

S O M E
CONSIDERATIONS
O N T H E
P R E S E N T S T A T E
O F
S C O T L A N D :

I N

A LETTER to the Commissioners and
Trustees for improving FISHERIES and
MANUFACTURES.

GENTLEMEN,

I DO in *Truth* — what all *pretend*, and most
Men believe they do ; I love my Country.
— This Disposition has moved me to do,
what every Man *ought* to do, to give Atten-
tion to its Interest, and to endeavour to promote
its Good. But, as my poor Endeavours have not
been blessed with the wished for Success, my At-
tention has, for many Years past, served only to
fill my Mind with gloomy, ill-boding Thoughts,
as it at *present* lays me under the deepest Concern,
from a thorough Conviction, that the Ruin of

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what I wish best to is unavoidable, unless kind Providence by Miracle interpose, or, (what is next to a Miracle in this degenerate Age), unless the People are brought, in spite of inveterate Prejudices, to *know* and to *pursue* their real Interests.

Miracles in our favours, though Miracles were more rife than they are generally thought to be, our *Worthlessness* forbids us to expect; — and the *rooted Prejudices*, the *gross Ignorance*, and the *stupid Indifference* that have Possession of the Minds of the People, render the Hopes of bringing them to *see* and to *do* their Duty almost desperate. — But as two Things are capable of certain and very obvious Demonstration; the one, — *That their immediate Ruin is unavoidable, unless they alter their Course*; and the other, — *That it is absolutely in their Power, by changing their Conduct, to avoid Destruction, and save this Nation*; — I cannot rest satisfied that I have done what my Duty and my Affection to my Country requires, until I have exposed to their Eye those two Propositions in that Sort of Light, and with that Degree of Evidence which *ought* to bring Conviction, and must render them *inexcusable*, as well as *despicable*, — unless they act upon it.

It is for this Reason, Gentlemen, that I put Pen to Paper, and take the Liberty to address what I write to you; not by way of Instruction, as you know the Circumstances of the Nation much better than I do; but by way of Appeal to your Knowledge and Experience for the Truth of what I write. — You, Gentlemen, are of no Party, or Faction, in those Politicks which unhappily divide the Kingdom; you have long
laboured

laboured for the Good of your Country in the most generous and disinterested Manner; you have for many Years bestowed your Time, and employed your Industry, in cherishing our *Infant* Manufactures, without Fee or Reward, other than the Satisfaction of doing good; — you have, with Pleasure, seen them rise to a Pitch that promised Deliverance from Poverty; you know, that the Value of the Linen stamped for Sale, from the Time you began to act till last *November*, exceeded *L. 2,700,000*. — But, alas! you know also, that this gay, this pleasing Prospect, is on the Point of disappearing; — you know, the Funds have failed, and that there is not Money wherewith to pay the Annuity due last *Midsummer*; you know, there is a full Stop put to the Payment of Premiums, and Salaries to Officers; and you know the unavoidable Consequence, — That the whole System must sink, and the Manufacture fall to its pristine Discredit, when the Encouragement and Means of Instruction to do well, and the Guards and Checks against doing ill, are withdrawn. But, what is still more material to my present Purpose, you know the *Source* from which this Evil springs; you saw, with Grief, the extravagant Use of *uncustomed Tea* and *Spirits* begin, — and foresaw the Destruction that must inevitably ensue to the Country, as well as to the Revenues and Manufactures; your annual *Reports* to his Majesty, for many Years back, have taken notice of this dangerous Circumstance, and *foretold* the Mischief you *foresaw*. — The Event has justified your *Prediction*; — and that *Prediction*, were there no other Evidence, is sufficient to satisfy

any one to what Cause our Complaints are owing. —You, therefore, Gentlemen, are the most proper *Witnesses* to appeal to on this Occasion; and, if what I affirm shall be confirmed by your Approbation,—it must become the *Belief* of the People. How far that Belief will dispose them to act, and whether there is so much common Sense and Regard to their Country left in their Minds as shall induce them to do, what is easily in their Power, to prevent the undoing of themselves and of the Publick, is what I intend to try by publishing this Letter.

To trace the *Disease*, under which we at present labour, to its *Source*, we must look back to the *Union* of the Kingdoms. The Treaty for that *Union* was carried on and concluded much against the Inclinations of the Generality of the People of *Scotland*; and the only popular Topick produced for rendering it palatable, was the great Advantage that must accrue to *Scotland* from the *Communication of Trade*, to which by the *Union* it was to be admitted. This Consideration was surely weighty; and, had the People honestly made use of that Privilege to which they were invited, the Complaints, under which we now suffer, would not have had a Being. But, unfortunately, the People took the most mischievous of all Turns: In place of pursuing *fair Trade*, they universally, with the Exception of *Glasgow*, *Aberdeen*, and one or two Places more, took to *smuggling*; their small Stocks they invested in Goods that bore *high Duties*, and, under the Favour of *running* those securely on our wide and ill-guarded Coasts, they flattered themselves they should soon grow rich,
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profiting at least of the high Duty, which by running they were to save.

Though this Scheme proved *destructive* to almost every Adventurer who entered upon it, though it was bottomed on Fraud and Dishonesty, and though it evidently tended to what it has very near accomplished, the total Ruin of the Country; yet so blind, or rather perverse, were the People, that they, without Hesitation, and almost without Exception, gave into it.—The *Smuggler* was the Favourite. — His prohibited or high Duty Goods were run ashore by the *Boats* of whatever Part of the Coast he came near; when ashore, they were guarded by the Country from the Customhouse-officer; if seized, they were rescued; — and if any Seizure was returned and tried, the *Juries* seldom failed to find for the Defendant. These Circumstances gave the *Running Trade* the Appearance of absolute Security; and have so *thoroughly* destroyed the Revenue, that the Customs are hardly able to pay the Salaries of their own Officers.

