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REMARKS

ON

**FREE TRADE**

TO

**CHINA.**



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THE period being arrived at which the question of the Renewal of the East-India Company's exclusive Privileges presents itself to the consideration of Parliament, it was natural to expect that a violent opposition would be offered to such a renewal. The ancient idea of change, *quasi change*, being an evil, seems to have yielded to the directly opposite opinion; and it would almost appear to be the genius of this age to abolish existing institutions, merely because they do exist. The mercantile and manufacturing interests eagerly grasp at any alleviation of the distress under which they labour; and too many, even of our statesmen, in their desire to shield some favourite theory from condemnation, have been ready enough to divert the whole storm of publick indignation to the devoted head of the East-India Company. Committees have been established in the manufacturing towns, who amuse themselves and their partisans by glowing descriptions of the El Dorado they have painted for themselves in a Free Trade to China; and the eloquence of our liberal senators is tasked to keep up and enforce the delusion. But fortunately for the East-India Company and the

Country (for the interests of both are the same), it is not by these persons that the question is to be decided. The Parliament of this kingdom are the judges, and the Company may rest satisfied that in the execution of that trust, they will first *enquire*, then *think*, and then give the award, which the Company may then fearlessly abide.

The important question now before Parliament, resolves itself into two grand heads—the Exclusive Trade with China, and the Administration of the Government of India. It is to the first of these only that the following Remarks are addressed; and in the few arguments which they will contain, it is proposed to put entirely out of view all claim on the part of the Company to “vested rights,” or to any extraordinary favours; not that the writer of them is disposed at all to undervalue this claim, but because it appears particularly unpalatable to the publick taste: the question will be met on the broad ground of expediency or in expediency, as regards the interests of this kingdom.

In presuming to offer a few remarks on a subject already so ably and so fully discussed, it will not be expected that any great novelties should be brought forward, of which indeed the subject is hardly capable; but this is the less to be regretted, as the object proposed is not to earn for the writer any reputation of authorship, but, if possible, to lend a feeble aid towards exposing the fallacies which have been but too readily entertained with regard to this important branch of our policy.

The course of argument which will be pursued, is shortly this :

It is proposed to show, in the first place, the *impracticability* of establishing a Free Trade with China :

Secondly; That if such Trade *could* be established, the anticipated advantages would not result from it: and,

Thirdly ; That the experience of the past and all the other grounds from which men are wont to draw conclusions for the future, are in favour of the continuation of the East-India Company, as the *most beneficial possible mode* of conducting our commercial relations with China.

First, then, as to the *practicability* of establishing a Free Trade between this Country and China.

The trade of this Country with China is confined to the single port of Canton ; and it was not till after long struggles and great losses, that the English succeeded in establishing even that footing. “ The earliest attempt on the part of the Company’s servants to open an intercourse with that country, was made in 1614, through the agency of some eminent Chinese merchants, associated with houses at Japan. The conduct of the Dutch in China *had created such odium in the minds of the natives towards Europeans, that the scheme proved wholly unsuccessful.*” \* This gives us but a discouraging prospect of the manners and policy of the people we are so anxious to trade with. The attempt was repeated in 1637, when, “ *through the duplicity of the natives, they were obliged to abandon the prospect, and were moreover declared to be enemies of the Celestial Empire.*” † The Company, however, were not yet discouraged, and in 1701, having at last obtained permission to trade to the Port of Canton, they despatched *three ships* to commence the long desired traffick. Such was the inauspicious commencement of our intercourse with that people, and on no more permanent a foundation does our trade rest at this moment, than when those three ships first appeared at Canton. On the caprice of a people notoriously the most intractable on the face of the earth, rest all our hopes. It would be well, then, that we should

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\* Auber’s Analysis of the East India Company.

† Ibid.

consider how *they* would be disposed to look on the attempt to establish a Free Trade. And no person possessing the slightest knowledge of that people, will hesitate to say that they would resent such a change, even to the total destruction of the trade.\* A very brief consideration of the manner in which the commerce is conducted, will put this in a powerful light. The whole trade with foreigners is strictly confined to seven or eight individuals, termed *Hong merchants*, who are held responsible to their government for the duties of the ships they supply. It is high treason by the laws of China, and if discovered, punished with death, for any other native to trade with foreigners. Is it, then, for a moment to be credited, that this Nation, whose policy is so jealously opposed to all foreign trade whatever, and who are so unalterably attached to the customary mode of business, will suffer the *barbarians* whom they affect to despise, to work so entire a revolution in their commerce. For hundreds of years, the Chinese existed without any foreign intercourse, and there is great reason to fear they would not be slow in returning to the practice of their ancestors? If the merchants of Liverpool and Glasgow could prevail on the Celestial Emperor to become a disciple of Adam Smith and Mr. M'Culloch, then indeed, they might have hopes of realizing their schemes. But as we cannot make foreign powers what we would, we must be content to take them as they are.

