

and for that Purpose sent considerable Quantities of Hats thither ; yet, unfortunately, great Numbers of those Hats were returned, and many of them still remain there unsold : So that the Number of Hats specified in the said Account to have been exported (were the same true) is far from being a Proof of an Increase in the Foreign Trade : But when it is considered, that, in the said Account, Beaver and Castor Hats are blended together without Distinction, and that Persons shipping Hats for Exportation, commonly enter a much larger Quantity, than what is really shipped (as no Duty is paid on the Export of Hats) very little regard ought to be paid to that Account.

On the contrary, that the Foreign Trade for Beaver Hats has of late Years declined, is apparent, not only from the Evidence now before the House, but from the small Quantity of Beaver left in the Market, for several Years past, for the Use of the Manufacturers : So that, had the *Number* of Hats exported been equal to what it was formerly (which is very far from being the Case) yet the *Value* of them must be much less.

In Answer to the Author's Remark, " That great Numbers of Non-freemen are now employed in the Manufacture of Hats," it is sufficient to observe, That the Master-Hatters of *London* do not only at this time, but always did, employ a much greater Number of Non-freemen, than Freemen ; and that all the former, and great Part of the latter, were formerly employed in the making of Beaver and fine Castor Hats, chiefly for Exportation ; whereas now very few are employed in that Species of the Manufacture, and those only for Home-Consumption.

If, therefore, a Prohibition of the Export of Beaver should not be a means of increasing the Import (as is suggested by the said Paper), it must necessarily be a means of reducing the Price ; and thereby enable the *British* Manufacturers to regain their Export-Trade, now almost wholly engrossed by their most dangerous Rivals : And it is submitted to Consideration, Whether, as the whole Fur-Trade is confined to *Great Britain* and *France* (the latter of which totally prohibits the Exportation of Beaver) it be not for the Interest of this Kingdom, that our own Manufacturers should be furnished with this useful Commodity at a cheaper Rate than Foreigners, as this is the only Market at which they can be supplied ; and, whether it be consistent with the Policy of a Trading Nation, to suffer so valuable a Branch of Commerce to be lost, by encouraging the Exportation of a Material essentially necessary to its Preservation, merely for the Sake of continuing to a few Merchants the Advantages arising from these foreign Commissions ?