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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

E F F E C T S

OF

PROTECTING DUTIES.

IN A LETTER TO A NEWLY-ELECTED  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

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ON THE EFFECTS OF  
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IN A LETTER TO A NEWLY-ELECTED  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT,

S I R,

**Y**OU are now arrived at that period of your life, and at that station among your countrymen, in which the determinations of your mind, and the conduct which those determinations will lead you to adopt, must necessarily become of importance to those around you. I have been sufficiently acquainted with the course of your study, to know that you are not deficient in capacity, and that the mode of your education has in some degree, settled you into habits of diligence. My apprehensions for you are not built upon these foundations; they arise from my knowledge of the nature of that stock of ideas which you have acquired, and of the particular turn of thinking in which you have been trained. My fears are, that all which you have hitherto acquired, altho' it may, and in truth I believe will, prove of some ornament to you as a Gentleman, can have but small force in forwarding you as a man of business.



THE historians of Rome have not handed down to us any considerable details of the commercial systems of the old world ; nor does the reasoning of Demosthenes apply itself much to the *policy of trading nations*. Yet it is something to have been in the habit of acquiring. A mind accustomed in this manner to furnish itself with the ideas of other men, will more readily gain upon any subject however novel it may be, than one which has to acquire its materials for thought and its habits of thinking together.

OF all the knowledge which you can possess, the knowledge of commerce in its general principles and in its detail of facts, will prove of most honour to yourself, and of most profit to your country. The time at which this knowledge must prove most singularly beneficial, will be during the present session of parliament. And during the present session of parliament, no question of commerce can arise which will involve so much of the rising prosperity of the kingdom, as that which will come in the first instance before you for determination——*the question of protecting duties*. In the decision of this question will be laid the foundation of the commercial system of Ireland. You perceive then how you are pressed, scarcely any thing as yet known, and almost every thing to be instantly decided ; this at once then shews you my inducement, and constitutes my apology.

THE spirit of the Irish nation has been already tried ; its wisdom must shortly be discovered. To pant after the possession of liberty, is the effect of an universal feeling in human nature ; it has fallen to the lot of few to enjoy it—but it has fallen to the lot of fewer still to enjoy it to its true purposes ; to render that activity which it inspires subservient to



to the satisfaction of life, to the augmentation of its enjoyments, and to the mitigation of its sufferings. The moment of the acquisition of liberty, is a moment of danger to any country. The people from that period will be active: but the activity of unskilfulness may impoverish and disgrace a nation as well as an individual.

IGNORANCE may preserve liberty——but it will be liberty in tatters: knowledge only can preserve and enjoy her in the complications and refinements of civil society. For three millions of people to establish their freedom, it is only necessary that they should unite in a determination to be free. The dullest head in society may contrive, and the weakest hand assist the execution of such a purpose. To overpower an union of this nature would never pay for the exertion which it would require. But after the object of that union has been attained, a nation will require every assistance that natural sagacity and acquired information can afford. In proportion as a national spirit has been roused, it becomes necessary for caution to step in to regulate its progress.

To acquire the power of being happy, and to apply that power to its object, demand very different modifications of the passions, and very different exertions of the understanding. Common place history affords us examples, and common experience confirms the truth of them, that to obtain a victory, and to enjoy the *profits* of that victory, are too often separated.

We have conquered. Let us now endeavour to be happy. To be happy as a nation, I mean to be industrious and to be rich. I am not for the Spartan profits of victory. Iron money, and black



bread, could afford but small inducements to an Irishman, who, in the most deplorable moments of the depression and poverty of his country, has contrived to keep a part of its beef for his own consumption, and to exchange another part of it with his neighbour for claret.

THE institutions of commerce are of all others, the most pernicious, or the most beneficial; their effects are always more extensive, they penetrate farther into the general business of life, and mingle themselves more completely in the general mass of our transactions, than any other branches of political œconomy. Other institutions are less frequently called forth into action. The rules of landed property, for instance, cannot operate so extensively. It is not every hour that land changes its master. Every man in the community is not a land owner; but every man in the community eats, drinks, and wears cloaths; and is hourly engaged in the increase, consumption, or exchange of those necessaries of his life. In proportion as commercial institutions extend in their effects, these effects become more minute and numerous. To ascertain therefore and arrange them, to trace them through their different stages up to their true causes, mixed and perverted as they are by the ingenuity of pride and avarice, require a greater share of patience, and of skill in the ordinary courses of business, than can fall to the share of many.

To discriminate and to arrange, require in some degree a scientific education. To collect commercial materials for such purposes, requires long attention and a close insight into various branches of business. To be a man of science, and at the same time a man of business, requires a rare combination of endowments. The student seldom  
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treats the workshop with any civility. Experience, that safest guide in most other researches, tho' it may be of some use, yet certainly cannot afford us a view sufficiently extensive in this enquiry. This is a subject on which experiment cannot well be hazarded: the expences to society are too great, the consequences not succeeding, too fatal. Besides that the length of a life will hardly afford time to draw a conclusion: we are born too late to see the beginning, and we die too soon to see the end of many things. Cautious as we ought to be, we must however trust something to information. We cannot collect all ourselves, we must therefore be content at some time to make use of the labours of others.

It is a circumstance to be lamented, that in our own country, the place where we could be best enabled to extend our enquiries, and to ascertain every circumstance with the highest degree of precision, scarcely any such materials as we now want are to be found. The history of Tom Thumb and the history of Irish Commerce, could be afforded by the bookseller at nearly the same price. In every period of the history of our country, we are presented with misfortunes enough to have afforded us knowledge. But one peculiarity of our situation has been, that we have sustained the weight of misery, without the benefit of that experience and caution which generally arise from distress. We have frequently received the stroke of poverty, but have not yet learned how to ward the blow. This is owing to our having been passive on the stage of Europe.

IRELAND has been a sufferer, but not an actor. Our misfortunes have not arisen from the errors of our *own* activity. The mother-country, as she has



has proudly termed herself, and our sister kingdom as we now affect to stile her, took upon herself the active part as a kingdom. She never gave us any thing to do, but always something to bear——to share her misfortunes whenever she was mistaken; but to be a spectator only, not a sharer of her advantages when she proved successful. Like the slaves in a Roman family, who were doomed to the general proscription, when the enemies of their master's faction were triumphant, tho' they had received little but whips and hard labour in the days of his prosperity.

THE principal advantages arising from activity and acting for ourselves, either as nations or individuals, are derived from the habits of business in which particular men are trained, from the knowledge of facts which they acquire, and from the details which they can ascertain in all the different parts of public or private intercourse. When these are fully known, their true forms as they stand by themselves, and their connecting parts as they stand related to each other, thoroughly investigated, and familiarly imprinted on the mind, systems of intercourse become readily formed, and the most ignorant can take advantage of the labours of the most skilful in society. But such advantages our situation unhappily precluded us from.

To debase us still more, the errors of government were so palpable, the impressions of those errors were so severe, that to *feel* was to *know*——inference or deduction became useless, and being useless were not cultivated. Hence our men, supposed to be, and supposing themselves to be men of business, have studied modes of clamorous invective, rather than of serious investigation; and particular



particular abuse has supplied the place of general reasoning. To such a state of substantial and intellectual poverty has the domination of England reduced us. When I speak in such terms of what has past, I do not mean to open again the sources of discontent, or to blame those transactions as having exhibited on the part of England any peculiar marks of political depravity. They arose from a *false system of commerce*, from the ruinous spirit of MONOPOLY.

