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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

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N<sup>o</sup> 41. Friday, May 11.

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*Dissentientis conditionibus  
Fœdis, et exemplo trahenti  
Perniciem veniens in ævum.*

Hor.

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**A**S the care of our national commerce redounds more to the riches and prosperity of the publick, than any other act of government, it is pity that we do not see the state of it marked out in every particular reign with greater distinction and accuracy, than what is usual among our *English* historians. We may however observe in general, that the best and wisest of our Monarchs have not been less industrious to extend their trade, than their dominions; as it manifestly turns in a much higher degree to the welfare of the people, if not to the glory of the Sovereign.

The first of our Kings who carried our commerce, and consequently our navigation to a very great height, was *Edward* the Third. This victorious Prince, by his many excellent laws for the encouragement of trade, enabled his subjects to support him in his many glorious wars upon the continent, and turned the scale so much in favour of our *English* Merchandise, that, by a balance of trade taken in his time, the exported commodities amounted to two hundred ninety four thousand pounds, and the imported but to thirty eight thousand.

Those of his successors, under whose regulations our trade flourished most, were *Henry* the Seventh, and Queen *Elizabeth*. As the first of these was for his great wisdom very often styled the *English* Solomon, he followed the example of that wise King in nothing more, than by advancing the traffick of his people. By this means he reconciled to him the minds of his subjects, strengthened himself in their affections, improved very much the navigation of the kingdom, and repelled the frequent attempts of his enemies.

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As for Queen *Elizabeth*, she had always the trade of her kingdom very much at heart, and we may observe the effects of it through the whole course of her reign, in the love and obedience of her people, as well as in the defeats and disappointments of her enemies.

It is with great pleasure that we see our present Sovereign applying his thoughts so successfully to the advancement of our traffick, and considering himself as the King of a trading Island. His Majesty has already gained very considerable advantages for his people, and is still employed in concerting schemes, and forming treaties, for retrieving and enlarging our privileges in the world of commerce.

I shall only in this paper take notice of the treaty concluded at *Madrid* on the fourteenth of *December* last, 1715; and by comparing it with that concluded at *Utrecht* on the ninth of *December*, 1713, shew several particulars in which the treaty made with his present Majesty is more advantageous to *Great-Britain*, than that which was made in the last reign; after this general observation, that it is equally surprizing how so bad a treaty came to be made at the end of a glorious and successful war; and how so good a one has been obtained in the beginning of a reign disturbed by such intestine commotions. But we may learn from hence, that the wisdom of a Sovereign, and the integrity of his Ministers, are more necessary for bringing about works of such consequence for the publick good, than any juncture of time, or any other the most favourable circumstance.

We must here premise that by the treaty concluded at *Madrid* in 1667, the duties of importation payable upon the manufactures and products of *Great-Britain*, amounted upon the established valuation in the *Spanish* book of rates, (after the deduction of the *Gratia's*) in *Andalusia* to 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  per Cent. in *Valentia* to 5 per Cent. and in *Catalonia* to about 7 per Cent. or less; and consequently upon the whole aforesaid trade, those duties could not exceed 10 per Cent. in a medium.

After this short account of the state of our trade with *Spain*, before the treaty of *Utrecht* under the late Queen, we must observe, that by the explanatory articles of this last mentioned treaty, the duties of importation upon the products and manufactures of *Great-Britain* were augmented in *Andalusia* to 27 $\frac{1}{2}$  per Cent. at a medium.

But by the late treaty made with his present Majesty at *Madrid*, the said duties are again reduced according to the aforesaid treaty of 1667: and the deduction of the *Gratia's* is established as an inviolable law, whereas, before, the *Gratia's* of the farmers particularly were altogether precarious, and depended entirely upon courtesy. That

That the common Reader may understand the nature of these Gratia's, he must know that when the King of *Spain* had laid higher duties upon our *English* goods, than what the Merchants were able or willing to comply with, he used to abate a certain part: which indulgence, or abatement, went under the name of a Gratia. But when he had farmed out these his customs to several of his subjects, the farmers, in order to draw more Merchandise to their respective ports, and thereby to increase their own particular profits, used to make new abatements, or Gratia's, to the *British* Merchants, endeavouring sometimes to outvy one another in such indulgences, and by that means to get a greater proportion of custom into their own hands.

But to proceed: the duties on exportation may be computed to be raised by the *Utrecht* treaty, near as much as the aforesaid duties of importation: whereas, by the treaty made with his present Majesty, they are reduced to their ancient standard.

Complaint having been made, that the *Spaniards* after the suspension of arms had taken several *New-England* and other *British* ships gathering salt at the Island of *Tertuga*, a very full and just report concerning that affair was laid before Her late Majesty, of which I shall give the Reader the following extract:

“ Your Majesty's subjects have, from the first settlement of the continent of *America*, had a free access to this Island; and have without interruptions, unless in time of war, used to take what salt they pleased there: and we have proofs of that usage for above 50 Years, as appears by certificates of persons who have been employed in that trade.