Let us take a summary view of what, in all human probability, would be the result of the indiscriminate resort of English merchants to Canton. The Hongs would naturally be reluctant to bind themselves to their own government

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\* "The Chinese government, always extravagantly tenacious of established usage, is so little prepared to see the whole system of our Canton transactions overturned, that the chief Hong merchant, the *organ of its sentiments*, observed in 1828, that he contemplated the practicability of such a change as one to ten thousand!!" *Quarterly Review*, No. 83.

for *strangers*; their proverbial caution would prevent them from receiving any article of manufacture but after the most tedious and costly inspection; their cunning and avarice would prompt them to demand exorbitant prices for *the worst goods*, which, the desire to traffick being chiefly on his part, the merchant would be compelled to pay; and finally, their power not being checked by any united and resolute opposition among the merchants, they would advance their monstrous exactions (of which more by and by) to a most intolerable extent. The merchant, on the other hand, driven to despair by these oppressions, would be tempted to resort to an intercourse with the individual natives. As this smuggled trade increased, the dissatisfaction which the Chinese authorities have already evinced to other nations suspected of such practices, would be extended to the English. This increased disadvantage to the merchant, would increase his desire and attempts at smuggling, until the Celestial Government, finding all their edicts disregarded, would proceed to the full execution of their summary and sanguinary laws, and finally drive from their shores the "*ignorant barbarians*," who, having been admitted to some portion of their favour, had shown themselves so unworthy of it, as openly to violate the conditions upon which it was granted.

Now this is a plain unvarnished statement of the fate that would inevitably attend such an attempt. That the Chinese are *altogether averse to foreign trade*, and view its increase with the most vigilant jealousy, their official acts and edicts loudly proclaim; that they would highly resent any sudden change in the mode by which they have been accustomed to permit such trade, their tenacious attachment to established usages sufficiently testifies; and that they would not fail to resent any such change by the total destruction of their little despised commerce, the slightest knowledge of their dispositions and

customs will convince any unprejudiced mind. Their sole reason for trading at present is, the advantages they derive from their enormous imposts; and the very moment the payment of these is evaded, or the fatigue and difficulties attendant on their collection exceed, in their eyes, the value of them, that moment will they cease to trade at all. The American trade will doubtless be quoted against us on this point; but all unbiassed enquirers will suspend their inferences from this much-boasted trade, until they have considered (which we shall presently have occasion to do) how far the East-India Company itself *assists* in the maintenance of that trade.

But granting, for the sake of argument, the *possibility* of establishing this Free Trade. We deny, in the second place, that the advantages anticipated by its advocates would result from it. From all that has been said, these supposed advantages are chiefly two—that we should thereby obtain a wider channel for the exportation of our manufactures, and that we should get tea cheaper.

Let us see, then, on what grounds the first of these anticipated benefits is based. And here we must never lose sight of the important fact, that the trade of this Country with China is confined to one single port; and that purposely assigned us at the most distant corner of the empire, cut off from the capital and the main part of their dominions by all the disadvantages which can attend locality. The avowed charges\* in that port are exorbitant beyond the conception of any persons not acquainted with the fact; and the private and arbitrary exactions of the *Mandarin merchants* monstrous in the extreme. Is it, then, possible for any trade to thrive under such disadvantages? We are answered, the “genius of the English merchant” has overcome