Gain expected was the *Temptation* that drew the Traders into this villanous Project; and a *Dislike* to the *Union*, an *ill Opinion* conceived of the first Sett of Customhouse-officers that were sent down hither, an *Unwillingness* to favour the Revenue, on a Supposal that the Money thence arising was to be remitted to *England*, and *Partiality* to their unhappy Countrymen who were dipt in this Trade, together with small Bounties and Presents received from the *Smuggler*, drew the Bulk of the People in, to favour them.

When the *Smuggler* runs Goods that *do not* interfere with the *native* Produce of the Country, he

he hurts the Revenue *only*; but when he imports Merchandize of any kind that prevents the *Consumption* of home Commodities, unless such Commodity can draw the Value at a foreign Market, it is evident, that, besides robbing the Revenue, he wrongs his Fellow-subject *just so much* as the home Commodity loses of its Price, by lessening the Demand for it. In addition to this, if the foreign Commodity is taken from a Country that does not receive *equal Value* of our Goods in Exchange, the Difference comes necessarily to be paid in *Bullion*.

This Reflection, however obvious, was either not made, or not attended to: For, from the Commencement of the Union to this Day, the *smuggling* those Sorts of Goods, which interfere, *the most sensibly*, with the Consumption of *our own*, and which are for the greatest Part purchased in Exchange for *Bullion*, has been persisted in, and encouraged to that Degree, that our own have sunk above *one third* in their Value; and there is hardly a Penny of *Coin* left,—the *Smuggling* of many Years having bartered *almost all of it*, against those *foreign* Commodities that have *sunk* the Value of *our own*.

For twenty Years after the Union, this Mischief continued, without being *very* sensibly felt. — By much the *greatest* Part of the Wine brought into the Out-ports paid no Duty, — and *none* paid higher than the *Spanish*; — Brandy in vast Quantities was imported without paying *any*: And by those Means the Consumption of Beer and Ale was in *some* Degree impaired, and the Use of home-made Spirits *almost universally* laid aside. — But as the Price of Wine never came so *low* as to bring it
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within the *Reach* of the *Populace*; as the *Vice* of *Punch-drinking* had not prevailed over the *meaner* Sort, who were accustomed to no better Liquor than *Twopenny*; and as the *more pernicious* Practice of *Tea-drinking* was confined to what may be called *People of Condition*: our Grain still bore some Price, because the Consumption of Malt-liquor was considerable.—The Excise, though lower than it had formerly been, produced Sums fit to answer the Expence of the Civil Government; and such Cities and Towns as had an Impost on Beer and Ale granted to them, found no *considerable* Diminution of their Revenues.

But when the opening a Trade with the *East-Indies*, first at *Ostend*, and afterwards in *Sweden*, brought the Price of Tea in the Northern Parts of *Europe* so low, that the *meanest* labouring Man could compass the Purchase of it; — when the Connection which the Dealers in this Country had with many *Scotsmen* in the Service of the *Swedish* Company at *Gottenburg*, introduced the common Use of that *Drug* amongst the *lowest* of the People; — when *Sugar*, the inseparable Companion of *Tea*, came to be in the Possession of the very *poorest* Housewife, where formerly it had been a great Rarity, — and thereby was *at hand*, to mix with Water and Brandy, or Rum; — and when *Tea* and *Punch* became thus the *Diet* and *Debauch* of *all* the *Beer* and *Ale* Drinkers, the Effects were very *suddenly* and very *severely* felt.—The *Excise* sunk in proportion as these Abuses grew; the *Malt-duty* kept Pace with it; the *Imposts* in Cities and Towns fell *still lower*, as these *Vices* prevailed more in *Towns* than in the open Country:—Grain yielded

no Price; and, at present, the melancholy Experience of every Man informs him, that there is no *Bullion* left in the Country, at least none in proportion to what was some Years ago.

Our Exportation to *France* hardly pays for the Wine which the Palates of the better Sort of People must be pleased with from thence; our Exports to *Holland* come far short at present of paying for the Flax we import from that Country; and, since the Herring-fishery on our Coasts has failed, we have not Commodities to give the *Swedes* in exchange for the Iron and Timber which we must have from them.—How then must the *Brandy* we have from *France* directly, or by the way of *Holland*? how must the *Tea* we have from *Holland* and *Gottenburg* be paid for? Why, surely, either in *Bullion*, or what from other Markets would fetch this Country *Bullion*.—And if any Man will but recollect how *many*, or rather how *few* Crown or Half-crown Pieces he has met with for some Years past, and consider how industriously they have been picked up by the *Smuggler*, he can be under no Difficulty to account for the Cause of the *Scarcity* of our *Coin*.