“ It doth not appear, upon the strictest enquiry, that the *Spaniards* ever inhabited or settled on the said Island; nor is it probable they ever did, it being either all barren rock, or dry sand, and having no fresh water or provisions in it.

“ We take leave to lay before your Majesty, the consequence of your Majesty's subjects being prohibited to fetch salt at *Tertuga*; which will in part appear from the number of ships using that trade, being, as we are informed, one year with another about a hundred sail.

“ The salt carried from thence to *New-England* is used chiefly for curing of fish, which is either *Cod*, *Scale-fish*, or *Mackrel*: the former of which is the principal branch of the returns made from the continent to *Great-Britain* by way of *Spain*, *Portugal*, and the *Straits*, for the woollen and other goods sent from this kingdom thither. Besides which, the *Scale-fish* and *Mackrel* are of such consequence, that

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“ the Sugar-Islands cannot subsist without them, their Negroes being  
 “ chiefly supported by this fish: so that if they were not supplied there-  
 “ with from *New-England*, (which they cannot be, if your Majesty’s  
 “ subjects are prohibited from getting salt at *Tertuga*) they would not be  
 “ able to carry on their Sugar-works. This hath been confirmed to us  
 “ by several considerable planters concerned in those parts.

“ Upon the whole, your Majesty’s subjects having enjoyed an uninter-  
 “ rupted usage of gathering salt at *Tertuga* ever since the first settlement  
 “ of the continent as aforesaid, we humbly submit to your Majesty the  
 “ consequence of preserving that usage and right upon which the trade  
 “ of your Majesty’s plantations so much depends.

Notwithstanding it appears from what is above-written, that our Sugar-  
 Islands were like to suffer considerably for want of Fish from *New-  
 England*, no care was taken to have this matter remedied by the expla-  
 natory articles, which were posterior to the above-mentioned report.

However in the third article of the treaty made with his present Ma-  
 jesty, this business is fully settled to our advantage.

The *British* Merchants having had several hardships put upon them at  
*Bilboa*, which occasioned the decay of our trade at that place, the said  
 Merchants did make and execute in the year 1700, a treaty of privileges  
 with the Magistrates and inhabitants of *St. Ander*, very much to the ad-  
 vantage of this kingdom, in order to their removing and settling there:  
 the effect of which was prevented by the death of King *Charles* the Se-  
 cond of *Spain*, and the war which soon after ensued. This matter, it  
 seems, was slighted or neglected by the managers of the *Utrecht* treaty:  
 for, by the fourteenth article of that treaty, there is only *a liberty given*  
*to the British subjects to settle and dwell at St. Ander, upon the terms*  
*of the ninth and thirtieth articles of the treaty of 1667*, which are gene-  
 ral. But no regard was had to the forementioned treaty of privileges  
 in 1700; whereas by the second article of the treaty now made with his  
 present Majesty, the forementioned treaty of privileges with *St. Ander* is  
 confirmed and ratified.

Another considerable advantage is, that the *French*, by the treaty  
 made with his present Majesty, are to pay the same duties at the *Dry-  
 Ports*, through which they pass by land-carriage, as we pay upon impor-  
 tation or exportation by sea: which was not provided for by the *Utrecht*  
 treaty.

By the cedula’s annexed to the treaty of 1667, the valuable privileges  
 of having Judge-conservators (appointed to make a more speedy and less  
 expensive

expensive determination of all controversies arising in trade) was fully established. But by the fifteenth article of *Utrecht* that privilege was in effect given up. For it is therein only stipulated, *That in case any other nation have that Privilege, we shall in like manner enjoy it.* But by the fifth article of the treaty now made with his present Majesty it is stipulated, that *We shall enjoy all the rights, privileges, franchises, exemptions, and immunities whatsoever, which we enjoyed by virtue of the Royal Cedula's or Ordinances by the treaty of 1667.* So that hereby the privilege of Judge-conservators is again confirmed to us.

As nothing but the reputation of his Majesty in foreign countries, and of his fixed purposes to pursue the real good of his kingdoms, could bring about treaties of this nature: so it is impossible to reflect with patience on the folly and ingratitude of those men, who labour to disturb him in the midst of these his Royal cares, and to misrepresent his generous endeavours for the good of his people.

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N<sup>o</sup> 42. *Monday, May 14.*

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*O fortunatos mercatores ! -----*

Hor.

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**S**EVERAL Authors have written on the advantage of trade in general; which is indeed so copious a subject, that as it is impossible to exhaust it in a short discourse, so it is very difficult to observe any thing new upon it. I shall, therefore, only consider trade in this paper, as it is absolutely necessary and essential to the safety, strength, and prosperity of our own nation.

In the first place, as we are an Island accommodated on all sides with convenient ports, and encompassed with navigable seas, we should be inexcusable, if we did not make these blessings of providence and advantages of nature turn to their proper account. The most celebrated merchants in the world, and those who make the greatest figure in antiquity, were situated in the little Island of *Tyre*, which, by the prodigious increase of its wealth and strength at sea, did very much influence the most considerable kingdoms and empires on the neighbouring continent, and gave birth