

THE ECONOMIC IDEAS OF DANIEL DEFOE

VOLUME TWO

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TRADE WITH EUROPE

During Defoe's career as a pamphleteer, a profound shift in England's foreign trade had begun which made north-west Europe less and less important as the chief market for the exports of her own produce and changed the emphasis in her imports from Dutch gin and brandy and Dutch and German linen cloth to raw materials for the developing Scottish and Irish linen industries and for the increasing demands of the English metallurgical and shipping trades. But this change in the character and direction of her foreign trade had not gone far enough by 1731 to affect Defoe's conviction that north-west Europe was still her most important market and indeed it still took one-third of her domestic exports at mid-century, twenty years after his death. (1) That he was usually refreshingly free from the still current envy of our former most formidable trade rival may be ascribed to his estimate of the value of the Dutch market and to his concern for maintaining the solidarity of the Protestant interest in Europe which he thought was endangered by the growing strength of the Catholic powers. (2) Indeed he maintained that the Dutch had played an important part in that early development of the English woollen industry which in his account belongs more to romance than to economic history. The export of English cloth to Holland had begun during Elizabeth I's reign because of her great influence over the Dutch: "The Hollanders ador'd the Queen, and esteem'd her, as she really was, their great Patroness and Protector, and in

1. P. Deane, The First Industrial Revolution (1969) p. 55; P. Mathias, The First Industrial Nation (1969) pp. 99-101.
2. "The Danger of the Protestant Religion" in A True Collection, I, pp. 230-233. Cf. his similar attitude towards Sweden, Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 64) p. 258.



Return, they omitted nothing that would oblige her, or her People; and particularly the encouraging and propagating the Consumption of the English Manufacture was their particular Care, knowing they could do nothing that could oblige her Majesty more." (3) In the first volume of the "Review" he had declared, "the Dutch can no way Injure our Trade but are helps with us to the settling all the Considerable Trade in the World, in these Parts; and tho' the Native Prejudice some People have at that Diligent Nation, prompts them to be always repining at them; I take leave to say, 'Tis not the Dutch Cunning, but our Folly; not the Dutch Diligence, but our Laziness and Luxury; not the Dutch out-doing us, but our undoing our selves, that Injures our Trade." (4) Almost a year later he again complained of the "continued Cavils" of his countrymen against their Dutch neighbours only because the Hollanders understood their own interest better. He undertook to prove that, "next to the Spaniards, if restor'd to us in the State of Trade formerly settled, the Dutch are to us the most beneficial Nation in Trade in the World; with Whom we Trade to more real Advantage in the General Ballance, who aid us most in the Consumption of our Manufactures, and the Growth of our Country." (5) Even though he would have preferred that England should export all her manufactures fully finished, he approved of the trade in undyed white cloth to Holland until English dyers could so perfect their workmanship as to dye them better and cheaper than the Dutch. He thought that this trade was so important that he told his readers, "it would be hard that

3. A Plan of the English Commerce. . . . p. 104.

4. Review, Vol. I, (No. 83) p. 346.

5. Ibid, Vol. II (No. 118) p. 469.

because your Dyers are Bunglers at their Trade, you should support them at the Expence of your whole Manufacture." (6)

In addition he claimed that many of these Wiltshire whites were sent from Holland into Germany, France and other countries where they were worn undyed as German surtout coats, monastic habits and uniforms for the Saxon cavalry. (7) In September 1709, commenting on the rumours that Denmark, Prussia, Poland and Russia were about to join in an attack on Sweden after Poltava, he was most alarmed by the danger of weakening such an important pillar of the Protestant interest in northern Europe and by the threats to Dutch and English trade from the Danish designs.

England and Holland must keep the Duchy of Bremen out of Danish hands because their trade with Hamburg would be endangered if Denmark possessed both banks of the Elbe. Similarly if Denmark recovered Schonen (Scania) from Sweden and regained complete control of the Sound, the chief Dutch trade, that with the Baltic, would be threatened. That Defoe added that this would also affect the English trade to Holland, "the greatest Market in Europe" for her woollen manufactures, shows the importance which he attached to the Dutch use of English cloth in making up cargoes to the Baltic. (8) As late as 1727 he repeated the popular estimate that the Dutch took £2 million of English woollen manufactures each year, or one-quarter of the current estimates of her total production of woollen goods, but nevertheless he was less certain than some of his contemporaries that the trade

6. In fact the English made so much progress in dyeing during the 17th century that even in 1660 about two-thirds of the export of broadcloths was dyed and by 1700 there was only a very small export of undressed white broadcloths to Holland. R. Davis, English Overseas Trade 1500-1700 (1973) p. 38.
7. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 160) pp. 638-639.
8. Ibid., Vol. VI, (No. 74)

balance between the two countries was always in England's favour. (9) As we brought in the goods of "almost all Countries in the World thro' their Hands," it was hard to determine which way the balance turned. A "dear Year of Corn in England" with consequent prohibition of export and of distilling, which would in turn produce an increased importation of brandy from Holland, or a shortage of re-exports of Virginia tobacco and of West Indies sugar, might so easily turn the balance against England. Indeed in 1727 "the late Encrease of the Importations from Holland, such as fine Hollands and Linen of all Sorts, and admitting Brandy from thence ... has infinitely encreas'd the Debt of Trade on our Side, and at least turn'd the Ballance very much in favour of the Dutch." (10) Although he agreed that Holland had few manufactures of her own, he recognized the superior quality of her linen, which he thought was mainly due to her use of the excellent Silesian yarn, of her fine writing paper, which he considered to be even better than the French, and of her Delft ware which he said only fell short of China ware in the fineness of the material and not at all in the workmanship. (11)

In Europe he believed that the Dutch and British economies could exist side by side, that they were complementary rather than competitive, but the two nations remained keen rivals in

9. Joshua Gee, The Trade and Navigation of Great Britain Considered (1729) pp. 18-19, however, thought that the amount of smuggling between Holland and England considerably reduced the favourable balance.
10. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 168-169.
11. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 115-116.

more distant waters, especially in the colonial sphere. (12) Even in Europe, when the French prohibited trade with Holland in 1711, he welcomed the possibility that England might become the intermediary in trade between France and Holland rather than that the Dutch should continue to act as the middlemen between the French and the English. Previously whenever England obtained any French goods which were not smuggled, she obtained them from Holland, like the French wines and brandy which were imported into Scotland to take advantage of the lower duties before the Act of Union became effective. Because the Dutch had so little of their own produce to sell, direct trade between England and France together with the French prohibition of their trade with Holland, would compel the Dutch "to come to England for all the French Goods they want; which first deprives them of the Medium of Trade, which was their Gain before - Causes them to buy their Wines and Brandy dear, and at second Hand, of other Nations; takes away the Profit of the return of Goods from them, and at last, Stagnates their Navigation, by leaving their Ships out of the Trade." (13)

On the other hand, he had already shown a full appreciation of the vulnerability of Holland to a French invasion. Lord Haversham's criticisms of the Scots and the Dutch in a speech in the Lords in 1705 provoked a vigorous answer from Defoe who had other differences with Haversham as he had with Sir Humphrey

12. Supra, pp. 15, 73-78.

13. Review, Vol. VIII (No. 10) pp. 37-38.

Mackworth. (14) In blaming Prince Louis of Baden and the Dutch Field Deputies for the failure to take more vigorous action against the French in 1703 and in particular for preventing the implementation of Marlborough's cherished plan for an advance along the Moselle valley, Defoe alleged that Haversham had reflected upon the Dutch as a nation. (15) He proceeded to justify the institution of the Field Deputies and paid this tribute to Dutch bravery and to their devotion to the Allied cause:

"We never find the Dutch sparing of their Bones upon any reasonable occasion, if at a distance from home, nor are they shy of committing the command of their Troops to our Generals. Witness the eight thousand Men under Prince Lewis, their Army on the Danube, under the Duke of Marlborough; Witness their Fleets always under our Admirals. But when the War is on their own Frontiers, and the Armies at their Doors, when on the least Defeat or Disappointment, the Enemy is in their Bowels in 24 Hours, and some of their capital Fortresses are exposed, This alters the Case. The Dutch are a numerous, a rich and a trading Nation, they have a great deal to lose, and it lies in a little compass, and the least miscarriage exposes them to infinite damage before they can look about them." (16)

14. In A Reply to a Pamphlet Entituled, The L(or)d H(aversham)'s Vindication of his Speech (1706) pp. 8-9, Defoe accused him of ingratitude to William III who had made him a peer. A former Whig, Haversham had become a leader of the High Tory opposition during the Spanish Succession War, and in 1705 he was responsible for a motion, intended to embarrass the Godolphin-Marlborough ministry, to invite the Dowager Electress Sophia to reside in England. In another motion he condemned the Scottish Act of Security which Defoe defended (infra, p.811) Like Mackworth, he also supported the subsidised manufacture of cloth in workhouses. See J. Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 117-119; J.R. Moore, Daniel Defoe, Citizen of the Modern World, pp. 79, 303; G.M. Trevelyan, op. cit., Vol. II (Ramillies and the Union with Scotland) pp. 89-92, 244-245.
15. The responsibility in these instances was the Dutch generals, not the Field Deputies. See G.M. Trevelyan, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 316-317.
16. A Reply to a Pamphlet, pp. 24-26.

The part played by the Dutch in Marlborough's victory at Ramillies gave him the opportunity to comment that the Dutch horse, "of whom we used to say a thousand Reproachful Things, and reckon them as nothing" had "had the principal Share of Action" in the battle. (17)

Despite the fact that he was in the pay of Harley's Tory ministry, he had rushed into print early in 1712 to answer Swift's indictment of the Dutch in his famous pamphlet. He completely rejected the thesis that they were the principals in the war and the English only auxiliaries, maintained strongly that Flanders was the chief theatre of the conflict for England as much as for Holland and pointed to the Dutch refusal to make a separate peace to demonstrate their steadfast loyalty to the alliance. (18) But his exposed personal position after 1710 and his financial dependence upon Harley inexorably forced him into mounting criticisms of the Dutch for their too close association with the Whigs in opposition to the Tory peace terms with the French. (19) Thus he repeated the accusations that they had frequently failed to fulfil their quotas of men and ships, that they had made great gains from the war while Britain had been impoverished and, in marked contrast to his earlier remarks, he now asked why "the States alone should have a Negative Voice in the Field." (20) Yet in the main his attacks on the Dutch were concentrated on the charge that "they were acted by a Faction from hence," that they were trying in concert with the

17. Review, Vol. III (No. 90) p. 357.
18. A Defence of the Allies and the Late Ministry (1712), pp. 8-15, 18-26, 35-36.
19. Supra, pp. 380-383, 411-413, 418.
20. A Further Search into the Conduct of the Allies ... (1712) pp. 55-74; Peace or Poverty (1712) p. 15; Reasons against Fighting ... (1712) pp. 3, 6, 8, 19-24.

Whigs to prolong the war in the hope of ousting the Tories from the government. (21) By July 1712, he had become so alarmed by the deterioration in the relations between the two maritime powers that he devoted six successive issues of the "Review" to emphasizing the community of interests between them, that Britain and Holland were "the Life and Soul of the Protestant Interest", that for Britain to make war on her chief ally would be "like a Man cutting off his Left-Hand with his Right," that it must ruin the Hanoverian succession and bring in the Pretender, so that only a Jacobite could desire it. (22) Even the first of his anonymous pamphlets which referred to the possibility of such a war, and which could have given him greater freedom to prepare his countrymen for it than the pages of the "Review," was entirely given up to the economic dangers of such a conflict. Whatever the military outcome, Britain must lose. Not that he considered that the Dutch would be the victors, but the war at sea would be hard fought. Both nations had been so drained by the past twenty-two years of the struggle against France that they would require at least twice that span for full recovery. Apart from the "mighty and insupportable" additional financial burden, the immediate effect of a Dutch war must be "uncommon mischiefs" for British trade. In the last war with Holland, we had lost 2000 ships during the first year because no part of British trade was beyond their reach.

21. An Enquiry into the Danger and Consequences of a War with the Dutch (1712) p. 37.
22. Review, Vol. VIII (No. 200) pp. 801-803; (No. 201); (No. 205) pp. 823-824; (No. 206) pp. 827

"On the contrary," he added, "some of the best Parts of our Trade are in great Danger of being entirely lost to them, such as the East-India, African and East Country Trades in particular ... their Collonies of superiour Strength lying so near ours in the two First, and their Potent Alliances in the latter, enabling them effectually to supplant Us." But Britain's home trade was almost as vulnerable, so that he alleged that those who wanted the war were landed men who had forgotten how they depended on trade for maintaining the value of their lands and their high rents. Thus the landed men around Newcastle-upon-Tyne would soon feel the effects of the interruption of the coal trade by the reduced demand when coal reached £4 a chaldron at London. In the last Dutch war this trade had been reduced by more than 50,000 chaldron in a year. Similarly the landed men along the east coast from Hull to the shores of Sussex must suffer from the fall in the large exports of corn to Holland and could expect demands for abatement of rents. Without this market, these lands "must either lye unmanur'd, or at least be laid down, and only employ'd in breeding of Cattle, a poor Trade and which is now left to the Northern and Western Parts of England and to the Hights of Scotland." He conjured up the same spectre of reduced demand for agricultural output in the dire effects of a Dutch war on our chief manufacture which, it was thought, exported so much cloth to Holland. It was not only the demand for wool that would be affected but "the General Consumption of Provisions."



"That the great Trade of Broad-Cloth, Kersies, etc. one of the greatest Branches of Trade in England, particularly in Leeds, Huthersfield, Wakefield, Hallifax, Bradford, Rochdale, and the adjacent Parts, and where it is by modest Computation supposed, FOUR Hundred Thousand People are employ'd ... that this great Trade is principally maintained and supported by the Exportation to Holland.

That the Stop to that Exportation, must of necessity encourage the Dutch in the Making the same kind of Goods in their own Country, particularly at Leyden, where they have for some Years endeavour'd it, and are Daily improving.

.....  
 That the North-Riding of York-shire, Bishoprick of Durham, and great part of Lancashire, and Westmorland are supported, by breeding and feeding Cattle, for the Consumption of the West Riding; ..."

Because the collier ships would be in ten times greater danger from the Dutch than from the French privateers, all manufactures which used coal would be made much dearer but the chief sufferers from the increased price of fuel would be "the midling Families of our Tradesmen and the Poor" who already endured great hardship in the winter when coal was scarce and dear. There would be a similar increase in the price of salt as London and eastern England obtained its supplies from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In the last Dutch war, it had reached 4d. per pound and now there would be the additional burden of the heavy tax of 3s.4d. per bushel.

His second pamphlet on a possible Dutch war was an elaborate attempt to justify the Tory government for its attempt to secure a general peace after a long and exhausting war, that Anne by withdrawing from the conflict now held the balance in

23. An Enquiry into the Danger and Consequences of a War with the Dutch (1712) passim.

Europe and that any attempt to upset that balance would be tantamount to a declaration of war against her. Thus the Dutch in seeking to prolong the conflict would be making war upon the Queen rather than England making war upon the Dutch. Yet he forecast that such a war would be "the most mischievous and most bloody War" that had yet been known and was to be avoided at all costs. (24) If Defoe was also the author of "A Justification of the Dutch", he was using the cloak of anonymity to repudiate the views which he was expressing in the "Review" and in the rest of his propaganda for ending the war. The calumnies against the Dutch were spread by men of no estate or who owned lands that were so encumbered with debt that only a complete upheaval in both church and state offered any hope of recovering them. Instead of being deficient in their quotas, the Dutch had contributed more to the common cause than the British, in proportion to the size of their country. As for the charge that they grew rich by the war, it was an accident that the war had been fought in the neighbouring territory of Flanders and "the Money spent amongst them, must of Necessity have been spent in any other Place" which had been the seat of the war. "The most dead Trade in Peace," he insisted, "is of more Profit than all the best Advantages which can be had by Expenses of an Army in a Country the Theatre of War, besides all that ever heard of the Dutch must allow, that Peace and Trade makes them Great, and is the only Harvest they expect." They had had the expense of capturing all the towns which had been given to them as a barrier and if we had gained these towns

24. The Justice and Necessity of a War with Holland (1712) passim.

25. The Review of the Affairs of Great Britain (1710) pp. 3-10, 29-34.

we should have been obliged to entrust them to our ally "because the Yearly Revenues we must send to keep up the Garrisons of those Towns wou'd be as burdensome as the carrying on the War."

(25)

In trying to heal the breach with our chief ally, the beneficial trade with Holland probably weighed as much with him as his constant concern for the Protestant Interest in Europe, but the trade to Scandinavia came in for severe criticism because, in his view, it represented an avoidable loss of bullion. At first he believed that the initial restrictions on the importation of Asiatic textiles were adequate and in February 1705 he declared, "there are other Trades less necessary, and which Export much more of our Bullion than the East-India Trade." He singled out the trade with Norway as "the Trade of all our Publick Necoce, which is worse still, with the least Reason for it," but he looked with almost equal disfavour on the trade with Denmark and Sweden. The ships used in this trade were usually "very great Ships, from 200 to 500 Tons burthen, and upward" and therefore must train and employ large numbers of seamen which was almost as serious an objection as the loss of bullion. He further complained that the Scandinavian lands took nothing in return "except Tobacco, Pewter, and a very very few Manufactures" and that the freight charges which were paid for these imports were almost as large as the value of the cargo and in some cases more. Indeed he doubted if they bought more British goods than a tenth part of the combined value of their goods and freight charges but he complained that this "injurious" trade aroused little

popular comment: "The East India Company and the Bank of England, (25) put

"... this is one of the Gulphs at which our Money runs out of the Nation; and yet, as ... they bring no Silks nor Toys to annoy our Weavers, we have no Clamours against them at the Door of the House of Commons, no Petitions, no Bills to prevent either their bringing their Goods in, or their carrying our Money out." (26)

The reason, of course, was that Britain needed the timber and naval stores but they could be supplied from British territories, delivered by British seamen in British ships and Britain "need not pay one Farthing of ready Money for them" because they would be procured by her own manufactures. Linking together some of his favourite propositions he announced,

"Now is the Time to Man a Navy without Pressing.  
To stop our Bullion going out unnecessarily, before it be all gone.  
To settle a Supply of Timber and Naval Stores from our own Collonies  
To Employ the Poor without ruining our Trade, and confounding the Manufactures." (27)

More than twenty years later he was still complaining of the failure to take more notice of this disadvantageous trade which carried out "more Silver in Specie, nay in our very Coin, Crowns, and half Crowns, than the East India Company it self." (28)

It was generally believed that the bullion loss to Northern Europe was so large that it even drained away English currency and that merchants did not always try to evade the ban on the export of coins by first melting them down into specie. In 1727 Defoe observed that Norwegian fir was in such great demand that "some have complain'd in England, that they carry away the greatest Quantity of our current Coin of any Trade whatever;

26. Review, Vol. I, (No. 96) pp. 397-398.

27. Ibid, (No. 98) p. 403

28. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 268.

for they covet chiefly our Crowns and Half Crowns," (29) but fifty years earlier the author of "England's Great Happiness" had answered the same allegation by Complaint with the argument that English land could be put to more profitable use than growing timber and that thus England obtained her shipbuilding materials more cheaply. (30) Similarly John Cary accepted the loss of money because he thought that anything which saved home timber was an advantage (31) and while William Wood computed this annual loss at £200,000, he claimed that England gained more than twice this amount from other nations by her shipping. (32) Defoe was alone in deploring the adverse balance of trade with Northern Europe more than the much larger and continuous drain of silver to the East Indies, but his attitude seems to have owed more to his feeling that England was dangerously with dependent on this area for her vital supplies of naval stores, to the presumed loss of income from freights to Scandinavian shipping and to his conviction that these strategic imports could be replaced by production in the North American colonies. H.S.K. Kent, however, has stated that, except in the war years, most of the shipping in the Norwegian timber trade during the first half of the eighteenth century was English, although the Norwegian merchant fleet expanded rapidly. (33)

Recent discussion suggests that contemporary pamphleteers were mistaken about the alleged loss of coin and bullion. At

29. Atlas Maritimus, p. 125.

30. J.R. McCulloch, editor, Early English Tracts on Commerce, p. 260.

31. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... p. 132.

32. W. Wood, A Survey of Trade, Part II, pp. 90-91.

33. H.S.K. Kent, "The Anglo-Norwegian Timber Trade in the Eighteenth Century," Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd. ser. Vol. VIII, (1955) pp. 68-71.

first Professor Wilson claimed that bullion payments were essential necessary in this mainly bilateral trade and that this helps to account for the obsessive concern of mercantilist writers with "treasure" but the evidence submitted by Professor Price and J.G. Sperling supports Heckscher's contention that mercantilist pamphleteers were not a reliable guide for the actual mechanism of international trade. They indicate that a sufficiently developed system of multilateral payments by bills of exchange, based primarily on Amsterdam and secondly on London, had evolved before the end of the seventeenth century, following the contraction in the European silver supply, and that there was an elaborate European exchange network extending from Lisbon to Aleppo and from Messina to Archangel. The English customs accounts show the adverse balance of visible trade with Northern Europe but very little transfer of bullion, only £3159 to Denmark-Norway in 19 years, although Joshua Gee asserted that it was carried away secretly, "lest by being made public, it should lead to an Enquiry whence the Bullion came." (34) The only persistent payment to Northern Europe was to Russia but this coincided with a decade when England had a slight balance on visible trade and disappeared when the balance moved in Russia's favour. By far the largest movement of English specie in Europe was to Holland with which England had a favourable trade balance and represented the settlement of the relatively

34. J. Gee, The Trade and Navigation of Great Britain Considered, p. 119.

small balances which remained after the main bulk of commercial transactions by bills of exchange. (35) On the other hand, Mr. Kent claimed that there was some degree of barter in the Norwegian timber trade throughout the century, that the Norwegians wanted English coin because of their chronic money shortage and that it became the common medium of exchange in south Norway to such an extent that an order of 1758 legalized the payment of taxes in English coins. (36) Defoe, however, seems to have been well aware of the existence of a multilateral payments system in the Baltic trade. After suggesting that the development of this commerce in naval stores was as great a discovery as that of America, he claimed that it was now "one of the most flourishing Articles of Trade in Europe; and especially attended with this particular and valuable Circumstance, that 'tis carried on to the greatest extent with the least share of Money in Specie, of any Trade at this time known in the World." Spain was the only nation that sent money in specie into the Baltic but this was because she had not sent any ships there until very recently and had bought her naval stores from the Dutch. Britain sent fish,

35. C. Wilson, "Treasure and Trade Balances: The Mercantilist Problem," Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd ser. Vol. II (1949), pp. 152-161; E. Heckscher, "Multilateralism, Baltic Trade and the Mercantilists", Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd ser. Vol. III (1950) pp. 219-228; C. Wilson, "Treasure and Trade Balances: Further Evidence," Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd ser. Vol. IV (1951) pp. 231-242; J.M. Price, "Multilateralism and/or Bilateralism: A Note on the Settlement of British Trade Balances with 'The North', ca. 1700," Econ. Hist. Rev. 2nd ser. Vol. XIV (1961) pp. 255-274; J.G. Sperling, "The International Payments Mechanism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd ser. Vol. XIV (1961) pp. 446-468.
36. H.S.K. Kent, loc. cit., pp. 62, 72-73.

salt, lead, tin, pewter, sugar, tobacco, woollen and silk manufactures, and East India goods. The French traded rather in wine, brandy, silks, toys, perfume and paper while the Dutch carried more herrings, spices, train oil and whale fin. "But in the case of all three nations, here is neither Silver or Gold carry'd one way or other, but they trade infinitely to Advantage both ways without it; making good the deficiency or the balance of Trade upon one Nation, by Drafts upon another, and governing the whole by the Rates of the Exchange, which is generally negotiated upon Hamburg." (37) One possible explanation why he continued to deplore the drain of specie to northern Europe in later pamphlets is that he was so eager that New England should become our chief source of supply of these essential materials for both trade and war, the subject of a whole chapter in his "Plan of the English Commerce," that he was ready to play upon the old prejudices which Englishmen still entertained about the Baltic trade.

Because Defoe had so constantly reiterated his conviction that England had been blessed with a unique supply of the finest raw materials for woollen manufacture, he found it difficult to accept the evidence which accumulated during his closing years that other countries could make tolerable cloth of their inferior wool. This is probably the explanation of the contradictions in his later comments on trade with our traditional markets in northern and central Europe, at one moment still asserting that Europe did not produce a wool "capable of making our fine Broad Cloths of Warminster, Trowbridge, Bradford and Froom, or our

37. The History of the Principal Discoveries and Improvements, (1726) pp. 200-202.



fine Gloucester and Worcester Whites; no nor perhaps such as our Wakefield and Leeds Cloths, tho's what we call coarse, yet of Substance and Weight inimitable" and, within the space of a page, admitting that the Saxons were making cloths which successfully competed with Colchester bays and Welsh flannel. These were noted for being "thick and downy, well mill'd and the Nap raised", only possible when the wool was "fine and soft, and the Workmanship close and thick." Yet now these were not only made in Saxony, but were sold at Frankfort, Nuremberg and "most of the other Fairs ... in the Upper Germany." The English cloths were not kept out by prohibitive duties but they had to pass through so many hands in different countries and were subject to so many charges and transport costs that the Saxon products were markedly cheaper. Although he noted that the Saxon wool was brown or russet in colour, he added that the bays were generally dyed, as were many of the flannels.

(38) After his derisory comments on "French dog's hair broad-cloth" and "cabbage net bays", (39) he was now forced to admit that there was "a manifest Difference between the Wool being good for nothing, and being not so good as the English or Irish Wool." In Brandenburg, they now made "all those coarser Manufactures" which could be manufactured from their own wool and therefore the Elector had prohibited the corresponding English cloths such as the "Yorkshire Kersies, double and single Dozens, the coarse Goods made in Lancashire, such as Half-Thicks, Pennistones, Duffels, Blanketting" which had formerly been sent "in great Quantities" to Hamburg, Stettin, Stralsund and other ports

38. A Brief Deduction of the British Woollen Manufacture, pp. 45-46.

39. Mercator, No. 105, January 23, 1713 (1714).

along the south shore of the Baltic. The same was true of Sweden although their wool was even coarser and only fit for "the poorest and roughest" manufactures that could be imagined. The Swiss of Zurich were making "Camlets, Shalloons and several other Sorts," both for men's wear as well as women's, which it was hard to distinguish from the same varieties made in England, as the workmen who had set them up had been brought from Spitalfields. These goods were taken to Basle and sent down the Rhine to Mainz and up the Main to Frankfort where their cheapness made them "go too far in Supplanting the English Goods of the same Denomination." (40) Yet the very next year, he was again referring to the coarse wool of Saxony and proclaiming that the quality of English wool was "peculiar to this Country, ... nor do all the Depredations made upon it by Imitation, by Application for the getting Wool either from us by Stealth, or from remote Countries, as Saxony, Silesia, Poland, Barbary, and the like, amount to much; far from so much as England need be concerned at them; while she has the Wool, her Trade is invulnerable, at least no mortal, final, destructive Blow can be given it." (41)

Happily, the difficulties which British merchants were meeting in northern Europe were not paralleled in the lands round the Mediterranean Sea, where by the beginning of the eighteenth century, British trade had come to satisfy all the ideal requirements of the contemporary writers on foreign trade. These lands had become complementary to the British economy,

40. A Brief Deduction ... pp. 47-48.

41. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 187, 129-130.

exchanging raw materials and luxury foodstuffs such as fruit for British manufactures. The economic roles of Italy and Britain had been reversed, so that the peninsula had become primarily agricultural and the decline of the Italian textile industries had gone so far that they were unable to meet the competition of the new draperies and other woollen goods exported from Britain. (42) Even in the case of silk, not the most successful of British textiles, Italy began to supply Britain with raw silk or silk yarn instead of silk manufactures. Similarly, the old English broadcloths which were being displaced by the new lighter cloths in many markets, found a ready sale in the Levant where the people welcomed their warmth during the autumn and winter months. They had replaced those formerly imported from Venice and dominated the market until they faced increased competition from French fabrics in the early decades of the new century. Again, Italy which had for so long been the distributing centre for Asiatic products imported into Europe via the Levant, became the chief Mediterranean market for the same goods when they now arrived in Dutch or British ships through the western gateway. English merchants settled in these southern lands began to send Mediterranean produce, such as olive oil and currants, directly to their native country and the colonies of Venetian and Florentine trades disappeared from London. While the trade with the eastern Mediterranean was an exchange of goods for goods, even to the extent that British merchants sometimes found difficulty in finding return cargoes, that with Spain and Portugal provided Britain with her

42. C.M. Cipolla, "The Decline of Italy" in Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd. series, Vol. V, pp. 178-185.

chief imports of bullion and was the most highly regarded. Finally, the Mediterranean was the first region where English ships took a large part in the carrying trade between other countries, largely because they were the safest ships in waters infested by the Barbary corsairs. The bigger ships used in the Levant trade could be converted into extra warships when the need arose and the whole Mediterranean commerce was esteemed as a valuable training ground for seamen. (43) All these considerations appealed strongly to Defoe and he wrote with approval on each branch of the trade with southern Europe, but especially on that with Spain and Portugal. Both these countries were particularly valuable as Britain's chief sources of supply of bullion which was acquired by the substantial British surplus in visible trade, largely as a result of the exports of British manufactures, especially cloth, which was always so gratifying to Defoe. They both prohibited manufacturing in their American settlements and yet were unable to supply their colonists with manufactures of their own making. It was the import of bullion from their colonies in America, silver from the Spanish empire and gold from Brazil, which in turn financed their imports from Britain. In both Spain and Portugal, Britain was the best customer for their own native products and the trading nation best able to supply the imports which they needed in return, both for their own inhabitants and for their overseas colonists.

43. R. Davis, "England and the Mediterranean 1570-1670" in Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England, edited by F.J. Fisher, pp. 117-137.

44. J.S. Moore, Spain and its World, 1500-1700, pp. 73.

Throughout his economic writings, Defoe tended to give pride of place to the Spanish trade. At the outset it was imperative to warn his countrymen of the serious situation which England would face if France obtained control of Spain. While his first two pamphlets on the Spanish Succession question acknowledged that the prospective union of the two countries was a formidable threat to the balance of power which had been established at Ryswick, they seized on the vital importance of the Spanish trade with England as our chief interest in the dispute. His personal presentation of his "Legion's Memorial" to the House of Commons, in defence of the Kentish Petitioners and to extend their protest, formed another strong criticism of the Tory ministry at the end of William's reign for their failure to take prompt action to avert the threatened danger.

(44) Although Professor Moore seems to regard "Reasons against a War with France" as a possible criticism of his hero, William III, the title seems to have been deliberately ironical. (45) Defoe alleged that Louis XIV's recognition of the Pretender was not sufficient reason for a rupture with France and that more serious issues were involved. He insisted that it was the breach of the balance of power, which the Partition Treaties had sought to prevent, that was the vital question, but his primary concern with Spain's overseas trade is revealed by his proposed plan of campaign if war should break out. He may have been bidding for Tory support for the war by urging that England

44. J. Sutherland, Defoe, pp. 70-74; P. Dottin, The Life and ... Adventures of Daniel Defoe, pp. 87-88.

45. J.R. Moore, Daniel Defoe, Citizen of the Modern World, p. 73.

should wage a vigorous naval war with Spain, especially in American waters, but this strategy was based on his steadfast conviction that such a war would invariably be profitable:

"There never was yet a War between the English and the Spaniard but that we made Extraordinary Advantages of their West-India Wealth." (46)

"To let the French possess the Spanish Dominions," he insisted, "would overthrow the Ballance Purchas'd in this War with so much Blood and Treasure, and render fruitless the Treaty of Reswick. 'Twould especially ha' been Fatal to the English and Dutch, by the encrease of Wealth from the Mass of Money returning Yearly from the Empires of Mexico and Peru, which the French wou'd be better Husbands of than the Spaniards; by their encrease of Shipping, which wou'd make them too strong for all the World at Sea, and by their ruining the Spanish Trade, which is the greatest and most profitable in Europe; 'twould immediately unhinge all the Settlement of our Merchants and Factories, and turn the whole Channel of Trade; for the Ports of Spain being free to the French as Subjects, all our Negoce that way wou'd be destroy'd." "... The Streights-Mouth", he continued, "would be like the Sound, and all our Ships should pay Toll at Gibraltar, as they do at Elseneur; your Fishing Trade from New-England and Newfoundland would perish, for the French from the Banks of Newfoundland should go free, and you Pay 23 per Cent. etc. .... all the Ports from Sluce in Flanders, to the Fare of Messina in Sicily, should be in the

46. "Reasons against a War with France ...," A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 200.

Hands of the French, which is a Coast of near 3000 Miles, Portugal, Genoua, and Leghorn excepted; and how long they will hold out, is easie to imagine." (47) There was a particular threat to the British cloth industry in that the improving temper of the French might triumph over the Spanish attachment to custom. Thus, although Spain was a very hot country, the Spaniards still wore cloaks of "course black English Bays" whereas the French might "introduce some antick French Druget, or other thin Stuff, such as they make in Normandy." This would immediately destroy the Colchester cloth industry, "the noblest Manufacture in many respects that we have in England", and send 40 Thousand People, who depend on that Trade, to beg their Bread." (48) These exports of cloth were so important that he estimated that they earned for Britain each year over a million pieces of eight in bullion more than the value of her imports of Spanish goods, even though Britain took from them almost all their wine, oil, fruit and wool and the greater part of their cochineal, indigo and other dyes from their American colonies. (49) His conclusion that the trade to Spain was "the best, the greatest, and most profitable Trade" that Britain had, (50) made him insist almost throughout the war that Britain must drive the French out of Spain. The disaster of Almanza in April 1707 only made his assertions the more vehement: "The Channel of our Manufactures, the Consumption of our Produce,

47. "The Two Great Questions Consider'd ..." in A True Collection Vol. I, pp. 358-361.

48. Ibid., pp. 363-4.

49. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 57) p. 114.

50. "The Two Great Questions Further Consider'd" in A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 377.

the Supply of our Bullion, the Employ of our Shipping, in short the general Wealth and Greatness of Britain depends so much upon the Trade with Spain, that we can no more let the French enjoy Spain, than we can permit them to block up the River of Thames, or put a Garrison into the Tower of London." (51)

Almost two months later, he told his readers, "whatever it cost, you must have Spain: set up your Rest by that, As Scipio said of Carthage, 'Delenda est Carthago'; so I say of Spain, it must (be) recover'd: This War must not end, let the Consequence be what it will, or the Length of it as it will, it must be a War till we recover Spain. ... if we are (beaten out of Spain), we must get into it again; ... there is no Medium, no Equivalent will serve here, and therefore to be discouraged is Nonsense; we must have Spain out of French hands and French influence, or this War cannot be ended; we must have Spain, or France must have Spain and Us too." (52)

In November, he continued to emphasize this doctrine: "to make Peace without it, would be to sign our own Destruction, and be Parties to the general Impoverishment of the Nation, it would be giving a mortal Stab to our Manufactures, and sending our Poor to beg even by Act of Parliament. ... the French may obtain high Imposts to be laid upon our Goods, and a free Importation of their own; they may influence the Spanish Government to open a free Trade for the French to some Port in their Dominions in America, and at the same time lock it up from us, as it is now." (53)

In 1709, he argued, that Britain was the Allied power most concerned with expelling

51. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 47), p. 187.

52. Ibid., (No. 65), p. 257.

53. Ibid., (No. 125), p. 498.



the French from Spain, because all the rest of Europe put together did not carry on half the trade with Spain that Britain did in peacetime and that the trade which they had was "not half so essential to the Prosperity of those Countries" as Britain's Spanish trade was to her people. (54) Even as late as September 1711, he was still declaring, "To give up Spain to the House of Bourbon, is a Thing so absurd, so ridiculous, you ought as soon to think of giving up Ireland to them... the Ruin of the English Commerce is, no doubt, in the same Design," adding that the British should not think of it until Barcelona had been lost, "Marlborough beaten, Bavaria restor'd, Prince Eugene driven from the Rhine, a French Emperor Chosen, and the French at the Gates of Amsterdam." (55) It is true that he had often urged that the war against Spain could be carried on more effectively on the other side of the Atlantic and that the French had many advantages in a struggle in Spain, "but if our People will carry it on there, they must ... this War must be carried on, Spain must be reduc'd, France must be humbl'd." (56) The previous April, however, before the death of the Emperor Joseph I posed a new threat to the European balance from the possible union of Austria and the Spanish inheritance, he had again disclosed that his principal pre-occupation was the trade with Spain rather than the actual succession to the Spanish crown. "What matter'd it to us", he asked, "who possess'd Spain, if the Vent of our Manufactures, on which the Employment and Bread of our Poor depends, did not make it absolutely Necessary to keep it out of the Hands of

53. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, (No. 7), pp. 25-26.

54. *Review*, Vol. VI, (No. 49), p. 194.

55. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, (No. 69), p. 279.

56. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, (No. 128), pp. 510-511; (No. 132) p. 527.

France? What signify'd it to us, who and who was together, in the World, if with the Exorbitance of Power, the Byas and Balance of Commerce in Europe did not lie expos'd? And we were not Subject to be Supplanted in our Trade, Navigation and Vent of our Produce?" Otherwise Britain would be content to let the Duke of Anjou and the Archduke Charles fight it out or divide the Spanish empire between them. (57) It is true that he was soon committed by his loyalty to his patron and paymaster, Harley, to publicly defending the Tory government's peace offensive but I have previously argued that this did not at first involve any sacrifice of principle in that he emphasized misgivings about the war which he had expressed at various times during the conflict. (58) Even though, ultimately, he was driven by his deep sense of gratitude to his benefactor into justifying this policy in the face of the restraining orders to Ormonde and the actual disengagement of the British forces in Flanders, this did not affect his economic beliefs. Accepting that peace would almost certainly now mean that the Duke of Anjou would become King Philip V of Spain, he fully expected that the ministry would safeguard Britain's economic interests and therefore could confidently assert that Britain would still dominate Spain's foreign trade. He based this conviction on the notion that the national interests of France and Spain were incompatible and that Philip V would be "in a few Years as much a Spaniard by Interest, as he is a French Man by Birth." (59) In no sphere was this more true than in trade. Because Spain

57. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 7), pp. 25-26.

58. See my M.A. Thesis, pp. 192-253 for a full discussion of Defoe's change of attitude towards the war.

59. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 93), p. 375.

was dependent upon England and Holland for her commerce, he declared, "I do not make such a Bugbear of King Philip's having Spain as I did before." This was subject to the proviso that Spain surrendered her possessions in the Netherlands and in Italy, because her Italian territories would make her dependent on French help against Austria. It was even more vital that the trading interests of England and Holland should be safeguarded. King Philip must "do nothing to the Prejudice of the Commerce of Britain and Holland; shall never put any part of Flanders or America into the Hands of the French; shall never lay any Impositions on the English and Dutch Trade, either Importation or Exportation, or on their Shipping other than shall be laid on all other Nations." (60) If the last condition of free competition in Spain's foreign trade were met, Britain was bound to outdistance her rivals because she was Spain's best customer for her native produce. Defoe admitted that the Spaniards were "a People of great Prudence, Wisdom, Gallantry and Courage, hardy, brave; patient of Difficulties, sober and temperate", but they were ruined by their national sin of pride which was associated with two "usual but criminal Consequences, Indolence in Arts, and Bigotry in Religion," the latter contributing to the depopulation which further kept Spain poor. Although the people of the southern provinces showed some signs of industry, he did not think that "even the most industrious part of Spain" was like other countries of western Europe and declared that Castile soap was the only improved native product and swords and firearms their only manufacture for export." (61) Therefore, they had to import all the manu-

60. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 92) p. 371.

61. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 158-159; "The True Born Englishman" in A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 2.

factured goods, which they required, "all their wrought Silks from Italy and France, their Linnen from France, Holland and Germany, (Hamburgh); their East India Goods from Holland and England; nay their very Fish they do not catch themselves but buy it of the French, Dutch and English; and their Woollen Manufactures they always had wholly from England, excepting a few, fine, thin Spanish-Wool-Druggets ... from the French." They paid for these goods with about five-sixths of their bullion imports from the New World, but the export of their native produce was most important in reducing this drain of specie. (62) In general, the French and Italians took "nothing but Money" for the goods they supplied, the Dutch and Hamburgers imported in part exchange "some quantities of American Goods", but England alone took off "the Growth and Produce of the Country." Spain's oil, wine and fruit would only compete with France's own output so that they would be "fitter for the Dunghill than the Market there" and to send them would be like carrying coals to Newcastle. The French could only take "a little Wooll and Iron; and ... but a little of that." The Hamburgers and Dutch were fully supplied with wine from the Rhineland and France and all the oil carried there from Spain was less than the English imported at Bristol. A little Spanish wool went to Holland, "but nothing of quantity." He estimated that England imported 22000 pipes of Canary, 16000 pipes of other Spanish wines and 7000 butts of sherry in a year, "whereas one Ship from the Canaries would glut the Hollanders with Sack." To question this, "would be to ask if the Sun be up when you see Noon Day-Light." "The English only", he announced, "drink Canary, eat

Plumb Puddings, drink Bristol Milk, (Sherry) and bring in 10000 Pipes of Oil for their Manufactures. The Fruit would rot, the Olives would not be gathered, the Vines would not be planted in Spain, if they had no Trade to England." Similarly, the British supplied a large proportion of the manufactures which Spain needed for her colonies overseas. Whereas the inhabitants of Spanish America, he claimed, could manage without silk, linen or lace manufactures, or East India goods, "without the Woollen Manufactures, they cannot shift upon any account." He believed that English woollen cloth normally made up at least half of the cargoes which Spain sent across the Atlantic and that France was completely unable to supply enough cloth of equivalent quality and price to displace England from her dominant position in Spain's colonial trade. Complete proof of this was to be found in the statement that during the Spanish Succession War, when France controlled Spain's colonial trade and Britain was entirely excluded, she had had to buy £20,000 worth of English goods in Holland several times for the Spanish American market. (63) Although the French could have had the entire Spanish wool clip, and more cheaply than the British because of lower transport costs, they bought Spanish cloths of English manufacture in Holland, Flanders, and Spain itself, and paid "six shillings an Ell Duty for it to the King, letting the Spanish Wooll lie at Bilboa for us to fetch away." He further asked, "How came the Town of Gibraltar to have such a Trade from hence as was never heard of before? And how came such a vast Export of English Goods to Portugal? Even more than in time of Peace used to go to Portugal and Spain,

63. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 87), pp. 173-174.

put together." With his customary exaggeration once he was launched on a theme, he alleged that if Spain, without her American territories, were not merely under French influence, but were actually "a Province of France, yet the Trade to Spain would be ours... because they could not help it: They could not support Spain without it." (64) Fourteen years later, when there was again danger of war between Britain and Spain, he declared, "the Trade to Great Britain takes off the Growth and Produce, which they are ruin'd if they do not Sell, and supplies them with Necessaries which they are ruin'd if they cannot Buy; In a word; they have no Commerce without us; their whole Export is stagnated." (65)

Because these return cargoes were so important in Defoe's estimation, he believed that Britain and Spain were natural trading partners, although the balance was in Britain's favour. "No Nations can Unite in Trade", he announced, "who have not a reciprocal Return to carry on the Traffick to mutual Advantage, ... Can you unite a Nation in Trade with another, when it will take off none of its Produce? ... (until) the French shall take off the Growth and Produce of Old Spain in Trade ... the Spaniards may be French in their Court-Interests if they please, but they will be English in their Trading Interests as long as the Trade of Europe remains." (66) He was naturally indignant with the rival pamphleteers of the "British Merchant" at the beginning of 1714, when they alleged that the balance of trade was against Britain and that she was buying bullion as a commodity at Cadiz for the needs of her East India trade rather than

64. Mercator, No. 86, December 10th, 1713.

65. The Evident Advantages to Great Britain, and its Allies ... (1727) p. 18.

66. Mercator, No. 89, December 17th, 1713.

earning it by her exports of manufactured goods. He protested that it was "an Attempt to arm and prejudice the People of Great Britain against the only Trade in the World that is the Fond of their Wealth and Prosperity; THE Trade that has always enrich'd us, and which is to us an inexhaustible Mine of Treasure which nothing can prevent from doing us Good but such an abhorr'd villainous Plot as this, bent against the Nation's general Good. ... Was ever such a Thing heard in Europe before! Lose by our Trade to Spain! We may be said as truly and as reasonably to lose by our Woollen Manufacture." On the contrary, he maintained that despite the export of specie to India and "several hundred thousand Ounces of Silver sent to Holland," the price of bullion was below the current value of the coinage and that merchants were sending "everyday great Quantities to be Coined" at the Mint, a sure sign, he said, that the British were "already in full Possession of the Spanish Trade." (67) He suggested that the freight of the British shipping employed in the Spanish trade together with the value of the fish sold there by British fishing vessels, was equal to all the goods and commodities brought from Spain. (68) When there was a prospect of war between Britain and Spain, Defoe was quick to point out the booty which could be obtained by attacks on the bullion fleet and, even more important, the opportunities war would give for colonial expansion in South America, but the damage to British trade in each dispute with Spain was such as to make him fully conscious of the benefits

67. Ibid, Nos. 97, 99, 100 of January 5, 9 and 12th, 1713.

68. Mercator, No. 100, January 12th, 1713.

which each country derived from their trade with each other. Believing that Spain was now "one of the weakest and most unperforming Nations in Christendom" (69) and captivated by a dream of a great new British colony in America, he could assert that Britain never lost by a war with Spain or that it would be no loss to Britain if she never had peace with her (70) but his apparent enthusiasm for hostilities was always qualified by the knowledge that war to a trading nation was "a Degree of Death ... a strong Paralytick." Britain, like Holland, had the financial strength from her trade to wage war successfully but was also particularly vulnerable because of her "infinite Number of Ships, and Merchants, and Merchants Effects" which were "abroad in every Corner of the World." (71) No nation had so much to lose by war. Thus in the autumn of 1718, he was lamenting the "terrible Havock" which the Spaniards had caused by seizing British merchant ships and goods, including twelve ships at Cadiz. Before the news of the naval victory at Cape Passaro arrived, he was also remarking on "the unexpected Gallantry of the Spanish Soldiers" in their attack on Sicily. (72) Finally, by 1730 he reached the conclusion that while Spain was not "a formidable Enemy," she was "a valuable Friend," that although the Spaniards could not destroy British trade, they were able to interrupt it in many ways and that there was "a vast Difference in Trade, between carrying it on by Force, and carrying it on peaceably and by a kind and generous Concurrence and mutual Return from Nation to Nation." He claimed that there was an old Spanish

69. Reasons for a War ... (1729) p. 10.

70. The Evident Advantages to Great Britain ... pp. 13, 15.

71. The Advantages of Peace and Commerce ... (1729) pp. 23-24;  
Cf. The Interests of the Several Princes and States ...  
(1698) p. 24.

72. Mercurius Politicus, September, October, November, 1718,  
pp. 545-577, 646, 663-664, 668-669.



proverb, "Give Spain Peace with England, and War with all the World," and that it was a matter for wonder "that two Nations who are, or who are capable of being so profitable to one another in Trade, should ever differ." He thought Britain supplied Spain with two-thirds of her imports, that 400 large ships were employed in delivering fish and 300 English and Dutch ships called "Pipineers" went to Seville each year for oranges, all these cargoes, except those for Holland being carried in British vessels. He estimated that the British trade to Spain was twice as large as the French and four times as great as the Dutch. Finally, Britain's imports from Spain were particularly useful to the woollen industry. (73) Before the Spanish Succession War began, he discussed the possibility that the French might use all the Spanish wool and announced "let the West-Country Clothiers speak for themselves, and say what strange work it wou'd make among them, or our Hamborough Merchants give an Account what their Trade wou'd come to, where they are outdone already in course Cloth, and would have no finer to send to Market." (74) During that conflict, he wrote, "we cannot be without the Trade to Spain, on Account of what we Import from thence, viz. the Wine, Oyl, Cocheneal, Fruit etc. . . and above all, the Wool; which are, especially the Wool, Oyl and Cocheneal, Capital Articles in our Manufactures. To buy these from the French would be ruinous to the last Degree, and to have Spain trading to France directly, and to us at second hand, would . . . make the Britains turn Journeymen to the French, which is intollerable to think upon." (75) In 1713 he admitted

73. Political State of Great Britain, Vol. XXXIX, January 1730, pp. 45-52.

74. "The Two Great Questions Considered . . ." in A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 363.

75. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 47), pp. 187-188.

that oil from Spain was an essential import for the British clothing industry and that his countrymen could not dye in some colours "without the Cochineal of Mexico, the Indico of Jamaica, the Logwood of Campeche, the Wood of Germany, the Galls of Turkey, and the like." (76)

Defoe was remarkably consistent in his view that the established, as it were secondhand, trade through Spain was preferable to a direct trade with the Spanish colonies in America. In 1698, when he was envisaging the possibility that France would prohibit British trade with Spain, he admitted that a direct trade would be cheaper and that British goods were in such demand that the Spanish colonists would "run all hazards to get our Goods on shore." Nevertheless, "a Trade carried on by Stealth would be neither very durable, nor very considerable and therefore could never amount to an Equivalent to the Loss of that great Branch of our Trade from England to Cadiz." (77) In October 1707, in the high tide of success against the French, despite the disaster at Almanza in August, he attacked those who were "for ingrossing Lands and Dominions" and, with his inveterate fondness for a paradox, argued that the British would be "infinite Gainers by this War, without adding one Cubit of Earth or the smallest Tittle of Possession" to what they already enjoyed. Developing this theme, he announced, "we sufficiently possess a Nation when we have a free Trade to it ... our Trading to Old Spain has been a full Trade to New Spain, and a Trade by which England has always drawn as much Money from America as Old Spain itself ... we get more Money by our Trade to Old Spain,

76. General History of Trade, June 1713, p. 35.

77. The Interests of the several Princes and States ... pp. 25-27

even from America, than we should do if we had a free Trade to their Plantations in America directly." (78) He was prepared to admit that a direct trade, because of his estimated 500 or 600 per cent. advance in the price of British goods in America, (79) would at first yield more profit than the existing channel through Cadiz, "but when the Staple was fix'd, and the Market glutted with Goods, ... they would give no more for Goods there, than other Nations do; whereas now Spain keeping the Trade, prevents great Glutts of Goods going thither, maintains the Prices to their own Advantage, and we have equal Benefit from the Trade, as if America were lay'd open to all the World." (80)

When the South Sea Company was founded, he was quick to disabuse his countrymen of inordinate expectations of profit from its trade with America. He complained in the "Review", "our People run away with a Notion, that we are a going to turn the whole Channel of the Spanish Trade directly to America; ... That we shall no more stand in need of the Trade to Cadiz ... Lima shall become the Staple of European Goods instead of Cadiz ... we dream of nothing but Ships and Fleets coming Home, like Sir William Phipps, Loaded with Gold and Silver, as to Manufactures, we depend upon carrying away enough to set the whole Nation at Work ..." (81) On the contrary, he protested, the Spaniards could never allow other countries to trade freely with their colonies. They might allow particular places to send provisions and they might grant the Asiento contract to Britain

78. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 101) pp. 401-402.

79. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis p. 300.

80. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 101) p. 402.

81. Ibid., Vol. VIII, (No. 47), p. 191.

because they could not supply themselves with negroes, but a free exchange of European manufactures for American bullion "would be so fatal to the very Life and Being of the Spanish Dominions in Europe, ... as to Commerce, that unless the Spaniards are to be divested of common Sense, Infatuate, and given up, ... throwing away the only Valuable Stake they have left in the World, ... we cannot suggest that they will ever on a Consideration, or for any Equivalent, part with so Valuable, indeed so Inestimable a Jewel, as an Exclusive Power of Trade to their own Plantations in America." Without the colonial trade, he reiterated, "Spain would be the most despicable Monarchy in Europe. The Trade of Old Spain would neither subsist it self or be worth our driving, for they having no Manufactures of their own, the buying of ours would so exhaust them, that in a few years they would not be able to pay for them, nor could they take off any more of our Goods than their meer Growth of Wine, Oyl, Fruit and Wool, could pay for." (82)

The Anglo-Spanish Treaty of 1667 was, therefore, in Defoe's eyes, still the essential basis of commercial relations between the two countries. It was "upon the foot" of this agreement that his hero, William III, had been obliged to abandon the Scots in their Darien enterprize, even to the extent of forbidding the English colonists in the West Indies to afford them any relief or assistance. (83) The Spaniards were only trying to enforce the same principles on which the British Navigation Acts were founded. "Without a strict Observance of the Laws of Trade," he reminded his readers, "in those Cases made by us as well as by the Spaniards, the Property of Trade, and the

82. An Essay on the South Sea Trade ... pp. 40-41.

83. Mercator, No. 169, June 22, 1714.

Advantages of Colonies and Plantations in America could not be preserved to the Nations, whose Property they are." (84) Therefore, he condemned the existing clandestine trade between Jamaica and the Spanish colonies in the strongest terms. It was a "Thieving Roguing Trade ... an open Violation of the public Faith of their Country, a Breach of solemn Leagues and Treaties." (85) When the Spaniards, on the return of peace in 1713, began to take more vigorous action against this sloop trade, Defoe defended them against the protests of the Jamaica merchants. "It is the highest Justice in the Spaniards", he announced, "to take all our Ships, who offer to Trade on their Coast, by any Method, whether by Force or Stratagem, and on Resistance to put all the Resisters to the Sword; and in Case of taking them Prisoners, to send them to the Mines if they please." It was indeed the duty of the British Government to suppress the traffic by confiscating both the ships and the money gained by the trade, even to the extent of sending the men in irons to England for punishment, "for in vain has England stipulated with Spain; that our People shall not Trade with their Colonies if we cannot call them to an Account when they break that Capitulation." (86) In 1730, however, the reports of the excesses of the Guarda Costas provoked this characteristic outburst, "I think they should use them as Pyrates, and bestow the Ceremony of the Yard-Arm upon their Crews, and show them in that Posture to the Spaniards, at such particular Ports where they have been so treated." (87) When his national feelings were not aroused, however, the sloop trade was a "Pyritical

84. Ibid., No. 170, June 24, 1714.

85. Ibid., No. 171, June 26, 1714.

86. Mercator, No. 170, June 24, 1714.

87. The Political State of Great Britain, August 1730, p. 176.

Peace-Breaking Trade" and the Jamaica men "Thieves of Commerce and Trade-high-way-men." (88) The old claim to cut logwood in the Bay of Campeachy on the coast of Honduras came in for similar strictures. This was "nothing more or less than going into another King's Country and Plundring it, Cutting down his Woods, and bringing away the Timber." It had been "a wicked Trade" for many years because it had been "the refuge of those worst of Pirates, Buccaniers." (89) He accused them of "innumerable Murders, Barbarities, Burnings and Plunderings upon the Innocent Inhabitants of New Spain." (90) Because Jamaica was "the Nest and Receptacle" of all the buccaneers, where they fitted out their ships and where they returned to spend their hauls of silver in riots and debaucheries, "the Bulk of the People" of the island were "a meer Banditty of Trade," who had been used to thieving for so long that they began to claim it as their right. (91)

As always, Defoe could not help deriving some satisfaction from the extent of the trade of "that profligate Island." Although Jamaica was "a very good Colony," it would not be able to carry on one-twentieth part of its existing trade but for its smuggling commerce with the Spanish colonies on the American mainland. As a mere plantation, it could not maintain so many people as were employed in "plundering and robbing the Spaniards, even in the time of the profoundest Peace." They could not otherwise consume £400,000 or £500,000 a year in linen and

88. Mercator, No. 171, June 26, 1714.

89. Mercurius Politicus, April 1717, p. 257.

90. Mercator, No. 173, July 1, 1714.

91. Mercator, No. 171, June 26, 1714.

woollen goods, more possibly than were sent to all the other British colonies in America, while their import of foodstuffs from the mainland colonies at least equalled those of all the other British West Indian islands put together and employed 500 ships a year. The pieces of eight obtained by this clandestine trade supplied all the British colonies in America with their current coin and he estimated that it was as valuable to the island as the sugar planting. Yet these Jamaica men were not "real Traders, bred Merchants" and he was prepared to see them brought to "a Low Ebb" by the return of Britain's Spanish American trade to its old channel through Cadiz. (92) "Thieving Trade", he insisted, was "but an Impoverishing anticipating Trade" which tended to ruin the general commerce "as Hawking and Pedling are found ruinous to Trade by cutting off the Circulation, and depriving many Families ... of their Business and Livelihood." He again showed his preference for an authorized trade by the established routes. Because the King of Spain was defrauded of his duties, goods sent directly from Britain via Jamaica could be sold more cheaply than those which went via Cadiz, but the consequent reduction of the quantities sent by the regular route would bring down the value of British goods in Spain generally, "and so lessen our Gain on that side six times as much as it may be supposed to advance it on the other." (93)

During 1730, he was expressing the general dissatisfaction

92. Ibid, Nos. 171 and 172; The Political State of Great Britain ..., April 1730, pp. 346-348.

93. Mercator, No. 173, July 1, 1714. Cf. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ..., p. 305.

of Englishmen with the constant disputes which had arisen from Bolingbroke's "Lame, blind, Misshapen Monster", the Anglo-Spanish commercial treaty of 1713, and the failure of the high hopes which had been raised by the Asiento contract and the annual permission ship to Spanish America. He complained of the Spanish detention of the "Prince Frederick" in Vera Cruz and of the delay in sending the "cedula" for the "Prince William" which threatened to hold up her arrival at Porto Bello in time for the great annual fair when the galleons arrived from Spain. In this event, the voyage would be ruined because the merchants of Peru, Chile, Guatemala and the other Spanish colonies returned to their homes at the end of the fair and few people were left in the unhealthy port. He reaffirmed his conviction that Britain should use her naval strength to enforce her treaty rights, but on the other hand he insisted that she should not act provocatively, "only to resist Violence if offered" and that he was not "for kindling a Flame" which he had often said he had been glad to see extinguished. Moreover, he again voiced his misgivings about the South Sea trade in general, which is a further indication that he was not the promoter of the scheme to his patron, Harley. Speaking as a supposed merchant and in a private capacity, he confessed that he would not be much concerned if no South Sea ship "on the same Foot of Business" ever made the voyage again, "being none of those who take that License of Trade to the South-Seas, to be our Advantage in General." He asked if it were any advantage to the general interest of trade "to forestall the Market end", if they would sell more of Britain's manufacture and growth, or employ more



ships and seamen. "Anticipating or turning the Channel of a Trade", he asserted, "does not always argue an Improvement or Increase: For, if the same Goods are only carried to, and only made to supply the same Market, it is but taking the Bread out of the Mouths of A, B and C, who carried the Goods to, and sold them at the same Markets before, and putting it into the Mouths of X, Y and Z, who carry the same Goods to, and sell them at the same Market now." The case would be altered, "if the South-Sea-Company carried the Goods to some new Market, where they were not sold before, or to be consumed in some Country where they were not made Use of ... before" or if they promoted a larger sale at the same market than previously. He claimed that he would only accept that there was an increase in British trade if we exported goods which were not usually exported to Cadiz "in the ordinary Course of the British Trade ... such as Wrought Silks, Germany Linnen, and such particular Exportations as were usually supplied by the Dutch, Hamburgers, French and Italians". Obviously, he wanted his favourite exports of English cloth to follow the old channel and it is clear that he associated the decline in England's traditional trade with Old Spain with the trading activities of the South Sea Company when he said that sending two ships a year to the West Indies was in no way equal to the reduction in the number of ships plying between England and Cadiz. (94) He was not aware that it was rather the defects in the commercial treaty of 1713, the increased competition from the French in the Spanish market and the political disputes between England and Spain which prevented

94. The Political State of Great Britain ..., August 1730, pp. 151-157.

the trade from returning to its pre-war level. (95) Yet it would be easy for the Company "to lay Foundations of Trade, which, in a few Years, would turn to the real improving our Trade in general, ... by ... enlarging and increasing our Colonies, and finding a Vent for our Manufactures where they had no Market before." His complete disillusionment with the Asiento Contract is shown by the following penetrating analysis of the reasons why it had proved unprofitable. It could "be carried on with Advantage", he declared, "were it possible to bring the Spaniards to a fair and just Performance of their Agreements; and were the Company so well settled and fortified at the Buenos Ayres, and other necessary Places, as that the Spaniards upon every capricious Humour might not be able to seize upon, and confiscate the Company's Effects, Servants and Ships; ... But ... while there is so much Cavil and Quarrel on both Sides; ... and that we must be so many Months and Years in obtaining Justice for any Injury; I do not see that the Trade for Negroes, however profitable it may be, if fairly perform'd on both Sides, can turn to the Account of the Company; ... On the other Hand, it will be always breeding Matters of Dispute and Quarrel between the Nations, and at last End in Loss and Disaster." (96)

Defoe's suggestions for the improvement of Spain and her colonies reveal his basic convictions about industry and trade. The key to progress was a larger population both in Spain and

95. Jean O. MacLachlan - Trade and Peace with Old Spain 1667-1750, pp. 23-29, 46-85.

96. The Political State of Great Britain ..., August 1730, p. 128.

the colonies. If the land of Spain were fully cultivated, it would support five million more people. Immigration should be encouraged by abolishing the Inquisition, although the immigrants could be drawn exclusively from other Catholic countries. To bring about a more rapid increase of population, the number of monastic houses should be reduced. Her foreign trade should be restricted to her own ships and seamen by Navigation Acts and the export of her wool should be either forbidden or only permitted on payment of a high duty. Spain could have supplied her shortage of people by slaves from Africa and America provided they had been able to gain their freedom after a term of years and become settlers. Believing that environment and education were more potent than heredity in the development of individuals, he speculated on the improvement which would have followed had Spain set aside two million native children in America instead of deliberately exterminating the natives as he thought had occurred. They "might perhaps have shewn, that all the Difference of Nations under the Sun consists in the Advantages of Education only; not in the Blood; not in Nature but in the Improvements added to Nature." If this had been done, the output of sugar might have been greater than the combined production of Brazil and the British and French colonies "and the like of Tobacco, Indigo, Cocoa, Cochineal." The larger colonial population might have built all their own ships "and instead of sending two or three Ships yearly from Acapulco to the East Indies and China, as they now do, have sent two or three hundred, and brought the whole Trade of India home to Europe by the Isthmus of Darien, and circulating through the Hands of the Spaniards." Believing

that the American silver mines were inexhaustible and that the output could be increased even a thousand-fold, he thought that the India trade could at last be made "a gainful Commerce to England and all Europe" by sending the silver directly from the mines of Potosi and Mexico. Instead of the sale of European manufactures suffering from this large import of Asiatic commodities, they "would have been exchange'd for them all; and yet not the less Quantity of Silver and Gold in Specie have come from America to Europe neither, but infinitely more." He estimated that there were not more than 300,000 Spaniards in the mainland colonies, only one-tenth of the total population, and as they were the sole consumers of the large quantities of European goods sent there each year, four or five million Spanish colonists would have required an immense quantity of European goods. Therefore, he argued, "nothing but an Increase of People in New Spain is wanting to make the Trade to those Countrys the greatest Branch of Commerce that ever was known in the Christian World; and nothing but a like Increase of People in Old Spain, and those People to be industrious ... will put the Spaniards in a Capacity of improving and reaping the Advantage of that Trade from New Spain, so as to call it their own." Yet there was no danger that British trade would be ruined by the Spaniards working up their own wool and similar improvements, because they seemed "to have no Genius for Trade, for Arts, Manufactures, Cultivation of the Earth, or Sale of its Product." (97) Finally, the market for European goods was capable of great expansion as was evident from the high prices which the Spanish colonists were prepared

to pay for them. If twice, or even four times as many were sent there, although the rate of profit would fall, the total gain would be much greater. Further, the reduced prices of European manufactures would enable the natives to buy them and thus produce "an exceeding great increase of the Consumption" with consequent benefits to British industry and shipping. (98)

In marked contrast to their neighbours, the Portuguese, although they lacked many of the natural advantages enjoyed by the Spaniards, had proved much more enterprising. "Spain," he exclaimed, "is a Country as full of the native Product of the Earth as Portugal is empty, and yet Portugal is rich, and Spain is poor." Spain, with a number of ports compared with Portugal's one, was much better situated for trade, yet Portugal was "all Trade and Employment, Spain indolent and wanting Business." Whereas the Spanish galleons were "half-mann'd with Foreigners", the Portuguese were able to sail their Brazil fleets with their own seamen. Although Portugal had a barren soil and yet was "throng'd with People", her inhabitants seldom lacked food, which, he claimed, was often the case in sparsely-populated Spain, "even to distress." It is true that only a few pages earlier, he had referred to the decline of Portugal: "From being the richest and most famous Country for Trade, and the People the best and most expert Navigators in the World, they have fallen to be the poorest in Trade, the most degenerated in their navigational Skill, and the most discourag'd in their Foreign Affairs, of any Nation in Europe." It is obvious,

however, from the context of the passage that he had used the wrong compound tense. He ascribed this decline to the conquest of Portugal by Spain in 1580 and to the consequent loss of many of her colonies and monopoly of Eastern trade to the Dutch. He dated the Portuguese recovery from their expulsion of the Dutch from Pernambuco in 1654 and "especially since their discovering the Gold Mines there, that they have advanc'd the Commerce there to more than twenty times the Value of what it was in those Days." Characteristically, he was very impressed by this great increase in these imports of treasure and made numerous references to the rich cargoes of the Brazil fleets when they reached Lisbon. He thought that the royal revenue amounted to nearly £2 million a year in gold alone, in addition to the proceeds from the customs, and that the English merchants, as in Spain, earned even more gold by the sale of their goods. He claimed that the gold imports in the year 1721 amounted to over £5 million, although he added that they did not have such a return every year. (99) In January 1730, he put the figure at £3.5 millions. (100) As usual with Defoe's figures, these were considerable exaggerations, but his estimates of the shipping employed in Portugal's colonial trade, 100 sail a year in three large fleets in the commerce with Brazil compared with twelve previously, and only three ships a year in her East India trade, seem to have been substantially accurate. He thought that the Portuguese imports of sugar, hides, tobacco and wood from Brazil had increased four-fold, although sugar production had in fact suffered from the competition of the British and French West

99. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ..., pp. 158, 152-153, 155.

100. The Political State of Great Britain ..., January 1730, p. 64.

Indies. He also noted that Portugal's extensive share of the African slave trade was made necessary by the demands of her plantations and mines in Brazil, enterprises which could not have been developed on a large scale without slave labour. (101)

Most of Defoe's comments on Portugal's foreign trade were made at the height of the controversy over the Anglo-French commercial treaty and therefore were polemical thrusts at the Whig defenders of the Methuen Treaty, but his remarks show a close understanding of the nature of Britain's trade with Portugal. He was undoubtedly correct in stressing the preponderant importance of Brazil in the increase of Portugal's overseas trade and in his assumption that it was the flow of gold from her American colony that was primarily responsible for the large shipments of British cloth to Portugal rather than the famous Methuen Treaty. (102) "Our Export to Portugal was always very great", he pronounced, "Our Import from thence always very small." (103) The increase in the Portuguese demand for British goods was not the result of our increased demand for their wines after the treaty, but followed from "the prodigious Encrease of the Wealth of the Portuguese Nation at home, and of their Brazil Trade abroad." "This Encrease of the Brasil Trade", he continued, "has enrich'd the whole Kingdom of Portugal ... the great Encrease of the Consumption of our Woollen Manufactures in Portugal is occasion'd hereby ... and ... a vast Quantity of those Goods are Consumed in the Brasils more than ever were before." Using his opponents'

101. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ..., pp. 153-156.

102. See H.E.S. Fisher, "Anglo-Portuguese Trade 1700-1770" in Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd. series, Vol. XVI, (1963).

103. Mercator, No. 117, February 20, 1713.

estimate that Britain exported £1,000,000 worth of goods to Portugal each year, he put the value of the Portuguese wine imported into Britain at £100,000 a year "first cost" and asked, "Do the Portuguese take this Million a Year of us in Goods because we take one Tenth part of it from them in Wines, or is it because they have occasion for our Goods?" (104) He consistently underestimated the value of the imports of their wines by at least half, sometimes using a figure as low as 70 or £80,000 a year, and he tried to suggest that the writers of "The British Merchant" had claimed a profit on British exports to Portugal of £1,000,000 whereas the actual figure which they quoted of the value of those exports was £1,300,000" and perhaps to a much greater Sum." (105) As Defoe himself accepted a total figure of "not so much as a Million," the difference between them was not material and did not affect the force of his argument. In fact, British exports to Portugal were probably about £600,000 in 1713 and did not reach the £1,000,000 mark until near mid-century. (106)

Much more important was his assertion that no part of the increase of the trade with Portugal was "to be placed to the Account of Mr. Methuen's Treaty, or so little as is not worth naming," supported by the claim that this trade was increasing long before "this ridiculous Treaty" was made, dating from the time the Brazil trade began to grow with the development of the gold mines. (107) He asked what had the Portuguese to send to

104. Mercator, No. 116, February 18, 1714.

105. Ibid, No. 119, February 25, 1714; British Merchant, No. 10, September 8, 1713.

106. H.E.S. Fisher, loc. cit.

107. Mercator, No. 119, February 25, 1714.



Britain in return for their imports of woollen textiles and insisted that, apart from their wines, it was "not worth Naming, when match'd with our Export to them, except their Gold." Britain took none of their other main Brazilian goods, sugar and tobacco, and only a little salt. In support of this view, he listed the British exports of woollen goods only from 1702, the year before the Methuen Treaty was signed, and compared them with the imports of Portuguese wines and brandy. He concluded that the whole year's import of all goods from Portugal did little more than balance the value of the bays exported to Portugal. (108) On the other hand, he claimed that Britain was Portugal's most important market for her surplus natural products of wines, oil, fruit and salt. As was the case with Spain, these were "all as Dung in France," while the Dutch only took the salt, "and some few Oranges and Lemons." (109) His main argument, however, was the same thesis that he had advanced in relation to the Spanish trade, that Portugal forbade manufacturing in her colonies, yet could not supply her own home market with manufactured goods. An attempt to manufacture their own cloth at Elvas, near the Spanish frontier had failed, in spite of the fact that supplies of Spanish wool were so near at hand. He alleged that they had only succeeded in making "a few very coarse and ordinary Things worse than the English Kerseys" because they were "too proud to set their Hands to work." (110) No other country could supply their needs of woollen cloth except Britain, especially bays, which were essential to the Portuguese. "A

108. Ibid, No. 120, February 27, 1714.

109. Ibid, No. 121, March 2, 1714.

110. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 155.

