

FACTS PLAINLY STATED :

IN

ANSWER TO A PAMPHLET

ENTITLED

“ PLAIN STATEMENT OF FACTS,

Connected with the

PROPOSED

St. Katharine's Dock.”

BY A

LONDON - DOCK PROPRIETOR.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR J. M. RICHARDSON, 23, CORNHILL.

1824.

Note.—*The Minutes of Evidence, &c. quoted in the Notes, are selected from the Examinations taken before the Committee of the House of Commons on Foreign Trade.*

FACTS PLAINLY STATED,

&c. &c.

A PAMPHLET has just appeared, entitled a “ Plain Statement of Facts, connected with the proposed St. Katharine’s Dock ;” which, although it seeks to attract observation, by alluring professions of open and general competition, yet will be shown, in the following pages, to have little claim to the public attention. The Author of the Pamphlet, whilst he impugns the intention of the publishers of various anonymous remarks, suppresses his own name—but, as he is not very delicate in the use of misrepresentation and censure—“ It is,” to quote his own words, “ important that such misrepresentations should be met by an unqualified contradiction, least they should influence the minds of those who will have to determine, whether the project (he advocates) shall receive the sanction of the legislature or not.”

In opposition to what might be inferred, from the language of the Pamphlet in question, it is material, that it should be clearly understood by the public, that the persons who are concerned in the Docks already formed have never opposed the views of government, as respects the Warehousing-System; on the contrary, their interest must have led them to wish that system success; and whatever value may have been assigned to the evidence given on this subject, by Mr. Hall and Mr. Thornton, those who will give themselves the trouble to read the evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on Foreign Trade, will find ample testimony in favour of the existing establishments, and of their willingness, on every occasion, to reduce, as much as possible, the expenses of the Port of London; although it cannot but be evident, to any one at all acquainted with the subject, that it is impracticable for any Docks or Warehouses in London to reduce the charges to a level with those of Holland, Antwerp, &c. whilst the wages of labour and the expenses of construction are so much higher here than they are in those places. It must always be borne in mind, that house-rent and the expense even of existence are dearer here than in any other part of Europe. When these expenses are reduced, then, and not till then, can we hope, fairly, to compete with foreigners.

The Evidence of Mr. Thornton, to which allusion is made in that part of the Report of the Committee

of the House of Commons, which is set forth in the Pamphlet, it should be observed, related chiefly to the bottling of wine—in consequence of his Evidence, an order was given to allow wine to be bottled in bond, for exportation.

The moment this order was issued, arrangements were made in the London Dock to give every facility for carrying it into effect, and the charges imposed by that Dock are little more than sufficient to cover the actual expense incurred; yet, notwithstanding the accommodation thus afforded, not more than 140 pipes of wine have been bottled for exportation.

The Author of the Pamphlet has accused the existing Dock Establishments of imposing vexatious regulations, though, it is remarkable that he has not thought it convenient to point out any one of the vexations he complains of, he cannot but know, that not any of the regulations which are alleged to interfere with the facilities that Mercantile Transactions require, have been adopted, until found necessary and insisted upon by the Officers of the Excise and Customs.* Every one must see that it is manifestly the interest of the present establishments to afford all possible accommodation to trade in their power; and as to the assertion, that representations and

* *Mr. TOOKE's evidence.*—The accommodation at the London Dock, excepting as connected, probably, with the revenue-laws, is very satisfactory.

remonstrances have, in most instances, been disregarded, the London Dock Company can have no hesitation in meeting such unsubstantiated accusations by a direct denial, and the Author is *defied* to produce any proof in support of his charge of injustice.

