

Space for Notes



Thomas Mun,
***Englands Treasure by Forraign Trade. or The Ballance of our
Forraign Trade is The Rule of our Treasure***

Written by Thomas Mun of Lond. Merchant, and now published for the
Common good by his son John Mun of Bearsted in the County of Kent,
Esquire.

London,

Printed by J.G. for Thomas Clark, and are to be sold at his Shop at the South
entrance of the Royal Exchange, 1664

To the Right Honourable, Thomas Earl of South-Hampton,

Lord High Treasurer of England, Lord Warden of the New Forrest, Knight of
the most Noble Order of the Garter, and one of his Majesty's most Honourable
Privy Council.

My Lord,

I Present this ensuing Treatise to your Lordship as its proper Patron, to whom,
by vertue of your great Trust (the greatest, doubtless, in this Kingdome) the
management of his Majesty's Treasure, and improvement of his Revenue, are
most peculiarly committed.

The title of it (*Englands Treasure by Forraign Trade*) alone bespeaks your
notice, the Argument, (being of so publick a nature) may invite your perusall
but the Tract it self will, I hope, deserve your Lordships Protecton. It was left
me in the nature of a Legacy by my Father, for whose sake I cannot but value it
as one of my best Moveables, and as such I dedicate it to your Lordship.

He was in his time famous amongst Merchants, and well known to most
men of business, for his general Experience in Affairs, and notable Insight into
Trade; neither was he less observed for his Integrity to his Prince, and Zeal to
the Common-wealth: the serious Discourses of such men are commonly not
unprofitable. To your Lordships judgement I submit this Treatise, and my
presumption herein to your Pardon.

My Lord,

Your most faithful and obedient Servant,

John Mun

**England's Treasure By Forraign Trade or The Ballance of
our Forraign Trade is the Rule of our Treasure.**

My Son, In a former Discourse I have endeavoured after my manner briefly to
teach thee two things: The first is Piety, how to fear God aright, according to
his Works and Word: The second is Policy, how to love and serve thy Country,
by instructing thee in the duties and proceedings of sundry Vocations, which
either order, or else act the affairs of the Common-wealth; In which as some
things doe especially lend to Preserve, and others are more apt to Enlarge the
same: So am I now to speak of Money, which doth indifferently serve to both
those happy ends. Wherein I will observe this order, First, to shew the general
means whereby a Kingdome may be enriched; and then to proceed to those
particular courses by which Princes are accustomed to be supplied with
Treasure. But first of all I will say something of the Merchant, because he must

be a Principal Agent in this great business.

Chapter 1

The Qualities which are required in a perfect Merchant of Forraign Trade.

The love and service of our Country consisteth not so much in the knowledge of those duties which are to be performed by others, as in the skilful practice of that which is done our selves; and therefore (my Son) it is now fit that I say something of the Merchant, which I hope in due time shall be thy Vocation: Yet herein are my thoughts free from all Ambition, although I rank thee in a place of so high esteem; for the Merchant is worthily called The Steward of the Kingdoms Stock, by way of Commerce with other Nations; a work of no less Reputation than Trust, which ought to be performed with great skill and conscience, that so the private gain may ever accompany the publique good. And because the nobleness of this profession may the better stir up thy desires and endeavours to obtain those abilities which may effect it worthily, I well briefly set down the excellent qualities which are required in a perfect Merchant.

1. He ought to be a good Penman, a good Arithmetician, and a good Accomptant, by that noble order of Debtor and Creditor, which is used onely amongst Merchants; also to be expert in the order and form of Charter-parties. Bills of Lading, Invoyses, Contracts, Bills of Exchange, and policies of Ensurance.
2. He ought to know the Measures, Weights. and Monies of all forraign Countries, especially where we have Trade, & the Monies not onely by their several denominations, but also by their intrinsique values in weight & fineness, compared with the Standard of this Kingdome, without which he cannot well direct his affaires.
3. He ought to know the Customs, Tolls, Taxes, Impositions, Conducts and other charges upon all matters of Merchandize exported or imported to and from the said Forraign Countries.
4. He ought to know in what several commodities each Country abounds, and what be the wares which they want, and how and from whence they are furnished with the same.
5. He ought to understand, and to be a diligent observer of the rates of Exchanges by Bills, from one State to another, whereby he may the better direct his affaires, and remit over and receive home his Monies to the most advantage possible.
6. He ought to know what goods are prohibited to be exported or imported in the said forraign Countreys, lest otherwise he should incur great danger and loss in the ordering of his affaires.
7. He ought to know upon what rates and conditions to freight his Ships, and ensure his adventures from one Countrey to another, and to be well acquainted with the laws, orders and customes of the Ensurance office both here and beyond the Seas, in the many accidents which may happen upon the damage or loss of Ships or goods, or both these.
8. He ought to have knowledge in the goodness and in the prices of all the several materials which are required for the building and repairing of Ships, and the divers workmanships of the same, as also for the Masts, Tackling, Cordage, Ordnance, Victuals, Munition and Provisions of many kinds; together with the ordinary wages of Commanders, Officers and Mariners, all which concern the Merchant as he is an Owner of Ships.

9. He ought (by the divers occasions which happen sometime in the buying and selling of one commodity and sometimes in another) to have indifferent if not perfect knowledge in all manner of Merchandize or wares, which is to be as it were a man of all occupations and trades.

10. He ought by his voyaging on the Seas to become skilful in the Art of Navigation.

11. He ought as he is a Traveller, and sometimes abiding in forraign Countreys to attain to the speaking of divers Languages, and to be a diligent observer of the ordinary Revenues and expences of forraign Princes, together with their strength both by Sea and Land, their laws, customes, policies, manners, religions, arts, and the like; to be able to give account thereof in all occasions for the good of his Countrey.

12. Lastly, although there be no necessity that such a Merchant should be a great Scholar; yet is it (at least) required, that in his youth he learn the Latine tongue, which will the better enable him in all the rest of his endeavours.

Thus have I briefly shewed thee a pattern for thy diligence, the Merchant in his qualities; which in truth are such and so many, that I find no other profession which leadeth into more worldly knowledge. And it cannot be denied but that their sufficiency doth appear likewise in the excellent government of State at Venice, Luca, Genoua, Florence, the low Countreys, and divers other places of Christendom. And in those States also where they are least esteemed, yet is their skill and knowledge often used by those who sit in the highest places of Authority: It is therefore an act beyond rashness in some, who do dis-enable their Counsel and judgment (even in books printed) making them incapable of those ways and means which do either enrich or impoverish a Common-wealth, when in truth this is only effected by the mystery of their trade, as I shall plainly shew in that which followeth. It is true indeed that many Merchants here in England finding less encouragement given to their profession than in other Countreys, and seeing themselves not so well esteemed as their Noble Vocation requireth, and according to the great consequence of the same, doe not therefore labour to attain unto the excellencie of their profession, neither is it practised by the Nobility of this Kingdom as it is in other States from the Father to the Son throughout their generations, to the great encrease of their wealth, and maintenance of their names and families: Whereas the memory of our richest Merchants is suddenly extinguished; the Son being left rich, scorneth the profession of his Father, conceiving more honor to be a Gentleman (although but in name) to consume his estate in dark ignorance and excess, than to follow the steps of his Father as an Industrious Merchant to maintain and advance his Fortunes. But now leaving the Merchants praise we will come to his practice, or at least to so much thereof as concerns the bringing of Treasure into the Kingdom.

Chapter II

The Means to enrich this Kingdom, and to encrease our Treasure.

Although a Kindom may be enriched by gifts received, or by purchase taken from some other Nations, yet these are things uncertaim and of small consideration when they happen. The ordinary means therefore to encrease our wealth and treasure is by Forraign Trade, wherein wee must ever observe this rule; to sell more to strangers yearly than wee consume of theirs in value. For suppose that whe theis Kingdom is pletifully served with the Cloth, Lead, Tinn, Iron, Fish and other native commodities, we doe yearly export the

overplus to forraign Countries to the value of twenty two hundred thousand pounds; by which means we are enabled beyond the Seas to buy and bring in forraign wares for our use and Consumption, to the value of twenty hundred thousand pounds; By this order duly kept in our trading, we may rest assured that this order duly kept in our trading, we may rest assured that the Kingdom shall be enriched yearly two hundred thousand pounds, which must be brought to us in so much Treasure; because that part of our stock which is not returned to us in wares must necessarily be brought home in treasure.