The Purchase of foreign Spirits before the *Epidemical* Disease of *Tea-drinking*, cost the Nation annually a very considerable Sum, which would have been long ere now sensibly felt in the Diminution of our *Specie*, had it not been for several Accidents, that brought or kept Money in the Country.—The unnatural Rebellion that broke out in the Year 1715, was the Cause of large Remittances for the Support of the Army, which then was sent, and for some time kept in *Scotland*;
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the Attempt of *Spain* on the Highlands in 1719, produced the like Effect; the Purchase of the forfeited Estates by the *York-building* Company, brought us considerable Sums from *England*, and the expensive Undertakings of that Company in Woods, Iron-works and Mines, kept at least the Rents of all the Estates they had purchased at home, if they did not draw further Sums from *England*. These Circumstances, not to mention the different Supplies we have had at different Times, by the Return of some of our Countrymen with Fortunes picked up by their Industry in foreign Parts, prevented for some time our feeling the Effects of *Smuggling*.—But since the ruinous Expence of *Tea* came to be added to that of *foreign Spirits*, and the *Waste* of *Bullion* thereby occasioned, has not for several Years been supported by such *contingent* Supplies, we feel the Sore with a *Vengeance*; and now to our Sorrow and Confusion see, that our *Coin*, and with it our *Trade* and *Credit*, are gone; and that our *criminal* Indulgence to the *Smuggler* has been the Cause of these Misfortunes.

It is hardly possible to make any *exact* Estimate of the Quantity of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits* imported, and made use of by such as *ought* to be satisfied with the Product of their own Country; but it falls within every one's Observation, that the *Use* of *Tea* has descended to *Hundreds*, for every one that drank it fifteen Years ago; and that *foreign Spirits*, plain, or made into *Punch*, are become the Entertainment of every one who cannot come at Wine. These Liquors must necessarily supply the Place of some other Liquor formerly

accustomed ; and if any one will but compare the *present* Amount of the Excise and Malt with what those Duties produced *formerly*, and consider the *Decrease* in the *Brewery*,—he must necessarily charge that *Decrease* to the Account of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits*,—and conclude, that the *Tea* and *Spirit* drinking is *high*, in proportion as the *Brewery* is *low*.

For Example, if the *Impost* of two Pennies on the Pint, in *Edinburgh*, produced *L. 7383 per annum* at a Medium of five Years before *Midsummer 1728* ; and if the yearly Produce has been but *L. 4905* at a Medium of five Years preceeding last *Midsummer* ; and if the Number of Inhabitants has been *nearly* the same in both Periods : can it be a Doubt with any one who knows that *Tea* is become the common Breakfast of *Bluegowns* and the *Fish-carriers* of *Musselburgh* ;—and that Footmen and Porters get drunk over *Punch*, as freely, and *almost as cheap*, as they formerly did over *Twopenny*,—that the *Decay* of the *Brewery* is *immense* ; and that the *Cause* of it is *the Use* of *Tea* and *Spirits* ? —This, however, is the unlucky Case of the City of *Edinburgh* ; and the Case of every other Town that has had the like Grant, will by their Books appear to be *nearly* the same.

If it must then be admitted, that *Tea* and *Spirits* prevent the Consumption of our own *Malt-liquors*, can it require an Argument to prove, that this must *prevent* the Sale and *lower* the Price of our *Grain* ? Is it not manifest, that so much as is *not* consumed at home, must ly on the Proprietors Hands, and *perish*, if there is no Demand from abroad ? And does not every body know, that we
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have no Demand from abroad, except when their Crops miscarry? which seldom happens but when ours are deficient also. If any one doubt of this, I should be glad to know from him, what is the Cause of the present *low Price*, or rather *no Price*, for Grain.

Without spending more Words on proving a Proposition so very plain, as that *preventing* the Consumption of our Grain, *lowers* its Value, I shall proceed to another, equally certain, though not so obvious, or so commonly attended to; and that is, That by much the greatest Part of the landed Interest of this Nation, perhaps nine tenth-parts of the whole, suffers *cruelly* by the Abuse I am considering.

It will be admitted,— that the *Rents* of Lands in *Scotland* arise generally from *Grain*, and that they are paid, partly in *kind*, and partly in *Money*. If the Rent is payable in *Grain*, the Reduction directly affects the *Landlord*: If his Boll, which last Year brought *L. 6*, brings this Year no more than *L. 4*, he loses *one third* of his Income; and the *Farmer*, who pays him that Rent, loses in proportion on every Boll that he can afford to carry to the Market.—On the other hand, if the Rent is payable in *Money*, the Loss affects the Farmer in the *first* place; but, if he conditioned to pay Money-rent, on the Supposition that the Boll was to be worth *L. 6*, it is manifest he must soon fail; —the Landlord cannot hope to recover *Payment*, or, when the Lease is broke, to find another Tenant who will take a Lease at the *same* Rent.

Hard then must be the Case of the Landlord,

and *miserable* that of the Tenant. It is a *melancholy*, but a *well known* Truth, that *few* landed Gentlemen can boast of being *altogether* free of Debt; and it is also true, that the *Turn* of the greatest Part of them is to *live up* to their Fortunes. Now, if their Income shall be reduced one third, they must either *starve*, (for so they will call retrenching their Living), or the *Creditor* must *starve*; and he again, to prevent that Calamity, must call the Law to his Assistance; *Process* must issue, *Fails* must be crowded, Lands must be *sequestered*, Estates must be *sold* at less than the Value, because there is no Money; and the Children of Families which have subsisted with some Respect for Ages, must become a Load on the Charity of their Friends, if any such are left able to support them, or must be turned adrift into the wide World, to look for Bread the best way they can. And as for the Tenant, whose Condition is at this Day, generally speaking, very *poor*, the Reduction of his Income is attended with *immediate* Beggary; upon Failure of Payment of Rent, his Lease is forfeited, his Goods are taken in Execution, friendless and helpless he must wander from Door to Door, leading perhaps an Infant-family, which must perish for want, if not supplied by the Charity of Neighbours, who in the general Distress will be little able to afford Assistance.