With respect to the Rates imposed by the several Dock Establishments,—in the “Plain Statement of Facts,” a very important fact is, most unfairly, kept out of view, viz.—That the London Docks are restricted in their charges, to those paid in the Port of London, in the year 1798; and that, in very many instances, the charges at present imposed are even much below those rates. By the permission given, in consequence of the recommendation of the Foreign Trade Committee, of the 3d of June, 1823, to bond goods wherever sufficient security could be provided, ample opportunity is afforded for carrying into effect the desired measure of bringing goods into the very heart of the City, and thus, greater and more extensive facilities and advantages to trade are given than any which the New Dock can possibly offer; and that competition (the asserted want of which is the great argument made use of, in support of the new scheme, by the Author of the Pamphlet, and his party) is thus, as respects the Warehousing of Goods already effectually in operation. In respect to landing, the Dock Establishments are also sufficiently competed with, by the legal Quays and Sufferance Wharfs, to remove all hazard

of exaction.* If, indeed, we were to derive our information on this head from the Pamphlet alone, we might think that this competition was, in effect, little more than nominal; for, in the statement there given, a most important fact is withheld, viz.—That, by the official returns, delivered to the House of Commons, on 17th of March last, it appears, that, on the south side of the river, eighty-six vessels of 100 tons and upwards, and, on the

* *Mr. TOOKE's Evidence, July, 1822.*—I am not acquainted with the proportion of charges as between the West India Docks and London Docks, but as between the London Dock and Sufferance Wharfs, I believe that the whole of the advantages, in a pecuniary sense, preponderate in favour of the London Dock; at least, so we think, and we act accordingly, in directing by far the largest proportion of our business to those Docks.

I believe that the charges in those Docks, (Commercial and London,) and Wharfs, which are open to competition, are on a very reduced scale, and do not come under the objection which I have stated of Port Charges.

I have not spoken of the London and Commercial Docks as being unreasonably high.

We do find their charges as low as at any of the Sufferance Wharfs.

I conceive that if the charges of the *Navigation* of the Port of London could be materially reduced, it would tend in a very great degree to restore the business of the Port of London to the utmost it has ever been at.

I have found upon the whole there has been a competition (between the London Docks and Sufferance Wharfs) which has constantly kept them on an equality.

north side sixty-two vessels of the same description, may unload at one and the same time, between London Bridge and Limehouse. It is observable, that the Author studiously endeavours to undervalue the usefulness of the Docks, &c. on the south side of the river, for general purposes, upon the presumption, it may be supposed, that the immense population on that side of the Thames are not consumers; and as to the assertion, that “no vessel of more than 200 tons, with a heavy cargo, and such only as are flat bottomed, and Dutch built, can discharge at the Sufferance Wharfs;” the best answer that can be given is, that many owners of vessels above 200 tons, and neither flat-bottomed nor Dutch built, have (notwithstanding what has been said upon the subject) been desirous, that these vessels should unload at the Sufferance Wharfs; but, upon application to the Customs for leave to do so, have often been refused. The Owners may certainly be considered to be the best judges where their Vessels may be unloaded in safety.

The Author felt, no doubt, that, in opposition to his assertion, of there not being sufficient wharf-room to afford fair accommodation to the increased Trade of the Port of London it would be urged against him, that the extension of accommodation furnished by the construction of the existing Docks, is much more than proportionate to the increase of trade; he, therefore, has been driven to make a very curious statement of the number of vessels which resort annually to the Port of London.

He asserts that no less than 52,838 vessels arrived and departed from the Port of London, during the year 1823. Now, it appears from the Report made to the House of Commons, on the 11th of March last, that the number of ships, which entered the Port, was —

	British.	Foreign.	Total.
In 1814,	2,773	2,297	5,070
1821,	3,527	571	4,098
1823,	3,648	865	4,513

And, from the Harbour Master's Report, the number of vessels moored between Limehouse and London Bridge was,—

In 1814,	13,100
1817,	13,219
1822,	13,433
1823,	13,112
And steam-boats, do.	945

Now, as these returns are the only authentic data upon which the Author, it is concluded, can possibly found his calculations, it becomes matter of no small difficulty to discover how he could arrive at the conclusion he has done; the method, however, which he appears to have pursued is this:—Supposing 945 Steam-vessels to visit the the Port of London annually, he reckons them both at their arrival and at their departure; and

thus makes 1,890 of them, and so with the other vessels.