For in this case it cometh to pass in the stock of a Kingdom, as in the estate of a private man; who is supposed to have one thousand pounds yearly revenue and two thousand pounds of ready money in his Chest: If such a man through excess shall spend one thousand five hundred pounds per annum, all his ready mony will be gone in four years; and in the like time his said money will be doubled if he take a Frugal course to spend but five hundred pounds per annum; which rule never faileth likewise in the Commonwealth, but in some cases (of no great moment) which I will hereafter declare, when I shall shew by whom and in what manner this ballance of the Kingdoms account ought to be drawn up yearly, or so often as it shall please the State to discover how much we gain or lose by trade with forraign Nations. But first I will say something concerning those ways and means which will encrease our exportations and diminish our importations of wares; which being done, I will then set down some other arguments both affirmative and negative to strengthen that which is here declared, and thereby to shew that all the other means which are commonly supposed to enrich the Kingdom with Treasure are altogether insufficient and meer fallacies.

Chap. III.

The particular ways and means to encrease the exportation of our commodities, and to decrease our Consumption of forraign wares.

The revenue or stock of a Kingdom by which it is provided of forraign wares is either Natural or Artificial. The Natural wealth is so much only as can be spared from our own use and necessities to be exported unto strangers. The Artificial consists in our manufactures and industrious trading with forraign commodities, concerning which I will set down such particulars as may serve for the cause we have in hand.

1. First, although this Realm be already exceeding rich by nature, yet might it be much encreased by laying the waste grounds (which are infinite) into such employments as should no way hinder the present revenues of other manufactured lands, but hereby to supply our selves and prevent the importations of Hemp, Flax, Cordage, Tobacco, and divers other things which now we fetch from strangers to our great impoverishing.

2. We may likewise diminish our importations, if we would soberly refrain from excessive consumption of forraign wares in our diet and rayment, with such often change of fashions as is used, so much the more to encrease the waste and charge; which vices at this present are more notorious amongst us than in former ages. Yet might they easily be amended by enforcing the observation of such good laws as are strictly practised in other Countries against the said excesses; where likewise by commanding their own manufactures to be used, they prevent the coming in of others, without prohibition, or offence to strangers in their mutual commerce.

3. In our exportations we must not only regard our own superfluities, but

also we must consider our neighbours necessities, that so upon the wares which they cannot want, nor yet be furnished thereof elsewhere, we may (besides the vent of the Materials) gain so much of the manufacture as we can, and also endeavour to sell them dear, so far forth as the high price cause not a less vent in the quantity. But the superfluity of our commodities which strangers use, and may also have the same from other Nations, or may abate their vent by the use of some such like wares from other places, and with little inconvenience; we must in this case strive to sell as cheap as possible we can, rather than to lose the utterance of such wares. For we have found of late years by good experience, that being able to sell our Cloth cheap in Turkey, we have greatly increased the vent thereof, and the Venetians have lost as much in the utterance of theirs in those Countreys, because it is dearer. And on the other side a few years past, when by excessive price of Wools our Cloth was exceeding dear, we lost at the least half our clothing for forraign parts, which since is no otherwise (well neer) recovered again than by the great falloff price for Wools and Cloth. We find that twenty five in the hundred less in the price of these and some other Wares, to the loss of private mens revenues, may raise above fifty upon the hundred in the quantity vented to the benefit of the publique. For when Cloth is dear, other Nations doe presently practise clothing, and we know they want neither art nor materials to this performance. But when by cheapness we drive them from this employment, and so in time obtain our dear price again, then do they also use their former remedy. So that by these alterations we learn, that it is in vain to expect a greater revenue of our wares than their condition will afford, but rather it concerns us to apply our endeavours to the times with care and diligence to help our selves the best we may, by making our cloth and other manufactures without deceit, which will increase their estimation and use.

4. The value of our exportations likewise may be much advanced when we perform it our selves in our own Ships, for then we get only not the price of our wares as they are worth here, but also the Merchants gains, the changes of ensurance, and freight to carry them beyond the seas. As for example, if the Italian Merchants should come hither in their own shipping to fetch our Corn, our red Herrings or the like, in the case the Kingdom should have ordinarily but 25s for a quarter of Wheat, and 20s for a barrel of red herrings, whereas if we carry these wares our selves into Italy upon the said rates, it is likely that wee shall obtain fifty shillings for the first, and forty shillings for the last, which is a great difference in the utterance or vent of the Kingdoms stock. And although it is true that the commerce ought to be free to strangers to bring in and carry out at their pleasure, yet nevertheless in many places the exportation of victuals and munition are either prohibited, or at least limited to be done onely by the people and Shipping of those places where they abound.

5. The frugal expending likewise of our own natural wealth might advance much yearly to be exported unto strangers; and if in our rayment we will be prodigal, yet let this be done with our own materials and manufactures, as Cloth, Lace, Imbroderies, Cutworks and the like, where the excess of the rich may be the employment of the poor, whose labours notwithstanding of this kind, would be more profitable for the Commonwealth, if they were done to the use of strangers.

6. The Fishing in his Majesties seas of England, Scotland and Ireland is our natural wealth, and would cost nothing but labour, which the Dutch bestow willingly, and thereby draw yearly a very great profit to themselves by serving many places of Christendom with our Fish, for which they return and supply their wants both of forraign Wares and Mony, besides the multitude of Mariners and Shipping, which hereby are maintain'd, whereof a long discourse might be made to shew the particular manage of this important business. Our Fishing plantation likewise in New England, Virginia, Groenland, the Summer

Islands and the New-found-land, are of the like nature, affording much wealth and employments to maintain a great number of poor, and to encrease our decaying trade.

7. A Staple or Magazin for forraign Corn, Indico, Spices, Raw-silks, Cotton wool or any other commodity whatsoever, to be imported will encrease Shipping, Trade, Treasure, and the Kings customes, by exporting them again where need shall require, which course of Trading, hath been the chief means to raise Venice, Genoa, the low-Countreys, with some others; and for such a purpose England stands most commodiously, wanting nothing to this performance but our own diligence and endeavour.

8. Also wee ought to esteem and cherish those trades which we have in remote or far Countreys, for besides the encrease of Shipping and Mariners thereby, the wares also sent thither and receiv'd from thence are far more profitable unto the kingdom than by our trades neer at hand: As for example; suppose Pepper to be worth here two Shillings the pound constantly, if then it be brought from the Dutch at Amsterdam, the Merchant may give there twenty pence the pound, and gain well by the bargain; but if he fetch this Pepper from the East-indies, he must not give above three pence the pound at the most, which is a mighty advantage, not only in that part which serveth for our own use, but also for that great quantity which (from hence) we transport yearly unto divers other Nations to be sold at a higher price: whereby it is plain, that we make a far greater stock by gain upon these Indian Commodities, than those Nations doe where they grow, and to whom they properly appertain, being the natural wealth of their Countries. But for the better understanding of this particular, we must ever distinguish between the gain of the Kingdom, and the profit of the Merchant; for although the Kingdom payeth no more for this Pepper than is before supposed, nor for any other commodity bought in forraign parts more than the stranger receiveth from us for the same, yet the Merchant payeth not only that price, but also the freight, ensurance, customes and other charges which are exceeding great in these long voyages; but yet all these in the Kingdoms accompt are but commutations among our selves, and no Privation of the Kingdoms stock, which being duly considered, together with the support also of our other trades in our best Shipping to Italy, France, Turkey, and East Countreys and other places, by transporting and venting the wares which we bring yearly from the East Indies; It may well stir up our utmost endeavours to maintain and enlarge this great and noble business, so much importing the Publique wealth, Strength, and Happiness. Neither is there less honour and judgment by growing rich (in this manner) upon the stock of other Nations, than by an industrious encrease of our own means, especially when this later is advanced by the benefit of the former, as we have found in the East Indies by sale of much of our Tin, Cloth, Lead and other Commodities, the vent whereof doth daily encrease in those Countreys which formerly had no use of our wares.

9. It would be very beneficial to export money as well as wares, being done in trade only, it would encrease our Treasure; but of this I write more largely in the next Chapter to prove it plainly.