The *other* pernicious Consequences of Smuggling affect the landed Gentleman and Farmer in *common* only with the Bulk of the People. Is *Coin* so scarce that we cannot go to Market? that Sore must be felt by every one. Is *Credit* so low, and Trade so dead, that no Hopes are left of bettering our Condition?
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— the Prospect must be equally disagreeable to all. — Are our Manufactures, which at present seem to be our *only Resource*, to perish, because the Revenues cannot afford the Monies destined to support them? Are our numerous Poor to remain unemployed? Must our *excellent Workmen*, thoroughly bred to the Loom, starve? or must they for Bread *abandon* their native Country, and *add* to the *Stock* of Artists in a neighbouring one, at present our Rivals in that Business, and thereby give *that* Country an Advantage *never* to be recovered by *ours*? And is this last Circumstance to happen, in all Probability, within the Compass of a Twelvemonth? — Those Reflexions are very bitter; but they pierce, or ought to pierce, the Heart of every *Scotsman* alike.

But it is far otherwise with respect to the Article now under Consideration, the reducing the Value of *Grain*. To the *poorer* Sort, especially to such as love to be *idle*, it is considered as a Blessing; and to the People in general it is surely a Convenience; but to the *landed* Gentleman and *Farmer*, it is certain Destruction. — Hard, therefore, is their Case, who share *in common* with their Fellow-subjects *the other* Calamities that attend *Smuggling*, and are *over and above* cursed with this Plague, which must soon put an End to them.

Hard however as it is, they certainly *deserve* no Pity, and *cannot* expect to meet with any, if the Distress which is *just* approaching, shall reach them. Pity they *do not* deserve, because by their *own* Act they have pulled, and are daily pulling this Mischief on *themselves*; and Pity they have no Reason to look for, if the Evil shall continue,
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because it is undeniably in *their own* Power, and in *their Power only*, as Things at present stand, to prevent it.

It is a Circumstance well known to every one who knows any thing of *Scotland*, that the Grounds which produce Corn, ly alongst the Coasts; — that the Midland shews mostly barren Muirs and bleak Mountains, yielding only coarse Pasture for low-sized Cattle; that the Land is every where so cut by *Fritbs* and Inlets of the Sea, that nine tenths of the Corns produced in the whole Country grow on an *Edging* within five Miles of the Coasts of the Sea, or of the Banks of Rivers, so far as they are navigable.

Now, if this shall be admitted to be the Case, and if it is at the same time true, that *Smuggling* has been nursed up, and brought to its present Perfection, by the Inhabitants of this *Corn-growing* Country, and that it cannot subsist *one Moment* without their Countenance and Protection; the Misery *they* have brought upon *themselves* cannot lay Claim to the Compassion of any Man, — but on a Supposition that they acted ignorantly, without being aware of the Mischief they were bringing on their *Country* and on *themselves*: And if, after the Admonition they now receive, they shall proceed in the same *wicked*, as well as *foolish* Course; or *shall not*, on the contrary, exert the Power which their Situation and Circumstances put in their Hands of retrieving their *Country* and *themselves* from Ruin, and thereby repairing in some Degree the Wrongs they have done to *both*; — the *Contempt*, the *Curses* of their Country, must be their Lot; — and, in place of Compassion from Men,

Men, they will have just Cause to look for *Vengeance* from the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.

Wide and ill-guarded as the Coasts of *Scotland* are, the *Running Trade* could never have succeeded without the Assistance of the Inhabitants of the Sea-coast. —The *Smuggler* must have *Boats* to lay his Goods on Land; —he must have *Carriages* to transport them by Land; he must have *Cover* to shelter them in, until *Carriages* are provided; he must be possessed of the *favourable Disposition* of the People, to secure against *Informations* to the Customhouse; nay, he must be confident of their *Power* to protect his Goods from Seizure, or to *rescue* them, if by Accident they should be seized. —All these Aids are *indispensably* necessary, and yet all these Aids the *Felon*, who has been *murdering* his Country, has hitherto had.

Boats, if the Weather permit, the *Smuggler* is absolutely sure of, whatever Part of the Coast he touch at. Our Fishermen, every body knows, have for the most part left off their *proper Business*, and dedicated their Time and *Industry* to the Assistance of the *Runner*; in so much that our Markets are far from being so well supplied with fresh Fish as heretofore. —And the Quantities caught and cured for Exportation, come far short of what the Coast-Fishing formerly produced. —Which is *another Branch* of the numerous Losses with which this abominable Practice is attended.

When his Goods are laid on Land, all Hands are at Work for his Service; Cattle and Carriages are ready; every Farm-house, every Cottage is open for their Reception. — Giving the least Information to the Customhouse is, in the Opinion
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of the People, branded with Infamy: And if any loose Information shall direct the Officers to a Search, the Country is in Arms, and nothing less than a Detachment of regular Troops can protect the Officer in his Search, or fetch the Goods to the Customhouse, when seized.

This *monstrous*, this *unnatural* Encouragement, received from *that Set* of Men *whom* of all others *Smuggling* hurts in the most tender Part, is the sole Support of it. Withdraw but the Assistance of *those* whose Fortunes depends on the *Value* of Grain, and the Customhouse must prove too hard for the *Runner*. But such is the Power of *Prejudice*, such is our *Blindness*, or rather *stupid Insensibility*, that, though no one can contradict, or indeed dissemble the Knowledge of any of the Circumstances that have been stated; yet, *Gentlemen* and *Farmers* go on in the usual Train, — cherishing and hugging in their Bosom the *Smuggler*, that *Leech* that lives by sucking their *Heart's Blood*.