IF then we have suffered so long and so severely by this spirit of our sister kingdom, shall we as the first act of our own free-will, adopt and enforce the same system ourselves? Shall we prove to England that we are Englishmen in every thing but their power, their industry, and their wealth?

You will perhaps reply to what I have said, of the little information which can be obtained in the transactions of our country, or from the knowledge of our countrymen, that although the transactions of our country are as barren of materials as I have asserted them to be, yet, that our men of business can hardly warrant the observation which has been made on them. You will perhaps urge against me the examples of our orators and our patriots. Believe me when I tell you, that you must not look for examples of useful knowledge, or of true virtue among them. We have had men, whose formation has rendered it doubtful whether nature was a prodigal or a miser — so lavish has she been to them in the powers of the understanding, and so niggardly in the virtues of the heart. We have seen such men devote their youth, the graceful and I believe the honest part of life, to the indulgence of the most shameful and pernicious appetites. When the  
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body has sunk under this torrent of animal gratification, the atrocious vigour of their genius has exerted itself, without distraction or interruption. An unmixed severity of study has succeeded to an unrestrained licentiousness of enjoyment. Gloomy and distrustful even in the very lap of pleasure, it could not be expected that they should have warmed into chearfulness, or relaxed into sociability by the intenseness of application. From this retirement they have come forth adorned but not amiable, wise but not useful. The application of our acquisitions determines the motive of acquiring. Their industry has been pointed only to display the miseries of their country, but never to explain or enforce the methods of removing them. They have bent the powers of their imagination to the miserable employment of inventing combinations of reproachful and abusive terms against their antagonists, until our language has sunk under their exertions. They seem to have ranged the paths of science, and collected its materials together for no other purpose than to gild the bitterness of personal invective, with these splendid productions of their labours. Clamorous tribunes of the people, when the people were without hope, raising a futile opposition and pointing their exertions to little objects, because those objects were the favourites of government; but shrinking into and continuing the trickling adulators of a paltry court, when a lucky juncture of circumstances opened a way to the course of the solid prosperity of their countrymen. After this when they have sickened at the applauses which followed some daring attempts in favour of liberty, we have seen them resign the profits of venality, to the hopes of regaining their lost character: and we have seen that contented cuckold—the people, with open arms



arms again receive them, tho' reeking from the very bed of prostitution.\*

THIS is the general description of modern patriotism, and modern patriotism is to our political, what a modern disease is to our animal constitution. They are equally the children of licentiousness: they equally fasten upon the sources of existence in their unhappy subjects: equally manifest their vigour by their venom; and nothing but the application of a metallic poison can stop the progress of either. Gold is to the political what mercury is to the animal infection. The minister and the physician who apply them, are equally justified by dreadful necessity. They do, it is true, stop the killing progress of the distemper; but the strength of the patients waste, and their beauties fade, under the malignant qualities of those medicines which can only prolong existence. From a connection with such men you cannot hope for advantage. It would be dangerous to follow, and they will not suffer you to lead them.

HAVING given you these general cautions lest you should be misled by the noise of party, or the glitter of individuals, or lest you should waste your time in seeking for information where it is not to be found, I shall now proceed to lay before you some matters which I know you are candid and honest enough to wish for. To this end I shall require from you a little more sobriety of attention than I believe you have found it necessary yet to bestow.

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\* Yet the people of Ireland have been told, that "the affections of a politician are always matter of speculation. His *sudden reverses* of affection are still more suspicious."

Sindercombe's letter in Lord Townshend's time.



THE demand which I apprehend will be made from the wisdom of parliament, by some of those gentlemen whose opinions coincide with the present dispositions of the people is, that certain duties shall be laid on the importation from Great Britain, of all goods of the various branches of the woollen and cotton manufactures, so as to prevent in the home market a possibility of competition between these foreign fabrics and articles of the like nature, the produce of our own labour. These duties so intended to be demanded, are now called by the popular name of *protecting duties*. The policy of this system of protecting duties, I understand to be by preserving the home market without any competition, to give to our own manufactures such an extension of demand, and such a certainty of profit as may enable us, by increasing the skill of our manufacturers, and our capital employed in those particular branches of business, to vie hereafter in foreign markets with foreign artists.

THIS I apprehend to be a plain and full state of the question——of the means, and of the end proposed to be attained by those means. From this state I apprehend it appears, that they who insist upon the measure of protecting duties, as an instrument necessary to the commercial prosperity of this country, must admit that we are undersold by foreign manufacturers in our own markets. It is not material to the present business from what circumstances this cheapness of the articles arises, if the fact be so. I scarcely think it necessary to answer the idle reproach thrown out against the people of this country, of a partial fondness for the productions of other countries, when they can get their own as good and as cheap.

Whoever



Whoever shall go into a fair in the country, or into the House of Commons in Dublin, which is, or *we all know* ought to be, the Representative of all the *fairs* in the country, will quickly perceive that foppery is not the predominant vice of the good people of Ireland. I am ready to grant that a few perhaps may be found in both places, who are what their neighbours call *Beaux* — but those are very few; and their cast of character is generally drawn into some unpleasant notice, both in the honourable House and in the fair, by the salutary wit of a nick-name. It must be admitted then, that the cause of this demand upon our legislature is, *that we are undersold at home.*

BEFORE any legislature should carry a proposition of this nature into a law: into a law likely to operate so extensively as this necessarily must do, they should be fully satisfied of the truth of this assertion——that it will be a law likely to operate to the good of the *whole* community. If it should operate immediately to the good of any one particular part, without at the same time operating to the injury of any other particular part, I apprehend it would be a law operating ultimately to the good of the whole: inasmuch as the wealth of one part must necessarily diffuse itself in a degree through the remainder. But if it should be a law operating to the profit of any one part of the community, at an expence equivalent to that profit thrown upon any other parts of the community, it could not be a law operating to the good of the whole. If the profit of the one part were precisely equal to the loss sustained by the other part, and so there were no actual loss sustained, yet it would be a law not only not operating to the good of the whole, but a law actually operating to the injury of the whole. For it would turn the tide  
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of industry out of its natural and fixed channel, into an artificial, and consequently an uncertain one.

AND again, admitting the profits to be precisely equal to the loss, yet still if the profit were given entirely to one part of the community, and if the loss were divided among many parts of it, it would be a dangerous, and consequently an injurious law. For the profit which was given to one part, being heaped in one spot, the increase would be easily discerned: but the loss, although equal to the profit, yet being divided into many parts, the diminution could not be perceived; and thus the community would be cheated into a belief of an increase of wealth, which it had actually never acquired—a dangerous and injurious belief!

I HAVE have stated the matter in these various points of view, because I am fully persuaded that to ascertain whether the measure of protecting duties, will operate ultimately to the good of the whole community, it will be necessary to examine it in every one of them. You may call me formal if you please, for the manner in which I have done this—but if by becoming more formal I shall become more clear, if I can convince your understanding, by affording you an opportunity to laugh a little at me, I shall give you your jest, and proceed with my argument.

