CONSIDERATIONS

ON

TWO PAPERS

Lately Publiſhed.

The Firſt, called, *Seaſonable Remarks*, &c. And the other, *An Eſſay* on *Trade* in General, and on That of *IRELAND*, in Particular.

DUBLIN:
Printed in the Year 1728.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

WHATEVER the first Grounds of Trade have been, it is certainly now so interwoven with the Interest of Princes, that no Nation can be truly powerful without a Share of the Riches that are thereby obtained. For this Reason the Improvement of Trade is become a principal Affair of State: And as no Ties among Princes are of superior Obligation to the Good of their respective Countries; so all Nations, in their Dealings with one another, may be said to be, as it were, in a State of Nature; ever ready to lay hold of any Opportunity that may offer, to aggrandize themselves. Thus they endeavour to gain the most they can by Trade, little regarding the

Loſs of thoſe Countries they traffick with, unleſs it be in order to encreaſe the Calculation of their own Profit.

Since therefore Trade is not only neceſſary to the Well-Being of a State, but is alſo a Game whereat Nations muſt play; tho' they are at the ſame time ſenſible no Ties of Friendſhip are ſufficient to defend them from being overreach'd whenever it is in the Power of their Antagoniſts to do ſo, it is abſolutely neceſſary People ſhould be acquainted with the Nature of the whole Game, to the end they may prevent, or counterplot the Schemes laid for deſtroying the Intereſt of their Country.

But this Skill is not ſo eaſily attained as the Generality of Men imagine. The Alterations of Trade are ſo various and frequent, that it is not from old Schemes we muſt judge of the preſent State of it; nor is a Wandring in Generals, or a ſuperficial and ſmattering

tering Knowledge in the common Intereſt of Countries, with reſpect to Trade, nor of their Wants and Superfluities, which are eaſily pick'd out of Books, a ſufficient Evidence of a Man's having acquired this Science: He ought moreover to be well verſed in the Commercial Laws of his own Country, and in the Laws, Cuſtoms and Practices of thoſe Nations with which it trades, all which are to be conſidered, compared and weighed with Judgment, before he ſhould preſume to form peremptory Concluſions, or advance dogmatical Aſſertions, with reſpect to the Trade and Intereſt of his Country, as it relates to that of other Nations.

I have been lead into this way of conſidering the Nature of Trade, and the Intricacies of it, by two Papers which have lately appeared in Print, and whereof it ſeems we are to have more brought into the World; but the Author keeping

his Name concealed, it is not poſſible to convince him in private of many Miſtakes he has been guilty of. I am therefore under a Neceſſity of taking this Method of remarking on ſome of them, to prevent the World's being miſlead into falſe Notions of the State of this Country.

If what my Author ſays, of the Encreaſe of the Wealth of *Ireland*, were true, he might have boldly concluded, not only *that ſtinted in Trade, and waſted by* Out-Lyers *as we are, there is ſtill ſomewhat left highly deſerving of our Care and Circumſpection*; but he might have alſo ſaid, that *Ireland*, under all thoſe Preſſures, and notwithſtanding the Waſte of a long, bloody and inveterate War, maintain'd in her Bowels, has encreaſed in Riches within theſe 50 Years in a greater Degree of Proportion than any other Country in *Europe*; which is ſuch an Aſſertion, that I dare ſay will not be credited by any Perſon who is

ever

ever ſo little converſant with the Affairs of *Ireland*. And yet what my Author maintains amounts to this, when he pretends to prove, that ſince the Year 1676. the Value of Lands and Improvements in *Ireland* is encreaſed from 9 Millions to near 56 Millions and an Half, whereby he makes the Encreaſe to have been above ſix fold, which is three times more than the moſt ſanguine Computor ever aſſerted the Riches of the moſt flouriſhing Country in *Europe* have been encreaſed in that time. And if we are thus encreaſed in Riches, does it not follow, that our Taxes ought to be proportionably encreaſed? which, I hope, is not the Concluſion my Author aims at.

