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T H R E E
NATIONAL GRIEVANCES,

The Increase of Taxes :

The Hardship of unequal Taxation :

And the continual Rise of the Poor's Rates :

WITH THE

CAUSES and REMEDIES

O F T H E S E E V I L S,

HUMBLY SUBMITTED TO THE

CONSIDERATION of the LEGISLATURE :

I N A

L E T T E R

T O

The Rt. Hon. Lord JOHN CAVENDISH,

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, &c.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1783.

1912. 4. 23

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T H R E E

NATIONAL GRIEVANCES.

I N A

L E T T E R

T O

The Rt. Hon. Lord JOHN CAVENDISH.

MY LORD,

OBSERVATIONS inseparably connected with the *prosperity* of the State, deserve the attention of all who wish well to their country; especially of such as can both remedy the evils we feel, and prevent those we fear.

Our national *prosperity* depends on our *wealth*: but if, on the one hand, the public Revenue continually *sinks* by the increase of smuggling; while, on the other hand, the poor's rates continually *rise* by the increase of the wretched objects, for whom we are obliged to tax ourselves; it is evident, that we make continual advances towards the end of our national wealth and prosperity.

To state these evils and their *consequences*, to trace their *causes*, and to propose a *remedy*, is the subject of this Letter, which is inscribed to you, My Lord, because the inspection of the revenue is more particularly your Lordship's province; and because the proofs you have given the Public, that your Country's welfare lies near your heart, make me think, that *you* will not disdain to weigh the hints here suggested to every Member of Parliament.

FIRST GRIEVANCE.

The Increase of Taxes, resulting from the Decrease of the Revenue, through the amazing Progress of Smuggling.

Government *must* be supported, and when one branch of the revenue fails, another *must* be grafted in. Had not the public revenue fallen greatly short of expectation, the Parliament, at the end of the war, when we expected a diminution of our burdens, would not have been under the disagreeable necessity of laying unpopular taxes upon baptisms, receipts, burials, &c. &c.

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Such and the like taxes, which apprehend us as soon as we are born, follow and press us, in various shapes, as long as we live, and do not let go their hold of us, even when we are dead, will probably be multiplied; and (if the legislature does not interpose) our burdens will increase more and more without prospect of relief; for *the public revenue is not only on the decline, but on the verge of ruin*: This is a FACT, known to most people in the commercial line.

Yes, my Lord, the complexion of the times, the degeneracy of the morals of the people, the luxury, necessities and bribery, of the lower class of the revenue-officers, threaten the *destruction* of the great branches of the national income. To prove this assertion, I need only lay the following informations before your Lordship.

That amazing quantities of foreign Brandy, Rum, Gin, Tobacco, Snuff, Tea, Wines of all sorts, and a variety of other articles, are *fraudulently* imported into Great Britain, is a truth no one can deny; because the *low* price of these articles on the sea-coast, *proves* with what facility they are landed free of duty. And indeed, what difficulty attending this operation cannot be easily surmounted, when there is a well-understood

derstood convention between the parties interested?

The common price of proof Spanish Brandy, in the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and all around the sea-coast is 4s 3d, and that of over-proof French Brandy, is from 6s to 7s the gallon, delivered into the purchaser's cellars. The price of Holland Gin is from 3s 6d to 4s. The price of good Jamaica Rum over-proof is from 4s to 5s. Port Wines are delivered into the purchaser's cellars for 26l or 31l the pipe, and all other Wines in proportion. Now at this rate, they are purchased for *half* the price, which they cost the conscientious merchant, as will appear by the following account of what they are laid in at, by the regular importer.

The prime cost of a cargo of the best Coniac-French *Brandy*, delivered in the river (every thing included) will amount to nearly 3s 2d a gallon, and the duties of landing will amount to 9s 6d more, which together is 12s 6d. Hence it is evident, that the smuggler, who sells the same quantity for 6s, actually undersells the regular importer above ten shillings in the pound: therefore, unless smuggling be stopt, the revenue on this article must be lost, and the honest importer ruin'd.

The same observation holds with regard
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to *Rum*. The current price of the best on the keys, is now about 11s a gallon; this article, of the same quality, is sold by the smuggler at 5s 6d.

Holland Gin costs the regular importer on the keys (duty paid) nearly 12s 6d the gallon, and the smuggler sells the same quantity at 4s.