10. It were policie and profit for the State to suffer manufactures made of forraign Materials to be exported custome-free, as Velvets and all other wrought Silks, Fustians, thrown Silks and the like, it would emply very many poor people, and much encrease the value of our stock yearly issued into other Countreys, and it would (for this purpose) cause the more forraign Materials to be brought in, to the improvement of His Majesties Customes. I will here remember a notable increase in our manufacture of winding and twisting only of forraign raw Silk, which within 35 years to my knowledge did not employ more than 300 people in the City and suburbs of London, where at this present time it doth set on work above fourteen thousand souls, as upon diligent

enquiry hath been credibly reported unto His Majesties Commissioners for Trade. and it is certain, that if the raide forraign Commodities might be exported from hence, free of custome, this manufacture would yet encrease very much, and decrease as fast in Italy and in the Netherlands. But if any man allege the Dutch proverb, Live and let others live; I answer, that the Dutchmen notwithstanding their own Proverb, doe not onely in these Kingdoms, encroach upon our livings, but also in other forraign parts of our trade (where they have power) they do hinder and destroy us in our lawful course of living, hereby taking the bread out of our mouth, which we shall never prevent by plucking the pot from their nose, as of late years too many of us do practise to the great hurt and dishonour of this famous Nation; We ought rather to imitate former times in taking sober and worthy courses more pleasing to God and suitable to our ancient reputation.

11. It is needful also not to charge the native commodities with too great customes, lest by indearing them to the strangers use, it hinder their vent. And especially forraign wares brought in to be transported again should be favoured, for otherwise that manner of trading (so much importing the good of the Commonwealth) cannot prosper nor subsist. But the Consumption of such forraign wares in the Realm may be the more charged, which will turn to the profit of the kingdom in the Ballance of the Trade, and thereby also enable the King to lay up the more Treasure out of his yearly incomes, as of this particular I intend to write more fully in his proper place, where I shall shew how much money a Prince may conveniently lay up without the hurt of his subjects.

12. Lastly, in all things we must endeavour to make the most we can of our own, whether it be Natural or Artificial, And forasmuch as the people which live by the Arts are far more in number than they who are masters of the fruits, we ought the more carefully to maintain those endeavours of the multitude, in whom doth consist the greatest strength and riches both of the King and Kingdom: for where the people are many, and the arts good, there the traffique must be great, and the Countrey rich. The Italians employ a greater number of people; and get more money by their industry and manufactures of the raw Silks of the Kingdom of Cicilia, than the King of Spain and his Subjects have by the revenue of this rich commodity. But what need we fetch the example so far, when we know that our own natural wares doe not yeild us so much profit as our industry? For Iron oar in the Mines is of no great worth, when it is compared with the employment and advantage it yields being digged, tried, transported, brought, sold, cast into Ordnance, Muskets, and many other instruments of war for offence and defence, wrought into Anchors, bolts, spikes, nayles and the like, for the use of Ships, Houses, Carts, Coaches, Ploughs, and other instruments for Tillage. Compare our Fleece-wools with our Cloth, which requires shearing, washing, carding, spinning, Weaving, fulling, dying, dressing and other trimmings, and we shall find these Arts more profitable than the natural wealth, whereof I might instance other examples, but I will not be more tedious, for if I would amplify upon this and the other particulars before written, I might find matter sufficient to make a large volume, but my desire in all is only to prove what I propound with brevity and plainness.

Chapter 4

The Exportation of our Moneys in Trade of Merchandize is a means to encrease our Treasure.

This Position is so contrary to the common opinion, that it will require many

and strong arguments to prove it before it can be accepted of the Multitude, who bitterly exclaim when they see any monies carried out of the Realm; affirming thereupon that wee have absolutely lost so much Treasure, and that this is an act directly against the long continued laws made and confirmed by the wisdom of this Kingdom in the High Court of Parliament, and that many places, nay Spain it self which is the Fountain of Mony, forbids the exportation thereof, some cases only excepted. To all which I might answer, that Venice, Florence, Genoa, the Low Countreys and divers other places permit it, their people applaud it, and find great benefit by it; but all this makes a noise and proves nothing, we must therefore come to those reasons which concern the business in question.

First, I will take that for granted which no man of judgment will deny, that we have no other means to get Treasure but by forraign trade, for Mines wee have none which do afford it, and how this mony is gotten in the managing of our said Trade I have already shewed, that it is done by making our commodities which are exported yearly to over ballance in value the forraign wares which we consume; so that it resteth only to shew how our monyes may be added to our commodities, and being jointly exported may so much the more encrease our Treasure. We have already supposed our yearly consumption of forraign wares to be for the value of twenty hundred thousand pounds, and our exportations to exceed that two hundred thousand pounds, which sum wee have thereupon affirmed is brought to us in treasure to ballance accompt. But now if we add three thousand pounds mor in ready mony unto our former exportations in wares, what profit can we have (will some men say) although by this means we should bring in so much ready mony more than wee did before, seeing that wee have carried out the like value.

To this the answer is, that when wee have prepared our exportations of wares, and sent out as much of every thing as wee can spare or vent abroad: It is not therefore said that then we should add our money thereunto to fetch in the more mony immediately, but rather first to enlarge our trade by enabling us to bring in more forraign wares, which being sent out again will in due time much encrease our Treasure.

For although in this manner wee do yearly multiply our importation to the maintenance of more Shipping and Mariners, improvement of His Majesties Customs and other benefits: yet our consumption of those forraign wares is no more than it was before; so that all the said encrease of commodities brought in by the means of our ready mony sent out as is afore written, doth in the end become an exportation unto us of a far greater value than our said moneys were, which is proved by three several examples following.

1. For I suppose that 100000 £ being sent in our Shipping to the East Countreys, will buy there one hundred thousand quarters of wheat cleer aboard the Ships, which being after brought into England and housed, to export the same at the best time for vent thereof in Spain or Italy, it cannot yield less in those parts than two hundred thousand pounds to make the Merchant but a saver, yet by this reckning wee see the Kingdom hath doubled that Treasure.

2. Again this profit will be far greater when wee trade thus in remote Countreys, as for example, if wee send one hundred thousand pounds into the East-Indies to buy Pepper there, and bring it hither, and from hence send it for Italy or Turkey, it must yield seven hundred thousand pounds at least in those places, in regard of the excessive charge which the Merchant disburseth in those long voyages in Shipping, Wages, Victuals, Insurance, Interest, Customes, Imposts, and the like, all which notwithstanding the King and the Kingdom gets.

3. But where the voyages are short & the wares rich, which therefore will not employ much Shipping, the profit will be far less. As when another

hundred thousand pounds shall be employed in Turkey in raw Silks, and brought hither to be after transported from hence into France, the Low Countreys, or Germany, the Merchant shall have good gain, although he sell it there but for one hundred and fifty thousand pounds: and thus take the voyages altogether in their Medium, the moneys exported will be returned unto us more than Trebled. But if any man will yet object, that these returns come to us in wares, and not really in mony as they were issued out.

The answer is (keeping our first ground) that if our consumption of forraign wares be no more yearly than is already supposed, and that our exportations be so mightly increased by this manner of Trading with ready money as is before declared: It is not then possible but that all the over-ballance or difference should return either in mony or in such wares as we must export again, which, as is already plainly shewed will be still a greater means to encrease our Treasure.

For it is in the stock of the Kingdom as in the estates of private men, who having store of wares, doe not therefore say that they will not venture out or trade with their mony (for this were ridiculous) but do also turn that into wares, whereby they multiply their Mony, and so by a continual and orderly change of one into the other grow rich, and when they please turn all their estates into Treasure; for they that have Wares cannot want mony.