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\* On a ship of 600 tons the whole of the port duties are not less than 2,784 taels (£.928.) or about *thirty shillings per ton!*—*Quarterly Review.*



greater ; but will the "genius of the English merchant" sell goods where there is no demand ? How if Canton and its surrounding country be *already supplied by the East-India Company* with as many English manufactures as they need, will the "genius of the English merchant" compel them to take more ? Or will it carry metals and manufactures over mountain and over dale to the interior of the empire, in defiance of the sanguinary laws and the "genius" of the Chinese ? Or, finally, having brought their wares to a market, is there any charm in the "genius of the English character" which will induce the natives of China to purchase goods at a higher price than they can themselves produce them ?—for it is evident that to such a price the charges of that enormous carriage must raise them. These are questions which well deserve the grave consideration of Parliament at this time. We should remember, that the Chinese are not a people in whom we can create a demand *ad libitum*, by the variety and novelty of the manufactures we could show to them. They are a singular instance of a nation divided from all others ; having in themselves the means of supplying all their wants, and little given to imitate the manners and habits of others. Tenacious of custom, *usque ad absurdum*, unchanging in apparel for thousands of years, severe in their laws against any such change, we can scarcely hope to convert them into English fashionables, even with the temptation of Birmingham saddlery or Manchester ginghams. What trade can be effected, the East-India Company do and will effect ; and if they, with all the advantages the confidence of the natives gives them, are unable to carry it to any vast extent, what shall we expect from merchants unknown and distrusted ?

A slight consideration of these facts, will suffice to prove, that if our export trade to China can be increased,

it is not to be done by turning loose on that jealous and restive people, a horde of individual adventurers ; but by the sure, though slow advances of a Company already possessed of an extraordinary share of their confidence ; gradually increasing that confidence by the observance of the same calm and unwavering policy, and thus capable of ascertaining the precise moment when the commerce may be augmented with safety. That they have the *power* to do this, their very opponents admit ; that it must be their *interest*, the cupidity which these opponents display to share in the supposed profits, will be sufficient to convince every impartial observer. If any doubt be entertained as to the facts here stated, it may be resolved by a reference to the evidence now being elicited before the Committee of the House of Commons—Look at the statements of Mr. Majoribanks (as reported in the publick papers, the *general* correctness of which has not been denied) a member of the Company's Factory at Canton ; and whose experience and personal knowledge both of the Chinese character and trade, qualify him to offer opinions and facts worthy of attention. But it does not suit the views of the Company's opponents to require the information of *sound practical* judges. They would rather listen to the voice of imagination, and close their ears to the displeasing testimony of facts.

We come now to consider the other great benefit to be derived from Free Trade with China, viz. reduction in the prices of tea. And it may be clearly shown, that this expectation is no better founded than the former. We are told, that the great competition which the opening of the trade would create, must bring down the price of tea : and, without now entering into the question whether such a reduction would be *any advantage to the State* ; we deny the position. These gentlemen do not appear to recollect, that the very cause on which they rely, to

bring down prices in England, must infallibly operate to *raise them in China*. Surely they have forgotten that the monopoly of the Company is nothing compared to that of the Hong merchants; and, unless they can alter the laws of China, as well as of England, any change in the latter must throw more power into the hands of those seven or eight individuals. The Hong merchants have been kept in awe solely by the power which the *union* of the Company gives them over the trade; but if hundreds of *disconnected* merchants are to resort to Canton, bidding against each other, each anxious to escape at almost any price from the ruinous expenses of the port, what is there to prevent the cunning and avaricious Hong from raising their prices to any conceivable extent? How is so perfect a union on the part of the sellers to be counteracted, but by similar union among the buyers? And how is such union to be expected from private merchants labouring under the grinding exactions of Chinese imposts? Moreover, would not these very charges *be raised* to drive the merchants to compliance with their exorbitant demands? The history of the past, shows that such a raising of prices *has been attempted*. And it also shows that nothing less than the power which the sole trade of England puts into the hands of the Company, could have defeated it. And here we come at the real support of the American trade, so much quoted against the Company. The Americans have no such Company, is the triumphant cry; true,—but the Americans and all other foreigners thrive under the shadow of ours. The English East-India Company, by overawing the Chinese monopolists, enable all other nations, *who buy after them*, to continue their trade. They prevent any arbitrary raising of the prices; and, in return, as the natural consequence of their pre-eminence, obtain the first choice of the teas. It may indeed be alleged that such a union of interests might exist among the traders without any such Com-