Port Wines, and all other Wines new, will cost the regular importer 46l the pipe: the smuggler sells the same at 26 to 34l delivered into the purchaser's cellars.

As to *Tea, Tobacco, Snuff, &c.* were I to state what they cost the regular importer, I should prove, that smugglers can sell them at *half* the price which he can afford to take. Therefore, on all these articles also, the revenue must be lost, the regular importer ruined, and the smuggler encouraged to persist in his trade, by the prospect of immense gain; for, while the profits of regular importers are trifling, his own are enormous; since the Spanish Brandy, which he sells at 4s 6d, costs him only about 1s 8d a gallon: and the best Brandy, which he sells at 6s 6d or 7s (to such as buy 500 or 1000 gallons) costs him but 3s 6d. Spanish Wines, which he sells at 26l, cost him but 10l. The mixed Ports cost him but 13 or 14l the pipe. The Claret he sells at 20s to 30s per dozen, or

29l a hoghead, costs him but 10l per hoghead: and the mixed black Teas he sells at 3s 6d, cost him but half the money, as one half of them is dried leaves called *Smouch* by the smuggler.

The Spanilh Wines, which the smuggler mixes with the Ports, are new: these Wines being put into barns, and frequently remaining on the sea shore all night, must turn acid; and as these Gentlemen are strangers to qualms of conscience, I should not be surpris'd if they took the late Jones's method to restore those pricked Wines, and attempted to sheathe their acidity with the litharge of lead; an experiment, which has proved so destructive to numbers; witness the recent affair at Salt-hill.

Peace being now restored, many, who were employed as Pirates, go, some to France, others to Guernsey, for the purpose of cutting Tobacco, to make it into Snuff, which is all to be smuggled into England. A great number of these adventurers, in the late war, were, one day, the crew of a smuggling Cutter; and the next day, when their cargo was landed, in the offing they shewed French colours, or the thirteen stripes. Three thousand, or more, of these resided in the French ports, from Dieppe to Ostend, and by this stratagem took an incredible number of coasting

coasting or other vessels, both in the North seas and in the Channel. I should take up too much of your Lordship's time, if I related all the tricks of the smuggler. I will only mention two more:

The Cutters employed to prevent smuggling have sometimes seized a cargo, which has been sold by auction at the custom-house; and this very cargo has too often been the means of smuggling double the quantity. An opulent smuggler (for some of them have got from 20 to 100 thousand pounds in this business) by his agent purchases at the auction this condemned cargo of Brandy, which he ships, say for London; getting a Permit from the custom-house for the quantity sold to himself or his agent. The night he sails, other Cutters attend him to take the Brandy, which is relanded, and sold on the coast for a loss, say of 2s a gallon. The smuggler, with his Permit and custom-house cocket, proceeds in his empty Cutter to Guernsey, where a cargo of strong Brandy is immediately shipped, with which he stretches over to England. If he should be examined on the coast, he has a custom-house Permit, and a cocket, and is bound for London: having landed his cargo, he sails again for Guernsey, takes in a second cargo (the same quantity, or perhaps double) with which he goes to London, and there sells

it for its full price, as a Permit accompanies it.

The other fraud is not less common. A person imports, say 100 pipes of Wine, at any one port, suppose London: he takes out a cocket at the custom-house for 50, to go to any one port to the west of London. These Wines he never ships; or, if he does, he re-lands them again, goes to Guernsey, takes in 50 pipes which have not paid duty, proceeds to the out-port, and lands them there, as Wines which have paid duty, agreeable to his cocket.

These, and many other ways of evading the laws, are big with mischief: they greatly lessen the revenue on Wines, and by ruining *fair* traders and conscientious merchants, injure society, of which honest men are the most useful members.

But, great as these evils are, they only make way for one of a far greater magnitude, namely the loss of many thousand subjects, who might have been useful to their king and country; but, being now nursed up in, and trained to, the most desperate enterprises, are ready prepared for riot, murder, and rebellion.

There are now in the kingdom, or in places depending thereon, many thousands of lawless men, who secretly or openly prey on the revenue; cursing the Minister for the time being; perpetually forming or executing
schemes

schemes to defraud the government, and reduce us to beggary. This they have done so long, that they now persuade themselves, it is no crime to cheat the king and his officers. The duties are so high (say they) that the government knows they cannot be payed, and therefore it winks at our evading the laws. And even people, who pay yet some regard to honesty, are so carried away by the tide of this fraudulent practice, as to plead for its harmlessness; not seeing that, by countenancing this evil, they strengthen the hands of the felons, who arrogate to themselves the right of customs, which is the Sovereign's Prerogative; they rob the government, cheat the community, and help greedy, lawless men, to pick their honest neighbour's pocket of the money, with which we pay the *additional* taxes, defrauded government is obliged to lay upon us.

