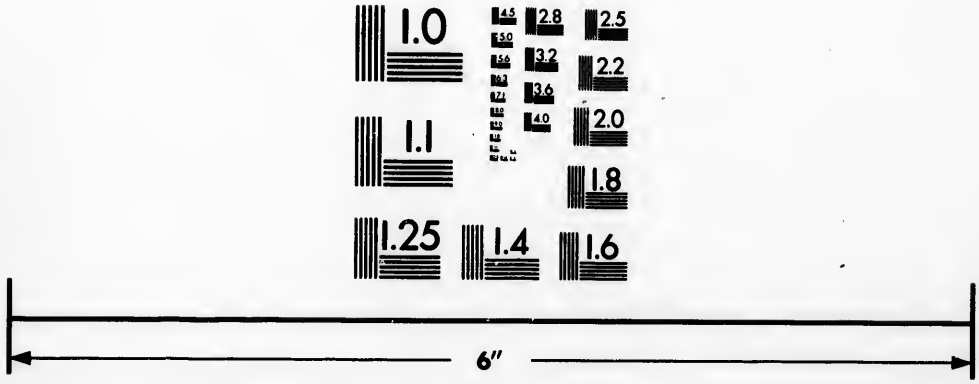
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)



Photographic
Sciences
Corporation

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- [ ] Coloured covers/ Couverture de couleur
- [ ] Covers damaged/ Couverture endommagée
- [ ] Covers restored and/or laminated/ Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- [ ] Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- [x] Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- [ ] Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/ Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- [ ] Coloured plates and/or illustrations/ Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- [ ] Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- [ ] Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/ La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distortion le long de la marge intérieure
- [ ] Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/ Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- [ ] Additional comments:/ Commentaires supplémentaires:

- [ ] Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- [ ] Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées
- [ ] Pages restored and/or laminated/ Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- [x] Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- [ ] Pages detached/ Pages détachées
- [ ] Showthrough/ Transparence
- [ ] Quality of print varies/ Qualité inégale de l'impression
- [ ] Includes supplementary material/ Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- [ ] Only edition available/ Seule édition disponible
- [ ] Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image/ Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X		14X		18X		22X		26X		30X	
	12X		16X		20X		24X		28X		32X

THOUGHTS

ON THE LATE

PROCEEDINGS

OF

GOVERNMENT, &c.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

THOUGHTS

ON THE LATE

PROCEEDINGS

OF

GOVERNMENT,

RESPECTING THE

TRADE

OF THE

WEST INDIA ISLANDS

WITH THE

UNITED STATES

OF

NORTH AMERICA.

By BRIAN EDWARDS, Esq.

Quis furor iste novus? quò nunc, quò tenditis, inquit,
Heu miseræcives? non hostem, inimicaque castra
Argivûm; vestras spes uritis. VIRG. Lib. 5.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

M. DCC. LXXXIV.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE moſt material of the facts ſtated in this pamphlet, were collected by the author during his reſidence in the Weſt-Indies, previous to the beginning of the late war. His ſituation there, afforded him means of information, not always attainable; and he endeavoured to avail himſelf of it, for a purpoſe very different from that of a haſty and temporary publication. Some late meaſures of government, particularly the proclamation of the twenty ſixth of December laſt, renewing among other regulations, the reſtrictive proclamation of the ſecond of July preceding, induced him, in judging of its propriety, to recur to the materials in his poſſeſſion; and conceiving that a clear and accurate knowledge of every part of our antient commercial ſyſtem with America, is at this time

time eſſentially neceſſary, he ventures in this manner to ſubmit his thoughts on a very important branch of it, to the wiſdom of our miniſters, and the judgement of an enlightened publick. Unconnected with party, he writes with the freedom of hiſtory: he truſts with impartiality: he hopes without offence. And although he has not the folly to ſuppoſe that the name of an undiſtinguiſhed individual like himſelf, can add weight to his opinions; yet as he finds it neceſſary to animadvert on the writings of others who have avowed themſelves to the world, he has thought it his duty, as an honeſt man, to give his name alſo to the publick.

B. EDWARDS.

Weſtbury Houſe, *Hants*,
10th *February*, 1784.

in this
a very
dom of
of an
d with
of hif-
y: he
ugh he
e name
e him-
yet as
on the
them-
it his
name
ARDS.

The reader is requeſted to excuſe and correct the following *Errata*, occaſioned by the Author's reſiding at a diſtance from the preſs.

Page 4, line 3, for *to conſole with*, read *to conſole ourſelves with*. P. 17, line 29, dele *the*. P. 19, line 18, for *ſupply*, read *ſupplies*. P. 29, line 8, for *manufactories*, read *manufactures*. P. 31, line 18, for *of*, read *on*. P. 37, line 10, for *intereſt*, read *intereſts*. Ibid. line 18, for *our*, read *her*. P. 39, line 6, for *that*, read *thoſe*.

TRADE

BETWEEN

NORTH AMERICA

AND THE

WEST INDIES.

THERE is this essential difference attending the conduct and determinations of private persons, and of persons in power: the mistakes of the former, however gross and dangerous, seldom spread their consequences beyond the individual himself, and the small circle to which he belongs; whereas those of the latter are often co-extensive with the interests of a whole people.—A single error in the councils of a publick minister may involve in it the fate of nations, and the welfare of posterity.—We have all been melancholy witnesses to the truth of this remark; and can bear testimony, from our own remembrance, of the fatal effects that one eminent mistake in the conduct of a great and able statesman has produced: the revolt of

three millions of our fellow ſubjects:—The diſmemberment of the empire, and a combination of impending dangers, from which death ſeems our only refuge.

It is not wonderful, therefore, that our late adminiſtration with ſuch an example before them, at once a leſſon and a terror to the world, ſhould, in a caſe ſo unprecedented as the ſettling a commercial intercourſe with our late fellow-ſubjects, now a great and independent nation, have diſplayed unuſual timidity and caution. That their intentions were good, I have not a doubt; but I think it may be queſtioned whether the dread of *doing too much*, has not had too powerful an influence on their councils; for in deſperate caſes temporizing expedients are not always the ſafeſt line of conduct. To me, indeed, the governing principle of what *ought to be* the conduct of Great Britain, on the preſent occaſion, appears ſufficiently obvious. The baſis of every permanent commercial alliance between diſtant nations is *mutual advantage, founded in mutual confidence.* Surely then it is our intereſt and our duty to endeavour, by ſoftening animoſity, to reſtore that confidence which we have unhappily loſt. Although we cannot retrieve ALL the great benefits which we have wantonly and fooliſhly thrown from us, let us not, in the peeviſhneſs of diſappointed ambition neglect the recovery of ſuch as are ſtill within our reach.

By

By an enlarged and liberal policy on our part, paſſion and prejudice will at length happily ſubſide, and then, and not till then, will intereſt have its natural bias on the mind of America. Trade will no doubt, in ſuch caſe, revert in a great degree to its antient channels; and that ſeparation which has rudely torn from the robe of Majeſty one of its brighteſt ornaments, may not ultimately prove ſo eſſentially fatal as is now apprehended. Thus(—— allied to us, as they ſtill are, by the deareſt ties of conſanguinity—) let us hope that the Americans will yet prove themſelves, as they have hitherto proved, our beſt friends and cuſtomers in peace, and in war our firmeſt allies. The propriety of this doctrine, I preſume to think, is not leſs juſtified by the precepts of chriſtianity, than by the maxims of ſound policy and commercial experience.

But we are now aſſured by men of high rank and great authority, that ſuch generoſity is not only unneceſſary but dangerous; for that, in ſpite of American reſentment and independency, this kingdom muſt neceſſarily poſſeſs as much of their commerce as we wiſh to retain *. If this be indeed the caſe, what a dreadful monu-

* See the debates in Parliament, March 7, 1783. See alſo 'Obſervations on the Commerce of the American States' by Lord Sheffield. The aim of his lordſhip's pamphlet throughout is to ſupport this doctrine.

ment

ment of human infirmity does Great Britain exhibit to the world! And what have we to console with, for the millions we have expended, and the blood we have spilt? we have dismembered the noblest empire in the universe;—and for what? *To make assurance sure!*—to possess ourselves of an object already our own, and of which nothing it seems could have deprived us!