THE general system of England in her commerce, has been this system of restraint and protection, with some occasional deviations however from her general rule. The general system of Holland, on the contrary, has been a system of commerce free and unprotected, with some occasional deviations into the system of England——

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into restraint and protection. Both countries have in general pursued systems directly opposite, but they have occasionally adopted the maxims of each other. Both countries working under these opposite plans of commercial intercourse, have acquired a degree of wealth and power unknown to the other states of Europe. I have made these observations upon the different conduct of the two countries, not that I intend to apply them immediately, but that you may carry them in your recollection until the application will be too obvious to escape you.

HAVING endeavoured to prepare your mind by the foregoing observations for this examination, I shall trouble you to follow me while I examine a question which comes home to the "business and bosom" of every Irishman—whether the measure of protecting duties, as I have before stated it, is a measure which it would be prudent in the legislature of Ireland to adopt: either circumstanced as Ireland is at present, or in any other circumstances in which we can conceive her to exist?

IRELAND must adopt it then, either as a principle universally useful, or as one which would be useful to her from her particular circumstances.

WE shall presently see how far it can be considered as a principle universally useful, by supposing it carried universally into execution.

THE mists of prejudice, and the clouds of error which relaxed the industry and defaced the morals of Europe, for so many centuries after the downfall of the Roman empire, have been for above 200 years last past gradually evaporating and dispersing. The different nations of Europe are now beginning



beginning clearly to perceive the advantages resulting from general commerce, of enabling each other to participate of the productions of different soils and climates, and of the different exertions of human industry and invention. With the eagerness natural to human nature upon the appearance of a new object of hope, they are now all running the race of commerce. If the Irish should adopt this measure as a general principle, it is not probable that the salutary regimen will remain long a secret. The wisdom of our Volunteers has already appeared in the Amsterdam gazette—and that is a paper, as George Faulkner said of the Dublin Journal, read in the coffee houses of Constantinople and Dunstable. The wisdom of Ireland must stamp authority on it——let us suppose it then universally adopted. To a benevolent mind, no prospect can be more delightful, than the contemplation of the universal adoption of a principle which, wherever it is received, must give new hands to industry, and new wings to invention. Let us indulge ourselves in the pleasing hope of seeing England prohibit our linen and our beef, the wines and fruit of Portugal, Spain or France: Portugal, or Spain, prohibit the hardware and the woollens of England, the linen and the beef of Ireland; and America prohibit every thing.

In short let us suppose, in imitation of the wisdom of Ireland, a complete and universal prevention to take place in every country, of the importation of every article which could in any way be fabricated at home, or for which any succedaneum could be discovered. Alas! what is become of our benevolence now? Shall she never drink punch again? Every thing being prevented from being imported  
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every where, any thing cannot be exported anywhere. After such a conclusion, it would be ridiculous to dwell upon this part of the subject any longer. But I shall go farther. I shall suppose for a little time, that the eagerness of imitation, or the sweets of retaliation and revenge, would not in this case operate as they operate in most cases on mankind, and that no such universal adoption of this commercial principle, as I have mentioned, should take place. On the contrary, I will suppose the rest of Europe, particularly England, so blind or so tender-hearted as to permit Ireland to attempt to enrich herself at their expence. Yet I shall not scruple to assert, that however freely she might be permitted to indulge herself in her schemes of aggrandisement, without danger of retaliation from England or any other country, she could not enrich herself by any such measure.

To save the inconvenience of contradiction, and perversion, it is often necessary to state that which is already known and admitted. That we may ascertain what the means are by which a nation may most probably be enriched, it will be necessary for us to ask in what the wealth of a nation consists? For the sake of truth, we should be accurate even to enumeration in this particular. It is easy for false, to wear the appearance of true reasoning, when it travels through general and undefined terms, and gives us a comparison where an instance should be produced.

THE wealth of a nation then consists in that stock of materials, whatever those materials may be, which are necessary or pleasing to the existence of man—which constitute his necessities or his comforts. This stock of materials may be said to consist particularly of food, cloaths, houses, household furniture,



furniture, buildings for the assistance of labour or the preservation of goods, money, improvements of land, of all the different articles, in whatever stage of preparation they may be of which these are compounded——to these must be added, as a part of the stock, the acquired and useful skill of all the inhabitants. I pretend not to be perfectly accurate in this enumeration. Something in the hurry in which I am obliged to call upon my memory, may have escaped me. It will be sufficient for me, if I shall be able to point your attention to the proper objects.

Of the whole quantity of these materials which are called stock, some part of it is necessarily appropriated to the immediate consumption of the people, and consequently cannot increase. The other part, after having laid by all that is necessary for immediate consumption, is kept as a subject of the industry of the people to work upon, and by working upon to increase, and is called the capital. What is true of a nation in this particular, is true of every individual in it. Every man will find this division take place in his property. Although I have enumerated the skill of the inhabitants among the different articles of stock, it is palpable that it is of a different nature from the rest. It is the vital principle of the whole capital. It is a collection of springs, by which all the various parts of the capital are moved. The five Dutchmen who were cast away on the coast of Greenland, had, I suppose, as much industry and skill as any of their countrymen who resided in Holland; but for want of materials, that is, capital to work upon, they were necessitated to spend the half of their days in sleep, and the whole of them in poverty.

Hence



HENCE it follows, that any attempt to increase the industry of the society, without, at the same time, increasing the quantity of materials upon which that industry is to work, must fail of success. That, and that only, which adds to the wealth of a nation, is the difference between those articles which are added to the capital of the society, by the industry of its members, and those which are taken from it within the same space of time for their consumption. Now what regulation of commerce, prohibiting the importation of any given commodity, can increase that difference. You reply, that by invigorating the industry of society, you will thereby increase the quantity of materials for it to work upon. No. The industry of every society is proportioned to a certain increase of its materials, and by that certain increase of its materials, a foundation is laid for a new accession of industry. But if you would suddenly increase the industry of any society, beyond what the former increase of its materials has laid a foundation for, you must also suddenly increase the quantity of materials beyond the former stock.

THE increase of materials must, by the inevitable relation of things, *precede* the increase of industry. The first stroke of the industry of man was applied to materials, *previously* provided by nature. Had these materials not been *previously* provided, his industry; never could have had a *commencement*. Having, I think, clearly proved, that an increase of materials must *precede* an increase of industry, it remains to be shewn whether a protecting duty can prepare that increase of the stock of materials. It cannot. A protecting duty when enacted, will not add an additional number of ploughshares, to assist the hand of man in tilling the earth. It will not dive into the earth to procure

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the iron to make that ploughshare. It will not procure corn to be sown, nor leather to be tanned, nor wool to be spun. Is it expected that the magic of a protecting duty, will operate as powerfully as the agency of the Grecian deities, and cause a horse and an olive tree to spring at once from the earth, for the use of its favourite city ?

As it is obvious then, that a protecting duty cannot, of itself, increase the quantity of materials in any country ; and, as it is equally obvious, that industry cannot be maintained without a capital of materials to work upon, it follows inevitably, that an instrument which cannot *previously* increase the quantity of materials or capital, can never increase the industry of any country.

BUT, after this reasoning, however convincing it may appear in theory, some account must be given to you of that appearance in other countries, which, as it has always followed the enacting of protecting duties, has therefore been always considered as an effect of it. I mean the increase of that particular manufacture, in favour of which protecting duties have been enacted.