It is true, Sir *William Petty* makes the yearly Rent of the Lands in *Ireland* (comprehending Quit Rent, Tythes and Tenants Improvements) to have been in 1676, about 900,000 *l.* or 2 *s.* *per* Acre, *Iriſh* Plantation Meaſure. But our

Author ſays, they are now worth 2,824,870 *l. per ann.* that is, about 6 *s.* 4 *d. per* Acre, which is more than the Land of *England*, including all the Houſes and Improvements of that immenſly rich Kingdom is computed at, according to their Meaſure. From whence alone it is evident, how wild a Computation my Author has made of this Article, and that it is a needleſs Work to deſcend to any nice Scrutiny of Particulars with him.

It is certain the Value of Lands to be purchaſed in *Ireland*, is conſiderably encreas'd ſince Sir *W. Petty* wrote his Anatomy of *Ireland*. The unſettled State of Affairs then, and the high Intereſt of Money in *Ireland*, kept the Value of Lands at 10 Years Purchaſe, and now they ſell at 20; but it does not thence follow that *Ireland*, conſidered in itſelf, is grown in ſuch a degree of Proportion, as my Author aſſerts, richer than it was in 1676; for tho' Lands let and

ſell

ſell dearer now than they did then, yet as the Benefit of thoſe Purchaſes and Encreaſe of Rents does not entirely accrue to the Inhabitants of the Country, but proportionably encreaſe the annual Drafts on us by our *Out-Lyers*, &c. in *England*, we are ſtill kept in a very low Eſtate.

It is true *England* (and therein the general Intereſt of the *Britiſh* Empire, whereof *Ireland* is an eſſential Part) is thereby greatly benefitted; but though *Ireland*, is grown richer, yet, it is not in a ſix fold Proportion, ſince, as the annual Debts paid into *England* by Sir *W. Petty*'s Computation, amounted only to 200,000 *l.* that Sum was in leſs Proportion to 900,000 *l.* the then Rental of *Ireland*, than 600,000 *l.* which my Author ſays is now annually ſent into *England*, is to 1,600,000 *l.* which, according to the beſt Computations I have yet met, is the utmoſt Value of our preſent Rental.

At another time I may perhaps be

be inclined to enter farther into the Conſideration of this Matter, and to lay down ſome Rules, which may prevent Computers in political Arithmetick from falling into ſuch palpable Errors, as my Author has committed with relation to the Intereſt of *Ireland*; but at preſent I ſhall only deſire him to conſider, that no Nation could ever encreaſe in Riches with that Velocity he has made *Ireland*, without a proportional Encreaſe of Caſh, and of People.

Now Sir *W. Petty* ſays, the Caſh of *Ireland* was 400,000 *l.* and the People, 1,100,000. At this time our Caſh is at moſt 600,000 *l.* and our People 1,500,000. This is in truth a conſiderable Encreaſe, conſidering the Circumſtances of our Affairs, and it bears a proper Proportion to the Encreaſe of our Rental from 9 to 16 hundred thouſand Pounds *per ann.* but it is in no degree of Proportion to the imaginary Encreaſe of our Wealth, as laid down by my Author.

The

The next Miſtake I ſhall take notice of, is the Account of our Trade with *France*, whereby my Author ſays we gain 117,281 *l. per an.* Indeed if he ſaid we loſe ſo much by that Trade, he would be nearer the Truth.

Merchants, it is certain, are often byaſſed in giving their Advice for the Encouragement of thoſe Trades they are accuſtomed to gain by; however, in ſome things it will be worth my Author's while to conſult them.

They will be able to tell him, that the *Iriſh* Trade with *France* is under ſuch ſevere Reſtrictions in that Country, that they are forced to ſend Money, or, what is the ſame Thing, to pay for the greateſt Part of the Goods they bring from thence, with Bills of Exchange. That as to the National Trade, it is evidently to our Prejudice; tho' indeed particular Merchants get thereby, as they often do by the moſt pernicious Trades.