But what makes the most *ridiculous* Figure in all this Matter, is the Silliness of the Temptation that prevails with them, so notoriously to give up their own Interests, and those of their Country; which, besides the Prejudices already stated, amounts to no more than this, That the Gentleman has Rum and Brandy, and his Lady Tea and Coffee, at very reasonable Rates, and the Farmer has small Presents of these precious Drugs made him.

Let no Man be so *absurd* as to imagine, that, without this Countenance from the *Proprietors* of Lands on the Coasts, and their *Tenants* and
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Servants, Smuggling could keep its Ground in *Scotland*; because in *England*, where the Runner does not meet with the same Countenance, we hear of great Bands of armed Smugglers travelling alongst with their Goods, and even fighting pitched Battles with the Officers, and their Assistants the Troops: For the Case of the Runner is very *different* in the *different* Countries.

In *England*, where the Goods run are a *Trifle*, compared with the *regular Importation*, the *Smuggler* sells his Goods *at* or *near* the Prices which Goods that have paid the Duty draw. Thus he profits of the *whole* Duty, and can very well *afford* to pay extraordinary Hire for Carriages, and to have a Gang of *Bravo's* in Pay, to secure him against *Officers* and their Assistants.

But, in *Scotland*, every body knows the Matter stands *quite* otherwise. The *Smuggling* Trade is much *overdone*. The Facility of running has invited every *petty* Dealer to try it. No foreign Spirits *are*, and no Tea *can* be regularly imported into this Country.—In place of drawing a Price equal to the prime Cost and Charges, with the Addition of the Duty, the Smuggler is obliged frequently to sell the Goods *cheaper* than they cost him; —which is the Cause of the numberless *Bankruptcies* that every Day happen amongst that *Gang*.—Under these Circumstances, the Running Trade cannot support the *Apparatus*, or bear the *Expence* that is necessary to make it successful in *England*; and if you deprive it of the Encouragement it has from the *ill-fated* Country, the Country must *soon* be delivered from that Curse.

On this Occasion it may not be improper to observe,

serve, that if *Running* were to be attended with the *same* Expence in *Scotland* as it is in *England*, one of my capital Objections to it would cease. It would indeed *rob* the Revenue of a *Trifle*, and it would *drain* the Country of *some* Money; but it would not *destroy* the Value of our *Grain*; because the *Smuggler* could not afford to sell it *so* cheap, as to invite the very *poorest* of the People to become Purchasers; and consequently it would not prevent the *Use* of *Malt-liquor*, as it does at this Day.

And this Reflection is the Foundation of the *Hopes* I entertain of seeing an End put to this extensive Mischief, by the *joint* Resolution and Action of the Gentlemen whose *All* depends upon opposing it. Should they rouse themselves from the *Lethargy* that possesses them, and do what is *manifestly* in their Power, prevent the running of Goods without paying Duty; the Consequence whereof must necessarily be, that foreign Spirits and Tea *could not* be sold without adding the Duty to the prime Cost and Charges; it is my fixed Opinion, the Complaint would cease: For the lowest Class of the People, who run upon those Commodities, because they *can afford* to purchase them, behoved then to return to their former Diet, because, at the advanced Price, they *could not*; and the better sort, who are so made to them by Custom, that they cannot *think* of dispensing with the Use of them, may still enjoy what they are fond of, as freely and as cheap as they did before the excessive Consumption of these Goods began; because they *can afford* to pay the Duty.

Should the Proprietors of Lands on the Coast,
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moved by *their Interest*, and by Regard to *their Country*, come seriously to a Resolution of exerting themselves to prevent the Destruction of *both*, that *Vermin* the *Smuggler* would no longer overrun us. Every one knows the *Power* which Gentlemen have over their *Fishermen*;—who generally hold their *Huts*, their *Acres* and their *Boats*, by no other Tenure than the Master's *Good-will* and *Pleasure*:—And no one doubts of the great *Authority* they have over their *Tenants*;—if the Tenant has *no Lease*, which in many Places is the Case, he must not disoblige the Landlord; and though he have, the Term is commonly so short, (which in other Respects is unfortunate), that he must not risk the giving Offence. A Signification, that no Lease should be renewed to any one who assisted a *Smuggler*, with Conditions in Leases to be hereafter granted,—That assisting the Smuggler should *forfeit* the Lease, must quickly determine the *Farmer* to alter his Conduct, and thereby put an End to the destructive Traffick.

The Reason why I mention the *Authority* Masters have over their *Fishermen* and *Tenants*, is to shew, that though those last should prove reluctant, and still retain a hankering to that sort of Commerce, which has long been in fashion, and which has furnished them with Means of getting drunk very cheap; it is nevertheless in the Power of the Masters, whose Eyes will, I hope, by what I write, be opened, and turned to the true Interests of *their Country*, to *compel* them to do what is so manifestly for *their own*. Not that I think *Compulsion* will for any Tract of Time be *necessary*; since I am well satisfied, that, if due Care is taken,

the *Farmer's* Eyes may be *also* opened, and he be determined by *Interest* to save the Country from *Ruin*.