EXPERIENCE here seems to be directly against the reasoning of which I have made use. I admit, that wherever a protecting duty has been enacted, an increase of the particular manufacture in favour of which it was enacted has followed. I admit, that this effect is apparently against the reasoning which I have laid before you : but I say, that it is only so apparently. For although I admit, that wherever a protecting duty has been enacted, an increase of the *particular manufacture* has followed ; yet, I deny that thereby the wealth of the *whole community* has been increased. This will be best explained



explained by tracing the effects of a protecting duty. Let me suppose then a protecting duty had actually taken place in favour of our woollen manufactures. The effect of this would be an immediate activity in that branch of business. But by what means does the protecting duty produce this effect? By obliging every consumer in the community to pay a price for goods; which otherwise he would not do. Remember, that the reason for a protecting duty is, that the same sort of goods can be had elsewhere, better or cheaper. What then is the consumer compelled to? To pay a greater price for the same goods, or the same price for worse goods than he could otherwise have obtained.

Now what is the price that the consumer pays? Money you will say. No. Money is the instrument by which he facilitates the exchange; but the price which he actually pays, is so much as he gave of his labour and skill, working upon his capital to acquire that money. What is the actual effect then of a protecting duty upon the whole community? It compels every consumer to give so much more of his time, labour, and skill, working upon his capital, for the commodity of which he stands in need, than he otherwise should have done.

THE revenue of every country is produced by the labour of the inhabitants, operating upon its capital. The addition to the wealth of any country, is made by the difference between its consumption and its revenue. If then the inhabitants shall be compelled to give so much *more* of their revenue, that is, their labour, working upon their capital, for any part of their consumption, than they otherwise should have done, it is obvious

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that they produce so much less by their labour, and by consequence, the difference between the amount of the consumption, and revenue of the country is lessened, not increased.

THE policy of every legislature should be, to enable its people to obtain the greatest possible quantity of every kind of consumable commodity, by the smallest possible exertion of labour; for the less labour it is necessary to exert in the acquisition of any particular commodity, the more may be spared for the acquisition of others. Hence the advantages of all sorts of machines, in the abridgment of all sorts of labour. Here then is a policy directly opposite to that general rule. It obliges every consumer of woollen cloth, to give a greater exertion to his labour, for the acquisition of that which could have been obtained for a less. It operates upon every consumer, as if he were transported to a climate less friendly, and a soil less fertile than that in which he had lived. He is obliged to exert himself more to live as well as he had before done. It operates as a tax upon every consumer in the country, the amount of which is put into the pockets of a few of the manufacturers. Now, as the number of consumers of any one article must infinitely exceed that of the manufacturers, how can any legislature justify the taxation of a larger body of its subjects in favour of a smaller. But in a trading country most of the consumers of any particular commodity are themselves manufacturers. In proportion as they are taxed for any article of consumption, they will raise the price of every article of their own manufacture upon other consumers. Hence the rise of every article of manufacture, in consequence of the rise of one—hence the unfitness, from the universal dearness of commodities, to supply foreign markets—hence



—hence the very manufacturers, in whose favour a protecting duty should be enacted, would be themselves taxed to pay the price of their own avarice.

BUT it will be answered to this argument, that it proves too much. That it proves that no country could have succeeded, where such a miserable policy had been adopted. That the instance of England where this policy was adopted, proves the fallacy of the argument. But I reply, that the instance of England does not prove the fallacy of the argument. On the contrary, it illustrates and enforces its truth. It is the want of attention to the *particulars* of the progress of England that deceives. England began very early to addict herself to commerce. In this pursuit she had the advantage of most of her present competitors, by having begun before them. England began very early to display the marks of her blundering avarice, her prohibitions both of export and import. Yet with much industry, frugality, and a very arrogant spirit of monopoly, her commercial success, until about the commencement of the present century, was but small.

IF we compare the commercial advancement of England with that of Holland, we shall find that she was infinitely outdone by Holland before this last century; yet England set out with an infinitely greater extent of territory, and exceeded Holland in the numbers of her people, in the fertility of her soil, and the quantity of her capital. Add to the disadvantages of Holland, that she began her course under the burthen of a war carried on in her own country, against a powerful and implacable master, who endeavoured with his whole force to harass and oppress her. She escaped  
from



from this ; but she escaped with an unsettled government, a small capital, and that capital in debt. Holland however had proceeded on a better plan than England had, and she succeeded accordingly. The first considerable advance which England made in her commerce, did not proceed from any advantages which she produced in her own market.

THE wars with the Dutch in the time of the Commonwealth, and in the reign of Charles the Second, disturbed their commerce so much, that England was enabled to seize a part of that body which she had separated and scattered. Her natural strength enabled her to cope with the acquired power of her wiser adversary. After these wars the first considerable addition to the commerce of England was observed ; but this was the plunder of a robber, not the profit of a merchant. From this period, that is from the end of the war, which was concluded by the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678, to the year 1704, the increase of the English commerce was not of any extraordinary magnitude. Scarcely any thing but what will be added by every frugal nation to its capital, by the difference between the produce of its industry and its consumption. Not so much as would have been added to it, had every one of her ports been as open as St. Eustatia was at the time of its late capture. I take the year 1704 particularly, because I am enabled from the papers which were laid upon the table in the English House of Commons, in the year 1775, to state the amount of the trade of England in 1704. In the year 1704, the whole export of England to all the world, amounted to 6,509,000*l*. Immediately prior to the year 1775, the whole export trade to all the world, stood at about 16,000,000*l*.

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FROM the first peopling of England down to the year 1704, the accumulated industry of England, produced little more than 6,000,000*l.* But in little better than half a century nearly 10,000,000*l.* were added to this. To what was this alteration owing? To the colony trade. Of this last sum of nearly 10,000,000*l.* the colony export amounted to above 6,000,000*l.*——and was supposed to have been a cause of the increase of the other parts of the export. The colony trade alone, in the latter period, was equal to the entire trade in the former.

AFTER this short state of the progress of England, let me call your attention for a moment to the inference which may be drawn from it. I say then, that from comparing the two different stages into which I have divided the progress of England, it appears, that during the first period she had been struggling with a false policy, of which she felt the effects, but was ignorant of the cause. This is evident, by her having been outdone by Holland, in the same attempt; but who, either by superior wisdom or better fortune, had taken another course. During this time however, accident and her own ambition, had led England into a system of colonising. Under a variety of fortunes these colonies had increased. In these colonies then she found a remedy for that disease which her own intemperance had brought upon her.

As the dearness of her manufactures, occasioned by the shackles which had been thrown upon her trade, had excluded her from markets which she would have been obliged *to court*, she was fortunate in having found those where she could *dictate*. She owed her profit to her power of dictating to so large an empire as she held in subjection. She barricaded her intercourse with the colonies by every instrument



ment which enormous expence could enable her to collect—she precluded all other nations from competition, for she knew it would have been fatal.

AGAIN, the revenue acquired by the colony exports, was not as the revenue acquired by the exports to independent kingdoms would have been, clear gain. England expended 200,000,000*l.* in the support and preservation of this complicated system of commerce. She did so: and while surrounding nations sat, as in a theatre, the silent spectators of this display of her *power*, the spring of *liberty* is touched, the lights of her glory sink, and the splendid machinery on which so many millions had been lavished, vanishes for ever!