Neithr is it said that Mony is the Life of Trade, as if it could not subsist without the same; for we know that there was great trading by way of commutation or bartr when there was little mony stirring in the world. The Italians and some other Nations have such remedies against this want, that it can neither decay nor hinder their trade, for they transfer bills of debt, and have Banks both publick and private, wherein they do assign their credits from one to another daily for very great sums with ease and satisfaction by writings only, whilst in the mean time the Mass of Treasure which gave foundation to these credits is employed in Forraign Trade as a Merchandize, and by the said means they have little other use of money in those countreys more than for their ordinary expences. It is not therefore the keeping of our mony in the Kingdom, but the necessity and use of our wares in forraign Courtries, and our want of their commodities that causeth the vent and consumption on all sides, which makes a quick and ample Trade. If wee were once poor, and now having gained some store of mony by trade with resolution to keep it still in the Realm; shall this cause other Nations to spend more of our commodities than formerly they have done, whereby we might say that our trade is Quickned and Enlarged? no verily, it will produce no such good effect: but rather according to the alteration of times by their true causes we may expect the contrary; for all men do consent that plenty of mony in a Kingdom doth make the native commodities dearer, which as it is to the profit of some private men in their revenues, so is it directly against the benefit of the Publique in the quantity of the trade; for as plenty of mony makes wares dearer, so dear wares decline their use and consumption, as hath been already plainly shewed in the last Chapter upon that particular of our cloth; And although this is a very hard lesson for some great landed men to learn, yet I am sure it is a true lesson for all the land to observe, lest when wee have gained some store of mony by trade, wee lose it again by not trading with our mony. I know a Prince in Italy (of famous memory) Ferdinando the first, great Duke of Tuscanie, who being very rich in Treasure, endeavoured therewith to enlarge his trade by issuing out to his Merchants great sums of money for very small profit; I my self had forty thousand crowns of him gratis for a whole year, although he knew that I would presently send it away in Specie for the parts of Turkey to be employed in wares for his Countries, he being well assured that in this course of trade it would return again (according to the old saying) with a Duck in the mouth. This noble and industrious Prince by his care and diligence to countenance and

favour Merchants in their affairs, did so encrease the practice thereof, that there is scarce a Nobleman or Gentleman in all his dominions that doth not Merchandize eithr by himself or in partnership with others, whereby within these thiry years the trade to his port of Leghorn is so much encreased, that of a poor little town (as I my self knew it) it is now become a fair and strong City, being one of the most famous places for trade in all Christendom. And yet it is worthy our observation, that the multitude of Ships and wares which come thither from England, the Low Countreys, and other places, have little or no means to make their returns from thence but only in ready mony, which they may and do carry away freely at all times, to the incredible advantage of the said great Duke of Tuscanie and his subjects, who are much enriched by the continual great concourse of Merchants from all the States of the neighbour Princes, bringing them plenty of mony daily to supply their wants of the said wares. And thus we see that the current of Merchandize which carries away their Treasure, becomes a flowing stream to fill them again in a greater measure with mony.

There is yet an objection or two as weak as all the rest: that is, if wee trade with our Mony wee shall issue out the less wares; as if a man should say, those Countreys which heretofore had occasion to consume our Cloth, Lead, Tin, Iron, Fish, and the like, shall now make use of our monies in the place of those necessaries, which were most absurd to affirm, or that the Merchant had not rather carry our wares by which there is ever some gains expected, than to export mony which is still but the same without any encrease.

But on the contrary there are many Countreys which may yield us very profitable trade for our mony, which otherwise afford us no trade at all, because they have no use of our wares, as namely the East-Indies for one in the first beginning thereof, although since by industry in our commerce with those Nations we have brought them into the use of much of our Lead, Cloth, Tin, and other things, which is a good addition to the former vent of our commodities.

Again, some men have alleged that those Countries which permit mony to be carried out, do it because they have few or no wares to trade withall: but wee have great store of commodities, and therefore their action ought not to be our example.

To this the answer is briefly, that if we have such a quantity of wares as doth fully provided us of all things needful from beyond the seas: why should we then doubt that our monys sent out in trade, must not necessarily come back again in treasure; together with the great gains which it may procure in such manner as is before set down? And on the other side, if those Nations which send out their monies do it because they have but few wares of their own, how come they then to have so much Treasure as we ever see in those places which suffer it freely to be exported at all times and by whomsoever? I answer, Even by trading with their Moneys; for by what other means can they get it, having no Mines of Gold or Silver?

Thus may we plainly see, that when this weighty business is duly considered in his end, as all our humane actions ought well to be weighed, it is found much contrary to that which most men esteem thereof, because they search no further than the beginning of the work, which mis-informs their judgments, and leads them into error: For if we only behold the actions of the husbandman in the seed-time when he casteth away much good corn into the ground, we will rathr accompt him a mad man than a husbandman: but when we consider his labours in the harvest which is the end of his endeavours, we find the worth and plentiful encrease of his actions.

[. . .]

Chapter 7

The diversity of gain by Forraign Trade.

In the course of forraign trade there are three sorts of gain, the first is that of the Commonwealth, which may be done when the Merchant (who is the principal Agent therein) shall lose. The second is the gain of the Merchant which he doth sometimes justly and worthily effect, although the Commonwealth be a loser. The third is the gain of the King, whereof he is ever certain, even when the Commonwealth and the Merchant shall be both losers.

Concerning the first of these, we have already sufficiently shewed the ways and means whereby a Commonwealth may be enriched in the course of trade, whereof it is needless here to make any repetition, only I do in this place affirm, that such happiness may be in the Commonwealth, when the Merchant in his particular shall have no occasion to rejoyce. As for example, suppose the East-India Company send out one hundred thousand pounds into the East-Indies, and receive home for the same the full value of three hundred thousand pounds; Hereby it is evident that this part of the Commonwealth is trebled, and yet I may boldly say that which I can well prove, that said Company of Merchants shall lose at least fifty thousand pounds by such an adventure if the returns be made in Spice, Indico, Callicoes, Benjamin, refined Saltpeter, and such other bulkey wares in their several proportions according to their vent and use in these parts of Europe. For the freight of Shipping, the ensurance of the adventure, the charges of Factors abroad and Officers at home, the forbearance of the Stock, His Majesties Customs and Imposts, with other petty charges incident, cannot be less then two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, which being added to the principal produceth the said loss. And thus we see, that not only the Kingdom but also the King by his Customs and Imposts may get notoriously, even when the Merchant notwithstanding shall lose grievously; which giveth us good occasion here to consider, how much more the Realm is enriched by this noble Trade, when all things pass so happily that the Merchant is a gainer also with the King and Kingdom.

In the next place I affirm, that a Merchant by his laudable endeavors may both carry out and bring in wares to his advantage by selling them and buying them to good profit, which is the end of his labours; when nevertheless the Commonwealth shall decline and grow poor by a disorder in the people, when through Pride and other Excesses they do consume more forraign wares in value then the wealth of the Kingdom can satisfie and pay by the exportation of our own commodities, which is the very quality of an unthrift who spends beyond his means.

Lastly, the King is ever sure to get by trade, when both the Commonwealth and Merchant shall lose severally as afore-written, or joyntly, as it may and doth sometimes happen, when at one and the same time our Commodities are over-ballanced by forraign wares consumed, and that the Merchants success prove no better than is before declared.

But here we must not take the Kings gain in this large sense, for so we might say that His Majesty should get, although half the trade of the Kingdom were lost; we will rather suppose that whereas the whole trade of the Realm for Exportations and Importations is now found for to be about the yearly value of four million and a half of pounds; it may be yet increased two hundred thousand pounds per annum more by the importation and consumption of forraign wares. By this means we know that the King shall be a gainer near twenty thousand pounds, but the Commonwealth shall lose the whole two hundred thousand pounds thus spent in excess. And the Merchant may be a loser also when the trade shall in this manner be increased to the profit of the

King: who notwithstanding shall be sure in the end to have the greatest loss, if he prevent not such authority courses as do impoverish his Subjects.

Chapter 8

The enhancing or debasing our Moneys cannot enrich the Kingdom with treasure, nor hinder the exportation thereof.

There are three ways by which the Moneys of a Kingdom are commonly altered. The first is when the Coins in their several Denominations are made currant at more or less pounds, shillings or pence than formerly. The second is when the said Coins are altered in their weight, and yet continue currant at the former rates. The third is when the Standard is either debased or enriched in the fineness of the Gold and Silver, yet the Moneys continue in their former values.

In all occasions of want or plenty of Money in the Kingdom we do ever find divers men, who using their wits for a remedy to supply the first and perserve the last, they fall presently upon altering the moneys; for, say they, the raising of the Coins in value will cause it to be brought into the Realm from divers places in hope of the gain: and the debasing of the monies in the fineness or weight will keep it here for fear of the loss. But these men pleasing themselves with the beginning onely of this weighty business, consider not the progress and end thereof, whereunto we ought especially to direct our thoughts and endeavours.