Man is not compleatly Dressed there without a Bays Cloak", he declared, but no other country could make them, and even in England, only Essex. Although a shortage of Portuguese wine would never cause a rebellion in Britain, he maintained "that the King of Portugal could never force his People to leave off the English Bays, especially in Brasils; it would endanger a Revolt, they could not bear the excessive Heats without such a Garment, so thick and yet so light, which, as it is easie to carry, is their skreen from the Violence of the Sun, and they could scarce live and do their Business without it." Although Holland and Hamburgh supplied linen, and Genoa and Leghorn furnished Portugal with silk goods for her Brazil trade, the English woollen manufactures were worth three times (as much as the goods any other country supplied. Therefore, it was again the superior quality and, indeed, indispensability of English cloth which made him maintain that the trade between Britain and Portugal was "to us Profitable, but to the Portuguese Necessary ... so necessary, that they could not carry on their own Trade without us; so necessary, as that they would be ruin'd and impoverish'd without it." Otherwise the Portuguese could not dispose of their own native produce and they would not be able to supply themselves, let alone Brazil, with clothing. (111) He claimed that the proposed commercial treaty with France would only lead to a small reduction in the British imports of Portuguese wine, because many Englishmen had acquired a taste for it and the French would pay the same duties as the Portuguese. (112) Even if Britain only took half the previous quantity, or even none, Britain would

111. Mercator, No. 121, March 2, 1714.

112. A General History of Trade, September, 1713, pp. 28-31.

still be the main market for their oil, fruit and shumach. (113) It was improbable that the King of Portugal, "for such a trifling Cause" compared with the whole trade, would prohibit a trade which "would ruin his whole Country." (114) A fifty per cent. reduction in their wine imports was the utmost that Defoe considered likely. (115)

Although he accused the Portuguese of being "Knaveish and Cowardly" and alleged that it was only because the British generals had "kept the Enemy from Engaging with them" that they had been useful in locking up 25 to 30,000 Spanish troops, he never disputed that the Portuguese trade was a very great and "a very Gainful, Useful, Necessary Trade." (116) When Swift, in "The Conduct of the Allies" criticized the terms of the British treaties with Portugal in 1703, Defoe quickly rejoined that Britain had been obliged to make the alliance because otherwise she did not have a port for her ships to enter between England and Genoa. He reminded his rival that "we had a Trade to carry on thither worth all the Articles of Support the Ministry could stoop to, from whence we import Yearly a Million of Gold, and export as many Manufactures as formerly used to be sent to both Portugal and Spain." (117) Any market which disposed of so large a quantity of woollen manufactures was obviously of outstanding importance, but he pointed out that the trade had been artificially swollen by the interruption of direct trade with Spain during the Spanish Succession War. All the British manu-

113. Mercator, No. 121.

114. Ibid., No. 120.

115. Ibid., No. 116, February 18, 1714.

116. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 148), p. 591; A Defence of the Allies and the Late Ministry ... (1714) p. 30; Mercator, No. 123, March 6, 1714.

117. A Defence of the Allies ... p. 28.

factures which reached Spain in those years had run through Portuguese hands and Spanish wines had reached Britain by the reverse route. This had added "a mighty Flux of Trade" which would be reduced when peace restored normal commercial relations with Spain. (118) Yet he could see no reason why the trade with Portugal should not continue to be mutually advantageous to both countries, and be very little reduced from its swollen wartime volume even if Britain concluded a commercial treaty with France. Because the wealth and luxury of any nation always expanded together, the change in the standard of living of the Portuguese colonists in Brazil, "from a Mean to a Splendid and Liberal Equipage, and Expence, even to Profusion" would so increase the demand for British manufactures as to more than offset any reduction in the other branches of the trade between Britain and Portugal. (119) By 1728 he was claiming that the Portugal trade was "the best, and most entire Trade" that Britain had and that it now took off more woollen goods "since the late Encrease of their Commerce to Brasil, than both the Kingdom of Portugal and Spain used to do before." (120)

Dr. Fisher's recent study has shown the basic soundness of Defoe's arguments. In the 1670s and 1680s English exports to Portugal had fallen to low levels because of the commercial depression in Brazil and Portugal which followed the rise of West India sugar production and led to the import restrictions of the pragmatistical decrees and to attempts to develop Portuguese industry.

118. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ... p. 153.

119. Mercator, No. 124, March 9, 1714.

120. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 122, 207.

The expansion of gold mining in Brazil from an annual average of 1500 kilogrammes, 1691-1700 to 2750 kilogrammes 1701-1720, produced great commercial prosperity in both Portugal and her chief colony and the attempts at industrial expansion were abandoned. As a result, woollen textiles, in which bays predominated were never below 70 per cent. of British exports to Portugal during this period and Britain's surplus of about £250,000 in her visible trade with Portugal during the first two decades of the century, doubled after 1725 and doubled again in the late 1750s. With the decline in Brazil's gold output after 1760, the export of British textiles was soon halved. The chief importance of the Methuen Treaty was in furnishing the legal framework for trade by Protestant merchants in an autocratic and Catholic country and, in any case, similar privileges were soon granted to other countries, notably Holland in 1705, as Defoe was quick to point out in 1713. (121) Portuguese wines enjoyed a tariff preference over French wines of more than 50 per cent from 1697, six years before the Methuen treaty, and for the first time surpassed the wine imports from Spain. Wine quickly came to form over 80 per cent of Portuguese exports to Britain but while this stimulated the demand for British manufactures, their average annual value of £302,000 in 1726-30 was only two-fifths of the value of Portuguese imports of British cloth. Wine, however, took considerable shipping space and offered more chance of return cargoes for British ships and probably lower freight charges. France imported little from Portugal and could not offer the long credit of British merchants, but

121. Infra. p. 680.

122.

clearly Brazilian gold played the key role in the expansion of Anglo-Portuguese trade. This Portuguese market was responsible for about one-third of the increase in British exports during the first forty years of the century, when her total exports were growing only slowly, and was even more significant in the expansion of her cloth exports, accounting for 85 per cent of the increase in this period. (122)

Defoe always wrote contemptuously of the Moslem disregard for trade throughout all the lands which they controlled. Thus the Turks depopulated the world rather than improved it. As for their trade, except what the Europeans and Jews drove among them, it hardly deserved the title of commerce. The rich returns from the Levant were not the growth of Turkey but "the Product of Armenia and Georgia, the Provinces of Guilan and Indostan, Part of Persia on the shore of the Caspian Sea" or of the islands of the Levant or the Aegean. Little was now produced by the "fruitful rich Countries of Natolia and the Lesser Asia, from the Aegean to the Euxine Sea, once the most rich, populous, and fertile Provinces of the World." (123) Greece, in the hands of the Turks, was now "a Country without Trade" and the famous Arcadian plains lay "desolate and uncultivated." He believed that the Peloponnesus had a soil "as rich and fruitful as almost any part of the World" and could support two million people, but was now "hardly able to support its own Sea-Coast Towns." His greatest complaint, however, was that the Turkish conquest of south-eastern Europe interposed a

122. H.E.S. Fisher, The Portugal Trade: A Study of Anglo-Portuguese Commerce 1700-1770 (1971) passim.

123. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 10-12.

barrier to foreign trade and particularly deprived Britain of "new Scenes of Commerce." Were there free passage of the Hellespont, "our Ships would have a free Trade to the Mouth of the Danube, and by that River convey our Manufactures up to Belgrade, and into Hungary, where we have now no Commerce at all, nor ever had." The southern shores of the Black Sea would be open to trade while the Don would enable merchants to reach the Volga and thus into the heart of Russia, even to Moscow, or down that river to Astrakhan on the Caspian and thence to the coast of Persia. But the Turks were like "Aesop's Dog in the Manger ... a Mischief to other Nations, and no good to themselves." Only the Venetians had any substantial trade to the Turkish capital, which, except for Cairo, was "the largest City with the least Commerce in the World." (124)

Despite these criticisms, Defoe at first shared the general approval of the Levant trade, but less for its rich returns than because this was now probably the best of the few remaining markets for his beloved broadcloth, the quality export in which he thought the excellence of her wool and the skill of her operatives gave England a distinct advantage over her competitors. (125) In May 1713, he had declared that if the French made fine broadcloth of their Spanish wool, "they might hurt our Turkey trade," (126) and he consistently maintained that they could not produce

124. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 170-173.

125. For over 50 years, until the 1720s, the annual average of nearly 20,000 cloths, worth over £250,000 represented about one-eighth of all English textile exports. R. Davis, Aleppo and Devonshire Square: English Traders in the Levant in the Eighteenth Century (1967) p. 97.

126. Review, Vol. IX (No. 90) p. 180.

any cloth of comparable quality. (127) In fact the exports of broadcloth did not show any marked decline during Defoe's lifetime and still amounted to an annual average of 15,673 cloths for the years 1726-30, compared with 18,800 for the decade 1701-1710. The serious fall came in the 1740s when France at last displaced the English dominance in the trade, but this was closely associated with the fact that she was able to take more raw silk and cotton than England. This trade was almost a barter trade of raw silk for woollen cloth, the only European manufacture that Turkey needed, and depended entirely on the returns which the western European countries could absorb. The French demand was so large that considerable quantities of coin had to be sent to Turkey to supplement their exports of cloth. The chief French challenge was in the cheaper grades and in the bright colours of their middle range of cloths and it seems that British sales were maintained in the face of the rigorous French competition by cheaper varieties of broadcloth rather than by the high quality of the British product. As the Levant factors had replaced the expensive Suffolk broadcloth by the cheaper Gloucester and Wiltshire product in the 1670s, when the Wiltshire clothiers concentrated on high quality they obtained their chief supplies from Gloucestershire and Worcestershire and by 1720 they had turned to the still cheaper West Riding "londra." (128)

When the British imports of Turkish silk fell, so did the number of broadcloths sold in Constantinople, Aleppo and Smyrna.

127. *Supra*, pp. 194-198, 203-215.

128. R. Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-32, 98-102, 126-133.



As the English silk manufacture expanded, it came to rely on Italian thrown silk for the warp of broad silk goods, but the chief rival of Levant silk for the weft was Bengal silk after 1713 and by the time of Defoe's death Turkey was only supplying one-third (by weight) of the English industry's requirements compared with three-quarters in 1669. With his usual emphasis on quality, Defoe accused the Turkey merchants of importing an inferior raw material, but the London industry had concentrated on the market for high quality fabrics and preferred the finer Bengal product. (129) He told his readers that it was not the goods which the Turkey merchants exported that wanted a market,

"but that the Silk they have brought Home, has, ... abated in its usual Fineness and Goodness; and that to such a Degree, that the Manufacturers here, ... could no longer make use of it ... and so the Trade may have suffer'd, not from the Abatement of the Market Abroad or at Home, but from the Merchants not taking Care to import a good Commodity. This can no more be call'd a Decay or Loss of the Turkey Trade, than it would be a Loss of the Trade now carried on by the South Sea Company to America; if the Returns for their Goods should be made in a false Coin, ... if the Weavers cannot use the Turkey Silk, because it is deficient in Quality, they must use other Sorts; that is to say, fine Italian and Piedmont thrown Silks, or Bengale raw Silk in the Loom of it, and 'tis certain they do so ...

N.B. It was alledg'd in the late Dispute between the Throwsters and the Weavers before the House of Commons, that as the Turkey Silks were brought over worse than formerly; so the East India or Bengale Silks came better than ever, and accordingly were more in Demand: For it will for ever be true, that whatever Materials of Manufacture are furnish'd from Abroad, and decay in Goodness, they will decay in the Use, sink in Price, and at length sink out of Demand, or they will make the Manufacture they are employ'd in sink in its Value, which is still worse." (130)

129. Ibid, pp. 136-144. Professor Davis adds that the supplies of Persian silk were interrupted by internal difficulties in Persia and by wars with Russian and China.
130. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 208-209.

This may have been one reason why he supported the Italian merchants in their controversy with the Turkey merchants in 1720. He had always associated the Levant Company with the first expansion of England's woollen manufactures into overseas markets and he ascribed its foundation to merchants following up Elizabeth's initiative in sending an ambassador to Solyman the Magnificent. (131) Generally he accepted the arguments put forward by the chartered companies that their monopoly powers were necessary to maintain English trading privileges against those of other nations particularly where the companies were dealing with despotic rulers outside the European states system. (132) Thus he maintained that the Turkey trade had been "carried on in the most regular Manner imaginable, from its first Establishment" and had increased from £30,000 or £40,000 a year to upwards of £300,000. (133) He further contended that the trade was a "much more profitable Commerce" than that carried on with Asia by the East India Company. (134) In 1720, however, the Levant Company was accused of restricting the trade in its own interest in order to obtain a high return from a limited sale and not only on concentrating the traffic in annual shipments but of a decision to send no general ship in 1718. A protest by members of the company who had opposed this resolution provoked a sharp pamphlet warfare but the main dispute

130. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 208-209.

131. Ibid, p. 102. The envoy had been sent out in 1578 to the court of Murad III, not Suleiman I who died in 1566, by two London merchants, Sir Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, and Elizabeth granted a charter to the company formed on the successful result of his mission because she hoped to use this commercial connexion with the Porte to advantage during the struggle with Spain. J.B. Black, The Reign of Elizabeth (Oxford 1936) pp. 201-202.

132. Infra, pp. 730, 791-792

133. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 108.

134. A General History of Trade, July 1713, p. 24.

between the two rival groups of merchants centred round a petition from the Levant Company in 1719 praying for the repeal of the clause in the Navigation Act which allowed goods coming from the Straits and the Levant to be laden at the usual ports although they did not originate there. Although the provision originally had been intended to benefit the Levant Company, it had enabled the English merchants trading to Italy to buy cargoes brought to Leghorn from the Levant by various traders and thus to invade the company's monopoly. The Turkey merchants had complained about this Italian trade as early as 1700 but the fall in their trade in 1718 led to a new attempt to strengthen their monopoly. (135)

Defoe joined in the paper war with a pamphlet ostensibly by a merchant setting forth the positions of the two sides but the defenders of the company justifiably complained that he had not stated the case fairly between them. He had begun by charging the company with no "want of Cunning" in drawing up their petition and had dismissed their "specious Pretences" for the general good of trade and the promotion of British manufactures as cloaks for their private interest. Throughout, he presented the arguments of the company only to rebut them and to defend the Italian merchants. But for "the ill conduct of the Turkey Company, the French wou'd have no Silk to sell, nor

135. R. Davis, op. cit. pp. 49-55; A.C. Wood, A History of the Levant Company (1935) pp. 136-140; The Case of the Levant Company, relating to the Importation of Turkey Goods from the Neutral Ports in Italy (1705); The Case of the Levant Company (1718); The Case of the Italian Merchants (1720); The Case of the Italian Merchants importing Goods of the Growth of Asia by Way of Italy (1720); An Answer to the False Suggestions of the Italian Merchants: ... (1720); The Farther Answer of the Turkey Merchants to the Cases of The Italian Merchants (1720); at least ten more broadsheets 1718-1720.

vend any Cloth in Turkey worth naming." He proceeded to accuse them of aiming "at engrossing the Trade of selling Cloth in Turkey, and of Silk in England, in order to imposing their own Price upon the Buyers of Cloth Abroad, and the Manufacturers of Silk at Home." He agreed that over 200 persons were "free of the Turkey Company" and that the restrictions on entry to this regulated company were so few and so modest that almost any merchant could become a member, even the Italian merchants, (136) but, he added,

"the Gross of the Trade to Turkey is carry'd on by a very few Men, and even of those few a yet fewer Number have the growing Influence of the Trade, and can go far, very far, to limit the rest by their Interest, to Ship or not to Ship, Trade or not to Trade, as their Quantities of Goods, Abroad or at Home, want a Market, or want a Price."

This made the company "a most effectual Monopoly" and was the reason why the Italian merchants had "always declin'd the Company."

Defoe repudiated the company's main allegation that the raw silk imported by the Italian merchants from Leghorn had been brought from Marseilles and was the return of French cloth sold in Turkey. Admitting that a large quantity of silk had been thus conveyed in 1714-1715, he observed that this was a temporary surplus accumulated by the French in the hope of an open trade with England but that the failure of the commercial treaty and the revaluation of their coin obliged them to sell it off at a great loss. Much of this silk had been bought

136. London merchants were required to be freemen, but this restriction was not proposed by the company, but was imposed by the Privy Council on the petition of the Lord Mayor and Common Council. Wood, op. cit., p. 95; Davis, op. cit., pp. 49-51.

with French money rather than with French cloth for all the cloth the French merchants could send to Turkey would not supply the French demand for raw silk. As the price of silk in England was as high as 30s. or 32s. per pound and was threatening the weavers with unemployment, the purchase of this French silk "was infinitely the Advantage of our Trade, and in Proportion ruinous to France." The charges of the French merchants in carrying silk from Turkey to Marseilles and thence to Leghorn was bound to advance the price and for the last three years it had been 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per pound cheaper in London than in Leghorn. There was unlikely to be any further "considerable Importation of Raw Silk from Leghorn, but when the Turkey Company, by their oppressive Limitations, and other monopolizing Arts, restrain or with-hold the Importation of a Quantity sufficient for the Market, on purpose to advance the Price for their private Gain." Whereas the Levant Company had alleged that 100 bales a year had been brought in, the Italian merchants had given evidence to the Commons that they had only imported 36 bales in the current year. On the other hand, if the Italian trade was as inconsiderable as the Turkey merchants claimed, "the Damage to them must likewise be small" and there were then no grounds for their campaign.

Insisting that the real grievance of the Levant Company was the infraction of their monopoly, he contended that it was still unnecessary "to strike at the Root of the Italian Trade" which was larger and more advantageous than their own. He claimed that the Italian merchants sold from £40,000 to £50,000

worth of English goods a year in Turkey and that as a large part of their returns was then sold in Italy this "must be a clear Gain to the publick Stock of Great Britain." The Italian merchants also exported more than twice as much tin as their opponents. He accused the company of "not duly supplying the Markets, by laying Mulcts and Restraints on the English Cloth" which came from Leghorn, "byswearing their Factors and Servants not to sell any of their Goods, but for present Payment," whereas the French gave credit, and of forbidding the English cloth to be conveyed from Leghorn in English ships while they allowed those ships to carry French and Dutch cloths. Although they had "all the Grand Seignior's Dominions for their Trade", they only employed 6 or 7 ships a year, whereas the Italian traders had almost 150 but many lay "mouldring in Port" while the French ships obtained the freights to Turkey. Throwing the trade open would employ not "seven Ships a Year, but seventy, and perhaps seven score Ships" like the Russian Company which formerly sent 6 or 7 ships a year to Archangel and now employed above 120. Arguing strongly for a more dynamic attempt to expand the trade with the Levant, he concluded, "a far greater Number of Ships wou'd go to Turkey, having but Part of their Loading thither from England and having the Liberty to take in Goods for Leghorn, Naples, and Messina, in their Way to Turkey," with a similar freedom on the return voyage, as the opportunities for earning profit presented themselves. (137)

137. The Case Fairly Stated between the Turkey Company and the Italian Merchants (1720) passim. Professor Davis, op. cit. pp. 51, 56-59 has shown that internal rivalries between the few large firms which dominated the trade prevented the Levant Company from being an effective monopoly and that when the trade was thrown open in 1753 this did not prevent its further decline. The company, however, had been opposed to English traders operating outside its three great centres of Aleppo, Smyrna and Constantinople and left the southern sector of the Turkish dominions to the French. See also Wood op. cit. pp. 125-128.

In addition to the restrictive practices of the company, the difficulties in the Turkey trade and the expansion of British trade with Italy are the probable explanation why Defoe abandoned his customary support for the chartered companies in the case of the Levant Company. Yet the company had not entirely forfeited his regard. Describing the expansion of our trade with Leghorn in the "Atlas Maritimus" he noted that the Italian merchants had a large commerce to the Levant and that "our Broad Cloths, prepar'd after the same manner as for the Turkey Trade, are frequently exported from England to Leghorn, dyed, pack'd, cur'd, and made up" but, he added, "this is a kind of contraband Trade as to the Turkey Company in England." (138) He never failed to deplore contraband trade, even the profitable Jamaica sloop traffic, (139) and he also reproached the East India Company for sending English cloth to Persia in its attempts to fulfil its requirement to export £100,000 worth of woollen manufactures a year. This practice, he declared, "is only supplying the same People, who were supplied before, with the same Goods from Alleppo and Scanderoon; so that it is only taking the Trade from the Turkey Company, and transferring it to the East India Company which is no Encrease of Commerce, the last Consumers being the same." (140) In his last year, welcoming the arrival of four ships from the Levant plus the same number freighted for Turkey, he commented, "No Man will suggest that their Trade is not for the General Good of our Commerce."

138. Atlas Maritimus, p. 164.

139. Supra, pp. 592-595.

140. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 244-245.

Claiming that 10,000 pieces of broadcloth had been taken on board these ships, he asked "what Country in the World can boast of an Exportation of the Woollen Manufacture like the Turkey Company, and in so short a time." (141)

In his later writings there are a number of favourable references to the Italian trade. He reported that usually £100,000 worth of woollen goods, "such as Druggets, Du-Roys, Sagathyes, Camlets, with all other Sorts of Mens Stuffs, and broad Cloth it self," were sold at the great fair at Messina. Although the Italians produced a large supply of cheap wrought silks, they were "generally clothed in English Cloth or thin Stuffs; the Clergy in black Bays, the Nuns ... vail'd with fine Says, and Long Ells." Even "the noble Venetians" wore fine English cloth for "their best Dress" and it was worn at the courts of Milan, Turin, Naples and Rome. Most of the pepper imported by the East India Company was re-exported to Leghorn, Genoa and Venice and to France. (142) The Venetians were "the richest State, and the most universal Merchants" of the eastern Mediterranean. Their "universal Correspondence" made them the counterpart of the Dutch in northern Europe and they were said "to drive the most Ready Money Trade of any of the Mediterranean Countrys" because they exported such large quantities of goods to countries which had no returns to make except money. Formerly the greatest glass-makers in Europe, they had been outdone by the French who, in turn, had been surpassed by the English who now made "the best Glass-Wares in the

141. The Political State of Great Britain, September 1730, pp. 238-239.

142. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 138-139, 181.



World" and even sent plate glass and drinking glasses to Venice itself. Similarly Flanders bone-lace was now better than the Venetian. As these, with silk, were their chief manufactures, the trade of Venice was almost solely in the produce and wares of other countries and, again like Holland, was "rather the Trade of the People than of the Place." Although their demand for English woollen manufactures was much less than that of Messina, Genoa or Leghorn, and only amounted to £10,876 worth in 1717, they bought "large quantities of Muscavado Sugars" in England and France for their sugar refineries. (143)

In general the Italian trade was "a very much improv'd Branch of the British Commerce, as to the Returns made thither, and the Quantity of British Manufactures consum'd there." Although the British imports of Italian thrown silk had very much increased, the trade balance which had been so adverse as recently as 1715-1717, with imports from Italy almost three times the value of British exports there, was now, he thought, about £200,000 a year in Britain's favour. Even in the former years, he claimed that British exports to the Straits, which excluded the Turkey and the Spanish trades, exceeded imports by £50,000 a year. The export figures were only those from London, whereas the returns were all made to London, "hardly a Ship unloading her whole Cargo at any other Port." There must therefore be added the "very great Quantities" of woollen manufactures sent to Italy from Hull, Topsham and Bristol, the "Red Herrings from Yarmouth; and Pilchards, pack'd Herrings, as also Block-Tin,

143. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 166-167; A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 182.

from Plymouth, Dartmouth and Falmouth; and lastly, white Fish from New-England and Newfoundland," which amounted in total to at least £105,000 a year. In particular, the exports from Hull to Italy were much increased each year since the 1715-1717 figures, and several ships went each year "wholly loaden for Italy, with Woollen Manufactures and Lead." The chief reasons for this great alteration in trade were the decline in the imports of Italian wrought silks because of the growth of the British silk manufacture and the great increase in our cloth exports to Leghorn "since the Stop of the French Trade for those Manufactures." It was the latter which was the more important to Defoe and furnished conclusive proof of the continuing superiority of English cloth, for the wartime prohibition of British trade with France having continued into the peace, "the Merchants of Marseilles (and other South French ports) buy the British Manufactures at Leghorn, at Messina and Genoa, and import them into France under other Denominations; whence it is apparent the French, notwithstanding their Improvement in Woollen Manufactures, cannot supply their own Markets but by those of the English, whose Merit ... forces their way in spite of the several Prohibitions."

THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE

This noteworthy but still-born commercial treaty which was to complement the 1713 political settlements with France provoked a fierce pamphlet war in which the Tory ministry's proposals were so vigorously defended by Defoe in the "Mercator: or Commerce Retrieved . . .," that the Whigs founded the rival "British Merchant: Or Commerce Preserv'd: . . ." to combat his advocacy. It is claimed that in the course of their controversy, and particularly because of the Whig victory, mercantilist principles became more systematically defined and more firmly established until they were challenged by Hume and by Adam Smith in the second half of the eighteenth century. These ideas were given a wider circulation because Charles King made a more methodical arrangement of the arguments put forward in the twice-weekly issues of the "British Merchant" and issued these in three volumes in 1721, (1) which were often reprinted. Throughout this chapter, however, in order to trace the development of the paper war between Defoe and his opponents, all references will be to the individual numbers of the "British Merchant" as its writers strove to discredit the arguments which Defoe deployed to win support for the proposed trade treaty.

By it, Bolingbroke was trying to end nearly fifty years of tariff war between the two countries in the hope that this would provide the basis for friendlier political relations in the

1. E.A.J. Johnson, Predecessors of Adam Smith (New York 1965 reprint of 1937 edn.) pp. 145-147.

future, (2) possibly always a vain aspiration in that the treaty was defeated as much by the underlying hostility towards France as by the mistrust of its specific terms. This feeling was a very natural one after Britain had been engaged in twenty years of strenuous conflict for the security of trade and religion against an apparent French threat to dominate Europe, the last eleven years of which had proved to be the biggest war she had yet waged. Indeed, Defoe claimed that the Whigs were primarily trying to discredit the proposed trade agreement because they did not want the achievement of more cordial links with France, the converse in fact of Bolingbroke's objective. (3) Since the main aim of the Whigs was to recover the political power which they had lost in 1710, they sensed the danger that a secure peace would enable the Tories to establish themselves more firmly in control of the national and local offices now at their disposal. There is the further view that the achievement of this commercial accord was in any case unlikely because the French and British economies were now competitive rather than complementary. (4) Certainly the proposals for a commercial treaty aroused marked apprehensions amongst the trading and industrial sections of the nation to reinforce any political considerations which may have actuated the Whig opposition.

The discussions for this trade treaty seem to have begun during Prior's first visit to France in July 1711 and to have

2. H.G. Pitt, in The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. VI, ed. J.S. Bromley (1970), p. 469; E. Lipson, The Economic History of England (5th edn. 1948) Vol. III, pp. 99-106 has a good summary of this tariff war.
3. Infra, pp. 628, 686-687, 697-698.
4. H.G. Pitt, loc. cit., p. 470.

become the subject of negotiations during the spring of 1712. The project was for a most-favoured-nation treaty based on the moderate French tariff of 1664 before Colbert's heavy increases in 1667 and the English counter-measures of 1678, 1689 and 1697 strangled the lawful trade between the two countries. (5) Most of the twenty clauses of the treaty, such as the eleventh with its removal of the tax of 50 sous per tun on British ships and that of 5 shillings per tun on French ships, gave rise to little discussion and the initial reaction in England does not seem to have been hostile. (6) But England had demanded the exclusion of woollens, sugar, salted fish and the product of whales from the reductions that France was to offer the Dutch in another commercial treaty and the French in turn insisted that these restrictions must also apply to the Anglo-French treaty, to preserve most-favoured-nation treatment for the Dutch. (7) Attention, therefore, became focussed on the 8th and 9th Articles, and particularly on the latter which incorporated this stipulation, since the 8th Article simply gave effect to the most-favoured-nation condition. By Article 9 it was proposed to levy no higher duties in England on French than on other foreign imports, to remove all prohibitions by both countries on goods not prohibited before 1664, to admit English imports into France according to the general tariff of 1664, except for the four commodities which were to be the subject of separate negotiation, along with certain British proposals, by commissaries from both countries within two months of the ratification of the rest of the treaty.

5. *Ibid*, p. 469; E. Lipson, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-106.

6. *H.M.C. (Polwarth)*, i. 9-10. Reference in E. Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

7. H.G. Pitt, *loc. cit.*, p. 469.

In the meantime they were to pay the higher 1699 tariff, English "clothes, ratines and serges" were to be imported only at St. Valery, Rouen and Bordeaux and were there to be subject to the same inspection as French goods, and salt fish was only to be imported in barrels, paying an additional levy of 40 livres per last of 12 barrels, each weighing 300 lb., and was to be imported only at St. Valery, Rouen, Nantes, Libourne and Bordeaux.

(8)

Miss McLachlan's statements that "on commercial questions Bolingbroke's knowledge was scarcely more profound than that of the country gentlemen who supported him" and that in these matters he relied on the advice of Arthur Moore, a former footman, but now one of the Commissioners of Trade, do not seem to have been challenged. (9) It was, therefore, probably Arthur Moore who was responsible both for the initial draft and for the terms of the treaty as they emerged from the negotiations with the French. It also appears that it was Moore who engaged Defoe to promote the treaty in print, for on May 21, 1714, Defoe wrote to Harley about the Bill which proposed to restrict the Dissenters' schools and added, "I am in great want also to lay before you something about the 'Mercator', and if it may please you to have that paper made more useful, I mean to more purposes than its single original design, I have some thoughts to lay before you on that head. I hope your Lordship is made acquainted that Mr. M—, who first set me upon that work, and undertook the support of

8. Tractatus Navigationis et Commerciorum (1713), pp. 13-16.

9. J.O. McLachlan, Trade and Peace with Old Spain, 1667-1750 (Cambridge 1940), pp. 182, 53.

it, has declined any consideration for it ever since Lady Day last, so that I perform it wholly without any appointment for it, or benefit by it; which I do singly, as I hope it is of service, and that it may be agreeable to you to have it continued; though my circumstances render it hard to me to do so because it is expensive to me ..." (10). Because he had served the Queen's ministers since the early months of 1704, he regarded himself as in the general service of the government, but he looked upon Harley, as his first benefactor and agent of "the Queen's bounty", as his immediate employer and after 1710 he was particularly dependent on the Lord Treasurer. Aware that he had been supplanted by Swift as the chief government pamphleteer, and that he had incurred the bitter enmity of the Whigs by his defence of the peace negotiations with France and even the hostility of his fellow-Dissenters, he was desperately trying to find ways in which he could still commend himself to his patron. (11) It does not seem, however, that Harley was much concerned with the 'Mercator', or with commercial questions generally. The trade treaty was Bolingbroke's brain-child and there are only five other references to the journal or to the controversy about the treaty in the letters which Defoe wrote to Harley. The first was on August 1, 1713, when thirty issues of the 'Mercator' had appeared. At the end of a short letter, he wrote, "... I hope I have not been an unprofitable servant in the new undertaking which I am embarked in. But I would willingly be farther useful according to my duty, and for this reason I attend the

10. H.M.C., Portland, v. p. 445.

11. See my M.A. Thesis, pp. 294-312, particularly pp. 304-307.

first occasion I may have to lay before your Lordship such thoughts as I hope may be for your service on this occasion." (12) The other four references were all in October 1713. Only one, the letter of October 22, commented at length on the dispute about trade, the rest linked it with the general struggle between the two parties. (13) Thus, on October 16, he wrote, "... I know you are sensible what these men drive at, and I hope are sufficiently prepared to disappoint them; the Shibboleth of Trade is now artfully put into the mouths of the people, and the Parliament will be thronged with clamorous petitions on the subject, if some vigorous and speedy resolution does not repulse them at first. They promise themselves to put the whole nation in the same ferment they have done the city. I have many expedients to offer you on this affair if you would be pleased to admit me at proper times to attend for that purpose; no question but some way may be proposed to put a stop to this fury." (14) He made this last reference to "the Bill of Commerce" on October 31, "it is very needful to open the eyes of all the Government's friends to this particular, ... that the dispute about trade is but a circumstance, an excrescence grown out of the general party broil, taken hold of as they would have done of anything else that had offered, as men drowning take hold of one another and drown the faster; but that the quarrel is the same as before, and they who will be amused with the clamour of a party without enquiring into the true design, really make that design effectual, and assist that party to destroy themselves and the Government together, and ... ought to remember it is not

12. H.M.C., Portland, v. p. 315.

13. Ibid, pp. 351-353.

14. Ibid, pp. 314-315.



trade that they are voting for, but the Queen and Ministry against rage and disorder.

This is what, if your Lordship approves my thoughts, I shall apply myself to, and wish that all men who have any zeal for her Majesty's service would do the same, and I the rather mention it because I see there is room for arguments on this head, ..." (15) He wrote eight more letters to Harley between this date and the letter of May 21, 1714 and another, on June 23, 1714, before Harley was dismissed from office, but he made no further remarks about trade or the 'Mercator'. Although Arthur Moore probably launched the 'Mercator', one is left with the impression that Defoe was free to comment as he thought fit about the treaty or trade in general, and that he thought that he was serving Harley, as head of the government, rather than Moore, or even Bolingbroke. Whether he received any separate payment for the 'Mercator' has not been recorded. In 1714 he received the usual sums of £100 "for secret services" or "as of Bounty" on five occasions, namely on January 16, February 1, February 10, July 2 and July 26, all being made to one of his aliases, Claude Guilot, but there is no payment on March 25, "Lady Day last of the letter of May 21. He did not receive any "royal bounty" during 1713, the year when the 'Mercator' began publication, in fact nothing between March 6, 1712 and January 16, 1714, but there was a similar gap between December 27, 1710 and February 24, 1712. (16) Perhaps the financial

15. Ibid, p. 356.

16. L. Hanson, Government and the Press 1695-1763 (Oxford 1936) p. 96, quoting from P.R.O. Secret Service Accounts (Lowndes Papers) ff. 1, 2, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16-18.

support from the government consisted of payments direct to the printer and publisher of the paper, although Boyer said that Defoe "received a large weekly allowance from the Treasury" for "this dirty work." (17)

The Treaty of Utrecht was signed on April 11, 1713, and eleven days later (April 11, O.S.) Defoe was arrested on the ridiculous charge of treason for writing his three ironical pamphlets on the eventualities which might follow the Queen's death. Although he had tried to warn his readers of the danger and dire consequences of a Jacobite restoration, the Whigs, furious at his political conduct since their downfall in 1710, and pretending that the pamphlets were genuine expressions of Jacobite sympathies, had engineered his arrest. The intervention of Harley secured his release on £800 bail, but Defoe, in two issues of the 'Review', unwisely allowed himself to reflect on the impartiality of Lord Chief Justice Parker, so that he was again imprisoned on April 22. It was not until he apologized to the court on May 2 that he became free of these entanglements, but he did not finally break clear of this episode until the autumn. (18) On October 9, he wrote to Harley to inform him that the Attorney-General had instructed him that he could only secure his safety on "the old affair of the three pamphlets" by petitioning the Queen to obtain her pardon. He asked for Harley's help in this petition and added "Mr. Moore has promised to be the bearer of my petition to your Lordship." (19) This

17. Quad. Annae Post v. 323, quoted in L. Hanson, *op. cit.*, p.10
18. J. Sutherland, Defoe (1937) pp. 195-199; P. Dottin, The Life and Adventures of Daniel Defoe translated L. Ragan, (1928) pp. 171-180.
19. H.M.C., Portland v., pp. 345-346.

reference to Moore suggests that the two men were then closely associated in the publication of the 'Mercator'. On November 20, he received the Queen's pardon with a recognition that he had been writing ironically in the three pamphlets.

The text of the commercial treaty was presented to the House of Commons on May 9, and on May 14 it was moved that leave be given to bring in a bill to give effect to the 8th and 9th articles, the essential preliminary to the ratification of the treaty. This being carried, the Bill was given its first reading on May 30. (20) In the interval, the first number of the 'Mercator' appeared on May 26, stating that it was "Considerations on the State of the British Trade; particularly as it respects Holland, Flanders, and the Dutch Barrier; the Trade to and from France, the Trade to Portugal, Spain, and the West-Indies, and the Fisheries of Newfound-Land, and Nova Scotia; With other Matters and Advantages accruing to Great Britain by the Treaties of Peace and Commerce lately concluded at Utrecht. The whole being Founded upon just Authorities, faithfully Collected from Authentick Papers; and now made Publick for General Information," but each issue was directly or indirectly concerned with British trade with France. Outside Parliament, there was strong opposition to the measure from the numerous vested interests which had become established during the years in which French imports had been prohibited, or from

20. For the details of the Parliamentary battle about the treaty I have followed D.A.E. Harkness, "The Opposition to the 8th and 9th Articles of the Commercial Treaty of Utrecht" Scottish Historical Review, (1924) XXI, 219-226.

those who thought they were beneficiaries from the Methuen Treaty. The first of a stream of petitions from the clothing centres against the Bill, that from Colchester, had reached the Commons on May 11 and they continued almost daily for the next four to five weeks. There were also many petitions from the importers of Portuguese wine, the silk weavers of London and Canterbury, the distillers, the linen-weavers, the paper-makers, the manufacturers of gold and silver thread and from the Levant and East India Companies. Although the Bill was given its second reading, by 202 votes to 135, the Whigs were strengthened in their opposition by these demonstrations of support from the trading and manufacturing sections and the Tory squires were correspondingly dismayed. There was strong feeling about the "four species", the four commodities excepted by France from her 1664 tariff and on June 13, a clause was inserted that these should be admitted into France on the same terms as other British imports. On June 18, during an eight-hour debate on the motion that the Bill be engrossed, Sir Thomas Hanmer, who represented Suffolk and may have been influenced by the clothing towns in the county, announced that the petitions had convinced him that the measure would be prejudicial to the woollen and silk weavers. This change of front from his former vigorous support of the Bill decided its fate and the motion was defeated by nine votes, by 194 to 185. Mr. Harkness points out that "the ministry, divided on political questions was no more united on the question of the Commercial Treaty. The treaty had been the work of St. John and Arthur Moore, and the rest of the ministry had simply acquiesced without regarding the 8th and 9th Articles

with any great enthusiasm. But St. John had gone to the Lords as Viscount Bolingbroke and, in his absence, the ordinary Tory members were unlikely to be swayed by a man such as Moore when Hanmer had declared against the bill." (21)

When this decisive debate took place, only eleven issues of the 'Mercator' had appeared, but two days later, Defoe declared that his paper was not less useful than before "tho' the Parliament has for the present thought fit to lay by the further Proceedings therein" and he continued to publish it three times a week until 181 issues had appeared, when it finally came to an end on July 20, 1714. (22) Possibly, Bolingbroke thought that the decision could be reversed. In obvious annoyance, he wrote to Harley just after the debate on June 18, "The Dutch had notice of the throwing out the Commerce Bill before our letters got into Holland ... they are overjoyed at it, and laugh openly at us. They are going to take off the small duties they have on French goods, particularly on silks, that they may the better carry on that trade for us.

Indeed, my Lord, we make a despicable figure in the world. You have retrieved many a bad game in your time; for God's sake make one push for government ..." (23) Again, on July 27, in a letter calling on Harley to express more direction in the ministry he remarked, "Though the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty are

21. D.A.E. Harkness, loc. cit., p. 226; (Anon) A Short History of the Parliament (1713) p. 13, claimed that the Commons were zealous for the commercial treaty "in every Step" until they were alarmed by the petitions against it.
22. Mercator, No. 12, June 20, 1713.
23. H.M.C., Portland, V., pp. 299-300.

not made effectual as to the tariff, there are other advantages independent of the condition, which we are entitled to. The French Commissaries desire to understand the matter otherwise. This should be settled, and Commissaries should meet upon it ..."

(24) Harley, however, was ready to abandon the Bill because of the weight of opposition against it. (25) On the other hand, the Whigs, despite their Parliamentary victory in June and the petitions from the country, must have felt that their success needed to be consolidated or, alternatively, that the Tories were vulnerable on the question of trade, for, on August 7, 1713 the "British Merchant" appeared as an avowed opponent of the 'Mercator'. Possibly, Defoe's propaganda in favour of trade with France had been sufficiently effective for the Whigs to decide that he must be answered but only 32 issues of the 'Mercator' had then appeared. The new journal had the support of the Earl of Halifax, one of the leaders of the Whig opposition to the treaty in the Lords, and of General Stanhope, their leader in the Commons, and Charles King, Sir Theodore Janssen, James Milner, Joshua Gee, Christopher Haynes and David Martin were among the contributors to the 105 issues which appeared up to July 30, 1714, only two days before Anne died. (26)

One feels that Defoe must have welcomed the opportunity to write exclusively about trade. From time to time, in the 'Review', he had returned to trade and allied topics with obvious

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 311-312.

25. Cobbett, *Parliamentary History*, vi, pp. 1223-1224.

26. E.A.J. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-146 and 347-348.

pleasure after some weeks spent on political questions. (27) Dottin noted that Defoe proposed to divide the 'Review' and to supply an issue solely given up to trade but that this idea had to be abandoned because of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. tax on newspapers imposed by the Stamp Act of 1712, one of the repressive measures of the closing years of Anne's reign. Because of this measure, Defoe had to abridge the 'Review' to a single sheet printed in two columns but this reduced its circulation. (28) Therefore, only sixteen days after the appearance of the 'Mercator', he brought the 'Review' to an end, after nine years in which he had produced it, single-handed. This was also the case with its successor, although at one time it was thought that Moore began the new journal before handing it over to Defoe, or that Defoe was only the main contributor. The style, however, is so unmistakably his and its arguments are so typical and so consistent with the rest of his writings on economic questions that there seems no doubt that Defoe wrote the whole of each issue.

When he took up the cudgels on behalf of the commercial treaty, he was able to develop arguments which he had first used nearly nine years earlier and had restated at intervals in the 'Review' throughout the War of the Spanish Succession. His starting point was the example of Holland, always one to be considered carefully by Defoe. On December 12, 1704, during the arguments about the prohibition of trade and correspondence with the enemy, he announced:

27. Review, Vol. II (No. 118) p. 469, Vol. III (No. 1) pp. 1-2; Vol. IV (No. 147) p. 588; cf. Preface to Vol. II.  
 28. P. Dottin, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

" ... I presume to say, Our stopping of Trade with France, both during the last war and this, has been a great many Millions Damage to us, and much more so, than it has to them; and yet the main thing, viz. The preventing Intelligence and Correspondence ... has not been prevented neither ... In the late War, great Care was taken to prevent our Shipping Corn and Lead, from England to France, for the Supply of our Enemies, the French; and some People were Punished for the breach of this Law, tho' not near the Number of those that were Guilty. Now, If Keeping the French from our Corn, would have starv'd them, and kept them from Bread; as we were Enemies, ... we ought to have done it, and done it more Effectually than we did, they having at that time, a great scarcity, and a succession of bad Harvests, for six or seven Seasons together: But while by this Prohibition, we only sent our Corn to Flanders and Holland, and they sold it to the French at a double Price; 'tis plain, we only cheated our selves, the French had the Corn, and the Flemings had the Profit. The like in our Lead; ... while we only sent our Lead to Lisbon and Venice, and they took care to Convey it to France; we Cheated our selves, the French had our Lead, and Beat us with our own Bullets; they gave an Extravagant rate for them, and the Portuguese and the Venetians got the Money. Thus has England been always kept Poor and Honest, and has always taken Care to have a Principal hand in her own Misfortunes." (29)

It was not merely a question of gaining the maximum amount of profit from supplying France with one or two commodities, even including war materials, for which she had a temporary and exceptional demand, but he was now confident that general trade with France would also be to England's advantage. In December 1704, he asserted, "our Trade with France, suppose the War over, stands on a better Foot than it ever did in these last 50 Years, or indeed ever before. French Fashions, French Wines, and French - grew upon us so much in the Reign of King Charles II that in spite of all the English goods we could vend in France, we Traded with them to our loss, and the Ballance run 800,000 l.

29. Review, Vol. I, (No. 81), pp. 337-338. Cf. R.F. An Enquiry into the Causes of the Prohibition of Commerce with France .. (1708) p. 3, "The Dutch are as much concern'd to keep their secrets from the French as we, and yet they allow a free Trade with them."



Sterling per Annum against us, which we were oblig'd to make good by Bills." It was "that very single Article of Liquids", the large import of French wines and brandy that was chiefly responsible for this adverse balance, but the interruption of this trade by war had caused France to suffer "an Irreparable Loss" which she would feel in trade "for fifty Years," and perhaps ever after the War." This had "so turn'd the Scale of Trade against her", that she must henceforward trade with Britain as much to her loss as she had previously gained, or "above a Million and half Difference every Year, in the general Ballance of Trade." (30) There were only two reasons, he insisted for prohibiting trade with any nation, "1. Preventing Intelligence with, and Supplies to them as Enemies: Or, 2. Some Exceeding Advantage in Trade, which the Enemy has over the Nation so prohibiting the Trade." (31)

As the first was "a most vain and palpable Absurdity," (32) impossible to prevent "unless we could bear a General Embargo of Shipping," so the second was "the most rational Thing in the World," in 1688. The position, however, was now completely altered. Despite the "deadly Blow" of the curtailment of the Spanish trade and the loss of £30,000,000 at sea from the depredations of the French privateers, English trade had "thriven upon the War" and was now "capable of the greatest Improvements that ever it was, since England was a Nation, and capable of being made the greatest and most flourishing in the World. (33)

30. Ibid., I (No. 82) p. 342.  
 31. Ibid., I, (No. 83) p. 345.  
 32. Ibid., I, (No. 82) p. 342.  
 33. Ibid., I, (No. 83) pp. 345-346.

It was the French refugees arriving here after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes who were chiefly responsible for this tremendous change. Because they were, "generally speaking, all Mechanicks," they "began to erect such French Manufactures, as we used to have in great Quantities from them." He singled out "five exceeding great Articles of our Improvement" and claimed that the manufacture of glass and of hats we had "absolutely and entirely made our own", that lustrings, or plain black silks, paper and sail-cloth were "wonderfully Improv'd" and "vast Quantities of them made in England." He added that there were "near fifty White-Paper Mills" which now made "exceeding good Paper for the Press, and for the Pen," which, only a few years before, were "not to be found in this Nation." Even more important, however, was the substitution of Portuguese wines for French:

"... as soon as the first War broke out, the strict Prohibition of Wines and Brandies from France; and more particularly, the high Duties on those taken by Prize, put a Check to the vast Importations from thence; and that War holding so exceeding long, the Portugal Merchants soon enlarg'd their Trade, and fill'd the whole Nation with their Wines. 'Tis true, their Wines being heavy and strong, did not at first please, and we hanker'd after the old Claret of Bourdeaux; but in time ... the Merchants found out Ways and Means, either to bring the Portuguese Wines to our Palates, or Custom brought our Palates to the Wines; so that we began to forget the French Wines, and like the other well enough - ... I should much rather the Act against Sophisticating of Wines should not pass; for we trade in Wine so much to our Advantage now, ... that we had better drink almost any thing for Wine, than fall back into the old Channel of Trade, and buy them with our ready Money from France - ... It is not for me to enter into the dark Doings of our Vintners, Wine-Coopers, and Brewing Merchants. I am not examining what Quantities of Syder, or Turnip-Juice is used in that Wine we drink. 'Tis better for England we should drink all Turnip-Wine, or any Wine, than that we should drink the best Wine in Europe, and go back to France for it."

Because of these two changes, if the war ended, "we should not import any of their Glass, their Hats, or Lustrings, not a fifth part of their Wine, not above a third of their Brandys, nor half their Linens." Although the French prohibited our herrings and imposed high tariffs on our manufactures, they could not do without "our Lead, our Tin, our Tobacco, our Sugars, our East-India Goods, our Corn, our Leather, and too much of our Wooll." (34) This was evident from the experience of "the short and precarious Peace" between 1697 and 1702, when, he claimed, "the Prodigious Flux of French Gold into this Kingdom" was such that 1,100,000 French pistoles were coined into English money by the Mint. The high <sup>prices</sup> ~~duties~~ of £43 per tun for wine, and of £50 per tun for brandy were "the Effectual Bar" against any return of the English taste for French wines. The "height of the Price," he reiterated "will always baulk the Consumption; a few City and Court Taverns, may demand their dear French Wines, with hard Names, only because they are dear, and have hard Names; but the General Draught can never carry it off; the People will Drink Wine, but they will never Drink Quantities at two shillings and sixpence to three shillings per Bottle. The Custom of sixteen Years Prohibition, has fix'd the English People into Portugal Wines." Because of the French demand for English lead, horses and corn during this short period of open trade between the two wars and the continuing high duties on French wines, Defoe accepted "the least and most moderate Computation" that France was obliged to pay £90,000 a month in cash to England throughout these years. He admitted that this period was exceptional, in that France had been

"entirely Empty of English Goods" for many years, that she had had two poor harvests and that she was busy stockpiling because the return of the war was imminent. Thus he claimed that an English gentleman had told him that he had seen 20,000 pigs of English lead on the quayside at Rouen. Nevertheless, he reasoned "while we keep up the high Duties on French Wine and Brandy, we can never Trade to France to our Loss." Although it might be necessary from time to time to prohibit the export of some particular commodity to France as, at the time of writing, horses, because of a French shortage, yet, if these were reaching France through another country we should send them directly. (35)

Since trade with France was now profitable, Defoe asked why it should continue to be prohibited. "If it be to our Gain," he exclaimed, "it must be to their Loss; and if we are, as by the Declaration of War, by all means to annoy them both by Sea and Land, let us Trade with them. We shall beggar them by it, and all Men will allow that's as quick a Way of Beating them, as to Fight them. We ought to Trade with every Nation we can Bubble; I wish we Traded with none that Bubble us."

The French might have good reason to forbid trade with England, "but it remains a most entire Mystery to all the World, why we should Prohibit Trade with them." As for prohibiting postal communication with France, he added, echoing a famous phrase of North's, this had "less Sence by half in it than those Wise Men who would make a Hedge about the Cuckoo" because of the links with France through countries such as Turkey, Tuscany and Genoa.

To those who were always repining at the Dutch and called on the English government to stop their open trade with France by threatening to send over no more English troops to Flanders, he asked whether we sent these forces to help the Dutch or to defend ourselves outside our own frontiers. We should also have an open trade with France, he retorted, "if our Eyes were not, with Solomon's Fool, in the Ends of the Earth." (36)

It is important to note in the foregoing statements that Defoe dated the beginning of the increased English consumption of Portuguese wine to the prohibition of French wines in 1688 and that he made no mention of the Methuen Treaty in recording that the sales in England had already reached a high level. Indeed his comments were written in December 1704 and January 1705, when the economic agreement of the Methuen treaties was only a year old. Total wine shipments to England rose from an average of 16,252 pipes in 1700-3 to only 17,198 in 1704-7, while total exports to England in 1710 were lower than in 1700. (37)

In June 1707, when there were loud English complaints of French wine and brandy reaching England through Scotland, Defoe reaffirmed his belief that an open trade with France would be to England's advantage, but also revealed his basic attitude towards foreign imports by the "two particular Restrictions" on which he insisted, namely that the high duties on wine and

36. *Ibid*, I, (No. 88), pp. 366-367.

37. V.M. Godinho, "Portugal and her Empire" in The New Cambridge Modern History, ed. J.S. Bromley, Vol. VI, p. 524, footnote.

brandy should remain and "that such Prohibitions as are laid on French Manufactures, as interfere with our own, should also remain." Otherwise, the balance of trade would be turned against us "and take the Reason for opening the Trade quite away." It was so much more profitable to import wine from Portugal, Italy and Spain than from France, "because the first three take nothing from us but our own Manufactures, which are the Employment of our Land and Poor, and the other by overballancing our Manufactures, will drain us of our ready Money to make good the Difference." Because "Dearness of Goods lessens the Consumption," although some would have the French wine whatever it cost, these would only be a small minority. He declared categorically, "There are always needful Prohibitions and Limitations in Trade, which are thought proper to be maintain'd between Nations, who are nevertheless in Peace and good Terms one with another ... (such as) The several Prohibitions of Manufactures, Corn, Cattle, etc. between England and Ireland, and formerly between England and Scotland." The reason why silks from Caudebec and glass from Normandy should continue to be subject to high duties was because "by the Cheapness of the Materials and of Labour together with their long Usage, the French are able without those necessary Prohibitions to make them either somewhat better or somewhat cheaper." (38) If the duties remained, it was easy to open the French trade, and yet preserve the balance on the English side. (39) Three years later, he repeated, "I am far from being of their Mind, who say, that all Prohibitions are destructive to Trade, and that wise

38. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 55), pp. 217-219.

39. Ibid., IV, (No. 149), p. 596.

Nations (the Dutch) make no Prohibitions at all" and he instanced the Dutch restrictions on their colonial trade. He also re-emphasized the futility of wartime embargoes on trade, alleging that the Portuguese and the Genoese sold our corn to the French at 100 per Cent. profit and that Lisbon bought more lead from us in ten years than ever she took in two hundred years before. (40) In the next issue, he reminded his readers that he had argued in favour of an open trade with France "ever since the first War began" and that he had frequently offered it "both in Publick and in Private," adding "I had the Honour to defend this Opinion ... before both the House of Commons, and before the Privy Counsel in the late Reigns ... I said openly in Print, the Dutch did it, because their Trading Eyes were open, and we did not, because our eyes were shut, and I think so still." He contended that the Dutch had carried on trade with France, "notwithstanding the War, to very great Advantage" and that this was confirmed by Amsterdam's attitude to the struggle with France:

"The City of Amsterdam was the only Place which shewed an Uneasiness at the last War, and indeed at this too; and ... were eager for a Peace, almost to Clamour, ... their Commerce was so considerable to France, that the stop of it was too sensible a Loss, not to pinch them sorely; as soon as the Commerce with France was open'd, ... no City in the United Provinces so Vigorous for the Prosecution of the War as Amsterdam, so Zealous for the Cause, so forward to Contribute ... and so averse to the several Propositions of Peace ... And give but Amsterdam a free Trade with France, and our Trade shut up, I dare say they will never upon any private Account, complain of the length of the War, tho' it were to last a HUNDRED Years."

He claimed that he could name one merchant in Amsterdam, with whom he was acquainted, who had bought over £200,000 worth of English woollen goods in one year, implying that these were

largely for resale to France, and that the Scots had lost since the Union, £40,000 a year by the sale of fish to France by "this unhappy Prohibition of Commerce." The same was true of the tobacco trade,

"by which we have baulk'd our Trade of near six Thousand Hogsheads of Tobacco a Year, at the same Time that our Tobacco for want of a Market, will not pay its own Freight, but brings the Planter in Debt for carrying it to Market; ... (yet) the Dutch for want of Quantity, Plant Tobacco in Guildres and Haiault, when our Colony in Virginia and Maryland ... can produce more Tobacco, than all the World can Consume, and for want of a Trade, are like to turn their Hands to Corn, Husbandry, and Manufactures, ... When will this Nation cease to be the blindest of all the open-Ey'd Nations of the World? ... I have known the Trade to France Employ 400 Sail of English Ships at once; for that Trade is always carry'd on in our own Ships; for these last Years, you might see your own Ports full of Dutch Ships, carrying on that Delicious Trade which we have cast off - ... while our own Vessels have been fitted out for little or nothing, but for Prizes to the French Privateers, or have lain by the Walls and Perish'd for fear of them." (41)

"Prohibition of Trade, he insisted,

"is only Transposing Trade, and resolving to Trade at second and third Hand, when we might Trade at first Hand - For both we and the Dutch must, and always do Trade with France: When the Dutch Trade was open, and ours prohibit, we Traded through their Hands; If theirs is prohibit, and ours open, they will Trade through our Hands; if both are prohibited, as once they were, and the Portuguese were Neuters, we both Traded through their Hands; after the Portuguese came into the War, the Danes and Swedes were the People, but still we Traded to France, and do so still; so that the Prohibition serves only to make our Trade more difficult and less Profitable."

Although "it was formerly a Pernicious Destructive Trade to us, Ruinous to our People, and Impoverishing to us, as to Money," it was now quite otherwise. (42) Thus, "it was absolutely necessary to Prohibit the French Trade in King William's Time"

41. *Ibid*, VII, (No. 145), pp. 577-578.

42. *Ibid*, VII, (No. 146), p. 582.



and for the same reason it was "as absolutely necessary to take off that Prohibition now." Moreover, this could be done "without any Breach of our Alliances with Portugal." (43) It would not damage the Portugal trade, nor "hurt any Body but the French themselves." (44) To maintain the prohibition now was "the maddest Thing the Nation could do, or ever did in the Matters of Trade." (45)

Defoe did not date the deterioration in English trade with France to Colbert's tariffs of 1664 or of 1667, but to 1672, when "Duties were doubled again" and "the French Trade, like the French Tyranny, became a Grievance to the Nation." He conceded that the adverse balance of this trade became so great that in the second year of James II's reign, "when I had the Honour to see a Calculation made to the Privy Counsel," it amounted to above £850,000 a year, with as much as 45,000 tun of wine and brandy imported from France in one year. Even worse, this was "a Trade wholly consisting of Superfluties, not necessaries; Toys, Trinkets, Trifles, and the general Assistants to our Luxury, that at once debauch'd our Morals, as it debauch'd our Trade, and dreyn'd us of our Money, to furnish our Vices." (46) Therefore, he acknowledged, "Whoever thinks, that by opening the French Trade, I should mean bringing us back to Trade with France upon the same Terms that we Traded with them in '76 to '86 ... must think me as Mad as I think him for suggesting it" but he claimed that England could now trade with them £600,000 a year

43. *Ibid.*, VII, (No. 148), pp. 591, 590.

44. *Ibid.*, VII, (No. 154), p. 574 (614)

45. *Ibid.*, VII, (No. 150), p. 598.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 598-599.

to her gain. Although he wrote so enthusiastically of the English improvements in making goods formerly imported from France, he admitted that these were only "trifles" and that it was the prohibition of imports of French wine and brandy that was really responsible for the change in our trading position. (47) Therefore, the maintenance of the high duties on these imports was the key to the situation. Although there was "a Vice in our National Humour" that some Englishmen would have what they fancied "cost what it will" or "that the Dearer the Thing" the more they wanted it, this was only true of those who had "more Money than Thought." His own experience in the wine trade made him confident that the high price would effectively reduce the consumption of French wine for he announced that he had sold "many a Tun of as good French Claret as is in the World, or perhaps ever will be, at 6 l. 10s. to 7 or 8 l. a Hogshead" and that he had since seen the same kinds sold for £200 a tun. He quoted the great increase in the price of coffee during the past three years, which obliged coffee houses to charge  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. more, but the demand declined so much that "Hundreds of Coffee-Houses left it quite off." (48)

A year later, in April 1712, his estimate of a favourable balance of £600,000 a year if the French trade were renewed, was replaced by his previous high figure of January 1705. Referring again to the short interval of peace which followed the Treaty of Ryswick, he claimed that "it was apparent from just

47. *Ibid.*, VII, (No. 154), p. 574 (614)

48. *Ibid.*, VIII, (No. 4), pp. 13-14.

Calculations, that we Traded to France ninety thousand pound per Month to our Gain, in Ballance." Repeating his former arguments against prohibitions on the export of corn and lead to France, by which "we Cheated ourselves of the Advanc'd Profit," he again urged the ministry to follow the Dutch example and resume trade with the French and thus "enable ourselves the better to fight them." He demanded, "Why we had not made a Treaty of Commerce with them at first?" and added, "I have, in the Course of this Paper, Printed it ten times over at least, that if we had been in our Trading Wits, we had open'd our Trade with France from the beginning ... Fight with France as long as you will, but Trade with France, all the while." (49) The reference to "a Treaty of Commerce" at this particular time is puzzling. Whether he already envisaged a trade treaty with France, or had received a hint from Harley, is difficult to determine. The latter, however, seems unlikely because the preliminary discussions with the French were only just beginning and it has already been noted that, after 1710, Defoe's relations with Harley were never as close as they had been earlier. (50) There is no reference at this time to economic matters in his letters to Harley, which were concerned with political affairs in Scotland, the Dissenters, and the Dutch mistrust of the peace negotiations with France. The main theme of the 'Review' in the spring of 1712 was the necessity of ending the war because of the burden which the heavy taxation imposed on our foreign trade. In this context, he may have used the phrase entirely by chance and the next brief reference, in December 1712, "that

49. Ibid, Vol. VIII, (No. 167), p. 670. Cf. Vol. I, (No. 87) pp. 361-362.

50. Supra, p. 418.

in particular Articles of Trade" it would be "our great Advantage to have a Free Trade with France" suggests that the earlier reference has no particular significance. (51)

Apart from this possible but doubtful instance of kite-flying, all the foregoing reflections on trade with our chief political and commercial rival were published long before there was any suggestion of a trade agreement with France. The closing issues of the 'Review' were devoted to this question but the commercial clauses of the Treaty of Utrecht had then begun to be the subject of debate and Defoe was preparing the ground for his defence of the treaty against the furious onslaught of the Whigs and of the many vested interests which had emerged during the years when trade with France was prohibited. As is so often the case in Defoe's major polemical battles, the main substance of his argument in the 'Mercator' was an extension of the propositions which he had already advanced in the 'Review'. Although he naturally used every debating point which he could employ against his Whig opponents, it is the development of these earlier statements which represents his true convictions. Thus, he soon returned to the topic of prohibitions in trade and announced, "It is a Maxim founded in the Reason of Trade, that Manufacturing Nations ought never to Prohibit the Exportation of their own Manufactures to any Place whatsoever. Importations may be Prohibited as Emergency may offer, and sometimes are made necessary by the Circumstances of Trade, but Exportations never."

51. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 38), p. 76. On 3 Feb. 1711 he had offered to write on a variety of topics if Harley approved. These included "the French Trade and how it may be opened most to advantage of the nation and of the revenue". H.M.C. (Portland)

It was not only the Dutch who had adhered to this principle, but even the French had taken care "not to hinder the Export to us of their Wine and Brandy, wrought Silks, Paper, Linnen, or any thing else which Employed the People, and consumed the Native Produce of their Country." He accused England of prohibiting her own commerce more than any other trading nation, a practice "something unnatural in Trade ... for as the Labour of the People is their Subsistence, the stopping the Exportation of the Goods produced by that Labour, is so far taking the Subsistence from the said People." (52) Even prohibitions of the import of foreign manufactures could prove disadvantageous and he again instanced the ban on the imports of bone lace from the Spanish Netherlands which had led the Flemings to forbid the importation of English woollen goods in reprisal. Earlier, he had claimed that the renewal of that trade after the victory of Ramillies had given us possession of the Flemish towns had led to such a trade boom in August and September 1706 that "the price of Yorkshire Cloths, Kersies etc., in that Part, advanced above 16 per Cent," and that "20 l. per ONE HUNDRED Pound was given for Money on Exchange between Leeds and London." (53) His great objection, however, to the prohibition of exports was that he completely disagreed with the attempts of the English government to wage economic warfare by depriving the enemy of war materials (54) and that he believed so strongly in the supreme importance of exports in employing the poor and in achieving a

52. Mercator, No. 23, July 16, 1713.

53. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 150), pp. 599-600.

54. G.N. Clark, The Dutch Alliance and the War against French Trade 1688-1697 (Manchester) 1923. War Trade and Trade War 1701-1713 Ec. H.R. Vol. I, (1927-1928).

favourable balance of trade. (55) "IN War, or OUT of War", he insisted, "Trading Nations never shut the Doors of their own Commerce: ... it should have been the French, not the English, who should have Prohibited our Corn and Lead, and Leather, and Woollen Manufactures going into France." Thus the French "Prohibited our Manufactures coming to them, because that was Enriching us with their Money." It was even possible for a nation to gain from an adverse balance of trade with another country provided that the foreign imports were luxuries. By way of example, he considered the sale of £400,000 worth of English manufactures in France and the import of £800,000 worth of "the Produce and Manufacture" of France. "The Making and Venting of Four hundred thousand Pound Sterling in Manufactures, is the Employ and Subsistence of a prodigious Multitude of Poor; whereas the Import of the Foreign Goods being a superfluous Expence, goes out of the Hands of but a few; and it were better to abate an HUNDRED thousand Pound a Year in the public Ballance, than not Export Four hundred thousand Pounds a Year in Manufactures." (56)

In the first number of the 'Mercator', however, his journalistic fondness for over-statement led him to take up a position well in advance of his previous views, when he began with this challenging proposition as "a Foundation", or "General":

"That the Trade between ENGLAND and FRANCE not only MAY BE but always HAS BEEN, a Beneficial Trade to this Nation." His

55. Supra, pp. 30-37.

56. Mercator, No. 48, September 12, 1713.

aim was obviously to seize the initiative in the pamphlet war about the treaty. If he could establish that the trade with France was favourable during Charles II's reign, when it had been generally accepted for over fifty years that England then had an adverse balance of between £1,000,000 and £1,600,000 a year, he would have much less difficulty in convincing his readers that England stood to gain from an open trade with her great rival in 1713. He admitted in this first number that the belief that the French trade had always been to England's disadvantage was the "formidable enemy" which he had to combat and professed to be astonished that a nation which drove "the greatest Trade in the World" should not rightly know whether they gained or lost by "one of the most considerable Branches of that Trade." Notwithstanding the several French tariffs and prohibitions on foreign imports between 1677 and 1699, he claimed that the balance of trade had always been on the English side for "a Medium of any three Years for above forty Years past." (57) The fact that the French king had found it necessary to impose these restrictions was one proof of this and a second was the loud English complaints against these, as cited in one paragraph of the English declaration of war on France in 1689 where it was alleged that Louis XIV's measures showed a "Design to destroy the Trade on which the Wealth and Safety of this Nation so much depends." (58) Defoe argued that William III would not have made this "a Reason for declaring War against France, if he had believed that the Trade carried on with France had been ... carried on at more than a Million Sterling per Annum to the

57. Mercator, No. 1, May 26, 1713.

58. Ibid,

Loss of this Nation ... (nor) that the French would be the Aggressor for Interrupting a Commerce by which his own People were Gainers from the English" by a like amount. Taking 1660 as his starting point, because "the History of Trade will hardly admit a further Retrospect," he contended that the general English tariff of 5 per cent. in the Book of Rates, with rather higher duties on imported wines and spirits was very moderate and that the similar French tariff of 1664, with 10 per cent. on certain textile imports, "was esteemed by all the Nations in these parts of Europe to be very easy, and not the least Interruption to their Trade with France." (59) Yet the figure of £1,000,000 for the adverse balance of trade with France had appeared in 1659 and Fortrey's estimate of £1,600,000 was first published in 1663. (60) Defoe himself, however, only five days before the 'Mercator' appeared, had written in the 'Review', "That as our high Duties on Wine and Brandy, and Prohibitions upon the Silk Manufactures etc. from France, were the only things which turn'd this Scale of Commerce to us, which ran so high against us before; so if ever a Peace came, it would be our Interest to keep up those Duties, at least to such a height ... that Trade might not return into the same Channel as it did before." (61)

In the second number of his new journal, Defoe attacked the "Scheme of Trade" between England and France, compiled by 14 London merchants in 1674, when Charles II's ministers, in

59. Ibid

60. M. Priestley, 'Anglo-French Trade and the "Unfavourable Balance" Controversy, 1660-1685' in Ec. H.R. 2nd Series, IV, No. 1 (1951), p. 39 and footnote.

61. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 97), p. 195.



response to their promptings, were trying to negotiate an earlier Anglo-French commercial treaty. Miss Priestley has shown that this was a propaganda document originating in the alarm felt by City exporters of woollen cloth, such as Patience Ward and Thomas Papillon, after Colbert had doubled the import duties on these commodities in 1667 and her investigations support Defoe's contemporary criticisms. (62) He accused them of taking the year 1668 for valuing the English exports to France, which, being the year immediately after Colbert's 1667 tariff increases, "was the lowest Year they could find" and of assessing the imports from France by the year 1674 "which was the highest Year they could pitch upon." Further, re-exports had been omitted entirely and the merchants had considerably overestimated the imports of French linen and silk goods, wine and brandy, in the case of linens and silks, more than "was ever brought into England in One Year." To refute their figures of 160,000 pounds of wrought silks, 60,000 pieces of lockram and dowlas, 11,000 tuns of wine and 4,000 tuns of brandy, he quoted from the custom-house books, which would certainly be included in the "sufficient materials" with which he claimed to have been furnished in the first issue. These gave 6,408 pounds of wrought silks, 25,014 pieces of linen, 5,726 tuns of wine and 333 tuns of brandy imported from France into London. (63) These figures were for 1668-69 not 1673-74, but the "Scheme" was supposed to be representing a typical year of Anglo-French trade and the merchants had used the 1668-69 figures for English exports. Again these were the imports into London only, but the capital was England's biggest wine port and

62. M. Priestley, loc. cit., pp. 37-52.

63. Mercator, No. 2, May 28, 1713. P.R.O. T64/274, nos 111-115, wine and brandy imports 1673-1712. The outports' share was less than 1/5 that of London, but above 1/3 in imports from France.

held a predominant position in England's foreign trade generally, so that the imports of all the outports together would be very much smaller. Whatever the extent of smuggling at this time, which was before the great increases in English duties, it would not alter appreciably the above totals. (64) There is a similar wide divergence between the valuation of imports from France in the "Scheme" and in the London Book of Tables, although Davenant considered exports as more accurately rated than imports even in the latter document. (65) The "Scheme's" figure of £1,136,150 for all English ports is more than double the amount of £541,583. for London in the Book of Tables, but naturally the biggest discrepancy is between the "Scheme's" total of England's imports of linen and silk at £807,250 and the figure of £198,308 for London in the Book of Tables. (66)

Defoe reproduced the valuation of the trade with France as given in the Book of Tables for the year 1662-3 and for the year 1668-9, which gave an adverse balance of £268,641..10s. for the former year and £452,844 for the latter, compared with £965,128 in the "Scheme of Trade". He was still convinced that even these lower figures did not give a true picture of the French trade and that "the Value of our Exports exceeded the Value of our Imports in a considerable Sum." He pointed out that the Book of Tables did not include re-exports, which were growing steadily at this time, and that wine and brandy imports were greatly overvalued by being "Charged at the Price sold here after the Freight, Customs and Charges were paid." These valuations

64. M. Priestley, loc. cit., pp. 40-41.

65. C. Davenant, Works, ed. Whitworth (1771), V, 368.

66. M. Priestley, loc. cit., p. 49.

were £36 per tun for wine and £45 per tun for brandy compared with the prime cost in France of £8 and £9 respectively, and that this alone reduced the adverse balance in each case by £177,315. (67) He did not include invisible items such as shipping, although he made much of this in later numbers, and he did not explain that the apparent large increase in the adverse balance in six years was due to the fact that an abnormal quantity of lead was shipped to France in the earlier year, £239,327 worth, or 64 per cent of the total value of exports, temporarily displacing woollen goods as the largest single export, and that this had fallen to £14,608 in value by 1668-9. (68) In a later number, however, in answer to a paper produced by the opponents of the commercial treaty and which purported to be an account of the imports of French wine, brandy and linen for the two years 1667-9, signed by the farmers of the customs, Defoe insisted that imports were then abnormally high because England was "exhausted of French Goods" after the plague of 1665 had "put an universal Stop to all Trade", the fire of 1666 had destroyed "quantities of wines in the cellars and warehouses" and the second Anglo-Dutch War had only just been concluded. (69)

Defoe also maintained that England "carried on a very great and beneficial Trade with France, from the Year 1667 to the Year 1685" in spite of Colbert's great tariff increases of 1667, (70) whereas his opponents, and indeed the majority of English merchants, believed that England's major export of woollen cloth

67. Mercator, No. 2, May 28, 1713. Davenant, Works Vol.V, pp.  
 68. M. Priestley, loc. cit., p. 43. 366-8.  
 69. Mercator, No. 12, June 20, 1713.  
 70. Ibid, No. 3, May 30, 1713.

had suffered a calamitous blow and had declined to as low as one-fortieth of the previous totals of shipments to France. (71) Miss Priestley, however, has demonstrated that the 27 per cent fall in London's woollen exports to France between 1662-3 and 1668-9 was a temporary decline and that using the valuations in the Book of Tables, a total of £55,726 worth had been reached by 1675-6, compared with £67,586 and £49,542 respectively for the years 1662-3 and 1668-9, and that this had risen further to £145,033 by 1683-4. Contemporaries seem to have been misled by the big decline in the shipments of the coarse woollen kerseys, previously the chief cloth export to France, but this was more than balanced by a larger increase in the sales of worsted serges by 190 per cent between 1662 and 1684 and in the valuable Spanish cloths for which France was England's best customer in 1684-5, taking 4131 pieces rated at £18 each or more than the total for all types of cloth in 1662-3. Taking the whole of Charles II's reign, "woollen exports became a very considerable item in London's trade with France", the volume of woollen exports of all kinds increased by 36 per cent and the expansion was chiefly in the latter part of the reign. (72)

The reason why Defoe gave so much space to this controversy about the French trade during Charles II's reign was that the "Scheme" had been reprinted in 1713, "given about at the Door of our Parliament Houses ... and made use of as the Fundamental, the Test or Touchstone of the French Trade." (73) As Miss

71. M. Priestley, loc. cit., p. 38.

72. M. Priestley, loc. cit., pp. 44-49.

73. Mercator, No. 2, May 28, 1713.

Priestley concludes her article, "So firmly did the idea of an adverse balance of £1,000,000 per annum become established as a political as well as an economic issue, that it continued to exercise a powerful influence on the shaping of public opinion for many generations to come." (74) That Defoe's judgement was sound is shown by the use of the "Scheme" by the authors of the "British Merchant." When the rival journal appeared, it at first pretended to deny that its opposition to the commercial treaty was in any way influenced by the "Scheme" and tried to reduce its importance in the current controversy, possibly because Defoe's arguments had caused some to question its authenticity, but it never abandoned it as a weapon of propaganda. In the first reference to it, the writer exclaimed, "the Scheme is not an Idol of my setting up ... Till I have better study'd the Scheme, he shall have that whole Subject to himself." (75) A month later, he added, "I never had any thing less in my Thoughts, than to charge my self with the Defence of the Scheme, ... But ... it is highly probable they were not much mistaken in the Conclusion, and that the Ballance even in 1669 against England was almost a Million Sterling." (76) In December came this characteristic comment, "I cannot easily believe that it could impose upon a whole Parliament, especially so wise a one as that of King Charles the Second ... whoever reads that Scheme, and the Conclusion of it, will readily believe, that as many of our Imports of the Growth and Manufacture of France are omitted, as of our Exports of Foreign Growth and Manufacture." (77) Before its close, the "British Merchant" had completely identi-

74. M. Priestley, *loc. cit.*, p. 52.

75. *British Merchant*, No. 4, August 18, 1713.