BUT I will not take advantage in argument, of the miserable termination which has been put to the commercial grandeur of England; I will suppose that grandeur to subsist. What follows from the example? That to support a system of *prohibition*, a system of *monopoly* is necessary. That to support these systems so contrary to the interests of mankind, a nation must fight, she must negotiate, she must conquer or colonize. Therefore a system of prohibition *alone* is not to be supported. But can Ireland fight, negotiate, conquer or colonize? Has she 200,000,000*l.* to expend in these pursuits, or if she had, would she so expend it? But I will quit *this* view of England, from which it clearly appears, that her conduct affords no example against the truth of that commercial theory, which I have endeavoured to establish. I will take a view of England stronger against my own argument. Separate the two periods into which the trade of England has been divided, and take the latter. From the year 1704, England was all prohibition and monopoly



nopoly; she was at the same time all activity, all power, and all wealth. Were not the latter then the effects of the former? I shall admit they were; but I will still say, that even this view of England affords no example against the general theory.

IF we include the dominions of England, in Europe, in the East, and in the West, we shall find that her empire, like that of ancient Rome, “ comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind\*.” She exceeded antient Rome in extent of territory, in infinite variety of soil and climate, and in the dexterity and ingenuity of her subjects. For an empire like this, who included *within herself*, every production that could relieve the necessities, or gratify the luxuries of mankind, to prohibit was hardly to *exclude*. She could supply herself, within herself, with every thing. This example only proves, that in proportion as empire extends over fertile soils, and various climates, and in proportion as it can command the range of human ingenuity, its wants of external commerce are lessened. The effects of a prohibitory system therefore, become only less pernicious as this proportion increases. The empire of China may venture to despise and to thwart foreign commerce; but these examples, though exceptions, justify the general theory—they shew the variety of circumstances which are required by any state to justify a deviation from it. But it will be said, that England owed her extent of dominion to the very system which I oppose. It is not so. She fought for dominion, and the nation which fights, cannot be said to owe her greatness to any system. Her successes will be determined by accidents, the rise of which cannot be foreseen or commanded.—  
Had

\* Gibbon.



Had Harry the Fourth of France succeeded quietly to his crown ; had France been able to pursue his politics after his death ; or in a later period, had not the projects of Louis the Fourteenth directed in some degree the French activity from commercial pursuits, the flight of England must have been lowered. The misfortunes which the character of Philip the Second of Spain entailed upon that country, contributed not a little to elevate the fortune of England. These were circumstances which no penetration could foresee, and which if foreseen, no system could have controlled.

THE example of France, who pursued the same system as England, will, no doubt, be urged against me—but it will be urged against me in vain.

SULLY, the wisest politician, and the honestest minister that ever served a grateful master, as soon as the settlement of the government enabled him, encouraged the agriculture of France : not by monopolies or prohibitions, but by lightening as much as possible the burthen of taxation on the husbandman, and by encouraging him to expect a steady possession of his profits and of his capital. Under this wise system, the nation speedily recovered from the injuries of a civil war. Under it she would have flourished. But Colbert, who came some time after him, less sagacious and more impatient, threw a greedy eye upon the gaudiness of manufacture. He prohibited from abroad, and he encouraged at home. What was the consequence ? Manufactures flourished, but agriculture decayed.

THE French ever since the time of Colbert, tho' the most industrious people in Europe, and possessing the most fertile territory, have been more frequently subject to famine than any other nation. The shuttle flew, and the people starved ! This is  
the



the consequence of attempting to increase the industry of a people, without having previously increased their capital. This is precisely taking from one body of subjects a quantity of industry and capital, and giving it to another—*turning the tide of industry out of its natural and fixed channel, into an artificial, and consequently an uncertain one.* France has been for some years endeavouring to correct the mistakes of Colbert.

BUT if what I have stated of France were not true, her example would not justify Ireland. France may be compared to one of those great empires which have been already mentioned. Her colonies were considerable. She commanded above 16,000,000 of people at home; she possessed above 150,000 square miles of the most fertile territory, situated in the most beneficent climate in Europe. Can Ireland, narrowed in her territory, less fertile in her soil, with something under 3,000,000 of people, and under the influence of a more sullen climate, presume to deviate into the policy of France? What then remains for her? To reject a system contradicted by theory, and unwarranted by example.

I MAY now, I think, venture to assert, that the country which is enabled to exchange the smallest proportion of any commodity which it has, and which it does not want, for the greatest proportion of any commodity which it has not, and which it does want, is the most likely to become rich. It is evident that this cannot be attained by any method but by an open market. But as a market entirely open cannot be expected in any country which has the expences of its government to defray, a market as near to an open one as those expences will admit, is most to be desired. The advantage  
of



of an open market has been as evident in practice as I hope it now appears in theory. From the taking of Tyre by Alexander, to the taking of St. Eustatia by Admiral Rodney,\* there has not been a single instance of any place declaring, and preserving itself a free port, which has not risen into a degree of wealth, infinitely beyond any thing which has been acquired by other systems of policy.

It has been, I think, clearly shewn, that the principle of securing the home market against a foreign intercourse, by protecting duties, would be generally injurious; but I will forego the advantage of my own argument. I will for a moment suppose the clamours of our countrymen to be founded in sound policy, and I will admit that a protecting duty, instead of having been proved to be an injurious system of policy, had appeared to have been a salutary one. However sound a general principle of policy may appear, it will sometimes happen, that a country may find such a combination of circumstances to arise from her connections and situation, as to warrant a deviation from it.

ADMITTING then, that the measure of protecting duties, instead of being a measure injurious to commerce, was an encouragement and an assistance to it; I will venture to assert, that there is now such a combination of circumstances in the connections and situation of Ireland, as should induce her to deviate from it. It is natural to man to dwell with peculiar complacency upon the phantoms of his own imagination—he considers them as real objects

\* I do not intend to suggest any likeness between the two heroes by placing them together. In three circumstances indeed they afford some likeness—rapacity, insolence, and good fortune.



truly represented, nor once perceives the medium through which they are distorted. What is true of individuals, will be generally true of governments and of nations—the same passions excite, the same fancies mislead. To detect this propensity in individuals and in states, may be useful on the present occasion. It may teach them both to avoid hazardous experiments, where want of success and total ruin stand for each other.

IRELAND is at this instant in possession of a branch of trade, in which she stands confessedly superior to any nation in the world : it has long enriched the whole, and now actually employs a moiety of her people \*. Of this manufacture, the whole of what has hitherto been exported, has been exported to Great Britain ; and nine tenths of what has been sent there, has been consumed there. The actual subsistence then of one half, and the ease and wealth of the whole of the people of this kingdom depend not merely upon the general trade of Great Britain, but upon actual consumption within that kingdom.

WE are now clamouring for duties, the avowed purpose of which is to prevent the introduction into this kingdom of the staple commodity of that country, whose internal consumption is the sole source of our industry and our wealth. Forbearance and generosity have seldom been national characteristics any where ; but if they were, we could have little hope of their prevalence in Great Britain. The counsels of Great Britain have been more influenced by pride and selfishness, than those

\* Beside the whole province of Ulster—the following counties have each of them a share of this trade more or less, viz. Louth, King's County, Queen's County, Drogheda, Dublin, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Cork and Kildare.

perhaps



perhaps of any other nation. The general character of nations, and the particular character of Great Britain, therefore, warrant the opinion, that she will be as ready to retaliate the injury, as we are to inflict it.