In the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and all round the sea-coast, too many people are thus employed. There was a time, indeed, when a person of character abhorred the name of a SMUGGLER; but now the men of capital, employ a desperado, who does all the business, while they reap the profit: if this wretch is discovered, they pay his fine, enable him to begin afresh, or perhaps send him to carry on the same business in Flanders,

France, or Guernſey; and another takes his place in England. There are few branches of the revenue, which do not now, or will not ſoon ſuffer by the rapacity of theſe men. But it is not to be conceived what our trade has ſuffer'd by their *treachery*. Always oppoſed to all Government, from corrupt principles and ſelf-intereſt, many of them were the ſpies of France in the late war, and actually proved the worſt enemies of their country.

Another bad conſequence of ſmuggling, is the loſs of many thouſand failors. There is good reaſon to think, that our Engliſh *Moon-light Merchants* (as ſmugglers call themſelves) purchaſe half the low Teas imported by all the foreign Eaſt-India companies in Europe. What a number of foreign failors are here employed by us, and maintained at our expence, to rival us at diſtant markets in time of peace, or to man the ſhips of our enemies in time of war! If this ſmuggling were ſtopped, the Eaſt-India company could ſend out a great many more ſhips, manned with ſome thouſands of failors, both to export our manufactures, and to import thoſe articles, which, by means of our ſmugglers, we have now from the foreign Eaſt-India companies. And what an addition
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would this be to our naval strength, and to our inland trade?

Our enriching those foreign companies, together with the high duties we lay on foreign Spirits, Wine, Teas, Tobacco, Snuff, &c. &c. raise the astonishment of the people who reside on the French, Flemish, Dutch, and German coasts, and are spectators of the quantities smuggled into England. It can hardly be conceived what numbers of failors, artificers, manufacturers, and others, in consequence of this illicit commerce, are constantly employed from the port of L'Orient, in France, to Dunkirk, and from thence to Hamburgh. This contraband trade to England, is the only commerce of many towns on the coast, where multitudes of stills are continually at work, distilling grain, and making Gin, for the sole purpose of smuggling it to England, to the great prejudice of the landed interest: and what a loss is this to the nation at large?

The gradual decline of our fisheries is one of the evils, which flow from smuggling. This unlawful trade employs so many hands, that fishing is greatly neglected. To be convinced of it, we need only take a view of the coast of England, and see how few people are employed in fishing; particularly on the south-coast, known to abound in fish, which
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in time of peace the French pick up, and frequently sell to us. What numbers of sailors would be nursed up in this useful occupation, if the destructive trade I complain of were once properly checked. Instead of carrying millions of our coin to France, * to Flanders, &c. &c. we could supply our neighbours with the produce of our bays and coasts, and we should see a hardy race of useful members of society, nursed up for our navy, content with their old and more wholesome beverage, Beer, or Cyder, and not tempted to put an early period to their days by an immoderate use of cheap Spirits. And in the mean time, what numbers of children would be employed in spinning, and making nets for those flourishing, but now neglected fisheries?

Instead of seeing a number of fishing boats about our coasts, how grievous is it to see, in a civilized country, troops of Banditti from 100 to 200, horse and foot, patrolling the coast, ready to encounter the king's officers and forces, watching the arrival of a Cutter in the offing, and landing its cargo, which they carry off by force of arms without the least molestation?

We have seen the English sailors smuggling under the flag of Prussia, and that of the
Emperor,

* English Guineas pass at Paris, and in all the smuggling ports, at three per cent. profit.

Emperor, and filling the smugglers stores all along the coast. The thirteen stripes will soon fly about this island; and under their shade the same lawless crews will bring us, from the French islands, great quantities of Tobacco, Snuff, and all kind of West-India produce, free of duty. And if this flag mocks us by bringing into our ports some cargoes of Tobacco, they will soon be exported again to Ostend, Guernsey, or France, to be smuggled back into this country; and thus the evil will grow from bad to worse: but it is not without remedy.