I have indeed ever thought and said, and ever shall think and say, that the war with America on the part of Great Britain, was conceived in wickedness, and continued thro' insanity; but I had hopes, after the discipline we have undergone, that at length we were nearly cured of our delirium; for we have been blistered and blooded, pumped, purged, and chained to the earth. Nevertheless there are, I am sorry to find, a considerable party in the nation, who appear to me to be still labouring under some *unlucky ascendant*; for they tell us, that the only method which now remains of improving and extending a commercial intercourse with our late brethren, is to treat them in all respects as a foreign people: to shut our ports against them, as aliens and strangers: to make them sensible, that having renounced the duties, they have renounced also the privileges of British subjects. The Americans, we are gravely assured, will be far from taking such conduct amiss: nay, they will even applaud us for it, and consider

it

it as a convincing proof of our liberality and friendſhip towards them †.

Fortunately among each of the great parties that are now contending, ſome for the preſervation, and others for the attainment of power; there are a *few* who argue more conſiſtently on the ſubject. Mr. Burke, with his uſual comprehenſive diſcernment, has expreſſed a generous indignation againſt all prohibitory ſyſtems; and the accompliſhed miniſter ‡ in the direction of our finances, brought into parliament ‖ a proviſional bill for the re-eſtabliſhment of a commercial intercourſe between this kingdom and America, founded on very beneficial and enlarged principles; and which, had it paſſed into a law, would, I am perſuaded, have tended in its conſequences, not to the injury of our trade and navigation, as was apprehended, but, in a very eminent degree, to the ſupport and encouragement of both.

A change of adminiſtration taking place ſoon afterwards, this bill was rejected. Nevertheleſs, I will not preſume haſtily to condemn the meaſure which was adopted in the place of it. I allude to the act which empowers his Majeſty in council to regulate the trade with America in ſuch manner as ſhall be thought moſt expedient

† Lord Sheffield's obſervations, p. 2.
‡ Mr. Pitt.
‖ March, 1783.

and

and ſalutary. It ſeemed not unreaſonable, it muſt be owned, that ſome engagement ſhould be required on the part of America, in return for *certain* indulgencies, which ſhe will probably expect from Great Britain; and I take for granted, that conſiderations of this nature induced parliament to veſt a diſcretionary authority in the privy council; but notwithſtanding this diſplay of prudence (perhaps of wiſdom) it does not appear that the authority thus intruſted to adminiſtration has been productive of any of thoſe beneficial effects which were expected from the exerciſe of it. One of its firſt fruits was the proclamation of the ſecond of July; a meaſure which I venture to pronounce (if it be meant as a permanent regulation) was founded on the groſſeſt miſinformation, and is fraught with the moſt ſerious conſequences:—of the danger of which, however, I firmly believe its adviſers had not, nor yet have an adequate conception *.

If

* The proclamation was renewed 26th of December, 1783; yet few men are better acquainted with the true intereſts of the Weſt-India Iſlands, the importance of their trade, and their dependance on external ſupport, than the Right Honourable Gentleman § (at that time ſecretary of ſtate) who ſupported the act in the Houſe of Commons on which this proclamation is founded. I ſay this from no other

§ Mr. Fox.

If there ever was one particular ſyſtem of commerce in the world, that called leſs for reſtraint and limitation than any other, it was doubtleſs the intercourſe and reciprocal exchange

other motive than the love of truth; for I am wholly unknown to the Right Honourable Gentleman; but I have frequently, from the gallery of that houſe, heard him diſplay ſo rich a fund of correct and moſt valuable information on thoſe ſubjects, (as he did particularly on an application of the ſugar refiners in February, 1781, for a reduction of the duties on foreign ſugar,) as convinces me that on the preſent occaſion (if indeed he adviſed the proclamation) he has ſuffered his own moſt excellent judgement to be biaſſed by that of leſs enlightened or intereſted men. As the reader may wiſh to refer to the proclamation at large, it is hereunto added.

At the Court at St. JAMES'S, *the 2d. of July*, 1783.

P R E S E N T.

The KING'S Moſt Excellent Majeſty in Council.

WHEREAS by an Act of Parliament paſſed this ſeſſion, intituled, "An act for preventing certain inſtruments from being required from ſhips belonging to the United States of America, and to give to his Majeſty, for a limited time, certain powers for the better carrying on trade and commerce between the ſubjects of his Majeſty's dominions and the inhabitants of the ſaid United States," it is amongſt other things enacted, that during the continuance of the ſaid act, it ſhall and may be lawful for his Majeſty in Council, by order or orders to be iſſued and publiſhed from time to time, to give ſuch directions

change of commodities, which ſubſiſted between our ſubjects in the Weſt-India Iſlands, and thoſe of the now United States of North America. It was not a traffick calculated to ſupply the

tions and to make ſuch regulations with reſpect to duties, drawbacks or otherwiſe, for carrying on the trade and commerce between the people and territories belonging to the Crown of Great Britain, and the people and territories of the ſaid United States, as to his Majeſty in Council ſhall appear moſt expedient and ſalutary, any law, uſage, or cuſtom to the contrary notwithſtanding; his Majeſty doth therefore, by and with the advice of his privy council, hereby order and direct, that pitch, tar, turpentine, hemp, and flax, maſts, yards, and bowſprits, ſtaves, heading, boards, timber, ſhingles, and all other ſpecies of lumber; horſes, neat cattle, ſheep, hogs, poultry, and all other ſpecies of live ſtock and live proviſions; peas, beans, potatoes, wheat, flour, bread, biſcuit, rice, oats, barley, and all other ſpecies of grain, being the growth or production of any of the United States of America, may (until further order) be imported by Britiſh ſubjects in Britiſh-built ſhips, owned by his Majeſty's ſubjects, and navigated according to law, from any port of the United States of America, to any of his Majeſty's Weſt-India Iſlands; and that rum, ſugar, molaſſes, coffee, cocoa nuts, ginger, and pimento, may, until further order, be exported by Britiſh ſubjects in Britiſh-built ſhips, owned by his Majeſty's ſubjects, and navigated according to law, from any of his Majeſty's Weſt-India Iſlands, to any port or place within the ſaid United States, upon payment of the ſame duties on exportation, and ſubject to the like rules, regulations, ſecurities and reſtrictions, as the ſame articles by law are or may be ſubject and liable to, if exported to any Britiſh colony

the fantaſtick calls of vanity, or to adminiſter gratification to luxury or to vice. Its firſt object was to obtain food for the hungry: to purchaſe common ſuſtenance for thouſands in thoſe iſlands who muſt otherwiſe have unavoidably ſuffered the miſeries of famine. And the ſecond great aim of the planters was, to procure materials for the ſupply of two capital objects; their buildings, and packages for conveying their ſtaples to Great Britain, from whence alone they are ſupplied with raiment and other manufactures to an immenſe amount, for the comfort of life and the ſupport and maintenance of their plantations.—Of the neceſſity of obtaining materials for the package of their principal commodities, ſugar and rum, an idea may be formed from this,—that the quantity of thoſe articles annually ſhipped to

colony or plantation in America:—and the Right Honourable the Lords Commiſſioners of his Majeſty's Treaſury, and the Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, are to give the neceſſary directions herein, as to them may reſpectively appertain.

Steph. Cottrell."

The act on which this proclamation was founded, expiring the 20th of December, 1783, it has been renewed this preſent Seſſion, and declared to be in force until the 20th of April, 1784. The reader will obſerve, that thoſe important articles beef and pork, ſalted fiſh, lamp oil, &c. are prohibited altogether from the United States, even in Britiſh ſhips, navigated according to law.

Great Britain, exceeds in value the ſum of three millions of pounds ſterling, and without the means of conveying the ſame to the Britiſh market, the whole of its immenſe cultivation muſt ſtop;—for who will raiſe, at a great expence, commodities which he can neither conſume himſelf, nor ſell to others?

Such being in part the nature, and indeed the abſolute neceſſity of the trade in queſtion, it ſeems beyond the ſtretch of human ingenuity to deviſe a ſolid reaſon why the circumſtance of American independency ſhould induce Great Britain to object (if America does not) to the continuation of ſo beneficial an intercourſe:—beneficial in the higheſt degree to Great Britain herſelf; not to her ſugar plantations only:—yet the proclamation before mentioned, by interdicting American ſhips from a participation therein, is, according to my conception of it, tantamount to, and in effect an abſolute prohibition of the trade altogether. Nor is this opinion ſingle and unſupported; the inhabitants of all the Britiſh Weſt Indies conſidered the proclamation in the ſame light; for it no ſooner reached them, than American ſupplies roſe immediately, in conſequence of it, three hundred per cent. in price.