PERMIT me then, to state at once our gain and loss upon this occasion, and let self-interest draw the conclusion. We gain a certainty of supplying ourselves at home with particular articles of consumption, which we are now furnished with from a foreign market. This is the only *certain* advantage (and were I disposed to argue all that could be argued, it might perhaps be proved, that even this is problematical\*) which can attend this measure. We also open to ourselves a probability, or rather a possibility of improving those manufactures in whose favour the duties are intended, so far as to be able to vie with other nations in foreign markets: so that we see the whole extent of benefit, which can, even by the most fortunate issue, accrue from the adoption of this measure, consists in advancing the woollen and cotton manufactories, to the same degree of national advantage which arises from the linen at present. Thus stands our account of gain. The loss which will attend it, consists in a certain destruction of our linen manufacture—a manufacture already matured, necessary to all the purposes of home consumption and

\* When the encouragement given to smuggling by every high duty, comes to be considered, it will appear that this assertion is well founded—that a high duty cannot always protect. This will be particularly true, with regard to Great Britain and Ireland; from the neighbourhood of their coasts, and from the appointment of the officers of revenue in Ireland, being in the hands of Englishmen. From this last circumstance it is not probable, that a law, which is in fact a bribe to our governors to encourage smuggling, will be carried very rigorously into execution.



foreign supply, which affords an immense revenue to the kingdom, into which the genius of the people hath been turned, from the first dawn of industry among them ; and for what ? For the chance of an event which succeeding to our utmost wishes, can at last only place us in the same degree of consequence, as a trading nation, that we at present enjoy.

BUT you will say, that I have been all this time arguing on a false supposition. That I have supposed England to pursue a conduct which she will not. Let us examine this matter. You deny that England will prohibit the importation of our linens ; you say that it is not consistent with the selfish character of the English, to subject themselves to an inconvenience merely to revenge a loss. The validity of the charge then against me, depends upon England's suffering an inconvenience from the prohibition of Irish linen. If I shew to you that England will gain considerably by the prohibition of our linens, you are no longer protected by their selfish character.

Look then at the English statutes relating to the importation of linens, from the 10 Ann. c. 19. downwards ; you will see that the consumption of foreign linen in England is subjected to a weighty duty. How does that duty operate ? As a premium upon the consumption of Irish linen. Take away the duty, what will be the effect ? That the manufacturers of Ireland in the British markets could be underfold by the Germans, &c. from 15 to 20 per cent. The very circumstance of relieving foreign linens from the duty which they are liable to pay at present, would operate as a prohibition upon the importation of ours. I say as a prohibition, for where there could be no demand, there



there would be no importation : And what individual in England would pay 20 per cent. more for a piece of linen, merely because it was made in Ireland, than he could get a piece of linen of any other country for ? The industry of England is by these laws taxed to support the industry of Ireland. The difference of price is the same thing as the difference of labour, in procuring any article ; and if a tax compels you to pay a higher price for any article than you could have procured it for if that tax had not existed, that tax disables you from being able to produce so much by your labour as you could have done without it. Add to this, that there is another tax upon the industry of England to support the industry of Ireland. I mean the bounties which are paid from one halfpenny to three halfpence, upon Irish linens exported from Great Britain ; the amount of that bounty paid upon the exportation of Irish linen, must be produced by the labour of England.

BUT supposing that this advantage did not hold itself out as a temptation to England. Supposing that they could not ease themselves of a considerable part of their burthens, by attacking the industry of Ireland in this unfortified part ; let us examine whether there be not some other inducements to it.

IT is much easier after any art has arrived to any tolerable degree of perfection, to raise it up to the highest degree of refinement of which it is capable, than to raise it from its first rudiments up to that tolerable state. The first awkward attempts of industry got over, the way becomes less difficult as we ascend. Hence arts which have been travelling for centuries towards a middle state will gain the summit of perfection in the course of a few years.

There



There is now, and has been for a considerable time past, a linen manufacture existing in Great Britain. It has gone beyond that middle state, to attain which, is the difficult part of the progress. It has been computed, that this manufacture has employed not less than 800,000 persons. The necessity which England, from her late misfortunes, now labours under, of seeking for every resource of wealth within herself, would fully justify her policy in endeavouring to make her linen manufacture a *second staple* of England. It has already become a pleasing object of national contemplation. In the last session of parliament, it engaged the attention of the country gentlemen; and the eloquence of some of the senators of England was employed in persuading parliament to adopt some method of encouraging it, by *protecting duties*: And as among other good effects of our free trade, a cargo of our oratory is, we understand, intended to be exported, and offered for the supply of the English market; we may yet hear of Irish provincial sounds being tuned to the measure of English protecting duties!

You perceive then, how the interest of England is doubly tempted to ruin us. On the one hand, to relieve herself from the weighty tax of taking our linens at a price of 15 or 20 per cent. dearer than she could supply herself elsewhere; or on the other, to assist the progress of a rising and a favourite manufacture of her own. Refuse the admission of her manufactures into your ports, and you add the stimulations of revenge to the urgency of avarice. You can then have little to hope from the interest, and surely nothing to expect from the benevolence of England. That trade which has been hitherto the source of employment and of wealth, will be lost to us for ever.



We cast off that full grown offspring which had long nourished and supported us, and adopt a sickly infant, whose arriving at maturity is at best doubtful. We give up a fair inheritance of ample revenue, for an uncertain reversion, which can at last but equal what we at present enjoy ; and for the chance of enabling generations yet unborn, to arrive at the *same* rank in the commercial system which we now relinquish, reduce ourselves to instant beggary ! Did we sacrifice present advantages to give an increase of wealth and dignity to future ages, the refinement of patriotism might applaud the deed : but here we have present poverty without future benefit—We cannot even expect the gratitude of posterity, to reward us for our self-denial. From this single instance then, we may collect how big with destruction to this country that measure would prove, which is now pressed upon us for our approbation. Were it necessary to extend our observation, it would be easy to shew, that this is not the only aspect in which the adoption of this plan, would have a malignant influence upon the welfare of this kingdom—Not only that general jealousy which would instantly arise among all nations, from a system founded on a principle of monopoly, should be avoided ; but the connection of this country with England, is such as would render the raising such a sentiment there, fraught with peculiar danger.—Where the interest of governors and governed are supposed to be at variance, there never can be peace ; it will be at the best “ *a state of smother’d war :*” and though we may now, with a degree of pride due to our virtuous efforts, say, that we are not governed by England, we are yet governed by Englishmen.—

They will ever think it necessary, to preserve the interests of that kingdom from which they are sent ; and will certainly oppose the adoption of measures that



that will appear to them, to have no other object in view, than to distress the people of that country.