pany; and in proof of this assertion, the example of the merchants of different nations, trading to Sumatra and other spice islands, may possibly be adduced, where combinations among the natives to raise their prices have been frequently resisted with success, by a general determination of the traders not to buy. But to quote this as an analogous case, two most material circumstances must be overlooked; first, that inasmuch as the sellers of spices are all the individual natives of those islands, their combination can never be so perfect or so formidable as the close monopoly of the *seven or eight* Hong merchants; and, secondly, that in those ports the traders are not driven to succumb, by the enormous charges which in Canton would *absolutely prohibit* any resistance attended by delay. It is clear, then, that competition would go *at least as far* towards raising the prices in China, as it could by possibility to the lowering of them in England. So much with regard to the Hongs; but what would be the effect as respects the East-India Company? The credit of that body is so well established with the Hong merchants, that there is never the least reluctance with any of them to be security for the government duties on their ships. They are the only English authority known to, or cared for by, them; and by a long course of integrity and fair undaunted traffick have succeeded in obtaining from the Chinese, privileges granted to no other nation in the world. Mr. Marjoribanks tells the Committee of the House of Commons, that the English (*by which we should remember, is always meant the Company*) are alone permitted to use the Chinese character; a fact important only as it shows the estimation in which the Company is held; that woollen manufactures are received upon the faith of the Company's seal, and *purchased without inspection*. It follows from all this, and it is well known to be the fact, that the Company have an advantage

over all other dealers, in the first choice, both of sales and purchases. Such is the case at present. Now, what would be the result of opening the trade? The Company would of course continue to possess all their advantages, in which it would be folly to suppose the English merchants could rival them, any more than the American, Portuguese, or Dutch. How then would they be situated? *They would be freed from the restrictions under which they are now placed by law;*\* they would continue to possess themselves of what teas they chose, and having brought them home, would be entitled to demand their own price for them, instead of being by law compelled to put them up at a certain advance on the cost price! Where, then, would be the use of the boasted competition? If the publick refused to give the Company's prices, the publick must go without the good teas—obtain them otherwise they could not. The trade of the private merchants would be confined to the inferior teas, *now rejected by the Company*, with which they would deluge the country; while the Company would remain the unchecked and irresistible monopolizers of the best article, and of course dictate to the market the price that should be given for it.

It will be perceived that these remarks have been strictly confined to a brief exposure of the fallacy of the chief benefits which the opponents of the East-India Company propose to themselves from a Free Trade with China. And these two have been selected—both because they are the only advantages which have been supported by theories deserving any attention; and also

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\* “ And that it shall not be at any time hereafter lawful for the said United Company to put up their tea for sale at any prices which shall, upon the whole of the tea put up at any one sale, exceed the prime cost thereof, with the freights and charges of importation, together with lawful interest from the time of the arrival of such tea in Great Britain, and the common premium of insurance, as a compensation for the sea risk incurred thereon.” Act 24 Geo. 3. c. 38, § 5.

because the reasoning by which they are disposed of, admits of an easy application to any others that may be contended for.

Let us now proceed to the last point proposed to be argued at the commencement of these Remarks. Although it may, perhaps with some justice, be contended, that it requires something more than a mere refutation of the arguments brought forward by their opponents, to establish perfectly the Company's claim to a renewal of their exclusive privileges; yet it will readily be seen that very little beyond this will suffice. It remains, then, to be seen how far the experience of the past, and the other grounds from which we are accustomed to draw conclusions for the future, are in favour of a continuation of the exclusive trade vested in the East-India Company.

But before any consideration of that kind can be entered into with fit impartiality, the publick mind must be disabused of the insinuations so constantly enforced, that the interests of that corporation are necessarily opposed to those of the Country. If there be any force in the reasoning by which we have endeavoured to upset the idea of reduction in the prices of tea resulting from Free Trade, it is evident that this injurious opinion cannot for a moment subsist. If the Company do at present enjoy the confidence of the Chinese beyond all other traders, and if such would continue to be the case after the introduction of English merchants, what can the Company have to fear (looking to pounds shillings and pence) from such a measure? We have seen that they would have the preference in buying, that their established name and superior experience would give them immense advantages over the individual merchant, and that in all probability the trade of the latter would be almost exclusively confined to smuggling. When, in addition to all this, we remember that the Company

would be at liberty to demand what price they pleased for their teas (the best of which they would in fact continue to monopolize,) it is strange that any person should be found to give credence to the audacious and artful assertion, that the Company oppose a free commerce, solely because it would ruin their own trade. The East-India Company do no such thing : the Company oppose a Free Trade, because they *know* that such would be the means of an instant loss of *all* trade with China. They know well enough that they could have nothing to fear from competition with their countrymen, if that were all; they possess too much knowledge of the nature of the trade, and the difficulties it labours under, to feel any doubt as to the fate of those who should venture to compete with established credit and long proved experience. But *they know also*, that from the moment the Parliament of this country throws open to all its inhabitants the China Trade, from that moment the days of that Trade's existence are numbered. The representations of the Company are entitled to serious *attention*, because they are unquestionably the depositaries of much and valuable information. That they are entitled also to our *confidence*, a review of the manner in which they have hitherto exercised their trust, and the benefits which have resulted therefrom to all classes of this kingdom, will clearly declare.