I intend to treat of this Matter more fully at another Time; and I ſhall therefore at preſent content my ſelf with ſaying, that *France* ſhews no Manner of Favour to *Ireland*, but what their Neceſſities for our Proviſions, and Materials for Manufactures, enforces them to: Yet we are ſo fond of this (I will call it) deſtructive Commerce, that the Duties on *French* Wines, *&c.* are more favourable, than what is paid for the ſame Goods from *Spain* and *Portugal*, by both which Trades, we, as all other Nations, are conſiderable Gainers.

But my Author ſays, he has the Authority of the Cuſtom-Houſe Books for what he advances; yet it may be obſerved, that thoſe Books are not an infallible Evidence of this Trade, ſince it is well known, many of the moſt expenſive Articles of our Importation, are ſubject to ſuch high Duties, that they are clandeſtinely brought into the King-

dom;

dom; ſo that, ſhou'd the Cuſtom-Houſe Books give a Colour for my Author's Computation of Gain on the *French* Trade, which I cannot believe they do, they muſt be look'd upon as erroneous, in ſupporting a Matter contrary to what is ſo ſenſibly felt, as the evil Effects of the *French* Trade.

That we conſiderably ſuffer by that Trade, is yet further evident from the Courſe of Exchange between *Ireland* and *France*, which, for many Years paſt, has been to the Diſadvantage of *Ireland*. And, let my Author obſerve by the bye, that the Rate of Exchange is one of the Pulſes skilful Politicians are to feel, in order to diſcover the true State of a National Trade.

There are many other Remarks I cou'd make on the two Papers I have now before me; and, perhaps, when better Leiſure will permit, I ſhall do ſo: But, as the Author ſeems to mean well, I would be tender

tender of him However, before I quit his Works for this Time, I muſt put my Reader in mind, that it is dangerous to rely on every Information relating to Trade, which is extracted out of Books; for unleſs a proper Judgment adapts the Notions of the Author to the particular Subject he is enquiring about, he may be lead into dangerous Miſtakes.

To give a glaring Inſtance of this, I have but to obſerve, that my Author allows 25 *per Cent.* of the Value of our Exports and Imports, to be a reaſonable Medium for Freight of Ships, Merchants Expence, and Profit, on our general Trade; and this, becauſe that Medium was allowed in Computations of the ſame Kind in *England*. Now, my Author ſhould have conſidered, that this Rate was diſputed, even in *England*, as too large an Allowance on their unlimitted Trade: And, in order to ſupport the Reaſonableneſs

ſonableneſs of it there, the Premiums of Inſurances, which to us are all clear Loſs, either to *England* or *Holland*; the *Eaſt-India* Trade, on which at leaſt 400 *per Cent.* Profit is made, the *Weſt-India*, *African*, *Turkey*, and other rich Trades, in which we have little or no Part, were all brought into the Computation to ſtrike that Medium of 25 *per Cent*; and ſhall the Profit, *&c.* of our inſignificant Trade be ſet on the ſame Foot? ſurely, it is a great Error in the Judgment, I will not ſay, in the Will of my Author, to do ſo.

Let me now ask my Author, how he can reconcile the Aſſurance he has given us of our having grown above ſix Times richer than we were in 1676. even when he allows the Draft of our *Out-Lyers*, *&c.* in *England*, is 600,000 *l. per An.* and that the Balance of our general Exports and Imports, as ſtated by him, amounts to only 234,021 *l.*

234,021 *l. per An.* which is little more than 1 3d Part of that annual Drain. And, to ſhew his Skill yet further, let him take in, and account for, the Repairs of the Deva ſtations occaſioned by the War, which has intervened in that Time. To conclude, ſince he has promiſed to favour the World with more of his Works, and to lay Schemes before the Parliament, let me entreat him to conſider of what ill Conſequence it might prove to a Nation, to have the Legiſlature deceived in Matters of this Conſequence; therefore, let me adviſe him to weigh what he writes with more Care than he has done thoſe Things he has already advanced, and not to depend alone on what he finds ſet down in printed Books, which are deceitful, unleſs weighed by a ſound and diſcerning Judgment.

FINIS.