If we examine into the spirit which dictates this plan, we will find it to be the pride of equality; not an attention to profit—should we however pursue, it will be an equality of wrong, not an equality of right; of injury, not of benefit; of folly, not of wisdom. We grow rich by the exchange of commodities; and as we extend our markets, we increase the opportunities of acquiring. We have at present a market in some degree extensive; but by the false policy of our neighbours, not so extensive as we could wish. In order to remedy this inconvenience, we narrow that still more, which we complain is already too small: we complain of the selfish jealousy of England, and at the same moment justify her by following her example. We see then, that in every point of view, in which this measure can be considered, as we stand connected with England, it is a measure full of impolicy and ruin: and that even allowing the general principle of a protecting duty to be a just one, there are many circumstances in the present situation of Ireland, with respect to that country, which would not only warrant but demand a deviation.

BUT it is not only her relation to England, which should induce this deviation.

THE system of commercial intercourse now commencing between the old and the new world, seems likely to prove a source of wealth and power, of the extent of which any intercourse which has been hitherto carried on by mankind, can give but an inadequate idea. Ireland is situate in a climate of so even a temperature, that its ports are equally accessible at all seasons. This is a blessing to which



the northern part of the continent of Europe, and almost the whole northern part of the continent of America are entirely strangers. These two distinguished portions of the globe, are now peopled by the most active part of the human race. Besides its being situated in a climate so advantageous to commerce, the shipping of both continents must take their departure from, or make the land of Ireland in their voyages. Ireland is the uniting spot, where the inhabitants of both hemispheres will hail each other.

THE persons most skilled in the American trade admit, that they can make five voyages between any of the western ports of Ireland and America, in the same space of time that they can make three to any of the trading ports of England. Ireland has the advantage of situation therefore over the nearest parts of Europe, as five to three: her climate and her position then, are both pointing the way her to glory. What is that way which they are pointing at? To make herself a general market for the commodities of two worlds.

By a general market, I mean a place provided with that general assortment of goods, that ships unlading the commodities of any one country, may find that variety of articles by which they can, in one spot, procure a completely assorted cargo, to carry back whence they came.

IN a commercial intercourse between two countries of great extent, where one abounds in a variety of fine manufactures, the establishment of one spot, as a general market, is an institution so useful that it must take place somewhere. The reason is evident. The profit of freight is the great instrument by which the particular channel of all commercial



mercial intercourse is traced and determined.—Whatever mode of intercourse will afford the greatest profits of freight, that mode will be followed. In whatever intercourse a general market comes to be established, the profits of freight are more than doubled. For this reason, every person engaged in the carrying trade, will find it his interest to make common cause with all the rest of the body of the people engaged in the same business, to establish one general market. That general market will always be established, where the laws of the country are most favourable to the persons and property of individuals; and where the restraints upon export and import are the fewest and the least burdensome. If to these advantages should be added, in any one place, those of climate and position, the establishment of a general market, in that place must be inevitable. That the profits of freight are increased, that is, that intercourse is facilitated, by the use of a general market, let me illustrate by an instance.

A SHIP freighted from America with the rude commodities of that country, will make the greatest possible profit of the freight of that single cargo, if she can dispose of it all in one spot, and return. If she should, from a want of demand in one, be obliged to break her bulk and go to many places, her profit will be lessened: in as much as it is the same expence of labour and capital, in a vessel of, I suppose, 100 tons burden, to carry 20 tons, as it is to carry 100 tons—but the profits on the carriage of 20 tons can be but one fifth part of the profit on the carriage of 100. But her profit will be increased beyond the greatest possible profit upon a first cargo, if she can at the same port, where she finds a demand for the whole of her rude cargo, find also a complete assortment of manufactured goods to  
 carry



carry back. Being loaded both out and home, her profits of freight are doubled. But if in order to load herself both out and home, she should be obliged to go to several ports, either to dispose of her first cargo, or to procure an assortment of a second cargo, her profits of freight must be diminished. For vessels of bulk cannot, in the common course of demand, be loaded entirely with *one kind* of fine manufactured goods, as they can with one kind of rude commodity. A small bulk of the first, will be of infinitely more value, than a great bulk of the latter.

HERE then, consists the advantage of one general market. That by increasing the quantity of demand in *one* spot, shipping can come fully laden with manufactured goods of one sort, which may afterwards be broken into assortments, for the return cargoes of those vessels which brought the rude commodities : and those vessels which came with manufactured goods, may freight themselves homeward, with such rude materials as they may want. The profits of freight, are therefore, more than double to all the trading parties : for in being able to carry goods in large cargoes, and in being able to freight both out and home, is the great profit of the carrying trade. Hence it is, that articles of manufacture can frequently be had from a general market, cheaper than from the very spot where they were manufactured. The ports which are now in possession of this general market, principally London, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, are in point of situation, highly inconvenient. They have superadded some inconveniences also, by their laws. Ireland has the advantage of the world in situation for this purpose. She has this further advantage, that she is not at present incumbered by any impolitic laws, which by intangling themselves



selves in the whole business of commerce, are found very difficult to be got rid of, even after the impolicy of them has been discovered and acknowledged.

THAT this is the true system then for Ireland to pursue, will, I believe, now hardly be denied.— Let us examine the effect which the new regulations of protecting duties, will have upon this system.

By protecting duties, you hinder the admission of any manufactures into your country: and you must look to the industry of your own people, and to the length of your own capital, for your being able to supply any foreign demand. America is setting out at the same time with Ireland. She is connected with Ireland by the sympathy which struggles, though different in their means, yet similar in their end, naturally excite. She is connected with her by the ties of private relationship, by old habits of intercourse, and by speaking one common language. She has no resentments to assuage against Ireland, as she has against Great Britain.

FROM these circumstances it follows, that Ireland must become the favourite market of America, if Ireland will suffer herself to be made so. But America is a great market, and her wants are immediate. However Ireland might be favoured, yet if America cannot be supplied here, and supplied here *immediately*, she must be supplied elsewhere.

THE means by which the people of Ireland expect to afford a supply for foreign demand, is by protecting duties. But allowing this instrument the full force which its admirers imagine it possesses, it will take many years before it can raise up a sufficient stock of industry, and a capital to enable it to



to supply a foreign demand——many years before it can even equal the home demand. Now what is to become of the American demand for all this time. The demands of America are *immediate*. Our hope of being able to supply that demand by the means of protecting duties, is *remote*. Are the means then adequate to the end? They are not: for while this wonderful machine of regulation is toiling to produce its effects, years will elapse; and during those years, the people of America must wear coats, shoes, hats, and stockings. They must go to those places where they can procure them. And while we are patiently waiting the effects of our admirable regulation, America will have formed all her correspondences; her markets will be established, her connexions fixed, and the whole texture of her commerce will become so interwoven with that of other nations, that it will be impossible to tear them asunder. We are then disabling ourselves from supplying a market when we have one, that we may be able to supply a market when we shall not have one to supply.

BUT what policy ought we to pursue instead of this? To open our ports as much as possible to every species of foreign intercourse, instead of closing them against any. To encourage by every means in our power, every accession of foreign supply, of foreign wealth, and foreign industry amongst us, that we may be enabled to support the demand in a foreign market, for which we have not ourselves a sufficient stock either of industry or materials.——To learn as speedily as we can, that to procure the greatest possible quantity of any commodity, for the smallest possible exertion of labour, is the only position, the practice of which can lead to solid wealth—that if you can procure from foreigners any commodity upon cheaper terms, that



that is, for the produce of less labour than you can make it for yourself, always to take it—that such a dealing with a foreigner, always leads to as much industry at home as if you made the commodity, and produces more; for that no foreigner will supply you with goods, unless you have something to give him in exchange for it; and that to procure that something, you must work—that every individual is a better judge in his own place, of the method of turning his industry to profit, than any legislature upon earth can be—and that therefore the only sound encouragement, which any legislature can give to industry, is to protect it from external interruption, and internal oppression, and then let it work for itself.