76. *Ibid.*, No. 14, September 22, 1713.

77. *Ibid.*, No. 38, December 15, 1713.

fied itself with the compilers of the "Scheme". Thus, "this old Scheme roots out all his (Mercator's) Arguments, contradicts all his Sophistry, and proves all his Notions relating to the Opening of a free Trade with France to be as deceitful as absurd."

(78) In the last number, the writer reaffirmed this conviction, "The Old Scheme was a Custom-house Account, delivered in almost 40 Years ago by the chief Officers of the Customs, and therefore more likely to be a true Account of the Exports and Imports of that Time than any that shall be produced now to serve a present Turn ... some of my Papers have justified not only the whole, but almost every Article of the Old Scheme. They have fortified the Scheme, and clear'd it from all Objections that have been made to it." (79)

The importance of the "Scheme" in the economic arguments of 1713 was also due to the fact that direct trade between England and France had been prohibited since 1678, except for the brief interval of James II's reign and the short period of peace from 1697 to 1702, and had been restricted by heavy duties on both sides of the Channel even during the few years of open trade. As one of Defoe's opponents asked, "What Judgement can be made? There has been no open Trade between us for about twenty or thirty Years" and concluded that it was necessary to rely on "the Experience of former Times." (80) In his view this meant accepting the estimates of Fortrey or the "Scheme" because of the difficulty which confronted all the disputants in 1713, namely the absence of any official statistics for this earlier period. No national ledger of English trade was compiled until

78. Ibid, No. 91, June 18, 1714.

79. Ibid, No. 103, July 30, 1714.

80. A Letter to the Honourable A-r-M-re, Com-ner of Trade and Plantations (1714), p. 23.

the appointment of William Culliford as Inspector-General of Imports and Exports in 1696. Only in 1671 had most of the customs duties been taken out of the hands of tax-farmers and levied directly by the Crown through its customs commissioners, but even after this date, statistical information was prepared from the Custom House books only when called for by Parliament or the Commission of Trade. (81) The authenticity of the statistics of trade produced by Defoe was impugned by the "British Merchant" and vice versa. In August, 1713, the "British Merchant" questioned a list of goods re-exported to France between Michaelmas 1686 and Michaelman 1687 printed by Defoe in the 'Mercator' No. 26 which he had affirmed had been laid before Parliament by the Commissioners of the Customs. It accused him of producing "only the several Species of Goods, and their Quantities" and of then valuing these at £500,000, which, it claimed, was an overestimate by three-fifths. The 'British Merchant' produced its own list of re-exports for this period and valued these at £175,921..15..7d. (82) Certainly, Defoe's figure was much too high, for he estimated the total British exports to France in this year at £442,702. (83) Although re-exports were growing rapidly between 1660 and 1700 and 1686-7 were years of good trade in which the figures may have been as high as those for the similar peacetime period 1699-1701, it is unlikely that re-exports to France would total as much as half of the exports but would probably be higher than the 'British Merchant's estimate (84) Davenant valued total re-exports during the same period,

81. G.N. Clark, Guide to English Commercial Statistics 1696-1782 (1938). M. Priestley, loc. cit. pp. 41-42.
82. British Merchant, No. 4, August 18, 1713.
83. Mercator, No. 26, July 23, 1713.
84. R. Davis, 'English Foreign Trade, 1660-1700', Ec. H.R. 2nd. series, VI (1954) pp. 151-153.

1682-8, at £1,400,000. (85) The 'British Merchant' published an account of trade with France from Michaelmas 1685 to Michaelmas 1686 which had been laid before the 1710-1713 Parliament by the Commissioners of Customs, but Defoe attacked it as fraudulent and it certainly seems much more suspect than his calculation.

(86) This account valued the imports from France to London at £569,126 and added a figure of £715,293..10..3d. for the French imports into the outports to produce a total of £1,284,419..10..3d. Exports to France were valued at £408,589..6..4d. from London, and £105,547..11.11d. from the outports, to give a total of £514,136..18..3d., leaving an adverse balance on the trade with France of £770,282..12s. (87) Professor Davis suggests that

the outports' share of the import trade was only one-quarter that of London but that they occupied a much more prominent place in exports with three-fifths of the value of London's, a very different picture from that given by the 'British Merchant'. The increasing share of the outports in exports was particularly marked in the newer varieties of cloth such as Devonshire serges and Norwich stuffs which were proving most successful whereas two-thirds of London's trade in woollen cloth was in other denominations. (88) As London's predominance in the import trade in these years was especially marked in wines, brandy, silks and linen, the chief imports from France, the 'British Merchant's' figures for the imports to the outports becomes even more exaggerated. Professor Hoskins stated that London paid over eleven times as much in wine duties as all the outports together in

85. C. Davenant, *op. cit.*, II, 16.

86. *Commons Journals*, XVII, pp. 398-402.

87. *British Merchant*, No. 14, September 22, 1713.

88. R. Davis, *loc. cit.* pp. 158-161. Defoe commented in *Mercator No. 28* that "the proper Ports for the Exportation of these Goods" was near "the countries" where they were made so that serges were sent out from Exmouth, dozens from Weymouth, stuffs from Yarmouth and bays from Colchester.



1689-95 and that these years were probably typical and that the silk and linen duties of the outports were again rarely more than one-tenth of the total for the kingdom, although London's pre-eminence was more marked in silk than in linen. (89) Although trade with France was prohibited in 1689-97, the proportions for the previous decade or even for the 1660's are unlikely to have been <sup>very</sup> different. The 'British Merchant', however, was not satisfied with producing an adverse balance on trade with France of over £777,000 but proceeded to add a third to its import figures for clandestine imports, to produce a total bill for French imports of £1,712,559..7s. and an adverse balance of £1,198,422..8..9d. (90) Defoe's comment on this calculation was that his opponent had added £428,000 for "a Chimera of Clandestine Trade" and that the revised total for French imports was "a Fiction as ridiculous as the Histories of the Chineses World Three Thousand Year before the Creation." (91) Defoe reduced the figure for the French imports in 1685-6 to £889,934..10..3d., accusing his rivals of trying to represent

89. W.G. Hoskins, Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688-1800 (Manchester 1935) pp. 87-91.
90. The British Merchant, No. 14, September 22, 1713; Cf. A Letter to the Honourable A-r M-re. pp. 19-20 which claimed in reply to Defoe's calculations in the 'Mercator', that the Scheme had overvalued some English exports such as lead, alum, Norwich stuffs, serges and perpetuanas by nearly half their present value and had undervalued the imports of French wine and silks by half and of brandy by £5 a tun. Therefore, the author added to the Scheme's adverse balance of £965,128..17..4d., one-quarter of the value of English exports in 1674, repeated the figures for wine and silks, added £20,000 for the brandy and arrived, by what purported to be a modest revision, at £1,465,384..4s., very little short of Fortrey's figure. He added that a free gift to the French King by a voluntary levy of 2s. in the £ on the stock in trade of British merchants would save over £500,000 a year to the nation "instead of Commerce on such a Foot." The claim that English exports had been overvalued by the Scheme had previously been made in Some Further Observations on the Treaty of Navigation and Commerce. . . . (1713) p. 5.
91. Mercator, No. 64, October 20, 1713.

the French trade as "Formidable and Frightful," and printed his own table of exports to France for 1685-6, including re-exports, of a total value of £742,077..4..2½d. Both the quantities and the valuations in this list seem to come from the customs returns as, for example, 4190 Spanish cloths at the official rate of £18 each, although he added that they were usually worth more.

(92)

Defoe, probably irked by his failure to produce from the "Custom-House Books" one year in which the value of exports to France actually exceeded the value of imports from France, in spite of the repeated taunts of his opponents, was not content to demolish their exaggerated estimates of an adverse balance. He had already expressed his dissatisfaction with the over-valuation of imports of French wine and brandy (93) and he attacked the under-valuation of exports in the Book of Rates with its fixed 1660 values without any adjustment for rising prices. (94) He now exclaimed:

"But will our Mountebank Merchants think the Account of the Advantages of the French Trade ends here? Do they think the Gain or Loss of a French Trade is to be Ballanc'd in the Custom-House Books? ... Trade is an Article not immediately to be estimated by the direct Exports and Imports. There are oblique Branches of Trade, and a secret Circulation of Commerce, like the small capillary Veins in the Body, which tho' they are imperceptible even by the most curious Anatomist, are yet, in their proportion, equally essential to convey the Spirits through the whole, and to communicate Life and Vigour to the Parts. So there are divers Parts of our Commerce with France which are

92. Ibid, No. 63, October 17, 1713.

93. Supra, p. 654.

94. The author of A Letter to the Honourable A-r M-re seized the opportunity to comment on page 19 that Mercator had "grown sick of Custom-House Accounts" because they did not produce that favourable balance which he had rashly claimed that England had long enjoyed in her trade with France. Therefore these books were "one Day his Refuge, another not Authentick; any thing to serve his Turn."

imperceptibly to many carried on through other Countries, and which yet are essential to our Gain as those which we carry on directly, because they convey our Manufactures and Produce, which are the animal Spirits of our Trade, as effectually from us and into France, and back in Specie, as our immediate Trade with them does, and this in a very great Quantity. ... although ... this Part of Trade cannot admit of an exact Estimate."

The most important of these "oblique Exportations" was that through Holland, which, some "good Authors" affirmed, took £300,000 worth of English manufactures a year for French markets, but he included re-exports of foreign and plantation goods in this figure. This had the added advantage of being "an Exportation without Importation ... from France to England; for the Returns are all made to the Dutch, and they become Paymasters to us, nay and to themselves too; for it is a Commerce of a known Advantage to them." (95) With his lifelong interest in geography, he told his opponents to consult their maps, for the reason for this export via Holland was that Champagne, the three Bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun, Lorraine, part of Burgundy and Franche Comté', Alsace and the territory between the Saar and the Moselle and between the Saar and the Rhine could be supplied much more conveniently by water routes from Holland than by land carriage through France. Thus Metz, where, he said, there were more wholesale woollen-drapers than in any other French city outside Paris, was the nearest of these territories and yet it was 156 miles from Dunkirk. Similarly the north-eastern frontier districts of France, such as the provinces of Artois and Hainault, could be supplied more easily by the Scheldt and the Lys from Bruges and Ghent in Flanders, with again no French goods in return. For the moment, he omitted

any calculation of the English goods which entered Marseilles from Genoa and Leghorn, although he devoted three later Mercators (Nos. 46, 47 and 48) to this trade. Therefore, he printed a profit and loss account of English trade with France and added to his figure of £742,077..4..2½d. for English exports in 1685-6, £300,000 for English goods imported into France via Holland, £100,000 for those entering through Flanders, £50,000 for the 50,000 quarters of corn exported to France "in dear years", £64,200 representing "the advance" on six-sevenths of the above exports because they were "six-seventh Parts on English Account", and £500,000 for the equivalent value to goods exported of the income from the freight on 50,000 tons of shipping at 20s. per ton for the goods exported to France. He thus arrived at a figure of £1,756,277..4..2½d. for the gain to England and, after deducting the sum of £889,934..10..3d. for the imports from France, he had a favourable balance to England of £866,372..13..11½. He explained his last entry of the profit from shipping by arguing that as this sum of £50,000 for freight was paid by the French, and was "so much clear Money gain'd" it was the same as 10 per cent. profit on the sale of £500,000 worth of British goods. (96) It is not surprising that the "British Merchant" described Mercator No. 65 as "the most extraordinary" of all that had so far been published and its writer as "the most compleat Accountant in the World." He proceeded to demolish Defoe's figure of 50,000 tons of shipping by claiming that these exports only totalled 12,666 tons and might be conveniently stowed in 13,000 tons or 130 sail of ships of 100 tons each. Because France was so near, however, each ship might make three or four voyages a

96. Ibid, No. 65, October 22, 1713.

year so that 30 or 35 ships would be sufficient to carry these goods, compared with Defoe's 1000 sail or 500 "at a modest computation." (97) The "British Merchant" also denied that money paid for freight was all clear profit and advised the 'Mercator' to "take the Account both of Exports and Imports clear on board from both Countries, than pretend to any Advance upon the Sale of our Goods in France." He claimed that 10 per cent was far too high a rate of profit for sales in a neighbouring country and that all the French silks and most of their linens were sold here on commission so that the balance against England would be much greater "by a greater Advance upon their Goods than ours." (98)

Both Defoe and the authors of the "British Merchant" were, of course, primarily concerned with the probable outcome of the 1713 proposals for a trade treaty rather than with the terms of trade between England and France in the reigns of Charles II and James II and their arguments followed from their diametrically opposed attitudes towards this particular "leap in the dark", Defoe characteristically optimistic and expansionist and his opponents full of foreboding and therefore in favour of maintaining the existing protective barriers. One of the early numbers of the "British Merchant" declared, "the French Trade was always detrimental to this Nation, before our Prohibitions and high Duties upon their Goods and Merchandizes, and would be more so than ever, if, according to the late Treaty of Commerce between us, we should pass a Law for repealing our Prohibitions, and

97. The British Merchant, No. 24, October 27, 1713.

98. Ibid, No. 12, September 15, 1713.

favouring France with respect to Duties, as much as the Nations the most favour'd." (99) Defoe was under some difficulty here because he undoubtedly shared the conviction of his antagonists that our imports from France were luxury articles which, in isolation, we could well do without. He probably accepted all of Sir Theodore Janssen's nine beneficial and four disadvantageous trades. (100) When he first attacked Steele's "Guardian" No. 170, which, in the guise of a letter from Generosity Thrift, had merely summarised the arguments of the "General Maxims in Trade", usually reproducing Janssen's words, Defoe only more narrowly defined three of these principles to an extent which Janssen would have accepted. (101) His main attack followed a week later when he questioned Steele's (Janssen's) estimates of the imports from France if the treaty should be ratified. (102) His earlier comments on these imports have already been noted, and his adversaries quickly reminded him of these former statements about that "single Article of Liquids" and the desirability of drinking even turnip wine rather than "the best Wine in Europe. (103) In July 1706. he had written:

"... the Conquest of Bourdeaux, or any Part of the French Wine Trade, and opening a Freedom of Commerce hither, would be a Conquest of the least Advantage to the English Trade of any in the World ... If ever we open a Trade for Wine and Brandy to France, with an Abatement of the present high Duties ..., we give an effectual Stab to our own Manufactures, and return to one of the fatallest Trades, that ever we carry'd on in England. While the high Duties remain, the Import will be small enough to keep within the Bounds of our Export to France in English Manufactures - Because the Dearness will be a Checque to the Consumption. But if you lower

99. Ibid, No. 10, September 8, 1713.

100. (Sir T. Janssen) General Maxims in Trade ...(1713), pp. 5-9.

101. Mercator, No. 55, September 29, 1713.

102. Ibid, No. 58, October 6, 1713. Infra, p. 673.

103. Supra, pp. 636-638; (Anon) A Vindication of the Late House of Commons in Rejecting the Bill ... (1714) p. 19.

the Duties, the Cheapness of the French Wine, and the Suitableness of it to the Gust and Inclination of the People is such, that we shall import such Quantities as will in a prodigious manner, overballance our Export in Manufactures; and ... the Ballance must go from us in Money, which is manifestly to our Damage. ... nothing can injure England in Trade, that encreases the Consumption of the English Manufacture. We can take off the greatest Quantity of the Growth of a Country of any Nation in the World, if they will but take our Goods in the Room of it: but otherwise, we are Felo de se in Trade, murther our own Produce, and turn the Channel against our selves, which runs now half a Million per Annum in our Favour." (104)

He maintained, however, that Britain need not be inundated by a flood of French imports, because the treaty gave her complete freedom to adjust her tariffs, provided that she did not impose any higher duties on French goods than on the like commodities from other countries: "Is it not", he asked, "in the power of the British Parliament to Lay any higher Duties on Wrought Silks, on Brandy, on Paper, even so that none at all shall Come in? And will it be any Damage to us if none Comes in, either from France or any other Port? Are we not able to Weave all our Own Silks, Distill Our Own Spirits, and make Our Own Paper?" (105)

His Whig critics were in full agreement with this last statement for they considered all imports from France as injurious. One pamphleteer wrote that we imported from thence, "nothing capable of a further manufacturing; nothing of Naval Stores; nothing (or very inconsiderable) useful in improving our own Manufactures; nothing that we could re-export to foreign markets and that there was not even any gain from shipping for "ships of force" were not necessary since "every Cockboat" would serve to cross the

104. Review, Vol. III (No. 86), pp. 341-342.

105. Mercator, No. 50, September 17, 1713.

Channel. (106) Janssen declared, "France produces nothing that is necessary, or even convenient, or but which we had better be without, except Claret" and he certainly wished to exclude that too. He also complained that the French rarely made use of any other ships than their own because they victualled and manned their vessels cheaper than we did and that "our Ships went constantly in Ballast (except now and then some Lead) ... and ever came back full of Linnen, Wine, Brandy and Paper." (107) At that date, however, there was no Burgundy wine trade and all the French wines came from Bordeaux, which "had little shipping of its own, and its wine was usually carried in English, Flemish or Dutch ships." (108) Defoe, however, tried to claim that sailing in ballast was an advantage because more shipping was required! (109)

All the Whig writers were convinced that the new industries which had been established in Britain during the years of prohibition of French trade would be unable to face French competition if their tariff protection were withdrawn. The reasons given were sometimes the superior skill of the French workman, but more usually the much cheaper labour costs in France. Janssen asserted, "The French did always out-do us in Price of

106. A Vindication of the Late House of Commons, p. 11; Cf. A Letter to Sir R-H ... (1713) p. 6, which declared that if the goods imported were not necessary for navigation, were competing manufactures instead of raw materials, or tended "to lessen or interrupt any Gainful, Establish'd Traffick with other Foreign Kingdoms; the Mischief's trebled. For not only so much of the Riches of that Nation is carry'd away, its Poor depriv'd of a Maintenance, but the Channel stopt, which would otherwise ... supply it with Bullion."

107. Janssen, op. cit., p. 15.

108. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI; J.H. Parry in The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Vol. IV, ed. E.E. Rich and C. Wilson, p. 183.

109. Mercator, No. 51, September 19, 1713, Supra, p.272.



Labour: Their common People live upon Roots, Cabbage and other Herbage: four of their large Provinces subsist intirely upon Chestnuts; and the best of them eat Bread made of Barley, Millet, Turkey and black Corn; so that their Wages used to be small in Comparison with ours." (110) Because of successive revaluations of the livre, he claimed that the price of labour had been still further reduced to only half the British average, although the revaluations were much smaller than he and others maintained. (111) Provisions were as dear in Paris as in London but this was not the case in most of their provinces where meat cost only half what it did here. This did not concern the poor workman, for he generally drank nothing but water, "and at best a sort of Liquor they call Beuverage (which is Water pass'd through the Husks of Grapes after the Wine is drawn off)" whereas the British workmen spent half their money in drink. As a result, Lyons lustring workers were paid 9 sols an ell, or little more than 5d. compared with the English silk-worker's 12d. an ell and rag-sorters in the French paper industry earned less than 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a day when English workers earned 4d. (112) The "British Merchant" devoted most of one number to the competitive advantage of the French paper manufacture, announcing that three of the seven provinces where it was carried on were in the chestnut region and that, "except some of the upper Workmen", few of the workers were as well fed as those who lived on Defoe's onion and a draught of water, a bunch of grapes and a piece of bread. Therefore, he claimed that "considerable Parcels of Paper" had

110. Janssen, op. cit., p. 10.

111. P.G.M. Dickson in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, pp. 299, footnote 2 and 303.

112. Janssen, op. cit., pp. 10-12.

recently been imported into England from France in spite of an import duty of more than 100 per cent of the first cost in France, and which was also 45 per cent higher than on any other foreign paper. Although only the same number of workers were employed at each French factory as in England they produced 9 reams of paper a day to the English workers' 8. Because "there is a Slight of Hand in almost every Manufacture that is much more necessary than Strength, their inferior diet did not prevent them from making the best paper in the world as well as achieving greater output. "If the French Manufacturers can live on Chestnuts," he concluded, "possibly not a fourth Part of the Price of our English Diet, surely they will be able to work for a third Part of the daily Wages that are given in England." (113)

Defoe agreed that foreign artisans were paid lower wages than English workers but his answer was always that the Englishman's work was superior. The French craftsmen could only "work lower than we and live harder", not actually produce cheaper goods, for, taking quality and price together, English manufactures were the cheapest in the world:

"I allow the Frenchman can out do us in Whipt Cream, Froath and Surface, even in most things; it will for ever be true, that they can Dance better, Sing better, and Play better than we do; any thing that is Superficial, and agreeable to the levity of their Temper, they out do us in; but if they come to the substantial part of any thing, an English Man against a French Man ever while you live. Thus in the War, at Stratagem, at a Surprize, or at diligent Application, 'tis allow'd that they go beyond us; but at down-right Blows, at mere desperate Fighting stand clear there! They care not to meddle with us; anything that depends upon the nimble, they excel us in; any thing that depends upon the solid, we over-match them in; I appeal to Spittle-Fields,

take an English Weaver and a French, the French man will be sooner in his Loom in the Morning, and later at Night; take up less time in his eating and drinking, and perhaps less Victuals too, go less to the Wrestling-Ring, or Cudgel-Playing, that is, to his Diversion, than the English man; yet the English man that works fewer Hours, shall make as many Ells in his Loom as the French man - ... Suppose the French man throws the Shuttle swifter, makes more speed, and shall work more Ells in his Loom than the English man, but the English man's Work is more substantial, thicker and better, and shall sell for more Money than the French man's; ... And this is one Reason why England has never been effectually rival'd in her Manufactures, and I may say, never will; ... not by any Nation in the World." (114)

The only reason, he argued, that his opponents advanced against the French trade was "that we Imported such unreasonable quantities of their Goods, that infinitely over-ballanc'd what they took from us." Whether this had been true or not in the past, it was unlikely in the future for there were now two factors which made it quite safe for England to trade with France, which had not operated when the Scheme of Trade was drawn up. These were the high duties on French imports and the British progress in the new manufactures of linen, silk, glass, sail-cloth and paper. Previously "there were several single Articles which very much exceeded the Wine Trade." Thus the value of the linen imported from France was put at £600,000, the silks at £300,000, whereas the imports of wine were assessed at £137,500 and the brandy at £70,000, not so much more than the £40,000 worth of paper imported. (115) He did not accept these figures but declared that "these Great and Capital Articles"

114. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 98), p. 198.

115. Some Thoughts upon the Subject of Commerce with France (1713) pp. 29-30. The estimates in "General Maxims" were linen £600,000, silks £500,000, paper £30,000, wine £450,000, brandy £70,000.

were now "in a manner destroy'd." The duty of £1.14s. per pound on alamoses and lustrings had effectively stopped their importation so that only smuggled goods could be sold here, and the Act prohibiting the wearing of East-India silks had established the broad-weaving manufacture which would still be protected by a duty of 12s.3d. per pound. The "Encouragement given to the Linen Manufacture in Ireland, the very great quantity of Course Tabling made in Lancashire, Westmoreland, Durham and Yorkshire, the thin Diapers and other Linen brought now free of Duty from Scotland, and the more than usual quantity of Course Linen made in several parts of England" had had the effect of restricting the imports of linen from Hamburgh to less than one-sixth of the 60,000 pieces of lockram and dowlas which formerly came from France. He stated that the manufacturers of sail cloth had claimed that they could meet the whole British demand. (116) In an early 'Mercator' he had noted that the English silk weavers had declared to a House of Commons Committee that they made £300,000 worth of black silks and a much larger figure for all silk manufactures. He printed a table of imports of wrought silk from Germany, Holland and Italy and other European countries for the three years 1708, 1709 and 1710 and showed that the average annual value was only £33,000 which, he claimed, was "not more than a Thirtieth part of the Value of the wrought Silks made here." As the quantity imported from Italy was much larger before the increase in the duty, that protection would be just as effective against French silk goods. (117) The "British Merchant", however, argued that the figure of

116. Some Thoughts upon the Subject of Commerce with France, pp. 31-33.

117. Mercator, No. 9, June 13, 1713. Cf. The Case of the Silk Weavers ... (1713).

£500,000 for the probable future import of French silks was not extravagant since it represented only 20,000 pounds weight and was hardly "sufficient to buy Hoods for the whole Female Sex in the United Kingdoms of Great Britain, allowing nothing at all for Scarfs, Gowns and Petticoats." (118) Defoe made a calculation from the "Guardian's" figures of the future imports from France of the customs revenue which would result at the then rates of duty and arrived at a total of £1,173,125 which, he announced, was more than the whole of the customs, both inwards and outwards, for the year 1711, exclusive of the coal duty. (119) The "British Merchant" pointed out that the "Guardian" had printed 3,000 tuns of brandy and £600,000 worth of linen instead of the 4,000 tuns and £700,000 worth on which Defoe had based his calculations and that he had assumed that half of the imported silk goods were alamoses and lustrings paying the higher duty of £1.14s. per pound, instead of the general tariff of 10s.6d. per pound. On the basis that 20,000 pounds weight of wrought silk would give the value of £500,000 in the "Guardian's" figures, it was able to reduce Defoe's estimated yield from the duties on French imports by more than one quarter but the writer then added irrelevantly that even this lower total would not be reached because so many French goods would be smuggled into England. (120) Mrs Schumpeter's trade statistics show that the value of Dutch, Italian and miscellaneous imports of wrought silk, which would be of somewhat lower value than the French which they replaced, was seldom much above £2

118. British Merchant, No. 19, October 9, 1713.

119. Mercator, No. 58, October 6, 1713.

120. British Merchant, No. 20, October 13, 1713.

per pound weight in the early eighteenth century, a much lower figure than the "British Merchant's" £25 per pound weight, so that Defoe's figures, except for alamodes and lustrings, do not seem to have been seriously inaccurate. (121) In any case, it was his contention that the increase of smuggling was due to the excessive duties on French wines, brandies, silks and linens and that this was the reason why experienced merchants wanted the trade with France to be opened, "that so the Duties may be so Moderated as to make Clandestine Trade less worth while, and yet kept so high as to secure us against an Importation too large for our Trade: And this is the true Design of the Bill of Commerce." (122) "All Prohibitions", he exclaimed, "where the Value is high, serve but to whet the unfair Merchant ... to run the Hazard for the Advantage ... (and) are rather Encouragements to Importation than Hindrances." (123) In February, he had already noted that the prohibition of imports of French brandy had enabled the English distilling industry to become established and had claimed that we now distilled above 200,000 quarters of malt each year. (124) "If Brandy should come in again as low as it used to do, the Distilling of Malt Spirits, to the great and irreparable Loss of the whole Nation, must sink and be lost." Yet the distillers had tried, in the last Parliament, to have the existing high duty reduced because of its temptation to the smugglers. (125) He thought that a medium could be found "which on our Part would open a reasonable Sluice

121. E.B. Schumpeter, English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808 (Oxford 1960), Table XV.
122. Mercator, No. 62, October 15, 1713.
123. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 92), p. 122.
124. Ibid, (No. 57), p. 114.
125. Mercator, No. 80, November 26, 1713.

to the French Trade, without letting in the Flood of it to overwhelm us." (126)

Defoe was well aware that the opponents of the commercial treaty placed more emphasis on the presumed influx of French wines and brandy than on the more valuable amounts of linens and silks which had been imported when the trade was open. Therefore, he tried to minimise the importance of the Methuen Treaty which, in the opinion of the Whigs, had opened the Portuguese market to English woollens in return for the preferential treatment of Portuguese wines in England, but as the general question of Anglo-Portuguese trade has already been examined, only the 1713 arguments about this famous treaty will be discussed here. (127) Naturally the importers of Portuguese wines were very loud in their condemnation of the Anglo-French treaty, but Defoe had little difficulty in showing that their claims that their trade would be ruined had little justification. "There is a mighty Objection started by a Sett of Men", he wrote, "who not so much for their Country's Interest as because they are embark'd in the Wine Trade to Portugal, have settled Houses, ... at Lisbon and Oporto, and have felt the Sweetness of the Portugal Trade to their own private Purses, would fain persuade the World to believe, that This is the Trade which alone ought to be maintain'd, that it is the most gainful Trade to the Nation, that the whole Portugal Trade will be ruin'd if this Treaty goes on ... and that we are bound by the strongest Tyes of Honour and Interest to preserve the Portugal Treaty entire; ..." (128)

126. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 95), p.

127. Supra, pp. 602-611.

128. Mercator, No. 112, February 9, 1713 (1714)

He argued that the British people had now acquired a taste for the stronger Portuguese wines which would remain even when the duty on French wines was reduced to the same level as the Portuguese: "... even of the French Wines which we drink now, we seek their richest Puntacks, Hermitage, etc., and, in short, their strongest Clarets, and slight their small Wines ...", he declared and claimed that experienced merchants were of the opinion that the imports of Portuguese wines would only be reduced by 2,000 tuns, worth at the most, £20,000. He believed that we should import more Portuguese wines after the treaty was ratified "than ever we did before the war," whereas his adversaries assumed, with their figure of 18,000 tuns of French wine, that this would displace all other imports of wine, for this was the approximate annual total of all wine imports into England during the opening years of the eighteenth century. (129) They thought that French wine would be £2 a tun cheaper than Portuguese when the high duty on the French was reduced, although Defoe pointed out that the "Guardian's" figure of £25 per tun prime cost in France was far above Davenant's price of £8 per tun and that as the prime cost in Portugal was £10 to £12 per tun, the latter would still enjoy a price advantage especially as the freight charge from Portugal was only about £2 a tun more than that from south-western France. (130) Because of "the general Inclination towards every thing that is French", the opponents of the Anglo-French treaty believed that the experience of 1683-89 would necessarily be repeated. Portugal had profited most from the first embargo on French imports in 1678 and in

129. Mercator, No. 104, January 21, 1713 (1714); E.B. Schumpeter op. cit., Table XVI.

130. British Merchant, No. 23, October 23, 1713  
Mercator, No. 117, February 20, 1713 (1714).



1683 a record total of 16,772 tuns was imported, but when French wines were readmitted in James II's reign, they rapidly resumed their dominance of the English market and in 1685-9 London imports of French wines averages 13,402 tuns compared with only 434 tuns from Portugal. (131) But the eighteen years of prohibition during the two wars between 1689 and 1713 proved so much more decisive than the five years of prohibition 1678-83, that French wines did not recover their former position in England when the Tory ministry allowed them to enter again in 1711. In 1713, only 2,548 tuns were imported from France compared with 5,861 tuns from Portugal, 4,116 tuns from Spain, 1,663 from the Canary Islands and 1,228 from Italy and when the commercial treaty was not ratified, the quantity imported from France fell to 1,196 tuns in 1714. (132) It is true that English imports of Portuguese wine rose steadily during the first half of the eighteenth century, but Spanish wine continued to be important and usually amounted to half the total of that from Portugal, in spite of the English complaints about the new Anglo-Spanish trade treaty and the political difficulties between England and Spain. (133) In both countries wine helped to pay for the imports of English cloth which they required for their American colonies. During the century, the importance of wine in Britain's import trade greatly diminished, but this tendency had not become noticeable during the first two decades. (134) "The Portugal Trade", Defoe maintained, "was an Encreasing Trade long before the Treaty we speak of was made ... as will appear"

131. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, p. 846, or S.M. Price, loc. cit., p. 846.  
 132. E.B. Schumpeter, op. cit., Table XVI.  
 133. Ibid.; J.A. McLachlan, op. cit.  
 134. Ibid., T.S. Ashton's Introduction, p. 12.

by the growing Exportation of our Goods thither every Year from the Year 1698 to 1703 ... and the Encrease of the Exportations every Year since." This could not be the result of our increased demand for Portuguese wine, he argued, because as much had been imported before the treaty. (135) This was broadly true for the increased imports of Portuguese wine did not occur until after 1714 and it was 1718 before the quantity imported almost doubled the average for the two years 1700-1 of 7,495 tuns. In only two years of the Spanish Succession War did the quantity imported exceed 9,000 and, in two other years, 8,000 tuns. (136) He contended that before that war began, we imported from Portugal only 300 or 400 tuns of wine a year because it paid a duty of over £7 per tun more than French wines, "yet even then we exported a very great Quantity of English Goods to Portugal, even as many, take the proportion of their Brazil Trade into the Consideration, as it was then, as we do now." (137) He estimated that the trade between Brazil and Portugal had increased 20-fold during the previous 24 years, and had been caused "by the New Discovery of such inexhaustible Mines of Gold as are become the World's Wonder; a Treasure, which if it did not fall into the Hands of the feeblest and most impotent Nation as to ambitious Designs, in Europe, might have been fatal to all Europe." This had brought an influx of population and, since "the Wealth and Luxury of any Nation" always increased together, to a great demand for English manufactures both in Brazil and Portugal. There was "such a prodi-

135. Mercator, No. 119, February 25, 1713 (1714); No. 123, March 6, 1713 (1714)

136. E.B. Schumpeter, op. cit., Table XVI.

137. Mercator, No. 116, February 18, 1713 (1714).

gious Disparity" between "this Trifle" of the wine trade and the great expansion of the English cloth trade to Portugal that the one was no more to the other, "than a little Brook to an Arm of the Sea." (138) ... Or, he insisted, "to suggest then that the Portugal Trade is increased by this ridiculous Treaty, is to say no more than as is proverbially said, Everything helps, said the Wren, when she p - t in the Sea." (139)

Defoe also attacked the Methuen Treaty on the ground that it was not as advantageous to Britain as had been represented. "What", he asked, "if it should appear, that in the Portugal Trade we have already more Inequalities on our Side to the Disadvantage of our Trade than in any other Nation in the World from whence we bring Wines; (viz) That we lay less Duties on their Goods, and they lay more Duties on Ours." (140) "If there is any Customary abatement", he asserted, "it is First, Arbitrary; Secondly, Uncertain; And, Thirdly, It does not Reduce us so low, but we pay, I say, after those abatements, more Duty than we pay in any Port or Kingdom in Christendom upon the same Goods." (141) Using the familiar device of a supposed letter from a correspondent, he alleged that the King of Portugal had broken the treaty as soon as it was made, thereby enabling the British Government on their part to abolish the preferential tariff on Portuguese wines as compared with French wines. His case was that when the Portuguese removed the prohibition on British coloured cloth in 1703, in return for the reduction of the duty on Portuguese wine, "they took off the Prohibition also

138. Ibid. No. 124, March 9, 1713 (1714).

139. Ibid. No. 119, February 25, 1713 (1714).

140. Ibid. No. 112, February 9, 1713 (1714).

141. Ibid. No. 125, March 11, 1713 (1714).

on Dutch, French, and all other Cloths, and that without any Equivalent:" "The Intent of the Treaty", he continued, "was to encourage the Vent of our Cloth in Portugal, exclusive of other Nations ... but if ... the Portuguese put other Nations Cloth upon the same Foot as ours, I think there is no Reason of Complaint, if we level the Duties of French Wines with theirs ... I believe ... there has gone at least a Third part as many Dutch as English Cloths to Portugal since the Prohibition was taken off." (142) To the suggestion that the Portuguese concession was in effect giving an exclusive advantage to the British because they dominated the Portuguese market in cloth, Defoe cunningly replied that this argument was only valid if it were admitted that British cloth was better than either Dutch or French. (143) He was mistaken about the position of the Dutch in Portuguese trade. They tried to secure the same privileges for their cloth exports without giving the same preferential treatment for Portuguese wines, because they did not wish to damage their large trade in French wines. In the end they were compelled to grant the same preference as the English but ratification by the States General was slow and the embargo on Dutch cloth was not lifted until 1706. In the event the Dutch trade in French wine was not affected by the small imports of Portuguese wine, despite the reduction in the Dutch duty, and the Dutch trade in cloth was only a fraction of the English cloth exports to Portugal. (144)

142. *Ibid.*, No. 112, February 9, 1713 (1714).

143. *Ibid.*, No. 113, February 11, 1713 (1714).

144. A.D. Francis, The Methuens and Portugal 1691-1708 (Cambridge 1966), pp. 206-211.

The "British Merchant" challenged Defoe's reading of the Latin text of the treaty because he had argued that if the British government, in accordance with the Anglo-French treaty, levied the same rate of duty on French as on Portuguese wine, the King of Portugal would only be justified by the Methuen Treaty in again prohibiting those British cloths which were prohibited previously. (145) It alleged that he had omitted the words "and the rest of the British woollen cloths" from the woollen goods which the Portuguese king would be able to exclude if Britain broke the Methuen treaty, in other words a general prohibition of all British cloth. (146) Defoe, of course, accepted that the king could prohibit all the British manufactures from entering Portugal, by way of reprisal, but claimed that he was not empowered to do this by the treaty. (147) In any case, he contended that Portugal needed British cloth for her colonists in Brazil and that her demand for British manufactures did not depend on our demand for her wine. (148) Defoe's statement that woollen cloths, Spanish cloths and medleys were the most important woollen goods previously excluded by the Portuguese pragmatistical decrees of 1677 and 1686 is correct, for some of the new draperies were already admitted to Portugal before December 1703. Davenant's statistics of the cloth trade with Portugal 1701-1707 show that 15,937 pieces of double bays, 8,116 pieces of minikin bays, 592,604 pounds of perpetuanas and 244,707 pounds of stuffs were sent there in 1702, followed by 12,812 pieces of double bays, 10,764 pieces of minikin bays,

145. Mercator, No. 10, June 16, 1713; No. 112, February 9, 1713 (1714)

146. British Merchant, No. 2, August 11, 1713; No. 3 August 14, 1713.

147. Mercator, No. 114, February 13, 1713 (1714).

148. Ibid, No. 116, February 18, 1713 (1714).

754,503 pounds of perpetuanas and 278,037 pounds of stuffs in 1703. (149) As Mr. Francis sums up the precise effects of the Methuen treaty on British exports to Portugal, "it is difficult to pin down any items which clearly benefited from the abrogation of the pragmatical decrees. In theory most of the new draperies and worsted fabrics, including some of the bays, might have come under the sumptuary laws, but much depended on the colour and appearance of the cloth and scarcely a single item seems to have been entirely prohibited before the treaty. Many articles were imported to meet the needs of the war but the increase in Spanish cloths and in perpetuanas and serges can perhaps be directly related to the Methuen treaty. The effect was to produce a general increase, which persisted after the war and was facilitated by the continuation on an enlarged base of the wine trade." (150) Only in Spanish cloths was the increase dramatic, from 685 pieces in 1703 to 3005 pieces in 1704, and perpetuanas and stuffs seem to have remained more or less, up to 1707, at the level which they had already reached in 1703. (151)

In a heavy-handed attempt to counter the excessive Whig praise for John Methuen, Defoe denounced his achievement as "a Felonious Treaty" and protested "that he that made it, had he been living, ought to have answer'd for it." (152) Attacking the Whigs, as the great defenders of the rights of Parliament, where he thought they were particularly vulnerable, he asserted that the treaty

149. P.R.O. M.A.F. 7/1, folios 29-31 and 74-78, quoted in

A.D. Francis, op. cit., Appx. 3.

150. A.D. Francis, op. cit., p. 364.

151. A.D. Francis, op. cit., Appx. 3.

152. Mercator, No. 112, February 9, 1713 (1714).

was "an Invasion of Parliamentary Right" because a mere ambassador had negotiated rates of duty, and since it could not legally be made, it was therefore void. He contrasted the action of the Tory ministry in submitting the Eighth and Ninth Articles to parliamentary debate with the wider powers which John Methuen had exercised at the time of his negotiation: "for if an Ambassador can by a Treaty Article with Portugal, that the Parliament shall not lay such or such Duties, and that the Parliament shall not take off such or such; An Ambassador may by the same Rule Article in the Treaty with France, That the Parliament shall take off such and such Duties; and the like." He maintained that the Methuen Treaty destroyed "the very Essence and Nature of Magna Charta" and that "it would be worse than Felonious to enforce the keeping it at the expence of the undoubted Privileges of the British Parliament. This would be a Robbery equal to the worst Treason; for it would take from the Parliament that Right which has not for some Ages been disputed with them, (viz.) Of having the only Power of levying and appropriating Taxes, and raising Money ..." (153) The essence of this argument was that the treaty was not inviolable and that Parliament could adjust the duties on Portuguese wines as different circumstances required.

As the dispute about the commercial treaty became increasingly a party struggle, Defoe suggested that we were allowing the Dutch to profit at our expense. Having traded with the enemy throughout the war, they were now seizing the opportunity created by the English delay in ratifying the 8th and 9th

153. *Ibid*, No. 113, February 11, 1713 (1714).

articles to flood the French ports with goods. "Our Exports ...", he maintained, "had been more than doubled had we not Traded this Year under this intolerable Inequality as to the Dutch, (viz.) that they have had a settled open Trade thither, ... by which Means they have filled France with East-India Goods of all sorts, Sugar, Tobacco, Pepper, Indico, and the like; nay, with our own Manufactures, of which though the Benefit of the Consumption has been ours, yet the Gain of the Sale has been theirs:" (154) The danger was particularly acute in the tobacco trade. Although they bought some tobacco from Britain, they were planting "so prodigious a Quantity" that they were able to export nearly 100,000 hogsheads a year, of which "a great Quantity was going to France. (155) "It might have been expected", he announced, "that after so long an Interruption of Commerce by the War, we should have found the Fruits of the Peace in a mighty Flux of Trade upon the first opening of Commerce in Europe; ... it would have been so to us if we had not stumbled at the Threshold ... As it would have been so to us, it is apparent it has been so to the Dutch; while we have been wrangling about the Commerce, whether we shall Trade or not Trade, ... the Dutch fill the French Ports with their Ships and with Goods of all Nations, nay even with our own Goods, and We get the Gleanings of the Trade after them." (156) By the export of English cloth to France through Holland, the Dutch had been made "Partners in our Trade and Masters of our Manufacture." (157) To Defoe, this was an intolerable situation for a great trading nation and he completely rejected the argument that the Dutch market for

154. Ibid., No. 69, October 31, 1713.

155. Ibid., No. 70, November 3, 1713.

156. Ibid., No. 90, December 19, 1713.



English cloth was so valuable that nothing should be done to reduce the Dutch trade. At the same time he declared, "This Paper will never go about to lessen the Value of our Trade to Holland; those Trades which Export most of our Woollen Manufactures are without Question the most profitable Trades to us." He claimed, however, that the export of English cloth to Holland was always greatest when trade was prohibited between England and France or between England and Flanders and that if the Dutch could sell English cloth at a profit in France, "we might make some Profit of carrying them thither our selves", even if it were only "the Employment of our own Shipping." (158)

To those who argued from his own maxim that cheapness caused consumption and that, therefore, the Dutch, because of their cheaper freight rates, would be able to sell more English cloth in France than we could send there directly, he replied that most of the 20,000 or 30,000 pieces of serges and perpetuanas which had formerly been sent to France had been shipped from Exeter and Plymouth and that it was not possible that the Dutch "could fetch these at Axmouth, carry them to Holland, and from thence to France, cheaper than we could carry them just across the Channel." In such a short voyage, the difference in freights could not amount to more than ls. in £100 because the whole freight on bales of finer cloths was usually not more than 5s. on £100 worth of goods. (159)

The extracts already quoted from his correspondence with Harley show that Defoe was firmly convinced that much of the

158. *Ibid.*, No. 33, August 8, 1713.

159. *Ibid.*, No. 34, August 11, 1713.

opposition to the commercial treaty with France was a Whig party manoeuvre against the Tory administration. (160) In an early issue of the 'Mercator', he condemned "that Mean Error, which is now so much the common Practice, (viz.) of mingling private Interests and Matters of Commerce with Affairs of the State, making Trade a Party-Cause, which ought above all to be free and unconcern'd in such things." (161) By January 1714, he claimed that he had from the beginning of the 'Mercator' "avoided meddling with Party-Quarrels" and that he had tried to confine his paper "wholly to the Subject of Trade", but went on to print a letter from a correspondent, G.S., who observed that during the preceding months Defoe had been "dancing in a Circle, beating the Air and Talking to no purpose at all." This "correspondent" proceeded to launch a violent attack on the Whigs, exclaiming,

"Any one may know that Arguing about Trade is but an Amusement with these Men; ... Their Measures run in another Channel; the Peace and the Ministry is their Quarrel, and this Clamour about the French Trade is but a means laid hold on to bring to pass these other Ends ... I tell you they want only to be in the Ministry, and were they in, they would have made the same Treaty of Commerce, or a worse, and have Cried it up as fast as now they Cry it down; ... They have a general Maxim, ... (viz.) That without a Treaty of Commerce the Treaty of Peace could not be lasting, which indeed is very rational: So then, if they can overthrow the Treaty of Commerce, they do all their Work. It is a famous Climax in their Politicks, No Commerce! No Peace! No Peace! No Ministry! Then Hey boys, up we go, etc. is the next Step." (162)

Naturally, the "British Merchant" countered with the charge that "Rage of Parties" was constantly used by Defoe as "the only

160. Supra, pp. 628-629.

161. Mercator, No. 5, June 4, 1713.

162. Ibid, No. 108, January 30, 1713 (1714)

Argument against the Bill of Commerce" and asked "Is the Sense of all England for half a Century of Years, the Sense of a Party only?" (163) But Defoe extended his allegations against the Whigs to include the imputation that they were being duped by the Dutch or were consciously subordinating the interests of England to those of Holland in their overriding desire to oust the Tories. This hypothesis had appeared in the 'Mercator' as early as August 1713, when he wrote, "what has been spoken of the Dutch carrying on by their Agents here the Divisions of this Nation, must have some Truth in it, seeing those Divisions are managed so evidently for their Interest, ... that if it be not of their own doing, it must be, because they see some Men here so forward to do it for them, that they could not do it better them selves." (164) By the end of the year, he advanced the theory that at the conclusion of the recent war, France, although impoverished in general by the conflict like her neighbours, was "very full of ready money", more "than perhaps it ever was since it was a Nation, or ever will be again." This had accumulated in France by the wartime trade to the Spanish West Indies, by the revaluations of the currency which had encouraged coinage into specie and by the rich prizes taken by their privateers from both the Dutch and the British. "The Dutch, who always had the Reputation of knowing which side of their Bread had the butter on, took early Care to get the First fruits of this Harvest, and to secure their Terms of Commerce with France, which, having no Parties at home to prevent them, they effectually determined at the time of their Treaty of Peace.

163. British Merchant, No. 27, November 6, 1713.

164. Mercator, No. 33, August 8, 1713.

Not content with this success, he continued, "the sharpening Dutch, had another Game to play; for ... knowing well, that no Merchants in the World were able to Cut them out of this Trade but those of Great Britain, their next study was to keep the Cully to them selves, and to keep the British Treaty from being Compleated as long as possibly they could." Because "this Nation never wants a Party to undo her", the Dutch found them out "Tools ready ground by a Faction to their Hand" with the immediate outcome, "a great Clamour in the City against the French Trade; all the Absurdities and Forgeries of forty Years standing ... trump't up." In support of this assumption, he recommended to his readers his recent anonymous pamphlet "Memoirs of Count Tariff" in which "the whole Dutch Plot against our Commerce is laid open, how it was push'd on by the Dutch." (165) The previous links between the Whigs and the Dutch in their opposition to the separate peace negotiations between Britain and France (166) may have led Defoe to assume a similar connection in the campaign against the Bill of Commerce but this pamphlet was more likely a deliberate attempt to discredit the Whig opposition to the commercial treaty, not merely by the insinuation that they were willing tools of the Dutch, but also by playing on the long-standing English prejudices against those who had only just ceased to be our most-feared rivals in trade. In it he raked over old scandals such as the Dutch compromising their Christian faith in Japan because of their eagerness to trade there and "a certain Butcherly occasion" at Amboyna. The character of the Dutch people was personified in this indifferent

165. *Ibid.*, No. 91, December 22, 1713.

166. See my M.A. Thesis, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-246.

allegory in Mynheer Coopmanschap, "an old Carrier, and a cunning, tricking, circumventing, sharpening Dutch Broker ... a great Dealer in the Manufactures and Produce of other Countries, but (who) had very few or none at all of his own." It told how old Coopmanschap seized his opportunity when the English stupidly "cut off their own Trade" to engross all their trade with France, personified in Count Tariff, so that "no Body could Trade with Count Tariff at all NOW, but they must pay TOLL to old Coopmanschap, no Goods could be sent to Count Tariff, but in old Coopmanschap's Waggon and Ships, so that he became the general Carryer to all the Trade of that side of the World." Therefore, the British and French trade proposals came as a shock to the Dutch "for these were the very Men that he had bubbled for so many Years past; for having kept Count Tariff under his Thumb, he got all the Trade into his own Hand, made those English Merchants glad to sell their Woollen Manufactures to him, some finish'd, some unfinish'd, as he pleased to take them, and at what Price he pleased to give for them; so that they only furnish'd Count Tariff at second-hand, and old Coopmanschap got the Profit ... and this subtle Dutchman had only been a Pick-Pocket on both Sides." (167)

Because Defoe was convinced that nations were engaged in a conflict for a limited volume of trade, (168) the Dutch were in the right in trying to keep their control of the trade with France, "for they pick our Pockets by it, and we are deprived by it of a Trade which we should shut them out of." Therefore,

167. Memoirs of Count Tariff (1713), pp. 8-16.

168. Supra, pp. 12-13

we could not blame the Dutch, but it was "not the less monstrous to see Englishmen and Britains be drawn in to Talk their Language. (169) Since 1710, he had found himself in fierce opposition to his fellow Whigs on the national credit, on the peace negotiations with France, on their desertion of the Dissenters by their pact with Nottingham and now on the question of commercial policy. (170) He had been subjected to a campaign of misrepresentation and vilification which had included accusing references to his bankruptcies and to his appearance in the pillory, although this had been the result of a too-successful satire on their opponents, the High Church Tories, and was in any case completely irrelevant to the controversy about England's trade relations with France. (171) They had also tried to secure his imprisonment on the totally false charge of writing against the Hanoverian succession, a cause which he strenuously supported throughout his political career. (172) Completely isolated from his former political associates, he was more and more dependent on Harley, both politically and financially, and even there he had been displaced by Swift. It is not surprising that his dispute with the Whigs about the commercial treaty became increasingly bitter. In 1712, during the controversy about the peace negotiations with France, he had complained that in the Barrier Treaty, the Whig Junto had given the Dutch "the Sovereignty and the Commerce of the Spanish Netherlands" (173) and "a Barrier so pernicious to the Trade of Great Britain." (174) He now accused them of again

169. Mercator, No. 111, February 6, 1713 (1714).  
 170. See my M.A. Thesis, op. cit., pp. 263-5, 302, 306-7.  
 171. British Merchant, No. 27, March 6, 1713; No. 46, January 12, 1714.  
 172. Supra, p. 418.  
 173. A Further Search into the Conduct of the Allies (1712).  
 174. The Present Negotiations of Peace Vindicated (1712) pp. 15-16.

sacrificing our vital commercial interests to "our most dangerous Rivals in Trade", in return for Dutch support in their party struggle to supplant the Tory government of Harley and Bolingbroke "The Arguments put into the Mouths of our People against the Trade with France Are All Dutch, Coin'd in Holland, Calculated for a Dutch Interest." (175) In another issue it was the Whigs who had called in the Dutch "to defend our Commerce against the French which was like "the old Britons, who call'd in the Saxons to help them against the Picts, who ... devoured the People they came to help." (176) Finally, he insinuated that some Whig pamphleteers had been bribed by the Dutch to attack the trade treaty, declaring "if we shou'd say, that Dutch Money has been employ'd in order to keep alive the Clamour against our Trade to Fra(nce); its believed we might be able to get better Proof of it than these Men are aware of" and referred to "their bribing and hiring so many Mercenaries to raise a Clamour among the People, and to Print scandalous and scurrilous Libels against it." (177) Thus the whole nation was "bought and sold in a Horrible and Treacherous manner." (178)

The knowledge that the Dutch were so eager that Britain should be shut out of the trade with France was to Defoe sufficient reason why she should wish to have the treaty of commerce. (179) The fact that at the same time "they greedily embraced the French Trade them selves" led him to believe that this was

175. Mercator, No. 116, February 18, 1713 (1714)  
 176. Ibid, No. 127, March 16, 1713 (1714).  
 177. Ibid, No. 130, March 23, 1713 (1714).  
 178. Ibid, No. 111, February 6, 1713 (1714).  
 179. Ibid,

"a rich Morsel." (180) Whereas his opponents were convinced that trade with France fulfilled all the conditions of a detrimental trade, Defoe maintained that France was "a fifth Part of the Trading Part of Europe," with a population of many millions but who, "in spite of all their Industry", were not able to supply themselves with manufactured goods because they lacked the necessary materials. (181) The "British Merchant" asked if any English traveller in Europe ever wanted a joint of mutton for his supper and whether the people in other countries threw away the fleeces or if the sheep there had bristles on their backs instead of wool. (182) But nothing would shake Defoe's conviction that the English cloth industry was superior to that of any other country and would always remain so partly because of the skill of the operatives but primarily because of God's exclusive gift of the wool produced by our soil and climate. (183) This was always providing that some effectual method was found to stop the owling traffic, "or all your Tariffs of Trade, and Treaties of Commerce that are, or can be made" would not save England's trade "from immediate Destruction." If this could not be accomplished, he repeated, "you may as well open a Man's Veins, and say to him, Live and walk about, when at the same time he is bleeding to Death; as to say to the Nation, Trade, thrive, and carry on your Universal Commerce; when the Wooll, which is the Life and Blood of Trade is carried away, to those who alone can ruin our Trade." (184) The 'British Merchant', however, not only maintained that there was scarce any country

180. Ibid, No. 129, March 20, 1713 (1714).  
 181. Ibid, No. 127, March 16, 1713 (1714).  
 182. British Merchant, No. 27, November 6, 1713.  
 183. Supra, pp. 194-198, 203-215.  
 184. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 95), p. 192.



in Europe without woollen manufactures but that no nation had made such strenuous efforts to extend her trade in woollen cloth as France had done in the fourteen months since Utrecht. (185) Defoe still argued that there could be no serious competition from a country that had no wool but what they bought or stole from other nations, no dyestuffs but what they bought "at second-hand" and no craftsmen but what they borrowed or hired from abroad. (186) Any progress which the French might have made had been due to the prohibition of imports of English cloth which led them to achieve "a greater Knowledge and Capacity in the said Manufactures than they had before." (187) Therefore, he insisted, "the only way then left us, as well to stop our Wooll from going into France as to stop the French Improvements in our Manufactures is to have our Goods openly admitted into France on easie Terms, and on low Duties, that the Goodness and Cheapness of our Manufacture may, by its own Weight, overthrow and destroy the other, as it is plain it must and will do." (188) A year earlier, however, he had stated categorically, "the French are so far from encreasing in the Woollen Manufactures, that (they) are less able to make Woollen Manufactures NOW, than they were before the War; and will be still less able than they are now, after the Peace. That the French are not able ... to make so many Woollen Manufactures as they use them selves; but must every Year buy great Quantities from us, and always did so" but he produced no new evidence in support of this assertion. (189) More effective was the pertinent question that if the French could make better

185. British Merchant, No. 90, June 15, 1714.

186. Mercator, No. 127, March 16, 1713 (1714).

187. Ibid., No. 23, July 16, 1713.

188. Ibid., No. 138, April 10, 1714.

and cheaper goods than the English, why should they be "so hard to yield up the high Duties" which they had levied on English goods. "Were the Trade open, and the Duties on our Goods in France reduced to the Rule or Tariff of 1664", he added, "we should soon destroy the hopes of the French, and the fears of our own People, in the Affair of erecting Woollen Manufactures in France." (190) In the next issue of the 'Review', he told his readers that the French people were just as alarmed as the English about the proposed reductions in their tariffs; "for, say they, if we do so, the English would crowd their Woollen Goods upon us, in such vast Quantities, and they are so much beyond our own in Goodness, in Workmanship, and in Substance, tho' a little higher in Price, that ... no body will buy French if they can get English. As Louis XIV and his ministers were usually fully aware of their own interests, "if they did not know that our Manufactures would, in spite of all the Application, and cheap Working of their low-priz'd People, work them out and undo them; ... he would not harp so diligently upon that String, and press so hard to keep our Woollen Goods to the Tariff of 1699 when he is so easy in letting all other Goods fall to that of 1664." Thus leather was not excepted out of the tariff of 1664 for the French wanted all the leather they could get, "but if ... the Tanners in France could not sell their Goods, they would be as solicitous about the Leather as they are now about the Woollen Goods." (191) In one pamphlet he suggested that the French might be persuaded, in the further negotiations for which the treaty provided, to reduce the tariff on all woollen cloth to the 1664 rate, (192) but even if this modification were not obtained, he insisted that not all English

190. Ibid., (No. 98), pp. 197-198.

191. Ibid., (No. 99), p. 200.

192. Considerations upon the Eighth and Ninth Articles of the Treaty of Commerce (1713), p. 14.

cloth would be subject to the 1699 tariff, only broadcloth, ratins and serges, and that we did not export any ratins to France. In any case the 1699 tariff was less onerous than the opponents of the treaty maintained, being lower than the 1667 duties and, if the treaty were not ratified, English cloth would still be subject to the prohibition of 1701. He observed that by the 1699 tariff, broadcloth would pay per piece of 25 French ells, or  $31\frac{1}{4}$  yards, 15 livres more than in 1664, compared with 40 livres more in 1667. Cloth serges, per piece of 15 ells,  $18\frac{3}{4}$  yards, would only pay 1 livre more than by the 1664 tariff, 11 livres instead of 10. These duties would be much lower than those which would remain on French goods imported into Britain. (193) Therefore, he was convinced that what had happened in Scotland after the Union would be repeated in France if the treaty were ratified. The Scots had good wool "and if it was not so fine as ours, they never wanted ours ... to help out." He had seen very fine broad cloth and shalloons made at Edinburgh, Leith, Stirling, Musselburgh and Haddington and he thought that they would have maintained their woollen manufactures for the Scots were "as Poor, and as able to live hard, and consequently work low, as any Nation in the World. But as soon as the Union opened the Trade, ... down went all their Works, all their Workmen went off, their Stocks were sunk and broke, and their English Workmen, for such they had too, were forced to come back, ... and which I have always said of our Manufactures, what they wanted in Price, they made up in Goodness; so that

193. Mercator, No. 1, May 26, 1713; No. 6, June 6, 1713. The 'British Merchant' assessed the duty on broadcloth at 20 instead of 15 per cent. (No. 40, December 22, 1713).

we could send our broad Cloath from Worcester to Edingborough, and to Glasgow, by Land Carriage, of which I am an Eye Witness; and tho' that be near 300 Miles a Horseback, could sell broad Cloath cheaper there, than any could be made in Scotland." (194) Later, he claimed that cloth was even sent from Taunton to Scotland by land carriage and that no broad cloth, druggets or sagathies were now made in Scotland "to any purpose." "Just so would it be in France, were this Treaty made Effectual, and the Duty on our Woollen Manufactures reduced to the Tariff of 1664, as it is to be by the Treaty, Broad Cloth and Serges only excepted (195)

Whereas Defoe expected the exports of English woollens to France to "sink and confound the French manufactures," (196) his Whig adversaries complained that the French imports of our woollen goods would be restricted to the three ports of Bordeaux, Rouen and St. Valéry with no port of entry into Brittany where, they claimed, these goods had sold best. (197) They would also be subject to "exceeding troublesome Visitations" so that they would probably "lye 6 or 8 Months at the Custom house to be Moth-eaten" and then they might be measured and inspected "in the Rain and Dirt" with a consequent reduction in value of 20 per cent. "And does this look as if the French were in earnest to receive our Woollen Manufactures?" they asked. (198) But while they made

194. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 98) p. 197.

195. Mercator, No. 122, March 4, 1713 (1714).

196. Ibid, No. 134, April 1, 1714.

197. British Merchant, No. 43, January 1, 1714.

198. Ibid, No. 40, December 22, 1713; .....; Cf A Letter to Sir R - H - ... (1713) p. 3, which alleged that when there was an open trade with France, French inspectors, "under the Pretext of several old Laws", had been guilty of throwing English cloths into water, "adjudging them defective", and had thereby prevented their sale.

the most of these possible difficulties, their main argument was that British woollen goods would be unable to make much headway in the French market because the French manufacturers' labour costs were so much lower. Therefore, an ell of French cloth, which was the equivalent of a yard and a quarter of English measure, sold for the same price as a yard of the same cloth in England. (199) They contended that in the years when it was believed that we lost at least £1½ million by the French trade, woollen manufactures had formed over half of our exports to France. (200) The French were then only "in the Infancy of their Woollen Manufacture" and during the years when the entry of English cloth was prohibited, there had been a great expansion of the French industry, notably at the Van Robais factory at Abbeville, making Spanish cloth, and at Sattes near Carcassonne and Clermont de Lodere in Languedoc. (201) One writer even claimed that if French woollen manufactures were allowed into England, there was no doubt "but in a very little time, our Woollen Manufactures would be lost here; since all sorts might be imported much cheaper from France." (202) Both he and the authors of the 'British Merchant' were agreed that it was of no consequence whether the French offered large or small reductions in the tariff on our woollen goods, because "though our Goods were to pay no Duties at all, yet we should not be able to export such Quantities as we did in 1685," when we had an open trade with France. (203) So persistent were their suspicions of the

199. (Anon) An Account of the Woollen Manufactures made in the Province of Languedoc and at Abbeville in Picardy (1713)
200. British Merchant, No. 43, January 1, 1714.
201. Ibid, No. 41, December 26, 1713; An Account of the Woollen Manufactures ...
202. An Account of the Woollen Manufactures ...
203. Ibid; British Merchant, No. 28, November 10, 1713. Cf. The Consequences of a Law for Reducing the Dutys Upon French Wines, Brandy, Silks and Linen ... (1713) p. 5.

French that they suggested that the French king might relax the existing "Prohibitions, Edicts and high Duties, to draw on the Bill of Commerce" only to reimpose these restrictions when he had been successful in securing the treaty. (204) Even when they agreed that the best quality English cloth was superior to that produced in other countries, they were quick to add that in all countries few were able to afford this cloth and that it was the market for the cheaper sorts that was important, where price counted more than quality. (205) "Their Gentlemen of Estates may now and then fancy a Suit of English Cloth, if they do, they'll have it as the Trade now stands, and if the Bill of Commerce were past, they'll not take a Piece the more. The great Consumption of Wool does not lye amongst these Sort of People, 'tis amongst the inferiour Sort, and the Manufactures they consume are made much cheaper in France than any we can send them." This Whig writer claimed that the French craftsman worked sevenpence in the shilling cheaper than his English counterpart. (206) In spite of all their objections, Defoe not only believed that "a larger Quantity of our Woollen Manufactures would be exported to France than ever before, but declared that the result of opening a door into France would be the entire overthrow of the French Manufacturing." (207) As for those traitors who ran down the English manufactures and cried up the French, this was "a villainous, base Thing for Englishmen to do," even if it were true, "a piece of unnatural Treason in Trade," which did great disservice to the British cloth trade because

204. British Merchant, No. 35, December 4, 1713.

205. Ibid, No. 41, December 26, 1713.

206. A Letter to the Honourable A - r M - re, p. 35.

207. Mercator, No. 142, April 20, 1714.

French merchants were able to quote these opinions in foreign markets. (208)

Although a dramatic increase in our woollen exports was the chief benefit which Defoe expected to accrue from the commercial treaty, he insisted that other gains would follow even in the case of the remaining commodities excepted from the general tariff of 1664. He dismissed the article of whale-bone, fins and whale oil as unimportant since Britain had now no whaling industry worthy of consideration, but in an early 'Mercator' he declared, "Next to the said Exportation of our Woollen Manufacture, the Fishing Trade is our immediate Concern, and that more especially since our Union with Scotland." (209) He wrote two letters to the 'Mercator', which were published as a separate pamphlet, to show the opportunities which Scottish merchants had missed for increased exports of herrings, salmon, cod, leather, hides, coal, glue, butter and other provisions because the treaty had not been ratified. These would have balanced the Scottish taste for French wines and brandy and the demand for French salt for the fishing industry, but now specie would have to be exported to pay for these imports. (210) His adversaries naturally stressed the restrictions in the treaty, such as the importation of salt fish into France only in barrels and only at the five ports of St. Valéry, Rouen, Nantes, Bordeaux, and Liborne, the last-named, they claimed, being a port of no account and too

208. Ibid, No. 141, April 17, 1714 and No. 143, April 22, 1714.

209. Ibid, No. 18, July 4, 1713.

210. The Trade of Scotland with France Consider'd ... (1713), pp. 3 - 5.

near Bordeaux. (211) The British failure to seize Cape Breton Island during the war and the concessions granted to the French at Utrecht to dry the fish, which they caught on the Grand Banks, on the coast of Newfoundland had given them a distinct advantage in the Atlantic fishery, in the view of the Whigs, and they claimed that there would now be little opportunity for the sale of British fish in France, seeing that their own fishermen could import fish in bulk. The existing duties were replaced by those on landing and consumption obtaining before 1664, plus a new duty of 40 livres per last of 12 barrels, and these were to be paid even at free ports such as Dunkirk. The new duty was more than double the 1664 tariff on herrings, with even larger increases on salmon and cod, amounting "to almost the whole Value of that Fish." The whole article was a demonstration that Louis XIV intended that his subjects should eat no fish "but of their own catching and curing." (212) Another pamphleteer argued that the fish would have to be "wholly cured with English salt." (213) Defoe rejoined that English fish exports to France had been prohibited after the Treaty of Ryswick and that as this concerned the Dutch more than it did us, we should examine Holland's commercial treaty with France to arrive at a true evaluation of the prospects for supplying fish to France. (214) Despite the efforts of the French government,

- the French herring fishery continued to decline in the face of
211. { (Anon.) The Trade with France, Italy, Spain and Portugal Considered (1713) pp. 6-9, 23.  
Some Further Observations on the Treaty of Navigation and Commerce ... (1713) pp. 3-4, 12.
212. British Merchant, No. 49, January 22, 1714.
213. (Anon) Some Further Observations on the Treaty of Navigation ... op. cit., p. 15.
214. An Essay on the Treaty of Commerce with France.... (1713), p. 20; Considerations upon the Eighth and Ninth Articles of the Treaty of Commerce (1713), pp. 27-29.



Dutch competition, which suggests that Defoe was right in his assumption that the treaty would have provided opportunities for the Scots if it had been ratified. There was a rapid expansion of the French cod fishery after the Spanish Succession war, but the competition of the New England fishery was a more serious problem for the English West Country fishermen. (215)

Despite his early statement, Defoe made little attempt to meet the above criticisms, but he had considerable hopes for the Virginia tobacco trade, the re-export of which he said was "in the greatest danger imaginable of being utterly lost to this Nation." As these re-exports were placed on the same footing in France as the imports from all other countries such as Spain, this was not "an inconsiderable article, France being lately come into the Custom of Smoking Tobacco, and which England can supply, (placing the Goodness against the Price) Cheaper and Better than any Nation in the World" and might save "that sinking Trade from final Ruin." He hoped that in the subsequent negotiations the British ambassadors would secure that the French tobacco duties should not be farmed. (216) Even though the commercial treaty was not ratified, after 1713 France became the second most important market to Holland, for British re-exports of tobacco and, after 1730, the first. (217) Indeed, next to woollen goods, Defoe placed his greatest hopes on re-exports of colonial and East India goods to France, demanding, "Have we not Exported

215. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, pp. 848-850.