It were eaſy to demonſtrate the impoſſibility of Britiſh ſhips ſupplying excluſively the ſugar iſlands with American cargoes, except on terms abſolutely ruinous either to the merchant who carries

on

on the trade, or to the planter. To thoſe who are acquainted with the nature and comparative cheapneſs of American navigation, proof of this is unneceſſary; and it is equally unneceſſary to thoſe who are not: for in my opinion, the United States will cut the matter ſhort by a reciprocal reſtriction towards Britiſh veſſels. That they certainly *will* come to this determination, however, I do not affirm; I only ſay they *may*: and I think it more than probable, as ſoon as their preſent internal diſquietudes are ſufficiently allayed to permit them to attend to foreign commerce, *that they will*; and I form my opinion on the following circumſtances: Firſt, becauſe they well know that Great Britain muſt in time recede; for America has this advantage in the conteſt, that ſugar and rum, and coffee, and molaſſes, though very wholeſome things, are not, however, like American proviſions, abſolutely neceſſary to the preſervation of life. Secondly, becauſe if they are not permitted to purchaſe thoſe commodities from us, in their own way, they can get them elſewhere. The commerce of America, therefore, is beyond all equivalent more neceſſary to the Britiſh Weſt-India Iſlands, than that of the iſlands to her. For theſe reaſons Great Britain, as America well knows, muſt recede *at laſt*. The miſfortune is, that our devoted planters may be famiſhed before the conteſt is ſettled.

Thoſe

Thoſe who contend that the neceſſities of America will oblige her to ſend her merchandize to the beſt market, through any channel, appear to me to judge ſomewhat haſtily of human nature. They take for granted that *intereſt* has, in all caſes, an irreſiſtable influence on human action. I doubt this is not *always* a juſt concluſion. The bulk of mankind are, I believe, as commonly governed by *paſſion*. But though on the preſent occaſion, the paſſions and prejudices of America concur, according to my idea, with her real intereſt, to induce her to reject the alternative offered by Great Britain, yet it may not be uſeleſs to enquire what other nations have done under a ſimilar predicament, and in caſes too where evidently it was *not* their intereſt to retaliate. An inſtance occurs in hiſtory too ſtriking to be overlooked. By a ſtatute of Queen Elizabeth, the importation was prohibited of cutlery from the Netherlands. This act was no ſooner promulgated, than the Princeſs of Parma inſtantly prohibited in return the trade for Engliſh woollens, amounting to the annual value of one million ſterling. This princeſs knew as well as Elizabeth, that by this prohibition ſhe eſſentially injured the trade of the people under her government; but ſhe gratified her revenge: and in truth the annals of all ages abundantly prove, that conſiderations of intereſt, are frequently overpowered by motives of reſentment.

Surely

Surely the present subject is not properly understood in this kingdom, or, the profitable existence of the most valuable of our remaining plantations;—the welfare of thousands and thousands of valuable subjects;—I may add the manufactures and industry, in a great degree, of the nation, would not have been thus put in hazard. That the subject is not well understood, is evident from the reasoning of many distinguished men, both in and out of parliament, who cannot be supposed to be actuated by interested or improper motives. Yet their arguments prove them to be most strangely misinformed in a matter of the highest importance. Among other positions, which have seemingly had an influence on the councils of government in this business, it has been very confidently urged

First, That if the United States shall refuse permission to British ships to carry on the trade between the West Indies and America exclusively, the planters may obtain sufficient supplies of provisions and lumber from Canada and Nova Scotia, at least with some assistance from Great Britain.

Secondly, That Great Britain being entitled to the monoply of the produce of her own West India islands, it will be injurious to her interest, to permit a direct importation into the United States of any part thereof, in American vessels.

Thirdly, That if the Americans are allowed a free commercial intercourse with this kingdom

and

and its dependencies as formerly, they will ſoon ſubſtantially enjoy it, to the excluſion of our own ſhipping, and the entire loſs of our carrying trade.

Fourthly, That Ireland will have juſt reaſon to complain, if America is permitted to purchaſe ſugar and rum cheaper than herſelf.

I ſhall conſider theſe poſitions ſeparately: but in this, as in all other commercial diſquiſitions, it is the firſt duty of a writer *to aſcertain facts.* Declamation may miſlead and ſpeculative reaſoning perplex, but in matters of trade, the moſt plauſible theory, unleſs it be raiſed on the ſolid evidence of well authenticated facts, is built on ſtubble.

Lord Sheffield obſerves, and very truly, that the knowledge of the exports and imports of the American trade, will afford us facts and principles to aſcertain its value. I ſhall apply this obſervation to the trade in queſtion, as it actually ſubſiſted between our iſlands in the Weſt Indies and the now United States of America previous to the year 1774, in the latter end of which year, the non-importation agreement took place. I omit that year for obvious reaſons. If I miſtake not, the ſummary which I ſhall preſent to my readers will afford a full and ſufficient anſwer to more than one of the preceding objections. The reſt will give me very little trouble.

I begin with the imports. It is indeed abundantly neceſſary that Great Britain ſhould be acquainted

quainted with their nature and value, for their importance extends not merely to the preſervation of fortune, but to the maintenance of life.—It was ſaid in parliament, that they amounted to about 200,000l. annually, but that neither the people nor parliament of England have at preſent any juſt conception of their magnitude, may be ſeen from hence, that on an average of three years, previous to 1774, our ſeveral Weſt India iſlands received from America (I mean from thoſe provinces which now conſtitute the United States;—the ſmall and caſual importations from Canada and Nova Scotia being unworthy particular diſcrimination†) an annual ſupply of one hundred and twenty-five thouſand barrels of flour, five thouſand tierces of biſcuit, fourteen thouſand tierces of rice, twelve thouſand five hundred barrels of pork and beef; three hundred and ſixty thouſand buſhels of Indian corn; beſides beans and peaſe, oats, &c. but above all, as being of infinite importance towards the maintenance of the Negroes, was the article of ſalted fiſh, amounting to one hundred and fifty thouſand quintals, and thirty thouſand barrels*. Such were the proviſions,—not matters of luxury, but plain and neceſſary food. Of lumber for building, ſuch as joiſts, boards, planks,

* Worth in America about 120,000l. ſterling—of the great importance of this particular ſupply I ſhall again have occaſion to ſpeak.

† From 5th July, 1782, to 5th July, 1783, only *two* ſmall veſſels from Hallifax, and *one* from Quebeck, entered at Kingſton, Jamaica.

&c.

&c. (worth in the Weſt Indies before the war about 5l. ſterling per thouſand); the quantity imported was twenty million one hundred and fifty thouſand feet, beſides twenty-one million of ſhingles for roofing; and of ſtaves for hogſheads and puncheons, worth 8l. ſterling per thouſand, or thereabouts, the iſlands received twenty-one million one hundred and ſixty thouſand, exclusive of ſeventeen thouſand ſhook hogſheads, and about a million and a half of wood hoops. To all which are to be added, frames for houſes, ſpermaceti candles, iron, tar, turpentine and lamp oil; horſes, oxen, ſheep and poultry; the whole annual importation, I venture to ſet, on the moſt moderate eſtimate, at the ſum of 750,000l. ſterling money of Great Britain!

In payment of this immenſe ſupply, the Americans exported part of all the ſtaples of our iſlands; but principally *rum*. And it is a circumſtance deſerving particular attention, that the rum of all our plantations (Jamaica and Grenada excepted) is fit only for the American market, and would ſeldom prove a ſaving remittance if ſhipt to Great Britain. The quantity of this article ſold annually to America, on an average as above, was three million ſix hundred thouſand gallons, amounting, at 1s. 6d. ſterling per gallon, to 270,000l. ſterling.

The next article of export, in point of value, was *ſugar*, of which the Americans purchaſed about 3000 hogſheads, 1500 tierces, and 4000

barrels

barrels yearly, worth on the ſpot, about 125,000l. ſterling. It was chiefly the fineſt Muſcavado intended for the ſcale.