THEY who will study these important conclusions, founded in the relations of nature, may be useful, if they will be busy. But if instead of learning such general and wholesome truths, they should give themselves up to the fatal enthusiasms of their own uninformed imaginations, and yet be active—they will be active like Ravallac. The utmost happiness which can attend them is, that they should continue undeceived—and like Ravallac, die praising God, for having conducted their dagger to the heart of their country's glory!

PERMIT me now, before I quit you, to draw your attention to one or two local circumstances.

THE poor manufacturers of Dublin have been exceedingly distressed: and it is fitting that some cause should be assigned for it—that some remedy should be discovered. It is said, that there have been 7000 people out of employment. It is true, that since the peace, above 100,000 people, by the reduction of the army and navy, have been also deprived of  
their



their employments: and it is equally true, that these 100.000 people have contrived to subsist, by getting some other employments. But that is no reason, that 7000 people, who, as they have been more clamorous, I suppose, must have been more distressed, should be neglected.

It has been a custom with the generous nobility and gentry of this country, whenever they have heard of a slackness in the demand for the manufactures of Dublin, to enter into a subscription to support them. This practice, which no doubt, proceeded from a very generous principle, has produced an effect directly opposite to that for which it was intended. The custom of subscribing upon any cry of distress, has given the master manufacturer a very extraordinary interest. It has given him a profit arising from the *distress* of the working people whom he employs: he therefore, takes every method in his power to continue and promote it. From the knowledge which the master manufacturers have of the readiness in the inhabitants of Dublin to subscribe, whenever the profits of a regular trade do not entirely answer their most avaricious expectations, they immediately stop all their looms, turn off all their workmen, and send them starving into the streets, that by their clamours they may produce a fresh subscription. The misfortune of a manufacture being seated in a capital city, aids this iniquity exceedingly. As soon as the subscription has become tolerably full, they set to work, and continue so until the profits of the subscription have been put into their pockets. They then turn off their workmen again; that by another clamour, another subscription may be raised. Nay, to such a refinement has this baseness been carried, that upon an expectation of the city becoming full towards winter, these masters have turned off all  
their



their workmen; tho' there has not been the least slackness of demand, to justify such a proceeding.

THE aggravation of this distress being pointed out, the mitigation of it will become easy. If a trade cannot be supported without subscription, the sooner the industry of the people can be turned into some other channel the better. If it can support itself without subscription, to be clamoured into subscriptions is to feed avarice and idleness, and to render the master manufacturers of Dublin the masters of the kingdom.

MUCH of this evil has arisen from the manufacture having been seated in a capital city. It contributes to whatever real evil may exist, by increasing the actual dearth of the manufacture, from the actual dearth of subsistence in the capital. It contributes to whatever artificial evil may exist, by enabling a body of workmen almost to overawe the legislature; which becomes a perpetual inducement to the master manufacturers to starve them.

LET the country gentlemen, particularly those who have estates in the west and in the south of Ireland, recollect one effect which must necessarily follow the granting of a protecting duty: It will be a duty to enable the manufacture to continue in Dublin, and to extend itself in Dublin. When once such a duty shall come into force, it prevents for ever the removal or extension of the manufacture from Dublin. It will operate as a monopoly in favour of Dublin—and consequently against all the rest of the kingdom. The particular internal circumstances of the kingdom, and its external connection, point out the fertile plains of the west  
and



and south of Ireland, as the proper stations of the manufacture. There the great cheapness of labour, and the vicinity to the harbours which open the communication to America, might enable the manufacturers to contend with the length of capital, and superior dexterity of a neighbouring kingdom : But a protecting duty will operate as a prohibition to every species of improvement throughout the kingdom. The capital may flourish, but the nation will decay.

THERE is a circumstance which should be mentioned here, as it may contribute to ease the minds of the people. If ever there were an administration in any country, which deserved the confidence of the people; it is the administration of this country. It deserves the confidence of the people, because it was made by the people. Upon a late change in England, a new Lord Lieutenant was sent over here, who chose the men to advise government, who had been the conductors of the people, and in their confidence : these men have been continued. The present administration therefore, is the administration of the people. This circumstance seems to have changed the nature of our constitution, and made the people responsible to government, not government to the people.

I HAVE now gone through the task which I had imposed upon myself. It was rather to point out to you where you might acquire information, than to pretend to give it to you myself. I know your desire to be active and to be useful. I am apprehensive however, that you look too eagerly to that popular applause which is so frequently the source of activity among the gentlemen of the House of Commons. But be careful. To be useful to the people is not always the way to gain their esteem :  
and



and even if you should be fortunate enough to gain it, a life of the most unremitting industry and the most rigid integrity may not preserve it to you. You may remember to have seen a man in this country more highly graced by popular applause, than any of his cotemporaries. You may remember that this man deserved it, by having found his countrymen in a state of the most abject slavery, and having conducted them forward to the most perfect independence——that by combining the exertions of a daring genius, and a persevering spirit together, he led them to the discovery of *unknown* land—to a land of *liberty*, unthought of, and unfought before !

You have seen this man, as he ought to have been, exalted by the gratitude of the people whom he had served. And you have again seen this man, for a paltry difference of opinion with that people whom he had so served, stripped of the honours which he had so well deserved at their hands, and loaded with all the bitterness of abuse, which a rancorous disposition could suggest !

THE brilliancy of his former services remained unfulfilled ; the complexion of his integrity was untainted : yet he was vilified ! Tho' this should teach you to set a true value upon popular applause, let it not tempt you to condemn your countrymen. It is not the vice of Irishmen ; it is the vice of mankind. It is not Ireland ; it is the habitable globe. Columbus re-traced the Atlantic, loaded with chains, by the ingratitude of companions, who owed a *new world* to his services !

I have the honour to be, &c.

F I N I S.



and even if you should be fortunate enough to gain  
in a life of the most unassuming industry and the  
most rigid integrity, you will not give it to you. You  
will remember to have seen a man in this country  
who, after being placed by popular applause, then any  
of his accomplishments. I can only remember that this  
man, however it be having found his countryman  
in that of the most abject slavery, and having been  
sent forward to the most perfect independ-  
ence—that by comparing the exertions of a  
daring man and a persevering man together, he  
had learned the discovery of a new land—to a  
land of which, although one might think it better.

You have seen the man, as he ought to have  
been, exalted by the gratitude of the people whom  
he had served. And you have again seen this man,  
for a party difference of opinion with the people  
whom he had to serve, laid off of the honors  
which he had so well earned at their hands, and  
loaded with all the blame and things which a re-  
cursus disposition could invent.

The discovery of his former services remained  
unnoticed, the contemplation of his integrity was un-  
tenanted: yet he was valued! This should  
teach you to prize the value upon popular approval,  
let it not tempt you to content with a temporary  
It is not the view of humanity; it is the view of  
mankind. It is not Ireland; it is a world  
globe. Columbus reached the American land  
with claims by the regulations of a monarch  
who owed a new world to his services.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

F. I. N. 1. 2.