

# Englands Interest and Improvement.

Samuel Fortrey

1673

Englands Interest and Improvement.  
Consisting in the Increase of the Store, and Trade of this Kingdom.  
by Samuel Fortrey, Esquire.

London,  
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To the Most High and mighty Monarch.  
Charles the II.

May it Please your most Excellent Majesty,

Having some years since (with so great boldness) presumed to present this unworthy Treatise to your most Sacred MAJESTY; the which having received, not onley your Majesties pardon, but Favour and Countenance; I am encouraged to renew it again with the satisfaction to have had thoughts, sutable to your Majesties inclinations, as appears by your Majesties gracious approbation of many particulars contained in it; By which great success I am imbouldned, once again humbly to crave your Majesties favorable Pardon and protection, having no greater ambition than, The onely being,

your Majesties most Loyal and  
faithful Subject and  
Servant,

SAMUEL FORTREY.

To the Reader.

I have been often ashamed at my own confidence; in giving to any so much trouble, or loss of time, as the reading this undeserving paper. But it having been first Published in the year 1663, when my zeale to the Publicke, more than my ability prevailed with me, to venture the hazzard of such an Undertaking; And since finding my Endeavour more acceptable, than I had reason to expect, and no more Copies remaining whereby to gratifie such friends as seemed very desirous of them: I have again renewed them without any alteration; That it may appear, how many things have hapned since, according to my wish; and how my mean thoughts have found concurrence, in the worthiest Councils. And if my endeavours herein have been any wayes successefull, or beneficiall to any, I have attained the end I aimed at.

Sam. Fortrey.

Englands Interest and Improvement.

Englands Interest and Improvement consists chiefly in the increase of store and trade.

Store comprehendeth all such commodities, as either the soil,

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or people of this nation are capable to produce, which are either usefull at home, or valuable abroad.

Trade is the means, by which a nation may procure what they want from abroad, and vent to the best advantage, what ever may be spared of their own increase at home.

Of store there are properly two sorts, natural and artificial.

Our natural store may also be divided into three parts.

First, the annual increase of the soil, which consists chiefly in corn of all sorts, and all the best sorts of cattel.

Secondly, the product of our Mines, of lead, tin, iron, coal, allum, and the like.

Thirdly, the great plenty of fish our seas naturally afford, of which we might reap unknown advantages, were our fishing trade rightly improved.

Our Artificial store consists in the manufacture and Industry of the people, of which the chiefest in this nation are the manufactures of woollen clothes, and all other sorts of woollen stuffs, linen cloth, silk, stuffs, ribbandings, stockings, laces and the like.

In trade there may be likewise said to be two kinds.

The one, trade at home, one with another: the other, our trade, or traffick abroad with strangers.

And in each of these particulars, by the bounty of nature, and divine providence, this nation doth not onely equal any neighbouring countrey, but far excels all in the most profitable advantages.

France we know to be a nation, rich, populous and plentifull; and this onely by the increase of its own store, raised both by the fruit of the soil, and industry of the people; consisting in corn, wine, and many sorts of fruits, and great manufactures of all sorts of silks, linen clothes, laces, and many other rich commodities, which do not onely store them at home, with what they need, but by the overplus provides for all things else, they necessarily want from abroad; with plenty of money to boot.

Holland hath not much of its own store, especially not answerable to supply the wants of that nation; and yet by their industrious diligence in trade, they are not onely furnished with whatsoever the world affords and they want, but by the profit of their trade they excel in plenty and riches, all their neighbour nations.

Two things therefore appear to be chiefly necessary, to make a nation great, and powerful; which is to be rich, and populous; and this nation enjoying together all those advantages with part whereof onely, others grow great and flourishing; and withall, a Prince, who above all things delights and glories in his peoples happiness: this nation can expect no less then to become the most great, and flourishing of all others.

But private advantages are often impediments of publick profit; for in what any single person shall be a loser, there, endeavours will be made to hinder the publick gain, from whence proceeds the ill succes that commonly attends the endeavours for publick good; for commonly it is but coldly prosecuted, because the benefit may possibly be something remote from them that promote it; but the mischief known and certain to them that oppose it: and Interest more than reason commonly aways most mens affections.

Whereby it may appear, how necessary it is that the publick profits should be in a single power to direct, whose Interest is onely the benefit of the whole.

The greatest thing therefore that any Prince can aim at, is to make his dominions rich and populous, and by what means it may be effected in this nation, beyond all neighbour countreys, I shall

endeavour to demonstrate: People and plenty are commonly the begetters the one of the other, if rightly ordered.

And first, to increase the people of this nation, permission would be given to all people of foreign countreys, under such restrictions as the state shall think fit, freely to inhabit and reside within this kingdom, with liberty to buy or sell lands or goods, to import or export any commodities, with the like priviledge and freedom that English men have.

This would quickly increase the number of our people, and multiply our riches: for those people that would come from other countries to inhabit here, would also bring their riches with them, which if they laid out in the purchasing of estates, or improvement of our trade, or were onely their persons rightly employed, it might very much increase, both the riches and power of this nation.

But it may be demanded why we should expect that people should leave their own native contreys to come and inhabit here, when they enjoy already as many priviledges as here are offered them.

These reasons may be given,

First, that this countrey in it self is as pleasant, or more pleasant, healthfull, fruitful and temperate then any other.