The statement given of the official value of Imports and Exports appears to afford to the advocate of St. Katharine's Dock cause for regret. He says, " Let it be observed that the increase of the Trade (viz. from 1821 to 1822) was confined to the export of British manufacture and produce only, which show the mischievous effect of excessive charges upon the Transit Trade." But if a larger proportion of the increased Trade of the country consisted of British Manufactures exported, its real advantages would be so much the greater; and also more generally diffused than by putting Goods into Warhouses and taking them out again for exportation; however good the Warehousing System may be. The Author of the Statement of Facts will find but few real well-wishers to their country to join his lamentation on this head.

Every person, who thinks on the subject, must be as fully sensible, as the Author of the Pamphlet is, of the extensive advantages which must accrue from making the Port of London a deposit for Foreign Merchandize; and it is certainly a matter of great gratification to learn from him that Government have in view the adoption of plans which will reduce the expenses and facilitate the Trade of the Port:—as these plans are not intended, exclusively, it is hoped, for the new Dock at St. Katha-

rine's, their beneficial effects will, no doubt, be felt in the existing Establishments; if the difficulties and expenses which ships coming to the Port of London now said to experience are thus removed, it may fairly be expected that a part of the vacant room now to be found in every Dock and Warehouse, will be, to a certain extent, occupied; when that vacant room is either filled or there is any appearance of want of accommodation likely to take place, further Warehouse Room will immediately be provided—but whilst the want of room and accommodation exists only in the imaginations and writings of the supporters of the new scheme, those who manage the present Establishments are surely justified in the opposition they make.

As is stated in the Pamphlet, the Charter of the West India Dock expired in the month of August, 1823, but the privileges secured by that Charter did not practically cease till the month of February last:—the cessation of those privileges was certainly calculated to bring some ships from the West Indies into the London Docks; three West India cargoes have been landed there, but a larger number of Vessels which used to be brought to the London Dock have, since the trade was laid open, gone to the West India Dock. The West India Dock have in hand a large surplus fund, which, by an arrangement entered into with the Foreign Trade Committee, they have agreed to apply to the reduction of their rates; the conse-

quence is, that the rates now actually raised by that Company, at least as respects the West India Trade, are avowedly insufficient to pay the expense incurred in landing and storing the goods.—To attempt, therefore, to compete with the West India Dock, by reducing all charges to the level of *their* present rates, would be a competition for ruin. But there is another circumstance which will give the West India Dock, in many cases, a preference over the London Dock—viz. their being lower down the River; for there are owners of Ships who, notwithstanding the local advantages which the London Dock possesses, prefer sending their Vessels to the West India Dock to incurring the risk which they imagine heavily loaded Ships are subject to by the additional length of the navigation in coming higher up the River; and it may be affirmed that this circumstance will always, to a certain extent, counteract the Monopoly which the Author of the Pamphlet wishes to have it supposed would result to the London Dock, on account of its lying so much nearer to the centre of Commerce in London than the West India Dock.

It will be well to examine a little into the nature of the superior advantages which the Author promises that the New Docks will afford.—In the first place, it is asserted that building-materials and labour are now greatly cheaper than they were when the existing Docks were formed, and that, therefore, the expenses of construction will be so much less. From which assertion it is of course

intended to be inferred that they will be able to serve the public at lower rates. But the sum which the purchase of the ground and houses wanted will require, will, probably, more than counter-balance the advantages of the present low rate of materials and labour. And, it must be remarked, that the Author has in no part of his *Plain Statement* favoured us with any intimation of what the charges at the New Docks are to be, although there is much promise of superior vigilance and economy, and the usual inducements are held out which constitute the Formula of a regular Prospectus, such as we *now* see every day.