With *molaſſes* the Americans were chiefly ſupplied by the French, who being checked in their diſtilleries by the policy of their government, could afford to ſell it much cheaper than the Britiſh planters, yet in aſſorting their homeward cargoes, this commodity was not entirely overlooked. The quantity purchaſed by them in our iſlands annually, was ſtated to me at about 150,000 gallons, worth 5000 l. ſterling, but I ſuſpect it is greatly under-rated.

Coffee conſtituted a very eſſential article of American conſumption. The demand for it in Jamaica for the American market, was ſo great for ſome years previous to the commencement of the late war, as to occaſion an increaſe of cultivation in the mountainous parts of that iſland, (eſpecially in the vicinity of Kingſton) ſo rapid as to excite aſtoniſhment.

The quantity ſhipped to North America ſo long ago as 1767, (ſince which time I have no exact account) from the port of Kingſton, was 904 caſks worth, I preſume, on an average, 20 l. each (currency). I have no doubt that this exportation was doubled, on an average of the ſix ſucceeding years; and allowing the iſlands to the windward (particularly Dominica and Grenada and its dependencies) to have furniſhed

an equal quantity with Jamaica, the whole ſupply in ſterling money would not be ſhort of 50,000 l. This article too would have proved a loſing remittance if ſhipped to Great Britain. Our late miniſters however very wiſely and prudently reduced the duties on its importation.

The Americans purchaſed likewiſe (chiefly in Jamaica) conſiderable quantities of *cacao* or chocolate, and about 10,000 *mahogany planks*. Theſe articles were obtained principally from the Spaniſh Main; and the Iſland of Cuba, in exchange for Britiſh manufactures ſent from Jamaica. This was a trade formerly of infinite importance to Great Britain, till the Britiſh miniſtry, in 1763, through a miſtaken policy, becoming cuſtom-houſe officers for the King of Spain, gave it a wound which it has never thoroughly recovered. They purchaſed likewiſe, but to no great amount, *piemento*, *ginger*, *cotton-wool*, *fuſtick*, *logwood and lignum vitæ*. For theſe various articles I reckon on a looſe eſtimate, 60,000l.

From this ſtate of their imports and exports, the ſum of 240,000 l. ſterling appears to have been the balance in favour of America, and it was paid in caſh and bills of exchange. Part of which, as it is ſuppoſed, was afterwards laid out in the French iſlands, in the purchaſe of molaſſes and coffee; but much leſs I believe than is commonly imagined; for the French planters had as great occaſion as our own for American lumber and

and neceſſaries: and that thoſe articles were freely admitted into their ports, I have been myſelf an eye-witneſs: that they gladly received them too, inſtead of money, in payment of ſugar and other articles of their produce, which were afterwards conveyed (whether legally or not) into the ports of North America, there is no reaſon to doubt. It is therefore more than probable, that the whole, or the greateſt part of the balance due and received from the planters in our own iſlands, was remitted by the Americans to Great Britain, in reduction of their debts to the Britiſh merchants. And ſuch *were once* the happy effects of colonial navigation and commerce! Though ſpreading through a variety of diſtant channels, their profits all returned to, and ultimately concentred in, Great Britain, like rivers to the ocean, which, as philoſophers tell us, ſupply, by unobſerved operations, and through a thouſand ſecret receſſes, the ſprings and fountains of the earth: but theſe, after giving fertility and life to the remoteſt corners of the globe, return back with collective and augmented force, and freighted with golden treaſures, to the boſom of their general parent.

In the preceding enumeration of the exports from the Britiſh Weſt-Indies to North America, I am not clear that my ſtatement conforms to official documents. The Cuſtom-Houſe books in the Weſt-Indies, out of which thoſe documents are formed, afford no certainty of information;

for many of the bays, creeks, and ſhipping places in the iſlands (particularly in Jamaica) being remote from the ports of entry, it was formerly uſual with the maſters of American veſſels loading at ſuch places, in order to prevent delay, to make out their manifeſts, and take out their clearances before they were fully laden, receiving afterwards on board, notwithſtanding the riſques they incurred by the practice, much greater quantities of goods than they had reported. Governor Lyttelton, in a repreſentation to the Lords of Trade, in 1764, now before me, obſerves, that there was not at that time *one half* of the produce entered for exportation in the Cuſtom-Houſe books at Jamaica, which was actually ſhipped.—Perhaps, therefore I may have over-rated the balance in favour of America.

I am the more inclined to ſuſpect that government is not rightly informed in this particular of the *exports*, becauſe Lord Sheffield, who appears to have been refuſed no information that office can give, ſpeaks of them in general (the article of rum excepted) as inconſiderable and of little value.—With reſpect, however, to the *imports*, it is impoſſible but that the fulleſt and moſt correct information has been obtained; and amongſt the numerous accounts collected by his lordſhip, it would have been a proof of his candour if he had ſtated alſo an account of the imports in queſtion to the

public,

public, and thereby have rendered this intrusion on their patience unnecessary.

In truth it is the knowledge of the magnitude of the imports from the United States (—seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling laid out in such cheap and bulky commodities as provisions and lumber !—) that chiefly demonstrates the mockery of referring the disappointed planter to Canada and Nova Scotia. Even if nature had not, as unfortunately she has, shut up the navigation from the former of these provinces six months in the year, and devoted the latter to everlasting sterility; there is this plain reason in the nature of things that forbids the planter to look to those countries for effectual relief. "It is inconsistent with the nature of commerce, to furnish an adequate supply to so vast and so various a demand; coming immediately and unexpectedly. The demand and the supply must grow up together, mutually supporting, and supported by, each other." It will require a long series of years to bring them to a level *.

This principle applies too in a great degree, as well to England, as to our few remaining provinces in North America. I will suppose, however, that Great Britain can actually furnish the chief of those articles which the planters formerly obtained from the United states, yet it must

* See Mr. Walker's evidence before the House of Commons on the Planter's petition in 1775, wherein this remark is ably illustrated.

be

be remembered, that the price of them in Europe, from the advance of freight only, will at least be doubled. The freight of lumber, even from North America, a short and safe passage, is a moiety of the first cost of the goods. Nevertheless (as was well observed by a noble Earl in the House of Lords) " it is the readiness and cheap-" ness of the navigation that supports the inter-" course. From the vicinity of the American " Continent and the West India islands to each " other, the trade is carried on by small sloops " and schooners; nay, even by half-decked boats, " with two and three men, and perhaps a boy on " board of each; the value of one cargo, incon-" siderable as it is, being more than sufficient to " pay the prime cost of the whole vessel ‡."

With the advance of freight on goods purchased in Europe, (to say nothing of the augmented cost of the goods themselves) must be reckoned also the loss which the planter will sustain in the sale of his produce.—I mean in the difference he will experience between the prices he usually obtained from the American trader (who, dealing on barter and for a homeward freight, could afford to pay liberally) and those which he is likely to obtain at a glutted market, and subject to enormous duties in Great Britain.—Part of his staple commodities too, as we have shewn, if he cannot sell them to America,

‡ Lord Abingdon's Speech, July 15, 1783.

rica, muſt remain a dead loſs on his hands.—It is, therefore, cruelty and inſult to tell him of ſupplies in Great Britain, if he has not wherewithal to purchaſe them. There may be corn in Egypt, but there is no money in the ſack's mouth.

Under circumſtances of ſuch accumulated diſtreſs, it is abſolutely impoſſible that nineteen out of twenty of the planters can ſubſiſt. If it be aſked, *How it came that they ſubſiſted during the war, when all immediate intercourſe with the aſſociated provinces was cut off?* The anſwer is obvious. They obtained American ſupplies by means of the prize-veſſels which were condemned and ſold in their ports; and, if this reſource proved deficient, the advanced price of Weſt-India produce at the Britiſh market, enabled the planter to purchaſe ſuch articles in Great Britain, as Great Britain could ſupply. The reſource and its alternative no longer exiſt. And here it may not be improper to ſhew on what terms the planter was uſually ſupplied at the Britiſh market with thoſe commodities which he formerly obtained from North America.—An inſtance or two will ſuffice. Among other neceſſaries, *flour*, and *packages for rum*, conſtituted two important articles. Of the flour, a third, at leaſt, periſhed before it reached its place of deſtination; and with regard to puncheons for containing rum, it is to be obſerved, that pipe-ſtaves from the Baltick, though affording the neceſſary material, are not prepared for the uſe of the

Weſt

Weſt Indies; being too long for a ſingle puncheon, and not long enough for two; neither are they properly manufactured in other reſpects. The planter was compelled, therefore, to purchaſe ready made puncheons in Great Britain; the average price of which, during the war, was about twenty ſhillings each *, to which add ſix ſhillings for freight, inſurance, and charges, and the whole expence on delivery in the Weſt Indies, excluſive of the iron-hoops, was 26 s. ſterling.—Now the whole coſt in the Weſt Indies of the ſame article, prepared from American ſtaves, was uſually about 11 s. only.—Some part of this expence, however, was repaid; but it is no exaggeration to aver, that in this inſtance alone, trifling as it may appear, by importing their rum-packages from Great Britain inſtead of America, the iſlands ſuſtained a loſs of at leaſt 50,000 l. ſterling, per annum. From hence ſome judgment may be formed what little dependence, even the moſt opulent of the Weſt India planters, can place on the Mother Country for the ſupply of neceſſaries. The reſource itſelf is ruinous in the extreme.