Secondly, that our laws, government, and disposition of the people, I may say, are not onely as good, but much better then any other, for the ease, quiet, peace and security of a people.

Thirdly, if our trade and manufactures were but improved to that advantage, as they are capable of, there would be no countrey in the world, where industrious people might improve their estates, and grow more rich, then in this; and the hope of gain commonly bears so great a sway amongst men, that it is alone sufficient to prevail with most.

Fourthly, this being the most eminent and intire countrey of all others, that profess the Protestant Religion (which profession is very numerous in most of the other countreys of Europe, but many of them under constraint and danger, and the free liberty of mens consciences with security to their persons, being above all things most desirable) it cannot be doubted, or denied (were those impediments removed, that now may hinder) but we might be sufficiently stored with wealthy and industrious people, from all parts of Europe.

And were there not so many divine reasons to prefer the Protestant Religion before all others, as being doubtless above all the most free from vain and superstitious beliefs and ceremonies, being the onely model of true piety and vertue, without those allays of pretended pious evils, that some abound with; contriving by murder, treason and mischief, to advance their opinions: I say, if there were not these reasons for it, but that the Protestant Religion wanted this unvaluable worth, to prefer it before others, and suppose it onely equal with the rest; yet in humane prudence it is most eligible, and to be preferred by the Prince of this nation before all others.

First, because thereby, he remains the onely Supreme, under God, in these dominions; and controllable by none: whereby his power in government is much confirmed, and the peace of his people secured; when if it were otherwise (as in some it is) that means consciences were at the dispose of others; who use their power onely to the advancement of their own wealth, pride & greatness; it cannot be avoided, but that the Princes Interest and theirs may often differ; when can never happen but to the Princes great hazard, and peoples ruine; of which truth, there have been already too many sad examples in his kingdom; so as I conceive, there needs little more to be said to perswade a Prince, to prefer his own peace, security and freedom, aobe the perswasions of any, that

only seek their own private Interest and advantage.

Secondly, for the Prince of this nation, to profess the reformed Protestant Religion, is a matter of greatest policy & prudence, for the advance of his own power and greatness: For as it is said before, considering how desirable the country is in it self, and the only chief in Europe of this profession; and the hazardous and dangerous condition of those in other countries, & the power that the persuasions of mens consciences have to prevail with them, he may always be assured of this, that where any of this profession in other countreys, shall happen to be persecuted or injured by a stronger party of a contrary belief, their refuge will certainly be to him, either to be received as his Subjects in his own country, or else to offer their service to help to become Lord of their own; or otherwise, if quarrels or differences should happen to arise between this Prince and the Prince of any other neighbour country, if they should make war upon him, he would be assured of friends abroad to help to divert them, or if he should find it fitting to attach others, he cannot want confederates and assistants in the prosecution of his design, especially if there be any thing of pretence of Religion in the case: which is seldom wanting, where it is any ways serviceable to advance a design.

But by the way it is to be observed, that as this may be of certain advantage to this Prince against others, so would it be of like mischief to himself or worse, should he suffer the Interest of any other Prince to have the like advantage against him; and in this kind there is but one profession which is so considerable, either amongst our selves at home, or in countreys abroad, that is worthy the taking notice of, and it is so Catholick as I shall not need to name it.

And though Christians ought not to persecute one another, and that only for small differences in opinion, when wha is right or wrong for the most part remains a doubt and uncertain; whil'st the evils are onely certain that such disputes produce.

And as it may be truly said, Morality may be short of true Religion, yet it is most certain, that no Religion can be pure that wants true morality: I shall onely therefore make this short observation, That that Religion shall endeavour to advance it self by all immoral and wicked ways and means, must needs be in that particular much defective. And though this be commonly practised by most, yet certainly the danger is greater from that whose profest principle it is, than from such others, who (though often guilty) yet wholly disown it. And what Prince, or state is likely to escape mischief, or be secure; when opportunity is offered to those, who by ties of conscience are obliged to ruine it and have Interest and subtilty enough to contrive the same? all which being rightly weighed and considered, it is evident, how perilous and desperate a thing it might prove, if it were onely on account of policy, and self-preservation, for a Prince to admit or countenance such things, which have not the least shew or appearance of good, or advantage, but in all likelihood, of most certain hazard and ruine, both to Himself and State.

But granting what is said to be true, yet what can be objected against the countenancing, or at least toleration of all such other sorts of Christian professions, who pretend they have not the will, nor probably can have the power, to contrive or act any thing considerable to the damage, or disquiet of the Prince or State.

It may be answered, that the toleration of all such in it self doth not appear altogether so dangerous to the Prince or State: But if the nature of man be rightly considered, together with the common zeal in matters of Religion, you shall finde that commonly things of the smallest consequence make the greatest differences;

and, as the same faith and belief, doth very much increase love and affection, so contrariwise difference in opinions, do only beget & engender contempt, & animosities towards one another; by which means the Prince shall at no time be either quiet, or secure. For should the Prince suffer all indifferently, and not elect some one which should always be countenanced, and maintained as the chief, and most universal profession of his kingdom: the confusions would be so great, and the Princes Interest so small amongst them, for want of any dependency on him; that a kingdom so divided against it self, could not stand.

And on the other side, should the Prince first settle a government in the Church, as it is at this day, and then give toleration to all others; the mischievous consequence would not be much less: for first, all such as would withdraw, would not without grudging pay their dues to Parsons, from whom they receive no recompence, nay rather, whom they contemn and hate.