For we must know, that money is not only the true measure of all our other means in the Kingdom, but also of our forraign commerce with strangers, which therefore ought to be kept just and constant to avoid those confusions which ever accompany such alterations. For first at home, if the common measure be changed, our Lands, Leases, wares, both forraign and domestique must alter in proportion: and although this is not done without much trouble and damage also to some men, yet in short time this must necessarily come to pass; for that is not the denomination of our pounds shillings and pence, which is respected, but the intrinsique value of our Coins; unto which we have little reason to add any further estimation or worth, if it lay in our power to do it, for this would be a special service to Spain, and an act against our selves to indear the commodity of another Prince. Neither can these courses which so much hurt the Subjects, any way help the King as some men have imagined: for although the debasing (for once only) to the Mint, yet all this and more would soon be lost agian in the future great In-comes of His Majesty, when by this means they must be paid yearly with mony of less intrinsique value then formerly; Nor can it be said that the whole loss of the Kingdom would be the profit of the King, they differ infinitely: for all mens estates (be it leases, lands, debts, wares or mony) must suffer in their proportions, whereas His Majesty should have the gain only upon so much ready mony as might be new Coined, which in comparison, would prove a very small matter: for although they who have other estates in mony are said to be a great number, and to be worth five or ten thousand £. per man, more or less, which amounts to many millions in all, yet are they not possessed thereof all together or at once, for it were vanity and against their profit to keep continually in their hands above forty or fifty pounds in a family to defray necessary charges, the rest must ever run from man to man in traffique for their benefit, whereby we may conceive that a little mony (being made the measure of all our other means) doth rule and distribute great matters daily to all men in their just proportions: And we must know likewise that much of our old mony is worn light, and therefore would yield little or no profit at the Mint, and the gain upon the heavy, would cause our

vigilant neighbours to carry over a great part thereof, and return it presently in pieces of the new stamp; nor do we doubt that some of our own Countrymen would turn Coiners and venter a hanging for this profit, so that His Majesty in the end should get little by such alterations.

Yea but say some men, If His Majesty raise the mony, great store of treasure would also be brought into the Mint from forraign parts, for we have seen by experience that the late raising of our Gold ten in the hundred, did bring in great store thereof, more than we were accustomed to have in the Kingdom, the which as I cannot deny, so do I likewise affirm, that this Gold carried away all or the most part of our Silver, (which was not over worn or too light) as we may easily perceive by the present use of our Moneys in their respective qualities: and the reason of this change is, because our Silver was not raised in proportion with our Gold, which still giveth advantage to the Merchant to bring in the Kingdoms yearly gain by trade in Gold rather than in Silver.

Secondly, if we be inconsistent in our Coins, and thereby violate the Laws of forraign Commerce; other Princes are vigilant in these cases to alter presently in proportion with us, and then where is our hope? or if they do not alter, what can we hope for? For if the stranger-merchant bring in his wares, and find that our moneys are raised, shall not he likewise keep his Commodities untill he may sell them dearer? and shall not the price of the Merchants exchange with forraign Countries rise in proportion with our Moneys? All which being undoubtedly true, why may not our Moneys be carried out of the Kingdom as well and to as much profit after the raising thereof, as before the alteration?

But peradventure some men will yet say, that if our Moneys be raised and other Countries raise not, it will cause more Bullion and forraign Coines to be brought in than heretofore. If this be done, it must be performed either by the Merchant who hath exported wares, or by the Merchant who intents to buy off our Commodities: and it is manifest that neither of these can have more advantage or benefit by this Art now, than they might have had before the alteration of the Money. For if their said Bullion and forraign Coines be more worth than formerly in our pounds, shillings and pence, yet what shall they get by that when these moneys are baser or lighter, and that therefore they are risen in proportion? So we may plainly see that these Innovations are no good means to bring treasure into the Kingdom, nor yet to keep it here when we have it.

[. . .]

Chapter 10

The observation of the Statute of Employments to be made by strangers, cannot encrease, nor yet preserve our Treasure.

To keep our mony in the Kingdom is a work of no less skill and difficulty than to augment our Treasure: for the causes of their preservation and production are the same in nature. The statue for employment of strangers wares into our commodities seemeth at the first to be a good and a lawful way leading to those ends; but upon the examination of the particulars, we shall find that it cannot produce such good effects.

For as the use of forraign trade is alike unto all Nations, so may we easily perceive what will be done therein by strangers, when we do but observe our own proceedings in this waighty business, by which we do not only seek with the vent of our own commodities to supply our wants of forraign wares, but also to enrich our selves with treasure: all which is done by a different manner

of trading according to our own occasions and the nature of the places whereunto we do trade; as namely in some Countreys we sell our commodities and bring away their wares, or part in mony; in other Countreys we sell our goods and take their mony, because they have little or no wares that fits our turns: again in some places we have need of their commodities, but they have little use of ours; so they take our mony which we get in other Countreys: And thus by a course of traffick (which changeth according to the accurrents of time) the particular members do accommodate each other, and all accomplish the whole body of the trade, which will ever languish if the harmony of her health be distempered by the diseases of excess at home, violence abroad, charges and restrictions at home or abroad: but in this place I have occasion to speak only of restriction, which I will perform briefly.

There are three ways by which a Merchant may make the returns of his wares from beyond the Seas, that is to say in mony, in commodities, or by Exchange. But the Statute of employment doth not only restrain mony (in which there is a seeming providence and Justice) but also the use of the Exchange by bills, which doth violate the Law of Commerce, and is indeed an Act without example in any place of the world where we have trade, and therefore to be considered, that whatsoever (in this kind) we shall impose upon strangers here, will presently be made a Law for us in their Countreys, especially where we have our greatest trade with our vigilant neighbours, who omit no care nor occasion to support their traffique in equal privileges with other Nations. And thus in the first place we should be deprived of that freedom and means which now we have to bring Treasure into the Kingdom, and therewith likewise we should lose the vent of much wares which we carry to divers places, whereby our trade and our Treasure would decay together.

Secondly, if by the said Statute we thrust the exportation of our wares (more than ordinary) upon the stranger, we must then take it from the English, which were injurious to our Merchants, Marriners and Shipping, besides the hurt to the Commonwealth in venting the Kingdoms stock to the stranger at far lower rates here than we must do if we sold it to them in their own Countys, as is proved in the third Chapter.

Thirdly, whereas we have already sufficiently shewed, that if our commodities be over ballance in value by forraign wares, our mony must be carried out. How is it possible to prevent this by tying the Strangers hands, and leaving the English loose? shall not the same reason and advantage cause that to be done by them now, that was done by the other before? or if we will make a statute (without example) to prevent both alike, shall we not then overthrow all at once? the King in his customes and the Kingdom in her profits; for such a restriction must of necessity destroy much trade, because the diversity of occasions and places which make an ample trade require that some men should both export and import wares; some export only, others import, some deliver out their monies by exchange, others take it up; some carry out mony, others bring it in, and this in a greater or lesser quantity according to the good husbandry or excess in the Kingdom, over which only if we keep a strict law, it will rule all the rest, and without this all other Statutes are no rules either to keep or procure us Treasure.

Lastly, to leave no Objection unanswerred, if it should be said that a Statute comprehending the English as well as the stranger must needs keep our money in the Kingdom. What shall we get by this, if it hinder the coming in of money by the decay of that ample Trade which we enjoyed in the freedom thereof? is not the Remedy far worse than the Disease? shall we not live more like Irishmen than Englishmen, when the Kings revenues, our Merchants, Mariners, Shipping, Arts, Lands, Riches, and all decay together with our Trade?

Yea but, say some men, we have better hopes than so; for th' intent of the

Statute is, that as all the forraign wares which are brought in shall be employed in our commodities, thereby to keep our money in the Kingdom: So we doubt not but send out a sufficient quantity of our own wares over and above to bring in the value thereof in ready money.

Although this is absolutely denied by the reasons afore written, yet now we will grant it, because we desire to end the dispute: For if this be true, that other Nations will vent more of our commodities than we consume of theirs in value, then I affirm that the overplus must necessarily return unto us in treasure without the use of the Statute, which is therefore not onley fruitless but hurtful, as some other like restrictions are found to be when they are fully discovered.

Chapter 11

It will not increase our treasure to enjoyn the Merchant that exporteth Fish, Corn, or Munition, to return all or part of the value in Money.