It was once my opinion, that smuggling might be prevented by the combined services of the army and navy; but as most of the inferior custom-house officers on the coast, with 50*l* a year, live in splendor, and as the evil is deeply rooted, I am *now* convinced, that the *only* way to check it, is to take off the duties, to lessen the number of officers, in both custom and excise, and to advance the salaries of those who are retained. If I should be able to prove that, by lessening the duties, the revenue will be increased, and smuggling suppressed, I should think there can be no objection to the adopting of the plan proposed.

To begin with foreign Gin; if your Lordship will inquire what quantity pays duty in
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Great Britain, you will find it very trifling: the quantity smuggled exceeds 35500 hogf-heads: if we put together that which pays duty, and that which is smuggled, we shall find that a duty of 8d per gallon, would raise more money to government than the present high duty of 9s 6d per gallon. I would therefore propose a duty of 4s per gallon on this article, which would raise ten times more money than it now brings into the exchequer.

The quantity of French and Spanish Brandy now smuggled, being to that which pays duty as twenty to one; there is no doubt, but a duty of 4s per gallon would greatly increase the duties on this article. And if Rum were fixed at 2s or 3s, and British Spirits at 1s 6d, Wines, Teas, Snuff, and Tobacco, in proportion, the revenue would be raised, and an effectual stop put to smuggling; provided this method were backed by some penal law, and the delinquent were punished for the first offence, either with banishment, or with transportation to Africa. Add to this, that Brandy, Rum, &c. *fairly* imported, when only subject to these moderate duties, will generally be better than that which is smuggled. But these liquors, though cheaper than at present, will still be dear enough to keep the poor from an immoderate use of them.

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And here, my Lord, I beg leave to observe, that no blame is to be laid to the Ministers, who proposed an *increase* of those duties; because the consequence could not then be foreseen. Lord Chatham himself was led into this error; but being made sensible of the rapid progress of smuggling, he began to think, that it could not be suppressed any other way than by lowering the duties. Statesmen, as well as others, must sometimes be taught by *experience*: but let it teach us at last.

And indeed it is high time it should; for our present policy is the sport of our neighbours. Enormous duties are laid on various articles: but to what purpose, when not one tenth part of the sums imposed is collected; and when nine parts are shared among Banditti on our coasts, or scattered on the continental coast to enrich our enemies or our rivals? Some small part of the whole is indeed, by seizure, recovered for Government; but to suppose that *smuggling* is to be winked at, because smuggled goods, when seized, belong to the king, is as capital an error as to assert, that *rebellion* is to be tolerated, because, upon conviction, the estates of *traitors* are forfeited to the crown.

Again: we prevent the French from receiving numbers of our articles, because the Wines, and other articles, the growth of

France, are in a manner prohibited by the high duty laid upon them: That on Claret, for example, is full 30l per hoghead: now if we were to take a survey of all the Claret that pays duty, and all that is smuggled, we should find that all the Claret landed in England does not pay a duty of 20s per hoghead: therefore if there were a duty on Claret, equal to that on Port, this would at once increase the revenue, suppress the smuggling of this article, and engage the French to admit into their ports many of the articles manufactured in this island.

With regard to distillers, most of these gentlemen are so candid as to acknowledge, that more would be collected and paid to the revenue, if the half of the duty were taken off, and if a proper method of collecting this duty were found out. And here, my Lord, permit me to remind your Lordship, that, if the plan of stocking compound Spirits, and obliging all distillers to keep their stocks in casks of a given size and of a given strength, be rejected, something must be done; for it is well known, that one eighth of the duties laid on that article is not now collected, and never can be, when a distiller can well afford to bribe the officers who survey him, by presents to the amount of several thousand pounds a year. I therefore beg leave to
submit

submit the following plan to your Lordship's consideration.

To prevent the revenue from being defrauded by distillers; let an exact gauge be given of the contents of every still, which shall be entered for one month; and, allowing the still to be worked night and day for a month (Sundays excepted) let the quantity of Spirits, which can be drawn in it, be ascertained, and the duty of such Spirits paid when it is entered for the month. At the end of the month the proprietor shall make oath, that he has not worked, or any person for his account, but the hours and time limited by law; that he has not worked, or drawn, or made Spirits at any other still, either himself or his agents; and that he has not purchased, or any person for his account, any British or Foreign Spirits, but such as have paid duty, as drawn at the stills entered,—which are to be set forth in this oath.