Secondly, upon all invasions from abroad, or rebellions at home, the Prince shall be sure to have all such for his enemies, as shall be so tolerated.

First, because of their certain hatred to the present Church-government: by which they conceive, that they receive many injuries, and oppressions.

Secondly, in hope every one to advance their own party, could they remove the power in being; each imagining their own opinion as the most worthy, would first take place.

And lastly, where such advantages are offered, to strengthen any discontented party, no Prince can hope, or expect to be long quiet or secure.

These mischiefs and inconveniences, having of long time been so obvious, it hath been thought by some, that a strict uniformity in Church-government, is the onely means to prevent all the aforesaid inconveniences.

I conceive it cannot well be denied, but then care would be taken, that what is so imposed, be onely such things as are barely necessary and such as may agree best with the quiet and preservation of the State. And in this also good regard would be had, to the most sober way of the same profession in other countreys; which would much advance the design aforesaid, and in all likelihood would preserve the Princes power more entire, and his people in greater fidelity, love and peace.

But to return to the cause that first moved this discourse, as a means to multiply people, and enrich the kingdom, it may be objected;

First, that it doth not appear that people are wanting, but rather that we have already too many, if we consider the number of poor people that are found in every place; and it might be prudence, first, to employ these, before we endeavour to multiply more.

Secondly, that to give the like liberty and priviledge to foreiners, that English-men have, might be a means to undo the natives; for foreiners by their Correspondents abroad, and industry at home, will gain all the trade to themselves, and also by purchasing of estates, will make our land much the dearer.

It is answered first; It is true considering our present condition, how trade is decayed, and the little encouragement people have to industry, we have already more people then are well employed; but I conceive, it is so much the greater damage to the Prince, to have his people both few and poor; but if the manufactures and other profitable employments of this nation, were rightly improved and encouraged, there is no doubt but the people, and riches of the kingdom might be greatly increased and

multiplied, both to the profit, and honour of the Prince.

Secondly, that any Englishman, of the like ingenuity as a stranger will have the like advantage of trade, as any stranger can have, as to the exportation or importation of any commodities, for they may have their correspondents abroad as well as the other: yet, suppose they could not, it would be no damage to the kingdom, but an advantage, if the Subjects by this means be more plentifully and cheaply provided with all foreign commodities, & may gain a better price, and vent for their own, and the number and Interests that can pretend to suffer hereby, are so few, & inconsiderable that it bears no proportion with the advantage.

And further, by this liberty to foreigners, we should quickly attain to the perfection of those manufactures, which now we so highly value and purchase so dear from abroad: for many of the best Artists of other countries, no doubt in short time would be transported hither, perhaps no less to the benefit of this nation, then the like encouragement hath been in former times, by the improvement of our art of clothing; and by which practice the Hollander at this day reaps unknown advantages. And as for raising the price and value of our lands, or of any thing else that is our own; it is of so great an advantage, that it might be wished, nothing were cheap amongst us but only money.

But to proceed in order, and first of our natural store, and annual increase of the soil, the annual profit and increase of the soil of this kingdom, consists chiefly in corn of all sorts, flax, hemp, hops, wooll, and many more such like; and also the best sorts of cattle, as bullocks, horse and sheep; and the greater our increase is of any of these commodities, the richer may we be; for, money, and all foreign commodities that come hither, are only bought by the exchange of our own commodities; wherefore by how much our own store doth exceed those necessaries we want from abroad, by so much will the plenty of money be increased amongst us.

Our care should therefore be to increase chiefly those things which are of least charge at home, and greatest value abroad; and cattle may be of far greater advantage to us, then corn can be, if we might make the best profit of them; for that the profit we can make of any corn by exportation, is much hindered by the plenty that neighbour countries afford of that commodity, as good or better than we have any. Wherefore, could we employ our lands to any thing of more worth, we could not want plenty of corn, though we had none of our own; for what we should increase in the room of it, of greater value by exportation, would not only bring us home as much corn as that land would have yielded, but plenty of money to boot.

Of cattle, the most considerable are horse, sheep, and bullocks, in all which we do not only excel in goodness all other countries, whereby we can vent the profits of them at far greater rates, but we may also by our singular advantage, in the increase of those cattle, have the sole trade, being able so far to exceed our own wants, as to furnish all our neighbours, who must be forced to good rates, no other country affording the like for goodness, or scarce sufficient for their own use.

And might we freely have the liberty to export them, or so much of them as may be fitting, we should need no laws to hinder the exportation of corn; for we should find thereby a profit, so far exceeding that which might be raised out of every acre, that we might better afford to give a far greater price to buy it, than we can now sell it for. For the profit of one acre of pasture, in the flesh, hide and tallow of an Ox; or in the flesh, wooll and tallow of a sheep; or in the carcase of a horse, is of so much greater value abroad, than the like yield of the earth would be in corn; that the exportations of this nation might be at least double to

what it is, if rightly disposed. Wherefore it is to be wished, that the Supreme power would so far tender the publick good, in which it is so much concerned, as to remove all impediments, and promote all endeavours, which tend to so great and publick an advantage.

The greatest impediments in this Improvement are chiefly these,

First, men cannot make the best of their own lands.

Secondly, when they have, they cannot sell the increase of it to the best advantage. And these may be thus amended.