Many of the Gentlemen, whose Estates ly near the Coast, have Jurisdiction *patrimonial*; they are *Barons*. Most of them are in the *Commission* of the Peace, and have thereby, not only *Authority* to second their honest Intentions, by putting the Laws in Execution, but also frequent *Opportunities* of assembling and consulting together, at *Quarter-sessions*, *Head Courts*, and *Meetings* for levying the *Supply*.—All of them, I dare say, *love* their Country, and it is their *present* Opinion, that they would risk their *Lives* for its Defence; they have had Education, they have Knowledge, and they can see what their *Duty* to their Country, and what their *own* Interest requires: Should they, happily for this poor Country, think on the dangerous Way we are in, as I do; should they come to salutary Resolutions in their *respective* Counties and Districts to oppose the *Smuggler*; should the Gentlemen of *different* Districts amongst the Coast, maintain a *Correspondence* on this Subject with each other; and should the *Opinion* of the Gentlemen become also the *Opinion* of the Farmer, which with a little Time must necessarily be the Case; no Man who knows any thing of this Country will doubt that the *Smuggler* must betake himself to some other Business.

If the *Smuggler* cannot depend on having *Boats* to receive his Goods from the *bevering* Vessel;—if he can hope for no *Shelter* to cover them when landed; if he is to have no *Protection* or Assistance from the *Farmer*, but, on the contrary, is to look
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upon every *Farmer* as an *Informer*, and as an *Assistant* to the Officer, he must be very *mad* indeed if he persist in *running*.

For, though the Care of *landed Gentlemen* cannot extend itself to the Ports of *Royal Boroughs*, yet, if they exert themselves within their respective Estates, the Case of the Runner must be desperate.—Every one who is in any Degree acquainted with this Subject, knows, that in Fact *little* or nothing is run in the Ports belonging to Boroughs;—those Ports are generally guarded by Officers, who have the Assistance of Troops. Ships, 'tis true, loaded with *prohibited Goods*, are frequently forced into these Ports, when stormy Weather or other cross Accidents *prevent* their running their Cargoes at Sea.—But, in Port, they always have Officers on board, who prevent running to any *considerable Value*;—and when they sail for the foreign Port to which they *pretend* they are bound, their Business is, to meet by Appointment with Boats on some convenient Part of the Coast, to ease them of their Loading;—but not to put into the Port of any Borough, until they are light, and have lodged their Goods securely in the neighbouring Country, from thence to be brought with Convenience to Boroughs, or any where else.—So that if the *landed Gentlemen* prevent running where their Power to do so is unquestionable, there seems to be little Danger of running within the Liberties of Boroughs.

And if the Assistance of the *State of Boroughs*, to curb this wasting Evil, were necessary, there seems to be no doubt of obtaining their hearty Concurrence; as they are skilled in Trade, and well

acquainted with the Disease, of which the greatest Part of them are *very near* expiring.—They have, several Years ago, taken the Matter under their Consideration, and have given each other the strongest *Exhortations* to resist the Mischief. But as they were not *then* seconded by the *landed* Gentlemen, whose Interest is more deeply concerned even than theirs, their *Intreaties* failed of the hoped for Fruits.—However, as the Letter of the 3d of *September* 1736, addressed to the several Cities and Towns of the Nation by the *annual Committee* of the General Convention of *Royal Boroughs*, shews fully their Sense of the Matter, and may be of Service to convince those who may be disposed to yield more readily to *Authority* than to *Argument*; I shall take the Liberty to reprint it, and to subjoin a Copy of it.

If the various Reflections already made, are fit to yield full Conviction, that the excessive Use of *Tea* and *foreign Spirits* has been the *Ruin* of this Country; — that this *Ruin* has been pulled on it by the *weak*, the *criminal* Indulgence of the *Gentry* and of their *Tenants* to *Smugglers*; and that it is easily in the Power of those who suffer *most*, and *most directly*, by the Evil, entirely to prevent it for the future: I cannot yet be brought to think so *meanly* of the *Heads* or of the *Hearts* of my Countrymen, as to doubt that they will exert themselves, if their Case, and that of their Country, is fairly recommended to their Consideration.

Whilst *popular Prejudices* run high in favours of the *Smuggler*, and before the Mischiefs flowing from his Practice were *severely* and *universally* felt,
he

he very possibly might *not* have known the Extent of the Wrong he did to his Country, or to his Fellow-subjects who favoured him; —and therefore may be considered as having *erred* rather *ignorantly* than *wickedly*: But if, after *knowing* the fatal Tendency of that Traffick; if, after *seeing* the Poverty and Distress it has brought on the *Nation*, he relentless persists in repeating the *cruel* Wounds he has given, he can be no otherwise considered than as the *blackest* of all Villains, the *most execrable* of all Murderers, a *Parricide*; and must, if there is any Zeal for the publick Weal, if any Spirit is left, *raise* the Country against him, as *Wolves* have heretofore done, and as a *much less* mischievous Animal, a *mad Dog*, does at this Day.—Wherefore I am willing to flatter myself with Hopes, that if *Gentlemen* can be brought to take becoming Resolutions on this Subject, no Man, however *dishonest*, will be found *so bold* as to attempt the Running-trade in defiance of the joint Endeavours of the People.