With regard to the advantages promised from the improved state of engineering, it is yet to be seen how they are to be so very beneficially applied to the new projected Works. It is stated that the New Docks and Basin will afford the means of discharging and loading 120 Ships besides Craft at one and the same time; but were the 120 Ships laid side by side, the Docks, as described, would scarcely hold them; and (supposing the Ships could be accommodated within the room marked out) in Docks so crowded, as these would be, should any accident, by fire, occur, it is evident that, for want of room to separate them, every Vessel would run the risk of being destroyed. It may further be observed, that the greatest allowance made by experienced engineers, to afford due accommodation, is only eight Ships to an acre of

water, and, as the proposed Docks are stated to be about eight acres, the number will only be sixty-four Vessels, and then they must be laid double along the whole of the Wharfs, so that, in fact, only about thirty-two Vessels will lie with their sides to the Quays. The boasted advantage of Ingress and Egress during the night, it may be safely predicted, will be but seldom availed of, unless the Proprietors are prepared to pay for all the damages and losses which may happen.

As to the situation of the New Docks, it is evident that all the objections which Owners of Vessels feel to bring their Ships up the River to the London Dock will apply more strongly to the Docks at St. Katharine's; moreover, if Ships should not happen to arrive at the Docks, just at the time of high-water, so as to be able immediately to enter the Basin, they will be subjected to almost certain Damage, as there is not a situation in this part of the River, where they could lie afloat with safety.

The scheme which is proposed, of employing Steam Boats to bring the Vessels up to the Docks, is one which may appear plausible to those unacquainted with the River; but any one capable of judging, will pronounce the plan to be dangerous, if not impracticable, and under all the circumstances which exist, to a seaman, ridiculous. With the Tide, Ships come up through the crowded parts of the River quite fast enough. Will they be brought up against the Tide? and arriving at

low water, be suffered to remain in the River until there is sufficient water to carry them into the Dock ; thereby incurring the danger before mentioned, from not having any place where they may lie afloat in safety ? We are favoured in the Pamphlet with a table of the Depths of the Water, in the neighbourhood of St. Katharine's. at low water ; but since it is only at high water that any communication can be had between the Docks and the River, it would have been as well if the Author had accompanied the statement with some explanation of its utility ; it would also have been satisfactory if he had given his reason for taking the soundings, in that part of the River which is deepened by the return of the tide, down the channel of the present St. Katharine's Dock : he must know, that, as soon as the reflux from St. Katharine's Inlet is stopped by Dock-Gates, the river will, in a very short time, assume its natural depth.

Upon what data the number of persons the new scheme will remove is estimated is not mentioned, but that number is erroneously stated, and instead of 4000, it may be satisfactorily proved, that in the two parishes, or rather the Precinct of St. Katharine's, and the parish of Aldgate, in the county of Middlesex, it will be infinitely greater, and not fall much below 8000, besides, there is no provision made in the Bill for the poor of the Precinct, the whole of which, it is understood, is included in

the proposed plan, and instead of 860 Householders, as stated in the Pamphlet, it is fair to infer, that the number is much greater, as the Schedule attached to the Bill actually describes 1032 houses, and other buildings. That additional time should be given to the inhabitants to find themselves fresh residences has been in a manner forced from the Projectors; they, therefore, cannot claim any merit on this head. As to the notoriety of their intentions it may safely be said, that no great undertaking was ever more cautiously and secretly planned; so much so, that those most interested in its consequences were ignorant of it, until it was ready to be brought before the House of Commons. That a more extensive plan was originally intended, than is now avowed, is very likely, because the injustice, which in some cases it is probable would have been inflicted, has no doubt been successfully established, and, in some other cases, the cost may be more than the Projectors choose to encounter.

If the Author will give himself the trouble to look into some of the City Churches, he may find the attendance not more numerous than what he describes at St. Katharine's;* (the Pamphlet states

* The writer of these remarks has attended the Service in the Church at St. Katharine's, and certainly he never joined in worship with a more attentive and devout Congregation, consisting of very respectable people, the service admirably performed, and the Charity Children, Boys and Girls, dressed