First, by a liberty for every man to enjoy his lands in severalty and inclosure; one of the greatest Improvements this nation is capable of; for want whereof, we find by daily experience, that the profit of a great part of the land and stock in this kingdom, as now employed, is wholly lost. And this appears, in that the land of the common fields, almost in all places of this nation, with all the advantages that belong unto them, will not let for above one third part so much as the same land would do inclosed, and always several. And on the great Commons, a house with commoning will not let for one quarter so much, as it would do were its proportion several unto it. And all this by reason of the many several Interests: whence it is, that men cannot agree to employ it to its properest use, and best advantage: whereby much land is tilled with great labour, and small profit; and much land fed to the starving of the cattel, and the impoverishing the inhabitants; to the increase of nothing but beggery in this nation; all which inconveniences, would by inclosure be prevented.

But it may be objected, that many other inconveniences would happen by inclosure; and chiefly, it would cause great depopulations and scarcity of corn, as hath been conceived by former Parliaments; which appears by their opposing, rather than advancing of it; upon this opinion, that inclosure would convert the land to pasture; one hundred acres of which, will scarce maintain a shepherd and his dog, which now maintains many families, employed in tillage; and by experience it is found, that many towns, which when their lands were in tillage had many families, now they are inclosed, have not so many inhabitants in them.

To this I answer,

First, that inclosures would not have been opposed, had it not appeared, that most landlords endeavoured it; which is a greater argument of Improvement: for, did not the landlord suppose it would improve his land to a higher value, he would never have been perswaded to do it; and the reason why it would have been of greater advantage to the landlord, is, because the tenant could make more profit of it, or else he should not finde them so greedy after pasture, at so high a rate, when they may have arable enough for half the value; and this proves inclosure is profitable, since the same land is thereby raised to a far greater value.

Secondly, as for Corn, it would be nothing the scarcer by inclosure, but the rather more plentiful, though a great deal less land were tilled: for then every ingenious husband would onely plow that land that he found most fitting for it, and that no longer than he found it able to bring him profit: so as he would out of one acre, raise more corn than in the common field can be raised of two, whereby one acre would be saved for other uses, besides the charges of mens and cattels labours; whereas in the common fields, where the tenant doth not plow, the profit of the land is lost; whereby he is forced to a continual plowing, though to the ruine and damage both of the land, and of himself: so as that land, labour, and charge is lost, which otherwise might be employed, to the profit and advantage of the kingdom.

Thirdly, as to depopulations by inclosures, granting it

increaseth plenty, as cannot well be denied, How increase and plenty can depopulate, cannot well be conceived: nor surely do any imagine that the people which lived in those towns they call depopulated, were all destroyed, because they lived no longer there; when indeed they were onely removed to other places, where they might better benefit themselves, and profit the publick.

Certainly they might as well think the nation undone, should they observe how London is depopulated in a long vacation, when men are only retired into the countrey, about their private and necessary employments; and the like might thy think of the countrey in the Term time, yet a man is not thereby added, or diminished to the nation.

Fourthly, as many or more families may be maintained and employed, in the manufacture of the wooll that may arise out of one hundred acres of pasture, than can be employed in a far greater quantity of arable; who perhaps do not always finde it most convenient for them to live, just on the place where the wooll groweth; by which means cities and great towns are peopled, nothing to the prejudice of the kingdom.

Wherefore then if by inclosure the land it self is raised to a greater value, and a less quantity capable of a greater increase, and if really it causeth no depopulations, but at most a removal of people thence; where without benefit to the publick, or profit to themselves, they labored and toiled, to a more convenient habitation, where they might with less paines greatly advantage both: And if the manufactures and other profitable employments of this nation are increased, by adding thereto such numbers of people, who formerly served onely to waste, not to increase the store of the nation, it cannot be denied, but the encouragement of inclosure, where every mans just right may be preserved, would infinitely conduce to the increase and plenty of this nation, and is a thing very worth the countenance and care of a Parliament.

In the next place, the product of our Mines of lead, tin, iron, coals, allum, and the like, may also be accounted amongst the annual increase of the soil, and the product of these are onely obtained by the labour and industry of the people, and are very serviceable at home and profitable abroad; and therefore the increase of them doth very well deserve all just encouragement.

Lastly, the great plenty of fish our seas naturally afford may be accounted amongst our other annual increases, and the profit of these onely depend on peoples labour, and that in such a kinde as it doth not onely increase the plenty and wealth of the kingdom, but also may be very serviceable to preserve and increase the honour and safety of our nation, by increasing our shipping; especially if some course were taken to prevent others from robbing us of so great a treasure, and therefore very worthy of the publick care to maintain and incourage; but the concernment of this is already so well know to every one to be so great, as it is not needful to discourse it further.

In the next place, our manufactures ar to be considered, on which chiefly depends both the wealth and prosperity of this kingdom: for by the increase and encouragement thereof, the Subjects are employed in encouragement thereof, the Subjects are employed in honest and industrious callings, maintained and preserved from want, and those mischiefs which commonly attend idleness: the people furnished at home with all things both of necessity and pleasure; and by the overplus procure from abroad, what ever for use or delight is wanting.

The chief manufactures amongst us at this day, are onely woollen clothes, woollen stuff, of all sorts, stockings, ribbandings, and perhaps some few silk stuffs, and some other small

things, scarce worth naming; and these already named so decayed and adulterated, that they are almost out of esteem both at home and abroad.