Upon the same Prejudices and Mistakes, the *Connivance*, the *Lenity*, the *Partiality* of Country Gentlemen to *Smugglers* in *time past* may be excused: But when that *Partiality* is by fatal Experience found to be destructive of *almost all* the valuable Interests of the Country, and noxious to *every* Individual,—I cannot suffer myself to think, that it will subsist in the *Heart* or in the *Conduct* of any Gentleman one Moment longer. Before the Desolation that attends Smuggling was generally felt or known, I do not at all wonder that Men declined the *invidious* Task of *informing*, or assisting the Customhouse-officer. Neither is it fur-

surprising to me, that if the Goods belonging to any Gentleman's *Neighbour*, to his *Friend*, or to any other of his *Dependents*, were in danger of being seized, he should *connive* at the securing or rescuing them; and I can easily figure to myself what Inducements might have prevailed on the Generality of Men to *mitigate Penalties* when they sat as *Judges*, and to *wish* at least for the *Claimants* when they sat as *Jurors*. But now, when the Question with the Smuggler is brought to this Issue, Whether *they* or *the Country* shall sink or swim? I am confident no Gentleman will be so *mean*, as to put the Interest of his *Neighbour*, his *Friend*, or his *Dependent*; who, from this time forward, must *confessedly* be a *Villain*, if he is a *Smuggler*, in competition with *that* of his *Country*: And I encourage myself, on the contrary, to believe, that every Gentleman who loves, or would be thought to love his Country, will rouse himself and his Neighbours from that *faulty Heedlessness* which has so long possessed them, and endeavour to make use of all the Weapons that Law has *put* or *left* in their Hands to destroy their *common Enemy*.

It is because I am persuaded that *such would be* the Behaviour of the People if they were duly informed, that I take the Liberty of making this publick Address to you, *Gentlemen*, who of all others *know best* the melancholy Condition of the Country, and are therefore the *best qualified* to give Evidence of the Facts, on the *believing* or *disbelieving* whereof, the *saving* or *utter Destruction* of this Nation, *at this very Time*, depends.—Your *Stamp* must make those Sentiments *pass current*;

vent; and if they become the Sentiments of the *Publick*, the Work is done.

You, Gentlemen, who, without Fee or Reward, dedicate great Part of your Time to the Service of your Country, are a noble *Example* to other Gentlemen, no less interested in its Welfare than yourselves, to form themselves into *Societies* on this Occasion, in their respective Counties, to watch over the publick Good, and to guard against the common Enemy. — Could that generous *Example* prevail; did Gentlemen, in the different Districts alongst the Coast, form themselves into small *Societies*, shall I call them *Confederacies*? which should *correspond* with one another, and with you, *Smuggling* must receive its Death's Wound, and the Country be delivered from its present Distress. Nor do I see why this may not be expected: For, though *Inattention* to the publick Good, and a kind of *Insensibility* as to its Concern, seems to be the *present* Disease of most Men; yet there are, I hope, *a few* still left scattered up and down the Country, whose *manly* Spirit is not *quite* sunk; — who cannot stand the *Reproach* of being *accessory* to the Ruin of the Nation, by *not* preventing it when it is clearly in their Power; and who, by exerting themselves, may awaken their *lethargick* Neighbours, and bring them, *for avoiding* Shame, to do what they have not *Virtue* enough to move them to.

Your *Example* must encourage *Societies* already formed, such as *Magistrates* and *Councils* in Corporations, to watch over and promote the true Interests of the People under their Care. It is proved, in the Letter from the Committee of the Conven-

tion already mentioned, that *Smuggling* is destructive to the *State of Boroughs*; if therefore they can be stirred up to mind their common Concern, and, *in conjunction* with the *landed Gentlemen*, to pursue it, I am not able to foresee what can prevent their Success.

You, Gentlemen, can cure the *Apprehensions* of the unhappy Persons now engaged in this *villanous Trade*, that, if they *desist* from it, they shall fall out of Business, and find no Employment wherein they may improve their small Stocks: You can point out to them a *Trade*, wherein the Gains are much *more certain*, as well as *more innocent*; —you can tell them what may be got by raising, dressing and selling Flax; — you can tell them what Gain attends employing the Poor in *Spinning*, and the *purchasing* and *selling* Linen Yarn; —you can shew them what *Profits* attend *Looms* of all kinds; and, by opening the *various Branches* of the *Linen Manufacture*, you can satisfy them, that in it *alone* there is room for *employing* to great Advantage much more Money than they ever *abused* in Smuggling.

You can further, with great Truth, assure them, that, if they will but withdraw their Stocks from that *guilty Traffick* in which they at present are employed, the *Funds* for supporting our Manufacture must be so much *improved*, that it will incontestably be in your Power to *encourage*, and thereby to *introduce* and *promote* several *new Branches* of the Linen Trade, upon which the commendable Spirit that is now stirring amongst our Manufacturers disposes them to enter; but in which, Progress cannot be made for *lack of Funds*; —and

—and they must then with Satisfaction *see* Bread provided for *Thousands*, and a Field opened for *every one* who is not disposed to be *idle*, to improve his Fortune in.

And, by comparing their *present* Businets with *that* to which you invite them, you can point out this *essential*, and very *interesting* Difference, That the one *cannot* be carried on to any *Extent*, without *draining* the Nation of its *Bullion*; whereas the other *cannot* be carried on to any *considerable* Pitch, without *adding* to the *national Cash*: And that *the one* stuffs the Country with *foreign Drugs*, of no Use or Advantage to it, but which, by being consumed, *lessens* the Value, by *preventing* the Consumption of the *natural Product*; whereas *the other* fetches *Money* from abroad, in *return* for the *Product* of the Soil, and the *Labour* of the Industrious: And that Money employed in promoting and extending the Trade, *increases* the Number of working People, puts Money in Pockets to which Coin was heretofore a Stranger, and thereby enables *Multitudes*, who formerly lived in great *Want*, or were supported by *Charity*, to go to Market, and to pay for a *comfortable*, in place of *begging* for a *scanty* Subsistence; a necessary Consequence whereof it must be, that our Grain, and all the other Product of our Lands, must not only *recover* their former, but must fetch a *higher Price*.