about 150 persons,) but surely an excess of demoralization in a neighbourhood cannot be used as a reason why there should be less means of religious improvement afforded: the demolition of a place of worship, rendered doubly sacred by its antiquity, (for the purpose of forwarding a speculative scheme,) if it be not without a parallel, is certainly not worthy of imitation; seeing as we do efforts made every day to spread amongst the lower orders due respect for religious institutions; subscriptions raised to supply sea-faring men with places of worship, even afloat, how inconsistent does it appear, on such a plea as that offered on the present occasion to demolish an ancient and venerable Church, belonging to the Establishment? What veneration can it be expected will be paid to our Holy Religion, if its Temples are thus to be lightly thought of, and made to succumb to every Commercial Project? Rivalry in Trade is beneficial, kept however within proper bounds; but it can never be justified when its effects are injurious to the interests of Religion, or detrimental to the welfare of many, who have no opportunity of obtaining redress. Should the Author of "*Plain Facts*" really wish to cleanse an

with particular neatness, their quiet, regular conduct during Service, would be beneficially imitated by some others it has been his misfortune to observe act differently.

Augean Stable, let him try his skill in St. Giles's, or the neighbourhood of Whitechapel ; there he will find ample scope for the exercise of his benevolent intentions ; but then there is no place for a Dock, and all its expected emoluments and patronage :—his disinterestedness, however, will, on this account, be the more apparent.

We are favoured with an extract of a Petition to the Honourable House of Commons, signed by between “ one and two hundred inhabitants of St. Katharine and St. Botolph, Aldgate.” This Petition is actually signed by one hundred and twenty-five persons ; but what surprise will it excite when the public are informed that, of these one hundred and twenty-five, only *one* name is to be found amongst them of a resident *in St. Katharine's*, and that one has only resided a short time ; in *the Parish of St. Botolph, Aldgate*, in the County of Middlesex, where the proposed Dock is to be constructed, the names of about half a dozen gentlemen belonging to the Mint, (of which Mr. Wallace is at present master,) and three or four others ! All the other signatures are of persons living in another, but adjoining, parish, *viz.* St. Botolph, Aldgate, within the City of London, many of whom, probably, know as little of St. Katharine's as if they resided miles distant. What inference can we draw from this, but that there is an evident intention to mislead the Public, and impress upon the minds of the Members of the House of Commons that the actual re-

sidents of the space the Docks are to embrace are desirous of their being constructed, and upon the allegations stated in the Petition ascribed to them, and to which, it now appears, they are not parties? no comment is necessary; only one conclusion can be drawn. The circumstances of the Petition on the Manchester Gas-Lights must be fresh in the recollection of the reader.

The Petition states that the ground in St Katharine's is in part covered with houses of ill-fame; and that it will be greatly to the advantage of the Public that the proposed alteration should take place. But, supposing the case to be really as the Petition states,—may it not be fairly asked, what is to become of the nuisances which the alteration proposes to clear away from St. Katharine; and what advantages are to be looked for by the neighbouring Public from the dispersion amongst them of the dissolute persons who now congregate, as is asserted, in such numbers in St. Katharine's? There has, moreover, been a Petition presented against the Bill, signed by many inhabitants of the place, all of known respectability.

The Author, in his Pamphlet, has called the attention of the Public, more particularly, to the London Dock, as affording, by the present incapacity of accommodation, and the circumstances he affirms to have occurred there, the best proof to be adduced of the necessity for the New Docks being formed. The assertions which the Author has

made on this subject being fairly explained, the Public will judge on how false a basis the whole of his arguments are founded.

He has said that goods have been left to become damaged on the Quays of the London Dock, and that others have been stowed in unfit places. Now, as the Company would be liable to any damage which might result from such conduct, the only reply that need be made is, to use the Author's own language, "these charges will be denied until " otherwise proved."

Again, it is asserted, that some Vessels, recently arrived from foreign parts, have not entered the London Dock, in consequence of the want of accommodation; and it is insinuated, that, for want of sufficient storage, the Officers of that Establishment have discouraged the landing and housing of certain goods. Now the facts (as stated to the writer) are, that, in not one single instance has any ship whatever been refused admittance into the London Dock, except where the parties have wished to impose terms upon the Company by which they would have lost money by landing the cargoes; and the Officers of the Establishment have in no case discouraged the landing and housing of Goods, excepting where those Goods would not repay the Docks for the labour.

Again, it is asserted that the wines and spirits brought to the London Dock have been deposited in places totally unfit for the purpose. Mr. Inglis,

in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, gives a case parallel to the present; viz.