And this, because forein commodities are grown into so great esteem amongst us, as we wholly undervalue and neglect the use of our own, whereby that great expence of treasure, that is yearly wasted in clothing, furnitures, and the like; redounds chiefly to the profit of strangers, and to the ruine of his Majesties Subjects.

And this will more plainly appear, if we examine the vast sums of money the French yearly delude us of; either by such commodities as we may as well have of our own, or else by such others, as we might as well in great part be without: whereby no doubt our treasure will be soon exhausted, and the people ruined, as this particular may make appear, which not long since was delivered in to the King of France, upon a design he had to have forbidden the trade between France and England; supposing the value of English commodities sent into France, did surmount the value of those that were transported hither.

1. There is transported out of France into England, great quantities of velvets plain and wrought, sattins plain and wrought, cloth of gold and silver, Armoysins and other merchandises of silk, which are made at Lions, and are valued to be yearly worth one hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

2. In silk, stuffs, taffeties, poudesoys, armoysins, clothes of gold and silver, tabbies, plain and wrought, silk-ribbands and other such like silk stuffs as are made at Tours, valued to be worth above three hundred thousand pounds by year.

3. In silk ribbands, gallowns, laces, and buttons of silk, which are made at Paris, Rouen, Chaimont, S. Estines in Forrests, for about one hundred and fifty thousand pounds by year.

4. A great quantity of serges, which are made at Chalons, Chartres, Estamines and rhemes, and great quantities of serges made a Amiens, Crevecoeur, Blicourt, and other towns in Picardy, for above one hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year.

5. In bever, demicastor and felt hats, mad ein the city and suburbs of Paris; besides many others made at Rouen, Lions, and other places, for about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year.

6. In feathers, belts, girdle, hatbands, fans, hoods, masks, gilt and wrought looking-glasses, cabinets, watches, pictures, cases, medals, tablets, bracelets, and other such like mercery ware, for above one hundred and fity thousand pounds a year.

7. In pins, needles, box-combs, tortois-shell combs, and such like, for about twenty thousand pounds a year.

8. In perfumed and trimmed gloves, that are made at Paris, Rouen, Vendosme, Clermont, and other places, for about ten thousand pounds a year.

9. In papers of all sorts, which are made at Auvergne, Poictou, Limosin, Champagne and Normandy, for above one hundred thousand pounds a year.

10. In all sorts of iron-mongers wares that are made in Forrests, Auvergne, and other places, for about fourty thousand pounds a year.

11. In linen cloth that is made in Britainy and Normandy, as well course as fine, thre is transprted into England, for above four hundred thousand pounds a year.

12. In household-stuff, consisting of beds, mattresses, coverlids, hangings, fringes of silk and other furniture, for above one hundred thousand pounds a year.

13. In wines for Gascoigne, Nantois and other places on the

river of Loyer, and also from Bourdeaux, Rachel, Nante, Rouen and other places, are transported into England for above six hundred thousand pounds a year.

14. In aqua vitae, sider, vinegar, verjuice, and such like, for about one hundred thousand pounds a year.

15. In saffron, castle-sope, honey, almonds, olives, capers, prunes and such like, for about one hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year.

16. Besides five or six hundred vessels of salt, loaden at Maron, Rochel, Bouage, the isle of Oleron, and isle of Rhee, transported into England, and Holland, of a very great value. So as by this calculation, it doth appear, that the yearly value of such commodities as are transported from France to England, amount to above six & twenty hundred thousand pounds.

And the commodities exported out of England into France, consisting chiefly of woollen clothes, serges, knit stockings, lead, pewter, allum, coals, and all else, do not amount to above ten hundred thousand pounds a year. By which it appears that our trade with France is at least sixteen hundred thousand pounds a year, clear lost to this kingdom:

Whereby the King of France, finding it would prove to his loss, to forbid the trade with England, soon laid aside the design; however raised the customs of some of our English commodities, by which means the vent of those commodities is very much lessened and hindred.

Hereby it may appear how insensibly our treasure will be exhausted, and the nation begger'd, whilst we carelessly neglect our own Interest, and strangers abroad are diligent to make their advantages by us.

But most of these evils would be easily prevented, if onely his Majesty would be pleased to commend to his people, by his own example, the esteem and value he hath of his own commodities, in which the greatest Courtier may be as honourably clad, as in the best dress, Paris, or a French Taylour can put him in; besides it seems to be more honourable for a King of England, rather to become a pattern to his own people, than to conform to the humours and fancies of other nations, especially when it is so much to his prejudice.

This alone, without further trouble, would be at least ten hundred thousand pounds a year to the advantage of his people; for the Courtiers always endeavour to imitate the Prince, being desirous to obtain his favour, which they can no way better do, than by approving his actions in being of like humour; and the Court being the copy that the Gentry strive to write after, and the rest of the people commonly follow; it appears of what great consequence and advantage the good example of a Prince, is to the benefit of his people.

And whereas it sometimes hath been thought prudence in a Prince, to forbid and discountenance the excess of apparel in his Subjects; whereby many of the nobility themselves have ruined their families, and most of the Gentry have been impoverished; whereby the great expence and wast of treasure in that vanity doth appear; yet I conceive, in a convenient manner it rather ought to be maintained, and encouraged, onely observing these rules.