216. An Essay on the Treaty of Commerce ... op. cit., pp. 22-25.

217. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, pp. 852-853.

above Two hundred thousand Pounds to France a Year in East India Goods only?" (218) Battle was soon joined on this issue for in their petition against the treaty the Levant Company had protested that the Ninth Article referred to the "goods and merchandizes" of Great Britain instead of those of the subjects of Great Britain and that this implied manufactures and native products only, whereas they claimed that they had enjoyed the freedom to take the goods they brought from Turkey not only directly to France but also from England to France as they saw fit. (219) Defoe replied that in this case the words of the treaty would have been "growth and produce", not goods and merchandizes. (220) The 'British Merchant' argued that the first draft of the treaty had been more favourable to Britain and that the inclusion of the words "goods and merchandizes" had made the clause less general for they must mean the growth and manufactures of Great Britain, and not those of any other country exported from Britain. (221) There was so much disquiet in Britain on this question that the House of Commons added an amendment to the Ninth Article of the Bill of Commerce, declaring that the repeal of prohibitions in France should extend to foreign goods exported from Britain. (222) The 'British Merchant' asked if France had agreed to this amendment and maintained that all the restrictions on foreign goods exported from Britain were confirmed by the fifth article of the treaty which said that the laws and statutes of each kingdom should remain in full force, except as expressly

218. Mercator, No. 36, August, 15, 1713.

219. Petition of the Levant Company printed in H.M.C., House of Lords, N.S. X, pp. 113, 122.

220. Mercator, No. 4, June 2, 1713.

221. British Merchant, No. 6, August 25, 1713.

222. Cobbett's Parliamentary History, Vol. VI, pp. 1222-1223.  
 Abel Boyer, ed. The Political State of Great Britain, Vol. 5. p. 405, amendment of June 6, 1713.

provided otherwise in the agreement. (223) After printing the French arrêt prohibiting the wearing of Indian textiles or trading in them, the writer asked if it were likely that such an edict would ever be repealed in favour of Britain and declared that if East India goods were struck out of the 'Mercator's' list of re-exported goods, only "a very Trifle" would remain.

(224) He further maintained that before this edict and during the period of open trade, in 1685-6, "Foreign Goods, and those made or mixed with Foreign Materials, together with a very few Plantation Goods, were almost half the value of our whole Exports to France."

(225) Despite the French decrees, Defoe claimed that "great Quantities of East-India Goods" had been carried into France by the Dutch and that this was the most likely reason for the great export of these goods from England to Holland, amounting to 33,000 pieces of calicoes in the nine days between 23rd. January and 1st. February, 1714. (226) The 'British

Merchant' admitted that "some Parcels of these Goods" were exported to France, but this was only because Louis XIV was accustomed "to dispence with his Prohibitions to supply any present Wants or Exigencies of his Subjects," and that he was probably temporarily relaxing his restrictions to gain the treaty with

Britain. (227) Other pamphleteers alleged that the prohibitions against foreign goods would apply to England's Spanish cloths or to fish which had not been cured with English salt! (228)

223. British Merchant, No. 6, August 25, 1713; Cf. A Short History of the Parliament, p. 17; Some Further Observations ... pp. 14-15.

224. Ibid, No. 7, August 28, 1713.

225. Ibid, No. 42, December 29, 1713.

226. Mercator, No. 111, February 6, 1713 (1714).

227. British Merchant, No. 92, June 22, 1714.

228. A Vindication of the Late House of Commons ... (1714) p. 25.

One of Defoe's chief difficulties in recommending the treaty of commerce was that because trade with France had been prohibited for so many years, and had been considered adverse for an even longer period, it was almost impossible to give his opponents any indications of the advantages which he believed would accrue. It was for this reason that he suggested that the treaty should be provisional for three years "that a Medium of the Trade may be taken, not from what had been, or might be supposed to be, but as Experience shall prove to be." Because Britain could not send her exports to France until the treaty was ratified, the critics of the bill were given a distinct advantage. (229) Therefore, he tried to show that there was a large trade to France in spite of the various restrictions and thus to lead people to expect a great expansion whenever the barriers should be removed. In the autumn of 1713, he began to give lists at the end of each 'Mercator' of various commodities sent to France, but his Whig adversaries were quick to seize on the weaknesses in this propaganda. The 'British Merchant' bluntly exposed the reason for his lists and denied that the large quantities of corn and other foodstuffs were any argument for the bill of commerce, since France readily admitted these when she needed them. France also required about £30,000 or £40,000 worth of lead and tin each year from Britain and had obtained these during the recent war by way of neutral countries, as Defoe had already complained. If there were no French duties on these goods, Britain was not likely to sell more than £10,000 or £15,000 more each year. It accused him of giving "constantly several Parcels of Woollen Manufactures, without any Valuation,

that his Readers may believe the whole Year's Value is prodigious" or more than twenty times the value of £10,000 a year which the Whig journal placed on these exports. "And is this a Sum for a whole Year to be distributed to us in Parcels almost three times every Week?" it asked and claimed that most of these woollen goods went to the free port of Dunkirk, with not more than £200 worth to all the other French ports combined. Even if they were not mainly for the English garrison there, these exports represented only about 2s. per head of the French population of Dunkirk and not as much as one farthing per head for the whole population of France. As France had less experience of this manufacture, it might have been expected that she would take half this amount "for meer Patterns." (230) On the other hand, in giving his earlier list of 218 English ships with their cargoes which had entered Dunkirk in the nine months from August 16, 1712 to May 12, 1713, Defoe had expressly stated that there were no woollen goods in these shipments because the trade was still prohibited, and had added that it was "a Port of the least Trade of any on the Coast of France, in proportion to its bigness." (231)

Defoe remained convinced that the commercial treaty was particularly advantageous to Britain, one "so qualified for the Encreasing Manufactures and Encreasing the Wealth of her People, as none of her Ancestors ever obtained the like." (232) Indeed, the British should be careful not "to open the French Eyes too

230. British Merchant, No. 92, June 22, 1714.

231. Mercator, No. 29, July 30; No. 30, August 1; No. 34, August 11, 1713.

232. Ibid, No. 24, July 18, 1713.

much to it, least the Inequality should put them upon endeavouring to prevent us in it." (233) He contended that the French manufacturers were alarmed at the prospect of competition with British goods, but that they lacked "the liberty of just Complaint, which we abuse to an unjust Clamour." (234) Louis XIV could "truly be said to have sold the Commerce of the French Nation to its antient Enemies the English ... and were the French endowed with Privileges as the English are, and that had a Negative Voice upon any of the Transactions of their Kings, it might very well be expected from them, that they should have refused to make Effectual the Eighth and Ninth Articles of the Treaty," for the French King had been obliged to abandon all that he had been doing for the past fifty years to encourage his subjects in woollen manufactures. (235) Because the French were obliged by the treaty to admit British goods according to definite rates of duty, whereas Britain could adjust her tariffs as she wished provided that she did not impose any higher duties upon French imports than on the like goods from other countries, he insisted, "Does not the Treaty leave us entirely at Liberty, and keep them bound?" (236) But while he claimed that Britain could always raise her rates of duties to safeguard her new industries such as glass, paper, silk, linen and sailcloth or to prevent too large an influx of French wines and brandy, he readily admitted that the treaty would necessarily involve some reductions in the duties on French imports: "We can hardly expect the French should agree to take off the High Duties and Prohibitions on our

233. Ibid., No. 142, April 30, 1714.  
 234. Ibid., No. 122, March 4, 1713 (1714)  
 235. Ibid., No. 16, June 30, 1713.  
 236. Ibid., No. 142, April 30, 1714.

Goods in France, and leave us to continue our High Duties and Prohibitions on their Goods in England. This would have been an Article to have been expected if the King of France had been Prisoner of War at Nottingham instead of Marshall Tallard." (237) He enlarged on this in the pamphlet on the treaty which he openly published under the authorship of the 'Review':

"I have Examin'd as Nicely as I can the whole Treaty; I will not say, that several things might not have been added to it to make it more to our Advantage than it is ... If, indeed, we had been Masters of France, and had only one side of a Treaty to make, ..then it should not have been a Treaty, but an Act of Parliament, Enacting in what manner the French should Trade with us; as we do with Ireland; ... I should have taxt the Ministry with great Indolence and Neglect of our Interest, that they had not forbid the French making any kind of Woollen Manufacture at all, and taken off all Duties on the Importation of ours: They should have caused all Woollen Manufactures from Holland, Flanders, Germany, Switzerland, etc. to have been Prohibited etc. They should have caused the French to send no more Ships to the East-Indies, Turkey or Canada, and have caused Martinico and Quebec to have been surrendered to us, ... They might also have Continued all the high Duties on French Goods in England as they now stand, and which are in the nature of Prohibitions, and made the whole Coast of France a Free Port to the English ... But take the Treaty as a Convention between two Nations, in which we were to provide for the Equity and Justice of Trade, ... I do not see how the Treaty could be made between the two Nations, upon more equal Terms than it is; ... Nay, on the contrary, ... That the French King has struck such a blow by this Treaty to the Manufactures of Wooll among his own People, that if he stands long to the Condition of it, all the Undertakers of Woollen Manufacturers in France must be Ruin'd and Undone." (238)

By contrast, the Whigs completely mistrusted the good faith of the French and rejected the possibility that there could be any favourable outcome from the further negotiations about the "four species" for which the treaty provided. "No Man in his right Senses", declared the 'British Merchant', "can think that Commi-

237. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 95), p. 191.

238. Some Thoughts upon the Subject of Commerce with France (1713), pp. 19-21.

ssioners will be appointed by France for any other purpose than as a Shooing-Horn to draw on the Bill of Commerce, to amuse the Nation and grant us nothing. So that we have absolutely granted France what she wants by this Treaty ... the subsequent Articles in every Case of the excepted Goods, instead of an Allowance, are in effect a downright Prohibition of those Goods." (239) Any further adjustment in Britain's favour was thus summarily dismissed.

It is obvious that the Whig propagandists were not really concerned with the prospects for selling more English goods in France, but with preventing an inundation of French imports into England. This was succinctly stated by the 'British Merchant': "The French Trade is not condemned of buying none of our Manufactures, but only of selling us an Over-balance of their own." (240) Comparing the danger from French imports with that which England had faced from Indian silks and calicoes before the prohibition of 1700, another Whig propagandist argued that "the Importations from India were not so frequent, so that our Manufactures could better guard against them; whereas those from France will be every Month, every Week, and from thence our Gentry are too apt to take their Fashions." (241) Defoe, however, saw France as "a Country of a vast Extent, full of People, and if they take our Manufactures for their own Use, will take so great a quantity as we can hardly Buy such an Advantage too

239. British Merchant, No. 49, January 22, 1714.

240. Ibid, No. 31, November 20, 1713.

241. A Letter to Sir R - H - ... (1713) p. 16; Cf. A Vindication of the late House of Commons, pp. 34-35 for this view that French imports were a greater threat than Indian silks. The Trade with France, Italy, Spain and Portugal Considered, p. 10, claimed that if only one-sixth of the 3 million females spent as little as 20s. a year in hoods and scarves made of the cheaper black silk, this would produce imports of £500,000 from France in this one item.



Dear." (242) His Whig critic declared, "there is no Hopes of our exporting to France a fourth Part of the Value of the Goods we exported formerly to balance our Importations from that Country; for we shall have few Goods to send to France but such as are useful for perfecting their Manufactures." (243) Defoe confidently reasserted,

"Our Exportations to France will be more than ever

Our Importations will be less than ever." (244)

All our imports from France would be balanced by our woollen manufactures alone," and great Sums brought hither, in Specie of Gold, every Year." (245) This was the basic difference between the two sides and in the last analysis the dispute between them rested on their opposing estimates of the competitive strength of the English woollen industry. Before he began the 'Mercator', Defoe acknowledged in one of the last issues of the 'Review', "If we can Trade to France with Advantage, we are Fools if we decline it; if not, we shall be Fools if we embrace it. If I believed the French could make their Woollen Goods so much better than we do, and cheaper, I would Vote loudly against opening any Commerce at all with them." (246) In return, his antagonists repeatedly claimed that French woollen exports were affecting our sales in important British markets such as Spain, Italy and Turkey and would do the same in Portugal but for the Methuen Treaty (247) "Fear of goods", however, always dominated

242. An Essay on the Treaty of Commerce with France ... (1713), pp. 29-30.

243. British Merchant, No. 103, July 30, 1714.

244. Mercator, No. 80, November 26, 1713.

245. Considerations upon the Eighth and Ninth Articles ... op. cit., p. 10.

246. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 98), pp. 197-198.

247. British Merchant, Nos. 39, 45; Some Further Observations ... op. cit., pp. 5-6.

their view of British trade and ultimately led them into the doctrine of foreign-paid incomes. (248) One of Defoe's strongest reasons for opening the trade with France was the benefits which the Dutch derived from their French trade and he had tried to promote the commercial treaty by appealing to the traditional English jealousy of Dutch commercial success. One Whig writer firmly countered with the argument that Britain's imports from France would be wholly retained imports and therefore entirely adverse: "The French Trade, considering the different Circumstances of the Dutch and Ours, may be beneficial to them, though it is destructive to us. Holland is to be look'd upon as a Seaport to a vast Country on the Continent, they consume but a trifle of the Goods they import from France; after receiving a very good Toll of them, they are sent to other inland Countries ... Great Britain must consume all her Imports, by which she would prevent the Consumption of those from such Countries, whose Goods she has in Exchange for her Manufactures ... Can any Goods of France pass through Great Britain or its Dominions, ... to other Countries, that cannot be carried much cheaper to those Countries, directly from France?" (249) Similarly, the 'British Merchant' declared, "What we drank we consumed, the Consumption of our own People paid the Price of them, ... to France, our own Nation gained nothing, no Encrease of her Treasure, no Employment for our People, no Value for the Product of Lands." (250) Earlier, the same journal had claimed that salt was the only beneficial

248. E.A.J. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-157.

249. A Letter to the Honourable A - r M - re, ... *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

250. The British Merchant, No. 103, July 30, 1714. The Dutch Better Friends than the French to the ... Trade of England (1713), pp. 16, 34 also defended the Dutch trade with France. They were obliged to import French wine because they had no native drink. The French, however, would not take off "on Piece of Drapery" in return for the French goods which England would import.

import that we could expect from France, (251) and in its first issue had pronounced that Britain had never had so flourishing a trade as she had had since the prohibitions of French goods, "and by means of those Prohibitions." (252)

Although Defoe maintained that the quantity of French wines that would be imported had been greatly exaggerated and that it would be much less than our exports to France, (253) he was as protectionist as his opponents. The chief difference between them was that he believed that the new infant industries had been well nursed during the years when the French trade was prohibited so that England had made "greater Encroachment upon the French Manufactures than the French upon the English." (254) Therefore, they could now withstand some French competition and if not, the treaty did not interfere with the British government's power to adjust the tariff on all foreign imports of these commodities provided it was done equally, to ensure adequate protection. At times he showed the common prejudice against imports of luxury goods, such as wine and brandy, and his attitude was dictated by the same economic considerations which influenced his opponents, rather than by his Puritan outlook. (255) During the debate about the alleged English taste for French wine rather than Portuguese, he suggested a great increase in the duties on all wines, "even to a kind of Prohibition, so to lessen the Consumption." They could all be raised to the £52 per ton levied on French wines, a proposal which he had first canvassed three

251. Ibid., No. 29, November 13, 1713.

252. Ibid., No. 1, August 7, 1713.

253. Mercator, No. 50, September 17, 1713.

254. Ibid., No. 133, March 31, 1714.

255. Supra, pp. 37-60 for the connections between trade and morality in his writings.

months earlier, when he had suggested that the duty on Portuguese wine should be made the same as the existing rate on French wine, "according to the Sense of an old Country Proverb, (viz.) That if the Cow cannot come up to the Beam; the Beam must come down to the Cow." (256) Most of the Spanish wines would not be affected by this proposal because they were not of the same quality as the French wines, but he justified this virtual embargo by the statement: "the Consumption of Wine, as of all Goods of Foreign Growth consumed in England, is so much dead Loss to the Publick Stock; Consumption of our own Growth is not so, because it employs our Land and our People ... it would be actually saving of so much Money a Year to the Publick Stock as is paid for Wine, which is at least 300,000 l. per Annum." (257) He valued the Portuguese market almost as much as his opponents and in March 1711, before there was any question of a commercial treaty with France, he had written, "I acknowledge the Advantage of having the Channel of our Wine Trade run to Portugal, and not to France; the Reason of it is unquestionable, ... That the Wines from France were always bought with our Money, the Wines from Portugal Purchas'd by the Export of our Manufactures." Yet even then, he was urging that trade with France should be re-opened and not merely the wine trade which the Tory ministry had just permitted. The English had now lost "the great Gust this Nation had for Claret" and the success of the new manufactures made him certain that England "would never return to the use of the same Goods from France, as before." (258) Three years later, the trade to Portugal was still "a Noble Trade" and "a very Gainful, Use-

£52 must be an obvious misprint for the £25 duty.

256. Mercator, No. 104, January 21, 1713 (1714).

257. Ibid, No. 142, April 20, 1714.

258. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 152), p. 604.

ful, Necessary Trade ... as all Trades which vent such a Quantity of our Woollen Manufactures must of Necessity be." He was only ready to contemplate some reduction in this trade because "the Advantage which we shall make by the Admission of our Manufactures into France, will be infinitely greater than any Decrease of our Exportation to Portugal, which can justly be said to be occasion'd thereby, can amount to." (259) In flat contradiction, his Whig critics argued that to make France equal to the most favoured nation in our foreign trade must result in reductions in our imports of wine from Portugal and of linen from Germany and that they would "make Reprizals upon us by a Prohibition of our Manufactures." (260) Defoe demanded, "Ought we to be most apprehensive that the Portuguese shall Prohibit our Woollen Manufactures, or the Portuguese that we should not take off the Produce of their Country? ... they cannot be without our Woollen Manufactures, nor be supplied from any other Country: We may sell our Manufactures, tho' Portugal were not: But if Britain were not: no Nation will, or can take off their Wine, Oyl, Fruit etc. ... It is evident, every Nation we Trade with stands in need of our Trade." (261) With his journalistic penchant for overstatement, but correctly assessing the place of the French wine trade in the Dutch economy, he declared, "I dare say there is not a Ton of Port Wine drank in a Year thro'out the whole seven Provinces." (262)

Despite their differences, they accepted many of the same

259. Mercator, No. 123, March 6, 1713 (1714).  
 260. British Merchant, No. 29, November 13; No. 18, October 6, No. 30, November 17, 1713.  
 261. Mercator, No. 39, August 22, 1713.  
 262. A Letter from a Member of the House of Commons.

economic ideas. The 'British Merchant' agreed that Spain needed to sell its wine, oil and fruit to Britain, although it did not accept that this was likewise the case with Portugal. (263) They both believed that the woollen industry was the basis of British prosperity, that the employment of the people was a crucial question and that Britain could only acquire the bullion needed in certain areas of world commerce by trade with other countries. Defoe attached great importance to home trade, though for different reasons, but he could not agree with the 'British Merchant's' inconsistent claim that it was more important than foreign trade. (264) They were still closely linked by their differences for it was Defoe's denial that Britain gained £1 million a year from her trade with Portugal that led the 'British Merchant' to put forward the theory of foreign-paid incomes, that the difference between the value of our imports from Portugal and the value of our exports thence was all clear gain to the British labourer, landowner and merchant. (265) Although it had earlier ridiculed Defoe's exaggerated claims for our gain by freight charges, the two ideas had much in common.

There was so much common ground, not only because Defoe remained Whig in his political opinions and was a Dissenter in religion, but also because he shared the economic views of the predominantly Whig London trading community in which he had grown up and to which in outlook he still belonged. Loyalty

263. British Merchant, No. 45, January 8, 1714.

264. Ibid, No. 84, May 25, 1714.

265. Mercator, No. 119, February 25, (1713) 1714; British Merchant, No. 68, March 30, 1714.

to Harley and his exposed personal position after 1710 were probably the strongest of the various complex reasons why he served the Tory government from 1710 to 1714, and wrote strenuously in support of its peacemaking policy and the commercial treaty with France, but he never changed his basic Whig ideas. Both Professor Johnson and Professor Viner have accepted Sir William Ashley's assumption that there was a group of late seventeenth-century Tory writers with "liberal" views on economic questions, but this has not survived closer investigation. (266) Professor Letwin has shown that these writers were less progressive than Ashley thought, that their call for the removal of trade restrictions usually only referred to their own sphere of commercial operations and that their condemnation of certain economic ideas of the time must not be given any wider application than the particular context in which they were expressed. Sir Dudley North seems to have been the only one of the group named by Ashley who was a whole-hearted Tory and although he was the most "advanced" of the four, the most free-trade of his statements probably came from the pen of his younger son, Roger. Sir Josiah Child was a Whig when he wrote his best-known pamphlet, 'A New Discourse of Trade' about 1670, and while he can be described as a Tory when this was published in 1693, his Toryism seems to have been restricted to the alliance after 1680 between the Crown and the East India Company which he then dominated and which was largely dictated by the otherwise-vulnerable position of this great monopoly company. Dr. Nicholas Barbon's land-bank scheme

266. Sir W.J. Ashley, 'The Tory Origin of Free Trade Policy', reprinted in Surveys, Historic and Economic (1900), pp. 268-303; E.A.J. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 144-145; J. Viner, Studies in the Theory of International Trade (New York, 1937) pp. 116-118.

attracted the support of the Tories, Paul Foley and Edward Harley, but he was principally a financier and prominent speculative builder without marked political allegiance. (267) Although Professor Schumpeter claimed that he anticipated some parts of free trade doctrine, Barbon favoured moderate duties rather than outright prohibition. (268) The last of this "group" Dr. Charles Davenant, wrote some Tory political pamphlets, but he also served the Godolphin ministry when it had become mainly Whig, and the researches of Professor Waddell and Dr. Coombs have demonstrated that the contemporary accusation of "mercenary time-server" was not unfair and that his economic writings were much influenced by his personal circumstances. (269) The Whig author of "Torism and Trade can never agree" attacked Davenant as the supposed writer of the 'Mercator' but this pamphlet repeated the old allegations that the Tories, as the landed interest and supporters of Church and King, would always be enemies to trade because trade and liberty flourished together and increased property which was incompatible with tyranny. It argued that the 'Mercator' was of a piece with Davenant's 'Sir Thomas Double' pamphlets and accused him of favouring the only trade by which Britain could be undone but did not single out for attack any specific Tory ideas on trade and industry. (270) Davenant, who died in the year after Utrecht, contributed nothing to the arguments about the French commercial treaty beyond supplying, in

267. W. Letwin, The Origins of Scientific Economics (1963), pp. 3-79, 182-207, 231-239, 251-272.
268. J.A. Schumpeter, History of Economic Analysis (1954), pp. 362-371.
269. D. Waddell, 'Charles Davenant - A Biographical Sketch', Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd. series Vol. XI, pp. 279-288; 1958.  
D. Coombs, 'Dr. Davenant and the Debate on Franco-Dutch Trade', Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd series (1957), pp. 94-103.
270. (Anon) Torism and Trade can never agree (1713)



his capacity as Inspector-General of the Exports and Imports, some statistics of England's trade with France which gave a much less unfavourable picture of the trade than the 'Scheme' or Fortrey's calculations. (271) There remains the anonymous author of 'Considerations on the East India Trade' of 1701, who has been congratulated by McCulloch, Macaulay, Schumpeter and Viner for revealing "almost no trace of the mercantilist or protectionist fallacies." (272) If this was Henry Martin, he had completely changed his views by 1713 for he was then one of the foremost contributors to the 'British Merchant'. (273) It does not seem that there was a distinctive group of Tory economists or a similar Tory section of the trading community with economic ideas which were different from those of their Whig counterparts. It is even doubtful if there was a specifically Tory economic viewpoint on the commercial treaty. This was essentially Bolingbroke's scheme and was supported by the Tory squires because his thoroughgoing Toryism was more acceptable to them than Harley's moderation and because it would cement the peace treaty. Professor Viner has suggested that they were actuated by the following three considerations, that more trade with France would produce increased customs revenue for the crown and cheaper claret and silks and would check the growing power of the trading classes. (274) An increase in the customs revenue might have made some reduction in the heavy burden of the land tax possible,

271. D.A.E. Harkness, loc. cit., p. 220.

272. J. Viner, op. cit., p. 104; J.A. Schumpeter, op. cit., pp. 373-374; J.R. McCulloch, ed. Early English Tracts on Commerce (Cambridge 1952 reprint) Preface, xiii-xv.

273. P.J. Thomas, Mercantilism and the East India Trade (1926) Appx. B; E.A.J. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 145-146, 348.

274. J. Viner, op. cit., p. 116.

but these ideas do not seem to have been expressed in any surviving pamphlet. Although a propaganda thrust, this extract from the 'British Merchant' supports the conclusion that the Tory support for the treaty was lukewarm from the beginning: "The 'Mercator' every where urges, that all the Clamour against the Bill of Commerce, is the Clamour of a Party only: But ... every Parliament, from the Restoration ... has been of this Party. Not a Tory of the last, except the Place-Men or Expectants, shew'd any zeal for this Bill; there is scarce a Man of the Church of England who has employ'd his Pen in the Defence of this pernicious Commerce. No one would do it but a Miscreant, who has constantly prostituted his Pen to the highest Bidder."

(275) As another Whig pamphleteer demanded, "was there a trading Town in England that petition'd for the Bill? Was there a trading Merchant of Common Sense or Common Honesty that spoke for it? (276)"

It seems as if Defoe waged the paper-war for the commercial treaty almost single-handed. Apart from the 'Mercator', he published seven pamphlets in its favour during 1713 and only his pamphlets were singled out by the Whig opposition for reply. Although some Whigs at first attacked Davenant as the presumed author, it was soon realized that the 'Mercator' was Defoe's work and a virulent campaign was launched against him. As the fourth number of the 'British Merchant' stated, "Mr. Daniel Foe may change his Name from REVIEW to MERCATOR, from MERCATOR to

275. British Merchant, No. 17, October 2, 1713.

276. Anon. Remarks on a Scandalous Libel, Entitl'd A Letter from a Member of Parliament relating to the Bill of Commerce (1713) p. 4. It is significant that the clothing centres did not share Defoe's hopes of a rapid rise in cloth exports to France in that they sent a stream of petitions to Parliament against the proposed treaty.

any other Title, yet still his singular Genius shall be distinguished by his inimitable way of writing." (277) The most scurrilous attack came in the Whig reply to Defoe's "Letter from a Member of the House of Commons." This accused him of having had principles but no morals and of having sold his principles to write "in the Service of Popery and France." It published the grossly unfair report that he had been punished for writing in the interest of the Pretender when his three ironical pamphlets had been aimed at rousing the country to the dangers of a Jacobite restoration and his quite unjustified arrest had been contrived by the Whigs. Completely misrepresenting his successful tile-making venture in Tilbury, it asked if such an important question as trade with France was "a Matter to be banded about by a Clerk to a Brick Kiln, under the Protection of a Foot man?" The reason for this diatribe is evident in the writer's chagrin that the 'Mercator' circulated so widely but he claimed that this was artificially promoted by the Tory ministry: "Whatever has had an Appearance of Argument has been answer'd over and over again, yet his Papers are brought up and sent away by the Carriers in Bundles, Carriage Paid, to Poyson or Blind the Poor Country, and make 'em believe a Bottle of French Wine is better than a Bale of English Wool." (278) The circulation of the 'Mercator' again came under fire from another opponent who alleged that it was "twice a week industriously sent into the Country to amuse the Vulgar." (279) The charges of a prostituted pen, his "most ignominious punishment of the pillory and his recent prosecution

277. British Merchant, No. 4, August 18, 1713.  
 278. Remarks on a Scandalous Libel, ... pp. 3-5. Supra, p. 630  
 279. A Vindication of the late House of Commons ... p. 6.

for "three infamous and treasonable libels" against the Protestant succession were repeated by a pretended supporter of the Tory ministry who again named Defoe as the author of the 'Mercator' (280)

Unfortunately, he could not produce any new thought on economic issues to confute his Whig opponents, only arguments from the premises which they shared, to justify the measure which they condemned. As a journalist writing his journal three times a week, and concerned with other issues such as Scotland in other pamphlets, he was quite unable to develop a systematic theory of trade to support his advocacy for the treaty. On the contrary, he was occasionally guilty of inconsistencies. Because of the English prohibitions of trade with France, the Dutch had sent large quantities of English cloth there and had thereby been made "Masters of our Manufacture" but we ought to find direct trade with France much more profitable. (281) Later he claimed that this Dutch trade had the advantage of being an exportation of English goods without any corresponding importation. (282)

Similarly, he considered the export of English cloth so important because it gave employment to so many poor that he was prepared to admit an even greater value of wine into the country. Later, however, he returned to the traditional view that Britain would be better without any wine imports because they were not consumption of native products. (283) Johnson agrees with Viner that the level of argument on both sides was low, but this

280. (Anon) A Letter to a West Country Clothier Freeholder, Concerning the Parliament's rejecting the French Treaty of Commerce (1713) pp. 5-6.
281. Mercator, No. 23, July 16, 1713; No. 33, August 8, 1713.
282. Ibid., No. 64, October 20, 1713.
283. Ibid., No. 48, September 12, 1713; No. 142, April 20, 1714.

is not quite fair. (284) Schumpeter finds the arguments of the 'British Merchant' "by no means discreditable and, intended as they were for popular consumption ... may well be offered in refutation of the common belief that eighteenth-century 'mercantilism' was just a heap of nonsense." He describes Defoe as "a most brilliant and prolific writer" and although he ranks his contributions to the 'Mercator' as "economic journalism" he claims that they "rank high in the history of free - or freer - trade opinion." (285) In the course of the controversy, Defoe was forced to consider British trade with France, Portugal, Spain and Holland as a whole and thus to move beyond the theory of the particular balance and the customary fear of imports. "We alone are the People", he protested, "who are fighting with our own Trade, labouring to Chain it down to this or that Port, when it would, by the Nature of it, spread over the whole World." (286) Although he favoured protection for new industries, there is the suggestion that if the high duties were not adequate, the industry must be inefficient. (287)

That he arrived at a different conclusion from his antagonists, although they shared the same underlying propositions, was the result of the various arguments which have been discussed in this chapter and which were characteristic of his individual outlook on any topic, whether it was the practice of occasional conformity, union with Scotland, rights of freeholders or questions of economics. The most important of these were that the Dutch

284. E.A.J. Johnson, op. cit., p. 157; J. Viner, op. cit., pp. 116-118.

285. J.A. Schumpeter, op. cit., p. 372.

286. Mercator, No. 89, December 17, 1713.

287. Ibid. No. 8, June 11, 1713.

traded with France to advantage and that we had long been able safely to follow their example because our infant industries were now well-established and adequately protected from French exports of these manufactures and that the duties which would remain on French wine and brandy would be high enough to keep these imports to a reasonable level. Further, that other countries which might suffer some reductions in their exports to Britain would still be obliged to trade with us because of their need of our manufactures and the importance of the British market for their produce. All these considerations to some extent rested on his belief in the superior economic efficiency of the English cloth industry so that other countries were obliged to take off large quantities, including even France at second-hand, even though the treaty of commerce was not yet effectual.

Holland and Flanders were by no means the only routes for these exports, but also the free port of Marseilles, the Channel Islands and the Straits, where he variously estimated that from one-third to one-half of the cloth sent there ultimately reached France.

(288) If trade with Portugal was so profitable as the Whigs claimed, a market which was so much larger than Portugal, even with Brazil at that date, was obviously potentially much more valuable. He was so confident that English cloth was cheaper than cloth of the like quality produced elsewhere that he proclaimed, "let but an open Door be left to the English Merchants to bring in their Goods, upon reasonable and moderate Duties, and if they do not knock all the foreign Fabricators on the Head

288. Ibid, No. 156, May 22, 1714; No. 100, January 12, 1713  
(1714) No. 149, May 6, 1714.

at once, then they have nothing more to ask." (289) It is true, as so often with Defoe's writings, that in 1714 he stated that if the Bill of Commerce had been ratified, it "would intirely have ruin'd our Trade", and that the Tory government had given away our Newfoundland and Spanish trade. (290) The Whigs, however, were then again in power and there was no further prospect of a commercial treaty with France. This anonymous pamphlet was one of a series in which he tried to defend his former patron from the threat of impeachment and only a pamphlet written from the Whig standpoint could help Harley. He desperately needed to rehabilitate himself with the Whigs and it is unlikely that this phrase means that he had always held this opinion or that he had changed his mind within the space of a few months. Defoe did change his views from time to time but there is always an underlying consistency in his ideas.

As all the views on the French trade which he expressed in 1713-14 ran counter to the prejudices of more than half a century, it is not surprising that he failed to convince the great weight of opinion arrayed against him. Professor R. Davis has pointed out that the prohibitive duties imposed on French goods in 1693-96 like the preceding temporary prohibitions of 1678 and 1689, were political rather than economic measures and stemmed from "the fear of France as the rising aggressive power of Europe." At that date they "protected no important industrial interest" for the chief French imports, wine, brandy and fine linens, were not produced in England but the new branches of industry which

289. Ibid., No. 122, March 4, 1713 (1714).

290. Impeachment, or no Impeachment, (1714) pp. 7-8.

grew up under the shelter of this prohibition became vested interests and led to the development of protectionist ideas, which may have been the decisive influence in the rejection of the commercial treaty. "Even so, economic motives only tipped a balance, in 1713, in which the main weight of argument on both sides still derived from political attitudes to French power."

(291) Hostility to France was obviously at the root of all the propaganda against the French trade in the 'British Merchant'. This journal was not so completely committed to the theory of the particular balance of trade as has been sometimes suggested, although it constantly tried the French trade by this touchstone. It admitted that an adverse balance of trade, and consequent loss of bullion, could be accepted with particular areas because of the greater profits which would be earned elsewhere, as by the shipping which depended on the imports of naval stores from the Baltic and by the re-export of the goods from India. France, however, was the only trading area to which we lost bullion without any such indirect benefits. (292) Indeed, the trade had always been so detrimental, and would be worse in the future, that it would be better to pay the annual adverse balance of almost £1½ million in actual tribute than to accept any import of French goods. (293) "We can only get by the French Trade, when we keep out as much as possible the Goods and Merchandizes of that Nation." (294) It was also claimed that our "finest Spanish cloth" smuggled across the Channel could only be sold

291. R. Davis, 'The Rise of Protection in England, 1689-1786', Econ. Hist. Review, 2nd series, XIX (1966), pp. 309-310.

292. British Merchant, No. 30, November 17, 1713.

293. Ibid, No. 14, September 22, 1713.

294. Ibid, No. 91, June 18, 1714. Cf. the concluding maxim of The Trade with France, Italy, Spain and Portugal Considered "Better no Trade than a Destructive One".



in France by a reduction of 25 per cent. in its price. Because the French were giving "no more ease" to English cloth by the 1713 treaty than they had granted by the 1699 tariff, without any reciprocal concession by England, France did not merit any of the proposed reductions in the English import duties. (295) Predictably, the concluding maxim of another hostile pamphlet was "Better no Trade than a Destructive one". (296) It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that political antagonism to the Catholic, absolutist and expansionist French monarchy inspired much of this economic argument. Thus Defoe was probably correct in his deduction that the Whig opposition was mainly engaged in a party design to prevent closer relations between France and Britain as well as to embarrass the Tory administration. "If you will ruine the Ministry, you must destroy the Peace; if you will destroy the Peace you must overthrow the Treaty of Commerce; for, as the Inspector-General observes very well in his Report; no Peace can be lasting where a Friendly Commerce between the Nations is not Established." (297) Defoe was as strongly opposed as the Whigs to any extension of French power either in Europe or overseas but, in 1713, he realized that this had been greatly reduced by the two recent wars and that Britain, despite the strain of these wars, was relatively much stronger. Both countries needed peace and a trade treaty would help to establish this on a more secure foundation, but it was defeated by the strength of the political antagonism to France, sharpened by religious differences, trade rivalries and twenty years of strenuous warfare following the years under Charles II and James II

295. The Consequences of a Law for Reducing the Dutys upon French Wines, Brandy, Silks and Linen ... p. 5.

296. The Trade with France, Italy, Spain and Portugal Considered

297. Mercator, No. 109, February 2, 1713 (1714).

when England had often seemed subservient to France. It was impossible for Defoe to overcome this national sentiment, however ably he presented his arguments for a new direction in economic policy and the commercial treaty was postponed until near the end of the century.

THE EAST INDIA TRADE

From his first published comments on the East India trade to the end of his career, Defoe's attitude was ambivalent both with regard to the trade and to the great joint-stock company which had the monopoly of this traffic. At first he viewed the trade with general approval as one which "all Men must allow to be useful", (1) but with the reservations which all his contemporaries made, unless they were directors or servants of the company. Thus he asked that the company should be limited "to such Conditions both to Stock and Trade, as may be consistent with the preserving the Trade to India to the English Nation, and yet preventing the said Trade, from interfering with ... our own Manufactures; that it may be carried on without Factions among the Rich, or Clamours from the Poor; oblige them to import proper Quantities of such Commodities as serve to help forward our own Trade, and such as the Nation wants, as Saltpetre, Row Silk, Spices, Drugs, Canes and Callicoes, and limit them from importing too great quantities of such Goods as lessen the Consumption of our own Manufacture." (2) It is interesting to note that calicoes were listed among the desirable imports, but presumably he thought that the recent legislation of 1700, restraining their use in England, had been effective and that all these India textiles would be re-exported. His chief objections at this date were that the rivalry of the two East India companies, which

1. Review, Vol. I, (No. 94), p. 389.
2. 'The Villainy of Stock Jobbers detected, ...' (1701) in A True Collection, I, p. 270. Most opponents of the trade accepted that it had been profitable to England until the company brought in "that Indian torrent" of textiles, e.g. Prince Butler's Tale (1699).

were in operation between 1698 and 1708, greatly encouraged stock-jobbing, always one of his <sup>^</sup>bête-noires, and also stimulated the trade beyond what was safe and reasonable. Two companies would necessarily mean more trade which would reduce the sale price of the Indian goods which they imported and thus make them an even greater threat to English textiles:

"... their Emulation in Sales must certainly destroy their own Designs, and ruin them both. For cheapness of any Goods Imported which are with our Manufacture, must be prejudicial to that Manufacture; and when two of a Trade strive to ruin one another by under selling, it generally ruins the Trade, and both Parties too. For it does not follow that because Eight or Ten Ships in a Year from India, may be a necessary and profitable Trade; that therefore Thirty Ships must be so too; ... Twenty or Thirty would ruin the Trade it self, and be a general Prejudice to the Nation.

.....  
 The Companies cannot expect, especially now their Silk-Trade is limited, ... that this Trade can vent the Import of about Sixty Sail of Ships now abroad; if they come to under-selling one another, they are gone, and their Stock is not worth 20 per Cent. from the first Day they begin it. In the mean Time, if they do find a vent for so great a quantity of Goods as all those Ships must Import, the English Manufacture must suffer." (3)

Although this was the most serious danger from the struggle between the rival East India companies, the inevitable increase in stock-jobbing was almost as repugnant, not only in itself, but because of its repercussions in the much more important affairs of state and even in parliamentary elections. Not only did the quarrel lead to fluctuations in the price of stocks, affecting the value of property in the form of investments and influencing public credit, (4) but it divided the political nation so deeply that weightier issues were thrust into the background. "For the Power of these two Rivals is so great",

3. Ibid, pp. 266-267.

4. Ibid, p. 266.

he wrote, "and Interest in the Kingdom so popular and high, that matters of higher Moment than Trade seem to depend on them, while all the Proceedings of their Members, both in the City, and in the late Parliament, in both which their Parties have been numerous, are, and have been guided, according to their Interest in their respective Companies." He was writing during the campaign which preceded the stormy election of February 1701, when the threat which the Spanish succession question posed to the Protestant religion in Europe, to the European balance of power, and to British trade with Spain was uppermost in his mind. He complained that when men should be thinking carefully about their choice of representatives for the new Parliament, "here we are plagu'd with the Impertinence of two East-India Companies, as if the Interest of either Company were to be nam'd in the Day with the Protestant Religion and the public Peace, or as if they, who are fit to be Representatives of the People in the great matters of Peace and War, Leagues and Alliances of Neighbours, Succession of Crowns, and Protection of the Protestant Religion, should not be capable of deciding the petty Controversy in Trade between two Rival Companies, The Grand Question ask'd now, when your Vote is requir'd for a Parliament Man, is not as it ought to be, Is he a Man of Sense, of Religion, of Honesty, and Estate. But, What Company is he for, the New or the Old?" (5)

He criticized the way in which the whole matter had been handled by Parliament, in particular the launching of the new

5. 'The Free-holders Plea against Stock-Jobbing Elections of Parliament-Men' (1701) in A True Collection I, pp. 169-170.

company before the old one had been wound up, later issuing a new charter to the old company and finally, only two years after authorizing the new company, prohibiting two-thirds of the trade with India by the Act of 1700 against the wearing of Indian textiles "and so starve the Child they had begotten." (6) He accepted the arguments in favour of one exclusive joint-stock company in the trade, and for the same reasons which governed his thinking on the African trade, but he did not make any specific comments apart from this general statement in 1720, "I grant what was formerly voted by the House of Commons in 1694, That it is most for our Interest that the Trade to the East Indies be carry'd on by an exclusive Company." (7) Certainly, he did not attack the interlopers in this commerce as he castigated the separate traders on the Guinea coast, but the African trade was a vital British interest whereas, from the beginning, he had misgivings about the trade with India. A monopoly was necessary for the general regulation of the trade and for the dealings with the native princes and the Mogul emperor, but it should be a monopoly which all the British traders to the East should be free to join. "Had the new Company been so Establish'd that at the expiration of the old, it shou'd have had a Commanding Superiority, by which no other Man could have Traded, but under them, by Permission, at the same time leaving all Men at liberty to come in and Trade with them, there had been no Rivals in the Trade, which will, no question, as they now stand, soon reduce the Trade to very low Terms." (8)

6. Ibid, p. 169.

7. The Trade to India, critically and calmly consider'd ... (1720), p. 7.

8. 'The Free-holders Plea ...' in A True Collection I, p. 168.

The export of bullion was never Defoe's strongest objection to the East India trade although, for purposes of propaganda, he used it later. There is only one brief conventional adverse reference to the drain of specie in his first published pamphlets and in the first year of the 'Review', he declared, "Those Gentlemen who Clamour so much at our exporting Bullion, seem to be very much in the dark in this Affair; for tho' I grant that those Trades are most Beneficial to England, which return their Imports in Exchange for our Manufactures; yet it may be possible that such a Trade may be under a Necessity of Exchanging Bullion for their Manufactures; and England ought to be in a Posture, always to be able to spare a Million or two per Annum, for such Necessary Trades, without diminishing the Current Coins, and England always was in such a Posture till now; and the only Reason why she is not so now, is because of the stop put to the Spanish Trade, by the French." (9) This was the real cause of the shortage of coin, not the several channels by which the silver ran out, "but the stopping those at which it ran in." He claimed that the East India Company sent more silver abroad in William III's reign than they did in 1705 and that England sent as much to Holland, Savoy and Germany, but yet had "a Flux of Silver." (10) The war could not be carried on without a drain of money to the Continent, but while William III "opened large Doors for its going out, he kept open yet larger Doors for its coming in." Defoe readily admitted that it would be preferable "if we could drive our East-India Trade, in Exchange for our own Goods" but this was not possible and he maintained that there

9. Review, Vol. I, (No. 93) p. 386.  
10. Ibid. (No. 94), p. 390.

were other trades, "less necessary", which exported as much, if not more bullion than the East-India trade. (11) The trade to Scandinavia was more disadvantageous than that to Asia, because the imports came in foreign ships and these vital naval stores could be supplied from the New England colonies. But since this trade did not bring "Silks nor Toys to annoy our Weavers, we have no Clamours against them at the Door of the House of Commons, no Petitions, no Bills to prevent either their bringing their Goods in, or their carrying our Money out." (12) In the autumn of 1705, he attacked John Dyer, "a scandalous news-writer" with whom he often differed, for his report that the new East India Company had melted down 184,000 crown pieces to carry £46,000 in silver bullion on board the "Neptune" for India. He accused him of "setting the Mob upon the East-India Company" and of raising "a new War between the Companies and the English Manufacturers" in that it would readily be believed that every ship which went to India carried a similar amount so that the East India trade would be deemed guilty of exporting over £500,000 of English money each year. He fully accepted that this was a most damaging charge during a war which interrupted the influx of silver from America, and opened up the possibility that the Company might carry away all the silver in the nation. This would have been "a fatal treachery" to England and would have deserved a dissolution of all the Company's privileges, but he repudiated the story because it was incomprehensible that "Men of Estates" like the directors would be guilty of "so absurd a Trespass." When public affairs allowed him to return to the

11. Ibid, (No. 95), p. 393.

12. Ibid, (No. 96), p. 397.



subject of trade, he would undertake "to clear our East India Companies of the Odium fix'd upon them by the Ignorant People, of carrying out our Money, and fairly to prove, that as they are now limited, their Trade is of great Advantage to the Nation, no Prejudice to our Woollen Manufacture, and Causes more Bullion to be brought into England, than it carries out." (13) Two years later, he was still of the opinion that the outcry against the trade for denuding England of money was "without good Reason" (14) and in 1713 he rejected the story of the vast quantities of silver from Europe which had been buried in vaults by the Great Mogul. (15)

At first, after the restrictions on the importation of Indian textiles in 1700, he seems to have accepted the arguments put forward by J.C., Robert Ferguson and other defenders of the trade rather than those mounted by such opponents as Prince Butler, John Pollexfen and John Cary which had helped to produce this legislation. Thus he never gave any currency to the charge that the English company had expanded the trade in Asiatic textiles by sending out workmen and patterns to enable the Indians to perfect their wares for the European market, (16) possibly because he found it difficult to condemn such an example of English enterprise in trade. At this date, he does not appear to have been unduly alarmed by the importation of these Indian fabrics. In March 1705 he replied to a "correspondent" who had bemoaned the alleged drop in cloth exports because of the

13. Ibid, Vol. II (No. 74) pp. 297-300, (No. 84) p. 335, (No. 106) p. 422.
14. Review, Vol. IV (No. 12) pp. 47-48.
15. A General History of Trade, July 1713, p. 21.
16. (Anon) An English Winding-Sheet for the East India Manufactures (1696) p. 3; (Anon) A True Relation of the Rise and Progress of the East India Company (1699) p. 1; (Anon) England's Advocate, Europe's Monitor (1699) p. 15.

war and had accused Defoe of ignoring the further threat from the East-India trade to the trade to Turkey and the woollen manufacture. Defoe considered that these challenges had had little effect on the manufacture of broadcloth and that "our Destructive Prohibition of East-India Silks" had "neither caus'd any more Silk to be wrought at Home, nor any, or but very few Woollen Goods the more to be made." (17) In his propaganda for the Act of Union, he advised the Scots to abandon the Caledonia Company because they had no goods to send to India and they could not yet bear the export of their bullion, whereas the English were able to "uphold their Trade by the Strength of their Home Consumption, which is a vast Gulph of Trade; and the Export again is but upon Circumstances and Trifles compar'd to the Gross." (18) He further acknowledg'd that he had always owned that it was "a necessary Trade to this Nation" and that he could not join in all the complaints against it. (19)

Yet this was no reason why Britain should not try to make these popular fabrics at home. While he was always opposed to the employment of the workhouse poor in any part of the woollen manufacture, he was quite willing to see them used to establish a new manufacture such as cotton with the "Cotton-Wool from our own Colonies return'd for our own Manufactures" (20) and "equally our own Growth, as the Wool of Salisbury Plain, or the South Downs." (21) Writing very soon after the Act of Union with

17. Review, Vol. II (No. 8) p. 29.

18. A Fifth Essay, at removing National Prejudices ... (1707) p. 33.

19. Review, Vol. IV (No. 18) p. 71.

20. Ibid, (No. 11), p. 44.

21. Ibid, (No. 12), p. 47.

Scotland had received the royal assent, he saw the need to develop some new manufacture in the sister kingdom to offset the damage which the Union would do to the Scottish woollen industry, and cotton seemed eminently suitable. The government ought "to be concern'd to set the People in Scotland to work, rather than the People of Persia, China and Coromandel", particularly as there was "no Manufacture in Europe, in the Improvement of which, greater Advantage would accrue to the publick Stock, and less Injury be done to our Trade." Moreover, he claimed that this manufacture had already begun and that he had seen "very good Muslin, both strip'd and plain made there." (22) Even in 1713 Defoe could still write that the East-India trade imported several of the most valuable commodities in commerce, many of which could not be obtained in any other part of the world or were available in much larger quantities in Asia and so were much cheaper. Previously some of them had been excessively dear because they could only be imported with difficulty, despite the great demand, but since the discovery of the ocean route to India they had become "so absolutely Natural to us, that they claim to be mentioned among the very necessaries of Life." The trade in spices, coffee and tea was so prodigious that it was said "to equal, if not to exceed, the Sugars and Tobacco's, the Gold and Silver of America." (23)

It is significant, however, that there is here no mention of Indian textiles and, by 1708, his attitude towards their importation into Britain had begun to harden, probably dictated

22. Ibid, (No. 14), p. 51.

23. A General History of Trade, July 1713, pp. 21-24.

by the impending amalgamation of the two rival companies and the resulting fear that a more powerful East India Company would try to secure the removal of the prohibition on these fabrics. He alleged that "a knot of objectors" had been for two or three years "biting this Thong" which had "strangled their private Gain ... tho' they enjoy'd it at the Price of Starving the Nation." He argued that the import of these Eastern commodities had made only "little Invasions upon our Trade" before the Revolution of 1688, so that the distemper grew upon us "like a slow Feavour" until "it began to affect the Vitals of our Trade" and would have proved mortal but for the prohibition of 1700. The increase in the quantities of particular goods, "such as Damasks, Chints, Pelongs, stained Callicoes, Handkerchiefs, and other Silks" during the last decade of the century was of the order of "126 to 2540; others, as 23 to 315; others as 15 to 709; and again, as 1 to 200; the number of Ships going to the Indies, advanc'd from two or three, and sometimes but one in a Year, sometimes 3 in two Year, to 57 ships sent out in eleven Months, or a little more, (24) and to Fleets of six, nine and eleven Ships coming home together, the 'Tavistock' in her first Voyage, brought home nine thousand, seven hundred and some odd pieces of rich Damasks, and above 200,000 pieces of Silks and Callicoes of several kinds, that directly Rivall'd our own Manufactures." (25) There were two principal reasons for this tremendous expansion of the trade the first being the additional capital made available by "the Old Company calling 640,000 l. into their Trade" and by the

24. Corrected to "two years, eleven months" in the next number, No. 152.  
 25. Review, Vol. IV (No. 151) p. 602.

establishment of a new company. The second was the general infatuation of the English people for Indian wares, as he described it in this well-known passage:

"... the general Fanie of the People running upon East-India Goods to that Degree, that the Chints and painted Callicoes, which before were only made Use of for Carpets, Quilts, etc. and to cloth Children or ordinary People, became now the Dress of our Ladies, and such is the Power of a Mode; we saw our Persons of Quality dress'd in Indian Carpets, which but a few Years before their Chamber Maids would have thought too ordinary for them; the Chints were advanc'd from lying on their Floors to their Backs, from the Foot-Cloth to the Petticoat, and even the QUEEN Her self at that Time was pleased to appear in China and Japan, I mean China Silks and Callico. Nor was this all, but it crept into our Houses, our Closets, and Bed-Chambers, Curtains, Cushions, Chairs, and at last Beds them selves, were nothing but Callicoes or Indian Stuffs, and in short almost every Thing that used to be made of Wool or Silk, relating either to the Dress of the Women, or the Furniture of our Houses, was supply'd by the Indian Trade." (26)

The two rival companies, "tho' they were at open War with one another," acted together in so far as they tried to derive the maximum profit from this vogue for Indian goods and "borrow'd Money on Bonds, doubled their Stocks, and ... began to send whole Fleets every Year to the East-Indies." He claimed that between December 1697 and January 1699, in just over one year, they exported in bullion alone, quite apart from any sent by private traders, 7,157,372 ounces of plate and that the return cargoes of the 57 ships already mentioned were worth over £7 million at retail prices. (27) According to Dr. K.N. Chaudhuri, no gold was sent to India by the companies in 1698 and the average price of silver in London was 5s.2d. per ounce in that year. This gives a value for Defoe's figure of silver bullion exported of £1,849,404, whereas Dr. Chaudhuri's table of exports

26. Ibid, (No. 152), p. 606.

27. Ibid,

shows that £320,473 of silver were exported in 1697-8 and £412,180 in 1698-9. If the even higher figures for 1699-1700 and 1700-1 are added, they give a total for the four years of £1,871,960, only just above Defoe's figure for one year. (28) Like most of his contemporaries, Defoe greatly exaggerated both the drain of bullion to Asia and the value of the imports of Indian textiles. Dr. Chaudhuri's figures are the value of the annual exports of gold and silver to India, and take no account of the value of the Company's re-exports on which the defenders of the Company placed such stress.

According to Defoe, the effect of these imports of Indian goods on certain English textile centres was calamitous. In the silk manufacture of Canterbury the number of looms was reduced from 1000 to less than 50, "and if the unexpected improvement of Planting Hops, had not help'd the Poor to subsist, that City had been in a fair way of being reckon'd among one of the forsaken declining Towns in England, like Sandwich or Winchelsea." Although Norwich "supported itself under the Loss better than other Places, by its having a great Foreign and Country Trade ... the visible Decay was not to be conceal'd. The Masters gone to London, the Workmen into the Army, and Navy, and in several of the great Towns of Norfolk, where they drove formerly a great part of the Trade, the Manufactures seem'd quite lost and forgotten." The proportion of workmen thrown out of employment in Spitalfields was somewhat smaller than in Canterbury but the

28. K.N. Chaudhuri, 'Treasure and Trade Balances: the East India Company's Export Trade', Econ. Hist. Rev. 2nd Series, Vol. XXI (1968), pp. 497-502.

resulting distress was even greater because of the larger size of the London silk industry. The 20,000 displaced workmen "scatter'd them selves into all manner of Employments, such as Coal-Heaving, Portering, Fruit and Fish-crying; some to the Army; others to the Fleet, abundance on meer Begging and Starving," and their looms were sold for bread. In the streets, the houses were "falling down, and without Tenants... (they) would yield no Rent, and in many Places the Rent would not repair them, and in other Places whole Rows might have been purchased for the securing the Ground-Rents." (29) Five days later, he tried to form some estimate of the number of unemployed throughout the country, conceding that if it were not "very considerable ... it was not worth while to streighten the East-India Trade to relieve them, since the East-India Trade being considerable in it self, is neither without its Arguments, or its Uses, and ought not to be suppress'd for every Trifle." He based his calculations on Norwich, where he thought that 10,000 looms were employed in the stuff trade. Each loom would employ 6 spinners, 1 winder, 1 doubler and 1 weaver, making a total of 9, with 1 comber to every 3 looms. To these 93,300 people, he added 2000 dyers and others engaged in the finishing processes and 1000 master-weavers or clothiers. Characteristically, he brought in a further 10,000 "employ'd, in the Skirts of this Trade," such as carriers who transported the wool and the yarn and the finished cloth, "with 12 Waggons constantly travelling to and from London, and other Parts", master combers and other employers, wool merchants, loom makers and tool-makers, and 20,000 horses. He

reckoned that three times the above numbers were employed throughout the country in the stuff and broad-silk trades affected by the East-India goods, making a total of 30,000 looms, 60,000 horses and 320,000 people "besides the vast Et Caetera's of Trade, Shipping, Export and Import, which had a Dependence upon ... those People and Manufactures." As he thought that two-fifths of the workers were unemployed in Norfolk, the least-affected of his three main centres, he estimated that more than 160,000 had lost their employment by these imports. (30)

When this "East-India Frenzy" was curbed by "the late happy Prohibition" of 1700, the native manufactures of silk and wool quickly recovered and "to a higher Magnitude than they were at before." Although, by 1708, the number of looms at work in Canterbury was only about 500, he argued that this was for "Want of People, not Want of Trade" since the masters were offering a guinea a head advance-money to attract journeymen back to the trade. Norfolk was "full of Business" in spite of the various hindrances caused by the war, but the biggest change was in Spitalfields. He called on the landlords to support his claim that everybody was building more houses, which were "scarcer to be had, and let for better Rents, in Proportion, than in Cheapside." The manufacture had spread into neighbouring Southwark, where there was "a new Plantation, as it were, of the Stuff-Trade and such was the demand for yarn that, since the Union, he had been sent into Scotland, "to see, if any Spinning Work could be found among our Neighbours in the North." (31) At

30. Ibid, (No. 156), pp. 621-623.

31. Ibid, (No. 157), pp. 625-627.



least 10,000 people were employed in the single manufacture of silk handkerchiefs, and if 10,000 English people were maintained "by making what one hundred thousand Mahometans made before, even this very Article was worth the Prohibition." (32) The fact that some members of the East India Company could consider trying to get the prohibition of Indian textiles repealed was only a proof that when men followed their private advantage, they had no time to reflect on the damage which this might cause to their country's trade. (33) The very notion, he declared, was "a dishonourable and unworthy Reflection upon the Government ... 'tis raving and phrensie to suppose it, because it would be madness, ... 'tis putting an End to the War the shortest Way. In short, 'tis French Slavery, and Wooden Shoes all over ... so long as we are Blest with our present Constitution, and a British Parliament; so long I verily believe, this Act will stand firm and unshaken; that is, I hope and trust, so long as the Sun and Moon endureth." (34) The protagonists for the Company had advanced four arguments in favour of the repeal of the Act of 1700, namely that there had been a decrease in English exports of woollen cloth since the Act was passed, that our imports of silk goods from Europe had increased, that the imposition of a high duty would be preferable to a prohibition of the imports from India and that this would help to defray the heavy cost of the war. Defoe rejected each of these propositions, affirming that there never was a time when so many of the fine manufactures made of wool, or silk and wool, "which directly oppose the Indian Goods,

32. Ibid., (No. 158), p. 630.

33. Ibid., (No. 159), p. 633.

34. Reflections upon the Prohibition Act ... (1708), p. 16.

were Exported to Holland, Hamburgh and Portugal, as of late Years" and that the drop in "our Coarser Woollens" was directly caused by the interruption of trade with the Spanish colonies because of the war. Secondly, that there had never been so few European silk goods imported since 1660 as had been the case during the past six years and that many of these had been smuggled. To the third contention, he retorted that it was "not the Rate or Price, but the Quantity of these Goods" which caused "the Ruin of the Manufacturer" here and that an imposition was levied so that the goods might be brought in whereas nothing could keep them out but a prohibition. Experience had shown that a high duty was "a Bait to some Men" that never fails to tempt them to defraud the government. Because the price of labour in India was only one-sixth of that in England, the duty would have to be 500 per cent. to give adequate protection, but even this would not suffice for such was "the Fondnesses of all Sorts of People for these Goods, that vast Quantities would go off, let the Price be what it will." Lastly, if it were true that a yearly fund of £10,000 could only be found by repealing this Act, it was "the best News the French King ever heard since his Head was crown'd." (35) In the 'Review', he was at pains to point out that when he pronounced that we had "done our Trade more harm by Prohibitions and Negations, than any Nation in the World" that this did not refer to the East-India trade, "lest any should be so rash, as to think I mean, that all Prohibitions, and that among the rest, are injurious to our Trade." (36)

35. Ibid, pp. 16-21.

36. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 150), p. 600.

It is probable that Defoe would have been alarmed if only the silk manufacture in Spitalfields and Canterbury had been exposed to the competition of "the tempting Excesses of India, China and Persia," (37) but he was soon convinced that "our own manufacture" was vitally affected. It was "a great Mistake to suggest, that Spitalfields alone Complains ... the Manufacturers there feel the Burthen sooner; but all the Country, and almost all the Branches of the Woollen and Silk Manufacture feel it." The town workman merely felt "the stop of Trade" sooner than the country workman because the Spitalfields masters bought "in the yarn" and "as soon as the Trade stops, they stop," whereas the country clothier went on as long as he could "get Credit for a Bag of Wooll to work, or a Penny of Money to pay his Workmen." (38) He claimed that "the Broad Cloth and Stuff Trade" were particularly affected and quoted with approval the statement in the Report of the Lords Commissioners of Trade that every piece of printed and stained calicoes and linens prevented "the Consumption of the same Quantity of our Woollen and Silk Manufactures." (39) He insisted that the calicoes and the woollen manufactures were "like two Ballances, when one Scale went down, the other went up, and when one went up, the other came down." (40) The author of "The Weavers Pretences Examin'd ..." argued that the printed calicoes did not interfere with the sale of woollen or worsted stuffs because they were so much dearer, and that they did not compete with silk manufactures since they were

37. Reflections on the Prohibition Act, op. cit., p. 13.

38. A Brief State of the Question, between the Printed and Painted Callicoes and the Woollen and Silk Manufactures ... (1719) pp. 40-42.

39. The Trade to India, op. cit., p. 8.

40. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers Truly Represented (1719) p. 15.

so much cheaper that those who bought calicoes would never have been able to afford the price of silk. (41) Defoe replied that calicoes had become the general wear of both rich and poor alike:

"... all the mean People, the Servant-Maids, and indifferently poor People, who would otherwise cloath them selves, and were usually cloathed in thin Womens Stuff made at Norwich and London, or in Cantaloons and Crapes, etc. are now cloath'd in Callicoe or Printed Linnen; mov'd to it as well for the Cheapness, as the Lightness of the Cloth, and the Gaiety of the Colours: The Children universally, whose Frocks and Coats were all either made of Tammys work'd at Coventry, or of strip'd thin Stuffs made in Spittlefields, appear now in Printed Callicoe or Printed Linnen; let any one but cast their Eyes among the Children of the meaner Sort playing in the Streets, or of the better Sort at Boarding Schools, ... As to the richer Sort of People, Ladies and even Persons of Quality, the fine Chints and Painted Callicoes, as well India as English, some of which are even dearer than Silk, have so far superseded the Wearing of Silks, that they prefer them to the finest Damasks; and we need do no more than appeal to the Drapers Wives, some of whom would perhaps think them selves affronted not to be rank'd with the best of the Gentry."

He contended that it was the "invincible Pride in the ordinary People" which led them to ape the gentry, that had been responsible for calicoes becoming "so universally accepted, so that "the meaner sort of People were first brought to wear them more, because they saw them worn by the Gentry, than for any Conveniency or real liking they had to them at first them selves." (42)

It was indeed the occasion of profound disappointment to Defoe that the English people preferred "an upstart Importation of Foreign Goods" to the native manufactures which he always

41. (Anon) The Weavers Pretences Examin'd ... (1719), pp. 9-10.

42. 'The Just Complaint', op. cit., pp. 23-25.

extolled in such glowing terms. (43) Just as Joseph Coles in 1700 had insisted that "the Substantialness of our English Workmanship" far exceeded "the Indian Trumpery" and had condemned his countrymen for "wasting our Treasure for these light Wares, as light as Women, and as slight as Cobwebs," (44) so Defoe dismissed calicoes as "a worthless, scandalous, unprofitable Sort of Goods, embrac'd by a luxuriant Humour among the Women, prompted by the Art and Fraud of the Drapers and the Company, to whom also they are profitable." (45) He claimed that the Act of 1700 had not been the result of disturbances by unemployed weavers or of party-conflict or of the multitude of petitions from the clothing centres, but that "the weight of the Cause supported it self." The Act had been necessary because "the Humour of the People ... seem'd, at that time, possess'd against their Interest, and being hurry'd down the Stream of their Fancy, they run headlong into the greatest Neglect and Contempt of the Growth and Manufactures of their own Country and People, and embrac'd, with a Violence in their Temper, not to be resisted, the Silks and Calicoes of India, in a manner even ridiculous to them selves, as well as fatal to their Interest." Such was the extravagance of the age that "the Ladies converted their Carpets and Quilts into Gowns and Petticoats, and made the broad and uncouth Bordure of the former, serve instead of the rich Laces and Embroideries they used to wear, and dress'd more like the Merry Andrews of Bartholomew Fair, than like the Ladies and the Wives of a Trading People." (46) In another pamphlet attacking the wearing of calicoes, written in the guise of a petition from Dorothy Distaff,

43. Ibid., p. 6.

44. J. Coles, England to be Wall'd with Gold ... (1700), p. 6.

45. The Manufacturer, No. 21, January 8, 1720.

46. A Brief State of the Question ... op. cit., pp. 10-11.

Abigail Spinning Wheel and Eleanor Reel, three spinsters of Bury St. Edmunds, Defoe lamented the disappearance of certain stuffs or stuffs mixed with silk, such as "Brilleants and Pule-rays, Antherines and Bombazines, Sattinets and Chiverets, Oraguella's, Grazetts, ... Flower'd Silk and Worsted Tammy Draughts, and Damasks." He blamed this on "a tawdery, Pie spotted, flabby, ragged, low-priz'd Thing, call'd Callicoe, a Foreigner by Birth, made the L - d knows where, by a Parcel of Heathens and Pagans, that worship the Devil, and work for a Half-peny a Day." He accused the beau monde of following an "outlandish Fashion" and of appearing in "painted Trangums, and East-India Rags." (47) His presupposition that Indian textiles were inferior products to English broadcloth extended to other imports from the Far East. Noting "a manifest Encrease of Trade" in January 1713, which was marked by the rise of new slight wares instead of the old staples, both in home and in foreign trade, he exclaimed, "In our Foreign Commerce, we have, also mighty Improvements; Nay we boast of Trades perfectly new to the Nation ... For example. That most admirable return of Wealth from China, which adorns the Scrutores and Cabinets, and shine in the Angles of the Drawing Rooms, these mightily encrease the dead Stock of the Nation, encourage Navigation to a strange Degree, since Ships have come Home wholly laden with Earthen Ware, the Trumpery of China, supplies, to infinite Advantage, the Furniture of our Houses, and serves the Ladies instead of Plate and Jewels."

(48)

47. The Female Manufacturers Complaint ... (1720), pp. 8-12.  
 48. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 42), pp. 83-84 (81-82) Compare D. Clayton, A Short System of Trade ... (1719), "their foolish ridiculous Pictures, ... their childish useless China Wares, fit only to please Children." p. 10.

Fifteen years later, however, Defoe showed a better appreciation of the art and workmanship in the handicrafts of eastern Asia. He admitted that there was no European product which these countries needed, but firearms and ammunition and, in his view, some articles of lead, tin, brass and glass, but what were these to "the Commerce of the Indies?" If they had been better seamen, we could have supplied them with warships and merchant vessels and their equipment, but "even all this would come to little in the Account." All the commodities which might be supplied from Europe "would not pay for the Loading of five Ships a year instead of 100 Sail which use the Trade." Apart from the rich wrought silks and other fine textiles, and "the wonderful Variety of their Work", he singled out the following five matchless techniques of the Chinese and Japanese artist-craftsmen:

1. Their Painting of Figures and Flowers, as well on their Manufactures of Cotton and Silk, as on their lacquer'd Ware and China or earthen Ware; in which ... nothing done in Europe, whether in England or Holland, can come up to them; in particular in mixing and setting their Colours so as to hold washing, boiling, bleaching, Air and Fire: In these ... they either have such Drugs and Dye-stuffs for the Ingredients, or such Art in the Composition, as has been hitherto inimitable by the most ingenious Europeans, ...
2. Their working Gold and Silver on small Slips of Cane, fine as Thread, nay even as Silk, and which lying but on one side, yet weaves into their fine Atlases, and other Silks and Stuffs as fine as Gold and Silver wrought on Wire; whereas in our weaving Gold and Silver, as much lies on the wrong side as on the right. This is an inimitable piece of Art ...
3. Their Lacquering which whether by the Heat of the Climate, ... or by the Strength of the Varnish, outwears all that can be done in these Parts.
4. Their burning in, as they call it, of those Colours in their fine gilt China Ware: a Perfection perfectly inimitable.
5. Their artful preparing the Earth for the China Ware, an Art we know nothing of for want of the Earth it self to try it upon."

He found it particularly incredible that such workmanship could be produced by people who were, in his opinion, so ill-fed. He remarked on "their constant Application and Diligence in their Work, under the Hardship of so mean a Fare, and so hard a way of living." (49)

When the controversy about the Indian calicoes broke out again, with even greater force, in 1719, Defoe's opinions had become rooted in his final conviction that complete prohibition of the English calico-printing industry, was the only way to prevent the importation of East-India goods, which continued despite the Act of 1700. Whereas in 1708, he had written enthusiastically of the revival of the woollen and silk manufactures after that measure and although he repeated these assertions in 1719-20, he now realized that the older textile trades had to face a new and native rival. The Act which had allowed the importation of white calicoes, and at a lower rate of duty than previously, had thus given an impetus to an English cotton-printing industry in the London area. (50) In 1706, John Haynes stated that "greater quantities of Calicoes have been printed and worn in England annually since the importing of it was prohibited than ever was brought from India. (51) Defoe accused the linen drapers of conspiring to defeat the aims of the Act: "But, as if this Nation was never to want a Set of Men to undo her; no sooner were the East-India Chints and printed Calicoes prohibited from abroad, but some of Britain's unnatural Children,

49. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis (1728), pp. 220-221.

50. P.J. Thomas, Mercantilism and the East India Trade (1926) pp. 114-120.

51. J. Haynes, A View of the Present State of the Clothing Trade (1706) p.



who we call Drapers, set all their Arts to work to evade the Law of Prohibition, to employ People to mimick the more ingenious Indians; and to legitimate the Grievance, by making it a Manufacture: After which to clench the Point against the Manufacturers, and to perpetuate the Grievance, they prompted the laying a Tax upon the Improvement, so to make a Fund of the Oppression, and entail it on their Country for Ever." (52) In fact, the excise duty which was levied on printed calicoes and linens was in response to the demands of the woollen and silk weavers and to meet the cost of the war, and was doubled two years later despite the protests of the calico-printers. (53) "As this successful Mischief encreas'd," Defoe continued, "... the Weavers and Manufacturers soon felt the Effects of it; and as the restraining the Calicoes had rais'd them, ... so the opening a new Sluice which let them in again, immediately affected the Consumption of our own Goods; Trade immediately felt a sensible Decay, and the Weavers Ruin came gradually on." (54)

Defoe's first pamphlet in the 1719-20 discussion was "A Brief State of the Question." In this he announced the following five general propositions or "fundamentals" which remained the basis of his arguments throughout the ensuing pamphlet war:

"1. That the Woollen and Silk Manufactures of this Kingdom being the Staple of our Trade, and the most considerable and essential part of our Wealth, the Fund for our Exportation, the Support of our Navigation, and the only Means we have for the Employing and Subsisting our Poor; it is therefore the common

52. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., p. 15.  
 53. P.J. Thomas, op. cit., p. 127.  
 54. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., p. 15.

Interest of the whole Kingdom to discourage every other Manufacture, whether foreign or assum'd, so far as those Manufactures are ruinous to, and inconsistent with the Prosperity of the said British Manufactures of Wool and Silk.

2. That the Wearing and Using Printed or Painted Callicoes, as they are now almost universally worn and used in Great-Britain, is ruinous to, and inconsistent with the Prosperity of our English manufactures, as well those of Wooll as those of Silk.

3. That the total prohibiting the Wearing and Using of Printed or Painted Callicoes in Great-Britain, is not ruinous to, or inconsistent with the Prosperity of the East-India Trade; ... the East India Trade may and would remain in a very thriving and flourishing Condition, ... tho' all the Subjects of Great Britain and Ireland were effectually limited from, and prohibited the wearing and using of Printed and Painted Callicoes.

