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in terms? Commerce nourishes, but war destroys—it is a mutual loss; for plunder fire and sword neither improve lands nor enrich mankind.—The three last wars have distressed and depopulated the world.—But commerce did not, in the mean time, repair the loss. Even the powers that were victorious sunk under the weight of their conquests, and seizing upon a greater extent of land than they could either keep or cultivate, involved themselves in the ruin of their enemies: and the neutral powers, who were desirous of enriching themselves in peace, in the midst of those broils, received and put up with insults more disgraceful than the defeats of an open war.

What a source of abuses are those treaties of commerce which become so many seeds of war, by one nation claiming exclusive privileges over another. A general liberty granted to industry and commerce, is the only treaty which a maritime power should establish at home, or negotiate abroad. A nation that would take this step, would be the benefactor of the human race.

The more labour is encouraged upon land, the more ships will there be at sea, and the more will such a people enjoy the advantages aimed at by negotiations and by war. There will be no increase of riches in any country, if there be no industry among its neighbours. Without commerce and industry there can no valuable metals be produced, or manufactures worth mentioning: nor can either of these springs of riches exist without liberty. The inactivity of one nation is prejudicial to all the rest, either by increasing their labour, or by depriving them of what it ought to produce. The effect of the present *slavish* system of commerce and industry, is the total subversion of order.

An unlimited freedom of trade is all that is now wanting, to produce a lasting peace, and make the world happy. Were this once granted, by a general consent, all abuses and murmurings would cease: we should not then see all the rich produce of commerce confined to certain particular cities of a large kingdom, as the privileges and fortunes of the whole people are to some individual families. Circulation would be quicker, and the consumption increased. Each province, or state, would cultivate its favourite production, and each family its own little field; and under every roof there would be one child to spare for the purposes of navigation, and the improvement of the arts. Europe, like China, would swarm with multitudes of industrious people;—in short, freedom of trade would insensibly produce that universal peace and harmony, which it is not to be supposed, is merely chimerical. While each man calculated his own advantage, the national system of happiness would be founded on the *improvement of reason*, which would prove a more effectual security to morals, than the phantoms of superstition. These presently disappear, as soon as the passions exert themselves, whilst reason gains strength, and advances to maturity along with them.

T H E E N D.