First, that the vanity of the expence do not depend on such commodities, as have too much of the substance of gold, silver, or silk; whereby the publick treasure is wasted and lost.

Secondly, that we improvish not ourselves to enrich stranger, by that unnatural vanity, in preferring foreign commodities though worse, before our own, that are better.

Thirdly, that the excess of this expense consist chiefly in

the art, manufacture and workmanship of the commodity made in our own country; whereby ingenuity would be encouraged, the people employed, and our treasure kept at home, so as the Prince would be nothing damnified by the excess: for the ruine of one would raise as much another of his Subjects; and money would thereby be more moving, which would be a great encouragement, and satisfaction to the people.

To name the particulars of such commodities as would hereby be increased, would be endless and needless, when in a word it is, whatever at present we purchase from abroad, which we might as well raise of our own at home. But some perhaps may say, that this would destroy our trade abroad, for many of our commodities are vented, by the exchange of them for other commodities we bring home in return.

I answer, it is no prejudice to lose that trade which is a loss to keep; and if our importations of foreign commodities be of far greater value than our own exportations, our treasure must needs be wasted to even the balance; and so our own people remain idle & poor, for the vent of one thousand pounds worth of commodities abroad, is of little advantage to the people, if thereby they are hindered of the vent of two thousand at home.

Wherefore these particulars considered, it is evident of what great concernment it is to a Prince, to encourage and increase the trade, and manufacture of his own people. And so much concerning trade at home.

In the next place concerning our trade abroad with strangers: and this would also be encouraged, and increased by all means possible, and when any commodity is raised to the greatest height it is capable of, it should be free for exportation, under so reasonable customs, that the Merchant may afford his commodity abroad, as cheap as others, or else he would not be able to vent it.

Secondly, all foreign commodities that are useful, to improve our own manufactures and trade abroad, and cannot be raised here, should be brought unto us under easie customs, the better to enable us at an easie exchange, to vent our commodities abroad.

Thirdly, all foreign commodities whatsoever, that are only useful to be spent within the nation, & that have already all their perfection, as fruits, sugars, wines, linen cloth, laces, silks & what else can receive no addition here, and are not to be again transported; such commodity should pay extraordinary customs, but should not be forbidden to be brought in: For by this means, these commodities will be so dear to the people, that it will much wean them from so lavish an use of them, as might otherwise be, for such things as we are capable to raise, it will much increase it of our own; whereby the State will raise a good revenue, and the country save their wealth, that would be wastfully spent abroad, and so increase our own manufactures at home.

Fourthly, the increase of our land in any kinde (except sheep alive and mares) that have already all the perfection that we can add unto them, should be free for exportation, under reasonable customs; and of all things this nation is capable to raise, there is not any one of so great profit, as the exportation of horses, which of all commodities is of least charge to be raised at home, and of greatest value abroad. But to this may be many objections.

First, that it will make horses dear.

Secondly, that the exportation of stone-horses may be prejudicial, by furnishing others with our breed.

Besides, it may enable our enemies who may invade us, and we shall also weaken our selves by sending away our best horses; with other such objections.

But to these it is answered,

First, as for the dearness of any thing we sell to strangers, the more money we get it for by how much the dearer it is; and the only way to be rich, is to have plenty of that commodity to vent, that is of the greatest value abroad; for what the price of any thing is amongst our selves, whether dear or cheap, it matters not; for as we pay, so we receive, and the countrey is nothing damnified by it; but the art is when we deal with strangers, to sell dear and to buy cheap; and this will increase our wealth.

Secondly, to vent stone-horses, would be of far better profit then to vent geldings; for that a stone-horse will give far more money, with the same charges to us, besides the loss of many horses in gelding; and as for any prejudice to our breed, I conceive it no danger, if mares be not transported; for one horse will cover twenty mares as well as twenty horse may do: wherefore the increase of the horses do nothing increase the breed; and in France where we should best vent our horses, they have always horses enough, and of very great value and goodness, sufficient for stallions; but they have neither mares nor conveniency to breed; for the contrey generally is all champion, corn-fields, and vineyards, and also so unsafe to venture any cattel of such worth without stone walls to guard them, that scarce all the summer, either horse or cow is left abroad in the night, without a guard; besides, if they could breed, the breed of it self would prove degenerate, and soon be lost, the countrey being naturally improper for it.

As for enabling our enemies to invade us, I conceive there is but little danger in that. At present we have amity with all those countries that desire our horses, and if at any time it should be found fitting, to forbid the transportation of them, the prejudice that might happen by those already transported, would soon be past; for of five hundred horses that should be transported, I verily beleve in less than five years, there would scarce be five remaining.

Yet further, it doth not concern us to fear any such power in our neighbours, we having no frontiers subject to sudden incursions; but our defence consists chiefly in another strength which is our ships at sea, which should they be insufficient to guard us, I doubt the enemies want of our horses would be but small security.

And as to the weakening of our selves, by sending away our best horses, whereby we may want for our own use, this I conceive is a groundless fear, and wholly mistaken; for the good profit we should make by a free vent of this commodity, would encourage every ingenious husband, to be well provided with what is so profitable; and every man would endeavour, not onely to increase his breed but also to be curious in the goodness of them; so as it will rather be a double advantage to us; for as by the profit of those we send abroad, we shall greatly increase our wealth, and far more by this means than by any other this countrey is capable of, out of its own store; so we shall also have more choice, and plenty of this so serviceable and profitable a creature, both for use and pleasure.