Victuals and Munitions for war are so pretious in a Commonwealth, that either it seemeth necessary to restrain the exportation altogether, or (if the plenty permits it) to require the return thereof in so much treasure; which appeareth to be reasonable and without difficulty, because Spain and other Countries do willingly part with their money for such wares, although in other occasions of trade they straightly prohibit the exportation thereof: all which I grant to be true, yet notwithstanding we must consider that all the ways and means which (in course of trade) force treasure into the Kingdom, do not therefore make it ours: for this can be done onely by a lawful gain, and this gain is no way to be accomplished but by the overballance of our trade, and this overballance is made less by restrictions: therefore such restrictions do hinder the increase of our treasure. The Argument is plain, and needs no other reasons to strengthen it, except any man be so vain to think that restrictions would not cause the less wares to be exported. But if this likewise should be granted, yet to enjoyn the Merchant to bring in money for Victuals and Munition carried out, will not cause us to have one peny the more in the Kingdom at the years end; for whatsoever is forced in one way must out again another way: because onely so much will remain and abide withus as is gained and incorporated into the estate of the Kingdom by the overballance of the trade.

This may be made plain by an example taken from an Englishman, who had occasion to buy and consume the wares of divers strangers for the value of six hundred pounds, and having wares of his own for the value of one thousand pounds, he sold them to the said strangers, and presently forced all the mony from them into his own power; yet upon cleering of the reckoning between them there remained onely four hundred pounds to the said Englishman for overballance of the wares bought and sold; so the rest which he had received was returned back from whence he forced it. And this shall suffice to shew that whatsoever courses we take to force money into the Kingdom, yet so much onely will remain with us as we shall gain by the ballance of our trade.

[. . .]

Chapter 15.

Of some Excesses and evils in the Commonwealth, which notwithstanding decay not our Trade nor Treasure.

It is not my intent to excuse or extenuate any the least excess or evil in the Commonwealth, but rather highly to approve and commend that which by others hath been spoken and written against such abuses. Yet in this discourse of Treasure, as I have already set down affirmatively, which are the true causes that may either augment or decrease the same: so is it not impertinent to continue my negative declarations of those enormities and actions which cannot work these effects as some men have supposed. For in redress of this important business, if we mistake the nature of the Malady, we shall ever apply such cures as will at least delay, if not confound the Remedy.

Let us then begin with Usury, which if it might be turned into Charity, and that they who are Rich would lend to the poor freely; it were a work pleasing to Almighty God, and profitable to the Commonwealth. But taking it in the degree it now stands; How can we well say, that as Usury encreaseth, so Trade decreaseth? For although it is true that some men give over trading, and buy Lands, or put out their Money to use when they are grown rich, or old, or for some other the like occasions; yet for all this it doth not follow, that the quantity of the trade must lessen; for this course in the rich giveth opportunity presently to the younger & poorer Merchants to rise in the world, and to enlarge their dealings; to the performance whereof, if they want means of their own, they may, and do, take it up at interest: so that our money lies not dead, it is still traded. How many Merchants, and Shop-keepers have begun with little or nothing of their own, and yet are grown very rich by trading with other mens money? do we not know, that when trading is quick and good, many men, by means of their experience, and having credit to take up money at interest, do trade for much more than they are worth of their own stock? by which diligence of the industrious, the affairs of the Common-wealth are increased, the moneys of Widows, Orphans, Lawyers, Gentlemen and others, are employed in the course of Forraign Trade, which themselves have no skill to perform. We find at this present, that notwithstanding the Poverty we are fallen into by the Excesses and Losses of late times, yet that many men have much money in their chests, and know not how to dispose thereof, because the Merchant will not take the same at interest (although at low rates) in regard there is a stop of trade in Spain and in France, whereby he cannot employ his own meanes, much lesse other mens moneys. So that for these, and some other reasons which might be alledged, we might conclude, contrary to those who affirm, that Trade decreaseth as Usury encreaseth, for they rise and fall together.

In the next place, we hear our Lawyers much condemned; the vexation and charges by multiplicity of Sutes do exceed al the other Kingdomes of Christendome, but whether this proceed from the Lawyers Covetousness, or the Peoples Perverseness, it is a great question. And let this be as it may, I will enquire no farther therein than our present discourse doth require, concerning the decay of our Trade, and impoverishing of the Kingdom: Sure I am, that Sutes in Law make many a man poor and penniless, but how it should make us trade for less by one single penny, I cannot well conceive. For although amongst the great number of them who are vexed and undone by controversies, there be ever some Merchants; yet we know, that one mans necessity becomes another mans opportunity. I never knew as yet, a decay in our Trade and Treasure for want of Merchants, or Means to employ us, but rather by excessive Consumption of Forraign Wares at home, or by a declination in the vent of our Commodities abroad, caused either by the ruinous effects of Wars, or some alterations in the times of Peace, whereof I have spoken more fully in the third Chapter. But, to conclude with the Lawyers, I say, that their noble Profession is necessary for all, and their Cases, Quillets, Delayes and Charges, are mischievous to many; these things indeed are Cankers in the Estates of particular men, but not of the Common-wealth, as

some suppose, for one mans loss becomes another mans gain, it is still in the Kingdome, I wish it might as surely remain in the right places.

Lastly, all kind of Bounty and Pomp is not to be avoided, for if we should become so frugal, that we would use few or no Forraign wares, how shall we then vent our own commodities? what will become of our Ships, Mariners, Munitions, our poor Artificers, and many others? doe we hope that other Countreys will afford us money for All our wares, without buying or bartering for Some of theirs? this would prove a vain expectation; it is more safe and sure to run a middle course by spending moderately, which will purchase treasure plentifully.

Again, the pomp of Buildings, Apparel, and the like, in the Nobility, Gentry, and other able persons, cannot impoverish the Kingdome; if it be done with curious and costly works upon our Materials, and by our own people, it will maintain the poor with the purse of the rich, which is the best distribution of the Common-wealth. But if any man say, that when the people want work, then the Fishing-trade would be a better employment, and far more profitable; I subscribe willingly. For in that great business there is means enough to employ both rich and poor, whereof there hath been much said and written; It resteth only that something might be as well effected for the honor and wealth, both of the King and his Kingdoms.

[. . .]

Chapter 19

Of some different effects, which proceed from Naturall and Artificial Wealth.

In the latter end of the third Chapter of this Book, I have already written something concerning Natural and Artificial Wealth, and therein shewed how much Art doth add to Nature; but it is yet needful to handle these particulars apart, that so we may the better discern their severall operations in a Common-wealth. For the effecting whereof, I might draw some comparisons from Turkey and Italy, or from some other remote Countreys, but I will not range so far, having matter sufficient here in Great Britain and the united Provinces of the Low Countreys, to make this business plain: wherefore, in the first place, we will begin with England briefly, and onely in general terms, to shew the natural riches of this famous Nation, with some principal effects which they produce in the disposition of the people, and strength of the Kingdome.

if we duly consider Englands Largeness, Beauty, Fertility, Strength, both by Sea and Land, in multitude of warlike People, Horses, Ships, Ammunition, advantagious situation for Defence and Trade, number of Sea-ports and Harbours, which are of difficult access to Enemies, and of easie out-let to the Inhabitants wealth by excellent Fleece-wools, Iron, Lead, Tynn, Saffron, Corn, Victuals, Hides, Wax, and other natural Endowments; we shall find this Kingdome capable to sit as master of a Monarchy. For what greater glory and advantage can any powerful Nation have, than to be thus richly and naturally possessed of all things needful for Food, Rayment, War, and Peace, not onely for its own plentiful use, but also to supply the wants of other Nations, in such a measure, that much money may be thereby gotten yearly, to make the happiness compleat. For experience telleth as, that notwithstanding that excessive Consumption of this Kingdome alone, to say nothing of Scotland, there is exported communibus annis of our own native commodities for the value of twenty two hundred thousand pounds Sterling, or somewhat more; so that if we were not too much affected to Pride, monstrous Fashions, and Riot,