Let us, then, bear in recollection the short history of the rise and progress of the Company's Trade with China, which has been before extracted from Mr. Auber's Analysis : that history of itself speaks volumes in favour of the East India Company, and it is not the only thing for which the Company are indebted to Mr. Auber, in the course of his excellent and authentick publication, the merits of which are now so highly and so duly appreciated. Is there the slightest ground for supposing that any other than a perfectly united and con-

sistent policy among the adventurers, at length *permitted* to trade with this shy and haughty people, could have preserved *any* footing in that country, much less have increased it to its present prosperity? The influence which the Company have been enabled to obtain, has been most beneficially exerted for the salvation of the property and lives of unfortunate individuals, who have chanced to fall under the arbitrary displeasure of the Chinese authorities. Some persons (with the usual want of knowledge displayed on this important question) have not scrupled to ridicule such a description of the Chinese government; and have even gone so far as to assert that the Americans carry on a flourishing trade with Canton, and have been engaged in no disputes. The assertion is utterly false. It is known to the servants of the Company that such disputes frequently take place,\* and frequently have a disastrous

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\* Hundreds of instances might be quoted to this point; but we will be content at present with one, the truth of which is unquestionably established. It is told in such an able manner in the Quarterly Review, that we cannot do better than extract it, without alteration or comment.—“*As a signal contrast to our own countrymen, we will shortly state the unhappy and disgraceful American case which occurred in 1821, when an Italian sailor, on board a vessel of the United States, accused of murdering a Chinese woman, was delivered up to the government and strangled, though perfectly innocent of the crime imputed to him. The American captains and agents whose commercial proceedings were put a stop to until satisfaction should be made to the government, persuaded this poor Italian, by name Terranova, that he would certainly be acquitted and shortly restored to his ship. No sooner, however, was he in the hands of the Chinese, than a mock trial was instituted, at which not a single American was present. A body of the captains and officers of the East India Company’s ships repaired to the Consol court house, but were refused admittance on the plea that as the prisoner was an American it was no affair of theirs. It was afterwards learned from some of the Chinese who were present, that after some questions put to the poor man and the pretended examination of two witnesses, they produced a paper, which they advised him to sign, by imprinting the mark of his open hand upon it in red ink; they represented to him that this was merely a statement of the trial, which must be sent to Peking for inspection, and that on the return of an answer he would most likely be immediately acquitted. The unfortunate man, surrounded by strangers and put off his guard*



termination; while with the Company, on the contrary, whenever any difference has arisen, the authorities have been easily and speedily pacified. Seeing, then, that the English have attained to a much greater weight with the Chinese than any other nation, and knowing as we do, for an indisputable fact, that our trade with that country exceeds that of all other foreigners put together, it is fair to conclude, that these advantages are due to that part of our policy, in which only we have materially differed from other nations. It is no undue assumption on the part of the Company to claim exclusively to themselves the *merit* of that pre-eminence which experience shows them exclusively to possess.

Thus have we briefly gone through the several heads of arguments proposed at the outset. We have seen the formidable doubt that exists as to the possibility of establishing a Free Trade with China: and whether or no the arguments here adduced have been conclusive to that point, it cannot be denied that such is the opinion

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*by the fair promises of a PRINCIPAL SECURITY MERCHANT!* imprinted his hand on the paper; all further proceedings were instantly stopped—it was a confession of his guilt! Poor Terranova, still ignorant of his fate, was taken to prison, and according to Chinese custom in condemned cases, his irons were taken off and he had plenty to eat and drink. On the fourth or fifth day after, the *security merchants* who attended his trial visited him, and told him that a reply had been received from Pekin (distant 1200 miles), and that it was necessary he should go into the city and hear the result. The wretched man, in high hopes of a speedy liberation, cheerfully obeyed; he was taken into the city, and the first intimation he had of his cruel fate was, the executioner and implements of death before him, with the heads of decapitated Chinese hung round an open space crowded with native spectators. He uttered a cry of despair, and, was understood, to protest his innocence, and to implore the sight of a European or American. The executioner paid no attention to his outcries, but immediately proceeded to strangle him according to the horrid Chinese mode, by the gradual tightening of ropes from the lower extremities upwards; his bones were all broken, and the mangled remains of the victim delivered up to the American consul! This officer, a man of honour and feeling, disgusted at the conduct of his interested and *dis-united* countrymen, *threw up his commission instantly.*"