To conclude: if duties were thus lowered, and Great Britain made a free port, as the Irish Volunteers aim at making their island; if all nations were allowed to land certain articles, brought in English bottoms, duty free, to be bonded in the king's stores for a limited time; if those stores were kept by reputable custom-house officers, who can give to Government good security for their faithfulness:

fulness; and if the purchaser was to pay the duty on those articles, as he wanted them; the very temptation to smuggling would be removed; because the slender profit would not be worth the smuggler's notice: And an end would infallibly be put to his pernicious traffick, if his accomplice or abetter, the purchaser of goods known not to have paid duty, were also banished or transported to Africa for the first offence; especially if the bribed officer was to suffer the same punishment, or a greater, as being guilty of perjury and breach of trust.

By these means the smuggler, happily prevented from following his nefarious commerce, would be encouraged to carry on some branch of the coasting or foreign trade; and becoming an honest trader, or an useful master of a vessel, would prove a blessing to society, instead of preying upon its vitals, as he does at present. Permit me to observe, my Lord, that if something is not done this Session; before another year revolves, the revenue on the above-mentioned articles, will be lessened to half what it is at this time.

SECOND

SECOND GRIEVANCE,

The Hardship of unequal Taxation.

Next to the loss of the nation at large, the injury done to every honest man by smuggling, deserves the Legillator's attention. From what has been observed under the preceding head, your Lordship can easily see, that the conscientious citizens, who purchase of the fair trader all the articles which they consume, pay to Government far greater taxes than those lawless people, who, for cheapness sake, buy and consume articles, which never paid duty.

Surely, amidst the clamours which are raised about an equal representation, *these* injured subjects have a right to call on their Representatives to redress this Grievance, and to see *first*, that we are *equally* taxed. I will suppose that a gentleman, who spends 1000l a year, consumes annually four hog-heads of Wine on an average (some consume more, others less) and about 30 gallons of foreign Spirits, with a proportionable quantity of Tea, China, Raisins, Sugar, &c. &c.

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(for this also is now smuggled) if he purchases all these articles of the fair trader, he pays yearly to Government a tax of upwards of 70l more than his neighbour, who purchases them of the fraudulent importer.

This difference between the taxes paid by individuals, extends even to tracts of land; for the inland counties, which are more out of the smuggler's reach, contribute far more to the support of Government than the maritime counties; although these stand far more in need of protection, as being much more exposed to the depredations of hostile invaders. However therefore we may be *unequally represented*, which is comparatively of little consequence; it is a certain fact that, *eventually*, we are *unequally taxed*. This is a *real Grievance*, which calls aloud for redress; and it will be redrest, when, by the means above-suggested to your Lordship, smuggling shall be every where suppressed.

THIRD GRIEVANCE.

The continual Increase of the Poor's Rates, occasioned by the corrupted Morals of the lower classes of the People, which are seduced into idleness, and neglect of their families, in the public houses to be met with at every turn.

To smuggling we may impute, in many places, the debauchery and ruin of the farmer, the labourer, and the manufacturer: for, by smuggling, the desperado gets as much in one night, as he could get in a week at his farm, his manual art, or his daily labour; and therefore, he lies under the strongest temptation to leave all for this profitable business.

Such people must have their lurking places to enjoy themselves, and wait for opportunities of carrying their designs into execution: hence the great number of ale-houses, those nurseries of idleness, where the peasant is seduced into excess and vice of every description; and where the unwary youth, near great towns, is ruined and brought to the gallows.

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In some districts there are multitudes of private Retailers of *smuggled* Spirits, who, by inticing their neighbours into drunkenness, entail ruin on them and their families: and in some Parishes the number of these lawless Retailers far exceeds that of the Publicans. What an incentive is this to riot and excess!

But, to speak only of *licensed* public houses: What multitudes of *these* are found all over England? In some places almost every fifth house is one of those nurseries of vice. And how dear does the *Public* pay in the end, for such a needless number of houses of *public* entertainment! This number far exceeds that, which is allowed, even in those countries, where drunkenness prevails to a proverb. I cannot describe all the evils resulting from this part of our policy; but some I will touch upon, because a person of your Lordship's rank has seldom opportunity to see what passes in the lower sphere, where ale-houses more immediately shed their baneful influence.

If an apprentice is inticed away from his master, a sailor or a soldier from his captain, a journeyman from the artist, or a labourer from the farmer, who employs him;—if servants or workmen are kept from their business, and seduced into robbery; a public
house

house has probably been the soil, where their idleness is grown into disobedience and profligacy.