By the improvement of our trade as aforesaid both at home and abroad, whereby our exportations of commodities would exceed our importations, a very great & signal advantage would acruer not commonly taken notice of, and it is the profit we should then make of our returning money, by bills of exchange, in which at this present we suffer an unvaluable loss: for as it is said before, our importations exceeding our exportations, our coin & treasure must needs be wasted to even the balance and consequently more money drawn by exchange out of the countrey than is returned back again; whereby we are forced to give far more than the intrinsick value of

the thing, to receive our monies beyond the sea, to supply our occasions, the number being greater of those that desire to receive moneys abroad, then of those that want it at home; for it is in this as in all other commodities, Where the commodity is scarce, and the vent great, the purchase is alwaies dear; and the forein Merchant finding our necessity, makes his advantage upon us incredibly to our loss; so that by this means it also happens, that our coin and bullion is transported; it being found more profitable then returns by exchange, for the reasons aforesaid: and our gold bieng of less value at home then it is abroad it hath been all conveyed away within these few years: and laws to prevent it shall always prove fruitless, when it is advantageous to do it; there being means sufficient to be found to effect it, by such as shall find it profitable.

Wherefore to make laws to hinder the exportation of coin or bullion, I conceive altogether useless.

First, because it doth nothing prevent it where it is intended; and Secondly, in many cases it is most advantageous to do it. For in some countreys, some commodities are no way to be purchased at cheaper rates, than by money in specie: and if by the right ordering and disposing of our trade, our exportations did exceed our importations, in value; our coin and bullion would be daily increased; there being no other means to even the balance of trade.

And here it may not be altogether improper, to speak someting concerning our money and coin, which is also a commodity as well as the rest; in which these particulars are chiefly to be respected.

First, to consider and examine if the gold to silver, in England, be of the like proportionable value; as the gold to silver, in France, Spain, Holland, and other forein countreys.

Secondly, to consider the allay of gold, and silver, in England, to that of other countreys.

Thirdly, to consider if the coin be of equal value with the currant price of bullion, the charge of coining onely deducted.

Lastly, how to order our coin, so as may be most honourable and profitable to the nation.

To the first, it doth appear that the gold in England doth not bear so good a value to silver as it doth in France, and other forein countreys; whereby all our gold is exported and not our silver.

Secondly, the allay both of gold and silver in England, is finer than in other parts; which is rather a prejudice, then an advantage, it giving no more in forein countreys, than onley accordingly to the weight by their standard, without consideration to the pureness.

Thirdly, our coin is not equal to the true value of the silver, the coinage onely deducted; for by the imperfection of our mint, the pieces of the same value are made so various, that some shillings will weigh fourteen pence, and some not above eight pence; which afterwards, being new weighed over, and culled by the goldsmiths, through whose hands most of our bullion passeth, the heavy ones are picked out, and onely the leight ones, and those of under value, pass for currant; which is a most eminent abuse and wrong to the publick.

Wherefore lastly, in preventin to these inconveniences, First, our gold would be raised in proportion to silver, at leas equal with what it bears in France, and other countreys; and if it be desired to increase, chiefly, that species, a small addition to the value will soon do it.

Secondly, the allay would be made the same, with that in other countreys of Europe, with whom we chiefly traffick.

Thirdly, the abuses happening by the imperfection of our mint, as light and false money in abundance; any ill-favoured and imperfect false stamp being hardly to be distinguished from the true, might easily be prevented, by a more exact and curious stamp, as may easily be made by the way of milling; whereby not only the coin will be more beautiful, but also more equal in weight, and much more difficult to be clipped and counterfeited: especially if care be taken, to make the pieces large and thin; which will not only shew more great and noble, but will many ways be more easy to be distinguished from false, as by the sound, stiffness, weight and colour: it being both so difficult, and chargeable, to counterfeit money so formed, as few will hazard to undertake it.

Next, in order to our trade abroad, and safety at home, our shipping and navigation is to be considered; the increase and preservation whereof, is of great concernment to the Interest, safety, and well-being of this nation; for which the late act for trade, by the late pretended Parliament, did wisely provide, by ordering that no foreigner should bring any commodity hither, but what was the growth of their own country; Whereby the Hamburger and Flemming, that run hackney all the world over, were a little stayed from coming hither crowding so thick, with all foreign commodities as they were wont to do; whereby little, or no employment could be found for our own vessels; every thing being so plentifully brought hither by them; and at cheaper rates, than we our selves could fetch them.

But some perhaps may object, that, Sure it was an advantage to us, to be so cheaply and plentifully stored with foreign commodities, when we cannot be so cheaply furnished by our own shipping; for that we are at far greater charge, both in goodness of shipping, number of our men, and chargeable maintaining of them more than others.

I answer, It is true, that the same commodity brought hither in any of our own vessels, cannot be afforded so cheap as what might be brought by others; by reason indeed, that our shipping is much more chargeable, and better manned than any other: but this being rightly considered, it is rather an advantage than a prejudice to the publick; for, if commodities be thereby any thing the dearer, here at home, yet, we buy them as cheap abroad as any other; and all that others would have gained of us by the carriage, will now be earned by our own people; and whatever it costs the dearer to the purchaser here, is no prejudice to the publick, when our own nation receives the profit of it; especially it being by the increase of that, in which consists the greatest honour and safety of the kingdom. some might therefore think, that it might be of no less advantage, to forbid other nations to fetch any of our commodities, but to keep to our selves the benefit of the portage of them by our own shipping.