The preceding obſervations have, I truſt, fully obviated the firſt objection above ſtated, and anticipated in ſome meaſure an anſwer to the ſecond. I moſt readily admit that Great Britain is of right entitled to the monopoly of the produce of her

* The price is now 18 s.

Weſt-

Weſt-India poſſeſſions, as long as ſhe continues *to them* the monopoly of her market. This reciprocal obligation I conſider as founded on an implied convention, on the faith of which the ſugar iſlands were ſettled; but I contend that a vent in America (though no longer a part of the Britiſh dominion) of thoſe articles of their produce, for which the demand in Great Britain ſeldom affords a ſaving price, may very reaſonably be requeſted.—For not tending in the ſmalleſt degree to the prejudice of the mother country, it cannot ſurely be conſidered as a breach of that convention which I have ſuppoſed to ſubſiſt between her and her children. It were indeed ſtrange policy in a parent ſtate to deprive her colonies of any reſource, the loſs of which, though an injury to them, is productive of no advantage to herſelf, nor can any contract warrant ſo extenſive an interpretation. Sugar, indigo, cotton-wool, dying-woods, &c. being raw materials, for which Great Britain affords a ſufficient demand, ſhe may perhaps properly enough confine to her own market; but all or moſt of the remaining Weſt-India products ought to lie under no ſuch reſtriction; and I ſhall offer ſome reaſons to prove, that the principal ſtaple, *ſugar*, ought to be allowed a free export to America as heretofore, even in point of true policy on the part of Great Britain.

It is inconteſtibly true, that if the Americans are not permitted to purchaſe this article from our

 own

own islands, they will obtain it from those of France. We are told indeed by Lord Sheffield, that "neither Holland nor France will suffer the American States to carry sugar from their ports in the West-Indies;" but unless his lordship alludes to some recent regulation of those governments of which I have not heard, he will find it difficult to reconcile this assertion with that which immediately precedes it, in the same page and in the same paragraph of his book. "The difference of price, says his lordship, between French, Danish, and Dutch, and British West-India sugar, was so great, that above two thirds of the sugar imported into America came from the foreign islands." This indeed I believe, and whether such sugar was imported clandestinely from the foreign islands, or otherwise, it is a circumstance of which Great Britain ought certainly to avail herself, by encouraging as much as possible the Americans to deal with her own sugar islands for this article among others, instead of laying out their money with the French, the Danes and the Dutch. It seems not to be sufficiently understood, that every addition to the prosperity of our sugar islands is absolutely and entirely an augmentation of the national wealth. Envy perhaps may not be willing to allow this, and ignorance may not comprehend it; but such is the fact. It is to Great Britain, and to Great Britain alone, that our West-India planters consider themselves as belonging. It is *here* that their chil-

children are educated; their wealth centers *here*, and it is *here* that their affections are fixed. Even ſuch of them as have reſided in the Weſt-Indies from their birth, look on the iſlands as a temporary abode only, and the fond notion of being ſoon able *to go home* (as they emphatically term a viſit to England) year after year animates their induſtry and alleviates their misfortunes; of which by the bye, no people on earth have received a greater ſhare from the hand of omnipotence than themſelves. On what principle then of reaſon or juſtice, are we called upon to deprive theſe colonies, thus attached to us by every tie of intereſt and affection, of any one advantage in the diſpoſal of their produce, which is not immediately prejudicial to ourſelves? Are we by miſtaken prohibitions to compel their old cuſtomers the Americans, to deal with foreigners, whether they incline ſo to do or not? Very different was the policy of our former ſyſtem; for why was a duty of five ſhillings per cent. levied on ſugars of foreign growth, imported into North America, while that of our own iſlands was admitted duty free? evidently that the tax on foreign ſugars might operate as a bounty on our own. This ſyſtem it is true has ceaſed with the allegiance of America: nevertheleſs, if the veſſels of the United States are freely admitted into our Weſt-India ports, it is probable, in the aſſortment of their homeward freight, that ſugar will ſtill conſtitute *ſome part* of their cargoes. I believe

believe in truth a *ſmall part*. But whatever may be its amount, the value of it, if ſugar itſelf is prohibited, muſt be paid in ready money, which will afterwards probably find its way to thoſe plantations where a wiſer policy prevails *. It follows, therefore, and the fact undoubtedly is, that as we reſtrain our own ſugar iſlands, we ſupport and encourage, in the ſame degree, thoſe of our rivals and enemies, the French.

I am not unappriſed of that narrow ſelfiſh argument, that the Britiſh revenue will be injured by the export of our ſugar to North America:—but judging of the future by the paſt, I maintain, that the plenty of ſugar at the Engliſh market, as it has always kept, ſo it always will keep pace with the reduced price of neceſſaries in our ſugar plantations, and the eaſe with which labour there, is upheld and promoted. It is not the ſale of an inconſiderable portion of their great ſtaple to the North Americans, that ultimately leſſens its general export to Great Britain. On the contrary, by a reduction in the planters annual expence,—an advantage which he owes to an immediate, and therefore beneficial exchange of commodities (ſugar among the reſt) with America, a deſire of improving and extending his poſſeſſions, urges him to new undertakings;—his ambition is awakened;—his faculties expand, and cultivation increaſes

* See the Second Addreſs in the Appendix, from the inhabitants of Jamaica to Governor Campbell.

with

with a rapidity unknown to the cautious inhabitant of the colder clime, and less vigorous soil of Europe. Thus it is, that the islands will gratefully repay the generous indulgence of their parent. By permitting a direct exportation of sugar to America, she will soon find a proportionate encrease of the same staple, at her own emporium; while the consumption of her manufactories will enlarge with the augmentation of her navigation and revenues. The improvements that were visible in the Island of Jamaica within the short space of fifteen years, previous to the late unfortunate war, establish the truth of this reasoning beyond all contradiction. They may be judged of from this, that in 1757 the import of sugar into the port of London, from that island, was 24,494 hogsheads; in 1772, it had risen to 45,889 hogsheads! Let us now no longer be told, that an exportation of that commodity to North America is prejudicial to the revenues of Great Britain!

I come now to the loudest of all the objections that have yet been urged against the establishment of a liberal intercourse with the Americans; namely, the supposed danger of their engrossing the navigation and carrying-trade of this kingdom; on which, however, it is sufficient to observe, with respect to our sugar colonies, that the argument whereon this objection is founded, (if I rightly comprehend its meaning,) takes for granted what yet remains to be proved; since it implies, that the

admission

admiſſion of American veſſels into our Weſt India ports allows them alſo *a free trade from thence to Great Britain.* But aſſuredly this does not neceſſarily follow. Whether it may be prudent in Great Britain to conſent to ſo liberal an extenſion of her navigation laws, is a queſtion of general policy, whereon it would be preſumptious in the Weſt India planters to offer their opinion. Impreſſed with the dread of impending evils, they confine themſelves to their own particular ſituation, requeſting only, that America may be permitted, as formerly, to bring them food, and ſuch other neceſſaries as Great Britain herſelf cannot furniſh, and to receive in payment ſuch of their ſtaples as Great Britain cannot conſume. They are told that "Canada and Nova Scotia ſhall ſatisfy their wants." We have demonſtrated the folly of this expectation. "But Great Britain claims the monopoly of their produce." It has been ſhewn that ſhe will ſtill poſſeſs it to every beneficial purpoſe. Obſtacles, however, multiply. "The Americans will engroſs the carrying-trade, to the excluſion of our own ſhipping."—This objection, in truth, is expreſſed in ſuch general terms, that I really believe, many well meaning men, who have grown hoarſe in repeating it, have no preciſe idea of its meaning to this hour. If the ſenſe of it be this, *that American ſhips will ſupply foreign markets with Britiſh plantation ſugar, to the prejudice of the Britiſh refinery*; the noble author of whom I have made