If a carriage is carelessly overset by a driver, or if an idle traveller comes to an untimely end, the principal cause of his misfortune, was probably the temptations laid for him by those men, who stood ready at every turn of the way to get his money, and to give him the intoxicating, deadly draught.

If thousands of the lower class of the people are kept from public worship, or are so befuddled, that they reap no benefit from their attendance there; they have probably met in pot-houses with the draughts which, without the help of Circe's wand, have turned them into brutes.

If vagrants, under the name of Empyrics, or Show-men, are entertained to cheat the poor of their money; or if inhuman sports, such as Bull-baitings and Cock-fightings, are set on foot by idle men; it is probable that a Publican is the principal, and that his motive is to bring together the rabble of the town or country, that their idleness and drunkenness may pay tribute to his greediness and avarice. And indeed what better can be expected from many of these men, who, being too idle to work themselves, think they have a right to

pick up a maintenance by ministering to the idleness or cruelty of their neighbours.

In short, if quarrelling and fighting, if causing wrecks and plundering the shipwreck'd, if robbery, smuggling, or any other lawless practices, are *peculiarly* encouraged, or countenanced by any set of men, it is by the petty keepers of these nurseries of vice, where husbands are enticed and kept from their wives, fathers from their starving children, and sons from their aged and helpless parents.

To conclude: When carpenters, masons, &c. &c. keep public houses, the men they employ spend there half their wages, beggar their wives, starve their children, and, while they run in the baker's debt, drink away their money before it is earned. It is astonishing that this evil has not yet alarmed the country Gentlemen. I will be bold to say, that these public houses cause the death of hundreds of child-bearing women, neglected by their husbands, and of thousands of children, who, being deserted by their parents, perish through neglect and want: or, if they weather out the storms of their wretched infancy, their childhood is totally neglected, and they are brought up in savage ignorance; a greedy Publican running away
with

with what should have been spent upon their education.

It has indeed been alledged, in support of the *multitude* of ale-houses, which corrupts and starves our poor, that so many public houses are of great service to the Nation, because they bring money into the treasury: but is this a solid argument?

If the hours, the days, the nights, idly spent in ale-houses by thousands of the labouring part of the nation, are reckoned with the loss of time occasioned by parents going from ale-house to ale-house after their prodigal sons, and wives after their tippling husbands; if to this we add the loss of time, which is consequent upon the intoxication of those wretches, who, after a fit of drunkenness, cannot settle again to their work for a day or a week; and, in the end, contract diseases, which disable them from working at all; and if the price of the work, which might have been done in *all* that lost time is computed; what an enormous sum will the whole amount to? All this sum, my Lord, is a loss really sustained by the nation, in consequence of that habit for idleness and tippling, which is produced and kept up among the lower class of the people, in all the countries where so many tippling-houses are unhappily licensed. And therefore to allow

such a *superfluous* number of them, for the sake of the income arising from the licenses granted to those who keep them, is as contrary to the *true* interest of the nation, as it is contrary to wisdom, to throw away a Million, in order to get the twentieth part of that sum.

And what can be said of this branch of our policy, considered in a *moral* point of view? Is it not as irreconcilable to *Morality*, as the complaisance, with which houses of ill-fame are patronised in some countries, for the sake of the filthy income arising from those nurseries of shameful diseases?

If the nation were only injured by the *exorbitant* number of ale-houses *with-holding* from society the help of ten thousand hands; this loss, great as it is, might be borne with: but it is only the beginning of the mischief: for, what in consequence of idleness nursed, money squandered, vice countenanced, disorders contracted, &c. and what through the dissolution of the ties of nature, which bids parents provide for their helpless offspring, and commands children to supply the wants of their aged parents; thousands of individuals, and of families, reduced to want, become burdensome to their respective parishes.

Hence the continual rise of the poor's rates,

rates, which are already double what they otherwise would be, and in some parishes run higher than the national taxes. This is a heavy and increasing burden, which (to the grief and oppression of thousands) the landed interest is obliged to bear. In a word, my Lord, in these haunts of sloth and wickedness, the egg is laid, and the cockatrice hatched : for there breaks out the evil which stocks our jails and gallows, and carries desolation and ruin among the poor, while it heaps up burdens upon people of all ranks through the whole kingdom.