4. That the Printed and Painted Callicoes now worn and used in Great Britain, come under FOUR DENOMINATIONS, ALL pernicious and destructive to our Trade, (viz.) such as being imported by the Dutch, are either printed in the Indies or in Holland, and clandestinely run on Shore here, ... OR, such as being imported here by our own East-India Company, and prohibited to be worn because printed in India, are pretended to be exported, but are privately run on Shore again and sold: OR, such as being printed here, are entred and ship'd for Exportation, in order to draw back the Duties on the Stamps, but are re-landed and sold here; and lastly, such as are printed here, and legally worn and used, and under the Colour of which ALL the other Frauds are practis'd and conceal'd.

5. That this clandestine Importation and Relanding of Printed and Painted Callicoes, is no way to be prevented, ... but by effectually preventing and prohibiting the wearing and use of them." (55)

The last two heads form the crux of his argument in this particular dispute. He obviously believed that the smuggling and the various frauds on the customs were extensive and it is interesting to note that Professor Price thinks that the principal beneficiaries by the English prohibitions of 1700 and 1721

55. A Brief State of the Question, *op. cit.*, Introduction, 8pp. (no paging). John Asgill's A Brief Answer to a Brief State of the Question (1719) repudiated these five propositions and claimed that Defoe's demand for total prohibition of calicoes ought to apply equally to silk. Yet he argued that Defoe was "rather an Advocate for the Silk than the Woollen Manufactures" in that the calicoes competed more directly with silk than with woollen goods and that he had no complained of fustians which did affect the sale of woollen

were the smugglers. (56) Defoe devoted one pamphlet to these malpractices and then quoted from it, as if from an independent author, in "The Trade to India." He alleged that duties of 8d. per yard on imported white calicoes and 6d. per yard on the printing or stamps were drawn back on the calicoes printed here and entered for export but then sold here or, if actually shipped, re-landed and also sold on the home market. He also claimed that one firm of merchants had received as much as £10,000 in drawbacks between June 1717 and June 1718 for printed calicoes ostensibly sent to Holland and Hamburgh, and he estimated that the revenue was defrauded of £400,000 a year by the above devices. His evidence for this clandestine trade, however, was largely that most of the calicoes printed in England were entered for export to Holland or Hamburgh, where he claimed, they could not be sold because the East-India printed calicoes, which were much cheaper and better than the English commodity, were freely imported. Also that the Dutch printed calicoes were superior to the English and great quantities were brought from Holland, "so that to carry English Printed Calicoes to Holland or Hamburgh, would be to carry COALS to NEWCASTLE." (57) He further cited "the frequent Seizures made by the Officers of the Customs of such Calicoes, as well those Printed at Home as Abroad." He thought that this clandestine trade in calicoes completely undermined the claim of the East India Company that they exported goods to a greater value than the bullion which they sent to India and said that it had been estimated that the quantities of these re-import of calicoes were much greater than the goods originally exported

56. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI (1970), p. 861.

57. The Case of the Fair Traders ... (1719) (no paging).

by the Company from England. (58)

He found support for his belief that there was extensive smuggling of printed calicoes in the Report of the Commissioners of Accounts which estimated that a million people wore printed calicoes and painted linens in Great Britain and that each one consumed on average 5 yards a year, making a total of 5,000,000 yards. Assuming that one-quarter of this quantity was linens, the home consumption of calicoes was 3,750,000 yards a year, "infinitely above the Quantity of Calicoes printed in a Year in Great Britain." Defoe gave the average annual production of printed calicoes during the five years ending on 24 June 1719 at 1,355,672 yards, of which 379,224 yards were exported, leaving 976,448 yards consumed at home. Subtracting this amount from the previous figure of 3,750,000 yards worn in a year gave 2,773,552 yards "which must be imported clandestinely." Defoe, therefore, asked "whether any Trade can be called profitable to a Nation, or indeed ought to be suffer'd ... which ... is a Protection to such a monstrous Abuse of the Public, and to the fair Traders" and concluded, "they ought to give up such a Branch, however otherwise profitable to them selves, as a just Compensation for the Wrong" which they did the nation by rendering this injurious trade undiscoverable. He admitted that one of the chief drapers had maintained at the Bar of the House of Commons that only 70,000 people in Great Britain wore calicoes and that they each consumed 16 yards per year rather than the 5 yards in the Report of the Commissioners of Accounts. This gave a total

annual consumption of 1,120,000 yards, not far short of the number of yards printed. Defoe, however, quoted the calculation of "a judicious Observer" that 320,000 people "were cloth'd in printed Callicoe and Linnen in the County of Middlesex only, exclusive of the Cities and Liberties of London and Westminster." Characteristically, he decided that the figure of one million wearers was "much below the Fact" and that there were nearly double that number "cloath'd in and using Callicoe." He instanced the "many Thousands of Women" who had "two or three several Suits of Callicoe at a Time, for Morning-Gowns, Wrapping-Gowns, and Mantua's, and such like," in addition to "the great Quantities used in Furniture, such as Quilts for Beds and Window-Curtains" which were excluded from the Commissioners' estimates. (59) With an appearance of moderation, however, he used as the basis of a new calculation an estimate which he had already printed in the "Manufacturer" for February 3rd, 1720, where he took the Commissioners' figure of 1,000,000 wearers and the draper's estimate of 16 yards used by each person per year, to give a total of 16,000,000 yards of linen and calico and 12,000,000 yards of calico alone. (60) In the "Manufacturer" he had been ready to accept a total of 9,000,000 yards of calico, but he now added half a million yards used in furnishings to the figure of 12,000,000 yards of calico and linen, and deducted 1,050,758 yards for the linens printed and consumed in England and 976,648 yards for the printed calicoes (previously 976,448 yards) consumed here, leaving a balance of 10,472,594 yards of printed calicoes "fouly imported" each year "besides East India Wrought.

59. Ibid, pp. 19-30.

60. The Manufacturer, No. 27, February 3, 1720.

Silks." He thought 2/6 per yard a low estimate of the value of these goods, as the foreign printed goods were generally better than those produced at home, but this figure gave a total of £1,309,074..15s. per annum on the above quantity of smuggled calico. He estimated the bullion exported to India at £800,000 a year and he now added to this a figure of £1,065,419 for clandestine imports of India goods, making "£1,865,419 a year dead Loss to the Nation by the East India Trade." "Pepper and other Goods really exported" might amount to £350,000 a year, "but against this is to be plac'd all the East India Wrought Silks, and Stuffs mixt with Silks, all the Handkerchiefs and Muslins that are run in upon us again, as well from Holland as from on Board our own Ships ... and 'tis believ'd will fully balance the other." (61)

Against an annual deficit on the India trade of £1,500,000 he protested, "It is in vain to plead the Shipping, the Seamen, the People employ'd in this Trade, their Merit in Loans to the Government, or the like; no Trade, carrying out Money, and returning what is consum'd at Home, can be gainful to the Nation." When the Drapers claimed that printed calico was a small trade, he demanded why they should struggle so keenly for a commodity which so few people wore, but he completely rejected their estimates. When they affirmed that not more than fifty gowns and petticoats of foreign printed calico were worn in London, he asked them whether they could not see "more than 50 Women dress'd in foreign Printed Callicoes go by their Shops in an Hour's Time." (62) In fact, the quantity was so great, he declared, "that

61. The Trade to India ... *op. cit.*, pp. 31-33.

62. The Manufacturer, No. 27..

our own Company is not able to supply the Demand, no not even the Dutch, but our interloping Traders have assisted to erect another Company in Flanders, which they call Imperial; but ... is erected upon and carry'd on by a Subject of English Stock, and supply'd even with Captains, Factors, Seamen, and Ships from England." (63)

In 'The Trade to India', Defoe pretended to "leave out of the Question the Mischief of the Goods they return, and the Hurt they do to our Manufactures" but this was in fact his chief concern. (64) Whereas Cary stressed the effect on woollen cloth exports of a reduced demand for imports of German linen and Italian raw and manufactured silks which would follow from the English vogue for Indian textiles, Defoe was most conscious of the immediate danger to the English poor employed in the established woollen and silk industries making goods for the home market. (65) He maintained that every piece of printed calico or linen worn in England prevented "the Consumption of the same Quantity of our Woollen and Silk Manufactures," (66) and even that "every Pound Sterling laid out in printed and painted Callicoes for the Womens Wear", reduced the demand for our woollen manufactures by £8. (67) "To say this or that Manufacture" is not concerned in the dispute, he argued, "is not to the Purpose at all; the Stockings, Hats, Gloves, Bays, Blankets, Mens Cloth, Flannel, and many other Things made of Wool, are not immediately

63. The Trade to India ... op. cit., p. 35.

64. Ibid., p. 34.

65. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... (1695) pp. 52-53.

66. The Trade to India ... p. 8.

67. Mercurius Politicus, June 1719, p. 384.

concern'd in the Wearing of Callicoos: But ... the greater Part of our Woollen Manufactures; such as the whole Worsted Stuff Trade, and the Silk and Worsted Stuffs, the whole Clothing Trade, as far as exported to Turkey and Italy. These, which are the Gross of our Woollen Manufacture, are sinking, and in Danger of being lost." (68) In comparison with these staple industries, he refused to admit that the printing of calico was a manufacture. He exclaimed, "now we have the Pretences of the Callicoe Printers to struggle with, their calling the Callicoe a Manufacture, because Painted and Printed here; tho' these are in them selves meer Trifles, like that of the Numbers of Families employ'd in Printing etc. I say, Trifles, when compared with the Manufactures them selves which we plead for." It had been "an unaccountable Mistake in those who solicited the first Prohibition of Indian Printed Callicoos, that they ... did not insist upon prohibiting the Wearing and Use of those Printed at Home, as Things in them selves equally ruinous to our Manufactures; they had not then left the Door open to the Printing and Painting then in England, a Trade then scarce known, under colour of which, all sorts of Callicoos, wheresoever Printed, have been worn here, and Foreigners thereby encouraged to pour them in upon us by ... clandestine Trade, and our People impose upon us by Re-landing their own." (69) In another pamphlet in this dispute, he said that he was "well assur'd ... that the utmost Number of Families that can be reckon'd up by the most impartial Men, as employ'd in the Trade ... come to some less than seven hundred; whereas the Families of Weavers and Manufacturers here in London, and

68. The Manufacturer, No. 24, January 20, 1720.

69. A Brief State of the Question ... op. cit., pp. 23-24.



in the several Countries where they were employ'd in Work, which this Printing of Callicoes is particularly prejudicial to, amounts to above a hundred thousand; besides, that this last, is a Work of but yesterday, and so modern, that very few of those few Persons employ'd in it were originally brought up to it ... having most of them been bred up to other Works, which it is easy for them to re-assume." (70) In fact, calico printing had been established in England before 1688 and a Bill to prohibit calicoes printed in England, as well as those imported from India, was lost because of a dispute between the two Houses. The numerous petitions to Parliament between 1695 and 1701 against calicoes often embraced an attack on those printed in England, and a pamphlet of 1707 complained that the cheaper English product was worn by all classes, including the poor, whereas only the rich had been able to afford those imported from India. (71) The author of 'The Weavers Pretences Examined' maintained that English calico printing was about forty years old and said that he knew a calico printer, "very far from being a Young Man," who told him that his grandfather had followed the same trade. (72) Defoe, however, was not alone in belittling the newer industry. 'Claudius Rey' affirmed that there were not more than ten looms weaving calico in the country, compared with 12,000 producing silk, and although this refers to the production of English calico rather than to the printing here of Indian calico, it is typical of the protectionist approach to the issue. (73)

70. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., p. 26.  
 71. A.P. Wadsworth and J. de l. Mann, The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire (1931) p. 133.  
 72. A Further Examination of the Weavers Pretences ... (1719) p. 12.  
 73. C. Rey, Observations on Mr. Asgill's Brief Answer to A Brief State of the Question ... (1719), p. 5. On pp. 8, 11, he named Asgill as the author of a second The British Merchant which appeared on 10 November, 1719 in answer to Defoe's The Manufacturer, first published on 30 October. The two periodicals maintained a paper war until February 1720.

It is easy to see why Defoe sympathised so strongly with the riotous Spitalfields weavers in 1719, so much so that he was accused of excusing their disturbances and their attacks on the 'Calico-madams' which included tearing the offending garments off their backs. This was unfair as he always condemned civil violence of any kind. He wrote that they were in the wrong on two counts, for "making their Complaint in an unpeaceable Manner; and secondly in an unseasonable Time" because Parliament, which could always be petitioned, was not sitting. Yet, "without Question the Matter of their Complaint was just." (74) He condemned them for "raising a Tumult" but added "tho' I abhor Mobbs of all sorts, and am far from justifying the Exorbitances of these poor Men, ... yet I think they are rather Objects of our Pity, as I hope they will be of the Government's Clemency." He argued that the complaint of the Spitalfields weavers was "a National Grievance" but that "some of the poorer sort of Weavers" there had been "less Patient, and perhaps that too, because more severely pinch'd by the want of their Employment, than the other Manufacturers; and because their Subsistence here in London, not being so easy as in other Places, they were less able to support the want of Work." (75)

Until the campaign for the complete prohibition of printed calicoes should be crowned with success, he called on the English people to protect their native industries by wearing their own manufactures. He condemned "the preposterous unthinking Humour of our People, who, upon all Occasions, run directly

74. Mercurius Politicus, June 1719, pp. 381, - 382.

75. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., pp. 5-7.

counter to their Interest, as a Trading Nation, in so visible and so evident a manner as this of wearing Printed Callicoes" and he held up the Indians and Chinese as the example to be followed. It had proved almost impossible to sell English manufactures in their countries and they would only sell their own goods for ready money. (76) He declared "that if the Women would leave off the wearing Callicoes, it would be the most effectual Prohibition" but he obviously thought that the dictates of fashion were so powerful that he appealed to the male workers to restrain their own families. He told them, "we should have small Hope of reforming the rest of the Sex, if we cannot begin at Home; and if, while we are showing them, ... that wearing and using Callicoes will be the Ruin of our Country, the starving our Poor, and the Destruction of the Woollen Manufactures; It would be hard to have our Oppressors throw it in our Teeth, that all our Families, Wives, Children and Servants, are cloth'd in Callicoes." (77) In the 'Mercurius Politicus' for December 1719, he reprinted Steele's 'The Spinster' with its description of a fine lady being dressed by her maid, in which articles of foreign manufacture accounted for over £200 compared with £6.10s. for English goods, but as all these foreign imports listed by Steele were French or Italian, this did not add anything material to the dispute about calico. He proceeded to commend the example of Lycurgus in forbidding Spartan women the use of certain dresses and asked the English women to prevent the men from bringing in similar sumptuary laws by renouncing "the Gewgaws of the East-

76. A Brief State of the Question ... *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

77. The Manufacturer, No. 3, November 6, 1719.

Indies." He told them that their ancient British ancestors, "who for Ornament and Dress painted their own Bodies, would be astonished at the Callico Picts, their degenerate Children, and fly from their own Off-spring, as putting them selves in Masquerade only to reduce them selves to their primitive Poverty and Nakedness." He thought that once they realized that their fashionable tastes were responsible for turning "Thousands of poor Women and Children into the Streets a begging," they would throw their fine chintz gowns and petticoats in the fire. 'Tis in the Ladies Power," he announced, "at once to make it odious and abhorr'd all over the Kingdom: You are able to make it as much out of Fashion, as you brought it into Fashion at once: ... If the Women in England will but set their Hands to this Work, not a Callicoe, not a Piece of Linnen printed or stain'd shall be sold or worn in England: Then all our Petitions will be at an End, ... all the Manufactures of Great-Britain shall revive, and the Women will have the Glory of having saved the Nation."

(78)

In 'The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers', Defoe tried to counter the arguments advanced in favour of the calico trade by the author of "The Weavers Pretences Examined." To the plea that it was useless for Englishmen to boast of their liberty and property unless this included the liberty of eating and drinking, or wearing what they pleased, he replied that he never knew the claim of liberty "debauch'd in so gross, so vile a manner before, and that if this argument were sound, "all sumptuary Laws, all Prohibitions of any Kind in Trade," or laws to regulate morals

and manners would be at an end. Quoting from his favourite poem, 'The True Born Englishman', the line 'Restraint from Ill is Freedom to the Wise,' he argued that what was true in morals was also true in trade. "To be prohibited from Wearing that, which in its Use hinders the Consumption, and threatens the Destruction of our own Produce, is a kind and obliging Restraint, and only amounts to a directing us to do, what as wise Men we ought to be suppos'd desirous of doing." (79) He dismissed as a "wretched Piece of Trade-Nonsense," the argument that silk woven in England was as much a foreign commodity as calicoes printed here because the latter were made "in our own Colonies in the East-Indies, at a very small Price" and then "many times manufactured over again here" to a great increase in value. (80) "This poor ignorant Writer," he exclaimed, "does not understand the difference between a Colony, and a Factory, and that there is no such Thing as a British Colony in the East-Indies. Had we a Colony there, such as New England, New York, Barbadoes, etc. are in America; where the English People being planted, the Calicoes being made by the King's own Subjects, and the Cotton was the produce of the Land in the said Colony; ... more had been to be said for the Calicoes made there," but a factory was only a settlement for trade, by the permission of the ruler of the country. Even if the calicoes had been made in English colonies, however, "that is to say, by our own People, for the Produce of our Colonies, is our own Produce; yet, as they are the Destruction of our Trade, and the Ruin of our Poor, they

79. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., pp. 9-10.

80. The Weavers Pretences Examin'd ... op. cit., pp. 9-10.

ought to have been prohibited; ... as we are by Law prohibited from Planting Tobacco in England, that the most advantageous Trade of Tobacco by Virginia may not be lost." Thirdly, he rejected the argument that the printed calicoes were not responsible for the unemployment amongst the woollen weavers because wool had been dearer during the past two years than for many years previously, whereas the reduced demand should have caused a fall in the price of wool. He not only denied the truth of this last assertion, but added that the "universal Glut of all our Manufactures at Market," as could be proved by enquiry at Blackwell Hall or in the wholesale dealers' warehouses, was a more certain test of the prosperity of the industry than the price of wool, which, in any case, was kept dearer by the amount run out of the kingdom to France. His opponent had also maintained that we bought both raw and wrought silk, "at dear Rates of Foreigners, either with Money or Bills of Exchange," but Defoe protested that we bought silk as cheap as any nation could buy it and in return for our own commodities. Lastly, he repudiated any argument drawn from the different practice of the Dutch in not prohibiting the importation of any foreign goods. "Differing Circumstances," he observed, "make all Nations walk by different Rules; the Manufactures of the Dutch are small and trifling compar'd with ours; ... If we were to prohibit nothing, as is the Practice in Holland, what would become of our Trade in a few Years? And why do we limit our Fellow-Subjects in Ireland from exporting their own Goods? Why prohibit the French from importing theirs? The Practice of the Dutch is no more to us in Trade, than the Practice of Mahometans

at Constantinople is to us in Religion; if we were the meer Carriers of the World as they are, ... we should do as they do, and if they were the greatest Manufacturers of the World as we are, they would do just what we hope Great Britain will now do, viz. prohibit the Use of every Foreign Manufacture which interferes with their own." (81)

Instead, Defoe commended the example of "that Wise Nation," France, where, despite "the great Favour shewn there to the New East India Company" and the fact that the linen manufacture was the most considerable after the silk, "yet to preserve the Silk Manufacture which they have got, and to encourage the Woollen which they are striving to get, they have obtained this Arrêt, forbidding the Printing of Linnen, or wearing any Printed Linnens equally with the Callicoes, and on the severest Penalties." This instance was all the more important because the linen drapers, having "but one Refuge to fly to", had contended that printed linens were used and worn as much as printed calicoes, and further that these linens were made in Britain. Therefore, if the woollen industry continued to take precedence, this would only be "helping the Poor of South-Britain and hurting the Poor of North-Britain." He replied that the native linens which were used for printing were so small in quantity that they were not "worth naming in Competition with the British Woollen Manufacture" and that even if the above allegations were true, it was not reasonable that "the whole Woollen Manufacture of England, and Scotland also, should be ruin'd, and a Million of honest diligent People made Beggars at one Blow." (82) According to

81. The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers ... op. cit., pp. 35-37.

82. Mercurius Politicus, November 1719.

the excise duty on printed linen, rather more than one million yards were printed and consumed in Britain in an average year, but he did not add that this was rather more than the total of printed calicoes for the year 1718-1719, although very much more printed calico was exported. (83) Because linen was made in the north of England, and in considerable quantities in Ireland, apart from the "very great Quantity" imported from Germany, he did not think that Scots linen was more than one-quarter of that printed here, and was only worth £11,612..15..11d. Although he repeatedly urged that every effort should be made to promote Scottish industry, he asked the Scottish members of Parliament if so small an amount were worth contending for, in "the present Calamity of the British Manufacture." Moreover, the Scottish linen printed in England was not a true increase of the Scottish manufacture, but was only "turning one thing into another" and the stop of printing would result in an increase in the dyed linen sent into England, that is a return of the trade to its old channel. (84)

It is obvious that Defoe's main target in his attack on the India trade was the importation of Asiatic textiles, particularly calicoes. Three of his five pamphlets on this commerce do not mention bullion and his first pamphlet, of 1708, has only one short reference, namely that the trade required a much larger export of bullion, not only than the nation could spare, but than it possessed, and could only be met at the expense of

83. A.P. Wadsworth and J. de l. Mann, op. cit., p. 138.

84. Mercurius Politicus, November 1719.



the coinage. (85) . As he became more alarmed at the threat from Indian textiles, he brought in the drain of silver to Asia to strengthen his case for a further measure of prohibition. The reason why no silver was sent to the Mint was because of "the immense Quantities sent to the East Indies." The trade exhausted "the whole Treasure of Europe" and the Turkey trade was responsible for a further loss of silver, "for all the Silver the Turks get from Europe ... drains off this Way." "Thus", he announced, ... "Europe, like a Body in a warm Bath, with its Veins open'd, lies bleeding to Death; and her Bullion, which is the Life and Blood of her Trade, flows all to India, where 'tis amass'd into infinite Heaps, for the enriching the Heathen World at the Expence of the Christian World." Writing just before the South Sea Bubble burst, he blamed this drain of bullion for the fever of speculation in France, England and Holland: "From this great Cause of Europe's Poverty come all the Shifts and Projects of Europe, for raising imaginary Wealth in the Room of real Wealth; substituting Credit, which indeed is but Air instead of Bullion, and Paper instead of Money;" but added that these did indeed "supply the Want of the Species, or else Europe, ... could not carry on her Commerce. Her Product and Manufactures wou'd not circulate for want of Money to assist that Circulation, and to circulate with it; ...". He claimed that in the trade with India, "the Order of Trade" was inverted, "the Product and Manufacture does not go out to fetch in the Money, as is the natural Course of Trade, but the Money goes out to fetch the Goods in; and this, in Trade, is letting out the Blood." Because of this fatal defect in the trade with Asia,

if, for any reason, such as war or attacks by pirates, the Spanish treasure fleet was prevented from sailing and thus the supply of specie was not replenished, Europe immediately felt the loss. In marked contrast, he observed,

"the other Trade of Europe does not do thus: If the Money goes out of one Country into another, it passes from thence into a Third, and thence back again into a Fourth, and so back again from whence it came, and round again; ever circulating like the Blood in the Veins, and carries with it the Spirits, which nourish the whole. But India, like the Grave, swallows up all, and makes no Return; that is, the Money never returns: What they send us back is nothing; 'tis consum'd here. and so vanishes ... And was Gold as good a Commodity in England as Silver, we shou'd not have Money left to carry on the common Course of Trade." (86)

On the other hand, were it not for this constant loss of treasure, silver, "like Gold in Solomon's time, ... would have been like the Stones in the Streets. But as it flows in at one Mouth, it ebbs out at ten: 'tis Trade brings it in, ... (returning) Specie for Manufacture, Bullion for Labour: But while what the West-India Trade thus brings in, the East-India Trade draws out, all the Trade of Europe is but a Bag with Holes, and that which goes in at the Top runs out at the Bottom; nor can Europe be ever said to be rich by Trade till they find some way to put a stop to it."

(87)

Whereas Davenant had argued that because England and Holland had a virtual monopoly of the trade with Asia, it was the other European countries, which consumed the Indian commodities "without having any share of the traffic," that suffered from this commerce, Defoe believed that the whole continent was

86. *The Trade to India*, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-41.

87. *Atlas Maritimus*, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

impoverished by it. (88) "It is very strange", he protested, "to hear the several Nations of Europe complaining of one another, that they crowd them with East-India Goods, and that East-India Goods ruin their Manufactures ... it is not this or that, which injures this or that particular Nation ... but 'tis Europe in general that ruins it self, and with it self Africa and America, and even the North parts of Asia too, by trading to India: and it will never be otherwise, till some general Check be put to the Current of it; for while India and China send Goods to the tune of ten Millions per Annum, as is the Case at least, and receives all the Produce, or most part of it, in nothing but Ready Money and in Specie, ... how should it be but that India shall grow immensely rich, and Europe waste and become poor?"

(89) As he exaggerated the loss of bullion, so he naturally over-estimated the import of Asiatic commodities into Europe. It seems that these were sold for little more than £3,500,000 per annum at the sales organized by the various East India Companies, compared with Defoe's figure of £10,000,000. (90) Although these goods were obtained for a very much smaller outlay of specie, the drain of bullion from Europe was a very real problem. While the average annual figure of English bullion exports to India seems to have been below Davenant's conservative contemporary estimate of £400,000 throughout the years 1659-1720, it formed 80 per cent. of the value of British exports to India between 1708 and 1730 and 70 per cent of all British exports of specie went to Asia. (91) Those pamphleteers who attacked the

88. C. Davenant, 'An Essay on the East-India Trade' in Works, ed. Whitworth (1771) I, 91.

89. Atlas Maritimus, p. 220.

90. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, p. 856.

91. J.M. Price, loc. cit., p. 861.

trade, or more usually the East India Company's monopoly, claimed that the Dutch were more successful in meeting this difficulty because of their earnings in Asia from trade between the various countries and particularly by the silver which they earned in Japan. (92) Defoe also thought that the Dutch would have been drained of specie "to a very great Degree" but for their possession of the Spice Islands. (93) In fact, these advantages had already disappeared by 1700 because of the Japanese restrictions on the export of their silver and copper and the depreciation of their gold coins. In the period 1714-28, specie amounted to 90 per cent of Dutch exports to Asia, an even larger proportion than it did of the British. (94)

William Wood's attitude to the trade was typical of the reservations of those English writers who gave it a grudging blessing. Our need of saltpetre, pepper and drugs "would not acquit that Trade of the Guilt of exhausting our Treasure" if it were not for the amends made by the re-exports of Indian goods. He agreed with Defoe that it tended "only to the enriching the People of India and impoverishing those of Europe" by its return of luxuries and fully manufactured goods, and he said that Britain suffered more than Holland because she retained more of these articles. Yet these commodities "by the present Channel and Course of Trade" had "become unhappily necessary for our Foreign Markets" to provide more varied assortments. British merchants "would fit few or no Ships, for so long a Voyage, if

92. Carew Reynel, The True English Interest ... (1674), pp. 13-14; John Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... (1695) p. 62.
93. A General History of Trade, July 1713, p. 21.
94. J.M. Price, loc. cit., pp. 861-862.

they were not also to have the Liberty of importing Manufactures." Yet, paradoxically, he argued that "select Companies" were not the most effectual way to cramp "a disadvantageous Trade" but rather high duties or prohibitions. He alleged that not more than 10 to 15 ships were now engaged in the trade compared with the 25 to 30 in Sir Josiah Child's day and that the Company had restricted the supply in their own interest. In an open trade, a much greater number of ships "and those the strongest and most warlike" would be employed. "The smaller the quantity of Eastern goods imported, the greater the British disadvantage in trading with these goods to other countries. He claimed that he knew of separate ships sent out with small cargoes by private traders, "that by Trading from Port to Port in the Indies" and by their earnings from freight had brought home cargoes of "ten, twelve, and fifteen Times the Value of their Outset." As for the forts, these could be maintained by the Government or by a regulated company. (95) Slingsby Bethel argued that the monopoly of the Dutch East India Company was necessary because they needed a strong force to safeguard their large possessions in Asia but the British had only factories. (96) Thomas Baston and John Cary maintained that the Dutch company was not a true monopoly, Baston because it was "almost universal", the "whole Republic" being in effect but one company (97) and Cary because "it was not settled on such a narrow Foundation as ours." Cary also contended that the Dutch imports were almost their own product

95. W. Wood, A Survey of Trade In Four Parts (1718), pp. 92-93, 226, 263-278.
96. S. Bethel, The Interest of Princes and States (1680), pp. 11-12.
97. T. Baston, Thoughts on Trade, and a Publick Spirit, (1716), p. 18.

because of their large possessions which were more in the nature of colonies. (98) Because the East Indies were "a bottomless Pit for our Bullion", he proposed that the Company should be both limited in the quantity of bullion which they could ship out each year and that they should be obliged to carry to the Mint "a suitable Proportion" to what they sent away. Finally, he considered that long voyages rather used sailors than made them, (99) and that the Company was better defended against Dutch competition by Britain's naval strength in Europe than by forces in Asia. (100)

Like Cary, it was the prosperity of the English woollen industry which was always uppermost in Defoe's mind, rather than the loss of bullion. In 1729 he was alarmed by the Russian attempts to open a trade with East Asia, after the great development of Russian trade under Peter the Great. He thought this overland route a greater danger than the Ostend Company, as it had been "one of the Gates by which the India Goods found a Passage into Europe, before the Passage by Sea about the Cape of Good Hope was found out." He wished "that the Trade to China and India were in it self a profitable Trade to the rest of Europe; then the opening these Back-Doors or By-Channels might be of some Use to us; but as it is, I must confess it seems to be nothing but opening a new Passage to let in more Thieves upon us, to carry away our ready Money; and that neither this any

98. J. Cary, op. cit., p. 62.

99. J. Cary, An Essay towards Regulating the Trade ... (1719), pp. 31, 46-47. Cf. Querical Demonstrations Writ by Prince Butler (1699) which claimed that half the seamen perished on the voyage to India.

100. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... op. cit., p. 63.

more than the Ostend Company should be allow'd, ... nor our own be allow'd to bring any Goods but such as are absolutely necessary for our Use; and that as to wrought Silks, Callicoes printed or plain, they should be all entirely expell'd, as things utterly inconsistent with the Prosperity of the Linen, Woollen, and Silk Manufactures, not of England only, but of all the Nations of Christendom." The only possible remedy was to prohibit trade with Russia, or "a shorter Way," to drive the Russians out of Livonia and Ingria and deny them access to the Baltic, although the title of this pamphlet was "The Advantages of Peace and Commerce." (101)

Those writers who defended the East India Company usually justified the trade by the larger returns from the re-exports of Indian commodities, but Defoe had come to believe that most of these returned to Britain by various smuggling devices to threaten her native manufactures. Therefore, the ultimate test of the value of the trade must be the quantity of British manufactures exported to India, and from the very beginning of the trade, the Company had found it difficult to persuade the Indians to take British goods. (102) The directors had made great efforts to fulfil the quota of £100,000 worth of woollen cloth laid down by Parliament and had constantly urged their factors to try to sell more, but in only 13 years out of the 46 for which figures are available between 1670 and 1720 did their total exports exceed the above amount. (103) The apologists for the

101. The Advantages of Peace and Commerce, (1729) pp. 28-37.

102. S.A. Khan, The East India Trade in the XVIIth. Century ... (1923), pp. 165-167.

103. K.N. Chaudhuri, loc. cit., pp. 497-498, Appx. Table I.

Company were obviously sensitive to the charge that it failed to promote British exports. Robert Ferguson asserted that it took off "a considerable quantity of our Native Commodities and Manufactures, though not altogether so much as some other Trades do." (104) George White's protest, "Trade is no more to be forc'd than Faith ... we buy and sell both as to Quantities and Sortments, as our Interest directs" was written in answer to this specific indictment, but it was the general accusation of the Company's opponents that it placed its private profit before the national interest. (105) Defoe did not doubt that the trade was profitable. In 'Captain Singleton', which was published during the calico dispute of 1720, his hero said that they would "rather have taken one outward bound East India Ship, with her ready Cash on board, perhaps to the Value of forty or fifty Thousand Pound, than three homeward bound, though their Loading would at London be worth three times the Money; because we knew not whither to go to dispose of the Cargo." (106) Defoe complained, however, that "all our East-India Merchants, and all the Dutch, French and Spanish Merchants," could not find any goods in all Europe to transport to India, for which they could buy "a Bale of Muslins or a Bag of Saltpetre, comparatively speaking." The English cloth sent out by the Company was "a mere Trade-bite, a Delusion" for it was not conveyed to India, "but to Gomberoon in the Persian Gulph, and from thence carry'd to Persia, where the Turkey Company used to carry it before." He added, "It would make a Writer asham'd to muster up the

104. (R. Ferguson) The East-India Trade a most profitable Trade. (1677), p. 6.
105. G. White, An Account of the Trade to the East Indies ... (1691), p. 2.
106. Captain Singleton (Everyman edition 1963), p. 210.



Trifles which are carry'd over, compared to the Value in specie which goes with them." (107) Similarly, Cary had suggested in the course of a debate in the Commons in 1696 that the Company landed cloth at Cadiz when taking on bullion, and in the Arabian or Persian Gulphs, formerly supplied by the Turkey Company, (108) and in 1698 the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations reported "that it would be inconvenient" for the Company to send any additional cloth into Persia. (109) Defoe doubted if their exports of English manufactures reached £60,000 a year and "other Things" were "rather Trifles for the Use of their Factories, than for a Market; such as Wine, Beer, Bottles, wrought Iron and Brass for Household-Stuff, and a few Manufactures for their own Wearing." He admitted that the Company had just entered 4000 long cloths and 5000 perpetuanas for export to India, but this was said to be "to make a Show, and we must look back far for such another Entry." (110) Cary had seized on the Company's basic difficulty when he asked how it could hope to sell English cloth in India at a profit when they brought their Indian textiles to England at "great Charges," and sold them "at an extraordinary advantage" and in such large quantities because they were so much cheaper than English manufactures. (111) Defoe wrote that East Asia was "so supply'd by Nature with all things needful for human Life" that they wanted nothing from Europe, "either of Food or Furniture, Clothes or Household-stuff"

107. Atlas Maritimus ... op. cit., p. 220.

108. 'Queries offered to the House of Commons against the East India Company,' B.M. Addl.MSS. 5540, No. 115

109. Report of the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, quoted in S.A. Khan, op. cit., p. 267.

110. The Trade to India, op. cit., p. 10.

111. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England, p. 62.

only "our Ships and our Money." (112) Yet he was disappointed that English cloth did not make a better showing in India and he even refused to accept that their native textiles were more suitable wear in the hot climate. He declared, "we might very well answer this, by giving the Patterns of our fine Stuffs; some of which, as well as the manner of wearing them in hot Countries, are much Cooler, and much more suited to the Heat of the warmest Climate, than the uncouth Fashions, great Sleeves and pleated Gowns of the Indians, who even load them selves, rather than dress them selves with their Callicoos ... Any Traveller might be left to judge of this, who has seen the Spaniards in Peru, at Lima, at Panama, Carthagena, and such like Hot Places, where they dress much cooler and lighter in British and French Stuffs and Cloth, nay even in English Black Bayes, than the Indians on the Coast of Malabar and Coromandel, or in the Bay of Bengale, do in their Silks and Callicoos." (113) Nine years later, however, there still seemed little immediate prospect of more profitable trade between Europe and Asia. Although he stated that "the Indians and Chineses" were taking "every day more and more European Merchandizes", this was a less important trade than the increase in the supply of clothing and other European goods for the use of the European factories which earlier he had dismissed as of little account. "The only visible Prospect of any Amendment in the East-India Trade" was an increase in the European ascendancy in Asia, so that they might bring "the Natives under their Dominion ... into the European way of living," and he instanced the 100,000 Indian subjects of the

112. Atlas Maritimus ... op. cit., p. 229.

113. A Brief State of the Question ... op. cit., pp. 27-28.

Portuguese at Goa, the 300,000 of the English at Madras and the 500,000 of the Dutch in the East Indies. (114)

There were also two other solutions to the problem. The first was to do without many of the imports from Asia. He asked how many "might the Europeans be easy in the want of, and be even profitably without: supplying them selves with the Equivalent from their own Manufactures, or from those of their industrious Neighbours." (115) When he denounced "the Folly of carrying Money to the Indies, to buy that, which we ought rather to give Money to be without," (116) he was thinking primarily of Indian manufactures, but he regarded many other Asiatic products as undesirable because they had to be bought with money instead of by the export of English manufactures to Asia. These "trifling and unnecessary" returns included luxuries such as China ware, Japan work, pictures, fans and screens, minerals and raw materials such as tin, copper, cotton and indigo and even foodstuffs such as coffee, tea and sugar. (117) Therefore, his second remedy was to develop new sources of supply "in the like Latitude," particularly for the raw materials, dyestuffs and foodstuffs, "where we have great Reason to believe they would grow, and that to Advantage." (118) He was particularly impressed by the very recent success of the Dutch in reducing their dependence on Mocha, the main source of supply of coffee from 1690 to 1720, by planting it in Java so that they had begun "to leave off the Red Sea and bring 20 to 30 Tons of Coffee, at a

114. *Atlas Maritimus*... op. cit., p. 229.

115. Ibid, p. 220.

116. *A Brief State of the Question*, op. cit., p. 27.

117. *A New Voyage round the World* ... (1725) p. 313.

118. *Atlas Maritimus* ... op. cit., p. 220.

time from Batavia." (119) He criticized the Royal African Company for not seizing the opportunity to promote the cultivation of many of these commodities on the Guinea coast, (120) but he thought that similar attempts could be made in East Africa, which had the additional advantage that there was no existing European trade with this part of Africa. He called the whole of this area Ethiopia and described it as "one of the most fruitful, pleasant and agreeable Parts of Africa." There was "nothing wanting but the Possession of one Port, to open a Commerce from Europe; which, were it possess'd by the English, would be of infinite more Importance than any Trade now carry'd on at so great a Distance with whatever part of the World: The Country would take off almost any Quantity of English Goods, for they have neither Silk or Cotton, or Manufacture for them selves, and the Return would be in those valuable Articles of Gold, Pearl, Emeralds and Elephants Teeth, as also in Civet, and several valuable Drugs ... (but) at present the Europeans have no Commerce here." (121) Access to this region was the chief difficulty for "those Enemies of fair Trade," the Barbary corsairs, barred any route from North Africa, the navigation of the Nile was interrupted by cataracts and the Turks controlled the Red Sea, but he thought that two rivers in Somaliland, the Zeila and the Houache, would provide communication with "the very Centre of Ethiopia ... the richest and the most populous Part of it" and that settlements at the mouths of these rivers could be easily defended by "but two Ships of Force, from 40 to 50 Guns." To

119. A Plan of the English Commerce. (1728), p. 249.

120. Infra, pp. 1034-36

121. Atlas Maritimus ... op. cit., pp. 274, 191.

the objection that this area would lie "within the Circle of the East India Company's Charter," he replied, "Why then does not the Company open the Trade ...? If they do not, no exclusive Privilege of Commerce is granted to any Men, or Company of Men, to damn or destroy a Trade, but to improve and carry it on; and if they insist on their Charter to have the Right of Trading to Ethiopia, but will not trade, their Right is so far void." This commerce would be the exact reverse of their trade to India, because the natives of East Africa "would both receive our Growth and Produce, and make to us Returns in Specie." In addition to the returns in goods already mentioned, Defoe listed sulphur, saltpetre, deer skins, "Hides of black Cattle; Leopards and Lion Skins, ... fine Copper, and some very rich Gums and Drugs, ... (including) Frankincense, Gum-Arab, and Aloes Socotrina." Despite the hot climate, he claimed that the inhabitants were "all modestly and decently cloathed" so that in exchange for these commodities, "we should without Fail introduce our broad Cloths, fine Scarlet Shalloons, Sayes, Serges, and such other thin Stuffs as are usually worn in hot Climates; besides a great Quantity of hard Ware Manufactures, wrought Iron and Brass, edged Tools, Weapons, Fire-Arms, Ammunition, Lead, Pewter, Tin, fine Linen, and perhaps Silks." (122) Two years before, he had described the prospect of "an Ethiopian Commerce" as a Scene of Trade yet unopen'd, and which bids fair to out-do in Profit to us the Commerce of both the Indies." (123)

The great merit of this trade would be the completely new

122. A Plan of the English Commerce, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-261.

123. A General History of Discoveries and Improvements in Useful Arts (1726), p. 302.

vent for British manufactures, whereas the broadcloth which the East India Company sent to Persia was an interference with the normal channels of trade. (124) His strongest objections to the East India Company were its failure to establish a substantial market for English cloth and the damage which its imports did both to the home market and to the traditional outlets for our manufactures, defects which reinforced each other. As it had proved impossible to remedy the first, the protective measures adopted by the British Parliament were doubly necessary and received his enthusiastic approval. Thus the Act of 1701 was "this glorious Law," (125) and he celebrated the passage of the Act of 1721 in these terms:

"... Let us glory in the Felicity of being born in Britains, and of living in a Nation, and under a Constitution, where the Cries of the Poor will be heard against the Clamours of the Rich ... From this Day, we may date the Resurrection from the Dead, as well of our foreign declining Commerce, as of our Home Manufactures. On the one Hand, this one Vote has smitten Clandestine Trade under the fifth Rib; ... How many Callicoes printed in England will now be enter'd for Holland and Ham-burgh? I dare say, not a Hundred Yards to Ten Thousand.

Even the East India Company it self, what they lose one Way, they will gain another; if they import many Pieces of Callico fewer than they did, they will import many hundred Bales of Raw Silk more than they did before; ... let Coffee, Tea, and Pepper, be but regulated too, and after that, we will readily own for the Company, that what ever they export in other Goods, which they first import, entitles them to a Liberty of exporting to India the Value in Bullion; which, till then, cannot be granted upon any Account whatever." (126)

124. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 244-245.  
 125. Reflections on the Prohibition Act, p. 11.  
 126. The Manufacturer, No. 31, February 17, 1720 (1721).

Defoe's dilemma was a very real one. He considered that the trade was more disadvantageous to England than to any other part of Europe because she was the greatest manufacturing nation and thus suffered more from the imports of Indian textiles, because other nations had been wiser and "shut the Door of Trade against them" and because she was "the Center of the Consumption of East India Goods ... for all the Countries of Europe." (127) While the last remark was a more accurate description of Holland ~~rather~~ than of England, it indicates that he wanted England to continue to play a large part in the trade. Although he wished to surround it with "necessary Limitations", he believed that there was a danger of losing the trade to the Dutch if there were too many restraints on the Company's activities. In June 1712, he had written in the 'Review', that "the Trade to India, and the heavy Taxes now laying on Coffee, Tea, Drugs etc. which being Tax'd before to so great a height, as 30 or 40 per Cent. and 15 to 20 per Cent. more being now to be laid on, if the Companies or Importers are discouraged from carrying on that Trade, it falls gradually and of course, into the Hands of the Dutch - This is building up the Dutch upon the Ruins of Britain, and taking the Blood out of our Veins, to make it Circulate through theirs." (128) Similarly he had asserted that the two rival East India companies after 1698 had finally been driven into union by their ruinous competition: "The Effect of Rivals in Trade, is always lessening the Trade first, the lessening the Profits by under-selling to ruin one another, and at last both are undone. The Rival Companies to the East Indies were just

127. The Trade to India, op. cit., p. 41.

128. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 187), p. 752.





THE AFRICAN TRADE

"Others seek out to Africk's Torrid Zone,  
 And search the burning Shores of Serralone;  
 There in unsufferable Heats they fry,  
 And run vast Risques to see the Gold, and die.  
 The harmless Natives basely they trepan,  
 And barter Baubles for the Souls of Men;  
 The Wretches they to Christian Climes bring o'er,  
 To serve worse Heathens than they did before.  
 The Cruelties they suffer there are such,  
 Amboyna's nothing, they've outdone the Dutch."

Defoe proceeded to contrast the crimes of the slave traders with the genocide of the native inhabitants of America by the Conquistadores

"Who drank the Blood and Gold of Mexico,  
 Who thirteen Millions of Souls destroy'd  
 And left one-third of God's Creation void"

and concluded that Cortes and Pizarro were "merciful and kind" by comparison with their successors in the New World, the "ling'ring Life of Slavery" being far worse than death. (1)

These lines from 'Reformation of Manners' were written in 1702, when Defoe, following up his success with the 'True Born Englishman' published this call for an extension of the English Reformation into a Puritan reconstruction of the social life of the day. He blamed the small measure of success which had been achieved by the Societies for the Reformation of Manners on the shortcomings of those who should have been the spearhead of the campaign, namely the magistrates and other civic dignitaries such as the aldermen and sheriffs, but a passing reference to the activities of the chartered companies suddenly leads to this digression on the evils of the slave trade, so uncharacter-

1. A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 27.

istic of the early eighteenth century. Before this date, only George Fox and some of his Quaker followers and the Presbyterian divine, Richard Baxter, had made any adverse comment, and of Defoe's literary contemporaries only Steele, Southern, Pope, Thomson and Dyer voiced any criticism of the trade.

Two examples from his later fiction suggest that Defoe retained these humanitarian sentiments. In 'Colonel Jack' his hero, after he is promoted overseer of one Maryland plantation, despite the "Brutality and obstinate Temper of the Negroes", successfully tries the experiment of treating them "with Humanity" so that during five or six years not one negro was whipped, "except now and then an unlucky boy, and that only for trifles." Defoe maintained that the Maryland planters were less cruel to their negroes than those in Barbados and Jamaica and that as a result their negroes were less desperate or prone to run away.

(2) In the 'General History of the Pyrates', the unusual Captain Misson, true to the doctrine of "the Peoples Rights and Liberties" which he later tries to realize in his communist utopia of Libertalia on the island of Madagascar, sets the negroes free in the slave ships as he meets them. As he tells his men: "... the trading for those of our own Species, cou'd never be agreeable to the Eyes of divine Justice: That no Man had Power of the Liberty of another; and while those who profess'd a more enlightened Knowledge of that Deity, sold Men like Beasts; they prov'd that their Religion was no more than Grimace, and that they differ'd from the Barbarians in

Name only ... (3)

Twenty years, however, separate Defoe's early verse from his accounts of Colonel Jack and Captain Misson and in those years there is almost no trace of any similar reflections. On the contrary, he was one of the most vigorous defenders of the Royal African Company's monopoly from the attacks of the separate traders and other commercial and industrial interests. It would be reasonable to assume that Defoe's opinions had changed because of the overriding economic importance which he had come to attach to England's participation in the slave trade, but for the fact that five years before the publication of 'Reformation of Manners' he had suggested "an Agreement with the Guinea Company to furnish 200 Negroes" for the improvement of the Middlesex highways. This, however, can be regarded as a passing reflection on one possible solution to the problem of the cost of this particular project, which he had estimated at £263,040, especially as it is put forward as an alternative to the use of two hundred criminals who had been sentenced to transportation. Both proposals were schemes to reduce the cost by more than half and Defoe did not develop them any further. (4)

That any writer who had realized the iniquities of the slave trade could, within the space of a few years, not merely defend it but hope that English traders would come to dominate the traffic, presents a problem of analysis. When we consider

3. A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates, Vol. II, p. 28.
4. An Essay upon Projects, p. 103.

the range of his imaginative insight into various types of human outcasts, so that he could portray the feelings of thief, harlot, highwayman or pirate, this only adds to the difficulty of explanation. Even if we completely discount the strength of his religious convictions, it would seem that feelings of common humanity would prevent any such complete apostasy. On the other hand, to assume that he was merely an unprincipled journalist ready to write for any paymaster or quick to seize any chance of turning a current controversy to maximum monetary advantage is too simple an estimate of a very complex personality. Professor Watt claims that an ambivalent moral attitude is typical of the secularized Puritan and explains one group of apparent ironies in 'Moll Flanders' "as products of an unresolved and largely unconscious conflict in Defoe's own outlook, a conflict which is typical of the late Puritan disengagement of economic matters from religious and moral sanctions." (5) Other critics, however, notably J.R. Moore, G.A. Starr, W.A. Halewood and Michael Shinagel have emphasized the sincerity of his religious beliefs and I cannot accept Professor Watt's conclusion that Defoe was a secularized Puritan who had inherited everything from Puritanism except its religious faith. (6) Few early Nonconformists had questioned the morality of the slave trade and Eric Williams has pointed out that Moravian missionaries in the West Indies had no hesitation in holding slaves while the Baptist would not allow their earlier missionaries to deprecate ownership

5. Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, (1957) pp. 77-88, 119-135, (Chicago, 1958).

6. J.R. Moore, Daniel Defoe Citizen of the Modern World, pp. 13, 340. G.A. Starr, Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography. M. Shinagel, Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility, (Camb., Mass. 1968) pp. 100-102, 193-196.

of slaves. Eighty-four Quakers were members of the Royal African Company as late as 1756 and their opposition to slave dealing when it did develop came at first mainly from the northern American Quakers rather than from England. (7) The Evangelical minister, John Newton, had spent nine years on the Guinea coast, including three voyages as captain of a slave ship, without once experiencing any moral misgivings about his employment and it was probably at least twenty years later before he came to the conclusion that the trade was wicked. (8) Elizabeth Donner observed that within twelve years of the inauguration of the modern slave trade in 1444, it had become acceptable and profitable part of European commerce and that this attitude was strengthened by "the conjunction in a single half-century of the discovery of an immense new labor supply and of a new and comparatively empty continent in which such a supply could be profitably utilized." (9) It was this combination which made the trade seem so lucrative a venture and by the seventeenth century Europeans of diverse religious beliefs, Portuguese, Dutchmen, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Danes, Swedes and Brandenburger were struggling for a share of this coveted trade.

Every English writer on economic questions during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries enthused about the advantages of the slave trade and slave labour in the West Indies and America (10) and as late as 1746, fifteen years after Defoe'

7. Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery, pp. 43-47.
8. The Journal of a Slave Trader (John Newton) 1750-1754 ed., B. Martin and M. Spurrell (1962) pp. xi-xv, 97-113.
9. Elizabeth Donnan, Documents Illustrative of the Slave Trade to America, Vol. I, Introduction to Part I, p. 1.
10. e.g. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England (1695) p. 74; W. Wood, A Survey of Trade (1718) p. 179; J. Gee, The Trade and Navigation of Great Britain (1730) pp. 25-26.

death, Malachy Postlethwayt could state that the "daily Bread of the most considerable Part of our British Manufactures" depended primarily on negro labour and that the negro trade "may be justly esteemed an inexhaustible Fund of Wealth and Naval Power to this Nation." By this date criticisms had begun to be voiced, but Postlethwayt answered those who thought it "a barbarous, inhuman and unlawful traffic for a Christian Country to trade in Blacks" that they were treated with great lenity and humanity and that "their Condition is much bettered to what it was in their own Country ... provided living in a civilized Christian Country is better than living among Savages." He claimed that the African princes were engaged in perpetual warfare and that before the growth of the Atlantic slave trade, captives were tortured and sacrificed and that in any case the lot of the negro slaves in the British plantations was no worse than that of "Colliers and Miners in all Christian Countries."

(11) In another of his four pamphlets on the African trade, he went so far as to assert "though all other Branches of our foreign Trade should fail us, or the Ballance go against us, ... yet while we shall encourage and extend our Plantation and African Trades ... we shall not, perhaps, experience any great Diminution in Naval Power." (12)

Modern historians of the West Indies and the colonial trade agree with the pamphleteers of Defoe's day that profitable sugar cultivation depended on negro slavery, which in turn expanded rapidly on the basis of this crop which required one

11. M. Postlethwayt, The National and Private Advantages of the African Trade Considered ... pp. 4-5.
12. M. Postlethwayt, The African Trade the Great Pillar and Support of the British Plantation Trade in America ... pp. 42-43.

slave to two acres, whereas five to ten acres of cotton only needed the same labour. "The cultivation of sugar on a profitable scale required a larger, more highly organized and more continuous labor force than any other agricultural pursuit in the eighteenth century." "Because the profits from it, as Adam Smith pointed out, were greater than those from other crops in Europe or America, "Sugar also could afford the expense of slave cultivation" and "it is very probable that the production of sugar would not have taken place as soon as it did if slavery had not existed to furnish a sufficiently large and continuous body of labour." When slavery was abolished, the production of cane sugar in the West Indies declined. (13)

Dissenters, other English Protestants, fellow Protestants abroad, Roman Catholics, Moslems and finally pagans was probably Defoe's descending order of preference for his fellow men, but the fact that he almost invariably emphasized the treachery, brutality and savagery of the negro race suggests that he may have needed to justify to himself the odious traffic for which he was one of the most strenuous advocates. Admittedly in the following quotation, as Professor Moore points out, Defoe was trying to discredit the evidence of two negroes on the "Worcester" who had testified against the unfortunate Captain Green when he was being made a scapegoat by the Scots for their disappointments and frustrations in the Darien venture: "... those Left-handed Animals call'd Negroes, whom Nature has distinguish'd by their dismal hue from Mankind, as a Mark of their perfidious, sordid, implacable Tempers and perverse Inclinations: They seem some

13. F.W. Pitman, The Development of the British West Indies, 1700-1763, (Newhaven, Conn. 1917) pp. 61-64.

degrees below Humanity, a Compound of Man and Beast, and besides Speech, have only the dreggs of the Nature of the former, to distinguish 'em from the latter. Nothing of the bright Image of the great Creator appears in 'em; nothing of the Variety, Justice, Generosity or Humanity of Man, their Mind is always fill'd with Baseness; and 'tis notoriously known they are strongly inclin'd to Mischief, and easily practis'd upon to engage in the most Bloody and Inhumane Villanies, ... Wretches that know nothing of the Ties of Blood! who Murder their dearest Friends and sell their Fathers, Brothers and Sisters for Trifles! Wretches, that when Infants, imbibe such Ridiculous conceits of God and a future State, as can never after be Eradicated; that after 20 years Instruction in the Christian Religion have such crude confus'd and stupid Notions of it; ..." (14)

Similarly, the European nations had been unable to establish any successful trade with the south and east of Africa because of "the Brutality, a Degree above Barbarity, of the Inhabitants, who exceed so much all the rest of Mankind in their being entirel unconvertible and incapable of being Civilized." (15) It is significant that the only criticism which Defoe permits himself of the treatment of the slaves in the British colonies is the following: "The English Planters suffer some Scandals ... for what is called their cruel Usage of these poor Creatures, ... But the greatest Cruelty of the two seems to be the total Neglect of instructing them in the Knowledge of Religion, and that purely on the Apprehensions of their becoming Christians; in which case they would by the Laws of England obtain their Liberty: A Fear

14. A Letter from Scotland to a Friend in London, pp. 7-8.

15. A General History of Trade July 1713, p. 7.



which might easily be prevented by making Laws to secure the Property of the Masters, ..." (16) The question of profit seems to have been the overriding consideration. In May 1712, he wrote in the 'Review': "I take Trade to be to the State, as the Negroes in Barbadoes are to the Plantations there; the Negroes are indeed Slaves, and our good People use them like Slaves, or rather like Dogs ... He that keeps them in Subjection, Whips, and Corrects them in order to make them grind and labour, does Right, for out of their Labour he gains his Wealth: But he that in his Passion and Cruelty, Maims, Lames and Kills them is a Fool, for they are his Estate, his Stock, his Wealth, and his Prosperity." (17)

Thus Defoe's feelings of common humanity with the negro were rare, but were genuine enough in their context. The polemicist in him, however, was always able to exclude other considerations, even moral objections, when developing a journalistic argument. Yet they were only driven into the background to reappear in fictional guise ten years later when the dispute between the Royal African Company and the separate traders had long been resolved in favour of an open trade on the Guinea coast

To Defoe, as to his fellow pamphleteers, this trade on "the golden Shores of Africk, where they Barter Glass for Gold and Baubles for the Souls of Men" (18) was "a Trade which without

16. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, Introduction, p. 111.

17. Review, Vol. VIII (No. 182), p. 730.

18. Ibid, Vol. VII, (No. 30), p. 114. This is the only reference I can find where Defoe implies any moral criticism of the trade between 1702 and 1723.

any Export but of Trifles, brings back the most solid, the richest, and the best Return in the World." (19) Earlier, he had made two vital claims for the trade: "1. It makes the best Export, and the best Import of any Trade we drive; it exports nothing, but what we want to part with, and it Imports nothing but what we cannot be without ... Gold, Ivory, Bees-Wax, Red-Wood and Negroes, ... 2. It is the chief Support of another Trade, the Preservation of which, is of the last Consequence to Britain, Viz. our Collonies in America, which could no more be maintain'd, the Islands especially, without the supply of Negro Slaves ... Than London could subsist without the River of Thames." (20) Finally, in 1712, he laid down one of his "general maxims in trade", namely "That Trade which returns the most valuable Import, for the most trifling Export, must, in proportion to the Quantity, be the most profitable Trade to a Nation." He continued: "It would be writing a Panegyrick on the African-Trade, to enumerate the Trifles and Baubles that Purchase Gold Dust, Ivory and Slaves - The Truth is, the Payment on our side is hardly worth naming, unless Glass Beads, Cowries and Trinkets are of moment" and again stressed "the support of that most Inestimable Article of the British Trade, OUR PLANTATIONS. These can no more subsist without Negroes than England could without Horses ... Negroes are as essential to the Sugar Works at Barbadoes, Jamaica, etc. as Wind is to the Ships that bring it Home." (21) Previously, he had alleged that "were the Supply of Negroes but to stop one Year - the Plantations would

19. Ibid., (No. 32), p. 122.

20. Ibid., Vol. V, (No. 140), p. 559.

21. Ibid., Vol. IX, (No. 41), pp. 81-82.

fall Sick like a Body, when a Supply of Food is withheld from the Stomach." (22)

Not only, however, were there rival nations eager to enlarge their share of this valuable commerce, but the unsettled state of West Africa also made the building of forts necessary to safeguard England's trade in the area. The Portuguese, the first European nation to open it up to trade, had "found the Natives, Wild, Barbarous, Treacherous, and perfectly untractable as to Commerce" and had been obliged to fortify their trading posts. All the other nations had to follow their example, because of "this Maxim in the African Trade, that is, it is no way to be carryed on but by Force; for a mere Correspondence with the Natives as Merchants, is as impracticable, as it would be if they were a Nation of Horses." (23) Davenant advanced the same argument in stating that there were, between Axim and Accra, about twenty petty principalities, "wholly independent of one another" and that they were so mercenary and treacherous to each other that all the European nations had found it necessary to bribe them and to build forts. He further pointed to the example of the Dutch, "the most politick and designing people in trade", who had eleven forts and settlements along the Gold Coast. (24) Therefore, both writers came to the same conclusion, that only an exclusive, joint-stock organisation such as the Royal African Company could guarantee the maintenance of these military posts which were essential for the security of

22. *Ibid*, Vol. V, (No. 142), p. 568.

23. *Ibid*, Vol. V, (No. 140), p. 561.

24. C. Davenant, "Reflections Upon The Constitution and Management of the Trade to Africa" in *Works*, ed. Whitworth, Vol. V, pp. 114-115.

the trade. (25) Similarly, both men rejected the alternative of a regulated company, such as the Turkey Company, almost in identical words. Thus Defoe wrote, "this ... may be laid down as a Maxim in the Case of Companies in England; a Regulated Company is erected in no Trade, but which may be carried on by private Stocks, without any such Regulations at all; and an Exclusive Company is allow'd in England, in no Case but where private Trade cannot be carry'd on but by Force ... where no Justice or Laws of Commerce are so establish'd, as may be depended upon for Safety and Protection." (26) Davenant made the additional observation that in Turkey there were only two or three principal places of trade, all under the government of one ruler, and that "it were no difficult matter for the Queen of Great-Britain, by her ambassador, to have her subjects there vindicated and righted, even if there had been no company, as the French King, the Venetians and the Dutch have done all along." (27) Although the separate traders claimed that the forts were unnecessary, worth in their estimation only £41,000 when the trade was virtually thrown open in 1698, both Davenant and Defoe accepted the Company's valuation of £150,000. (28) Defoe said that the interlopers were in effect only valuing the forts like a ship about to be broken up or a house to be pulled down, "not as a Ship, or as a House, but according to the meer Worth of the Materials", whereas the Company, although then "only in the very Infancy of the Trade", had paid their predecessors, in 1672, £24,000 for three forts in a ruinous condition. (29) He firmly

25. Ibid, pp. 131, 142-143; Defoe, Review, Vol. V, (No. 158), p. 629.
26. Review, Vol. V, (No. 158), pp. 629-630.
27. Davenant, Works, Vol. V, p. 128.
28. Ibid, pp. 109-110; Defoe, Review, Vol. V, (No. 156) p. 623.
29. An Essay on the Trade to Africa, pp. 5-6; A Brief Account of the Present State of the Africa Trade, pp. 6-8.

believed that the separate traders could give no security for their upkeep, that a single payment as in a regulated company would be totally inadequate and that the income from the ten per cent contribution imposed by Parliament in 1698 on the value of the goods exported to Africa by both the interlopers and the Company was insufficient. (30) To the claim that the ten per cent contribution would be more than adequate for the maintenance of the forts because of the increase in trade under free competition, Defoe rejoined, "Who is the Man that will trade when he gets nothing by it, that will fit out a Ship meerly to preserve the Factory or Settlements, ... Will honest Men go over, and burn, and fry there for you for 100 l. a Year? ... Will you upon this precarious uncertain Fund be able to withstand and counteract the Dutch and French, who have an united Strength and Stock?"

(31) The opponents of the Royal African Company alleged that the forts were unnecessary because, except for Fort James in Gambia, they were only situated "in the Compass of 150 Miles on the Guinea Coast" whereas they claimed that they obtained slaves from 3,000 miles of the western coastline. Some pamphlets spoke of a distance of 7,000 miles between Cape Verde and the Cape of Good Hope. (32) Defoe ridiculed these claims and said that they should state how many slaves they bought south of Angola, "and whether any one Ship traded for Negroes, or Teeth or Gold, for 2,000 Miles of the 3,000 they mention; ... the Interlopers trade nowhere but where the Company Ships frequently go." (33)

30. Review, Vol. V, (No. 152), p. 606; An Essay on the Trade to Africa, p. 16.

31. Review, Vol. V, (No. 150), p. 599; An Essay on the Trade to Africa, p. 42.

32. (Anon) Remarks on the African Company's Memorial ..., p. 2.

33. Review, Vol. V, (No. 147), p. 586.

The separate traders also wrote in contemptuous terms of the Company's forts. Thus, "James Fort in Gambo taken by the French in open Boats ... no otherwise repaired, than by a Heap of Stones and Rubbish confusedly put together. Sierra Leone, taken also by open Boats, remains in Ruines, was only a Thatch'd Store-house, forty Yards square. Sherbro, a Thatch'd House, thirty Yards square, mostly tumbl'd down. Queen Anne's Point - one Man, no Guns, is a Place like a Pidgeon-House, wherein one Centinel is kept, to hinder the Natives carrying Corn to the Separate Traders out at Sea, Anishaw, A Negroe-House, one Man and no Guns. Animaba, mostly tumbled down, commonly called the Company's Brew-house ... Accra, a small Fort with about 20 Guns, usually manned with one Man to two Guns ... Dicky's Cove, ... one Part or other often tumbling down, serves only to keep three or four Men in, to give Notice of the Arrival of Ships. Succundee, once taken by the Negroes, a sorry Place ... Cabo Corso-Castle, worth all the rest of the Forts in Guinea, but cannot defend Ships that draw much Water, and commanded by Dane's Hill, where the Company had a small Fort called Fort Royal, but was washed down by the Rain, and remains yet unrepaired." The same writer claimed that during the Spanish Succession War "there were not for some Years ... more than sixty or seventy Soldiers, besides a General, and three Lieutenant Generals ... some of them having but two or three Men apiece, many of their Guns without Carriages, ill stor'd with Provisions, liable most of them to the same Fate as that of Gambo, ... Though indeed they charge thirty thousand Pounds per Annum for their keeping, which

most Years amounts to four hundred Pounds per Man per Annum; ..."

(34) Yet Defoe stoutly maintained, "if the Company had no Forts and Castles, the Separate Traders durst not come upon the Coast, or show their Faces to the Negroes". (35) John Cary, who as a Bristol merchant, naturally supported the separate traders against the exclusive London company, did not see any reason why we needed to fight our way into a trade as advantageous to the African natives as to ourselves and declared that the forts only seemed to be settlements for the Company factors and that they were not fitted "to wage a National War, or to secure against a National Invasion." (36) Defoe accepted this argument but countered that none of the nations on the Guinea coast was in any stronger position. Although some forts had been damaged by the French, they were still adequate to protect the trade against the natives or against foreign traders, although not apparently against rival British traders. (37) The historian of the Royal African Company, K.G. Davies, is in substantial agreement with Defoe's conclusions about the forts. He points out, as Defoe always argued must be the case, that Parliament, throughout the dispute between the interlopers and the Company, never departed from the proposition that the forts must be preserved and that the Spaniards took little direct part in the trade, possibly because they had no forts. Although "the defence of the Guinea Coast settlements against native attack depended less on fortification, and more on diplomacy ... it remains true that the forts of the

34. (Anon) A View of the State of the Trade to Africa ... (1708) pp. 44-47.

(Anon) The Improvement of the African Trade farther Demonstrated ... (1708), pp. 43-44.

35. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 7), p. 27.

36. J. Cary, An Essay towards Regulating the Trade ... (1719), pp. 55-56.

37. An Essay on the Trade to Africa ... p. 17.

Royal African Company contributed something to the maintenance of a kind of balance of power on the African coast in which no single nation could achieve supremacy. Conceivably in 1700 France might have gained that supremacy; but the fact that England (and the United Provinces) possessed forts meant that the process would be difficult, expensive, possibly bloody, and probably not worth the effort... the forts, ruinous and undermanned as they were, were at least an insurance against the small-scale raids which were likely to be launched. In the broad sense they preserved English interests, the company carrying the national burden. The economic value was slight; the most obvious and immediate result of their existence was the creation, by the preservation of the balance of power, of the conditions in which interlopers... could flourish." (38)

Defoe was impressed by the fact that "the most considerable merchants in London" had formed the Royal African Company and that it began "under the greatest Advantages imaginable, viz. a flush Stock and Full Credit." (39) Only the East India Company had a larger capital in 1672 and he was not in a position to realize that the African Company was under-capitalized and that its large borrowings were in effect only providing the dividends which it was unable to earn by its trading activities, while adding to the burden of debt. Both Defoe and Davenant believed that the Company was prosperous until the Revolution of 1688 and that it was the competition from the interlopers

38. K.G. Davies, The Royal African Company, (1957) pp. 262-264.
39. A Brief Account of the Present State of the African Trade, p. 4.



which then ruined the trade, (40) although a rival pamphleteer in 1711 pointed out that all the African Companies which had been established in Europe had become bankrupt. (41) Defoe believed that the private traders would be unlikely to export more than £50,000 worth of goods to Africa each year and he accepted the Company's claim in 1709, that if it were re-established in its exclusive privileges it would undertake to export at least £100,000 worth, which, he said, "would effectually restore the trade to the Nation." (42) He could not know that this was an essential requirement for the future viability of the company. Only in the year 1723 was this figure achieved and two years later exports had fallen to the negligible figure of £3,917 and even lower, to £2,943, in 1726. The highest previous figure was £88,000 in 1682 and the annual average was only £40,000 and below £25,000 during the period of intensive pamphleteering, 1700-1710. The direct trade with Africa never reached Englishmen's expectations, the market for Devonshire "perpets" being only a minor outlet and half the goods exported were re-exports, although as late as 1745 Malachy Postlethwayt thought that English goods formed seven-eighths of the total. (43) Yet the encouragement which the Company gave to English manufacturers enabled it to substitute their products for the Dutch goods which it had been obliged to use at the beginning. Both Defoe and Davenant attached great importance to the returns

40. Ibid, p. 6; An Essay on the Trade to Africa, pp. 9-10.

41. Davenant, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

41. (Anon) Reasons against Establishing an African Company at London ... p. 1.

42. Review, Vol. V, (No. 152), p. 606; (No. 147), pp. 585-586.

43. M. Postlethwayt, The African Trade, the Great Pillar and Support ... p. 19.

from Africa, but although the Company derived two-fifths of its income from the sale of these goods, its largest import of gold was only responsible for about 7 per cent of the total coined by the Mint, and this was the chief import. (44) Unfortunately for the Company, its heyday coincided with falling prices for West Indian sugar exports so that its ships usually returned to England in ballast, after delivering their cargoes of slaves, and when the prices began to rise after 1686 it was the separate traders who reaped the benefit. (45) In 1711 Defoe contrasted the former prosperity of the Company with its languishing condition at that date. Previously, "they had very little Debt upon them, an unlimited Credit, a full Cash, a vast Stock, and their Actions run the highest upon a real Bottom to support them of any Company that ever was in England; being once sold at Four Hundred Pound per Cent." The "Convulsions of their Trade", caused solely by the competition from the interlopers, had obliged the Company to raise nearly £200,000 by the issue of bonds at six per cent. interest and Defoe further accused its rivals of buying up these bonds in order to defeat the Company's proposals for reaching an accommodation with its creditors. (46) He claimed that he had lost £700 by two shares in the Company which he had bought for £800 and that if he had kept them they would only have been worth £22. (47) In the difficult summer of 1710, when public credit was suffering from the bitter party conflict intensified by the affair of Dr. Sach-

44. K.G. Davies, op. cit., pp. 44-46, 166-182, 344-345.

45. K.G. Davies, op. cit., pp. 187, 336-343.

46. An Essay on the Trade to Africa, pp. 10, 26.

47. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 54), pp. 211-212.

everell, from the strain of war and from the previous bad harvest, Defoe was enraged by the news that a Dutch ship had touched at Plymouth or Falmouth with a cargo of £60,000 worth of gold from Guinea. If the Company had not been harassed by interlopers, it would be importing similar cargoes, so important "when a long War had stopt the Channels of Bullion from Mexico and Peru." Equally disturbing was the fact that the Dutch had a surplus of slaves for their colonies and thus were able to supply them at half the price of their competitors, the English and the French. (48) He suggested that the Dutch might have doubled their Guinea trade as a result of the dissensions between the English merchants and asked, "Have they Discover'd any new Coast? Have they gone farther up the Country? In short, Have they gain'd any thing, but what we have lost? ... I am persuaded it might be made out, they have not got one Ounce of Gold, or one Elephant's Tooth, but what we have been forc'd to let slip through our Fingers, for want of Strength and Hands, to take it our selves." (49) Earlier he had declared, "These are the Hands that open the Doors to the Dutch, and that Surrender the Settlements to the French." (50)

One of the constant arguments of the Company's opponents was that it must, by its very nature as a monopoly, use its power to buy English goods from the manufacturers at the lowest possible price and by its control of the supply sell the negroes in the West Indies at excessive prices. In addition, as the

48. Ibid, p. 210, (No. 52), p. 202; An Essay on the Trade to Africa, p. 10.

49. Review, Vol. VII, No. 56, p. 218.

50. Ibid, No. 34, p. 130.

only freighter, it would become "the sole Director of this great Circle of Trade and Navigation." (51). Defoe, like Davenant, declared that the opposite was in fact the case, that the competition from the interlopers had ruined the trade by reducing the selling prices of English commodities on the Guinea coast and raising the price of negroes while the traders, in an effort to maintain their profits, had further advanced the price of negroes to the planters. . . . "The Coast of Africa was made a meer Common Fair, where every Ship's Company endeavouring to circumvent and undersell one another: The Negroes, who were before made to give our own Prices for Goods, were taught to be Hucksters and Brokers for one another; the whole Scale of the Trade was turned, and instead of putting our Price upon them, they learnt now to put their Price upon the English; as well as of what they Bought, as of what they Sold." (52) Whereas previously, "Slaves, Teeth and Gold; . . . were all purchas'd at low Rates from the Savages; and even these low Rates paid in Trifles and Toys, such as Knives and Sissors, Kettles and Clouts, Glass Beads, and Cowries," now, "by the Strife and Envy among the Traders, . . . that gainful Commerce once superior to all the Trades in the World, . . . is sinking daily into a Kind of Rubbish as to Trade; and we are sometimes said to buy even the Gold too dear." (53) For his part, Davenant alleged that the 1698 Act had not fulfilled his expectations, "that neither the company alone, nor the separate traders jointly considered, nor the British plantations in America, nor the

51. Reasons Against Establishing an African Company at London . . . op. cit., p. 1.

52. A Brief Account of the Present State of the African Trade . . . p. 11.

53. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 247.

nation in general, are gainers thereby; ... the planters complaining extremely of the great scarcity of, and extravagant advance upon the price of negroes, while others ... are complaining of the low and mean prices of woollen and other British manufactures on the coast of Guinea." He continued, "as the trade is now managed, it is next to impossible for either the company, or scarcely any of the separate traders who deal upon the square, ... to be gainers by it ... the merchant, to save his own bacon as much as he can, imposes these negroes again on the planters in America, at such exorbitant rates as the planters cannot possibly afford to give, without a proportional advance on the prices of sugar, cotton, indigo etc. ... that (like a virulent distemper affecting the blood) a fundamental error in the constitution of so essential a branch of our foreign trade, as that to Africa, must of course diffuse itself through the whole circulation of our trade in general." (54) Characteristically, Defoe lamented the fact that the 1698 Act had legitimated the separate traders, "under a new Name, disdaining the scandalous Title of Interlopers, which are indeed but the Raparees or Highway-men of Trade", always a term of strong condemnation by Defoe. (55) By 1710 in little more than a decade since the trade was thrown open, competition had almost doubled the price of negroes to the planters, (56) but this, he said, was "robbing the general Stock of the Nation to Bribe the Natives of Africa." (57)

54. C. Davenant, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79, 94-96.

55. An Essay on the Trade to Africa ... p. 15.

56. K.G. Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-144.

57. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 41), p. 82.