made frequent mention, and who has clearly given it this interpretation, has himself furnished an answer; for he repeatedly affirms, that the French islands can supply, not only the American consumption, but that of all Europe besides, on far cheaper terms than our own. Does the noble Lord suppose, that America will buy *dearer*, with a view to sell *cheaper*, than the French? Their past conduct has afforded no proofs of such egregious folly. I must observe too, that our islands have already permission (by 12 Geo. II.) to send sugars to the southward of Cape Finistere; yet, during a residence of 15 years in the West Indies, I never heard but of two vessels that tried the experiment, and the owners had no encouragement to repeat it. If the objection signifies, what I believe it was meant to signify by some who urged it in the House of Commons in the debate of Mr. Pitt's provisional bill; namely, *That American ships, having discharged their cargoes in our West India islands, will enter into a Competition with British vessels loading there, for freights to Great Britain*; it is, I confess, a matter deserving consideration; but Great Britain surely may administer a *preventive* less dangerous in its effects than the project of starving her sugar colonies, by interdicting all intercourse whatever between them and the United States. The disease, in this case, is, indeed, by far the lesser evil.

I hope

I hope that no apology to Lord Sheffield will be thought necessary for the freedom I have taken with his opinions. I mean no personal offence; for I have heard, and believe, that he is a man of great liberality and humanity; but, drawing his conclusions, as he confesses to have done, chiefly from oral testimony, I am inclined to think, that great part of the information given to his lordship, was not given in the spirit of truth; but, in that of selfishness and malignity. His lordship, having submitted his opinions to the public, avowedly for the purpose of influencing public measures, they are fairly an object of public investigation.

One objection still remains to be considered. It is that which respects Ireland. It shall quickly be dispatched; for it is without even a shadow of foundation. Ireland has already received, as matter of right, all the freedom of trade which she claimed, or can reasonably desire, and she nobly earned it.—Happy, if she knows her own happiness! Among other privileges, she possesses that of a direct intercourse with our West India islands. It is true, she has charged the consumption of West-India produce with duties proportionate to those which are laid by Great-Britain; and she has adopted our navigation act, in prohibiting the introduction thereof from foreign plantations in foreign bottoms. This she did at the reasonable request of this kingdom; for it was obvious, that a system of smuggling sugar and rum from thence hither, would other-

otherwise have been introduced that must have proved fatal to our revenues: but the duties which Ireland has thus established, she retains in her own hands. Great-Britain receives no part of them; and if by means of *these*, the people of Ireland are relieved of *other* taxes, how are they injured, and what have they to complain of? When therefore they are told, "That they ought to have West-India produce on as good terms as the Americans, now a foreign nation," the fact itself is not fairly stated. It is necessary to observe too, that England is no longer at the expence of maintaining a fleet for the protection of the commerce of America. Does Ireland expect that Great-Britain is to support the whole burthen of naval defence for both kingdoms, besides the load of debt contracted for both, and will the people of Ireland contribute in no respect to her relief? Men who have acted so bravely as the Irish, will not argue so ungenerously.

I have thus briefly, but I trust satisfactorily, obviated the principal objections and arguments that have been eloquently urged, both in parliament and from the press, against the revival of a commercial intercourse between our West-India islands and the United States of America, on terms of equal freedom and advantage. It has cost me but little trouble, for none of them were of deep and difficult consideration, and the subject did not require me to enter more fully and at large into that great system of general policy, which it will speedily

 demand

demand the closest investigation on the part of Great-Britain (aided by temperate councils, uncontaminated by party, and unbiassed by resentment) to arrange and establish on a solid and prosperous footing. Of that general system, however, the commerce of which I treat, constitutes a very essential part; and by considering it separately and distinctly, I flatter myself that I have enabled the reader to form a clearer notion of its nature, and a more accurate estimate of its value, than otherwise he might have done. With a few miscellaneous observations, therefore, that occur to me, I shall dismiss the subject.

It has been remarked, that the navigation from Canada is obstructed six months in the year by the ice. It should also have been observed, that the hurricane months in the West-Indies occupy great part of the time in which the river St. Lawrence is open. How casual, how uncertain, therefore, must be any supply from thence for the use of the planters in the West-Indies, even if Canada had people sufficient to cut her lumber, and the means of preparing her wheat into flour fit for the West-India market, neither of which advantages she possesses at present. I doubt also, whether Canada (as now bounded) furnishes that species of wood called *white oak*, the only material proper for containing rum. It is certain, that Nova-Scotia does not. This is a very striking circumstance; for next to the necessaries of life, *wood*, of which rum

rum puncheons are made, is the moſt important of ſupplies to the Weſt-Indies, as I have already demonſtrated, and the want of it affords an additional reaſon for placing very little dependance on either of thoſe ill-fated provinces *.

The papers, which I ſhall ſubjoin in an Appendix, have anticipated in part an obſervation wherein our humanity, as well as policy, is more intereſted than in any other. It ariſes from the dreadful conflagration which a few years ago reduced the large and opulent emporium of Jamaica to aſhes, and the ſtill more dreadful hurricanes, in which the angel of deſolation viſited in his wrath great part of that extenſive country, and the whole of ſome of the iſlands to windward.—Ever ſince thoſe calamities, the ſuffering inhabitants have reſided in miſerable hovels, by no means a ſufficient defence againſt the autumnal ſeaſons, in confident expectation that the return of peace would enable them to procure materials for repairing their dwelling houſes, and the re-eſtabliſhment of their mills and manufactories; and accordingly America, on the very firſt moment of reconciliation, haſtened to their relief. How grievous then is their diſappointment! yet this is but a very ſmall part of the evil. It has been ſhewn in the ſtate of the

* *Beech* from England has ſerved to make ſugar hogſheads, but will not anſwer for rum; nor any wood that I am acquainted with but *oak*.

imports

imports from North America, that the article of salted fish (viz. cod, mackrell and shad) to the incredible amount of 150,000 quintals, and 30,000 barrels, constituted part of their annual consumption. It grieves me to say, that this, and herrings from Ireland, made the only animal food of the poor negroes. By the late proclamation, the future import of salted fish from the United States is not permitted *even in British vessels*. As it is impossible that Ireland alone, or conjointly with the fisheries of St. John's and Nova Scotia, in their present state, can supply the deficiency, infatuation must have crept into our councils. Is it not enough that ruin will overtake the unoffending planter;—must the most wretched of all the children of affliction, his miserable slaves, also fall victims to our vengeance?

It was remarked, by Mr. Walker, in that admirable chain of evidence delivered by him, in 1775, to an unattending and unfeeling House of Commons, that "it is in trade, as in the human "body, nothing suffers singly by itself; there is "a consent of parts in the system of both, and "the partial evil soon grows into universal mis-"chief."—At present I shall confine the application of this remark to the African trade. Deprived of the means of procuring sustenance for the slaves they already possess, it can hardly be supposed that the planters will think of purchasing others. In lamenting this circumstance, I speak

now,

now, merely as a merchant or ſtockholder, meditating on the preſent, and probably future, ſtability of the revenues of Great Britain; to which the African trade is doubtleſs of conſiderable importance. As a man, and a Chriſtian, I hope I ſhall live to ſee the day (though a ſugar planter myſelf) when this abominable traffic will be prohibited. I think I can clearly prove, that even the welfare of the planter concurs with the honor of government, and the intereſt of humanity, in wiſhing its total abolition. At preſent, the ſyſtem of Great Britain towards her few remaining colonies, is a ſyſtem unexampled in the annals of mankind. It is war, under the name of peace, againſt the moſt valuable of her plantations, who have not only given her no provocation, but whoſe welfare ſhe knows and acknowledges to be the ſupport of our own empire. Well, therefore, may the planters complain, that "they are ſuffering without blame, and incurring all the effects of reſentment, without the ſlighteſt imputation on their obedience *."