I answer, should we do this, we can expect no less, but that other nations would do the like towards us, whereby we should be very much prejudiced.

First, in that we should then lose the advantage which now we have, in bringing foreign commodities home; and besides, we should perhaps, want the vent of our own commodities, which certainly will always sell best, where most chapmen are found to buy them; so as by how much the cheaper they can transport them, so much the more they will be contented to give us here; moreover, the greatest part our Manufactures, are of so great value, and so light of carriage, that a small advantage in the price, or a little better vent, will soon compensate the loss of the portage of them; but indeed, if the Hamburger and Flemming, were prevented in the carriage of some of our more sluggish commodities, as sea-coal, lead, iron, allum,

fish; or the like, where the charge of the carriage many times is greater, than the whole value of the commodity it self, this might possibly increase something our Navigation, and yet hinder nothing the vent of those commodities, which others cannot at all be without; and we shall not much need to fear their requiring us in the same kinde; for neither the Hollander, nor Hamburger, have any such commocities of their own, as we need care to fetch; who are the onely nation, that employ themselves in this kinde of trade.

It may not also be improper, to reflect a little upon the benefit this nation doth, or may receive by forein Plantations.

I conceive, no forein Plantation should be undertaken, or prosecuted, but in such countreys that may increase the wealth and trade of this nation, either in furnishing us, with what we are otherwise forced to purchase from strangers, or else by increasing such commodities, as are vendible abroad; which may both increase our shipping, and profitably employ our people; but otherwise, it is always carefully to be avoided, especially where the charge is greater than the profit, for we want not already a countrey sufficient to double our people, were they rightly employed; and a Prince is more powerful that hath his strength and force united, then he that is weakly scattered in many places. But, To descend to particulars, viz. what commodities are most desireable and of greatest advantage, and what countreys and climates are most proper to increase them, would be too tedious to treat of here.

There yet remains something to be said concerning Merchants, associating themselves in companies; the benefit or prejudice whereof hath been often controverted, but something difficult to determine.

It is true, It is opposed by many, conceiving the free liberty of trade would be much more advantageous in the general, because these companies, keeping the trade to themselves onely, will have what commodities are to be vented abroad at their own price, and at an under-value; none having occasion to buy them but themselves: whereby the workmen are many times discouraged, and sometimes undone. And on the contrary, what commodities are brought home in exchange, they sell at what unreasonable rates they please, the whole commodity remaining in their hands; whereby the people in general, are very much damnified, and the companies onely enriched; whereas, if the trade were free, our own commodities having more chapmen, would sell at better rates, and what is brought home in return, would be distributed at much cheaper prices amongst the people.

This is for the most part a truth, yet, rightly considering the thing, it rather seems an advantage in the whole, then the least prejudice; for indeed, as they make their profit at home, so they make no less advantage abroad; for the whole commodity being in their hands, they will make the most that can be made of it; none having the like commodities to undersell them: and the like advantage they have again in what they buy; whereby in truth, our own commodities are sold the dearer to strangers, and forein commodities bought much the cheaper; when both would happen contrary in a free trade; where each will undersell the other, to vent most; and also purchase at any rates, to prevent the rest: besides, many times the trade is wholly lost, particulars being often too weak to maintain and undergo it, and there is nothing less of a commodity vented by a Company, than by single persons: for they will always furnish, as much as this trade requires; the more they vent, the more being their profit. Whereby it may appear, that Companies both vent our own commodities to the best advantages and buy cheapest what we want from strangers; and the prejudice that may happen by them to the workmen, or home-chapmen, is fully

recompensed by the clear profit they return to the publick; of which they are members, as well as others. But if their particular profits be thought too great, it may be something moderated by a free liberty, that every one that please, may be admitted of the Company, on fit and reasonable terms.

In the last place, concerning the use of money; which being the life and sinews of trade, it hath been the opinion of some that, The greater use were allowed for money, the more would be the profit of the publick for that strangers, finding a greater benefit to be made of their money here, then other where, would send it hither; whereby money would be much more plentiful amongst us.

Indeed, I should be of their opinion, if as soon as by this means, great sums of money were transported hither, all their money should be confiscate to the publick; but if otherwise, sure it cannot be denied, but the greater the use the more the profit to the usurer, and loss to the debtor; so as in a few years, we should finde our selves so little enriched thereby, that when the principal should be again recalled, we should find but little money left; all our own being wasted in use: wherefore indeed the true benefit to the publick is, to set the use of money as low, or rather lower than in our neighbour-countreys it is; for then they would make no profit out of us, by that means; but rather we on them. and it is the clear profit that we get out of our own that will make this Nation rich; and not the great sums we are indebted to others.

Many prticulars more might reasonably be discourd of, and this already touched, possibly by some other might be more exactly and amply treated on; but these being the most material things that I could call to memory, and most conducing (in my opinion) to the improvement and prosperity of the Nation, and consequently to my present design; I shall satisfie my self with this Essay; hoping the subject being so worthy, some other and more skilful and knowing Pen, may be provoked to enlarge it further.

FINIS.

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