above all other Nations, one million and an half of pounds might plentifully supply our unnecessary wants (as I may term them) of Silks, Sugars, Spices, Fruits, and all others; so that seven hundred thousand pounds might be yearly treasur'd up in money to make the Kingdome exceeding rich and powerful in short time. But this great plenty which we enjoy, makes us a people not only vicious and excessive, wastful of the means we have, but also improvident & careless of much other wealth that shamefully we lose, which is, the Fishing in his Majesty's Seas of England, Scotland, and Ireland, being of no less consequence than all our other riches which we export and vent to Strangers, whilst in the mean time (through lewd idleness) great multitudes of our people cheat, roar, rob, hang, beg, cant, pine and perish, which by this means and maintenance might be much increased, to the further wealth and strength of these Kingdomes, especially by Sea, for our own safety, and terrour of our enemies. The endeavours of the industrious Dutch do give sufficient testimony of this truth, to our great shame, and no less perill, if it have not a timely prevention: for, whilst we leave our wonted honourable exercises and studies, following our pleasures, and of late years besotting our selves with pipe and pot, in a beastly manner, sucking smoak, and drinking healths, until death stares many in the face; the said Dutch have well-neer left this swinish vice, and taken up our wonted valour, which we have often so well performed both by Sea and Land, and particularly in their defence, although they are not now so thankful as to acknowledge the same. The summ of all is this, that the general leprosie of our Piping, Potting, Feasting, Fashions, and mis-spending of our time in Idleness and Pleasure (contary to the Law of God, and the use of other Nations) hath made us effeminate in our bodies, weak in our knowledg, poor in our Treasure, declined in our Valour, unfortunate in our Enterprises, and contemned by our Enemies. I write the more of these excesses, because they do so greatly wast our wealth, which is the main subject of this whole Books discourse: and indeed our wealth might be a rare discourse for all Christendome to admire and fear, if we would but add Art to Nature, our labour to our natural means; the neglect whereof hath given a notable advantage to other nations, & especially to the Hollanders, whereof I will briefly say something in the next place.

But first, I will deliver my opinion concerning our Clothing, which although it is the greatest Wealth and best Employment of the Poor of this kingdome, yet neverthelesse we may peadventure employ our selves with better Safety, Plenty, and Profit in using more Tillage and Fishing, than to trust so wholly to the making of Cloth; for in times of War, or by other occasions, if some forraign Princes should prohibit the use thereof in their dominions, it might suddenly cause much poverty and dangerous uproars, especially by our poor people, when they should be deprived of their ordinary maintenance, which cannot so easily fail them when their labours should be divided into the said diversity of employments, whereby also many thousands would be the better enabled to do the Kingdom good service in occasion of war, especially by Sea: And so leaving England, wee will pass over into the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

As plenty and power doe make a nation vicious and improvident, so penury and want doe make a people wise and industrious; concerning the last of these I might instance divers Commonwealths of Christendom, who having little or nothing in their own Territories, do notwithstanding purchase great wealth and strength by their industrious commerce with strangers, amongst which the united Provinces of the Low Countreys are now of greater note and fame: For since they have cast off the yoke of Spanish slavery, how wonderfully are they improved in all humane policy? What great means have they obtained to defend their liberty against the power of so great an Enemy? and is not all this performed by their continual industry in the trade of Merchanidize? are not

their Provinces the Magazines and Store-houses of wares for most places of Christendom, whereby their Wealth, Shipping, Mariners, Arts, People, and thereby the publique Revenues and Excizes are grown to a wonderful height? If we compare the times of their subjection, to their present estate, they seem not the same people; for who knows not that the condition of those Provinces was mean and turbulent under the Spaniards government, which brought rather a greater charge than a further strength to their ambition; neither would it prove over difficult for the neighbour Princes in short time to reduce those Countreys to their former estate again, if their own safety did require the same, as certainly it would if the Spaniard were sole Lord of those Netherlands; but our discourse tends not to shew the means of those mutations, otherwise than to find out the chief foundation of the Hollanders wealth and greatness: for it seems a wonder to the world, that such a small Countrey, not fully so big as two of our best Shires, having little natural Wealth, Victuals, Timber, or other necessary amunitions, either for war or peace, should notwithstanding possess them all in such extraordinary plenty, that besides their own wants (which are very great) they can and do likewise serve and sell to other Princes, Ships, Ordance, Cordage, Corn, Powder, Shot, and what not, which by their industrious trading they gather from all the quarters of the world: In which courses they are not less injurious to supplant others (especially the English) than they are careful to strengthen themselves. And to effect this and more than hath been said (which is their war with Spain) they have little foundation besides the Fishing, which is permitted them in His Majesties Seas, being indeed the means of an incredible wealth and strength, both by Sea and Land, as Robert Hichcock, Tobias Gentleman, and others have published at large in print to them that list to read. And the States General themselves in their proclamation have ingeniously set out the worth thereof in these words following, The great Fishing and catching of Herrings is the cheifest trade and principal Gold Mines of the United Provinces, whereby many thousands of Housholds, Families, Handicrafts, Trades and Occupations are set on work, well maintained and prosper, expecially the sailing and navigation, as well within as without these Countreys is kept in great estimation; Moreover many returns of mony, with the encrease of the means, Convoys, Customs and revenues of these Countreys are augmented thereby and prosper, with other words following, as is at large expressed in the said Proclamations, set forth by the States General for the preservation of the said trade of Fishing; without which it is apparent that they cannot long subsist in Sovereignty; for if this foundation perish, the whole building of their wealth and strength both by Sea and Land must fall; for the multitude of their Shipping would suddainly decay, their revenues and customs would become small, their Countreys would be depopulated for want of maintenance, whereby the Excize must fail, and all their other trades to the East Indies or elsewhere must faint. So that the glory and power of these Netherlanders consisteth in this fishing of Herrings, Ling and Cod in His Majesties Seas: It resteth therefore to know what right or title they have thereunto, and how they are able to possess and keep the same against all other Nations.

The answers to these two questions are not difficult: for first, it is not the Netherlandish Author of *Mare Liberum*, that can intitle them to Fish in His Majesties Seas. For besides the Justice of the cause, and examples of other Countreys, which might be alleged, I will only say, that such titles would be sooner decided by swords, than with words; I do beleieve indeed that it is free for the Fish to come thither at their pleasure, but for the Dutch to catch and carry them away from thence without His Majesties licence, I harbour no such thought. There may be good policy to connive still, and so long to permit them this fishing as they are in perfect league with England, and in war with Spain. But if the Spaniards were Masters of the United Provinces as heretofore, it

would neerly concern these Kingdoms to claim their own right, and carefully to make as good use thereof for increase of their wellth and strength, to oppose that potent enemy, as now the Netherlanders do, and are thereby well enabled for the same purpose: by which particular alone they are ever bound to acknowledge their strong alliance with England, above all other Nations, for there is none that hath the like good means to lend them such a powerful maintenance. Nor were it possible for the Spaniard (if he had those Countreys again) to make a new Foundaton with the power of his money, to encrrase his strength, either by Sea or Land, to offend these Kingdoms, more than he is now albe to perform with the conveniency of those Provinces which he hath already in his possession; for it is not the Place, but the Employment, not the barren Netherlands, but the rich Fishing, which gives Foundation, Trade, and Subsistence to those multitudes of Ships, Arts and People, whereby also the Excises and other publick Revenues are continued, and without which Employment at the said great Dependences must necessarily disbandon and fail in very short time. For although I confess, that store of money may bring them materials (which they altogether want) and Artsmen to build them Shipping, yet where are the wares to freight and maintain them out in Trade, what a poor number of Ships will this employ? or if the uncertain occasions of War must support them, will not this require another Indies, and all too little to maintain the tenth part of so many Ships and Men as the Hollanders do now set on work by the Fishing and other Trades thereon depending? But if it be yet said, that the Spaniard being Lord of all those Netherlands, his expence of the present War there will cease, and so this power may be turned upon us. The answer is, that when Princes send great Forces abroad to invade others, they must likewise encrease their charge and strength at home, to defend themselves; and also we must consider, that if the Spaniard will attempt any thing upon these Kingdomes, he must consume a great part of his Treasure in Shipping, whereby the means of his invading power of Money and Men to land will be much less than now it is in the Low Countreys: Nor should we regard them, but be ever ready to beard them, when our Wealth and Strength by Sea and Land might be so much encreased by the possession and practise of our Fishing, of which particular I will yet say something more where occasion shall be offered in that which followeth. And here in this place I will onely add, that if the Spaniard were sole Lord of all the Netherlands, he must then necessarily drive a great trade by Sea, to supply the common wants of those Countreys, whereby in occasion of war, we should have means daily to take much wealth from him; whereas now the Spaniard using little or no trade in these Seas, but employing his Ships of warre to the uttermost of his power, he only takes, and we lose great matters continually.