Both Davenant and Defoe believed that the Company because it was an established corporation must always act more responsibly than the separate traders who, if they found the trade unprofitable, "would quickly drawn their necks out of the collar and give over by degrees." (58) Defoe asked who could secure the colonies a regular supply of negroes at a reasonable price - "A Company whose Charter binds them, whose Privileges depend upon it, whose Stock may be Subjected to the Performance of it, who may be Prosecuted for the Omission of it? - Or a certain Number of Merchants that to Day are, and to Morrow are not to be found; ... that have no Tie but their Profit to fit out one Ship, and when that Profit ceases will fit out no more? - ... that must have their Price at this Island or this Colony, or else carry them to another?" (59) He further asked the planters who gave them long credit for slaves, taking their money out of the next crop, "or perhaps the second or third?" Even though the Company was burdened by "a crippled Stock and a decayed Credit", they had had £150,000 at a time owing to them in the colonies for negroes. (60) K.G. Davies substantiates this argument. Although the Company was never able to deliver a sufficient aggregate supply of slaves, it did distribute the negroes available more evenly than the traders. When the Barbados Assembly in 1706 obliged the creditors of the planters to take depreciated paper currency not only for the slaves they sold there but for outstanding old debts, the Company petitioned against the Act but continued to send slaves, whereas the separate traders cut off supplies. Yet at this date the Company

58. C. Davenant, Works, Vol. V, p. 130

59. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 152) p. 567 (607).

60. Ibid, Vol. V, (No. 143) p. 570.

was in great difficulties. (61)

It was for this reason that Defoe maintained that the Company was not really a monopoly. It was bound to carry on the trade through good times and bad, "and tho' an Interval of Trade, or Cessation of Profits for a Year or Years, were to happen, they go on; ... the Trade is sure to be kept up till better Times return. He continued, "all the Grievance of a Monopoly lies in the Engrossers of a Trade, being in a Condition to Impose a Price upon either Buyer or Seller; which in this Case is effectually Answer'd; for if they are bound to Export a certain Quantity of Manufactures, they are under a Necessity of Buying, and so cannot Command the Price of the Seller. If they are Ty'd to a Price of their Negroes, they cannot Impose upon the Market where they Sell; and so all Pretence of a Monopoly ceases of Course." (62) He seems to have believed that Parliament could impose further restrictions on the Company in return for its exclusive privileges: "Let a Company have but an Exclusive Authority, and that Authority kept Sacred and supported - Tye them Hand and Foot from monopolizing or imposing on any Body; set a Price upon their Ivory here, their Negroes there; nay, upon their very Gold." (63) He envisaged that conditions could be made, "that upon the Complaint of the Merchants of any Colony for Want of Slaves, ... the Company shall be oblig'd to deliver the Number demanded, Danger of the Seas excepted, within a certain Time. A thousand Ways may be taken with an exclusive Company, all which tend to secure the Trade;

61. K.G. Davies, op. cit.; pp. 146-147.

62. An Essay on the Trade to Africa, pp. 44-46.

63. Review, Vol. V (No. 143) p. 571.

because built upon this, that they may be oblig'd to Trade. But where every Man is at Liberty to trade or not to trade, as his Profit invites, or his Loss deters, no possible Security ... can be propos'd for the Preservation of the Trade, since without a sufficient Charge upon the Trade for upholding the Settlement, it cannot be upheld." (64) It must be remembered that Defoe thought that the trade was basically extremely profitable once the Company's privileges were secured and that any restrictions imposed by Parliament would not result in bankruptcy. (65) Finally, some regular organized group of merchants was required for the conclusion of the Asiento contract with Spain. "How could this be carried on," he asked, "by separate Men embark'd in private Interests? Who would the Spaniards deal with if we had no African Company? If with the South-Sea Company, Who would the South-Sea Company deal with?" (66)

Believing that the Company was like Solomon's true mother, intent on preserving the life of her child, trade, whereas the separate traders were "like the hard Hearted Whore" willing to see the trade "cut in pieces by the strife", it is not surprising that Defoe was amazed that many of the planters should be petitioning in favour of the interlopers. This was "as Ridiculous, as if the City of London should Petition to have all the Keys in the River of Thames laid open, as lawful Landing Places for Merchants Goods." (67) He reminded the colonists that their settlements "were all founded upon Charters, Companies, and ex-

64. Review, Vol. V, (No. 47) p. 578.

65. A Brief Account of the Present State of the African Trade... pp. 35-36.

66. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 41) p. 82. Cf. Davenant, Works, V, p. 138.

67. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 152) p. 567 (607).



clusive Privileges; ... without them they had never been settled, when settled never maintain'd, when maintain'd never improved" and that the exclusive laws of trade were necessary to prevent their acquisition by some rival colonial power. (68) He was relieved to note that these petitions were "sign'd by but few, and those none of the most Considerable of either Merchants or Planters" but that there should be any was "one of the most unaccountable things in the World." Like Davenant, he was quick to seize on the counter petition from the Barbados planters, "the greatest Part and the most Considerable for Interest, of all the Planters in the West Indies." (69) He reserved his chief scorn for the petitions from the "United Kingdoms of Wapping and Redriff", whose interest it clearly was that the trade of the Company should continue to be a London monopoly, and yet had petitioned, in effect, for the trade to be opened to the western outports. (70)

Although it is possible that both Davenant and Defoe were paid by the Company for their services, no evidence has yet appeared for this. Both protested that they were not hired but even if they were, it is unlikely that it made any difference to their views on the African trade. (71) Davenant had changed his mind since 1698 but his reasons seem genuine and Defoe was undoubtedly consistent in all his writings on this question. Writing in Edinburgh in 1706, he urged the

68. Ibid. (No. 154) p. 575 (615).

69. An Essay on the Trade to Africa, pp. 46-47; C. Davenant, Works, V, pp. 103-105.

70. Review, Vol. VIII (No. 4), p. 15.

71. Ibid., Vol. VII, (No. 40) p. 154; C. Davenant, Works, V. p. 75.

Scots to abandon their Darien Company because England would never allow a rival venture in their trade to India. But the East India Company was the only exclusive company in England's foreign trade and anyone could enter the Guinea trade by paying the ten per cent duty on their exports to Africa to maintain the Royal African Company's forts, "being their Settlement under cover of which you must carry on that Trade." (72) Thus Defoe had already become convinced that these forts were vital to safeguard the English share of the slave trade, two years before he began to argue so trenchantly for the Company.

In 1709 the Report of the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations to the House of Commons showed that in the decade since the 1698 Act the Company had supplied the plantations with only 18,000 slaves compared with 75,000 sent by the separate traders. Despite the great risks in this highly speculative trade, in the face of the special difficulties created by the war, and even when contributing to the upkeep of the forts, they had transported more negroes than the Company had ever been able to do in any corresponding period even in peace. (73) Why did both Defoe and Davenant

72. A Fourth Essay, at Removing National Prejudices . . ., p. 37.

73. K.G. Davies, op. cit., pp. 139-144.

discount this evidence? Davenant was at pains to dispute the claims of the separate traders, both their exports from Britain and their figures of slaves delivered to the plantations. (74) Both seem to have thought that the Company would have sent at least as many as the combined total if their monopoly had been strongly upheld. (75) Defoe certainly believed that trade must always be carried on through the regular channels and must be subject to the ultimate control of the state, either through the medium of an exclusive joint-stock company or by means of regulations laid down by Parliament. Otherwise the private interests of the merchant would endanger the strategic needs of the state or its competitive power in the conflict for trade.

During the seventeenth century each of the national states of western Europe "was experimenting with methods of commercial development and seeking for the form of business organization best suited to distant commerce." (76) None of the national exclusive companies, however, <sup>which</sup> engaged in the African trade proved successful. The Dutch West India Company, in spite of subsidies from the States General, became much less important than the English in the trade soon after 1700, and also suffered from the activities of interlopers. Although there were four reconstructions of Colbert's Company of the West Indies, it also failed to supply the French planters with sufficient slaves. (77)

74. C. Davenant, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-105, 280-300.

75. *Review*, Vol. V, (No. 140), p. 558.

76. E. Donnay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 73.

77. E. Donnay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 95-103; Vol. II, introduction, xix, xxvi.

When the French trade to Africa was also thrown open after 1713, French slavers proved so successful that they aroused the same fears in the mind of Malachy Postlethwayt that the Dutch had inspired at the time of Defoe forty years earlier. (78) It was the conviction of all three writers that any weakening of Britain's ability to defend her position on the Guinea coast would result in the loss of this inestimable trade, which was chiefly responsible for their insistence that the Company's monopoly must be restored. Defoe even insinuated that Dutch agents were behind the English interlopers. (79)

Although K.G. Davies confirms that the Royal African Company was the most successful of these rival national ventures, he shows that it developed before the other conditions were present which could ensure the commercial success of the large-scale trading company, except in the special circumstances of the East India Company. Apart from the fact that adequate capital could not have been raised at that date, the structural and administrative defects would always have militated against success.

(80) Neither Defoe nor Davenant was aware of this problem and although one of their rival pamphleteers observed that all the exclusive companies had become bankrupt, this was written to discredit the Royal African Company rather than because he had realized the fundamental weaknesses of this form of trading at

78. J.M. Price in The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, pp. 855-856; M. Postlethwayt, The African Trade, op. cit., pp. 7-11; The National and Private Advantages, op. cit., pp. 42-44.
79. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 10) p. 39.
80. K.G. Davies, op. cit., pp. 74-79, 111-112, 120-121, 148-149, 347-349.

the beginning of the eighteenth century. (81) Even if there had not been two large-scale wars with France between 1689 and 1713 and the Company had not had to contend with competition from interlopers who could trade more advantageously, it would still have failed. Although individual traders lost money and ceased to trade, the system of open trading flourished throughout the eighteenth century. (82) In 1729, however, only two years before his death, Defoe was still convinced that the decline of the Company had necessarily ruined all the branches of the trade, and three decades later, Postlethwayt was pressing for the elimination of French competition to restore the British position on the African coast. (83) Their fears were natural in those years of intense national trade rivalries and they could not foresee that the great expansion of the trade during the century, as the merchants of first Bristol and then Liverpool forged ahead of the London traders, would enable Britain to dominate the slave trade despite the demise of the Royal African Company and without the protection of its forts.

81. Reasons against Establishing an African Company at London .. op. cit., p. 1. Supra, p. 19.
82. K.G. Davies, op. cit., pp. 148-149, 346-347.
83. Plan of the English Commerce, p. 247. Supra, p. 22; M. Postlethwayt, The Importance of the African Expedition Considered ... 1758.

DEFOE'S ATTITUDE TO THE NEIGHBOUR NATIONS  
OF SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

Although there is no firm evidence that Defoe had any previous acquaintance with Scotland before he went north for Harley in September 1706, he had already shown himself to be an understanding and sympathetic observer of the sister nation. His earliest comments appeared in 'The Consolidator', for the first two volumes of the 'Review' were mainly occupied with the formidable struggle in Europe and with the danger that faction would weaken the English war effort. Despite the four provocative Acts of the Scottish Parliament in 1703-4, and the permission to export raw wool to England's trade rivals must have been particularly distasteful to him, Defoe did not share in the angry reaction of English public opinion. In reply to those who wished "to proceed the shortest Way with the Scots", (1) he declared that there was "no just cause for such a War." To fall upon a neighbour nation because they were making themselves secure had as little justification as a man breaking open a house "because the people bar and bolt the windows." "Opening instead of closing Differences was not at all the Method of bringing the Scots to Reason." Nor were poverty and weakness "a sufficient Ground to oppress a Nation, and their having a little Trade cannot be a sufficient Ground to equip Fleets to take away what they have." (2) Under the guise of the parallel nations on the moon, he claimed that the Solunarians "were really the Aggressors, and had put great hardships "upon the Nolunarians and that the

1. J.R. Moore, Daniel Defoe, Citizen of the Modern World, p. 179, uses one vague passage in the *Tour*, II, pp. 417-418 to suggest that Defoe had made a long journey in Scotland during William III's reign but supplies no further evidence.
2. The Consolidator, (March 1705), pp. 116-117.

root cause of the differences between them was the English dislike of Scottish Presbyterianism. He even reminded his readers that the English had often been well beaten in previous conflicts, but the main reason why English troops were reluctant to fight their northern neighbours was that "there was nothing to be got by it" because the country was too poor for plunder. He contrasted the English alarm with the steadiness of the Scots who "did nothing but tell them, that unless they would come to Terms, they would not have the same King as they, and then took some Measures to let them see they did not purpose to be forc'd to it." (3)

To force the Scots to accept the Hanoverian succession, without conditions, would be as unwarranted as Louis XIV's invasions of the liberties of his European neighbours, which was one of the reasons for the existing war. Anne, as Queen of Scotland by their Declaration of Right, was obliged to accept the Act of Security so long as the two governments remained distinct and independent - "the Queen acts in a double Capacity with Respect to the Administration, and is oblig'd to regard Justice to both without Byas." Even English indignation at the Scottish proposal to import French wine was a "weak Pretence" for we accepted Dutch trade with the enemy, practised this ourselves with Spain where we could see that it was in our own interest, "and should do so to France also, if we did not stand in our own Light." (4) But it seems that his strong condemnation of the Aliens Act of March 1705 stemmed from his fear that a prohibition of the imports of Scottish linen into England would endanger her precious

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 118, 341-346.

4. A Reply to a Pamphlet ... (January 1706) pp. 13-16.

woollen industry, as he ironically commented in the 'Review' on March 20th: "when I come to Examine the profound Policy of our Act to Prohibit or Discourage the Scots in their making Linen, and Importing it into England or Ireland, which if it does not push them of course into the Woollen Manufactures, and in Time do us more Prejudice, and themselves more Good than all their own Laws could, I am mistaken in the Scots, and they are more Fools than ever I took them to be." (5) The Aliens Act was, indeed, a "preposterous Law" and "in its Nature a Declaration of War". He likewise ridiculed "the marching Troops to the North, fortifying of Hull, and the like" but dismissed these actions as the work of a High Tory ministry, naturally averse to the Scots. The repeal of the Act, in December 1705, and the sacrifice of Captain Green made a fresh approach possible. He even tried to excuse the harsh fate of the innocent Captain Green, urging his readers to suspend their judgement until an authentic account of the affair appeared. Although nothing could be more horrid "than that the Scots should Execute these Men on a meer Pique at the English Nation", it was rash to conclude that this was the case, "and improve it on purpose to Exasperate our People against the Scots." (6) The following year he argued that hostile Englishmen had seized on this incident, "exaggerating and exclaiming against the pretended Injustice of those Executions, as a sufficient Ground of a National Quarrel, though at the same time there were two Scots hang'd to one English

5. Review, Vol. II (No. 7) pp. 26-27.

6. Ibid, (No. 23) pp. 90-91.



Man, and those condemn'd by the Ordinary Forms of Justice and Legal Process." (7)

"From his first comments on "this unhappy Broil", Defoe hoped that a closer union would be the outcome. It was evident that the design of the Nolunarians" was not a War, but a Union upon just Conditions." (8) In December 1705, four months before the Commissioners began their negotiations, he wrote, "all the Preliminaries of this Treaty consist in Three; Religion, Trade, and Civil Government. Charity would heal the First, Justice the Second, Prudence the last, the Union is Practicable on Good Terms, and Advantageous to both Nations, and I cannot but think, Now is the time to set it on Foot." In fact, the existing union of the crowns was more disadvantageous to the Scots than either complete separation or a complete union:

"The Scots are a brave, a populous, but poor Nation; nor are they at all the Richer, the Greater, or the more Considerable in the World, for their being either our Neighbours, or under the same Head with us; they are too much and too little united to us for their own Prosperity:

.....  
We have remov'd their Court, Engross'd their Trade, drawn off their Gentry, and thus their Capital is Destroy'd; they wither under our Shade, and we not only keep the Sun-beams of Prosperity from them, but we drop a sort of bitter Water upon them, that effectually keeps them from Thriving."

Even if a fuller union did not materialize, there were "a great

7. An Essay at removing National Prejudices against a Union with Scotland Part I, (May 1706) pp. 9-10. Two Englishmen and one Scotsman were hanged. If Defoe was the author of 'A Letter from Scotland' (1705), he knew more of the facts of the case than he shows in the above remarks. Professor Moore is now less sure of his authorship of that pamphlet, see A Checklist, p. 41. As late as December 1708, Defoe still referred to "the intollerable Ferment" which the executions aroused in England and maintained that it was not sufficient ground for a national quarrel, Review, Vol. V (No. 106-(109) ) p. 433.
8. The Consolidator, p. 344.

many ways yet left to make Scotland a Rich and a Powerful Nation, to revive their Figure in the World, and make them terrible to Europe." There was no reason why "we should hinder, prevent, or any ways interrupt their taking their Decaying Body into a Course of State Physick." (9) This was not official propaganda, written either at Harley's bidding or to find further favour with his benefactor. Apart from the two widely spaced comments in the 'Review', the rest appeared during a period of eleven months in two pamphlets which were not primarily, or even largely, concerned with Scotland. Until his second period of employment by Harley, after 1710, Defoe was almost entirely a free-lance propagandist with freedom to choose the topics on which he thought that he could mobilize public support for a wartime coalition ministry which was rapidly changing its complexion from moderate Tory to Whig. His first two essays at removing national prejudices were directed at Englishmen during the deliberations of the commissioners, but his pen was not enlisted to promote the Union in Scotland until he rode off to Edinburgh on September 13, 1706. Defoe may have suggested his first mission, as he certainly proposed his fourth visit in 1710-11, for he informed Harley on August 23rd that an anti-Union pamphlet, aimed at the English dissenters, had been sent to London and he expected to be asked to arrange for it to be printed. He added, "If I can lay my hand upon the manuscript you will be sure to see it, and if I cannot prevent its publication then, I shall but ill recommend my capacity to you as fit to be employed abroad." (10)

9. Review, Vol. II (No. 120) pp. 478-480.

10. H.M.C. (Portland), iv, p. 323.

His good opinion of the Scots was remarkable in Queen Anne's England or at any time throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The nobility had not been ennobled by party favour or by the acquisition of wealth, either in trade or in stock-jobbing, but were distinguished for their ancient lineage, "when Virtue only could that Fame obtain." If antiquity still had any claim to respect, it was in Scotland before any other place. (11) The Scottish gentry, like the Dutch and the German, were better educated than the English, because they were poor and needed to advance their fortunes. (12) "Bred to Letters first, and then to Arms", (13) they had shown their valour on so many European battlefields, particularly at Steenkirk, Namur, Blenheim and Ramillies. (14) He reported that Gustavus Adolphus had declared "that if he could have a Supply of forty thousand Scots joyn'd to his Finlanders, who were Horse, he thought he could conquer all the World." (15) He was no less warm in his regard for the Kirk:

"In Doctrine sound, in Discipline severe,  
The Church obtains her true Dominion here.  
And yet her soft Coercives yield no Pow'r  
Either to persecute, or to devour." (16)

To those who thought that Scotland was "a wast howling Wilder-ness", he retorted that she wanted nothing except what Englishmen would be better without, "your Overplus, your Excess, your Luxury, and abused Plenty." As the Scots fed soberly, so they lived soberly:

11. Caledonia, (1706) pp. 39-40, 46-48. Cf. An Argument proving that the Design of Employing and Enobling Foreigners ... (1717) pp. 34-36 - "O Scotland, ... how glorious art thou in the unmixed Blood of ancient Nobility, ..."
12. The Compleat English Gentleman, (1890) p. 118.
13. Review, Vol. V (No. 102) pp. 406-407.
14. Caledonia, pp. 26-37; A Scots Poem or A New Year's Gift ... (1707) p. 3. Cf. A Tour, p. 298, "we must always blush when we pretend to say the Scots ever wanted courage in the field"
15. Review, Vol. III (No. 120) p. 477.
16. Caledonia, pp. 25-26.

"The Countrymen are worse Husbandmen and better Christians than ours, and they have both more Knowledge and more Practice of Religion among the Poor than we have. There you shall ride thro' whole Towns and Cities, and hear no Swearing in the Streets ... Let your Country Clergy tell me, how full of Ignorance are the dark Villages in our Land of Light, and how many thousand Parishes are there in England, where a third Part of the People can neither write nor read? In Scotland every Lord of the Mannor or Heretor, who receives the Tythe or Teinds, as he is oblig'd to maintain a Minister in the Church, so he is bound to erect a School, and maintain a School-master in every Parish, by which means the poorest People have their Children taught and instructed."

He testified that he had seen a congregation of 700 people, even 7000, where hardly one was without a bible, except the two or three who were blind, whereas at many English services not one in twenty had a bible with them. (17) Another pointed comparison was between "the barbarous Treatment" of shipwrecked seamen by "the Country Cannibals" in England and the conduct of Scottish country folk when six Dutch East Indiamen were wrecked near Montrose. Not only had as much cargo as possible been salvaged, but even the "very Tackle and Furniture of the Ships", the gunpowder and 600,000 guilders in money, all carefully accounted for, "whereas had these poor People met with this Distress on the Goodwin or Portland Beach, or indeed any where upon our more Christian Shoar - The Ships had been torn to pieces, the Goods rifled, the Money dispos'd of, having no Ear Mark, and the poor Dutch Men turn'd a Drift to feed Herrings, that they might tell no Tales." (18) But his admiration for a more Puritan, a simpler, more sober society did not extend to "that scandalous Vassalage" that kept the poor dejected and miserable. (19)

17. Review, Vol. V (No. 80) p. 318. Cf. A Tour, II, pp. 320, 324.  
 18. Ibid, (No. 114) pp. 454-455.  
 19. Ibid, Vol. VI (No. 57) p. 226.

He ridiculed "the ancient Patriarchal Jest" of the clan system in the Western Highlands, where the "obedient Rabble" followed the call of their chieftain and hundreds of men had frequently been killed, "or rather murdered, on a side for some Impertinent Wrangle; as, for a Cow, or a Horse, or any such Country Trespass."  
(20)

Two years after full union had been achieved, he still regretted that there were not "in the whole World two Nations, that stand so near, have so much Concern with and Interest with each other, that know so little of one another." English ignorance of Scotland was such that "to hear our People speak of Scotland, or of the Scots Affairs; or People, it would make a Stranger think, that this same Place call'd Scotland was some remote Country in the East-Indies, or about Madagascar." They thought that Scotland was so barren that they would seriously ask if there was "any Mutton, or any Beef, or any Butter, or any such thing as Milk in Scotland - The Highlanders they take to be a Sort of Monsters, and ask, if they live upon Roots and the Bark of the Trees - Never was more wild Notions in the Heads of our People here, of the Caribbees in the Gulph of Florida, or of the Islands of the Gulph of Mexico - or of the brutish People of the Cape de bonne Esperance, than they have of this People." (21)

Yet Defoe was fully aware how backward the Scottish economy was in comparison with England's, a gap which he considered had widened ever since James VI succeeded to the English throne.

20. Jure Divino (1706) Book II, p. 6.  
21. Review, Vol. VI (No. 44) pp. 174-175. Cf. Vol. III (No. 170) pp. 677-678.

In one of his worst poems, he contended that it was "the damn'd Plague of Poverty" which prevented the Scots from developing the "golden Mine" of the fisheries at their very door.

"Ah Poverty's the damn'd Impediment,  
Marrs our Designs, our Glory, and content!" (22)

This did not mean, however, that Scotland was poor in natural resources. Where he expected to meet "nothing but Barbarians and Barrenness," he found much rich produce and expressed surprise that Englishmen should have such false notions of the northern half of their own island. (23) The growths were the same on either side of the border so that there were in Scotland,

"and that one hundred and fifty Miles North of Edinburgh, as well as nearer to England, whole Counties, vast Tracts of Land for twenty Miles together, as rich, as strong, as fertile, as well water'd, and as capable of Improvement, as the Counties of Middlesex, Hartford, and Bedford, or generally speaking, as any in England. But Scotland has been an uninstructed, discourag'd and abus'd Nation; Poverty has grown upon them; Misery begets Sloth ... and Sloth confirms and binds down that Misery; the Disasters of War, English Devastations, the Disasters of their Government, their Courts being remov'd to England, and above all, the Disasters of their Constitution, the Want of that Thing call'd Liberty, and the petty Tyranny of the Landlords, these have all kept Scotland poor - But ... Rouze but the Scots to Industry ... they have a Soil able to make them as rich, as plentiful, and as pleasant as your selves." (24)

But the fact that Scotland, by reason of her soil, climate and people, was naturally fruitful but remained backward, was a reflection on her landlords, particularly in the Highlands, who had failed to provide the spur to improvement.

22. A Scots poem or A New-Years Gift (1707) p. 4.

23. Review, Vol. III, (No. 170) p. 677.

24. Ibid, Vol. VI (No. 44) p. 175). A Scots poem, p. 25.

"The lab'ring Poor dejected and suppress't,  
See not th' approaching Prospect of their Rest.

Too much subjected to immoderate Power,  
Their Petty Tyrants, all their Pains devour.  
Th' extorting Masters their just hopes Restrain  
And Diligence is no where more in vain.  
The Little Chiefs, for what they call their due,  
Eat up the Farme and eat the Farmer too;  
Suck the Life-Blood, of Tennant and Estate,  
And needless Poverty to both create."

Only petty gentry would so disregard their own interest by racking the tenant, "their Necessities not permitting 'em to be more generous." (25) Therefore, to produce the desired improvement in Scottish trade, it was "a fundamental Maxim" that the land must be improved first. "If you will cure the raging Distemper of Poverty and Sloth, you must begin at the Principles of Improvement; and these are the Produce of the Earth." This would set in train the following chain of consequence: "The Increase of Rent must enrich the Landlord. As Wealth increases, Expenses must increase; and this makes Trade - Again, as the Produce increases, it will maintain and employ more Hands: This will raise the Value of Labour; raising the Value of Labour encourages the Poor to work; for 'tis Wages makes Men diligent: The Reward of Industry makes Men industrious - Two things only engender Sloth in the World, Pride and Poverty." Whereas the Scots abroad were noted for their diligence, at home they were the exact reverse, "Abroad the most forward in Business, and at Home the most backward of any People I know in Europe." (26)

Because of the deficiencies of the lesser gentry and because of the dominant position which the nobility and greater gentry occupied in Scotland, Defoe looked to the latter to initiate this

25. Caledonia, (1706) pp. 22-23.

26. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 45) p. 178.

fundamental change, which, he argued, did not depend on the Union. Indeed, he wondered why the opponents of the Union had not proposed this "as an Equivalent against it" for the only thing which would enable Scotland to remain independent would be agricultural improvement. "With or without an Union, the Nobility and Gentry may plant, manure and enrich their Estates; the Sheep Masters manage, direct and take care of their Sheep, preserve the Breed, and nourish the Encrease of their Cattel."

(27) The present coarseness of Scottish wool was entirely owing to "the ill Husbandry of the People, not the Inclemencies of Nature; ... and spoiling the Wool with Tar, Grease, and horrible foolish Applications to it ... on the Sheep's back." (28) The tenant was obviously incapable of making any improvements for he was so poor and dejected that he would be unable to take any advantage of a reduction in his rent, which in any case Defoe thought undesirable because it would "sink the Value of the Free-hold in the whole Kingdom." When the land had been enclosed and improved, it should be let for a much higher rental and every effort made to ensure that the tenants kept it "up to its Goodness" while they were gaining skill in husbandry. As for the heavy expense of enclosure, "no Money can be laid out to equal Advantage, nor in which the return can be equally certain or soon." (29) Throughout the Tour of Scotland, like Arthur Young in England at the end of the century, he was quick to commend any examples of improved agricultural practice or,

27. Caledonia, Preface to the Parliament. See T.C. Smout, 'Scottish Landowners and Economic Growth 1650-1850' in Scottish Journal of Political Economy, Vol. XI, (1964) No. 3.
28. A Fifth Essay ... (1707) p. 23.
29. Caledonia, Preface.



more frequently, to point to instances where English methods would produce a much greater output. In East Lothian he reported that the use of seaweed as a fertiliser enabled the farmers to avoid a fallow and yet "they had as much corn ... as could stand upon the ground." Along the southern shore of Moray Firth, west of the river Spey, he found early, yet large, crops of wheat as fine as any that he had seen in England. He believed that this owed something to English example as he claimed that many old Cromwellian soldiers had settled in the vicinity of Inverness when they were disbanded. In Galloway they had "the best breed of strong low horses in Britain, if not in Europe" and it was not uncommon "for a Galloway nobleman to send 40,000 sheep, and 4,000 head of black cattle to England in a year." The chief weaknesses in Scottish farming, however, were, in his opinion, the lack of enclosed pastures and the failure to fold their sheep and to fallow their arable in a regular rotation. (30) Therefore, it would be the fault of Scottish landlords if the value of their estates did not double in a few years once they introduced English improvements, for it was a slander upon Scotland to say that it was a barren land.

"'Tis want of Trade to whet Industry, Profit to whet Trade, Vent of Goods and Stock to produce Profit; These are the Barrennesses your Country Complains of, and Declines for want of. Your Lands Enclosed, Manured and Cultivated, would be as Rich, your Cattel as Large, your Sheep as Fat, and your Wool as Fine as in England, your barren Muirs would yield Corn, the Hills feed Flocks of Sheep, and your better Lands which you now wholly Employ with the Plough, would Feed Strong, and Valuable Cattel, from hence would proceed Darys, Milk, Butter, Cheese etc." (31)

30. A Tour, Vol. II, pp. 286, 405-408, 327, 290.

31. An Essay at removing National Prejudices ... Part III (1706) p. 9; Cf. H.M.C. (Portland) IV, p. 586.

In the pre-industrial age, it was axiomatic that the first step in the development of a backward economy must be the improvement of the land, but this was generally accepted as the essential preliminary to the still more desirable expansion of industry and overseas trade. No writer exemplified this outlook better than Defoe, but naturally, as was true of both sides in the later controversy about the French commercial treaty, both the Unionists and their opponents started from common ground. In this case this was the extreme poverty of Scotland and an adverse balance of trade leading to a serious shortage of foreign currency with which to buy essential imports. As if to emphasize the mercantile framework within which the debate took place, the individual merchant was accused of making matters worse by importing the wrong commodities in his pursuit of his own interest at the expense of the general welfare. (32) Thus Defoe blamed the Scottish merchants for the decay of trade, if indeed Scotland had any who deserved that name:

"For our Traders here, begin with Pedling Stocks, and when they have got, some, 5, 6 or seven thousand lib. Sterl: a Stock fit to begin upon; then Adieu Business, they must Buy Estates, and turn Lairds, they're too great for Merchandising. And when they do Trade, is it not to a Demonstration, That hastening to be Rich, not respecting the Interest of the Nation, their Import exceeds their Export, as far their Credit in the Countries they Trade with, will reach; and what they do Import, are such Commodities, as are all Consumed at Home, ... to the Value of 1000 Lib. Sterl: per Annum, in Legal Trade: And this to a Demonstration, makes their Trafficking rather Prejudicial than Advantageous to the Kingdom."

32. See J.M. Low's excellent discussion, 'A Regional Example of the Mercantilist Theory of Economic Policy' Manchester School, Vol. XXI, No. 1, (Jan. 1953) pp. 62-84.

He also attacked the "Universal Affectation of Grandeur" which, he claimed, had so far infected the Scots that there were not ten men who deserved the name of merchants, that is "Men Universally known in Trade."

"We are Poor, Idle and Proud. A Merchant... must be a Laird; a Laird that gets 20, or 25000 Merks per Annum, must be an Earl or Viscount at least; ... and then its below Laird, Lord or Earl, to put his Son to a Trade, or even to be a Merchant." (33)

While there was no quarrel about the diagnosis of Scotland's economic ills, there was a profound difference between the remedy of a closer union with England and the alternative cure which was advocated by its opponents. The latter looked backwards to strengthening the old trading ties with continental Europe at a time when this branch of Scottish trade was declining. (34)

David Black argued that France furnished salt, cork and hoops for Scotland's fisheries and took in return a number of Scottish products. If "a just Regulation" could be negotiated so that the French removed the prohibition of Scottish herring and white fish and reduced the duties on other goods, Scotland could trade with France "to great Advantage". Similarly "a well Regulate Trade" with Spain would produce a highly favourable balance while the trade with Holland, Scandinavia and Russia was already advantageous. He concluded that there was "scarce any Nation in Europe, but we can Trade with to Advantage", except, of course, England. (35)

33. The Advantages of Scotland by an Incorporate Union ... (1706) pp. 5-6, 12.
34. T.C. Smout, Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union 1600-1707 (1963) pp. 212-238. A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830 (1969) p. 245.
35. (D. Black) Essay upon Industry and Trade (Edinburgh 1706) pp. 30-35.

Defoe completely rejected these suppositions. There were two tests which determined if a particular balance of trade was favourable, the exchange rate as determined by the exchange of bills between the two countries and the stock of foreign currency in the country. The rate with Holland was at least "25 per Cent more than the intrinsic Value, of a Guilder" and while he accepted the opinion of the merchants that in 1706 Scotland had a favourable balance in the French trade, he commented that this was "indeed a wonder". He added that if exports of lead should fall, "which is but a Casual Commoditie, we should lose as much if not more, in our Trade thither, than to Holland". From Scandinavia some dollars were imported "when the Victual is cheap here, and gives a tolerable Price there, or when there's a good Tack of Herring: but this happens so seldom, and the Specie imported so inconsiderable, that dear Years or a bad Herring-fishing soon brings us to a Level." As he summed up the position, "if it were not for what we got this way, and for the Linnen Cloth and Cattle which is carry'd thence to England, we should scarce have any Money amongst us", for despite the presence of so many Scottish nobles and gentry in London in 1706, "Merchants had their Bills at 9, 9½ and 10 per Cent", less factors' fees and postal charges. The only foreign coins in Scotland were guineas, ducatoons and dollars, and the number of ducatoons was caused by their inflated value in Scotland so that it was profitable to export the Scottish forty-penny piece to Holland and to bring back ducatoons. Guineas, however, were the most common coin, and these were obtained by "our Drovers and Linnen Cloth Men" rather than by Scottish merchants. (36)

In the first part of this pamphlet, however, Defoe was concerned to discredit those Scottish merchants who had written against the Union. As there was "scarce a Tale of Money to be found amongst us, I'd fain know how much we are oblig'd to our Merchants; or how far we are to depend upon their Assertions in Trade." He even challenged the accepted view that Scottish trade was decayed, claiming that Scotland had seldom traded for more than she did then, but that her trade seemed less because the merchants imported so many consumable commodities to maintain a four-fold increase in luxury and because of "the daily Increase of our Neighbours in Trade" while Scottish trade stood still.

Another reason for the opposition of some of the most considerable merchants was that they would be unable to continue "a Course of Trade, very Beneficial to themselves, though not so for the Country." This was the export of lead, wool and hides, mainly to France, at 80, 90 or 100 per cent profit, and the return, also at a profit, of wines, "a Commodity piss'd against our Walls once a Year." Thus they brought home "a Superfluity of unnecessary Commodities" instead of the required "Balance in specie or Bullion." (37)

In the later 'History of the Union', he estimated that the wine and brandy imported into Scotland overbalanced "all the export out of Scotland to France by one half part" and that Scotland thus lost £100,000 a year. (38) But apart from an adverse balance of trade, the "auld alliance" was no longer practicable. France was the only country which had ever courted

37. Ibid, pp. 4-9.

38. The History of the Union (1709) p. 3.

Scotland, and this had been to facilitate her designs on England, "the little Gainers we were thereby, when daily exposed to the incursions of an Enemy... when France was but very seldom at the Expense or Trouble to Protect us." The Reformation, however, had now made the alliance untenable on religious grounds alone, apart from the exchange of liberty for tyranny. In any case, France was now so hard pressed as to be able to offer little assistance to her former ally. Such an alliance must inevitably lead to war with England and, despite his tributes to Scottish valour, such a conflict could have only one outcome, now that wars were decided by the longest purse rather than by the longest sword.

"For it would be nonsense to pretend, that we were able to Maintain so great an Army, or so great a Fleet as they... a Prevailing Enemy may Waste our Country, Destroy our Towns, and Houses, and Interrupt the little Trade we have so far as not to leave us a Ship to go from one Port to another in our Kingdom. Do we not see how much a few French Privateers Allarm our Coasts, and what Mischiefs would not a Noble and well Man'd Fleet do to us? ... one Campaign in our Country with a few days of a fair Wind to carry on their Ships, may lay our Towns in Ashes, and put all our Sea Ports in a Flame."

Even if the choice of a different successor to the throne did not result in actual war, trade with England would inevitably be interrupted. The losses which Scotland had already experienced by duties on her chief exports would be much worse if England imposed "a positive Prohibition of all our commodities, which we cannot Export elsewhere to any Advantage. And as England will take non of ours, so they will give us non of their Commodities, which we truly want, and wherewith we cannot be so well Supplied from any other place. Add ... that by our selves we are unfit and unable to carry on any great design of Trade. For Money and Power are the Sinues of such Undertakings, the want of

which, makes us so inconsiderable in the World... There is likewise a knowledge and Skill in Manageing and Carrying on Projects of Trade, wherein we are not generally Experienc'd,..."

(39) The alternative of a coalition with Protestant Holland rather than with Catholic France, though less objectionable, was no more viable. The English embassy of St. John and Strickland in 1652 had failed, although in Defoe's opinion it took place at a favourable juncture and the naval strength of the two republics "was enough to render them the only Merchants in the World, and to give Universal Laws to Trade." He hoped that the Scots were now wiser "than to think a Coalition with Holland equal to an Incorporate Union with England." (40)

Indeed the principal plank in Defoe's campaign for the Union was the profit which Scotland already gained from her trade with England and the expansion which would inevitably follow once the two countries were united in trade. He ridiculed one opponent's contention that this allurements would prove to be a "Trojan Horse" which carried Scotland's ruin in its bosom because the English themselves lost nineteen-twentieths of their stock each year by their poor management of their trade, and that Scotland, "without this Union, and without the Help of English Money", could trade to better advantage. By this argument since England had enjoyed for about a century an annual surplus of £2 million by her woollen manufacture alone she should now be worth £200 million, whereas

39. A Seasonable Warning Or The Pope and King of France Unmasked (1706) pp. 4-7.

40. The Advantages of Scotland ... pp. 22-23.

Locke's computation had shown a stock of only £8 million in currency at the time of the recoinage. In this writer's view this huge deficiency was due to the importation of luxury articles such as china, from eastern Asia. On the most favourable interpretation, a free trade with England, which was only a bare exchange of commodities, could never increase Scotland's "Power and Riches", but this would be positively harmful, for Scotland would exchange "Things useful for Baubles; Things lasting for Things perishable." (41) Defoe accused him of reducing the estimate of English coin by one-third, and proceeded to catalogue his other omissions:

"But he forgets the Vast Stocks lying in the hands of Merchants and Shop-keepers in London; which has not been valued under 50 Millions these 50 Years past; he forgets the vast Improvement of Lands, Houses and Stocks of Manufacture, Cattle and Horse, thro'out the Kingdom; which may be justly computed at 50 Million more; he forgets the Vast Increase, Strength and Riches of Shipping in England, with the charge of Guns, Ammunition and Arms; he forgets the Immense Sums expended by England in the Wars, and the Riches of that Kingdom in the East and West-Indies; he forgets the great Banks of Cash, which many Merchants in England, have in the several Trading Places of the World, and the great Quantities they have in that Nation, of Plate, Jewels and Rich Furniture, all which is the Effect of their Trade; and in a word ... by Computing all these, and Comparing them with the State of England 200 Years ago, that People may be modestly allowed to have bettered their State by Trade, 200 Million, which is one for every year." (42)

Defoe's own estimate was that Scotland had a favourable balance of £100,000 a year in her trade with England. He cited a government report which put Scottish exports to England at £200,000 per annum and from this figure he deducted £50,000 for

41. (Anon) A Letter Concerning the Consequences of an Incorporating Union, In Relation to Trade (Edinburgh 1706) pp.3,13-17.  
 42. The Advantages of Scotland ... pp. 34-35.



the returns from England into Scotland and a like sum for the expenses of the Scottish nobles and gentry in London, although he thought both figures considerable overestimates. The alternative markets for Scottish products suggested by his opponents did not exist. The Scots, in his opinion, "could not Sell ten Barrels of Beef a year" in either the Canaries or Madeira, for the Irish beef was "so much Better, so much Cheaper, and their Shipping and Sailing so much Easier." Even if they could sell their cattle there, they could not dispose of their returns in wine, whereas the Irish by sending their beef in English ships could carry the Madeira to the West Indies or bring the Canary to England. In 1699, however, the English market had taken 31,608 black cattle and 25,470 sheep, apart from those smuggled, from Scotland. It would be very difficult for Scotland to sell to Spain the 1,800,000 ells of linen which she sent to England each year. (43) Although Defoe and his fellow Unionists exaggerated the Scottish trade surplus, its existence was generally conceded by their opponents, (44) and he was understandably amazed "that any Scots-man ... could say, That Scotland does not gain by England in Trade, much less that you do, or can Trade abroad with equal Advantages to other Nations." The French trade, in particular, brought Scotland nothing but what drained her of money, while she sent there little but what she ought to keep at home. (45)

Characteristically, Defoe's sanguine temperament and perenn-

43. A Fifth Essay, at Removing National Prejudices (1707) pp. 20, 10-13.  
 44. T.C. Smout, Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union, p. 265.  
 45. A Fifth Essay ... p. 1.

ial interest in new projects made him most enthusiastic about the future economic possibilities for Scotland in a united Great Britain. Envisaging the increased opportunities for the sale of Scottish products in what was to become for many years "much the largest free-trade area in contemporary Europe", (46) he affirmed that Scotland would have "the Balance of Trade on her side, above 300,000 l. Sterl. per Annum." (47) As he heard the guns of Edinburgh Castle announce the Queen's assent to the Act of Union in March 1707, he wrote in the 'Review' of his own part in this happy result of the months of negotiation.

"I have hardly Room to introduce the various Contem-  
plations of the Consequences of this mighty Transac-  
tion; 'tis a Sea of universal Improvement, every  
Day it discovers new Mines of Treasure, Nor am I an  
idle Spectator here; I have told Scotland of Improve-  
ments in Trade, Wealth and Shipping, that shall accrue  
to them on the happy Conclusion of this Affair, and I  
am pleas'd doubly with this, that I am like to be one  
of the first Men, that shall give them the Pleasure  
of the Experiment. I have told them of the Improve-  
ment of the Coal Trade, and 'tis their own Fault, if  
they do not particularly engage 20 or 25 Sail of Ships  
immediately from Edinburgh on that Work. I have told  
them of the Improvement of their Salt, and I am now  
contracting for English Merchants, for Scots Salt, to  
the Value of above 10000 l. per Annum. I have told  
them of Linen Manufactures, and I have now above 100  
poor Families at Work, by my Procuring and Direction,  
for the making such Sorts of Linen, and in such Manner  
as never was made here before, and as no Person in the  
Trade will believe, could be made here till they see it.  
This has been my Employment in Scotland, and this my  
Endeavour to do that Nation Service, and convince them  
by the Practice, that what I have said of the Union,  
has more Weight in it, than some have endeavour'd to  
persuade them." (48)

Earlier, he had estimated that the removal of the 7s.6d. duty would despatch 100,000 chaldrons of coal from the Firth of Forth to England each year as coal was produced as cheaply in Scotland

46. T.C. Smout, 'The Road to Union' in G. Holmes (editor) Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714 (1969) p. 176  
47. Review, Vol. III, (No. 162) p. 646.  
48. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 21) pp. 81-82.

as on Tyneside and sold for 5s. a chaldron less at London. In addition 10,000 wey of salt and £100,000 worth of "Horse-Corn", would be sent to English markets, oats, beans and peas always yielding a good price at London. (49) The greatest possibility for expansion, however, would be in the linen trade where the export to England would rise "to double of what we send out of the Kingdom now." (50) The amount already sent paid £17,000 a year in duty, and when this was removed, while foreign linen still paid "12, 10, 16 per Cent. Duty", it would be Scotland's own fault if the trade did not employ the whole kingdom, as the woollen industry did in England. No nation imported as much linen as England, and Scotland might easily sell £1 million worth of her linen manufactures to her richer neighbour, a total, for output alone, which was not reached until the end of the century. (51) England would require more linen than Scotland would at first be able to manufacture, but the united Parliament would surely encourage its production in Scotland rather than import it from Germany. In all manufactures Scotland had a decided advantage because her labourers were "easier in their Victuals and Wages, by a third, if not a half" of what they were in England, but the fact that the chief Scottish products were staple commodities was even more significant because their cheapness was all-important in promoting their sale. (52)

49. A Fifth Essay, ... p. 21.
50. Considerations in Relation to Trade Considered ... (1706) p. 22.
51. A Fourth Essay ... pp. 24-25. Cf. Review, Vol. III, (No. 155) p. 618.
52. A Letter from Mr. Reason to the High and Mighty Prince the Mob (1706) pp. 4-5.

Some of the greatest opportunities for the Scots would be in the plantation trade, especially for her cheap manufactures, such as linen and "her low priz'd Woollens" which were "as vendible, and as much wanted there, as any English Goods." He emphasized that this trade must be in Scotland's own products for to trade to the colonies with English goods "were to make it a Trade and no Trade to them, turn them into meer Pedlars, or Second-hand Chap-men." (53) Observing that the Virginia trade employed 300 ships a year and the West Indies trade above 500, he claimed that the greater part of the commodities sent out in these ships was such as "the Product and Manufactory of Scotland" could supply cheaper than England. (54) These goods were usually sold "at the extravagant Advance of 100 per Cent. Profit" in the mainland colonies and, if they were sold at a loss in the islands, "great quantities of Bullion" were brought home for them. (55) The same opponent who had argued that this plantation trade would prove a delusion complained that the goods which Scotland might send to America would leave her fewer commodities for trade with England and other European countries. She would bring home "not one Penny of Money", only tobacco and sugar which would merely be exchanged for Dutch linen and Flanders lace, but again producing no return in money. "There is nothing to be got from Holland by Tobacco, but what we can purchase now." (56) Defoe fully endorsed the view that any drain of Scottish

53. A Fifth Essay ... p. 16.

54. A Letter Concerning Trade from several Scots-Gentlemen ... (1706) p. 12. Professor H. Hamilton observes that Scots manufactures "were cheap and well suited to the primitive needs of colonial people" and had enabled Scotland to establish trade with America before the Union, despite the Navigation Acts. An Economic History of Scotland in the 18th Century (Oxford 1963) p. 250.

55. A Fifth Essay ... p. 25.

56. A Letter Concerning the Consequences of an Incorporating Union, op. cit., pp. 7-15.

money abroad must be avoided, but he completely repudiated this pamphleteer's reasoning. If Scotland did not want these European goods, she would not import them; if she did, she must pay for them either in goods or in money. "So that the Advantage of Exporting your Tobacco and Sugar is equal to Exporting your own Product; because it either returns you directly in Money, or saves you sending your own Money abroad, which is letting the Nation bleed in the Vitals." (57) If Scotland secured only one-eighth of the British colonial trade, the 100 ships employed would take off "a vast quantity of your Native Product and Manufactory." He hoped that at least three-quarters of the returns would be re-exported and thus obtain a remission of the duties. If only 2,000 hogsheads of tobacco and sugar were re-exported, they would gain £400,000 a year. The direct trade to Guinea, "one of the least considerable", would enable Scotland, "in exchange for Lead, coarse Spirits of Malt, old Sheets and the thinnest of Pladden and Linnens", to "reasonably get from Guinea yearly 50000 l. sterl. in Gold, besides the other advantages in Trading thence, for Slaves, all Spice, and dying Woods, etc." (58) Commenting in a later pamphlet on these calculations, as if they were by another author, he admitted that it must be some time before Scotland could carry on the colonial trade "to that hight - Indeed, I forbear Computing the Advantages of these things, because I do not affect talking of Millions and great Sums." On the other hand, he gave a detailed analysis of the economic benefits which would accrue if

57. A Fifth Essay, p. 17.

58. A Letter Concerning Trade ... pp. 12-13.

Scotland were able to employ her own shipping in this colonial trade. (59) It was true that her merchants might buy ships abroad, as in Holland, cheaper than they could build them in Scotland, since the timber would have to be brought from Norway. But "Wood for Building three Ships can be cheaper bought than one Ship Built, and whatever is given for Building at home is all saved Money to the Kingdom, and also gives employment." (60) Taking his opponent's figure of a yearly import, before the Union, of 800,000 or 900,000 lb. of tobacco, paying £16,000 duty, he estimated that ten times as much might be imported, of which nine-tenths might be re-exported. He thought that one-third of this might be made in roll and thus augmented by one-fifth by liquoring. With the drawback of 5½d. a lb., this roll tobacco would be worth 9d. a lb., and the additional 536,000 lb. gained by liquoring would thus realize a clear profit of £21,100 or £5,400 more than the £16,000 previously charged for duty. No wonder that he believed that the proceeds of the plantation trade would offset all the additional taxation which Scotland would have to bear after the Union, for the profit on tobacco alone was "sufficient to balance all." (61) As usual, Defoe's estimates proved too high, for 9 million lb. of tobacco were not imported until the 1740s, but he was correct in his forecast of the future trend. Goods from America formed over half of Scotland's imports by mid century and tobacco represented 85 per cent of these imports. As most of it was re-exported, tobacco then accounted for half her exports. (62) Finally, he calculated

59. A Fifth Essay ... pp. 26, 29.

60. A Letter from Mr. Reason ... p. 7.

61. Considerations in Relation to Trade Consider'd. pp. 17-18.

62. H. Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 255-261.

that half of Scotland's imports from England before the Union consisted of "Tobacco, Sugar, Ginger, Dye-Stuffs etc." which would now be brought direct. (63)

Defoe's genuine enthusiasm for the Union can largely be explained by his realization that the economies of the two countries were complementary rather than competitive, and that political union would provide the framework in which they could both develop to their mutual advantage. His early propaganda in May 1706 was devoted to removing English fears of competition from the Scots in their manufactures and in their colonial empire which they believed was now producing substantial dividends after a long initial period of slow development. In his first attempt to remove national prejudices, he wrote, "a Freedom of Trade is our Advantage, more than the Scots, that the Scots have been opprest by us in Trade, and that tho' they shall grow rich, it shall be also our Advantage." (64) In his next essay, he observed that some Englishmen saw two dangers, "1. The letting the Scots into Our Plantation Trade. 2. Opening to them the Foundation of our Manufactures; I mean our Wool, by which we say, they fall into Our Trade, and by Under-working, and by Consequence Under selling, ruine our Trade at home, and rob us of the most Capital Article of our Prosperity the Employment of our Poor."

(65) By the autumn he was attacking these anxieties in typical fashion in the "Review". It was "a vulgar Error" to imagine that the Scots would "creep into our Trade" and thus bring about a reduction of wages in England. By "the Nature of their Country

63. A Fifth Essay ... p. 21.

64. An Essay at removing National Prejudices ... Part I, p. 17.

65. Ibid, Part II, p. 30.

the Genius of their People, and the Circumstances of Trade", the Scots were in no condition to encroach upon English manufactures but, with "the Indies at their Door" and their own distinctive manufactures, they would instead be fully occupied in improving their own country and in extending their existing overseas trade. He tackled the boggy of unfair competition from lower wages in Scotland by the statement that this would again be "contrary to the Nature of their Trade" and by restating his conviction that a rise in wages was a mark of a developing economy: "The thing is to raise the Wages of their Poor, to bring Scotland to a Pitch of Wealth, as to raise the Price of Labour; this would be to improve them; the Poor in Scotland do not want Labour as such; but they want to have a Price for their Labour, ... that they may work and be paid for it." Returning to his theme of two complementary economies, he added, "the Scots Union shall not only not injure, but much encrease your Manufacture in England; and the Parts of Trade, that the Scots shall pursue, shall be not only remote from your Manufactures, but assisting to them." (66) Four days later, he visualized a genuine partnership of economic interests:

"Scotland shall be so far from pouring her Shoals of People upon us, ... and encroaching upon our People, that growing opulent in Trade, and improving in Manufactures, they shall want People for their Works, and their Increase shall be our Wealth. I shall shew the Interest of both Nations so interwoven with one another, and so advanc'd by the Union, that it shall be hard to distinguish, which are greater Gainers by the Union; both shall grow rich, great, populous, and powerful; both increase in Trade, both fall upon new Improvements; there shall be Trade without Rivals ... and Wealth without Envy; there shall be a general Emulation of Gain but no Emulation of Strife; ... In short, our Trade shall



be better'd by our Union with them, they shall trade with us to the same Ports, Colonies and Plantations; and we be not at all less encourag'd to trade, nor have any Branch of our Trade taken away. ... our Colonies shall be better'd by them, and we in no way impoverish'd, ..." (67)

His confidence, however, also stemmed from the belief that Scotland was such a backward country that there was no danger of any real competition in English staples because English labour was much more efficient than Scots. "Their Poor cannot out-work ours, nor under-work them, that we can do more Work for less Money, than in any Part of Scotland; nay, if I should advance one seeming Paradox, viz. That our People, where our principal Manufactures are made, now actually work for less Wages than the Scots." Therefore, he hoped, "this Bugbear of a Union will be a little less frightful to some People; who ... prophesie Inundations of Scots among us in every Branch of our Trade, and that our Islands and Colonies will be all carry'd away a Horse-back to Edinburgh." (68)

In 1713 in support of his claim that the commercial treaty would enable English woollen cloth to make extensive inroads into the great French market, Defoe cited the experience of Scotland since the Union, (69) but while he was gratified that the superior quality of English workmanship had been so signally demonstrated, he had certainly not envisaged such a marked decline of the Scottish woollen industry. Admittedly, to some extent, he wrote with two pens on the prospects for woollen manufacture

67. Ibid, (No. 119) p. 474.

68. Ibid,

69. Supra, pp. 695-696; Review, Vol. IX, (No. 98) p. 197, Mercator, No. 122.

after the Union. Thus he reassured any English readers of a reply to James Hodges, "I know, in England 'tis objected, you will run into their Woollen Manufactures, and so I believe you will, to buy them:" (70) If the Scots could "fall in to make their own Cloaths well and good", this would be the limit of their achievement, but they would not trouble even to do that for they had the vision of better things before them: "Their Linnen Manufacture on Shoar, their Fishing at Sea, and their Plantation Trade beyond Sea, are Oceans of Wealth they will swim in, and cannot launch out too far; and in none of these will they interfere with England, or England with them." (71) On the other hand, he wrote in one Edinburgh pamphlet, "the Woollen Manufactures of this Kingdom will Natively run to a Level with those in England, as Water in two separate Vessels or Ponds would do by opening a Communication between them", (72) and, more fully, in another. "But our Woollen Manufactures may be much further improven than those of our Linnen can be, for ... after the Union ... there can be no impediment of sending our Woollen Manufacture to England, nor of bringing fine Wooll from thence, both of which are now prohibite." Although the Scots could have fine cloth cheaper from England than it was made in Scotland, they could send in return "coarse Cloths, Stuffs, Plaidings, Fingrams, Creps, Serges, coarse Stockings" from one quarter to one third cheaper than their English equivalents. Further, when fine English wool could be brought into Scotland, even fine cloths might be made cheaper than in England and there was the

70. A Fourth Essay ... p. 24.

71. Review, Vol. III, (No. 155) p. 618. Cf. A Fourth Essay, p. 24.

72. Considerations in Relation to Trade Considered ... p. 24.

possibility that some clothiers might settle in Scotland to gain the advantage of cheaper labour. (73) Twenty years after the Union, he owned that Scottish plaiding, made chiefly at Glasgow and Aberdeen, was made "so very fine, that no Manufacture of Wool in all Britain "equalled it, and that some of the Aberdeen stockings were so "exceeding fine" that they were sent to Holland and Germany "and not a few to London" where they sold for 14 and 20 shillings a pair. (74) His acceptance of a possible increase of Scottish woollen cloth production after the Union contrasts sharply with his condemnation of the current proposals for woollen manufacture in parish workhouses. Only four days before his remarks on Scotland in the 'Review' he had argued strongly in the same columns that cloth production in the London workhouse in Bishopgate street would necessarily mean decline in an old-established centre of the industry such as Colchester. (75) Scottish production, however, would not be subsidized output by workhouse labour in competition with the independent worker. Moreover, Scotland needed industrial development so acutely and there would be, of course, larger sales in the new common market, a condition that he had assumed to be absent from Mackworth's scheme. Defoe also believed that England alone could profitably manufacture all the wool produced in the whole British Isles and since he thought that most of Scotland's raw wool had previously found its way to France, he was bound to welcome any Scottish attempts to develop their woollen manufactures. (76) If there was also room for the Scots in "our manufacture", Defoe's conclusion naturally was, "I

73. A Letter from Mr. Reason ... pp. 5-6.

74. Atlas Maritimus ... p. 112; A Tour, II, p. 401.

75. Review, Vol. III, (No. 10) p. 40.

76. Supra, p. 199.

cannot imagine therefore one Article, in which the General Interest of the two Kingdoms can clash with one another." In coal, however, England must be prepared for some competition. "Newcastle will be sorry, but the Scots Coal will never want a Market at London, while the Ladies keep Fires in their Nurseries and Chambers." (77) Any gain that Scotland should make at the expense of England would not be "transmitted from the Island" but would increase "the Wealth of the Whole", (78) even though "some particular Places" might sink in their trade, "or some particular Persons have a less share of it." (79) Lastly, "the Center of Trade, and the Center of Government being all here, all the Wealth that Scotland shall accure (sic) by Improvement, shall Circulate thro' the Capital, and London shall still remain the Center of the Wealth of the whole Island." (80)

Not the least of the mutual benefits to both countries from a complete union would be peace on the border, but especially for England which had so often suffered invasion from the north during a French war. The northern counties had been subject to depredations "from above three Hundred formal Invasions of the Scots Armies" and rents had increased since border warfare had died down. (81) The northern marches had been the scene of such violence that "not the Bandits of Naples, nor the Cossacks of Hungary and Poland, came up to our old Bands of Border-Thieves Moss-Troopers." While the country was naturally fruitful, it

77. A Fourth Essay, p. 25.

78. Ibid, p. 41; Review, Vol. III, (No. 162) p. 646.

79. A Discourse upon An Union of the Two Kingdoms of England and Scotland (1707) p. 28.

80. An Essay at removing National Prejudices, Part II, p. 5.

81. Ibid, Part I, pp. 18-20.

remained barren because it had been "only plow'd with the Sword, and fatten'd or manur'd with the Blood of Men." (82) On the day when the Act of Union came into force, he asked any of his readers who tended to undervalue this great blessing of border peace to look back into history and see there "the black Descriptions of the Wars between these two Nations." If the Union had miscarried, "it was almost next to impossible to have prevented its issuing in a Breach." (83) A conquest of Scotland would be no advantage to England, because it would always be necessary to hold down the country by force, (84) whereas this peaceful union, despite Scotland's present poverty, would make Britain much more formidable in Europe than the two separate countries had been under a joint monarch, "too Wealthy, too Powerful for any Prince to Quarrel with." (85) Had they been always united, the dangerous growth of France might have been prevented. (86) He looked forward to a day

"when all the Wars, Depredations, Invasions, Blood and Rapin of both Nations shall be turn'd into mutual Courtesies, Civilities, Acts of Kindness, Coalitions of Trade, Improvements of all Kinds, and mutual Assistance of one another! When the wasted Borders shall grow populous, planted and improv'd! When the Harbours shall be throng'd with Ships, Trade find new Centers, Manufactures encrease; the People stay at home, the People tast Liberty and Plenty; and neither Ephraim envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim." (87)

The third great benefit that England would gain from the Union was an accession of manpower, which, Defoe, like most of

82. Review, Vol. III, (No. 128) p. 510.

83. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 35) p. 138.

84. An Essay at removing National Prejudices ... Part I, p. 22.

85. Review, Vol. III, (No. 119) p. 476.

86. A Discourse upon an Union of the Two Kingdoms ... pp. 21-22.

87. Review, Vol. III, (No. 170) p. 678.

his contemporaries, always regarded as economically desirable. "If the Wealth and Strength of a Nation consists in the Multitude of its Inhabitants, what Addition of Strength shall it be to this Nation, when the Scots shall be kept at home." Men never went abroad to "seek their Bread by Arms" unless it was impossible for them to earn a living at home. That Scotland was "an inexhaustible Treasure of Men" was shown by "the vast Numbers" in the British armies and navy in the present war, "and in the Armies of the Swede, the Pole, the Muscovite, the Emperor, Holland and France." "What might not England now do", he added, "had she in her Pay all the Scots, actually in the Service of these Princes." (88) In "Caledonia" he deplored the waste of Scottish blood in mercenary war

"Scotland has Sons indeed, but none to spare,  
To furnish out the Shows and Sports of War;" (89)

but it was the economic waste of this manpower that was most regrettable. To "Export the People, instead of the Labour of the People" was "letting out the Life-Blood of a Nation." (90) The Scots were in truth "the Nurses of Europe". They had the trouble and expense of their children until they were grown up, and then other nations were able to "reap the Profit of their Labour." (91) While the Scots were daily cutting one another's throats in the service of foreign princes, their country was being impoverished. It had hitherto been England's good fortune that the Scots were thus "dispeopled", for had the Scots been as rich as they were numerous, "we should long ago have sought this

88. An Essay at removing National Prejudices, Part I, pp. 27-28.

89. Caledonia, p. 33.

90. A Fifth Essay, p. 15.

91. An Essay at removing National Prejudices, Part III, p. 10.

Union with more eagerness than we fancy they seek it now." (92)

Two years after the Act of Union had come into effect, he was still asking the Scots to consider "whether their People going abroad is not the real, and indeed the only Foundation of their Poverty? And if any future Assistance can be given to Scotland, but to encourage her People to stay at home, whether it is not all Scotland wants, to make her as great, as rich, as fruitful, and as powerful as any of her Neighbours?" (93)

While the vigour which the Scots displayed abroad could be better employed in developing their own country, Defoe looked forward to the part which they might play in developing the British colonial empire.

"I shall prove, that the Scots Trading to our Colonies, shall enrich those very Colonies, and that in the single and only Wealth, which at present is the Dead Weight upon their Prosperity, viz. the want of People - What prevents our Norway Trade being converted into a New England Trade, Hemp, Pitch, Tar, Rosin, Plank, Masts etc. being brought from the Continent of America; as it already begins to be from Carolina: Why does not New-England supply us with Copper, Pensilvania with Iron, and all these Metals which now we purchase with our ready Money? Why are they not bought with our own Manufactures wrought by our own People, and the Wealth of them revert to our General Stock? Why are not the Bowels of the Earth search'd in the vast Tracts of Land we possess there, for a Treasure which has lain hid for so many Ages, and which we send to other Nations for, buy at our Disadvantage, and let our own lie still as a Prize put in the hand of a Fool, or a Talent hid in a Napkin? ... we have a yet Undiscovered Wealth in the Mountains of America; and when we come to ask our Merchants there, why it has not been search'd into, they will unanimously Answer, WANT OF PEOPLE. This therefore is the Wealth the Union shall bring us; this the Treasure to be rais'd out of the Barren Mountains of Scotland; poor Scotland shall thus make rich England, and we shall gain of them that only Wealth, that single Advantage, which of all things we want most, and which in time may make Britain the most powerful Nation in the World."

92. Ibid, Part I, p. 28.

93. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 34) p. 135.

It was the happy situation of the two countries "that neither the Stock of both Kingdoms, nor the Hands of both Kingdoms" could be "too great or too many, the one to be improv'd, and the other to be employ'd in the many and most extensive Branches of yet undiscover'd Trade." (94)

Defoe was not inconsistent when he condemned the Scottish efforts to establish their own colony at Darien in 1695-1700, because he looked on this attempt as a direct challenge to England in an area of trade where there was only room for one exclusive English company. In repudiating his Scottish opponents' claim that they would not be able to share in England's foreign trade after the Union because this was almost completely controlled by the great chartered companies, he maintained that this was largely an argument directed against the dissolution of the Scottish African Company. But this company, he continued, "neither is, nor in my Opinion ever was in Prospect of Success, or worth any Man's Notice as to Scotland in Trade, ... and that it signifies not two Farthings whether dissolv'd or (not), farther than to prevent a new Set of Interlopers with English Stocks under a Scots Title." He proceeded to deny the charge, arguing that the East India Company was the only exclusive company in England and this was open to any Scotsman on the same terms, as those available to any Englishman, namely buying the stock. Similarly anyone could engage in the Guinea trade on paying 10 per cent to the English African Company. (95) The Darien Company could only have succeeded by compelling Spain to trade

94. An Essay at removing National Prejudices ... Part II,  
pp. 30-32.

95. Review, Vol. III, (No. 161) p. 642.



with the Scottish colony, for a trade to India, "by the South-Seas, or any other way", was not possible without English assistance to furnish a market for the imports from Asia. Therefore, he told the Scots, "You cannot Unite with England without parting with it, two Companies being Intolerable in Britain." He warned them "an East-India Company abstracted from your Trade to England, would be the Destruction of all your Commerce", because the Scottish economy was not sufficiently developed to support a trade with Asia. With so few manufactures, Scotland would be obliged to send out "ready Money", which, he obviously thought, she would not be able to replenish. Her home market, unlike England's, would not be large enough to absorb the imports from Asia and she could not sell them abroad in any quantity because the Dutch were "the great Staple" for these commodities. Many people in England looked on the East India Company as "a grievance" and during the ten years when there were two companies in England, they "had not only almost destroyed one another, but ... bid fair for ruining the whole Nation", by intensifying party rivalries. Therefore, England could not unite with Scotland as long as the latter retained "an open Trade to India." (96) He rejected the claim that it was English jealousy that had ruined the Darien venture and that Scottish prosperity would have been assured if it had been allowed to take root. On the contrary, the pioneering period of colonization was long and unrewarding, so that the English colonies did not provide any return "for some fifteen, some sixteen, some eighteen Years; nay the East-India Company were one and twenty Year before they made any thing

of a Dividend" and that this was the customary experience had been demonstrated by Bacon's essay. Nor was his hero, William III, to blame for the final disaster. Apart from the delicate diplomatic negotiations in which he was then engaged, the King himself had said that it was the inability of the Scots settlers to buy goods in the English colonies in the Caribbean, not the instructions sent to the colonial governors, which prevented them from obtaining their necessary supplies. (97)

Again, because this would have led to further competition, although in this case to Scotland's advantage, Defoe resisted any suggestion that Scotland should have lower import duties than England after the Union. William Black had asked for preferential treatment for seven years because the Scots were "but Beginners in Trade" (98) but if this were granted, "they would ruine the English Trade, by supplying our Markets with all sorts of Imported Goods, cheaper than our Merchants could do; and this would be a most destructive Article in Trade, especially in fine Goods", such as Hamburg or Dutch linen, which paid high duties but had low transport costs. (99) There could not be two books of rates in one united kingdom of Great Britain. As for the plea that Scotland needed special assistance initially to enable her to join with her stronger trading partner, Defoe rejoined that after the Union Scotland might trade as cheaply as England, "Food, Labour and Freight, being rather cheaper than in England." Although the Scots might claim to be embarking

97. The Advantages of Scotland by an Incorporate Union ... pp.9-10.  
 98. (William Black) Some Considerations in relation to Trade, (1706), pp. 7, 10, 14-15.  
 99. An Essay at Removing National Prejudices ... Part II, p. 24.

upon a new trade, they would be "coming into a Trade already settled at the Expence of the English." If the tobacco duty in Scotland were reduced by only an eighth or ninth part, "no body in Britain would Trade to Virginia, or buy Tobacco but from Scotland." (100) After the Union, English merchants complained that the duty was less efficiently collected in Glasgow than in Liverpool, Lancaster, Whitehaven, or Bristol, but it does not seem that this was a factor in the spectacular growth of the Scottish tobacco trade. (101) On the other hand, the logic of Defoe's remarks was demonstrated by the attempts to take advantage of the lower Scottish duties on French wine and brandy to build up large stocks there which could be sent into England after the provisions of the Act of Union came into force on May 1, 1707. As early as February 22, because of the illness of Harley, he wrote his first letter to Godolphin to warn the Treasurer that the "great commissions from London" that were buying up wines and brandies in Scotland posed a dilemma for the government in that any action to prevent this would provoke a hostile reaction in Scotland at the very beginning of the Union, but that if nothing were done, the government would be defrauded of a considerable sum in revenue. Three ships had entered Leith during the previous week and he had heard that there were eight more at the Orkneys waiting to come in. (102) On March 10, he reported to Harley that three more ships had arrived on the previous day and ten more were at hand. He offered to buy a tun of rich claret for his employer as cheap as he would buy a

100. A Letter concerning Trade from several Scots Gentlemen ...  
p. 4.

101. H. Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 256-260.

102. H.M.C. (Portland) IV, pp. 388-389, Feb. 22, 1707.

a hogshead in London. (103) The attempt by the House of Commons to defeat these malpractices caused him to ask for some indications of government policy on this question because it had produced such an unseasonable "early ferment" in Scotland. (104) If this Drawback Bill had not been dropped, he could have been of no further use in Edinburgh. (105) Yet he had already noted that the quantity of wine was relatively small in that only 42 Scottish ships, at the most, were available (106) and this was the burden of his comments in the 'Review'. He complained that "the Mole-Hill Advantage to Scotland" was made "a mighty Mountain" in England, whereas it was not Scotsmen who gained from this scheme, but English merchants who had "poured in a great Parcel of Goods from Holland." As for the "huge Fleet that was to drown us with Wine and Brandy", it had just arrived, but comprised only "36 Sail, most of them Doggers and small Vessels, and one with another not above 60 to 80 Tun Burthen", and several of these were carrying salt. (107) Had the Scots had more time to lay in a store, or had one-fifth of what had been brought in been "Scots Mens Goods", England might have had grounds for complaint, but all the claret now north of the Tweed was not sufficient to supply southern Britain with "one Months Draught." The true remedy for preventing an influx of French wine and brandy into Britain was to guard the coasts "and keep that out that is out", and then that which had already reached Scotland would do little or no harm. (108)

103. Ibid, p. 392, March 10, 1707.

104. Ibid, p. 403, April 24, 1707.

105. Ibid, pp. 407-408, May 15, 1707.

106. Ibid, pp. 402-403, April 22, 1707.

107. Review, Vol. IV (No. 35) pp. 139-140.

108. Ibid, (No. 36) pp. 142-143. Cf. (No. 53) pp. 211-212, where he estimated the amount at 1200 tun of brandy and 800 tun of wine, much of it "a small thin Sort of Wine" which would not suit the changed English taste.