Your Opinion, *Gentlemen*, I am much disposed to hope, will soon become the *Opinion* of the *People*; and how small soever the Disposition of the *Idle* and the *Indolent* may be to *aēt* for the Good of their Country, yet such Persons are commonly willing

enough to *talk* for it.—From this very *Talking*, I am sanguine enough to look for *some* Advantage. It may give a Turn to the *Prejudices* of the Publick; —it may point out the *Smuggler* as the capital Enemy to the Country; it may make opposing, discovering, and declaiming against him, *fashionable*: And if this shall become the *Fashion*, I doubt not we shall soon have the Assistance of the *Clergy* (whose Remissness to expose and prevent a Practice so *shamelessly* sinful, so fraught with *Fraud* and *Perjury*, I have long complained of) to open the Eyes of their Parishioners of all Ranks, and to deter them from confederating with the Destroyers of the People.—I am not, I must confess, very fond of having Matters of *Policy* treated in the *Pulpit*: —But when any scandalous *Vice* prevails, the more *epidemical* it is, it becomes *the more* the Duty of the Clergy to inveigh against it; and if with it is evidently connected the *Destruction* of the Nation,—I do not see why *that Motive* also, to desist from it, may not be offered to the People from the *Pulpit*. It is not easy to determine, how far the Benefit from this Assistance may reach: —But one Thing I am inclined to believe, that, if the Clergy *do* their *Duty* in this particular, we shall no longer see *Jurymen* of the established Church, the Strictness of whose Conscience will not permit them to *kiss the Book* in the Court of Exchequer, *return*, upon their Oath, taken in the *most solemn Way*, their Verdict for the *Smuggler*, against *full and compleat* Evidence; which heretofore has frequently been the Case.

If you, *Gentlemen*, concur in giving the *Alarm*; if you declare your *Opinion* that the Nation is on
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the *Brink* of Perdition, and must in all Probability *now* perish, unless relieved by such Resolutions as have been mentioned; I can entertain no doubt that your Endeavours will be seconded. How degenerate soever the present Age may be, *Notions* of publick Weal are stirring, and are very strong in the Heads *especially* of the *Youth* of the Nation. Hence that *Zeal* for *Liberty*, that *Concern* for the Good of the Country, which has got so many *young Gentlemen* the Appellation of *Patriot*, wherein (if their Title to it is *just*) they most *justly* triumph. —Of this Character, many sprung from the best Families, endued with excellent Parts, improved by Learning and Study, are following the Profession of the *Law*, in which they very probably are, one Day, to make an *eminent* Figure.

The *present* Object that ingrosses their Attention, and warms their *Zeal*, is the *Honour* of the Kingdom, and the *Freedom* of the People; which they apprehend to be in danger, and, on *that Supposal*, exert themselves with becoming Spirit. I do not say, that I fall in with *all* their Sentiments concerning the *Reality* of the Danger, and the *Means* of preventing it; but this I will say, because I believe it, that the *Spirit* they show is *unaffected*, and flows from a *real Concern* for the Good of their Country. And if this is the Case, what Reason can there be to doubt, that those *Gentlemen* will concert proper Measures, exert every Talent, and leave no Stone unturned, to prevent the *instant* Destruction of the Nation, when they are *told*, so as to *believe* it, that *immediate* Ruin is to attend the Continuance of *Smuggling*? And if they (not to speak of their Influence in their several Counties) do

do but lend their *Mouths* in this City, from whence the rest of the People generally take their Sentiments, the Cry against that *infamous* Practice must prove *too strong* to be withstood ; and they will have the *manly* Satisfaction of having *delivered* their Country, *over* and *above* the Prospect of the *actual* Enjoyment of the Blessings purchased by their Virtue ; which we old Fellows cannot expect to *see*, and must *only hope for* to our Posterity.

This Letter, *Gentlemen*, has swelled to such a Bulk, that it is high Time I should take my leave of you. It is proved, I hope, beyond Contradiction, that *Smuggling* (by which I mean chiefly throughout — the running of *Tea* and *Spirits*) has been, and is now, the *Bane* of this Country, the *Drain* of its *Coin*, and the Destruction of the *landed Interest* ; it is proved, that this Mischief has been fostered and carried to its present enormous Size — by the *inexcusable* Countenance it has met with from those who are the *most sensibly* hurt by it ; and it is self-evident, that it is *in their Power*, with the greatest Ease imaginable, to rid themselves and the Nation of this intolerable *Nusance*. Whether laying those Truths before the Gentlemen of this Country, will determine them to *act*, is more than I can tell : I am sure *it ought*, and I am pretty confident *it will*, if there is the *least Spark* of Honour or common Sense left amongst them. But if it should not, my Mortification will be *very compleat* ; my Concern for the *unavoidable Desolation* of my Country, will be *aggravated* by this *cruel* Reflection, that my Countrymen, whatever *Airs* they give themselves, are *the most contemptible, the most*

most abject of all Scoundrels ;—and I shall have no other Recompence for the Trouble I have taken, but the Sense that I have done my utmost to avert their *Ruin*, and prevent their *Disgrace*.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most humble Servant.

EDINBURGH, *March 28.*

1744.