our VVool, and their Countrys gaining five or ten times the value of our Commodity, lost only to us by Exporting of it unwrought.

I have heard it objected, *First*, That Money is very scarce in Scotland, and that we may draw fourty or fifty thousand Pound yearly for Exported VVool. I Answer, 'tis not so in fact; but if it were, it is more certain, that our VVool wrought and sent Abroad, wou'd bring at least Three hundred thousand pound, so the proposition is a backward way to encrease our Stock.

A second Objection is, That Liberty and Property is Invaded, when the Wool-sellers are hindred to make the best of their Goods. To this 'tis easily reply'd, That when Liberty and Property are abus'd, they may merit the Names of Injury and Avarice. Government and Law are to sustain the Use, and prevent the Abuse, ev'n of our own Goods. The Disposal of private Men's Goods within their own Kingdom, is ordinarily voluntar, but the Export or Import of Goods to a Kingdom, is the Care of the Government, and the privat Right must be regulated by the publick Good. Now, the exporting of Wool, is so far from being any privat Man's Right, that on the contrair 'tis no Mans Right; and the hindring the export belong'd to every Scots-man, and was more especially the Right of those who had set up private Manufactories upon the Publick Faith; and

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and it wou'd seem the Magistrates Province both to hinder the Export, and punish the Exporters. Now indeed can the Manufactories *jus acquisitum* be taken from them, until the five Year Act be rescinded; and with what Justice that can be done, I leave to this House to consider.

There is yet another Objection, *viz.* That we hurt one part of the Nation for the Advantage of another, by obliging the first to take a less Value from the latter, than a Stranger is willing and ready to give. But to this 'tis easily answered, that the Force upon the Wool-seller, is no greater now than it always has been, for disposing of his Wool within the Kingdom; and as I have already said, he never had a Right to export, or sell it to a Foreigner. Besides, that the alledged Loss in the Price is most calumnious, is evident from this. That tho' *Scotland* has less Money by far, than it had before the Year 1660, yet the Wool used in *Scotland*, is raised to a vast Price, above what it was then: Yea more, *Scots* Wool in *Scotland* is dearer than *English* or *Irish* Wool of the same kind.

But I find the last and most clamorous Objection, is, That *Scotland* cannot work its own Wool, and what remains rots, and is lost, to the Ruin of the Wool-master. For Answer, I beg leave to lay this Matter in its true light.

*England* had more Wool than she cou'd, or did work for many Years; at first Export was allow'd, which afforded an Opportunity for the *French* and *Flemings* to work it, and grow rich, whilst she was hardly for her self: Then she began with partial Prohibitions of Export, but the Cure was partial too, and the Malady continued: Till at last, perceiving her Error, her Prohibitions turn'd to earnest. The Wool-sellers clamour'd more, than ours does now, and indeed with more Reason too; for as in *England* they had much more Wool; so they had fewer Hands in proportion to work it than we have. But the Question is, if *England* took off the Prohibition for this, or did they increase the severity of their Laws against Exportation? Did they force the Wool-sellers either to Manufacture their Wool, or sell it at reasonable Prices to other *English* men who wou'd? Has not *England* by this (and chiefly too) become one of the Richest and most Potent Nation in the World, both by Sea, and by

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by Land; In short, is this a terrifying, or an inviting Example? Doubtless *England* soon found that a partial export of Wool was sufficient to keep the *English* Manufacture at an undervalue abroad, and the Truth of this, both Reason and Experience may evince.

I w'll not say that the Wool-masters have, but they may politickly resolve (at least some of them) to keep up some Quantity of Wool, by not exposing it to Market, or setting too high a Price upon it, that its not being sold, may be a Ground of Complaint. But that there is any considerable Quantity unsold, is as positively deny'd by the one side, as asserted by the other, which lying in Fact, I leave it there. However 'tis, nobody can well believe that *Scotland* can't Manufacture all her own Wool; for before the Year 1660, there was no Prohibition of the Import of any Foreign Woolen Manufacture, no considerable Tax nor Imposition upon it before the Year 1660. But Foreign Wool manufactur'd being now under great Prohibitions and Impositions, *Scotland* must consume more of its own, than it did then; and if Foreigners get not *Scots*, *English*, or *Irish* Wool exported to them, they will stand as much in need of our Manufacture as formerly, and we shall have less to send them; because of our own necessary Consumpt. Now, so it is, that we never exported any Quantity of Wool worthy of our Notice before the Year 1660, it must then have been all wrought within the Nation, therefore may much more be so now.

As we have great Consumpt of Wool now than formerly; so there is less Wool now in this Kingdom than there was then, because one fourth of the Pasture Land, has within these fifty Years turn'd into Tillage, which infallibly must have diminished the Number of our Sheep.

How can it be believed, that our Wool cannot be consum'd, and is rotting in the Wool-masters hands, notwithstanding of all the *Scots* Manufacture, and the allowance given these two Years past of exporting Skins with Wool upon them, and the Price of Wool near a third higher than when none was exported, nor allowed to be so

It is further said for Exportation, and urg'd as a Politick for *Scotland*, that by exporting of our own Wool, we afford an Opportunity to *Scots* Merchants to transport with great Advantage, likewise that of *England* and *Ireland*.

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There is none that wishes more earnestly than I do, to have *Scotland* and *England* in a good Understanding, and a solid Union and Friendship between the two Kingdoms. But I am not of Opinion, that this is the proper Ground, and fit time for mutual Approaches; this may seem a reasonable Threat to induce them, but the Execution must be imprudent, before we give up all Designs of a Treaty. However, it is a bad Cure, which gives our selves the deeper Wound: For if we carry *English* and *Irish* Wool to *Holland*, *France* and *Sweden*, they will give the less (if any Price at all) for our Work, and to be sure, will ruin the Vent of our Manufacture. For if they actually have, or are in hopes to induce us to carry Wool to them, tho' it were but to make a part of what they need, their good Work will soon bring our coarse Work to an Undervalue, and Piece meal to an absolute Contempt. It is true, we may very well argue with *England*, that we can open a Back-door to let out both theirs and *Irish* Wool, and thereby persuade them to compensate our Kindness of not doing it, by granting us equivalent Benefit; So we may likewise say in the Point of making War against them in conjunction with any other potent Enemy: But to do either of these by *prevento*, is indeed a specimen of the old *Scots* wooing.

But after all, if the wearing of any Woolen Manufacture, but what is made of *Scots* Wool, and in *Scotland*, be severely enjoined, if the Exportation of *Scots*, *English*, or *Irish* Wool be severely prohibited, if the *Scots* Wool would be sold at a just and moderate Price, if the Wool-Countrys will assist to work their own Wool, if all exported *Scots* Manufacture be exempted from Taxes, and the Import of *English* and *Irish* Wool be strictly prohibit, until we find by Experience that we can work all our own Wool and more, then the Wool-master will have a constant and solid Vent for his Wool, there will be an Hundred Thousand Wool-workers employ'd in *Scotland*; what is not us'd at Home, will be exported, and Money return'd to ten times the Value of all our Wool when exported. Idle People will be set at Work, Poor People will be fed, Prophanity and Scandal will be much remov'd, *Scotland* will be enriched, and increase in Reputation: And the direct contrary of all these, will be the effect of our Exportation of Wool.

F I N I S.