Whatever may be thought of the paſt or preſent conduct of America towards this country, the peaceful and loyal inhabitants of the Weſt India iſlands are void of offence. Is it then conſiſtent with policy, religion, or humanity, to deſtroy the innocent, becauſe their deſtruction may operate

* Petition from the aſſembly of Barbadoes to the King.

eventually

eventually as a punishment to the guilty; and are 500,000 persons to be starved, and a property of 60 million to be rendered unprofitable and precarious, that America may lose the advantage of selling them food and necessaries? Policy, religion, and humanity, reprobate the idea!

To conclude: In private life, it is not the man who is injured; but he that gives the injury, that seldom forgives. This, however, is the peculiar characteristic of base and ignoble minds; for such only are guilty of unprovoked and premeditated mischief. Mistake, indeed, is the lot of our nature, and the wisest and greatest of men are not exempted from it; but conviction on such minds produces, not malignity or revenge, but acknowledgment and reparation. When unretracted error hardens into obstinacy, and disappointed ambition is degraded into malice—these are signs of a fatal degeneracy; of a conduct not merely erroneous, but proceeding from principles depraved and corrupt. It is with communities as with individuals. We were once a people renowned for generosity and magnanimity.—To the preservation of that character, exemption from error never was supposed immutably necessary. Our public conduct has indeed been dreadfully fallible, and we have much to answer for, and much to repair:—but, if public virtue be not wholly gone from us, if we still wish to be venerable among the nations of the earth, let us, above all things, discard, in

the

the fulneſs of diſdain, that low vindictive principle of womanly reſentment, which incites to ſecret malignity and revenge, when open and avowed hoſtility has failed of its purpoſe. Surely we are at this time ſufficiently humbled, both in our own eyes and that of the world, to learn a leſſon from the ſchool of affliction. If misfortunes like ours, will not teach us wiſdom, we are indeed a devoted people, and fate has fixed her ſeal upon our ruin!

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

At a Committee of the West-India Planters and Merchants, held the 11th of April, 1783, in pursuance of the unanimous resolution and appointment of a general meeting expressly called for that purpose:

RESOLVED unanimously, that the following REPRESENTATION be made to his MAJESTY's Ministers, viz.

THAT the proprietors of Estates in the sugar colonies have been put to such enormous expences for their defence during the late war, and for procuring even the insufficient supplies they have been able to obtain of lumber and other American produce, and have been during the same period visited with so many natural calamities, that their situation is become truly distressful, and loudly calls for attention to every possible means of supporting them, and, with them the

manufactures, commerce, navigation, and revenue of the mother country, under burthens which endanger their utter ruin.

It is with the greateſt reluctance they make any repreſentation concerning the very heavy and oppreſſive duties impoſed on the ſtaple articles of their produce by Parliament, being truly ſenſible of the urgency of the public neceſſities, and ſincerely ready to make every exertion for ſupporting their ſhare of them; but if ſuch duties are impoſed as muſt greatly leſſen the conſumption, whilſt they proportionably increaſe the temptation to ſmuggling, the proſpect of revenue will be defeated, and the ſugar colonies ruined in vain. Such it is greatly feared will be the operation of the increaſed duties upon ſugar and rum. Thoſe on rum have operated in a great meaſure as a prohibition to the importation from the Leeward Iſlands. Thoſe on ſugar have been nearly doubled in the courſe of the laſt war; and, conſidering that the greateſt part of the ſugar is refined before conſumption, the duties thereon are duties upon a raw material of manufacture, falling vaſtly heavier upon the ſubſtance conſumed, becauſe of the great waſte in refining. The advance of money required for payment of the duty inſtantly on landing aggravates its weight upon the planter; and upon the whole, it is apppehended that no ſimilar object of taxation has, under the preſſure of the ſame public neceſſities, been dealt with ſo hardly;

hardly; whilst few, if any of them from their connection with the most essential interests of this commercial country, stand so well entitled to a favourable attention. A relief from these duties may therefore become indispensably necessary; and such necessity can in the opinion of the committee be in no way prevented, but by the utmost assistance being given, to the supply of the sugar colonies with the articles they stand in need of; and to the encouragement of the cultivation of other articles of their growth; together with the most vigorous exertion of every means whereby smuggling may be prevented, and foreign produce kept from being introduced to consumption in these kingdoms instead of our own.

The dominions of the United States of America, and his Majesty's sugar colonies, having been settled in the express view of supplying each others wants, it cannot be expected that the sugar colonies can subsist, in any degree of prosperity, without those supplies of lumber and provisions from America at the cheapest rate, in contemplation of which they were so settled, or without the consumption in North America of their produce in return; and, although the exclusive right to that consumption is no more, yet, under a just and reasonable attention to mutual interests, the committee entertain no doubt but such a share of the American trade may be preserved to the sugar colonies as will greatly tend to their support, and,

upon

upon every principle of true policy, and proper regard to the views and purpoſes of rival nations, be highly deſerving of the utmoſt countenance and aſſiſtance from the mother country. To this intercourſe, the committee apprehend, the permiſſion of American ſhips, as heretofore, freely to bring the produce of the dominions of the United States to the ſugar colonies, and take back our produce in return, is ſo obviouſly eſſential, that they need not adduce any farther arguments in ſupport of that propoſition.

In ſeveral of his Majeſty's ſugar colonies there are ſtill great tracts of uncultivated land, of which, although a conſiderable part, would undoubtedly, under adequate encouragement, be ſettled with ſugar works, yet there will remain conſiderable quantities which, from ſoil or ſituation, are unfit for the culture of ſugar, though very fit for that of indigo, coffee, cocoa, and tobacco, if proper encouragement were given thereto; and ſuch cultivation would at the ſame time afford the means of ſubſiſtence to great numbers of loyal Americans and others, whoſe property is not ſufficient for the ſettlement of a ſugar plantation, and would greatly increaſe the internal ſtrength of the ſugar colonies. For theſe ſalutary purpoſes, it is ſubmitted whether the bounty of 4d. per pound, which only expired laſt year, ſhould not be revived, upon the importation of indigo of the growth of his Majeſty's ſugar colonies, and the duties on

coffee

coffee and cocoa be in a great meaſure taken off. Thoſe on coffee, in particular, operate almoſt as a prohibition on the legal conſumption, ſeeing that, notwithſtanding their enormous rate, they only produce about 7 or 8000l. per annum to the revenue, whilſt it is evident that very great quantities of coffee are conſumed in theſe kingdoms, to the encouragement of the general practice of ſmuggling, and the ſupport of the French Weſt-India Iſlands by the conſumption of their produce. By an experiment upon this article, therefore, the revenue can hazard little, and the committee moſt earneſtly recommend it, in the firm perſuaſion that if the exciſe were wholly taken off, and that, upon payment of a moderate duty of cuſtoms upon landing, to be drawn back on exportation, coffee were permitted to be conſumed free from all farther reſtraint, a very ſmall duty thereon would not only produce more revenue than is produced at preſent from the commodity itſelf, but, would materially aid the conſumption of ſugar, and the revenue ariſing therefrom. A ſimilar regulation of the duty on cocoa would, it is hoped, produce the like effects.

Among the defects of the preſent ſyſtem of laws againſt ſmuggling, it is ſubmitted whether ſome of the moſt ſtriking and conſiderable are not, the permitting veſſels ſeized to return to their former employment; the want of puniſhments ſuited to the enormity of the crime, to be inflicted on

ſuch

ſuch revenue officers as are either corruptly concerned in ſmuggling or in colluſive ſeizures, or wilfully and knowingly connive at them; and the permitting commodities ſeized to be ſold for home conſumption free of duty. Under this practice, every attempt made to ſmuggle, muſt of neceſſity produce all the evil to the ſtate, which its ſucceſs could produce; and the only queſtion is, whether the ſmuggler or the cuſtom houſe officer ſhall reap the benefit; for by the one or the other of them the commodity is with certainty brought into conſumption, free of duty, whilſt the ſale thereof upon the ſea coaſt at the ſame time, affords the means of covering, by permits, the fraudulent conveyance of vaſtly greater quantities of ſmuggled goods than could be ſo covered if thoſe ſales did not afford the pretence. It is therefore conceived, that the abolition of this practice, and the ſale of all ſeizures for exportation only, under the uſual ſecurities, is become eſſential to the ſupport of our own colonies, under the load of duties with which the conſumption of their produce in theſe kingdoms is burthened.