Defoe also tried to allay the alarm caused by tobacco being re-exported to Scotland to gain the drawback of 5d. per pound duty and then being reimported into England. A merchant had told him that 4000 hogsheads had been brought into Dumfries alone. (109) But it was "a Scandal upon the Scots to charge the Frauds and Subtilties of tricking Merchants upon their Nation and the Union." This case was quite different from the importation of French wine, because the Scots were not involved in this particular "Leger-de-main of Trade". This English cheat was "like getting a Wench with Child, and then lay(ing) the Bastard at another Man's Door; . . . like robbing a House and then cry(ing) stop Thief," and the Union was made "a meer stalking-Horse to cover and conceal the most notorious Abuse." (110) Yet, however critical he might be of any trade fraud which, in his view, invariably threatened to destroy legitimate commerce, he realized that the delicate state of Anglo-Scottish relations at the inception of the Union called for most careful handling. While the Parliament had been justified in trying to prevent this defrauding of the revenue by English merchants, the Queen had magnanimously chosen "to drop an Act so abundantly needful, and see her Revenue expos'd to the intollerable Ravages of this Raparee-Trade . . . than so much as tread upon the Edges of the Treaty." (111) He made the most of the abandonment of this Bill as an example of "the great concern" which England had for her northern neighbour and he told Harley that in countering the earlier Scottish protests that Parliament was breaking the Union he thought

109. Ibid. (No. 44) p. 173.  
 110. Ibid. (No. 54) pp. 215-216.  
 111. Ibid. (No. 44) p. 174.

that he was rendering more service than at any time since he had entered Scotland. He also warned his patron that to counteract the "surly, haughty, vain humour of the poorest and meanest people" he should send customs and excise officers who would use all possible civility towards the Scots, men who would "wink, abate, and bear with circumstances." (112)

The same accommodating attitude towards Scottish susceptibilities was in evidence in his observations on the fifth article of the Union treaty which included Scottish shipping in the English Navigation Acts. Although the Scots had partly managed to evade the restrictions on trade with the American colonies, they were fully aware of the wider opportunities which this article gave them and tried to secure these for the maximum number of ships. But most Scottish ships had been built in Holland and a large proportion had Dutch owners in whole or in part. (113) Therefore, this article originally insisted that only ships wholly owned by Scotsmen at the signing of the treaty should be accepted. Defoe pointed out that this was more than was allowed to Englishmen and that, in the long run, the Scots stood to gain from the strict maintenance of the Navigation Acts. On the other hand, he agreed that it would be hard if a ship with only one or two small Dutch owners should be excluded, particularly as Scotland's foreign trade could not have been carried on before 1707 without such Dutch partnership. Therefore, he approved the suggestion that a reasonable time should be given to the Scots to buy out their Dutch partners or to sell their

112. H.M.C. (Portland) IV, p. 408.

113. T.B. Smout, Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union, pp. 47-54; R.H. Campbell, Scotland since 1707 (Oxford 1965) pp. 39-40.

own interest in a vessel, which was the solution finally adopted. (114) He strongly resisted, however, the proposal that ships which were partly owned by Scotsmen should be accepted as Scottish ships. "If a Scots Merchant owns  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a Ship, and a Dutchman  $\frac{5}{8}$  she cannot be accounted in Reason, anything but a Dutch Ship, especially when her Bottom is Dutch too, ... the Scotsman is a part Owner of the Dutchman's Ship." By this proposal, it was even possible for an Englishman, in the name of Scotsmen, to buy ships in Holland which would become British ships when the Act of Union was ratified, "to the general Ruine of the Shipping in the whole Island." He claimed that in the third Dutch War, some Englishmen took advantage of the provision that Dutch prizes were recognized as English ships to buy Dutch ships, "caused sham Privateers to take them, and for several years, some hundreds of them were Employed in their Coal Trade, to the Ruine of the Town of Ipswick, where all the large Coal Ships used to be built - which Loss that Town never recover'd." (115)

As early as May 1706, Defoe was arguing that a union must be based on justice, especially in taxation. Whereas the land tax in England was unequally assessed, the Scots were "rigorous and exact" in collecting their taxes. In England, the amount raised from the tenant was subject to such heavy charges that 9d. or even 12d. per £ could be deducted, but the yield in Scotland was "clear of all Losses". Scottish rents were usually paid in kind, English in money, so that English land was more

114. T.C. Smout, *op. cit.*, p. 56.  
 115. Observations on the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Union ...  
 (1707) pp. 1-4.

valuable and could pay a higher rate of tax. Therefore, to levy the English rate in Scotland after the Union would be "the greatest Piece of Injustice and Inequality in the World ... and perfectly ruine that Nation." The Scottish eight months cess was the nearest equivalent to the English four shillings land tax, although it was the highest rate ever levied in Scotland and the Scots were so impoverished that they were less able to bear it than they were. Again, the English were "a rich Nation but greatly in Debt", the Scots poor but relatively free from debt so that they could not reasonably be asked to help to pay the English debts. Equal taxation was "absolutely necessary to Trade" and to complete the Union, but England had imposed some taxes to service her debts which were inapplicable in Scotland, and which would "render the Union odious and uneasie to them." The taxes on malt and salt were in this category and were quite unsuitable for Scotland because the rates were exorbitant, being charged by bulk and not by value. Because of the different values of these commodities in the two countries, equal duties would be to tax the Scots three times as heavily as the English. The salt tax was particularly burdensome on the poor, who lived "very much on Salt Meats" in Scotland and were quite unable to pay this particular impost. Finally, Scots ale or twopenny ale, was only small beer and should be taxed as such. (116) Defoe's letters to Harley from Edinburgh show that he was consulted during the Committee stage of the Bill in the Scottish Parliament and he tried to ensure that there was no substantial alteration to the articles which would cause the



treaty to be renegotiated. He told the M.Ps that "all their amendments or regulations might be brought into an Act explanatory of the articles and founded upon them, and while these explanations consisted with equality, proportions and reasonable constructions they might expect the Parliament of England would hear reason", whereas direct alterations might endanger the treaty. He persuaded them that a bounty on the export of peas and beans was unnecessary because there was a ready market for them in England, but he accepted their case for a drawback on the export of oatmeal of 2s..6d. per quarter, for the usual orthodox reasons: "They drive a great trade to Norway for deal and timber and they purchase them and sometimes bring silver to boot with their oatmeal." The Irish, however, undersold the Scots there so, that a bounty would increase the Scottish sales and might help the English trade balance as she traded to Norway "wholly for ready money." Defoe proposed that the drawback should be allowed when the price did not exceed 12s. per quarter, but the committee accepted Paterson's figure of 13s..4d., which they subsequently amended to 15s. Reporting that drawbacks on salt and pork would be the next demands, he added, "I think it every man's business that wishes well to this work to allay the spirits of this agitated people, at the expense of everything that can be easily parted with," although he acknowledged that the concessions would reduce the amount of the equivalent. (117)

In his correspondence with Harley, he seems to have thought that the loud Scottish complaints that they could not bear some of the English taxes exaggerated, although he had accepted their

case in his published propaganda. Thus he considered that the decision of the Scottish Parliament that Scotland should be exempt from the malt tax throughout the war was "the worst of anything" that they had done and "a breach of the equality which is the foundation of the Union." The only argument which had any substance in his view was the inferior quality of the Scottish malt but he countered this by the query why the Scots should ask for an equal bounty on exportation and by the statement that the English malt used in distilling was worse than the Scottish and yet paid the full rate of duty. (118) In resisting a higher drawback than the English 8s.4d. on a barrel of white herring, which he said was 1s.8d. more than the price of the salt used in curing the fish, he argued that if this were raised to 10s., which would apply in both countries, there was a strong possibility that English fishing would increase to such a degree that she might supplant the Scots in the export of fish to the Straits. (119) He also suggested that the Committee should investigate whether the salt tax would really be insupportable and he claimed that it was found that the average amount of salt consumed by the people was less than one-quarter of what they had imagined. (120) Although he granted that there was substance in their demand for a bounty on the export of pork, because of the large and increasing trade from Aberdeen, merely to Italy, Leghorn and Genoa, which had been estimated at 1000 barrels in the past year and was "a great article of the consumption of corn", he thought that it was ridiculous to couple this with a

118. Ibid, p. 365, 7 December 1706.

119. Ibid, p. 366, 7 December 1706.

120. Ibid, p. 371, 19 December 1706.

bounty on beef, for Scotland did not export ten barrels of beef a year. (121)

Defoe's complete rejection of a federal solution was largely on economic grounds, in accord with the above insistence on common duties and ultimately equal taxation. In his second essay he had expressed the fear that "If Scotland by a partial Union shall answer her End, grow Rich, Opulent and Formidable, and when She is so, be empower'd to break with us, and go off, they are the Gainers by us, and we no Gainers by them." On the other hand, nothing could "compleat the Wealth, Strength and Prosperity of both Kingdoms like a Firm, Entire, Compleat, and Indissoluble Union." (122) In his next essay, he compared the union to a body receiving food which would nourish all its parts: "If our Union be Partial, Federal, Periodical or indeed National, as most of those schemes have been; then the defects may be so also: One part may thrive, and another decay; ... But if the Union be an Incorporation, a Union according to the very extent of the Letter, it must then be a Union to the very Soul of the Nation, all its Constitution, Customs, Trade and Manners must be blended together, digested and concocted, for the mutual united, undistinguish't, good, growth and health of the one whole united Body." (123) Moreover, he did not believe that a federal union was practicable. Writing in the guise of a Scotsman, he asked "Would we keep up a Parliament here, with a Supream and Ultimate Power, and be one in everything else? How inconsistent are two Supream Judicatures in one State? and

121. Ibid. p. 372, 21 December 1706.

122. An Essay at removing National Prejudices, Part II. pp. 8, 32

123. Ibid. Part III, p. 7.

how many troublesome Consequences must attend such a Model of Government? ... must we have then a Parliament, above both our Parliaments? Sure every Reasonable Man will allow the Method proposed in the Treaty, much preferable, and more practicable." (124) Therefore he dismissed all talk of a federal union as a delaying tactic by the opponents of the Treaty, since it had been so often denied in the past and had just been rejected by the English commissioners. If it were granted, it would never furnish any "sure ground of Peace" since either kingdom would be able to break it. Nor would it differ much from the situation during recent years "when an English influence would still prevail." Whereas, after a full union, "the Advantages of the whole Island must reach to every part, and the Oppression or Hurt of any member or part, must affect and disturb the whole Body: which may serve as a short Answer to that so frequent Objection, of its being in the Power of a British Parliament to Alter and Undo what may be agreed to in the Union, and bear a heavy Hand on this North Part of Britain, which can never be expected, till it consist of Mad Men and Fools." (125)

Although the Tory government after 1710 were so soon to prove that his confidence was unfounded, this was Defoe's sincere conviction in 1707. In issue after issue of the 'Review', he reiterated this theme that the Union was "the most indissoluble Compact now made upon Earth", superior to all previous treaties, "1. In its being out of the Power of either Party to intrench upon or infringe it. 2. In its being so equally the Interest

124. The Advantages of Scotland by an Incorporate Union, p. 21.  
 125. A Seasonable Warning ... p. 12.

of either Party to maintain and support it." (126) It was as inviolable as Magna Carta. (127) In part this derived from the prevalent belief in fundamental law, (128) so that he looked on the Act of Union as a kind of written constitution which was the test of all subsequent legislation, but without any provision for judicial review or interpretation by a supreme court. "The Union will be the Test of all the Transactions of this Nation; if a Law be propos'd in Parliament, it will require no other Argument to crush and suppress it in the very Beginning, than to say it is against the Union; ... and if it should pass into an Act, the Union shall be pleaded in Bar of its Authority, as a thing no Law can be good against, because it is in it self superior to that very Power, that now must make our Laws; ... like the Stone in the Gospel, whosoever falls upon it, shall be broken to pieces, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind them to Powder." (129) It was also based on his dictum that the original power of the freeholders was superior to the parliaments which they elected.

"... no Power on Earth can dissolve the UNION - The Original Rights of the Collective Body of the People, when all constituted Power is Legally Dissolved, must and does remain; and they may when assembled dissolve the Constitution in being, and erect a new one - But even this collective Body must now Assemble as one, and must agree to divide again into two Kingdoms or more, ..."

I allow the Parliament is a Magnipotent Power, but I must not allow them Omnipotent; no, not in every thing relating to Civil Government; I mean the

126. Review, Vol. IV (No. 67) p. 266.  
 127. An Essay at Removing National Prejudices ... Part III, p. 12.  
 128. M.A. Thomson, A Constitutional History of England 1642 to 1801 (1938) pp. 251, 259-260. See my M.A. Thesis, The Political Ideas of Daniel Defoe, pp. 160-162.  
 129. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 67) pp. 266-267.

Parliament of Britain which now is - Which Parliament I say has not all the Power which the Parliament of England or Scotland, separately consider'd had before; and the Limitation of their Power consists in this very thing; that they being a Power, form'd and Establish'd by stipulation, of two different Parliaments, as they are subsequent to the Power of those Parliaments, so they are inferiour to them: Since every Power which is deriv'd from another must be inferiour to the Power from which it is deriv'd." (130)

If "the Breath of a House of Commons" in this new derived Parliament of Great Britain could dissolve this compact, the Scots would have surrendered their sovereignty and independence for nothing "and have brought forth an Off-spring which like the Pelican should eat out the Vitals of its Mother." Were the Union not unalterable, it was "a mysterious Juggle" in which neither nation could be safe. (131) It was only in the light of this constitutional doctrine that the Union could be acceptable to Scotland, the weaker nation both numerically and economically. Otherwise the Union was precarious and it was "a sufficient Ground for Scotland to say, they ought not to trust to it, and that they resign their Independency for an old Song, that they part with their Sovereignty without an Equivalent ... it makes the Parliament of Britain Illegitimate, and Usurpers of a Power they have no Right to, it makes the UNION a Cheat, the QUEEN a Deceiver, and both the Nations distracted." If the Union were not as unalterable as anything in human nature could be, its architects, in erecting "this beautiful Structure", had mocked themselves "with a painted piece of Pageantry, that seemingly to Unite and Confirm us in Amity and Affection, will leave us tenfold more the Children of Contention than we were before."

(132) In further support of his case, he seized on the fact

130. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 69) pp. 275-276.

131. Ibid, Vol. V, (No. 118) pp. 471-472.

132. Ibid, (No. 72) p. 288.

that certain articles, such as the 17th. 18th. and 19th. were expressly stated to be alterable by the Parliament of Great Britain. Where this proviso did not appear it could thus be assumed that the rest were unalterable, apart from the fact that the security of the two churches was guaranteed, "without any alterations for ever." (133)

Defoe, however, recognized that these legal restrictions which he considered so binding on future parliaments might be set aside, but while force might violate, it could not dissolve the constitution, "Force may de Facto invade, but cannot de Jure destroy." (134) Although he argued against the Scottish contention that the Union was broken in 1713, mainly to do what he could to uphold the treaty but also to excuse the intolerant actions of the Tory government which he still felt obliged to support, it is obvious that he was very uneasy at the trend of events. In 1708 he had joined issue with Leslie's "Rehearsal" on that High Tory's attempt to link the Scottish Episcopalians with the Church of England. Defoe vigorously maintained that many of their ministers were Jacobites who did not take the oaths to Queen Anne and that their use of the Anglican liturgy was a recent innovation, largely since 1706. He denied Leslie's charge that the Episcopalians were subject to persecution in Scotland by citing the 150 Episcopalian ministers in peaceful possession of parish churches despite the existing Presbyterian church settlement, in marked contrast to the sufferings of the

133. Ibid., Vol. VIII, (No. 151) p. 607.

134. Ibid., Vol. IV, (No. 51) p. 203.

Cameronians under Charles II. (135) From the beginning he approved of the Scottish measures against the Episcopalian minister, Greenshields, and was as disturbed as Scotsmen at the reversal of the judgement of their courts when Greenshields appealed to the House of Lords, by the Yule Vacance Act and by the Act which restored lay patronage to Scottish parishes. (136) He also condemned the decision to impose the malt tax on Scotland in 1713. It would lie "very heavy upon Scotland" where the people were poorer and it was unfair to levy the same tax on malt of inferior quality and a much lower price. He recalled that he was present at the Committee discussions in the Scottish Parliament and that while they regarded their seven-year exemption from the salt tax as temporary, the Scots believed that the similar exemption from the malt tax would become permanent because it was not expected that this tax would continue in England after the war. He tried to make the decision more acceptable to Scottish opinion by arguing that it would not be a long burden and was only necessary because the heavy wartime expenditure did not cease immediately the war ended and that it took time for the nation to emerge "clear of the Tail of the War." (137) On the other hand, although the tax was unfair to Scotland, it did not contravene the Union treaty: "I cannot see, with all the Eyes I have, ... that there is the least Ground in all this,

135. Ibid, (No. 89) p. 356; (No. 156) pp. 623-624; (No. 164) p. 656; (No. 174) pp. 693-694; Vol. V, (No. 84) pp. 334-335; (No. 58) pp. 231-232; (No. 59) p. 235; (No. 60) pp. 239-240; The Scot's Narrative Examin'd (1709) passim.
136. Ibid, Vol. VII, (No. 149) p. 594; (No. 153) pp. 611-612; Greenshields out of Prison ... (1710) passim; A Seasonable Caution to the General Assembly (1711) p. 9; G.S. Pryde, The Treaty of Union of Scotland and England, 1707 (1950) pp. 55-61.
137. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 102) p. 205.



to say or suggest that the Union is broken." (138) In 1709 he had adopted the same attitude towards the alterations in the Scottish law of treason following the abortive Jacobite invasion attempt of the previous year. While he maintained that he would be "the last man in England" who would "speak, write, or so much as think for, or in Defence of the least Encroachment to be made upon Scotland in any thing," and in spite of the fact that he had recognized that the Union Treaty had preserved Scotland's judicial independence, he claimed that it had given the united Parliament the power to alter the laws of public justice. In the face of the angry Scottish protests, he insisted that it was entirely constitutional to make the law of treason the same in both countries and that Scotland gained by the alterations. (139)

Defoe was most disappointed by the English failure, after the Union, to provide the capital and technical assistance to develop Scotland's economy, for this had been one of the main props of his propaganda campaign for the treaty. Indeed, it was an obligation on the wealthier partner to give this help. When the terms of the treaty, with the few Scottish amendments, had been finally approved by the English Parliament, he wrote in the 'Review', "Scotland, GOD be praised, is become a Part of our selves, and 'tis a Rent-Charge upon us to contrive Work, Employment and Settlement for their Poor, as well as our own ... And let no Man grudge at my frequently putting you in Mind, that the Employing and Improving of Scotland is our Concern, since

138. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 20) pp. 77-80; Vol. III, (No. 149) p. 594. G.M. Trevelyan, England Under Queen Anne, Vol. II, pp. 392-394.
139. Union and No Union ... (1713) p. 17.

they are now inseparable from you in Interest, and their Improvements are our Improvements." He told his readers that he intended to treat "the general Affair of Trade in both Kingdoms" as it really was that of one united nation and that he had changed the title of the paper to the 'Review of the British Nation' even before the treaty came into operation. He hoped to make the title and the subject matter frequently correspond. (140) "The Two Nations", he reaffirmed, "have now but one Politick Heart, thro' which the Blood of the whole united Body circulates; and wherever the Wealth of either Nation, which is the Blood of the Body Politick, is lessen'd, the whole feels the Loss." (141) In 1706 he had informed the Scots that if they needed capital "to Grasp that Sea of Wealth", the Indies at their door, "your Fish and their Stocks" would unite to promote this great undertaking. (142) Announcing that such a fishery might equal, "if not exceed that of the Dutch upon our Coast", he added "And so much Money is already design'd and laid aside in England for that purpose, ... as will circulat in a short time to the benefits of the whole Nation, Employ so many Hands, as none may be Idle among us." (143) Again, England would help the Scots to swim in those "Oceans of Wealth" the linen industry, the fishing and the plantation trade, and their wealth would "circulate thro' our Hands." (144)

By 1708, however, he was already beginning to show his disappointment at the slow response to his promptings. Protest-

140. Ibid., Vol. IV, (No. 12) p. 48.

141. Ibid., (No. 13) p. 51.

142. An Essay at removing National Prejudices, Part III, p. 8.

143. A Seasonable Warning ... p. 9.

144. A Fourth Essay ... p. 24.

ing that he had never been "very full of the Fishery", he deplored a "wicked Principle, too much spreading among us, and propagating every Day, (viz.) That we must not make the Scots too rich." There was a danger that "this Splenetick Blood" might reach such a height that Englishmen would forego the opportunity of profit "because the Scots must be Gainers with us." (145) Three years later, he admitted, "We have talked much of Improving Scotland by the Union, and the great Encrease of their Fishery by the help of our Merchants applying themselves to it - What little has been done that Way, I could tell you, and perhaps if it was not so little, that 'tis almost a shame to tell of it, I might." Since the Union the Scots had lost almost £40,000 a year by the prohibition of fishery exports to France, and England had never bought so much as a quarter of this sum, "and the Poor Fishermen in Scotland" might "blow their Fingers instead of curing of Fish." (146) A further reason why he denounced the attempt of the English High Churchmen to represent the Presbyterian Church as intolerant persecutors of the episcopal clergy was that it produced a reaction in Scotland that might frighten away English capital: "How shall it be expected, that English Merchants should embark their Stocks in Fisherys, or plant their Families in Scotland? How should they undertake Manufactures or Improvements, in order to employ the People and cultivate the Lands, while in Scotland they are represented as a People, designing to invade their Church, fill'd with implacable Aversion to their Disciplin." (147) During the controversy about the malt tax he refused to accept the view

145. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 159) pp. 634-635.

146. Ibid., Vol. VII, (No. 145) pp. 578-579.

147. The Scot's Narrative Examin'd ... p. 41.

that it would ruin Scotland and contended that if the necessary clauses were added to another Bill, "to enable the Scots to raise the Price of their Ale, without paying any more Excise, and some other Equivalents given to Scotland, which might set the Wheels of Trade to Work there, that Money might circulate among them, and the Poor be made able to pay a raised Price for any thing that should be Tax'd: This Tax would be the less insupportable by far ... for England, would they set heartily about it, are many ways able to make Scotland flourish, and grow rich, if they will but assist them, as they may and ought to do."

(148) He had not given up hopes of the fishery which, in a comparison often made at this date, could be richer than the mines of Potosi were to the Spaniards. "A Capital Stock from England", he insisted, could not fail to reap a profit in the Scottish fishery because, as was generally believed, the Scots could cure the herrings as early as the Dutch and be at market sooner. Nothing in trade could be desired more, for this was now one of his maxims, "That the Union being now past, the Poverty or Wealth of Scotland, is the Poverty or Wealth of England. The Interests, like the Sovereignty, are inseparable; and the Union of Interests, like the Union of the Nations, indissoluble." How easy it was for England, if she made a determined effort, to give Scotland compensation for the new imposition, "and enable them to pay, not these only, but any future Taxes." (149) More than a decade later he was still lamenting England's failure to fulfil the expectations aroused at the time of the Union, "Such as erecting manufactures there under English direction,

148. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 101) p. 203.

149. Ibid, (No. 102) pp. 206, 205.

embarking stocks from England to carry on trade, employing hands to cut down their northern woods, and make navigations to bring the fir-timber and deals to England, ... encouraging their fishery, and abundance of fine things more which were much talk'd of I say, but little done." (150)

Defoe's genuine desire to see Scotland prosperous appeared in two schemes of improvement which he put forward. He suggested that it would be easy to join the Forth and the Clyde by a canal, for the Languedoc canal had been five times as long and 500 times more difficult. As usual, he expected too much from this project, that ports from Liverpool northward would trade with London by such a canal and that Glasgow would be able to send her tobacco and sugar more directly to Holland, Hamburg and the Baltic, so that in a few years she would double her trade and send as many as a hundred ships. He was more realistic, however, in his statement that the scheme would have to wait "till posterity, by the rising greatness of their commerce, shall not only feel the want of it, but find themselves able for the performance." (151) His main attempt at pump-priming was in the plan which he put forward to Harley for a naval base in the natural deep waters of the upper reaches of the Forth above Queensferry, which would be the winter station for a squadron of about fourteen fourth and fifth rates. The current petition of the city of Edinburgh for approval for an expenditure of £40,000 to £50,000 on a wet dock and enlarging the harbour of Leith was less advantageous, for the harbour was shallow, narrow and exposed to enemy attack. Therefore, this "pickpocket pro-

150. *A Tour*, II, p. 281.

151. *Ibid*, pp. 332-333, 335.

posal" would only benefit Edinburgh, not the nation as a whole. The six advantages which Defoe expected to follow from his scheme were all economic:- the circulation of the capital outlay in Scotland; the employment of the various craftsmen required by the building, repairing and fitting out of ships; the breeding of seamen; "increase of shipping and trade for importing the naval stores ... and increase of business for goods to export; consumption of provisions, increase of wages to the poor, increase of labour and by consequence detaining the people at home, and by all these improving the land;" and the protection of Scottish trade during a war. This naval venture would serve to encourage the Scots to embark on the building and repairing of ships for which Scotland had certain advantages such as its supplies of timber and its closer proximity to the sources of supply of naval stores compared with Holland. He criticized the Commissioners of the Customs in Scotland for allowing an English builder, who secured the contract for three small frigates for trade protection, to build them at Newcastle, "whereas, by a workman I carried down there who has since built them several smaller boats, it has appeared it may even under the present discouragement and scarcity of materials be very well performed in Scotland." To pay for the imports of naval stores, Scotland would no doubt expand her herring fishery, which otherwise, he told Harley, "I confess I never promised much from." He probably had private reservations, but in his public propaganda for the treaty he had never failed to stress the expansion in the Scottish fishery which English capital would set on foot. (152)

Defoe had always been conscious of the drain of Scottish money southwards since the union of the crowns. Thus he had criticized James I for injuring his native country "by removing her Court and Gentry, by losing the Concourse of Strangers, Residence of Ambassadors, and consequently the Expenditure of Money, and the Helps to Trade from her Capital City." His partial union had made Scotland a province rather than a kingdom, but without "the proper Advantages" of an English province. (153) Although the transfer of the Scottish M.Ps. to London would intensify this loss, he contended that the expansion of trade would more than compensate for the disappearance of the Edinburgh Parliament. Scotland would gain tenfold "in the concourse of Strangers" as hundreds of families in England were looking north for opportunities in Scottish trade so that Edinburgh and Leith would soon be one city. (154) Its inhabitants had more reason to wish for a union than to oppose it: "For what is it they can lose thereby but a few Parliament Men once a Year, and may be not in SEVEN, to Live in it? Whereas a Union may bring such Trade and Traffick about it, with such Fleets of Ships into the Firth, as may be of more Advantage to it, than a HUNDRED Parliaments." (155) But by July 1709, he was already aware that the Union had not provided that immediate stimulus to Scottish trade and industry which he had been proclaiming. Whereas it had been "a mighty Cry" in England that the Scots would ruin England's manufactures by their cheaper labour, the latter had more reason to complain that the Union had opened "the Sluices of Trade, and let in an English Deluge of Manufactures upon them." (156) It

153. An Essay at removing National Prejudices ... Part I, p. 5.

154. Ibid, Part III, pp. 34-35. In the Review, Vol. III (No. 162) p. 646, he estimated the future expense of the nobility and gentry in London at £50,000 a year.

155. A Seasonable Warning ... p. 10.

156. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 47) p. 184.

was the finer fabrics that were chiefly affected, such as those made by the Newmills Company at Haddington. Defoe ascribed the previous success to the use of English workmen and English wool and admitted that they made "very good cloth, well-mix'd, and good colours", but after the Union they could not compete with the clothiers of Worcester, Gloucester and Wiltshire. (157) The coarser cloth, such as the "ordinary kind of stuff for poor peoples wearing" at Musselburgh and the well-finished Stirling serges or shalloons, continued to flourish, but in general, the industry, which had been damaged by the Scottish Act of 1704 allowing the export of wool, could not withstand the well-established English manufacture. (158) He criticized the Scots for sending their wool to France before the Union, and to England afterwards, instead of at least spinning it into yarn. (159)

He naturally seized on the greater prosperity of Dumfries, which more than compensated for the decline of its woollen manufacture, of the coal port of Irwin, despite its bar, and, above all, of Glasgow as examples of the gains which the Union should have brought to many more Scottish towns. Glasgow was the only city in Scotland that was expanding in both home and foreign trade and now sent nearly fifty ships a year to the American colonies. A Glasgow herring was reckoned as good as a Dutch herring, which in England they could not "come up to"; and there were "one or two very handsome sugar-baking houses; a large distillery for rum, or Glasgow brandy; and manufactures

157. A Tour, II, p. 291; W.R. Scott, op. cit., III, pp. 138-158.

158. Ibid, pp. 296, 346.

159. Ibid, p. 351.



of plaiding, linen and striped muslin, "much used for aprons by ladies," and exported in large quantities to the plantations and to England where they were also used as head-cloths "by the English women of a meaner sort." (160) Not all west coast ports, however, had prospered, so that Ayr was no longer the fifth town in Scotland, while Kirkudbright was "a port without trade, a fishery without nets," despite its fine harbour, because its lack of capital made the people indolent. Characteristically, he added, "were two or three brisk merchants to settle at Kirkubry, who had stocks to furnish out ships and boats for these things, they would soon find the people as industrious, and as laborious as in other places, or, ... they would soon make them so." Although he paid tribute to the people of Galloway as the most religious in Scotland, he thought that "they might at the same time be industrious, and apply themselves to trade," but the local gentry failed to give a lead because they scorned trade, despite their failure to make their estates profitable. (161)

Defoe showed his disappointment that the equivalent had so far failed to promote Scottish manufactures and suggested that too much of this money had been diverted to other purposes, but this passing reference indicates that he looked elsewhere for the chief cause of Scotland's continued economic backwardness. (162) Indeed, his explanation of the decline of the east coast ports reveals his conviction that the money which was gained by Scotland's trade surplus with England did not return to stimulate

160. *Ibid.*, pp. 315, 330, 335-338.

161. *Ibid.*, pp. 329, 323-325.

162. *Ibid.*, pp. 351-352.

her stagnant economy. Previously these towns had flourished, "their Court was magnificent, their nobility built fine houses and palaces which were richly furnish'd, and nobly furnish'd within and without ... whereas, now their Court is gone, their nobility and gentry spend their time, and consequently their estates in England; the Union opens the door to all English manufactures, and suppresses their own, prohibits their wool going abroad, and yet scarcely takes it off at home; if the cattle goes to England, the money is spent there too." The quantities of Scotland's imports were so small that all of them together did not balance her exports of lead, coal and salt. What, he enquired, "would not such an annual wealth in specie do for Scotland in a year, if there was not a gulph, into which it all runs as into a sink?" He agreed that the end of border warfare, the beginning of improved farming methods, England's sole responsibility for the burden of defence at home and overseas and Scotland's growing trade with the plantations provided a sound basis for future prosperity and in the long run Scotland would gain. (163) But the pace of advance would be greatly speeded up if the nobility, like true patriots, "should then put their helping hand to the rising advantages of their own country, and spend some of the large sums they get in England in applying to the improvement of their country, erecting manufactures, employing the poor, and propagating the trade at home."

163. Ibid, pp. 371-376. Defoe instanced the annual cost of the navy at £1,300,000, Review, Vol. III (No. 162) p. 646; A Fourth Essay, p. 40. In various pamphlets of 1706 he emphasized the importance of the English diplomatic and consular services, "we shall have the same Respect and Privilege in all the Ports abroad with the English Nation, as well as the Protection of their Ships of War, Ambassadors, Residents and Consels abroad." A Letter from Mr. Reason... p. 8; Cf. Considerations in Relation to Trade . p. 24, "... in the present case we are disregarded in all places to which we Trade as Interlopers."

A start could be made by following the example of the Irish in spinning woollen and worsted yarn for the English manufacturers. Observing that Scotland was not "bled white" by the imposition of heavy taxes which drained money away to London, T.C. Smout reaches the same conclusion as Defoe, that the biggest loss was caused "by the heavy expenditure of rents raised in Scotland by noblemen and lairds travelling and living in England." (164)

Before the Union was more than a year old, Defoe had recorded his disquiet that the Scots had not made a bigger initial effort. Acknowledging that he had always been "a Foreteller of Good from the Union," he insisted that he had "never told Britain, on either hand, North or South, that the Union would do you good whether you would or no." (165) The following year, he told the Scots that it was a justified reproach that they did not initiate enough improvements, although England was not providing the assistance which they had legitimately expected. He reminded them of the new facilities which the Union gave for economic progress, "Such as an open Door to Foreign Trade to all the English Colonies - An open Market to England for the Sale of every Branch of your Produce," coupled with a freer movement of people to spread knowledge of new methods and "the first Help of Money" provided by the payment of the Equivalent. (166) Yet only two days before, he had written that Scotland was now "the great Field of Commerce" and that there was "more Money now to be gotten in Scotland by Trade, than in any Part

164. T.C. Smout, A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830, pp. 243-244.

165. Scotland in Danger (1708) p. 3.

166. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 59) p. 236.

of the World - And this without Projects, and Wild goose Attempts." (167) Defoe's optimism was never absent for long and the difficulties in the path of economic expansion were commonly underestimated. The large profits which had accrued from some overseas trading ventures made men too ready to believe that it was only necessary to make a few basic improvements, as, for example in communications, or in ensuring supplies of essential raw materials, or in protection of industry, for wealth to flow in from abroad. At the time of the notorious Schism Bill of 1714, in a pamphlet ostensibly written by a moderate Tory opponent of the measure, he envisaged what would happen to England if the Dissenters were driven abroad by this attack on their religion. Because of their skill and enterprise they would be eagerly welcomed in all Protestant countries and would probably even receive an asylum in Catholic France.

"But should this unhappy People go no further than to the North side of the Tweede, and settle in Scotland, (where by the inviolable Act of Union they will be at liberty to enjoy their Religion according to their Consciences) this, tho' it would be no detriment to Great-Britain in general, because ... it is the same thing whether the Trade and Riches of it be lodg'd in the North or South parts, but yet England, poor England would be the sufferer; She would soon be depeopled, and all her rich Vales turn'd into Boggs, her Farmers would be undone, her Rents sink to nothing; Edinborough would emulate London, the glorious Trading Navy which now Rides on the Thames, would be seen Riding in the Frith, and the Epithet of Poor would be no longer applicable to the Scot but to the English-man. We are not to flatter our selves that the barren Soil of Scotland, and the inclement Northern Air will discourage them from settling there; ... And I fear should this Bill pass, Lands in Scotland will soon be worth 30 years Purchase, while those in England will have difficulty to find a Purchaser at any Rate." (168)

167. Ibid., (No. 58) p. 232.

168. A Letter to Mr. Steele, Occasion'd by his Letter ... (1714) pp. 31-34.

Twenty years after the Union, however, he regretfully conceded, with particular reference to Scotland, that "Nations do not grow rich at once: Time, and a long Series of concurring Circumstances bring it to pass." (169)

Defoe was justifiably proud of his part in promoting the Union and, indeed, it would have been hard to find a better choice for the difficult task which Harley had assigned to him. He acknowledged that he had "always Profest a more than Common Regard to this Nation" and there seems no doubt that he would have welcomed the opportunity to settle in Scotland after the Union. (170) He tentatively broached this on January 2, 1707, but Godolphin was reluctant to propose him for the vacant position of Secretary of the Customs in Scotland in the face of the expected opposition of William Lowndes, the able Secretary to the Treasury, without the support of Harley. (171) Defoe, however, claimed that he had eventually been offered a post as Commissioner of the Scottish Customs but that he was persuaded by Harley at the beginning of August 1707 to decline the appointment and remain "serviceable". (172) Defoe's alternative suggestion that he should be put in charge of a general survey of the Scottish customs, on the lines of Charles Davenant's Inspector-Generalship in England, proved equally fruitless for it is probable that Harley found Defoe too useful to him in a dependent capacity to recommend him for any established post. (173)

169. Atlas Maritimus, p. 113.

170. An Essey at Removing National Prejudices ... Part III, p. 3.

171. H.M.C. Portland, iv, p. 407.

172. Ibid, p. 432. Four years later he reminded Harley of this decision, H.M.C. Portland, v, p. 13.

Defoe's belief that he had given valuable service in Scotland led him to make the further proposal that he might be most useful to the Godolphin ministry by spending eight months in Scotland and three in London each year, with one month for travelling between the two capitals, but he was unable to regularize even his propaganda and secret service activities in this way. (174) Despite his justifiable complaints that lesser men, such as one Rigby and one Isaacson, had been appointed to posts in the custom service, he was not only left without any reward for his part in the Act of Union, but was often in desperate financial straits, particularly towards the end of his mission. (175) As he had not spared expense in obtaining intelligence, his employment had proved expensive, but his receipts from Harley were so irregular that he was compelled to tell his patron that he seemed to be completely forgotten. (176) Apart from financial worries and occasional danger, however, there seems little doubt that Defoe, as always, enjoyed his secret service role, of acting "the old part of Cardinal Richelieu", in his various explanations for his presence in Scotland, even to the extent of suggesting that he had fled from England because of his debts, of being "all to everyone" that he might gain some. (177)

Although he sometimes found them "proud, passionate, ignorant and jealous", or even that "the rigid and refractory clergy" were the worst enemies of the Union, his Presbyterian upbringing and religious convictions made him acceptable to the ministers

174. Ibid, p. 458.

175. Ibid, pp. 418, 444-445, 453, 458.

176. Ibid, pp. 373, 427.

177. Ibid, pp. 358, 385, 396.

and leaders of the Church, especially to the moderates such as the Rev. William Carstares. (178) His economic interests and experience in trade enabled him to influence the actual terms of the Treaty in the Committee stage of the discussions in the Scottish Parliament, although he claimed that William Paterson was being given the credit for these amendments. (179) His unflagging energy in the Union cause also contributed to the successful outcome, but his most signal service was obviously as a reasonable, able and prolific pamphleteer. Dr. Smout has concluded that his "brilliant and biting pen" (180) made him "easily the ablest writer among the pamphleteers for lucidity wit and punch." (181) Thus he dismissed the many addresses against the Union as "mere Clamour, a Phosphorus of artificial Fire" because they represented only a minority of the property holders and therefore did not adequately reflect public opinion. (182) It was by such arresting phrases that he maintained the Union side of the propaganda struggle and he was quite unrepentant about the charge that he was prolix and repetitive. Distinguishing three groups of people who cried out that the Union was broken as soon as it was made, he acknowledged that he aimed his arguments at "the ignorant, deluded little-understanding, nothing-thinking People" who would be the gunpowder of any conflagration. Although they scarcely knew whether the Union was "a Man or a Horse," they were convinced that it was "the Ruin of their Country" so that it was pointless to argue with them,

178. Ibid, pp. 385, 417.

179. Ibid, pp. 349, 357, 360, 365, 397.

180. T.C. Smout, A History of the Scottish People, p. 243.

181. T.C. Smout, Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union.

182. Review, Vol. III (No. 165) pp. 657-658.

for it was "talking Gospel to a Kettle-Drum." Therefore, he protested,

"I value the instructing and informing one honest meaning ignorant Person more than the detecting and confronting a thousand Knaves, and 'tis for the sake of these I write; for their Sakes I dwell upon a Subject sometimes longer than the Rules of Language allow, for their Sakes I repeat and repeat, and quote my self over and over, and can with Ease bear the foolish Banter of the envious Critick and Reproacher; I had rather say the same thing over twenty times, than once omit, what may this Way be useful.

I am without Vanity, neither ignorant of the Rules of Writing, nor barren of Invention, that sometimes I repeat and quote what I have formerly said, which I know those, this Paper reaches, never saw; 'tis for their Sakes I bear the Reproach of the scurrilous, who upbraid me with printing in this Paper, what I had in other Pieces printed before; thousands see this, that never saw the other, and what is it to them that it has been said before; do not our Ministers preach the same Sermons to different Auditories?" (183)

It was an honour to be employed in such a task, even though there was a risk of losing some readers by the space which he gave to Scottish affairs in the 'Review'. The constant desire for novelty, "the Age's Whore", made some of them throw down their copies when they found that an issue was again devoted to the Union, complaining that Defoe had "grown mighty dull of late." (184) When the Act finally received the royal assent, he looked back on his share in the whole transaction, how he had supported it in print, how he had seen it perfected in Scotland, in spite of "innumerable Oppositions", and finally approved by both Houses in England so that as he heard the guns of Edinburgh Castle announcing the final ratification, he could not resist repeating a childhood practice by fitting the words "Union, Union" to the boom of the cannon. He claimed that he pleaded no merit

183. Ibid, Vol. IV (No. 50) p. 199.

184. Ibid, Preface to Vol. V.



and that he did not exaggerate what he had been able to achieve, even though some had gone to London to solicit a reward for what he had been "the single Author of", but his well-deserved satisfaction in his own part in this great undertaking appeared in his wish that it could be recorded on his grave that he had done his duty "in promoting the Union." (185)

His fraternal regard for the Scots and dedication to the cause of Union was not paralleled by a similar sympathy towards the people of Ireland. Antagonism towards Roman Catholicism, however, does not seem to have influenced his attitude, although he believed that when the native Irish rebelled in 1641, "without the least Colour or Provocation," they had been enjoined by their priests "not to spare Man, Woman or Child" in their reported massacre of 300,000 Protestants. (186) He was primarily opposed to Catholicism on political grounds, particularly as he feared that the Protestant interest in Europe was markedly weaker than it had been at the Peace of Westphalia. While he denounced the Roman Church for absurdities and superstitions in its religious practice, for promoting ignorance and for a long and shameful record of persecution, he was no bigot. (187) In regretting the alleged increase in the number of Scottish papists between 1660 and 1688 after the imposition of episcopacy, he acknowledged that the Catholic priests had made much more effort to teach and civilize "the dark and ignorant Highlands" than the Episcopal Church had done. (188) He also drew a very sympathetic portrait

185. Ibid., Vol. IV, (No. 21) pp. 81-82.

186. Whigs turn'd Tories, And Hanoverian Tories ... prov'd Whigs (1713) p. 35.

187. See my Leeds M.A. Thesis, op. cit., pp. 55-62.

188. Review, Vol. V, (No. 118) p. 470.

of a French Catholic priest in the second part of "Robinson Crusoe." (189) He admitted that most English Catholics were loyal citizens and he welcomed the Catholics along with the other Palatine refugees. (190) It is also clear from his account of the three kingdoms on the moon that he thought that the transplanted English and Scottish settlers constituted the enterprising and trading part of the Irish nation. One kingdom had been completely conquered and the other

"suppress'd its Native Inhabitants and planted it with her own, and now carries it with so high a Hand over them of her own Breed, that she limits their Trade, stops their Ports, when the Inhabitants have made their Manufactures, these won't give them leave to send them abroad, impose Laws upon them, refuse to alter and amend those they would make for themselves, and make them pay Customs, Excise, and Taxes, and yet pay the Generals and Guards that defend them, themselves; Press their Inhabitants to their Fleets, and carry away their old Veteran Troops that should defend them, and leave them to raise more to be serv'd in the same manner, will let none of their Mony be carry'd over thither, nor let them Coin any of their own; and a great many such hardships they suffer under the Hand of this Nation as meer Slaves and Common People, tho' the greater part of the Traders are the People of the very Nation that treats 'em thus."

Defoe recognized that this harsh policy created additional difficulties for the conquerors, that it was responsible for "Eternal Murmurs, Heart-burnings and Regret, both in the Natives and the Transplanted Inhabitants; the first have shewn their Uneasiness by frequent Insurrections and Rebellions, for Nature prompts the meanest Animal to struggle for Liberty; and these struggles have often been attended with great Cruelty, Ravages,

189. The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe. II, pp. 130-131, 134; III, pp. 13-42, 53-61.
190. A Brief History of the Poor Palatine Refugees, pp. 19-20. He claimed, however, that some of them were Papists because of the accession of the House of Neuberg, that they were "of very moderate Principles" and were likely to come over to the Church of England.

Death, Massacres, and Ruin both of Families and the Country it self: As to the Transplanted Inhabitants they run into Clandestine Trade, into corresponding with their Masters Enemies, Victualling their Navies, Colonies, and the like, receiving and importing their Goods in spite of all the Orders and Directions to the contrary." (191)

Yet his constant concern for "our manufacture" overrode any such considerations of either justice or expediency. Within a month of publishing these reasonable comments, he was defending the prohibition of the export of Irish woollen manufactures as "a good Act of Parliament for the English, as it effectually Check'd a rising Nation in their easie Advantages over our Manufactures." He feared the seeming cheapness of Irish production just as keenly as the south-western clothiers and merchants like John Cary who had secured the prohibition in 1699. No nation in the world had the same opportunities to damage English trade as the Irish. Their wool was plentiful and the quality was as good, if not better than the English and this, coupled with cheap food prices resulting from the low land values might easily have transferred the woollen industry from England to Ireland. Without this essential legislation, "nothing but bringing fat Sheep down here to half a Crown apiece, and Beef to a Halfpenny a Pound ... could ever Enable us to match the Irish Trade." If the Act had not been passed, two results must have followed.

"1. Either the Trade Abroad Encreasing equal to the Surplus of a whole Kingdom's Labour, Ireland in time growing Rich, like England, the vast Demand for Goods would raise the Rate of Labour, and that of Provisions, and that of Lands, and so they would gradually be Rich like us, Or,

2. The more Goods they made, the Markets and Consumption being the same, the less we must make in proportion; and our Poor, by that means, wanting Employment, would (rather than Starve) Work for any thing; Provisions would sink with the Decay of Wages, and Lands in England fall down to the Period we have seen there."

Because the second alternative was so much more likely, Ireland was to England "as a Great Workhouse in the City of London." In other words, a low-cost Ireland represented a similar threat to the livelihood of the regular employee of the English woollen industry as the suggested remedy for English poverty which he had just discredited - "they were Abroad, just what our Vagrant Poor are at Home." As Mackworth's scheme of workhouse industry would have employed "our Vagrant Poor in the Works (our Diligent Families did before," so "two Kingdoms could not live on one Kingdom's Work." Yet he acknowledged that the action of the English Parliament "was using them like a Conquered People" and that he was "Impotent in Argument on behalf of this Act, as well as of several others relating to the Trade of that Kingdom." (192)

Exaggerating both the progress which the Irish woollen industry had already made and its probable future development, he maintained that it was difficult even for a skilled workman, to tell whether a piece of cloth in a foreign market had come from England or Ireland, except by the seals or town marks, and that the Irish were already exporting to France, Flanders, Holland, Germany and the Baltick, Spain, Portugal and the Straits." (193) Both critics and defenders of the notorious 1699 Act magnified

192. *Review*, Vol. II, (No. 22) pp. 85-86.

193. *Ibid.*, (No. 23) p. 89.

its importance. The recent marked expansion of the Irish industry between 1696 and 1699 had been closely associated with a favourable balance of payments for Ireland and while exports of new drapery had doubled since 1687, exports of frieze, the chief Irish cloth, had almost halved, largely because they had been effectively shut out of their main market in France by high duties. Ireland did not have extensive foreign markets for her cloth in 1699 and it is unlikely that she would have acquired them in competition with the more highly-organized English industry. Ireland, however, continued to supply her own large home market as imports from England declined during the first four decades of the eighteenth century. (194)

Defoe's career as a pamphleteer had only just begun in 1697 when the first attempt to exclude Irish cloth from the English and foreign markets was made, and he was at first too much engaged in other disputes, such as those concerning occasional conformity, moral reformation and the reduction in the army, to comment on Irish affairs, but many writers were more liberal in their views on the economic development of Ireland than he proved to be in 1705. It is true that the earlier publicists were still influenced by the French and Irish Catholic support for James II in 1690 and stressed the danger to England if she did not try to make Ireland prosperous. If Ireland had to be kept in subjection, she would be a constant incitement to an enemy invasion. Since Ireland had to be in English hands, the English Protestant minority must be secured against the

subject Catholic population by developing the native wealth of the island. (195) Union with England was advocated as early as 1690, and again before and after the Union with Scotland. (196) It was claimed that this would be easier than had been the case with the Welsh because of their different language, customs and laws, whereas there were few considerable families in England who did not have some relative in Ireland. (197) Others pointed out that an increase in area and population was always desirable and that false notions had only appeared because the two countries were separated by sea. (198) Most argued that England was in fact mistakenly acting against her own interest by allowing her policy to be dictated by such pressure groups as the cattle breeders and the south-western woollen manufacturers, in that any increase in Irish prosperity must finally centre in England. Apart from the Irish rents remitted to England and the expenditure of Irish courtiers in London, it was urged that England supplied most of Ireland's imports and that two-thirds of Ireland's overseas trade was carried on in English ships, amounting to a profit of £75,000 a year from this source alone. (199) It was also claimed that Irish imports of woollen manufactures from England were ten times more valuable than Irish exports to other countries and even that England gained more

195. Considerations Concerning Ireland, in Relation to England . (1690) pp. 1-2. Sir F. Brewster, New Essays on Trade ... (1702) pp. 69, 90.
196. Ibid; (H. Maxwell) An Essay towards an Union ... (1703); An Essay upon an Union ... (1704).
197. Ibid, p. 8.
198. Ibid, p. 7; A Discourse on the Woollen Manufactory of Ireland (1698) p. 8.
199. (Anon) Some Thoughts on the Bill ... for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woollen Manufactures of Ireland ... (Dublin 1698) pp. 4-5; Sir F. Brewster, A Discourse concerning Ireland ... (1698) p. 9; A. Dobbs, An Essay on the Trade and Improvement of Ireland (Dublin 1729) pp. 51, 56-57; Sir W. Harris, Remarks on the Affairs and Trade of England and Ireland (1691) pp. 18-20.

by her trade with Ireland than by her commerce with the rest of the world. (200) Sir Matthew Decker maintained that one-third of any increase in Irish trade and industry ultimately arrived in England so that the richer Ireland grew, the richer must Britain become. (201) To those who argued that England was justified in regulating Irish trade to her assumed advantage because of the expense of conquering the country and suppressing the various risings of the native Irish, Sir Walter Harris retorted that this had not cost one-tenth of what most people imagined and that England had derived a much greater financial benefit from her control of Ireland. Were there no such place, she would want employment for at least 300,000 of her people and a market for a good part of her products and manufactures. (202) To Sir Francis Brewster, Ireland was "a Mine of Treasure" and "the richest Jewel in the Crown" after England, providing the latter with a gain of nearly £2 million a year. (203) This estimate was accepted by a later writer who argued quite openly that England must secure the maximum advantage from her low-cost dependencies where labour was cheaper, the people hardier and taxation lighter. Like "so many Sponges" they would "suck up Treasures from the Ocean, in order to squeeze

200. Some Thoughts on the Bill ... pp. 3, 11.

201. Sir Matthew Decker, An Essay on the Causes of the Decline of the Foreign Trade ... (1744) p. 93; Cf. P. Paxton, A Discourse concerning the Nature, Advantage, and Improvement of Trade (1704) pp. 48-58. He argued that Ireland must be improved, "but so that the arising Profits may ultimately centre in England."

202. Sir W. Harris, op. cit., pp. 17, 27.

203. Sir F. Brewster, Essays on Trade and Navigation (1695) p. 17; A Discourse ... p. 11; New Essays on Trade (1702) p. 114.

them out again into the grand Receptacle" of these riches, Great Britain. Ireland, however, offered the greatest possibilities because she was so much nearer than the American plantations. If Ireland supplied the cheaper qualities of cloth, the Turkey Company would be able to recapture the market for these grades from the French, while the English manufacturers could concentrate on the production of her fine broadcloths which still commanded a sale in Turkey. (204) It was further contended that the prohibition of the export of Irish woollens had caused greater injury to England by the emigration of several Irish Catholics to France where they had laid the foundations of the French woollen industry and the owling trade between the two countries and by forcing the Irish to send more of their raw wool to France. Thus Britain had been deprived of millions instead of the thousands which Ireland would have gained. (205)

If Defoe read any of the above statements, they failed to alter his convictions about trade with Ireland. Towards the end of July 1711, he printed in the 'Review' a letter from a "correspondent" which supported his thesis that Britain had supinely allowed the French to establish a foothold in Spanish America and now had a belated opportunity in the recently-launched South Sea Company to dislodge the French and make a settlement on the coast of Chile. The writer quoted from two pamphlets, published in 1708, by Mr. K.T. Knox who in 1703 had been appointed by the Duke of Ormonde, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to survey the

204. Seasonable Remarks on Trade ... (Dublin 1729) passim;  
An Essay on Trade in General ... (1729) pp. 87-91.
205. A. Dobbs, op. cit., pp. 6-7. Cf. (J. Percival) Observations on the Present State of Ireland ... (1731) pp. 9-12, 18-19, 22. He also proposed that exports of Irish cloth could be restricted to England whence it could be re-exported at a profit.



Irish coast and to recommend measures to prevent Irish wool being run to France. Thus his first pamphlet had given details of the methods used to conceal the cargoes of Irish wool in barrels of beef and had maintained that an establishment of "riding officers" as in Kent and Sussex and a register of the raw wool would be more effective than the two armed vessels off the Irish coast. Defoe, however, was most interested in the general argument that it was the supply of smuggled wool from Ireland which had enabled the French to expand their cloth production and thus encroach upon the Spanish colonial trade. (206) In the second pamphlet, Knox declared that since the union with Scotland, there was "a kind of necessity" for union between Great Britain and Ireland although he did not envisage a complete union in everything and would not make the East-India, Turkey and Africa companies less exclusive. He claimed, however, that if the Irish trade were improved as it should be, it "might be made so subservient to Great Britain and its Manufactures, that no Branch of their Commerce" would be so advantageous. Like many other writers, he strongly criticized the 1667 Act prohibiting the importation of Irish cattle into England, which had particularly damaged the English woollen manufacture by pushing the Irish from their "Pastoral way of Living" into barrelling their beef for export, "converting their best Lands into Sheep Walks" and beginning to manufacture cloth. Previously, the money received for Irish cattle had been spent in England on her manufactures and foreign imports, so that it had been impossible for

Ireland "to be more subservient in Commerce" at that time. Therefore the Act should be repealed and the importation of staple wool from Ireland, which was so necessary for the manufacture of the new draperies, encouraged. Knox went so far as to recommend free trade between Great Britain and Ireland, even including manufactures. English merchants would no longer need to victual their ships in Ireland and many English manufacturers in Ireland would return home. The manufactures sent from Ireland were "so very inconsiderable in Comparison of England" that they would hardly affect one county, whereas the French manufactures "must necessarily fall to the Ground, and of other Places too" when Great Britain and Ireland worked all their raw wool and became "sole Merchants of the Woollen Manufactures." Also Knox would have permitted a certain number of Irish ships to trade freely from Ireland to the West Indies without first entering an English port on their return. Ireland could never be more than "an Out Port" to England, but the people of Ireland would be made entirely British by such measures. Goods could be brought much cheaper by water carriage from Ireland to London than if they were transported by land. Most of the Roman Catholics of the United Provinces were completely loyal subjects because they enjoyed the same trading and other privileges as the Protestant inhabitants. The addition of 1.5 million people and the extra revenue from taxation were further benefits which he anticipated from a union with Ireland. (207)

207. (T. Knox) Some Thoughts humbly offered towards an Union between Great Britain and Ireland (Dublin 1708/9) pp. 2-8.

Defoe stated that he sent for "the several Treatises" mentioned in his "correspondent's" letter and he named their author as Mr. Knox, "a Curious and Intelligent Person", but he was still unable to accept such a union, even one which Knox represented as so advantageous to England. Thus he had introduced the letter with the following comment:

"The Author (of the letter) seems to be of the Opinion of those, who have for some Years past, press'd hard for an Incorporation with Great Britain; a Thing which tho' it were less Just, if it were more Convenient, might perhaps have been done long since; and tho' it were more Just, yet while it is not less Convenient, I cannot see it practicable; but ... The Affair of the Wooll, and the French Encrease in Manufactures, their Encroachment on the Spanish Trade, and the Consequences drawn from it, I think, are very Just ..." (208)

Ten years later, Defoe published a letter from S.T., "an eminent Dublin Trader in the Woollen Affair ... to an Irish Gentleman of Distinction settled in London," (209) which shows that he had a thorough understanding of Ireland's economic difficulties. Even if the letter were genuine, he was then in control of what was published in "Mist's Journal," but it is more likely that he was using a common editorial practice of the day. In this way he could air views without the paper being closely associated with them, although the 10,000 weekly subscribers to this most popular of the Tory newspapers (210) were likely to be more sympathetic towards Ireland than the Whig merchants of London. The "correspondent" reported that Ireland's trade was in the most deplorable condition that could be imagined and dated its decline from the Act prohibiting the export of Irish woollen manufactures which he described as

208. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 54) p. 217.

209. Perhaps to make the letter seem more authentic, it was dated March 15 1720-21 although it was published in the issue of September 30, 1721.

210. J. Sutherland, op. cit., p. 221.

"fuller of Greediness than good Policy!" An Act as it is  
 beneficial to France and Spain, as it has been des-  
 tructive to England and Ireland. At the passing  
 of this fatal Act, the Condition of our Trade was  
 glorious and flourishing, tho' no way interfering  
 with the English; we made no Broad-Cloths above  
 six Shillings per Yard, coarse Druggets, Bays and  
 Shalloons, worsted Damasks, strong Draught-Works,  
 slight Half-Works, and gaudy Stuffs, were the only  
 Product of our Looms; these were partly consumed  
 by the meanest of our own People, and partly sent  
 to the Northern Nations from whom we had in Exchange,  
 Timber, Iron, Hemp, Flax, Pitch, Tar and hard Dollars.  
 At the Time the current Money of Ireland was foreign  
 Silver, a Man could hardly receive 100 l. without  
 finding the Coin of all the Northern Powers, and  
 every Prince of the Empire among it. This Money  
 was returned into England for fine Cloaths, Silks  
 etc. for our own Wear, for Rents, for Coals, for  
 Hard-Ware, and all other English Manufactures, and,  
 in a great Measure, supply'd the London Merchants  
 with foreign Silver for Exportation."

The English weavers, however, did not gain the profitable North-  
 ern Trade which the Irish then lost. On the contrary, there  
 were now towns without one loom in them, which previously "sub-  
 sisted entirely upon the Woollen Manufacture."

The writer claimed that three-quarters of the people in  
 his part of Dublin were English manufacturers, "whom either  
 Misfortunes in Trade, little petty Debts contracted thro' Idle-  
 ness, or the Pressures of a numerous Family, had driven into  
 our cheap Country." Several had taken apprentices from the

native Irish, but the Act caused the dismissal of thousands of  
 workmen, some of whom returned to glut the labour market in  
 England while others went to teach their skills in France, Spain  
 and the Netherlands. Because Ireland had more pasture than any  
 other European country, there was a constant supply of artisans

for Europe. He proceeded to make the customary charge that

much of the raw wool which Ireland could no longer make into cloth for export was smuggled to France or Spain, a custom-house oath having as little significance in Ireland as in England. When the Irish woollen manufacturers had been limited to the home market, they had been obliged to try to make finer qualities and they had now produced better cloth than the English "in several kinds of narrow Goods" while there was also the possibility that they would equal them in broadcloth within a few years. As a result Irish imports of English goods had fallen to scarcely one-tenth of the former volume. The commodities which the Irish were allowed to export had little or no sale in northern Europe and therefore they had to pay for their imports from these nations with ready money, "instead of carrying woollen Goods to their Markets and bringing home Money." If some foreign currency had not been acquired by her fraudulent trade in wool to France and Spain, Ireland would "scarce have a Penny to turn upon." As the Irish exports were largely primary products, they were "very much over-balanced" by her imports, so that the rate of exchange was unfavourable and people chose rather "to make their Remittances to England in Specie, than by a Bill" and Ireland was "perpetually drein'd of its little running Cash."

If Defoe wrote this letter from a correspondent, he was well aware of other fundamental causes of Ireland's difficulties and which remained the roots of the Irish problem in the nineteenth century:

"Another Cause of the Decay of Trade, Scarcity of Money, and Swelling of Exchange, is the unnatural Affectation of our Gentry to reside in and about London: Their Rents are remitted to them and spent there; the Countrymen wants Employment from them;

the Country Shop-keeper wants their Custom; for this reason he can't pay his Dublin Correspondent readily, nor take off a great Quantity of his Wares. Therefore the Dublin Merchant can't employ the Artizan, nor keep up his Credit in foreign Markets."

One of the excuses given by the Irish gentry for residing in London, loyalty to King George, would be better demonstrated by "staying in their respective Countries, influencing their Dependants by their Examples, saving their own Wealth, and letting their Neighbours profit by their necessary Expences, thereby keeping them from Misery and its unavoidable Consequence, Discontent?" What employments had they gained by their attendance at the English court? About forty of them had been created peers and less than a hundred, baronets and knights. In return,

"Thousands of our Gentry have squeezed their Tenants, impoverish'd the Trader and impair'd their own Fortunes!

Another great Calamity, is the exorbitant Raising of the Rents of Lands; upon the Determination of all Leases made before the Year 1690, a Gentleman thinks he has but indifferently improved his Estate, if he has only doubled his Rent-Roll. Farms are screw'd up to a Rack Rent, Leases granted but for a small Term of Years, Tenants tied down to hard Conditions, and discouraged from cultivating the Lands, they occupy, to the best Advantage, by the Certainty they have of the Rent being raised on the Expiration of their Leases, proportionably to the Improvements they shall make. Thus is honest Industry restrained, the Farmer is a Slave to his Landlord; 'tis well if he can cover his Family with a coarse home-spun Frize. The Artizan has little Dealings with him, yet he is obliged to take his Provisions from him at an extravagant Price, otherwise the Farmer cannot pay his Rent.

The Proprietors of Lands keep a great Part of them in their own Hands, for Sheep Pasture, and there are Thousands of poor Wretches, who think themselves blest, if they can obtain a Hut worse than the Squire's Dog-Kennel, and an Acre of Ground for a Potatoe Plantation, on Condition of being as very Slaves as any in America. What can be more deplorable than to behold Wretches starving in the midst of Plenty!"

The charge of laziness had often been levelled at the Irish, even by Sir William Temple in his comparison between Ireland and Holland, but the want of trade was due to the restrictions which England had placed on the Irish rather than to any shortcomings in the people. Within recent months the distress had reached heights unknown in the past thirty years and it was difficult to give any adequate account of the present calamities: "Numbers of miserable Objects crowd our Doors, begging us to take their Wares at any Price, to prevent their Families from immediate starving. We cannot part with our Money to them, both, because we know not when we shall have Vent for their Goods; and as there are no Debts paid, we are afraid of reducing our selves to their lamentable Circumstances. The dismal Time of Trade we had during Marr's Troubles in Scotland, are look'd upon as happy Days when compared with the present." The immediate cause of "this griping Want, this dismal Poverty" was "the accursed Stocks" which had desolated Ireland more than England. The Irish "went late to the South-Sea Market, and bore a great Share in the Losses of it, without having tasted any of its Profits." Many in England had been ruined, but some had been advanced and the English had "a free and open Trade to repair their Losses." As editor, however, Defoe added only one observation, that the writer must be wrong in his estimate of the scarcity of money in Ireland, "or surely such a thing as a Publick Bank would never be projected." (211)

John Cary agreed that Ireland had an adverse balance of trade because of the restrictions imposed by the English govern-

ment, her imports from England, the increasing difficulties of marketing her primary products in western Europe and the rents paid to English absentee landlords, (212) but whereas Defoe noted the drain of money from Scotland by the expenses of Scottish M.Ps. and peers in London, his only comment on the much larger transfer of money from Ireland was in the above letter in 'Mist's Journal.' Elsewhere he argued that as her trade expanded, Ireland might draw specie from England:

"Upon the whole, the Irish are Gainers by every Branch of their Commerce: for they have no extraordinary Consumption of any Goods of foreign Growth, unless from England: All their Clothes except Silks, some of which also they make at home; as also all their Furniture and Equipages: and they import nothing but the less necessary Articles of Life, the chief of which are Wine, Brandy, Tobacco, Sugars and Spice; the last of these in some measure serve to ballance the great Sums they would otherwise draw from England in Specie, for the Linen, Wool, and Yarn which they send every Year hither, and which would make their Trade still more to the Disadvantage of England." (213)

In Defoe's opinion, the Irish currency difficulties had been aggravated by their rejection of Wood's halfpence. As a literary agent for the Whig ministries after 1714, he published a pamphlet, using his old device of a discussion with a Quaker, to defend the patent granted to William Wood. He argued that there was no irregularity in the grant, that the new coinage was not imposed upon Ireland and that there was no valid objection against the workmanship or value of the metal. The Irish people wanted the new coins because of the real shortage of small change which obliged retailers to give long credit, so that there was not "the least Complaint against them, 'till

212. J. Cary, Some Considerations relating to the carrying on the Linnen Manufacture in ... Ireland (1704) pp. 5-7.

213. Atlas Maritimus, p. 114.



they had been current, and past as Current money among us, for several Months." The complaints did not begin amongst "the trading Part of the Nation" and the furore was solely due to a conspiracy among "a Sett of Persons in Ireland" to obtain the patent in place of Wood. Far from Wood making an excessive profit, the Irish, "the Circumstances of their Situation consider'd", had received their copper coinage cheaper than the English received theirs from the Tower Mint. This pamphlet, however, was more of a political tract than an expression of his economic ideas about Ireland. (214)

When Defoe made his final statements on the trade of Ireland in the years 1727-29, he still admitted that the economic situation of Ireland was deplorable and he was only able to excuse the English treatment of Ireland by the plea of necessity. Ireland was "in nothing more severely treated by the English than in Matters of Trade." Whatever was the position in law or justice, in trade they were treated "as a conquered Country". In spite of their love of liberty which made the English unwilling to tyrannize over their subjects, they were under "a sort of Necessity to carry a high Hand in this Article of Commerce upon Ireland, in mere Self-defence, suppressing and prohibiting the Exportation of the Irish Manufactures, to prevent the Ruin of their own." But the English and Scottish Protestants, who carried on most of the trade of Ireland, ought to accept this position and "enjoy the Country upon the English Terms" because they had been planted there by English military power. Even

214. Some farther Account of the Original Disputes in Ireland, about Farthings and Halfpence . . . (1724). passim.

the sheep had been transported to Ireland originally, although the English tried to prevent their transfer from England to any other European country. He admitted that Irish trade was now "very much contracted" and "almost confin'd to the mere Produce of their Land." This went out in three main channels, butter and smaller quantities of tallow and leather to the Low Countries, barrelled beef and pork particularly for victualling French ships and fish to Spain and Portugal. Almost the only industrial development was in shipbuilding and the new linen industry. Because the Irish built very good ships and had large supplies of excellent oak, many English merchants had their vessels built there, especially for foreign trade. (215)

His views on Irish trade tended to vary according to the fluctuating fortunes of the English woollen industry. When cloth exports rose as in 1716 and 1717, he was most concerned that there should be an ample supply of wool and he observed that the restrictions on the importation of wool into England were "a sensible Injury to the Trade, and tied up the Hands of the Clothiers and Manufacturers." Therefore, he criticized the limitation of these imports of Irish wool to the ports of the Bristol Channel such as Minehead and Barnstaple. (216) Previously, "before the Stop was put to the free Exportation of the Irish Woollen Manufacture, the Quantity of the Wool of England was too great for the Manufacture" and he had heard farmers complain that they could not pay their rent because they had two or three years stock of wool which they could not sell. When Defoe

215. Atlas Maritimus, p. 113.

216. Mercurius Britannicus, February 1718, pp. 54-55.

wrote this in 1728, the English woollen manufacturers were facing a marked slump in trade and in trying to maintain confidence he instanced the importation of 100,000 "Horse Packs from Ireland" each year as complete proof of the continued expansion of the industry. (217) The depression, however, made him complain of the Irish evasions of the 1699 Act and of the import of Irish yarn instead of wool as "two Articles in the Irish Trade, which appear exceeding grievous to the English, especially at this time when the Woollen Manufacture in England runs low. This yarn import had been allowed at first "as a small thing, and of no great Use except at Bristol: and 'tis plain the English Parliament intended not to make it extensive, by their rejecting the Petitions from London and Norwich for the allowing Irish Yarn to be brought directly into the Thames and to Yarmouth." The quality of this yarn, however, was good and it was so cheap that it could bear the added cost of land carriage from Bristol to London and by water from London to Yarmouth. As a result 40,000 packs, each weighing 240 pounds, were imported each year, "anticipating" the English spinning and causing unemployment in England. At 3d. per pound for spinning, he valued each pack at £6. Thus £240,000 per annum were "taken from the Employment of the Poor of England, and paid to the Poor of Ireland" at a time when all the world's markets were "scarce sufficient" for the sale of English cloth To prohibit the Irish yarn would not be a satisfactory solution and would also be a great loss to Ireland, so that it was as much an Irish concern as an English "to keep the Trade running in the right Channel." The Irish should also remember that any further encroachment on the English woollen

industry might provoke the English into taking away the incentives which their government had given for the encouragement of the Irish linen manufacture. (218)

Defoe's fears of Irish competition made him exaggerate both the quantity and value of Irish woollen output. Sir Arthur Dobbs pointed out that he had doubled the value of a pack of Irish yarn at £6, after giving 3d. per pound as the cost of spinning the 240 pounds in a pack. Defoe's 40,000 packs at 15 stone per pack would amount to 600,000 stones but Dobbs declared that Ireland sent only 103,459 stones in 1726, not much above one-sixth of Defoe's estimate. Therefore, the true value of the Irish yarn imported into England was only £20,691.16s., "a small Sum to grudge to the Poor of Ireland." Dobbs also correctly surmised that "A Plan of the English Commerce" was written by the same person as the 'Atlas Maritimus', since his calculations were "equally wide", and he again disputed Defoe's figure in his "Plan" that England imported 100,000 packs of Irish wool and yarn, that is 1,500,000 stones, whereas the true amount was 227,049 stones, again not much above one-seventh of Defoe's computation. On the other hand, he alleged that Defoe had underestimated the English imports of Irish linen at 2 million yards, whereas he maintained that this should have been 3,265,486 yards, and that this was improved in England by stamping. (219)

Most English writers on trade agreed that England should regulate the trade of all her possessions and looked on Ireland

218. Atlas Maritimus, p. 114.

219. Sir A. Dobbs, op. cit., pp. 61-62; A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 117.

as merely the nearest, and often as the most prejudicial of the plantations. (220) Therefore, they usually supported the embargo on the export of Irish woollen cloth, but were, to some degree, on the defensive because of the claims of the Scottish and English settlers for support against the Catholic majority. Thus Defoe thought that they were not more than a third of the population but that they were "the chief Managers" of Ireland's trade, the native Irish being chiefly employed in "Country Work." (221) But even those who urged the claims of Ireland for more sympathetic consideration still thought that it was undesirable that Ireland should compete with the English woollen industry. Thus Dobbs agreed that England "ought to have the Preference; as well upon Account of our being Embark'd upon the same Bottom, as that our Trade is but a Branch of their extended Commerce." (222) Writers like Brewster seem more liberal in their views because, unlike Defoe, they did not think that Ireland was a danger to the English industry. The Irish woollen manufacture was "so very inconsiderable", he wrote, and only consisted of "some ordinary Woollen Cloth for their own use." (223) Earlier, another pamphleteer declared, "the whole quantity of what we work up in Ireland, amounts not to the half of what any one Cloathing-County in England" would produce. (224) They did not so much plead for greater prosperity for the native Irish or even for the Protestant minority as maintain that England was acting against her own interests by her policy. Even the 1729

220. e.g. Joshua Gee, The Trade and Navigation of Great-Britain Considered, pp. 75-80; J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England, pp. 89-106.

