

" of Perfection, by the wise Regulations, and by the Attention of the Magistrates of the Police, and the Inspectors appointed to take Care of their Performance.

" In a Word, it may be said, and I shall say it without Exaggeration, that *France* reunites at home all the Advantages of *Commerce*, which are found divided among the other People of *Europe*, and, that, being sufficient to itself, it can absolutely pass without other Nations and content itself with its own Abundance, whilst they, on their Parts, will find it difficult to subsist without our Succours, and that *great Commerce*, of which some, and with a great deal of Reason, are so proud, would soon be seen to fall, if they ceased to receive from us that infinite Number of Merchandizes which are necessary to them, and which it is with Difficulty they can find elsewhere.

" It is this Truth ill understood, and urged too far, that has given Room to that Paradox so dangerous, which they of this Way of Thinking would establish in these latter Times; that *France* ought to carry on no *Commerce* with Strangers, and that she would always be sufficiently happy and flourishing, if she did not want Labourers and Soldiers.

" The Necessity of the one and the other is indisputable; without Soldiers our Frontiers would remain open to our Enemies, and the Kingdom without Defence; and without Labourers to cultivate our Lands, they would be no longer sufficient for our Support. But upon what shall the Pay and Maintenance of our Troops be established, if *Commerce*, which is the most fruitful Source of the Riches which enter our King's Exchequer, be taken from us? And what will the Farmers do with their Crops, though never so abundant, if they have no longer an Opening to get rid of their Superfluity; and, by Want of *Trade* see those Provisions miserably perish on their Hands, which would have enriched them, if they had passed into those of their Neighbours?

" The Merchants then are a third Order of Persons, of which *France* has Need, and who are not less necessary to her than her Soldiers and Labourers; and *Commerce* is a Profession, without which all would languish in the Kingdom, and the Inhabitants would sink under their own Abundance, as they could consume neither the Whole at Home, nor have the Liberty to carry a Part abroad.

" It is sufficiently comprehended, that by *Commerce*, supposed so necessary to *France*, and for which it is known, that the *French* are at least as fit as the other Nations of *Europe*, is not to be understood that Trade which is carried on in our Provinces, by the Communication which they have with one another, of the natural Productions, or the Works of Art, that they have each at home, for this would be always flourishing enough, if there was a Care at the same Time to carry on that abroad; but it is the *Commerce* which may be maintained with Foreigners that is principally in View, whether they come to our Ports to carry away those Merchandizes of which they have Need, or whether we send our Ships to load with those which they have and we want.

" It is true, that, for long Voyages, *France* has already at Home, a Company of *Commerce*, of which the first Success seems to promise, that it will not one Day be any Thing inferior to the more celebrated ones established among our Neighbours; so that, without encroaching upon the vast Grant of a Company so profitably formed and so wisely conducted, I shall content myself to animate the *French Merchants* to such other Objects of *Commerce* as they may share with the other Nations of *Europe*, or even that they may carry on with a greater Facility and Profit than they.

" These Hopes, with which I dare flatter our Merchants, are not false nor even dubious. Whoever surveys the Parts of *Europe* where the *English* and *Dutch* carry on their most considerable Commerce, *Spain*, for Example, or the Towns of the *North* and the *Baltick Sea*, will see what Nation is most likely to succeed.

" Almost all the necessary Merchandizes for those important Branches of Commerce are found in *France*; on the contrary, *England* and *Holland* have hardly any.