The immense overflow, from a particular cause, has more than filled the vaults; but that overflow has subsided, and may not recur again for another period of fourteen or fifteen years.

It is asserted, that “the Owners of goods deposited in the London Dock have made fruitless application for housing them.” This charge may, no doubt, be satisfactorily answered by reference to any particular case, and the reasons found to clear the Officers of the Dock most completely from all blame in this respect; for it will be seen, that when the goods have remained upon the quays, they have been left there either by desire of the merchant, or on account of the regulations of the Excise.*

* *Mr. INGLIS's Evidence.*—Are wines and spirits now occasionally lying any considerable time on the Quays?—Never from any wish of the Dock Company; their object is to house them as soon as possible; if they remain on the Quays, it is either for the convenience of the revenue-officers, till they have time to gauge them, or for the convenience of the merchant, as he may have the opportunity perhaps of selling them without housing them.

On what occasion was it that the Quays of the London Dock were so crowded as not to allow of the discharge of all the vessels in the Docks?—At one period of the war, in which the French armies were marching into the Peninsula, and threatening Spain and Portugal, the whole of the wine that

The Author asks, why the London Dock Company have not thought fit to open the Western

could be removed from those countries was brought into this country, as a depôt for security.

Mr. CHARLES STUART'S Evidence, June 14, 1822.—In cases where brandies are kept on the London Dock Quays, whether is it done for the convenience of the owners of the brandies, or whether is it done for the convenience of and to save expense to the Dock Company?—It is not done to save expense to the proprietors, but it is often done to suit the convenience of both.

Explain how?—Sometimes the importers of brandies might wish to keep them for a day or two after the three days allowed, paying a greater quay-rent, to avoid the expense of housing.

In general are they kept on the Quays for the accommodation of the one or the other?—Of both; it does happen that it is for the accommodation of both at times.

In general which prevails in a greater degree?—In a press of business with the Docks.

When there is not a press of business?—Then with the Trade.

Does such press of business frequently occur?—Not so frequently as we have experienced, unfortunately.

Are they kept on the Quays for want of accommodation in the vaults?—Not now.

When was that the case?—In the years 1808 and 1809.

Not since then?—No.

Mem.—It therefore appears, by this evidence, that between 1809 and 1822, a period of thirteen years, there was no want of vault-room.

Mr. FLETCHER WILSON'S Evidence.—In large Establish-

Lock for the ingress and egress of shipping? The motive of the Directors is understood to be, that although the Western Lock is necessary, in order that no delay might occur to the Trade, in case any accident should render the other entrance unserviceable; yet, that whilst the Eastern Lock can be used, the Western Entrance, when applied as at present, affords much more accommodation to the Trade than it would do if it were thrown open, and less inconvenience to the Navigation of the Port.

Upon what authority the Author has asserted that "great delay has lately existed in delivering goods for exportation from the London Docks," is not shown; but it may very safely be replied, that no delays occur, beyond those which must ever happen in all large concerns; and unless the Author can point out some instances of the evil he complains, it may be suspected that he has no just ground for the charge which he makes.

The Author labours, to cast a doubt upon the

ments there are always some inconveniences, but the London Dock regulations are very good ones.

I have seen a great many packages for weeks lying on the Quays.

They have been generally lying there for particular objects, at the request of the proprietor.

I believe that the goods which I have observed lying on the Quays of the London Docks, wines, and other articles, lie always at the request of the proprietors, for the convenience of sale, or for other purposes.

assertion, that a considerable portion of the Warehouses of the London Dock are, at present, unoccupied, and he says, that “the allegation will be “denied until otherwise proved.” What the London Dock Company have to allege on this point, it will be for them to prove, before the Committee of the House of Commons, if it be so required; at present it is sufficient to say, that persons of the first respectability, as well as of rank in the country, have seen that the assertions, with respect to vacant room in the London Dock Warehouses, are, unfortunately, too true.