If these paltry public-houses are the bane of the nation, let the legislative power interpose in England, as it has done in Holland : let two thirds of these nuisances be suppressed ; and, by raising the licenses of the others so as to indemnify the revenue, let the law put it out of the power of the *idle poor*, to set up these petty schools of idleness and vice : then people of character will no longer be afraid to become Publicans. For the great number of public houses so divides the profit, which might honestly be made by a few, that in many places no reputable person will enter upon that business ; being conscious that it is *now* almost impossible to live by it, without encouraging drunkenness, and breaking through the good order prescribed by law.

And

And that a constant watch may be kept over all the public houses which shall be licensed, let the officers of every parish be bound (under sufficient penalties) to see that the laws already made to keep good order in ale-houses, be put in force in their respective parishes.

Having thus laid before your Lordship some observations, which your high station does not permit you to make, I leave it, my Lord, to your candour, and to the wisdom of our other Legislators, to decide if the circumstances stated in this Letter, are capital enough to deserve attention and redress. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

most obedient

and humble Servant,

PHILANTHROPIST.

P O S T S C R I P T.

Since this Letter was written, I have seen a Pamphlet intituled, *Observations, Remarks, and Means to prevent Smuggling*. The Author of it sees this evil in the very point of light, in which I have set it before your Lordship. He asserts, that, from the best accounts, sixty thousand of the ablest young men in the kingdom, and a hundred thousand horses are employed in smuggling: whilst a hundred thousand women and children, make it their business to retail and hawk about the country, the articles which the men have smuggled. He reckons, that if the 160 thousand people, who now carry on this trade, were employed in fishing, agriculture, spinning, &c. their labour would amount annually to two millions four hundred and sixty four thousand pounds; a great sum this, which being added to the sum of one million eight hundred and twenty thousand pounds, (which he reckons to be the charge of keeping yearly the hundred thousand horses used by smugglers) and to the millions, which would flow into the treasury, if the customs were not defrauded; is an enormous sum, well worth being saved by a nation crushed under the burden of its debt, and still borrowing,

ing, while it still lays *new* taxes upon the people.—He thinks, that, through the increase of smuggling, the revenue will lose this year full three millions, which renders the taxes very unequal, and more burdensome to the inland parts of the kingdom.—He laments, as I do, the loss of our fisheries; observes that the Dutch, at one season, have caught fish on our coast, to the amount of a million sterling; and reminds his readers, that fishing and smuggling will never flourish together.—He asserts, that in Scotland, there are upwards of ten thousand private stills, which make immense quantities of Spirits; that these Spirits are sent to London under the covering of some others, which have paid the duties; and that, by this practice, the revenue has been defrauded of 100,000l this year.—And (after thirty years observation) he agrees with me in proposing methods to cure the evils I have stated; recommending the *suppression of smuggling*, to prevent the increase of taxes; *the lowering of the duties*, to suppress smuggling; and *raising the licenses of Publicans*, to lessen the number of public houses.

May I trespass yet a moment upon your Lordship's patience, to make a request, which Humanity and Patriotism jointly dictate? The worse than Turkish and heathenish custom

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tom of fighting Duels, prevailing more and more, the Bishop of London (it is said) has formed a plan to hinder the king's subjects from thus murdering one another in cool blood. Should his Lordship attempt a work so worthy of a good man and of a christian Prelate, may I not hope, my Lord, that you will second his patriotic endeavours? Being lately in a country, where two Englishmen, by firing again and again, at last killed each other, and where no mark of infamy was fixed upon their crime, I was struck with the Legislator's neglect, who, by not providing laws effectually to *prevent*, or *punish* this bloody work, indirectly permit or tacitly allow it: and I wished myself at the ear of every Member of the Legislature to whisper some lines of the description, which Voltaire, in his *Henriad*, makes of the regions of woe. *There* (says he, speaking of Rulers) *God punishes them, not only for the crimes they have personally committed, but also for those which they have permitted, or have not properly punished.*

Dieu punit les Forfaits, que leurs Mains ont commis;
Ceux qu'ils n'ont point vengés, et ceux qu'ils ont permis.

If so loose a Moralist, so wretched a Casuist as that Poet, has borne such a testimony to the duties incumbent upon those who are intrusted

trusted with the Legislative power, I hope, my Lord, that (so far as it lies in your Lordship's power) you will clear the British Legislature from the suspicion of winking at a barbarous practice, which is both a scandal to a christian country, and a disgrace to human nature.



Daniel Parker Esq, Bay

John Bunting Temple