Every delay, ariſing from the forms of the cuſtom-houſe, and the limitations of the ſpace in which buſineſs is required to be done, increaſes the opportunities, not only of defrauding the revenue by ſmuggling, but robbing the importer by pilfering the commodity on which the duty is payable. In this view, as well as in many others, it

it would be highly ſalutary, to aboliſh holidays at the cuſtom-houſe to the degree that they ſtand aboliſhed at the treaſury, admiralty, navy-office, and other great efficient boards of buſineſs; to conſolidate the ſeveral perplexed and intricate branches of duties and drawbacks into one duty and one drawback on each commodity; and to extend the public quays of London, and no longer require the commerce of the metropolis to be carried on in leſs ſpace than is allowed at the principal out-ports, and in ſo crowded a way, as wholly precludes an effectual care of the commodities imported, and encourages villany of all denominations among the labouring people employed about them. And on all theſe topics the Committee beg leave to obſerve, that the intereſts of government, and of the planter and fair trader, fully coincide, and no regulation can ſerve the one without protecting the other.

The Committee farther beg leave to repreſent, that the tares, allowed at the cuſtom-houſe on ſugars imported, require reviſion, being leſs than the real weight of the packages.

Under all the circumſtances herein before ſet forth, the Weſt-India planters and merchants deem it their indiſpenſable duty to make this repreſentation to his Majeſty's miniſters, and in the moſt earneſt manner to entreat, that their true ſituation may be ſubmitted to his Majeſty, and that, on due conſideration thereof, ſuch meaſures

may

may be ſuggeſted, and purſued, as ſhall appear beſt calculated to promote purpoſes ſo eſſential to the general welfare.

JAMAICA, ſt. Saint Jago de la Vega. } May 30, 1783.

To his Excellency Archibald Campbell, *Eſquire, Captain-General, Governor and Commander in Chief, in and over this his Majeſty's Iſland of Jamaica, and other the Territories thereon depending in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral of the ſame,*

The Humble Addreſs of the Grand Inqueſt of the County of Middlesex.

WE his Majeſty's dutiful and loyal ſubjects, the Grand Inqueſt of the County of Middleſex, beg leave to addreſs your excellency, with ſentiments expreſſive of the ſincereſt ſatisfaction, on the proſpect of ſecurity and extenſive commerce, thoſe natural conſequences of the ineſtimable bleſſing of peace.

We have every well-grounded hope, that a peace, which is profeſſed to be eſtabliſhed upon the liberal principles of equity and reciprocity, will be permanent, and univerſally beneficial.

We are induced, from the higheſt authority, to expect that a mutual and ſatisfactory intercourſe, between

between the empire of Great Britain and the United States of America, will be eſtabliſhed on the broadeſt baſis; and we cannot but flatter ourſelves that we ſhall be ſpeedily relieved from thoſe diſtreſſes, to which our local ſituation has more peculiarly expoſed us, in addition to the burthen and expences of repeated martial laws, and encreaſing taxes, during the courſe of the late war. It is within your Excellency's recolleſtion that the town of Kingſton has been in a great meaſure deſtroyed by a tremendous conflagration; that the whole colony was injured, and the Leeward pariſhes nearly deſolated, by two moſt fatal hurricanes—From the ſcarcity of lumber, and other neceſſaries, many valuable warehouſes and ſtores of the moſt reſpectable merchants; the works and other buildings of the uſeful and induſtrious ſugar planters, have remained to this hour in a ſtate of ruin, or (for the mere purpoſe of preſent exigency) have undergone a partial and temporary repair. With the moſt heartfelt ſatisfaction, we have ſeen the earlieſt diſpoſition, on the parts of the Americans, to ſupply us with thoſe articles which we moſt required, on which the exiſtence of our ſugar-works much depend, and which no quarter of the globe can afford with equal diſpatch, certainty, and abundance. We cannot but hope, ſir, that a branch of commerce, ſo beneficial to the ſubjects of the Britiſh empire, will not be impeded, or in any reſpect obſtructed, in its commencement in

 this

this country, where it ought to be more especially encouraged. We cannot, sir, repress our uneasiness, at being informed that this intercourse is threatened with a check, in its very infancy, from difficulties arising in clearing out American vessels. We implore your Excellency's interference to remove any delays or impediment that may have arisen; and that you will be pleased to direct, that every encouragement and dispatch may be afforded to the citizens and vessels of the United States of America: we shall otherwise see, with a regret bordering upon despair, the trade of that continent directed into the channel of our natural enemies, and the enlivening gleam of returning conciliation and fœderal union obscured perhaps for ever! Thus, sir, we submit to you, that every principle of policy and humanity operate in support of this application; and we entertain but little doubt that the intercourse bill, now depending in the British parliament, will warrant your Excellency in granting our petition in its utmost extent. We cannot conclude without assuring your Excellency, that we apply with the more confidence upon this occasion, to a governor, who, (it is but justice to acknowledge) has ever, in the course of his administration, through a long period of accumulated difficulties and distresses, created a general respect from a generous, disinterested line of conduct; and impressed an universal consciousness of a perfect disposition to promote every measure

that

that might most effectually ensure the welfare and interest of the colony he presides over.

His EXCELLENCY's ANSWER.

Gentlemen,

I RECEIVE your address with much satisfaction, and sincerely congratulate you on the peace; an event interesting to humanity, and from which I hope this island will reap the most salutary advantages.

Convinced that a mutual and happy intercourse between the British empire and the United States of America, would soon be established on the most liberal principles, and be productive of beneficial consequences to the merchants and planters of Jamaica, I had anticipated your wishes as early as the 10th of April, by directing the officers of his Majesty's customs at Kingston, to give every encouragement to American vessels entering the ports of this island; and for the more effectual support of these instructions, I summoned the Council to meet on the 3d of this month, persuaded that they will unite with me, in adopting some temporary expedient to remove the obstructions that are in the way of our trade with the United States of America, until full authority is received from England.

My warmeſt acknowledgments are due to you for the very favourable opinion you are pleaſed to expreſs of my conduct in this government, at a very intereſting period of the war; the difficulties of which were, however, greatly leſſened by the liberal ſupport I experienced from the gentlemen of the iſland.

Having no wiſh ſeparate from the welfare of this community, I ſhall ſincerely rejoice in every opportunity of promoting the proſperity of it to the utmoſt of my power.

To

To his Excellency ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, *Esquire, Captain General and Governor of this his Majesty's Island, Chancellor and Vice Admiral of the same, &c.*

The Memorial of the Custos, Magistrates, and Inhabitants of the Town of Kingston.

Humbly sheweth,

THAT since the conclusion of Peace, several vessels from the Independent States of America have entered this port, with cargoes peculiarly adapted to give relief against the accumulated distress and inconveniencies, in which war, storms, floods, fire, and other public calamities, have involved not only the inhabitants of this town, but the Island at large.

That notwithstanding these vessels have been suffered by the officers of the customs to enter and discharge their cargoes, yet their not having received from his Majesty's ministers instructions on the business of clearing them out with such produce as they wish to take in return, they are detained.

That

That one veſſel is now actually loaded with the produce of this iſland, which, if not permitted to clear out, muſt be relanded, and money given in its place. Your Memorialiſts aver, that a longer delay will operate unfavourably in the re-eſtabliſhing an intercourſe between this iſland and America; and your Memorialiſts are firmly of opinion, that the proſperity of this iſland much depends on a free and open trade with that country.

Your Memorialiſts therefore humbly pray your Excellency to give ſuch relief in the premiſes as the caſe requires.

His EXCELLENCY's ANSWER.

Gentlemen,

I HAVE great pleaſure in receiving your addreſs.

The happy conſequences that muſt reſult to the Britiſh Empire at large, and to this iſland in particular, from the encouragement of trade with the United States of North America, upon the moſt liberal and extenſive footing, were ſo evident, that I had, as early as the 10th of April, directed the officers of his Majeſty's Cuſtoms in Kingſton, not to throw any unneceſſary obſtruction in the way of ſuch commerce, but on the contrary, to afford it every poſſible encouragement.

To

To give more effect to those instructions, and that our intercourse with the American States should not meet with any unnecessary check in its infancy, I summoned his Majesty's Council to meet this day, in full persuasion that those gentlemen will chearfully co-operate with me in adopting proper measures to remove, as far as may be, the difficulties which may occur in the way of this trade, until we receive from England such regulations as may be established by the British Parliament.

THE END.