of a large majority of those best qualified by practical experience to judge; and if we are convinced, in the second place, that the advantages supposed to be contingent on such a trade, are at least doubtful; or, lastly, that much benefit has resulted from the mode in which our China trade has heretofore been conducted, we shall pause before we overturn, upon theories so very suspicious, a system which a long course of years has proved to be entitled to esteem.

The opponents of the Company, when defeated in argument, have been always ready to fall back on what they deem incontrovertible ground; and to exclaim, that, however the force of reasoning may make against them, the testimony of facts has proved that the merchants of Holland and the United States of America derive large profits from their China commerce; which profits, it is somewhat gratuitously assumed, might have been ours, but for the East-India Company. It is rather strange that a doctrine so opposed to the principles of free trade, as that the gain of others *must* be our loss, should proceed from persons who would be thought the very patterns of liberality. But it is no part of the present design to enter into a discussion of these supposed facts, because they have been often ably and fully refuted. It is sufficient, therefore, here to notice the fact of such refutation, and to observe that it is satisfactorily ascertained, that the American trade is conducted in Canton at a commission of not less than five per cent, while the Company pay but two. The high price of tea in England is occasioned by the heavy duties, and the other causes which enhance the prices of all commodities in this country; and it may not yet be so generally known as it deserves, that *not two-fifths* of the price at which tea is retailed in this country, goes to the Company to cover all the prime cost, freight and expenses, and so much talked-of profits. Notwithstanding the assertions so boldly offered to the

contrary, it is clearly made out by recent publications, that the prices of tea at Halifax and Quebec (where the causes above mentioned do not operate) are lower than those of the same quality in New York.

There is yet one argument for the preservation of the existing mode of commerce, which, it is apprehended, in the present state of our finances, will not be underrated.

If there be any force in our argument, it is clear as the sun at noon-day, that a Free Trade to China, if such *could* be established, would not *bring down* the prices of tea; and consequently, could not *increase* the consumption of that article. Is, then, the Chancellor of the Exchequer prepared in these times to tamper with a revenue of three millions and a half per annum, which is the amount of duties collected on tea? Is he willing to put these duties on the same footing as those upon *tobacco*?—To incur similar charges of collection, similar convictions for smuggling, and, after all, a similar deficiency in receipts? And is he willing to do this, when no satisfactory case has been made out, of the benefits to be derived? That an *increase* of price (which we have seen would be the effect of removing the Company's restrictions) would produce an increase of duty, is undoubtedly true; but it is no less true, that a *diminution of consumption* would follow, and consequently the aggregate of duties on tea would be no greater (if it were not less) than at present. The only consequence of the change in this particular would be, that instead of a Custom House clerk attending the sales at the East-India House, to note down at each purchase a similar sum for duty, and at stated periods to receive the amount without the loss of a shilling, the demands of the Crown would be scattered among all the merchants of the kingdom, and the whole paraphernalia of Custom House officers, Coast-guard men,

and Informers, would be called into action to guard the duties on tea, at a similar enormous cost with which they now protect the tobacco duties, and perhaps *with a similar success!*

It remains but to guard the Reader against supposing the arguments here imperfectly sketched, to be *all* that can be said in support of the Company's privileges. Much valuable information exists, of which the Writer of these remarks is wholly ignorant; and even of the little stock of which he believes himself possessed, something has been suppressed, from the fear of being considered a copyist of other productions. It is not the least disadvantage that a writer on a subject so generally discussed is exposed to, that all he can say is perhaps no more than has been said by others. Thus it may probably be discovered, that many of the opinions and facts contained in these Remarks have been touched on by previous writers; and especially by the author of the able and well-informed article in the Quarterly Review, to which reference has been made; the whole of which is well worthy the perusal of every person desirous of being informed on this head. To this want of originality, if it shall be charged against him, the writer can only plead, that facts are facts, how often soever they may be insisted upon; and when the numerous publications on this question are considered, it cannot be expected that every argument should possess the grace of novelty.

*London, 26th February 1830.*

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