If, indeed, there had not been a sufficiency of room, within the London Docks, as they at present stand, to afford every necessary accommodation for the Trade, the works would have been long ago extended, for the Company possess a large quantity of ground conveniently situated for the purpose,* which is now utterly useless and unproductive; and where they can, and will make further accommodation so soon as the Trade of the Port requires it; and this accommodation can be completed long before any Docks at St. Katherine’s can be constructed.

* FREDERICK GIBSON, ESQ. *Evidence*, June 28, 1822. —The London Dock Company have a very large space for building an additional Dock, and additional Warehouses, and a Stack of Warehouses, called Pennington-Street, which consists at present of only Vaults and a Ground Floor, which are so built as to be raised whenever there is occasion for them.

It is not true, that the Dock Charges are the cause why the Bonding System has not flourished in the Port of London. If the reader will refer to a Pamphlet published by Mr. Hall in the year 1821, he will find there a detail of grievances and an enumeration of expenses quite unconnected with the Dock Establishments, which grievances and expenses, and not the Dock Charges, are amongst the real causes which have prevented the success of the Bonding System within the Port of London.

Compared with other Docks, the London Dock Proprietors have some reason to complain, for the charges they have made to the Trade have not been sufficient to give them such a profit as a Mercantile adventure should fairly afford; yet they are accused of exaction. The large sums they were obliged to pay for the purchase of their premises, subjects them to a considerable loss; whilst the Public enjoy the advantages of locality; and the London Dock Company are competed with by Legal Quays, Wharfs, and Docks, constructed and established upon much lower terms.

That the East India and West India Docks have paid their Proprietors a dividend of 10 per Cent. certainly cannot be used as a proof that the London Dock Charges are excessive, seeing that their average dividend is only £4 : 14 : 6 per Cent. and now only £4 : 10 : 0 per Cent.; and with respect to their Surplus Fund, that is necessarily retained to be prepared against any unforeseen accident that

may occur to their Works, and to prevent alterations in their Dividends, such alterations having been justly apprehended, owing to the occasional unoccupied state of their Warehouses. As to the present value of London Dock Stock, that can only be fairly estimated by a comparison with other investments; and although its price may be above £100, yet, if sold, will not purchase now as it would have done, an Income in any other Securities equal to what it would have produced before the new scheme depreciated its value.—That the London Dock Company have, at certain periods, divided 6 per Cent. (*viz.* for two years) is another of the uncandid statements the Author makes, inasmuch as he has omitted to mention, that, for three years and a half, the Dividend paid did not exceed 3 per Cent. Government certainly do pay £15,000 a year for a Tobacco Warehouse, which covers five acres and upwards of ground, and is the finest building of the sort, probably, in the World. The Company, however, pay all the taxes, and have, further, at a very great expense, constructed a Dock, which is used almost exclusively for the Tobacco Warehouse; so that the income derived from this source, which is brought forward by the Author, as a notable discovery, is but common Interest for the money expended. That the rent which Government has received is not equal to the sum which they have paid, is not the fault of the London Company:—previously to this Warehouse be-

ing built, Government made use of premises of its own, charging little or no rent upon Tobacco ; and if the arrangement had not been advantageous for the Public, it is very unlikely that the Treasury would have entered into it.

In direct contradiction to what the Author states, the London Dock Company have acknowledged that the Compensations paid to those injured by the Establishment of Docks, were *not disbursed* by the Proprietors of the Docks, but were paid out of a duty levied upon Shipping: if the Compensation had been paid by the Dock Companies, the rates charged by them must necessarily have been higher, to reimburse the amount ; this London Port Duty has never been wholly taken off, although the advances made by Government in Compensations have been amply redeemed :—this is one of the taxes which serve to impede the full operation of the Warehousing System.