Now concerning the second question, Whether the Hollanders be able to possess and keep this fishing against all other Nations. It is very probable, that although they claim now no other right than their own freedome in this Fishing, seeming to leave the like to all others; yet if the practise of any Nation should seek either to Fish with them or to supplant them, they would be both ready and able to maintain this Golden Mine, against the strongest opposition except England, whose harbours and In-lands with other daily reliefs are very needful, if not absolutely necessary for this employment, and whose Power also by Sea, is able (in shsor time) to give this business disturbance, and utter ruin, if the occasion should be so urgent as is afore supposed: Neither is it enough for any man to contradict all this by saying the Hollanders are very strong by Sea, when both Sea and Land encounter them with a greater power; we must observe from whence their strength doth grow, and if the root may once be spoiled, the branches soon will wither; and therefore it were an error to esteem, or value them according to the present power and wealth, which they have obtained by trade or purchase; for although this were far greater then

indeed it is, yet would it soon be consumed in a chargeable war against a potent enemy, when the current of those Accidents may be stopt and turned by preventing the substance it self (which is the Fishing in His Majesties Seas) that gives Foundation, and is the very Foundation of their strength and happiness: The United Provinces (we know) are like a fair bird suited with goodly borrowed plumes; but if every Fowl should take his feather, this bird would rest neer naked: Nor have we ever seen these Netherlanders as yet in their greatest occasions to set forth neer so many ships of war at once as the English have often done without any hinderance of their ordinary traffique; It is true indeed, they have an infinite number of weak Ships to fish with, and fetch Corn, Salt, &c. for their own victualling and trading, the like to fetch Timber, Plank, Boords, Pitch, Hemp, Tar, Flax, Masts, Cordage, and other Ammunitions to make those multitudes of Ships, which unto them are as our Ploughs to us, the which except they stire, the people starve; their Shipping therefore cannot be spared from their traffique (as ours may if occasion require) no not for a very short time, without utter ruin, because it is the daily maintenance of their great multitudes which gain their living but from hand to mouths upon which also depends the great excises, and other publique revenues, which support the State it self: Neither indeed are those Vessels strong or fit for war; and in their proper use of Fishing and trade they would become the riches, or the purchase of a potent Enemy by Sea, as they partly find by one poor town of Dunkirk, notwithstanding their great charge of Men of war, strong Convoys, and other commendable diligence, which continually they use to prevent this mischief: but if the occasion of a more powerful enemy by Sea should force them to double or treble those charges, we may well doubt the means of their continuance, especially when (by us) their fishing might nevertheless be prevented, which should procure the maintenance. These and other circumstances make me often wonder, when I hear the Dutch vain-gloriously to brag, and many English simply to believe, that the United Provinces are our Forts, Bulwarks, Walls, out-works, and I know not what, without which we cannot long subsist against the Spanish forces; when in truth, we are the main fountain of their happiness, both for war and peace; for trade and treasure, for Munition and Men, spending our bloud in their defence; whilst their people are preserved to conquer in the Indies, and to reap the fruits of a rich traffique out of our own bosoms; which being assumed to our selves (as we have right and power to do) would mightily encrease the breed of our people by this good means of their maintenance, and well enable us against the strongest enemy, and force likewise great multitudes of those Netherlanders themselves to seek their living here with us for want of better maintenance: whereby our many decayed Sea-towns and Castles would soon be re-edified and populated in more ample manner than formerly they were in their best estate. And thus these forces being united, would be ever more ready, sure, and vigorous than a greater strength that lies divided, which is always subject to delays, divesion, and other jealousies, of all which we ought not to be ignorant, but perfectly to know, and use our own strength when we have occasion, and expecially we must ever be watchful to preserve this strength, lest the subtilty of the Dutch (under some fair shews and with their mony) prevail, as peradventure they lately practised in Scotland, to have had a Patent for the possessing, inhabiting, and fortifying of that excellent Island of Lewis in the Orcades; whose scituation, harbours, fishing, fertility, largeness and other advantages, would have made them able (in short time) to offend these Kingdoms by suddain invasions, and to have defened the aforesaid Fishing against his Majesties greatest power, and also to send out and return home their Shipping prosperously that way, to and from the East and West Indies, Spain, the Straights, and other places, without passing through his Majesty's narrow Seas, where in all occasions this Kingdome now hath so great advantage to

take their Ships, and prevent their best Trades, which would soon bring them to ruine, whereby (as they well know) we have a greater tie and power over them than any other Nation. And howsoever the said Island of Lewis might have been obtained in the name of private men, and under the fair pretence of bringing Commerce into those remote parts of Scotland; yet in the end, when the work had been brought to any good perfection, the possession and power would no doubt have come to the Lords, the States General, even as we know they have lately gotten divers places of great Strength and Wealth in the East Indies, in the names and with the purse of their Merchants, whereby also their actions herein have been obscur'd & made less notorious unto the world, untill they had obtain'd their ends, which are of such consequence, that it doth much concern this Nation in particular, carefully to observe their proceedings, for they notoriously follow the steps of that valiant and politick Captain, Philip of Macedon, whose Maxim was, That where force could not prevail, he alwayes used bribes, and money to corrupt those who might advance his fortune; by which policy he gave foundation to a Monarchy; & what know we but that the Dutch may aim at some such Sovereignty, when they shall find their Indian attempts and other subtil plots succeed so prosperously? Do we not see their Lands are now become too little to contain this swelling people, whereby their Ships and Seas are made the Habitations of great multitudes? and yet, to give them further breed, are they not spared from their own wars to enrich the State and themselves by Trade and Arts? whilest by this policy many thousands of strangers are also drawn thither for performance of their martial employments, whereby the great revenue of their Excises is so much the more encreased, and all things so subtilly contrived, that although the forraign Souldier be well paid, yet all must be there again expended; and thus the Wealth remains still in their own Countreys; nor are the strangers enriched which do them this great service.

I have heard some Italians wisely and worthily discourse of the natural Strength and Wealth of England, which they make to be matchless, if we should (but in part) apply our selves to such policies and endeavours as are very commonly used in some other Countreys of Europe; and much they ahave admired, that our thoughts and jealousies attend only upon the Spanish and French greatness, never once suspecting, but constantly embracing the Netherlanders as our best Friends and Allies; when in truth (as they well observe) there are no people in Christendome who do more undermine, hurt, and eclipse us daily in our Navigation and Trades, both abroad and at home; and this not only in the rich Fishing in his Majesty's Seas (whereof we have already written) but also in our Inland trades between City and City, in the Manufacture of Silk, Wools, and the like, made here in this Kingdom, wherein they never give employment or education in their Arts to the English, but ever (according to the custome of the Jewes, where they abide in Turkey, and divers places of Christendome) they live wholly to themselves in their own Tribes. So that we may truly say of the Dutch, that although they are amongst us, yet certainly they are not of us, no not they who are born and bred here in our own Countrey, for stil they will be Dutch, not having so much as one drop of English blood in their hearts.

More might be written of these Nethelanders pride and ambitious endeavours, whereby they hope in time to grow mighty, if they be not prevented, and much more may be said of their cruel and unjust violence used (expecially to their best friends, the English) in matters of bloud, trade, and other profits, where they have had advantages and power to perform it: but these things are already published in print to the view and admiration of the world; wherefore I will conclude, and the summ of all is this, that the United Provinces, which now are so great a trouble, if not a terrour to the Spaniard, were heretofore little better than a charge to them in their possession, and

would be so again in the like occasion, the reasons whereof I might yet further enlarge; but they are not pertinent to this discourse, more than is already declared, to shew the different effects between Natural and Artificial Wealth: The first of which, as it is most noble and advantageous, being alwayes ready and certain, so doth it make the people careless, proud, and given to all excesses; whereas the second enforceth Vigilancy, Literature, Arts and Policy. My wishes therefore are, that as England doth plentifully enjoy the one, and is fully capable of the other, that our endeavours might as worthily conjoyn them both together, to the reformation of our vicious idleness, and greater glory of these famous Kingdomes.

[. . .]

Finis .