The Author states truly, that, when application was made to Parliament for the Establishment of the London Dock, the promoters did not, for the accomplishment of their original object, desire any exclusive privileges ; but that object was extended, and the exclusive privileges were annexed in consequence. Even if it were true that it was the wish of the Directors of the London Dock to surrender their exclusive privileges to Government, on condition that all the Docks should be put upon the same footing, it may have been a question

whether (as there was a large quantity of the Company's Stock held upon trust, and to which, therefore, no legal consent could be obtained) even a General Meeting of the Proprietors was competent to give sanction to the measure.* But be this as it may, in what manner the wish of the London Dock Directors to relinquish their privileges (under the circumstances stated) imposes upon them the necessity of supporting the establishment of a New Dock, which cannot but materially injure their Proprietors, it is difficult to divine. The London Dock Proprietors do not seek for perpetual Monopoly, as the Author asserts; neither can they comprehend his prophecy, that a rival Establishment will materially benefit them. The Directors, therefore, would be wanting in a duty, which they owe to their Proprietors, if they did not use their utmost efforts to oppose the projected Dock; but notwithstanding the London Dock may appear to be the only parties who have regularly entered the lists, it is

* REPORT OF JUNE 3, 1823 :—“ Your Committee have considered how far it might be expedient, either to continue the exclusive principle to the West India Docks, to the period of the expiration of that of the London Dock Company, unless that Company should be disposed to relinquish, during the remainder of their term, the exclusive privilege now possessed by them. *Your Committee have found that such relinquishment is not practicable, either on their part, or on that of any other Company similarly circumstanced.*”

not therefrom to be taken for granted, that other Companies will not come forward to lay before the Legislature the extent of the injuries they are likely to suffer, and to claim the protection which their several circumstances entitle them to. The situation of the Sufferance Wharfs, particularly on the south side of the water, is truly lamentable, and were it not for the quantity of Corn in store, they would be, for the most part, empty : should the St. Katharine Dock be constructed, that species of property must be utterly ruined, notwithstanding the assertion made by the Author, that the New Dock will not, in any manner, interfere with their interests.

At the time when British Cruisers scoured the seas, and brought their prizes to London ; when many foreign Colonies were in our hands ; when the whole of the Trade from the Brazils, as well as South America, came to this Country ; when almost the whole of the Trade of Europe centred here ; when the Berlin and Milan Decrees closed the Continental Ports against us ; when immense Importations of Corn were brought into London, all in addition to the regular Trade of the Port ; even then, sufficient room was found to meet such extraordinary circumstances. Shall it be expected that the slow operation of the Warehousing System will instantly call for such great increase of accommodation ?—This is more to be wished than expected, so far as experience has yet enables us

to judge; the Author, has, therefore, completely failed in establishing his position, that more Docks are necessary for the accommodation of Trade, or for the purpose of competition.

Without calling in question the intentions of the very many respectable persons who patronize the projected Dock at St. Katharine's, it may be feared that they are not aware of the injuries they will inflict upon a great number of people, and there is hardly a possibility of their receiving any benefit themselves. So far from the Stock not being an object of speculation, it is reported to have been sold at various prices, until, at last, it does not find purchasers at par.

The recorded testimony of eighteen hundred mercantile establishments in favour of the New Dock might be considered to be of some importance, if many of the signatures had not been obtained, by the most intrusive importunities, at the doors of Public Meetings, not omitting that of the Chamber of Commerce, whose fate the St. Katharine's Dock Scheme will, it is hoped, follow; opinions, however, directly opposite have been recorded by numbers possessing property and respectability, such as any cause might be proud to have as supporters.

How the money has been expended upon the London Dock is more a question for the Proprietors than the Author of the Plain Statement of Facts, and may be safely left in their hands until his interference is asked for. And the Ship-



Owners of this Country are a class of men of so much intelligence that they will not require his instructions as to what will best promote their interests.

The Revenue has been completely secured by the Docks, and ample testimony may be produced that every assistance possible has been given to the King's Officers, without regard to expense, when necessary for the purpose. A new Dock must bring a very considerable increased charge upon its collection, without adding any thing to the Revenue.

After the exposure of so many fallacies what reliance can the Public place in the assurances which are held forth, of the great advantages they are to derive from the Establishment of St Katharine Dock?

Under all the circumstances, it may be unequivocally asserted that the Pamphlet in question is very erroneously entitled "Plain Statement of Facts."

THE END.

MERCHANT, PRINTER, INGRAM-COURT, FENCHURCH-STREET.