221. Atlas Maritimus, p. 114.

222. Sir A. Dobbs, op. cit., p. 52.

223. Sir F. Brewster, A Discourse concerning Ireland ... p. 35.

224. (Anon) A Letter from a Gentleman in Ireland to his Brother in England ... (1677) p. 12.

HOME TRADE

Most of the writers on trade before Adam Smith were convinced that national advantage consisted solely in the profit from foreign trade and confined their remarks to suggestions for extending England's overseas trade and for increasing the balance in her favour. From Hales and Mun to Gee and Decker, even those who are reckoned to be the freest from mercantilist preconceptions, if they mentioned home trade at all, it was only to emphasize that it was subordinate to, or rather contributory to foreign trade. (1) A particular manufacture making goods primarily for domestic consumption would be acceptable if it replaced a commodity previously imported, but the main emphasis was on the accumulation of export surpluses to produce an influx of "universal Wealth". Thus the author of 'Angliae Tutamen', "'tis not what we eat, drink or wear, or use other-ways at home, either of our own, or Foreign Produce, that is beneficial to us, but the sending abroad vast Quantities of ... all sorts of English Manufactures." The profit which individuals extracted from one another at home did not enrich the state "one jot." (2) Later writers usually accepted Davenant's conclusion, "it is the interest of all trading nations whatsoever, that their home consumption should be little, of a cheap and foreign growth, and that their own manufactures should be sold at the highest markets, and spent abroad; since by what is consumed at home, one loseth only what another gets, and

1. Sir W. Petty, 'Political Arithmetick' (1676), Economic Writings ... ed. C.H. Hull (1899) I, p. 295; R. Coke, A Discourse of Trade (1670), p. 3; W. Wood, A Survey of Trade (1718) pp. 226, 248-250.
2. (Anon) Angliae Tutamen ... (1695) p. 8.

the nation in general is not at all the richer, but all foreign consumption (exportation) is a clear and certain profit." Here he was justifying the imports into England of East-India goods, even calicoes, but he believed that this was a valid general principle and he proceeded to explain the wealth of the Dutch by their "frugality of consuming at home what is cheap or comes cheaply, and carrying abroad what ... will yield most money." He claimed that it was "an undoubted truth, that £400000 worth of our native goods sold abroad" added more to the national stock "than 4 millions worth of our home product consumed within the kingdom." (3) Defoe agreed that "National Wealth never grows by all we consume among our selves; this or that Family, and this or that Town or County may grow richer than another, as the Product is richer, or the People more employ'd than the rest: But this is all gain'd from one another, and the publick Stock is still the same." (4) Towards the end of his career, he was still reiterating this thesis "the Cheapness or Dearness of that Part of our Publick Stock, which is consumed at Home, is not of one Farthing Value in our Trade, because it is not of any Weight, one Way or other, in the publick Stock ... tho' all the Hands it passes thro', raise a Gain from it, ... yet the last Consumer pays it all; he loses whatever others gain, and so you are but just where you was; 'tis a Dance in a Circle, and you end just where you began, the People live by one another, and then live upon one another." (5) Defoe was never able to reconcile this conviction with his intuitive realization that

3. C. Davenant, 'An Essay on the East-India Trade' (1696), Collected Works, ed. C. Whitworth (1771), Vol. I, pp. 102, 103-104.
4. Mercator, No. 48, September 12, 1713; quoted more extensively supra, pp. 33-34.
5. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part I, p. 146.

such a large volume of economic activity as Britain's home trade comprised must be advantageous to the nation as a whole. Even the final cost to the last consumer might be passed on to the foreign purchaser, for in the following passage he seems to have anticipated the notion of foreign-paid incomes which his Whig antagonists developed in their campaign to discredit his advocacy of the commercial treaty with France. (6)

" ... Every labouring Man is an Encrease to the publick Wealth, by how much, what he gains by his Labour, amounts to more than He or his Family eats or consumes - For every Encrease is an Article in the Credit of the General Stock - And for this Reason, I say, it is an Addition to the publick Wealth to have the Price of Labour dear;

Every labouring Man then, however poor, encreases the publick Wealth - Nor is it enough to say, that the publick Stock is the same; for that what A gains, B pays, and it is still all in the Kingdom, both A and B being Members and Residents of the whole Body - For still the Circulation is the Wealth - And every Body encreases the Value, till the last Consumer pays it - And this almost in every Article of Trade falls upon Foreign Export; but be it that it were at home, yet the Profit is the same Thing, as it encreases the Value of the Thing, and that encreas'd Value is an Addition to our Wealth; it is an Advantage upon the general Valuation of all Things among us, and let it seem to be upon our selves alone, yet it is evident, it is upon every Thing, and must at last affect every Part of Trade - The Domestick and the Foreign depend upon one another; and ... give new Value to every Thing advanc'd above what it was before, and that Thing so advanc'd will purchase any Thing in the World at the advanc'd Price I speak of, whether there be an intrinsick Value or no.

I think therefore this must be plain, what ever Value we can put upon our Labour, which we can make our Neighbours pay, must be clearly our Gain." (7)

Although Defoe's confusion of thought about the respective merits of home and foreign trade is again apparent in the next

6. E.A. J. Johnson, Predecessors of Adam Smith, pp. 150-154, 308-315.

7. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 35) p. 138.



extract, it also shows that he thought that the employment of so much improving labour, even in production for the home market, must result in an increased national income and a higher standard of living. "The real Gain from Home Trade", he now announced, "by which the publick Stock encreases, doth not consist in the Money gotten by one Man, for what he sells to another; but by the Produce of Land and Labour, and People, and yet even this does not encrease us in Wealth, in one respect, because what the Encrease of Land, or Industry of the Workman, encreases the Necessities of Nature, sink again in the Consumption; tho' it is a gain also, because, by raising the Value of the Produce, and the Value of Labour, it enables the Consumer to live better, and spend more, which is a Wealth in its kind, and encreases, or at least keeps up the Rents and Value of Land." Seven years later, he still justified home consumption on this ground, "The Rents of Lands are rais'd by the Consumption of their Produce; the Produce of Lands are consum'd by the Numbers of the People; and, as they are enabled to fare well, it encreases that Consumption." (8) But as he was waging a vigorous campaign for the complete prohibition of even the use of Indian calicoes in Britain, his renewed demand for protection for his darling woollen manufacture again led him to emphasize parsimony at home to release a greater flow of precious exports:

"What is consum'd at Home, forms no Article in the Account of the General Stock, except it be that which comes from Abroad, as the Return of our Manufactures sold there.

.....  
 ... every Year Nature gives us a new Treasure, and that of an immense Value: Fields cover'd with Corn; Meadows and Plains, with Flocks and Herds of Cattle;

8. Ibid, Vol. IX, (No. 39) p. 78.

and our Coast with Shoals of Fish ... Now, could all the Nation live but one seven Years without Victuals and Cloaths, that all the Corn, and Cattle, and Fish; all the Wool, or Goods made of Wool, might be sent Abroad and sold, we should be the richest Nation in the World. But, on the other Hand, suppose that the Back and the Belly consume all this at Home, and by the next Season we stand gaping for another Harvest, ... pray, What, the richer are we for all this Increase? All that Nature gives us, is but a meer Annuity, ... Or, like ill Husbands, anticipate our Annuity, and eat the Calf in the Cow's Belly; that is, buy from our Neighbours, which is a dead Loss to us, and is like an Heir mortgaging the Reversion.

.....  
 - But if Nature is bountiful, and the People, by Labour and good Husbandry, can increase the Value of their Annuity; can trade with their Bread and Butter, and save some of it; or spin their Bread and Butter, ... and sell some of it to their Neighbours; every Ounce of that, is clear Gain to the Nation." (9)

When Defoe was not imprisoned in the current dogma, however, he frequently eulogized Britain's home trade in terms which made him almost unique amongst his contemporaries. In an early issue of the 'Review', he wrote of "the vast and Prodigious Circulation of Home Trade ... which, without doubt, exceeds any Nation in the World." (10) Twenty years later, "the Inland trade of England is a thing not easily described; it would, in a word, take up a whole book by it self; it is the foundation of all our wealth and greatness; it is the support of all our foreign trade, and of our manufacturing." (11) This last statement was anticipated by Carew Reynel but it is obvious that in the following extract Reynel was thinking primarily of the substitution of foreign imports by home manufactures:

9. The Manufacturer, No. 22, January 13, 1720.

10. Review, Vol. III (No. 6) p. 21.

11. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. I, p. 319.

"Trade is to be advanced every way ... but especially the home, as being of more Consequence than the Foreign: for what ever we can raise at home we should never have from abroad. Foreign Trade is a secondary help, home Trade is our primary advantage. ... To encourage home Trade we should enjoyn our own People chiefly to use our own Manufactures, and make them pay treble Custom that bring in any Foreign Manufacture, that we do make or may make at home..." (12) While John Pollexfen wrote that "Buying, Selling and Trading among our selves ... hath no immediate influence upon the enriching or impoverishing of the Nation" and that those nations "that are prodigal in the expence of their own Products, do decrease the Exportation of so much as they might have saved," he recognized that home and foreign trade were interdependent.

"Much doth depend upon the incouragement of our Home Trades; vast numbers of People have their Livelyhoods from it, and the Grandeur, Strength and Wealth of great Cities and Corporations are chiefly supported by it ... The more are maintained by Laborious Profitable Trades, the Richer the Nation will be both in People and Stock, and thereby all have the conveniency of Commodities the cheaper: Therefore all Laws, By-Laws, and Customs of Corporations, that tend to Restraine, Limit and Narrow our beneficial Home Trades, may upon examination be found prejudicial to the Public. Building Ships, and the great Dealings which are necessary for the Manufacturing of all Goods to be made fit for Exportation, and for the Consumption of what brought from Abroad, may be esteemed as part of our Domestick Trade: So that although the Riches of the Nation cannot be said to be immediately from our Domestick Trades, yet it is that upon which our Foreign Trade, and consequently our Riches, have so great dependance, that there cannot be one without the other, in any great measure." (13)

Against the current conclusion that the home trade contributed

12. C. Reynel, The True English Interest: Or an Account of the Chief National Improvements; ... (1674), pp. 7-8.
13. J. Pollexfen, Of Trade ... Also, of Coyn, Bullion ... (1700) pp. 40-42.

nothing to the enrichment of a nation, Sir Dudley North said much the same, "what is commonly understood by Wealth, viz. Plenty, Bravery, Gallantry, etc. cannot be maintained without Forreign Trade. Nor in truth, can Forreign Trade subsist without the Home Trade, both being connected together." (14) Bishop Berkeley was possibly referring to internal trade rather than imports when he asked "whether it be not folly to think an inward commerce cannot enrich a state, because it doth not increase its quantity of gold and silver? And whether it is possible a country should not thrive while wants are supplied and business goes on?" (15) Apart from the authors of 'The British Merchant', however, these seem to be the only references to the home trade in the vast pamphlet literature of the period and no other writer, except Defoe, examined the trade in any detail.

It is unlikely that these Whig propagandists of 1713 genuinely thought that the home trade was at least twenty times the value of Britain's foreign trade, because this additional argument in favour of protection was adduced solely to defeat the proposed commercial treaty with France. Their opposition to the measure was motivated by fear of French imports coupled with political and religious antagonism to France, and they obviously overvalued exports as much as any of their contemporaries. Their doctrine of foreign-paid incomes was a modification of the theory of the particular balance of trade and was

14. D. North (or Roger North), 'Discourses upon Trade ...' (1691) Early English Tracts on Commerce (edited J.R. McCulloch, (1856), p. 529.
15. G. Berkeley, The Querist (1735-3), query number 541.

used to demonstrate that Britain earned from her export surplus part of the income of her labourers and landowners. (16) Davenant estimated that the home market for woollen cloth was three times the value of British cloth exports but these accounted for half of the total value of exports and the ratio for other commodities would be much greater. (17) Thus the home consumption of corn was more than eight times as large as the quantity exported in the peak year of export in 1750. (18) On the other hand, total production of other manufactures, both for home and export, was small. On the basis of Gregory King's estimates, the home market was twice as valuable as exports in the case of manufactures and the total home market about eight to nine times the value of the foreign. (19) Thus the home market was much more important than most economic writers of the time visualized, but much less valuable than the propagandist assertions of the 'British Merchant'.

Defoe used various classifications in his writing about trade. In the 'Review', he stated that "all the Innumerables of Trade" came under "two Heads; Natural Produce, and Manufacture", but in the preceding paragraph he had already subdivided the latter into "House-Furniture, and Cloathing." (20) Similarly

16. E.A.J. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 150-154; The British Merchant, Nos. 11, 14, 29.
17. C. Davenant, 'An Essay upon the Probable Methods of making a People Gainers in the Balance of Trade', Collected Works, ed. Whitworth, II, pp. 233-234.
18. R. Davis, The Rise of the English Shipping Industry, (1962), p. 191.
19. D.E.C. Eversley, 'The home market and economic growth in England 1750-1780' in E.L. Jones and G.E. Mingay (editors) Land, Labour and Population in the Industrial Revolution (1967) p. 227; C. Wilson, England's Apprenticeship 1603-1765 (1965), pp. 20-23, W.E. Minchinton, editor, The Growth of English Overseas Trade in the 17th and 18th centuries (1969), pp. 38-40.
20. Review, Vol. III, (No. 2) p. 5.

he divided domestic trade into three parts, "1. Buying and Selling, which we call Shop-keeping, and 2. Manufacturing," with husbandry as the third branch. (21) In his 'Tour' as in the 'Review', he showed least interest in the last and his most frequent comments were on the influence of the great London market on the specialization of farming. At the outset of his account of his travels, he had only reached Tilbury from London when he was describing how the farmers and grazing butchers there bought Lincolnshire and Leicestershire wethers cheap at Smithfield in September-October (and kept them until Christmas or Candlemas for the price rise. (22) The fishing off the coast of Essex prompted this observation, which runs like a refrain through his account: (23) The influence of

"N.B. I am the more particular in my remark on this place, because in the course of my travels the reader will meet with the like in almost every place of note through the whole island, where it will be seen how this whole kingdom, as well the people, as the land, and even the sea, in every part of it, are employ'd to furnish something, and I may add, the best of every thing, to supply the city of London with provisions; I mean by provisions, corn, flesh, fish, butter, cheese, salt, fewel, timber, etc. and cloths also; with every thing necessary for building, and furniture for their own use, or for trades; of all which in their order." (23)

Woodbridge in Suffolk sent corn and barrels of fine butter, St. Ives three thousand couple of wild fowl a week from the fens and the Maidstone area bullocks, corn, hops and fruit. (24) From Suffolk and Norfolk three hundred droves of from three hundred to a thousand turkeys at a time had been observed to pass

21. A General History of Trade, June 1713, p. 11.

22. A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain (1724-6), I, p. 9.

23. Ibid., I, p. 12.

24. Ibid., pp. 55, 79, 113-114.

over Stratford bridge on the river Stour in one season, but these were outnumbered by those which walked to London by other routes. In like manner, droves of a thousand to two thousand geese fed on the stubble as they passed up to London between late August and the end of October when the roads became "too stiff and deep." Four-stage carts had recently been introduced for carrying fowls, especially young turkeys and live chickens, to the London market. (25) He had been told that forty thousand Scots cattle were fattened each year on the marshes between Norwich, Beccles and Yarmouth, (26) while the Lincolnshire fens sent tench, pike, perch and eels live by land carriage in "great butts fill'd with water in waggons", the water being changed when they stopped at an inn for the night. (27) The influence of the London market extended as far west as Hereford, where Leominster not only produced the finest wool in the country but also sent great quantities of cyder by land to the capital. (28) Similarly, Wiltshire, in addition to its "vast manufacture" of fine Spanish cloths, supplied cheese, bacon and malt. (29) Only Cornwall failed to send any foodstuffs but made "amends by sending up an immense wealth in their tin, lead, and copper." (30)

The former tradesman was naturally absorbed by the corn and malt markets at Farnham, Dorking, Croydon, Reading and Bedford, (31) by the Yarmouth "fishing-fair" of herrings in October, by the Wey-hill sheep fair in Dorset and the Penkrige horse-fair

25. Ibid, pp. 59-60.

26. Ibid, p. 65.

27. Ibid, II, pp. 100-101.

28. Ibid, II, p. 49.

29. Ibid, I, p. 284.

30. Ibid, I, p. 265.

31. Ibid, I, pp. 142, 153, 157, 291; II, p. 113.

in Staffordshire and, of course, by the famous Stourbridge fair at Cambridge. (32) G.D.H. Cole, however, pointed out that Defoe was more interested "in the buying and selling of goods than in their production" and that in his famous account of the West Riding cloth industry "he is far more concerned to tell us how the manufacturer gets his wares to market than how they are actually made." (33) Yet Defoe was always an acute observer, which makes it all the more surprising that at Kings Lynn he noted the large imports of coal and wine into the great inland navigation of the Ouse basin but made no mention of the extensive corn trade, possibly because it was so well-known. (34) He took particular note of cheese at Stilton, Wiltshire-Gloucestershire, Cheshire and Cheddar, which he considered, "without all dispute, ... the best cheese that England affords," often selling for six pence to eight pence per pound, three times the price of Cheshire. (35) Lastly, he was particularly interested in any improvements in methods of farming. Thus in east Suffolk he pointed out that this was the first part of England, "where the feeding and fattening of cattle, both sheep as well as black cattle with turnips, was first practis'd in England, which is made a very great improvement of their lands to this day; and from whence the practice is spread over most of the east and south parts of England, to the great enriching of the farmers, and encrease of fat cattle." (36) The pace of change was much

32. *Ibid*, I, pp. 66, 289, II, pp. 78-79, I, pp. 80-85.

33. *Ibid*, I, Introduction, p. xii.

34. *Ibid*, I, pp. 73-74. In Vol. II, p. 113, however, he referred to the corn trade of Lynn in his account of Bedford market - "great quantities of corn are bought here, and carry'd down by barges and other boats to Lynn ..."

35. *Ibid*, II, pp. 72, 110; I, pp. 278, 283-284.

36. *Ibid*, I, p. 58.



slower than Defoe imagined but E. Kerridge has shown that this practice did indeed begin in Suffolk and then spread to Norfolk.

(37) He observed that Romney Marsh was not only famous for large fine sheep but also for large bullocks, "and especially those they call stall'd oxen, that is, house fed, and kept within the farmers sheds or yards, all the latter season, where they are fed for the winter market." This he noted, "because these oxen are generally the largest beef in England." (38) Again, around Wisbech he saw many hundred acres "bearing great crops of hemp."

(39) Thus it seems strange that he did not gain the full facts about the Wiltshire water meadows. Having been told that a meadow at Amesbury was let for £12 a year per acre "for the grass only", he made particular enquiries "and was shew'd the meadows" with grass "to the length of ten or twelve foot" and "of so rich a nature as to answer very well such an extravagant rent", but the reason which he was given was "the washing of the rains from the hills adjacent" not the usage of covering the early grass with water to protect it from the frost. (40) On the downs around Salisbury Plain, he noted, "for the observation of those counties in England, where they are not yet arrived to that perfection of husbandry," the practice of folding sheep upon new plough lands "and this alone, has made these lands, which in themselves are poor, and where, in some places, the earth is not above six inches above the solid chalk rock, able to bear as good wheat, as any of the richer lands in the vales, though

37. E. Kerridge, 'Turnip Husbandry in High Suffolk', Econ. Hist. Review, VIII, No. 3, (1956).  
 38. A Tour, I, p. 125.  
 39. Ibid., II, p. 100.  
 40. Ibid., I, p. 211; E. Kerridge, 'The Sheepfold in Wiltshire and the Floating of the Water Meadows', Econ. Hist. Review, VI, No. 3, (1954).

not quite so much." He further reported that if a Wiltshire farmer had sheep and no fallows to fold them on, his neighbours would give him ten shillings a night for every thousand. (41) Commending the Leicestershire and Lincolnshire farmers for their large sheep with fine long-staple wool and "the greatest weight of flesh on their bones," he stated that it was not uncommon for them to pay from £500 to £2000 a year rent for their farms. Leicester and the adjoining counties of Northampton and Bedford also produced the largest horses in England, "generally the great black coach horses and dray horses." (42) His love of horses came out strongly in his praise of the racehorses which were bred around Bedale in the North Riding. He claimed that they were "perhaps some of the best in the world" and would "outdo for speed and strength the swiftest horse that was ever bred in Turkey, or Barbary" especially over a four-mile course and carrying twelve to fourteen stone weight. (43)

Similar observations had appeared earlier in the 'Review'. In July, 1709, he gave the following two reasons for the low yield of land in Scotland:

"1. The Want of Enclosures, in order to laying the Lands several, that every Husbandman may dung and manure each Piece of Ground, in Proportion to what it will bear, and keep Stocks of Cattle upon their own Land - Whereas now he that has 100 Cows is oblig'd to let them run at large, and his Neighbours Land reaps the Benefit of his Stock - And that Benefit is it self less by nine Parts in ten than it would be, if the same Number of Cattle are fodder'd and fed upon Enclosures of his own, at the proper Seasons, and in the Manner that the Rules of Husbandry direct. 2. Want of Winter Provisions for Cattle - Without which the Farmer cannot breed large Cattle or keep a large Number

41. A Tour, I, pp. 284-285.

42. Ibid, II, pp. 89-90.

43. Ibid, II, pp. 221-222.

of them, and for Want of which, those they have are stinted in their Growth, and starv'd by the Severities of the Winter ... the Cattle are starv'd not with Cold, but with Hunger." (44)

In June 1711 he first mentioned his visit in 1697 to Sir John Fagg of Steyning in Sussex which he later described in the 'Tour'. Sir John showed him four bullocks of his own breeding which weighed eighty stone per quarter, "or each of them 320 Stone in the whole, of Beef when drest up", and which he sold at Smithfield for £25 a head. Defoe said that these were much heavier than the bullock which Sir Edward Blacket of Ripon showed about the north of England, and he maintained that neither France, Spain, Germany nor Italy could feed "a Bullock of such Dimensions" as England. (45) Comparing the relationship between land and trade to that between land and cattle, he declared, "the more Cattle the Land can feed, the more it will be enabled to feed, and it is a good Husband-Man's Proverb, that Stock upon Land makes good Land; if the Stock be fed off the Land ... the Land is immediately beggar'd and spoil'd; and this makes our Landlords contract with their Tenants, for spending the Hay and Straw of a Farm upon the Farm." (46) Pleading for the settlement in England of the poor Palatines, he asked "are we arriv'd at the utmost Perfection of Husbandry? Have not many Things been introduc'd among us in the Memory of Man, as foreign Grasses, Turneps, and several other Parts of our Improvements, which are but lately brought hither? And no doubt but many other Things are still behind, to bring us to Perfection." (47) On the

44. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 49) p. 195.

45. Ibid., Vol. VIII, (No. 31) p. 127; A Tour, I, p. 131; II, p. 218.

46. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 22) p. 91.

47. A Brief History of the Poor Palatine Refugees ... p. 15.

other hand, in regretfully accepting the prevailing taste for luxurious living by the fashionable world, he condemned what he considered abnormal demands on nature, such as "raising Plants by mere Violence, and, as it were, a rape upon the Earth; forcing her to produce things before her time." "What Rapes", he protested, "are committed upon nature in the production of Animals as well as Plants! making the Ewes bring Lambs all the Winter, fattening Calves to a monstrous size, using cruelties and contrary diets to the poor Brute, to whiten its Flesh for the Palates of the Ladies and to gorge the dainty Stomachs of those who lay up their felicity in Eating fine." (48)

Defoe, however, had no doubt that enclosure was the essential first step towards further improvements in agriculture and claimed that this had been carried out previously by agreement amongst the village community. England, he said, "once lay open" like Scotland in 1709, but thousands of manors had been enclosed and improved. This had been done "not by Force and invading the Properties and Rights of the Tenants and Poor. No, no, Gentlemen, our Poor are no such tame Creatures; but it has always been done by Consent, by Agreement between the Lords and the Copyholders, and the Lords and the Freeholders, who had Right of Common, and between the Lords and the Parishes in Behalf of the Poor, and between the Lords and the Cottagers; all which in their several Capacities have had their respective Rights reserv'd or made up to them in the Enclosure, to their full Satisfaction; and so the Mannors have been enclos'd." (49)

48. The Compleat English Tradesman . . . , Vol. II, Part II, pp. 106-107.

49. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 43) p. 171.

The previous week, however, he had admitted that in many instances enclosure proposals had "rais'd Tumults and Rabbles" but he ridiculed the idea that these had involved an invasion of the rights of commoners. Any opposition had consisted of the unreasoning protests of the uninformed rabble or organized demonstrations in the interest of the chief landholder;

"... We will not give up our Common, even tho' in many Places 'tis of no Manner of Use - ... Even in New Forest, where some Land was enclos'd by Authority of Parliament, in order to preserve the Timber, a Thing too much wanted in England - Yet the miserable, unsatisfy'd Rabble rose and tore down the Fences, destroy'd the Enclosure.

.....

But the Poor - That indeed is the Cry - But, I tell you, 'tis a National Fraud - The Commons and open Grounds in England were, originally indeed, left open to the Poor, and were design'd for their Support; but 'tis the Rich enjoy them, ... A perhaps Lord of the Mannor, letts B a Farm - A demands 100 l. a Year for it, B bids 80 l. a Year, and says ... there is but so much Land ... so much Arable, so much Pasture, so much Meadow - Ay but, says A, ... by Vertue of this Farm, you have Right of the Common in the whole Mannor; you have Liberty to put 20 Cows or Horses upon the Town-Field, as soon as the Corn is off; you have two hundred Sheep allow'd you on the Down, Room for your Horses to run in the great Meadow, and you have Liberty to feed so and so upon THE FORREST ... besides you have Liberty to cut Wood for Fewel upon the Forrest - This makes the Farmer comply with the Rent, the Common is annex'd to the Farm, but the Landlord gets the Rent even of this Commonage - ... the Landlord really makes 20 l. a Year of the Common; and we talk of the Poor having the Benefit of the Common; the Thing is a Cheat - ... If any Poor get by the Common, it is the poor Cottager; and GOD knows, they are so few, and their Profits are so small, that they are easily satisfy'd by such equivalent Advantages as may be given another Way. ... when any Attempt is made to enclose Wastes or Forrests, it is not the poor Cottager that rabbles the Lord of the Mannor, it is the Tenants of the Lordship; and the Reason is put, because the Common has always been an Appendix to the Farm, and the Rent is paid accordingly."

Therefore Defoe proposed "a Court of Claims" which he thought would "remove all possible Objection against improving and

enclosing Forrests and Wastes." This tribunal should have power to award equivalent lands to the claimants in place of their rights in "the Wastes and Herbage". There were many precedents for this course, such as Richmond New Park in Surrey and Enfield Chase in Middlesex, which had been enclosed "and the Chase lett into Farms" in the Civil War, although this had been reversed after the Restoration, "principally because the Crown had not the Rent." (50)

The desire to see every acre of land improved, which was so typical of the period, appeared very strongly in the contrast which Defoe drew in his account of Surrey, between Bagshot Heath and the prospect of the Thames countryside between Richmond and London. Writing well before a romantic taste for a wild natural landscape had developed, he found this heathland "horrid and frightful to look on" with no "villages, worth mentioning, and but few houses, or people for many miles far and wide." It was so poor and barren that it only supported a few very small sheep and the sand on a windy day put him in mind of Arabia Deserta. Yet some of this waste was within eighteen miles of the capital. (51) Diametrically opposite was the view on either side of the Thames, with numerous estates of the merchants and gentry, surpassing the banks of the Seine at Paris, of the Danube above and below Vienna or of the Po at Turin and shining "with a lustre not to be describ'd." "In a word," continued Defoe, "nothing can be more beautiful; here is a plain and pleasant country, a rich fertile soil, cultivated and enclosed to the

50. Ibid., Vol. VI, (No. 40) pp. 158-159.

51. A Tour, I, p. 143.

utmost perfection of husbandry, then bespangled with villages; those villages fill'd with these houses, and the houses surrounded with gardens, walks, vistas, avenues, representing all the beauties of building, and all the pleasures of planting: It is impossible to view these countries from any rising ground and not be ravish'd with the delightful prospect." In the background the city of London made the most glorious sight that the world could then show, "or perhaps ever cou'd show since the sacking of Rome in the European, and the burning the Temple of Jerusalem in the Asian part of the world." Characteristically Defoe found great satisfaction in the fact that most of these estates were "houses of retreat" only used in the summer months and thus an indication of the luxury of the age and of the immense wealth of the city which created them "in one man's age." (52)

He was naturally pleased that Britain had become a net exporter of corn by the opening of the eighteenth century, that she was now "a Corn Country" ready to supply any of the countries of western Europe, "it being very rare" that both England and Scotland had "a general Scarcity" to stop the exportation. This was "one of the most advantageous Parts of our Commerce" because, apart from the provisions consumed by the seamen during the voyage, it was all "clear Gain to the publick Wealth of the Nation." The greater the price of corn abroad, the more gain to Britain. "Nor is the Dearness of the Price of Corn at Home, any real Detri-  
ment to the Generality, ... provided we admit none from Abroad; for tho' it may be a Damage to some particular Persons, and may

pinch the Poor, who yet, for ought I see, are always alike poor, in Plenty, as in Scarcity; ... 'tis no loss to the publick Stock, because it is all paid among our selves:" (53) He compared this to ten men gaming in a room where the amount of money in the room remained the same at the end of their play, although some individuals might have lost heavily, an analogy he had used previously in the 'Review'. (54) So wedded was Defoe to the principle that it was "the Interest and very great Advantage of this Nation to have Corn dear", adding that cheapness of corn was "the greatest publick Mischief" that could befall Britain, that he was publishing these statements in the 'Review' on October 13, 1709, after the worst harvest of the first three decades of the century. (55) The price of wheat had reached 11s.6d. per bushel at Michaelmas, 5s.0d. more than the previous year, which, in turn, had been 2s.8d. more than the year before. A good harvest in 1710 brought the price down to 8s.0d. and it only once again reached that figure, in 1713, before Defoe's death in 1731. (56) Yet he could maintain that there was in England at that time "NO SCARCITY AT ALL OF CORN" and that there had been, "generally speaking, a very good Crop of Corn thro'out England." He even claimed that there was enough corn in Britain "to supply the whole Island for very near three Years to come," although the general distress during the following months was one of the factors which contributed to the triumph of Sacheverel and the decisive Tory victory at the polls in 1710. (57) He

53. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 174-175.

54. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 39) p. 78; (No. 59), p. 117.

55. Ibid, Vol. VI, (No. 82), pp. 325-326.

56. T.S. Ashton, Economic Fluctuations in England 1700-1800 (Oxford 1959) pp. 16-17, and Statistical Table 1.

57. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 82), pp. 326-327.



contended that the whole nation was "full of Corn" and that he could not, "by diligent Enquiry", find one place where there was any scarcity. (58) He admitted that it had rained excessively for ten or twelve days during the second half of September but claimed that the harvest was then completed within a hundred mile radius of London. Harvesting was still going on in the north, but there had been very little rain there. (59) Englishmen were now being "Corn-jobb'd" because the rise in corn prices must be due to the machinations of stock jobbers. (60) He blamed the old "malpractices" of engrossing, forestalling and withholding which were all examples of "Clandestine Trade" for any apparent scarcity at the markets and it was the magistrates' duty to enforce the laws against these evils. If this were done, the price of corn would soon fall "in spite of Exportation." (61) The clamour against the export of Corn was "a Party-Trick" with "a Jacobite Interest at the Bottom of it." Because the Dutch "scarce sow Corn enough to feed their Cocks and Hens," they had "their great Magazine of Corn in Poland and Prussia" but they also drew a great quantity from Britain. They had "generously, rather than politically, exhausted themselves last Year for the Supply of the Armies in the Netherlands, and for the Relief of the great Cities in Brabant and Flanders." Because of an outbreak of plague at Danzig, Britain was now "their only source of supply. To "straighten the Dutch" and weaken the Grand Alliance "would be a most acceptable Policy" to the Jacobites. Because of the high prices on the Continent, "A

58. Ibid, No. 83) pp. 329-330.

59. Ibid, (No. 84) p. 335.

60. Ibid, (No. 83) p. 330.

61. Ibid, (No. 82) p. 326 and (No. 84) p. 334.

Stop of Export of Corn ought to be the last Thing we should do." Every quarter of corn sent abroad would be as profitable as three quarters in an average year, and if all the surplus "above our own necessary Supply" could be exported "while the Price holds thus dear", "it would furnish us with above two Millions Sterling of ready Money." (62) Six months later, he was blaming the London bakers for contributing to the rise in prices, "of making the Price of Corn it self rise and fall as they pleas'd." They "were become so much Masters of the Markets" because they had been of late "the principal Buyers at all the Markets round London." Because of the shortage of corn, the bakers had been ignoring the regulations of the Lord Mayor in his "Weekly Assize of Bread" and were treating the old laws as "Scare-Crows they valu'd not at all." Therefore Parliament had passed an Act to limit and regulate the assizes of bread throughout Britain, despite petitions of the bakers from all over the country against it. Defoe strongly supported the action which had been taken, calling the bakers "a Parcel of Mechanicks" and claiming that in the past the pillory had seemed a punishment particularly appropriate to them until "modern Justice" had decided "to bestow it upon Men of Letters." The bakers had indeed "got the World in a String ... when they pleas'd to tell us Corn was dear, behold, it became dear." If they should attempt to defy the law and ... refuse to bake, Defoe made two suggestions to prevent the citizen from becoming "Slaves to their Ovens," first a proclamation that recalcitrant bakers should be obliged to pull down their ovens and lose any further privilege of baking bread within the Liberties of the City and secondly conferring the freedom of the City

62. Ibid, (No. 85) pp. 337-338.

on any outside baker who would accept the new law. (63)

Throughout "this heavy expensive War", Parliament had shown a particular solicitude for the poor and had avoided a general excise. No "Necessaries of Life" had been taxed, "While your Neighbours pay something to the Government for every Bunch of Turnep they Eats." This "constant regard to the Poor" would be completely defeated if the bakers succeeded, in effect, in imposing "a Tax upon Bread." (64)

Two years after this disastrous harvest of 1709, Defoe remained convinced that there had been no real shortage. In September 1711, in an ironical survey of the benefits which would result from any further increases in wartime taxation, he wrote in his 'Review', "'tis not above three Years ago, since Corn rose above 3s a Bushel to 9s meerly on a wild Notion, without Ground, a Whymisie of Dearth in the midst of Plenty; a Prohibition followed ... they were not to Export any Corn till the Michaelmas after, when that Time expir'd, there was more Old Corn in England than had been in 20 Year before ... we had more Corn in Britain than we could Consume - Yet in this Time, What a Price did the Corn bear? Above double the Rate ... should a Gabel of but half the rising Price be put upon our Bread, what a Murmuring Nation should we have been? ... Do you not think we should have been all in Tumult, Rabbles, Riots, and perhaps in Blood, for Bread is a mighty Mutinous Article, ... Yet this Tax of four shillings per Bushel upon Wheat, I affirm we paid for near one whole Year, ... purely in the ungrounded Notion of a Scarcity of Corn ..." (65)

63. *Ibid*, Vol. VII, (No. 17) pp. 66-67.

64. *Ibid*, Vol. VII, (No. 18) p. 70.

65. *Ibid*, Vol. VIII, (No. 72) p. 290.

Defoe remained convinced that there were adequate safeguards for the consumer, if only the regulations concerning the corn trade were enforced. He also believed that in a normal year Britain now produced more corn than she could consume and this led him to give such warm approval to the distilling trade, as early as February 1713 when he noted that this now consumed 200,000 quarters of malt each year. (66) In May he explained his position in more detail.

"The Distilling of Malt Spirits is founded upon an Article of Trade, as essential to the publick Good in its Proportion, as any Trade we have, or can have in the Nation; I mean the Consumption of Corn, which being the neat Produce of the Land, it must be allow'd is the most immediate Profit to the Nation, of any Trade whatsoever. ... the Consumption of Corn is one of the Fundamentals of the Nation's Wealth: Every Quarter of Corn which the Nation can Export, reserving a sufficient Quantity for our own Expence, so that the Price may not rise too high, is clear Gain to the publick Stock. Every new Trade, which either causes the Corn to be Exported, or to be applied to some Use at Home, which it was not applied to before, and which prevents the Importation of something which must otherwise be brought from abroad, must be a gainful Trade to the Publick, ... This, now, is eminently seen in the Distilling Trade; Where first the Corn is consum'd; which Corn is our own Produce, pays Rent for our Land, employs our People, our Cattle, our Shipping, etc. And secondly, The Importation of Foreign Spirits is prevented that is to say, in Proportion.

Nothing is more certain, Than that the ordinary Produce of Corn in England is much greater than the numbers of our own People or Cattle can consume; And this is the Reason why, when the Markets are low abroad, ... that Plenty which is other Nations Blessing, is our intolerable Burthen. This was apparent in the latter Years of King Charles and King James, when Corn was so very Cheap, that almost all the Farmers in England were undone by it; and had it held so till now, the Value of Lands in England mut have sunk very considerably before this time. I have known a Farmer Plough twenty Acres of Land, and Sow it with Wheat, and have a vast Crop; and when carried to Market, the whole quantity would not pay for the Husbandry, carrying in and carrying

out; the whole Rent of the Land being sunk out of the Farmers Stock. The Distilling Trade is one Remedy for this Disaster, as it helps to carry off the great quantity of Corn in such a time of Plenty; and it has this particular Advantage, That if at any time a Scarcity happens, this Trade can halt for a Year, and not be lost entirely ... Put in times of Plenty, ... the Distilling of Corn is one of the most essential things to support the Landed Interest, that any Branch of Trade can help us to; and therefore especially to be Preserved, and tenderly Used. I have, upon all Occasions, been a constant Opponent of the common Nations of our People for prohibiting the Exportation of Corn: It is true, our common People, upon the least appearance of the advance of Price, immediately begin there ... but this is not the only Instance of Popular Errour, and where People to redress their Grievances, think of the very Methods that increase them. These poor People, while they Rage at the Exportation of Corn, and Distilling of Corn, overlook the Engrossing, Restraining, Reqrating, or as I may well call it, the Stock-Jobbing of Corn, which generally is the occasion of raising the Price, and gives us Dearth in Plenty, and Famine without Scarcity. (Distilling) must for ever pass with me for a Trade as Profitable to the Publick, as Necessary to be Supported, and as Useful to be Encouraged in Proportion to its Magnitude, as any Trade in the Nation." (67)

In the pamphlet which he wrote thirteen years later, Defoe was again solely concerned with distilling as a trade, but in the interval he had found in it new virtues. For the farmers, it provided "a Market for those Grains of the meanest Quality and which it would be difficult, if not impossible for them to dispose of to Advantage any other way." This was the case when the grain seemed "thin and light" after a long drought, or when "by unseasonable Rains in Harvest" the farmers had difficulty getting in their corn, or when it was damaged "either in the Field, or in the Barn, in the Ear, or in the Sack." Were it not for the distilling trade, the farmer "could do little with it but feed his Hogs, which would not enable him to pay his Rent." Some land would not "bear any other Corn," especially in the northern and

67. Ibid., Vol. IX (No. 92), pp. 185-186.

eastern counties, "where a very great Quantity of poor and unimprovable Lands, which formerly lay waste" were now sown with barley. Because two quarters per acre was "no mean Crop" on these lands, he estimated that 100,000 acres would be used to produce 200,000 quarters of corn. "The Horses employ'd in the Husbandry of 100000 Acres of Land ... and in the Carriage of this Corn ... and the Re-carriage of the Malt ... must necessarily consume the Growth and Produce of many Thousands of Acres of Land more." Much shipping must also be employed in bringing the corn and coal used by the distillers to London "from the remotest Parts of the Kingdom." In addition to the duty upon the malt, the excises upon the spirits amounted to more than £100,000 per annum, and there was also the duty on the 20,000 chaldrons of coal used by the distillers. If the industry had made so much progress in a little over twenty years, encouraging it would be a better way to raise a revenue than by imposing new taxes which could only reduce the consumption. Both the brewing and the wine trades were open to the same moral objections and he therefore quoted the following:

So hasty Showers, when they from Heaven fall down,  
 Are sent to fructify, and not to drown;  
 And in the Torrent if a Drunkard sink,  
 'Tis not the Brook that drowns him but the Drink.  
 But 'twou'd be hard, because the Sinner's slain,  
 For fear of Drowning, we must have no Rain." (68)

Defoe was naturally eager that Britain should export the maximum amount of corn because he never tired of reminding his readers that, by God's bounty, she had more of her native produce

68. A Brief Case of the Distillers, and of the Distilling Trade in England ... (1726), pp. 1-17.

to export than any other nation. (69) Yet while he supported the payment of a bounty on corn export, he recognized that this was "an Art of selling Bread cheaper to Foreigners, than to our own People, by whose Sweat and Labour" it was produced. (70) This, however, was an isolated comment, written in August 1709 when he was arguing that the admission of the Palatine refugees would increase the internal demand for the produce of her soil, and was followed in October by his vigorous advocacy of continued exportation even after such a disastrous harvest. On the other hand, his enthusiasm for the corn trade was limited and as usual he favoured the maintenance of "a just Ballance between the feeding Grounds and the Corn Grounds." He noted that corn prices had risen abroad during the war of William III's reign, because of bad harvests, or damage to crops by the warring armies or the interruptions of trade by privateers, and had remained high during Anne's reign under the stimulus of a large demand from Portugal and Spain. With his habitual exaggeration, he declared that "great Quantities of Grass Ground" had been turned into arable, "also enclosing Commons, and ploughing up Downs, and Heaths, or Moors where the Plough had never touch't before; so that many Millions of Acres had been plough'd up since the Year 1700, which were never plough'd before. This had coincided with an increase in population in England to give "a check to the Grazier" so that meat prices had risen. Plenty of corn was "without doubt a Blessing to the World" but if this led to a drop in rents "the Grand Capital of the Nation" would be abated,

69. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 57) p. 113; Atlas Maritimus, p. 100.  
 70. A Brief History of the Poor Palatine Refugees ... pp. 14-15.

and "speaking in the Language of Trade, we may be undone by too much Plenty." Yet he suggested that Nature would correct the unbalance "without any Laws" by Parliament, "for if the Plough has broken up too much Ground, and thereby made Corn too cheap, that Cheapness will oblige the Plough to lay down these Grounds again." (71). Nor was arable farming the most profitable use of the land. It was Scotland's disaster, "that the Lands, generally speaking, over the whole Kingdom, were given up so completely to the plough, that "all the fertile Meadows and rich Pastures" were ploughed up, "even to the very Banks of the Rivers, whereas in England, the grazing land, "tho' of the same Goodness" was let for five times as much as the arable. "There are Millions of Acres of Land", he continued, "in Scotland, which really turn to no Account at all, except to starve a few Sheep, which with good Husbandry and Industry would bear as good Corn as the lower Lands of Scotland now do." He said that he was not proposing that the dairyman should replace the ploughman, "but to transpose the Plough from the Valleys to the Hills - To turn that rich, fertile flat Country, adapted to Flocks and Herds, into Pastures and feeding Grounds, and carry the Plough to the Hills." (72) But even feeding land was not the summit of farming improvement, since "Garden Grounds" were let at £6 to £7, and even at £10 an acre compared with the 50 shillings per acre for feeding grounds. Therefore, a garden was "the highest Improvement of Land in the World." "Were England so full of People, that all the low Lands of the Nation were but enough to make their Gardens, and feed Homestall, as they call it, their

71. The Political State of Great Britain, September 1730, pp. 246-248.

72. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 47) pp. 187-188.



Horses and Cows, and the Hills their Sheep, that they could neither sow their own Corn, nor feed their own Cattle - It would still be the richer, and be the greatest Nation in the World." "You should then need no Laws to prohibit the Irish Cattle", he told his countrymen, "all the World should be your Breeders and Feeders, all your Neighbours should be your Plowmen, your Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water, and your Wealth and Strength would be a Prodigy like your selves." When the Roman empire was at its zenith and there were no fewer than 1,400,000 heads of families in Rome itself, "the prodigious Concourse of People spread the Country, the Cities were full of Freemen, the Country full of Gentlemens Houses, Italy was all a Garden, they fetch'd their Corn from Sicily and Barbary, their Cattle from Hungary and the Banks of the Danube." The same was true of the land of Canaan, and the Dutch suffered no want, although they ploughed no land, and sowed no corn, "comparatively speaking." (73) The supreme example of this perfection of husbandry was Barbados, "an unanswerable Testimony of its being a Nation's Interest, to put every Inch of Land to the highest possible Improvement, and to fill the Country, if possible so full of People, that the whole Kingdom could only serve to make their Gardens and Stable-Yards." This was a complete proof that no nation that had "a rich Produce" could have too many people. (74) "But if our Lands should be made to yield their utmost Increase, and your People cannot consume the Increase or foreign Trade take it off your Hands, 'tis then no Increase to us, and must not be produced: so that the Lands must be laid down, that is to say a certain Proportion of them, and left to

73. *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, (No. 36) pp. 143-144.

74. *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, (No. 47) p. 186.

bear no Corn, or feed no Cattle, because your Produce is too great for your Consumption." Only trade could remedy this deplorable situation. "If our Manufactures were so increas'd by Trade, that they could maintain more People than the Land could feed, and that, as the Dutch do at this Time, we were obliged to fetch all our Corn or great Part of it, from abroad, it would most certainly be an Advantage to the Publick, and the Rent of Lands would rise in Proportion." (75)

Thus manufacturing was more important than husbandry. The native product or imported raw materials were then fully improved and therefore could earn a higher return when exported. The early economists assumed that those engaged in farming could feed many more people and Defoe thought that the initial nucleus of his imaginary settlement, fifty farmers with their families and labourers, could support four times their number. (76) The larger population which manufacturing attracted, increased the internal demand for farm products and thus benefited the whole agricultural community. The second reason why manufactures were so significant was the need to employ the poor, the acute problem of under-employment which Defoe expressed in statements such as "our Manufactures which is the Labour of our Poor," "in all Business 'tis a standing Rule to employ as far as possible our own Poor," and "the Labour of the Poor; a Thing in all our Discourses of Manufacturing principally to be consider'd, as what lies at the Bottom, and is the Soul of our Welfare in Trade." (77) This vital function of manufactures was established by

75. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 116, 120

76. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 15-21.

77. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 146) p. 584, (No. 158) p. 630, (No. 160) p. 637.

one of his favourite chains of reasoning: "Manufactures are the Life of the Nation, the Work employs the Poor, the Poor consume the Provisions which are the Produce, the Consumption of Provisions keeps up the Value of Lands, the Value of Lands pays Taxes, the Taxes support the War, the War defends the Government, the Government our Religion and Liberty; and thus, by a noble Chain of Causes and Consequences, the whole publick Welfare turns upon this one Glorious Article of Commerce." (78) He was, of course, thinking primarily of manufactures for export and their importance in internal trade was seldom expressly stated. Even the following remark was probably made with reference to some exports which brought in little return, "That Employment of People, Consumption of Produce, either of Labour or Growth, is real GAIN to a Nation, tho' the Gain in Specie do not appear." (79) Home needs were, however, indicated in this comment, although the emphasis was still on employment: "Manufactures are a Benefit to the Nation, not only as they supply our Wants, serve our Exports, return Forreign Wealth, and create Trade, but as they Employ our People, Enable the Poorer Families in making them to subsist and support them selves, and the Midling Sort, by buying and selling them to grow Wealthy and live Happy." (80)

That final remark reveals that it was the third branch of the home trade which was, in Defoe's eyes, the most valuable. At the beginning of his 'Plan' he divided home trade into labouring and dealing and proceeded to classify all the various kinds of employment in trade:

78. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 149) p. 596.  
 79. Ibid, Vol. IX, (No. 38) p. 76.  
 80. Ibid, Vol. II, (No. 10) p. 38.

"Those concern'd in the meaner and first Employments, are called in common, Working Men or Labourers, and the labouring Poor; such as the meer Husband-men, Miners, Diggers, Fishers, and in short, all the Drudges and Labourers in the several Productions of Nature or of Art: Next to them, are those who, tho' labouring perhaps equally with the other, have yet some Art mingled with their Industry, and are to be particularly instructed and taught how to perform their Part, and those are called Workmen or Handicrafts. Superior to these, are the Guides or Masters, in such Works or Employments, and these are call'd Artists, Mechanics or Craftsmen; and in general, all are understood in this one Word Mechanics; such as Clothiers, Weavers, etc. Handicrafts in Hardware, Brass, Iron, Steel, Copper, etc. Superior to these are the Dealers who only buy and sell, either by wholesale or retale as above: these are the Factor, the Pedlar and the Merchant." (81)

In the 'Compleat English Tradesman', he gave full details of the last group, his criterion being whether the tradesman was engaged in distribution, or as he called it, circulation. Thus shopkeepers such as smiths, shoemakers and joiners, who sold the goods which they themselves made, were excluded, as were all primary producers, even master manufacturers "tho' indeed the very foundation of Trade." Similarly farmers and graziers, "tho' they are springs and wheels in the movement of Trade," were omitted but "Brokers and Buyers, and Sellers of Cattle, Corn and other Provisions by wholesale for other men" were ranked as tradesmen. The same was true of "Brewers and Distillers, and the Dealers in many things relating to them, as the Hop-Merchants, Hoop and Stave Merchants for their Cash, nay the Iron-Merchants for their Iron-hoops ... all the Vintners, Inn-holders, Alehouse-keepers and that prodigiously multiplied Article of Strong-water Shops." Wholesale and retail butchers and horse-dealers were tradesmen, as were Manchester men and pedlars and all the country

shopkeepers. There was scarcely one of England's 10,000 parishes that did not have some of these retailers and "not a few" had many hundreds. Thus he had been told that there were 60,000 tradesmen, by the above definitions, within Norfolk alone and probably 100,000 if dealers in wool and spun-yarn were justifiably included. Therefore, he thought that there could be "near two millions of Tradesmen, including their Servants, Apprentices and Journeymen in Great Britain." (82) Distinguishing between people making and people selling in an early number of the 'Review', he declared, "I am of Opinion, there are greater Numbers of Families Maintain'd, thus by our Manufactures after they are made, than there are by the making them." (93)

Although manufacturing played such a vital part in satisfying men's wants that without the labour of the poor, "the Rich would go Naked", it was yet a "Mechanick Employ" and clearly inferior to circulation. (84) The former tradesman always used "mechanick" in a derogatory sense. During the public debate about the peace negotiations in 1712, he regretted that every mechanic now pretended "to reason upon State-Matters." (85) Roxana expressed her relief when her son was "rescued from the unhappy Circumstances of being Apprentice to a Mechanick" (86) and in his attack on the London bakers in 1710 he regretted that he was "descended at once so low, as to be talking to a Parcel of Mechanicks call'd Bakers." (87) He believed that the people

82. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. I, pp. 1-4, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 72-81.

83. Review, Vol. II, (No. 10) p. 38.

84. A General History of Trade June 1713, p. 28.

85. The Present Negotiations of Peace Vindicated ... (1712) pp. 19-20.

86. Roxana, Vol. II, p. 6.

87. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 17) p. 66.

engaged in distribution were more useful than primary producers because they ensured a higher standard of living by making possible increased specialization and thus providing a greater variety of goods and services. It was this that really constituted trade, both internally and internationally, and enabled a community to expand both in numbers and wealth. He stated, "I must Distinguish between the Reason of Labour and the Reason of Trade; for Labour and Manufacturing is not properly Commerce, but rather ... Employment, and might have been so ordered in the World as that every Man should have been his own Labourer." (88) His imaginary settlement of fifty farmers which attracts a thousand more people is in effect a colony, such as he proposed for the Palatines in the New Forest and described in his 'Tour'. Those who join the settlement are shopkeepers and professional men and craftsmen producing essential articles and services for a largely self-sufficient community. There is little manufacture apart from spinning by the women who provide work for a linen-weaver, a woollen-weaver and a flax and hemp-dresser, and if they draw supplies from outside there is no explanation of what they offer in return. (89) During the debate about the admission of the poor Palatines in 1709, he gave a fuller statement of his views in the 'Review':

"Again, barely planting a Number of People upon our Land, who should produce the Provisions they eat, and manufacture the Clothes and Household-Stuff they wore;... would not perhaps answer, all that is alleg'd of encreasing Wealth to a Nation - Nor would a Colony so consider'd, make good what I have said ... There is no doubt but a hundred thousand People planted in any Country might subsist them selves, and do all the necessary Works they should want, without employing any Body. ... Trade is to be consider'd in its full

88. A General History of Trade, June 1713, p. 33.  
 89. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 15-21.

Circulation, by which it employs perhaps ten times the Hands, which the same Things produc'd in another Manner would employ, and which Circulation is the Life of general Commerce - 'Tis for Want of this Distinction, that most of our vulgar Errors, about Trade are midwif'd into the World.

I wear a Suit of Clothes - They are made of Cloth, lin'd with Shalloon, stitch'd with Silk, the Buttons are of one Work, the Button-holes of another, the Pockets are of Leather, the Wastcoat is lin'd with Flannel, the Breeches with Dimety, ... from the first Principles of the Clothes to my wearing them, 100 Families have a Part of their Subsistence out of this one Suit of Clothes ... The Farmer bred the Sheep, part in Leicestershire, part in Lincolnshire, part in Kent, part in Wiltshire etc. where the Wool being shorn, he sold it to the Staplers, who carry'd it to London, or to Sturbridge-Fair, or to Gloucestershire for Sale; ... the Clothier bought it, ... and a Multitude of Hands it runs thro' there too; the Shalloon-maker dwelt in Northamptonshire, perhaps at Kettering, he bought his Wool at London, had it spun in Bedfordshire, dy'd it at Coventry, wore it at Kettering, and it was sold three times after it was made, before I bought it for the Taylor."

Similarly, he commended the number of transactions in the cotton manufacture from the cultivation of the raw material in Jamaica, its transport to London, carriage to Manchester, the ten to twelve processes there before its return to London as fustians for lining clothes in England or its shipment to the same island of Jamaica. (90)

This was the main reason for his swingeing denunciations of Sir Humphrey Mackworth's proposal to employ the poor in parish workhouses. He admitted that goods might be made in every little village in England, but "this would be nothing but reducing us to our primitive State, and making every Village be a Colony within it self, independent of all about it - In this Case, five Farmers, and one of every general Occupation shall feed and

cloth the whole Parish; and where is the Thing you call Trade ...? You would by this Method leave two Millions of the People ... without Employment." In marked contrast,

"... by the Circulation of Trade, every single Person in this Nation makes ten times more Work than he can do - And all this is owing to the several Branches of Manufacture, the several little Fountains from whence Supplies of Provisions come, and from whence every Part of Britain helps and assists one another, corresponds and barthers with one another for what they want, just as the distinct Nations of the World do in the more general Commerce. Norwich sends Stuffs to London, and buyes there all her other Manufactures; as Cloth from Leeds, Stockings from Yorkshire, Serges from Exeter, finer Cloth from Wiltshire, Cotton Ware from Manchester, Flannels from Wales, ... All these Places again being employ'd in their other respective Manufactures, which universally go to London, buy their Stuffs there from Norwich."

He condemned direct trade between the various clothing centres, "a Model too much practic'd" as "an Invasion made upon the Circulation" because the manufacture passed through fewer hands. A large home trade had not developed in Scotland because the circulation of trade was "anticipated" and the wool grew, was wrought and was worn in the same place, "perhaps in the very same Town", whereas if the poor were encouraged in their own manufactures, "the several Shires and Burghs" would concentrate on their own particular speciality. "The Wool, the Flax, the Yarn, the Cloth" would "pass and re-pass from place to place" and "employ twice the Hands in the Work" without apparently any increase in prices, for the same number of people would be clothed "but in the same Manner, and with the same Expence." (91)

"The Manufactures of England", he asserted, are happily settled in different Corners of the Kingdom, from whence they



are mutually convey'd by a Circulation of Trade to London by Wholesale, like the Blood to the Heart, and from thence dispers'd in lesser quantities to the other parts of the Kingdom by Retail. He alleged that trade had already suffered "a manifest Detriment" by the "Transposing a vast Woollen Manufacture from several Parts of England to London" so that "the several Woollen Goods now made in Spittlefields, where within this few Years were none at all made, has already visibly affected the several Parts, where they were before made, as Norwich, Sudbury, Farnham, and other Towns, many of whose Principal Tradesmen are now remov'd hither, ... and leave the Poor of those Countries to shift for Work." Such a "Breach of the Circulation of Trade must necessarily Distemper the Body." By the use of the knitting frame, the manufacture of worsted stockings had been "wholly transpos'd into London" and "the Spittlefields men" had also invaded the Norfolk stuff trade. Canterbury had suffered even worse from the competition of London with the result that fewer than fifty broad looms were at work compared with two hundred a few years before. His reaction to these changes was to announce, "All Methods to bring our Trade to be manag'd by fewer hands than it was before, are in themselves pernicious to England in general, as they lessen the Employment of the Poor, unhinge their Hands from the Labour, and tend to bring our Hands to be superior to our Employ, which as yet it is not." It was "hard to calculate what a blow it would be to Trade in general, should every County but Manufacture all the several sorts of Goods they use, it would throw our Inland Trade into strange Convulsions, which at present is perhaps, or has been in the greatest Regularity of any in the World." If

every town should have a manufacture "and every Parish be a Ware-house", trade would be "burthen'd with Corporations" which were usually as destructive as monopolies. "Parish Stocks", he continued, "under the direction of Justices of Peace, may soon come to set up petty Manufactures, ... and all the poorer sort of People shall be aw'd or bypass'd to Trade there only. Thus the Shop-keepers, who pay Taxes, and are the Support of our inland Circulation, will immediately be ruin'd, and thus we shall beggar the Nation to provide for the Poor." Although "the settled Poor" could not remove, single people would follow the manufacturer and the government might find it inconvenient to have so many more inhabitants in the London area. In the districts which they left, lands would immediately fall in value because the farmer would be obliged to accept a lower profit on the foodstuffs which he produced because of the increased cost of carriage to more distant markets. Defoe, who always set great store by quality, feared that the reputation of British goods would suffer, because "our several Manufactures are known by their respective Names; and our Serges, Bayes and other Goods are bought abroad by the Character and Reputation of the Places where they are made", and these would be replaced by new goods of uncertain quality. If the parish authorities sold their products wholesale, they would prove poor merchants because their other interests would divide their attention, and if by retail, they would be in effect pedlars and thus "a public nuisance to Trade" which they would finally ruin. To "parcel out our Trade to every Door" would have other fatal consequences: "the Wool will be all Manufactured where it is sheer'd, every body will make their own Cloaths, and the Trade which now lives by running

thro' a multitude of Hands, will go then thro' so few, that thousands of Families will want Employment" whereas at present "'Tis the excellence of our English Manufacture, that it is so planted as to go thro' as many Hands as 'tis possible; he that contrives to have it go thro' fewer, ought at the same time to provide Work for the rest." (92) He claimed that the only argument that could be advanced by Mackworth's supporters for preserving this circulation was that no one parish could make all the different varieties of cloth and that they would send the surplus of what they did not need to London, but he replied,

1. Some Towns are large enough to have all the necessary sorts of the Manufacture made in them, ...
2. If every Parish cannot, every County may, and doubtless will.
3. If none do make all the Manufactures, the Circulation will be stop'd, as far as they do make; and ... by how many more Places it is made in, so much the less Circulation: ..."

Lastly, there were counties like Sussex, which had no woollen manufacture but produced some of the best wool in the country. If they began to make their own cloth, "would not they want the less Broadcloth from the West, Serges from Exeter, Flannels from Salisbury and Wales, Druggets and Stuffs from Spittlefields, or Norwich, Stockings from Yorkshire and the like." What would become of the people of Norfolk which had more than "50000 People in it, more than it could Maintain, without the help of the Manufactures?" (93) He envisaged that Mackworth's plan would "ruin, or at least greatly impoverish the great Trading Towns in England" which were now "like separate Colonies in every distinct Manufacture" but when their surrounding villages produced "petty and debased Works", would decay like "Winchelsea, Sandwich, Bramber,

92. Giving Alms No Charity ... pp. 17-23.

93. Review, Vol. II, (No. 11) pp. 41-42.

and other Towns, which once flourish'd in Trade and People." Whereas these towns were "the Glory and Wealth of the Kingdom" this scheme would "reduce England to one great Village, be (by) employing the People in their scatter'd Habitations, rather than encorporating them into Bodies", which not only helped trade but added to "the Methods of Employment". (94) Defoe could not think that anything could be so fatal to the woollen manufacture "as dispersing it into every Village must be". (95)

Defoe strongly maintained the corollary of this proposition, namely that large concentrations of population increased demand. He devoted a whole chapter of his 'Compleat English Tradesman' to the great benefit which the whole kingdom received "from the magnitude of London and its mighty trade." It was "the centre of nourishment to the whole nation." "Collected bodies of People" were "a particular assistance to Trade" and therefore "one great and capital City in a Kingdom" was much more advantageous than if the same number of people dwelt in several places. The same was true of navigation. It was much better to have "one commanding Port, one noble navigable River, than that they had, in their divided and remote situation, as above, fifteen navigable Rivers." He cited the opposite position of Spain, where he dismissed Madrid as a village rather than a capital city, despite its supposed 300,000 inhabitants, because it had "neither Sea-port or Inland Navigation", the river Tagus being distant twelve leagues and entering the sea in Portugal. The ten chief towns of Spain did not contain more people than London

94. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, (No. 5) pp. 18-19.

95. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, (No. 4) p. 15.

and its immediate surroundings, and because they were generally situated in the richest and most fertile soils, on or near the sea coasts, or on the banks of navigable rivers, their supplies of food and other commodities did not reach them "with difficulty, nor call for multitude of hands to be employ'd in raising, procuring, fetching or carrying them." (96) Similarly in Italy there was "a very great Collection of petty Trades" in all the great cities of Italy, "but were all those Cities join'd into one vast Metropolis, like London, the whole Country wou'd be employ'd to furnish needful Provisions and vast Quantities of Materials ... for Clothing, Furniture, Equipages etc. ... as People make Trade, and Trade employs and enriches People." (97) It was not a valid objection to say that the same number of people would consume the same quantity of provisions in whatever situation they might be placed. "For, though the quantity should be the same, yet the Influences upon Trade occasion'd by it being all pointed to one Center, is such as quite alters the case, and would put the whole Body of the People into motion, as it is in England." The number of people at London made it the centre of foreign commerce because they provided a market for any commodity. Many English ports could send ships out, but few could "bring them Laden home." Even Bristol could not always dispose of the return cargoes. Thus Yarmouth could send "perhaps eight to ten large Ships out to the Streights ... every Year, laden with Red Herrings: but if those ships load back with Currants from Zant, Oil from Gallipoli, Silk and Lipari

96. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 123-125; Cf. Atlas Maritimus ... pp. 161-162.

97. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 165-166.

Raisins, and Oil, from Messina; Silk and Wine, fine Oils, Anchovies, Capers etc. from Leghorn; Silks, Paper and Sulphur, and blocks of Marble from Genoa, what shall they do with those at Yarmouth?"

He summarily rejected the charge that "the bulk and growing greatness of the City" was too much for the whole country, that the nation was "Liver grown, and must die of a Pleura; The City drawing away the nourishment from the Country, as a dropsie swells the body, but draws the nourishment away from the extreme parts." His native city was no monstrous Wen. On the contrary, in his view, "this swelling the Body of the City, makes it the Center of Nourishment to the whole Nation, and as every part of the Kingdom sends up hither the best of their Produce, so they carry back a return of wealth. The Money flows from the City into the remotest parts, and furnishes them again to increase that Produce, to improve the Lands, pay Rent to their Landlords, Taxes to their Governors, and supply their Families with necessaries and this is Trade." Similarly, he accepted the restriction of certain foreign trades to London, as the Bristol merchant, John Cary, put the view of the outports and campaigned for the ending of London's monopolistic position in trade. According to Defoe, "Several of the most considerable Branches of Trade are confin'd to this place by Law: The East-India Trade is all settled here; the Greenland Trade deliver all here; the Italian Thrown Silk is confin'd to be imported here, ... Here the African Company import all their Gold, and the South-Sea Company all their Silver; in a word, 'tis the great gulph of the British Trade: and as it comes in here so it goes out again from hence

to all parts of the Nation, circling in Home-Trade from the Merchant to the Consumer." (98) In fact, since the Revolution the outports had successfully invaded London's former monopoly in a number of trades but Defoe is silent about this. (99) Again, the whole surrounding area within a ten-mile radius was "made populous by the vast run of Business occasioned by the neighbourhood of the City" so that in addition to his estimated  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions in London, he thought that were a further 500,000 in Middlesex and the adjoining parts of Essex, Surrey and Kent. For "the supply of these two Millions of People, we find the whole Kingdom more or less engaged, and the wheels of Trade are set a-going by it almost all over the island." The "bare bringing Coals from the North" was "a prodigy of Trade," employing 30,000 people underground, "a thousand sail of Ships" and 10,000 "Seamen, Lightermen, Keelmen and Boatmen in the Loading, Carrying and Unloading the Coals." Not one half of this prodigious demand would be felt if the population of the London district was scattered in ten or fifteen separate cities. Smaller cities had no need of hackney coaches. Edinburgh, "tho' a Capital of a Kingdom" had only ten or twelve and no other town in Britain had any at all, "so there would be eight hundred Hackney Coachmen, and above two thousand Horses, besides other depending People and their Families, and all the Farmers and Carriages employ'd to furnish them with Forage, dismiss'd at once," if the population was dispersed. The Thames was the only river in Britain with watermen plying for hire and he estimated their number at 4000 to 5000, "some say twice the numbers". If London were reduced

98. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 125, 128-130.

99. W.G. Hoskins, Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688-1800, pp. 14-15.

to the size of Bristol at least 30,000 people would be "immediately dropt out of Business." (100)

He compared the effects of the number of people in London to good spring showers with "a weight of Water sufficient to set Nature at Work, sink down to the Root." "It is not the Kingdom makes London rich", he added, "but the City of London makes all the Kingdom rich ... London consumes all, circulates all, exports all, and at last pays for all; and this is Trade; this greatness and wealth of the City, is the Soul of the Commerce to all the Nation." Not "a Shop-keeper of any Note in the remotest Town in England, but he holds some correspondence at London, or else he must be a mean Tradesman, that buys his Goods of some of his better furnish'd Neighbours, and they buy at London". As a result they were all in debt at London, "so that the whole Country may in some respects, be said to Trade upon the City's stock." Indeed, he claimed that London gave credit to all the world, in that her merchants carried on most of their trade "on the strength of their Stocks: they do not receive the Goods from Abroad, and so make the returns back to the several Countries from whence they come; but they send their own Goods first out, and receive the Goods of other countries back in payment." London's share in world trade was even more extensive: "Not a fleet of Portuguese ships from the Brasils, not the Gallions or Flota from New Spain, but the Gold of the first, and the Silver of the last, or at least a great share of it, is the product of English stocks, and belongs to London Merchants, whose Goods sold upon Credit at Lisbon and Cadiz, went first out to



America to purchase that Gold and Silver." Lastly he reported that there were no fewer than "thirty thousand Higglers, and Travelling Market Folks" about London, "a poor sort of People ... wholly employ'd to bring Butter, Eggs, Pigeons, Fowls, Chickens, etc. to London market, and bring Veal and Pork, ... up and down from House to House, and every one of them have a Horse, some more, some Carts; some of them come forty or fifty Miles", together with a prodigious increase of gardeners, who kept "Carts and whole Teams of Horses, or large Luggage-Boats upon the River" for the supply of this great city. (101) In his 'Tour' he gave much space to the London markets and observed that a certain Spanish ambassador had said that there was as much meat sold in Leadenhall market in one month "as would suffice all Spain for a year." Barges which came down the Thames from as far west as Abingdon brought above a thousand quarters of malt in one vessel to Queenhithe market, the great market for inland corn and meal as Bear Key was for the corn which entered by sea. The seventeen wharves, with their warehouses and lighters, between London bridge and Tower Dock brought in a revenue of more than £40,000 a year. (102) At a time when her merchants probably still controlled half the country's shipping traffic and a quarter of London's population depended on the sea for its living, (103) it is not surprising that Defoe should take so much pride in London's trade. He claimed that he had counted more than 2000 sea-going merchant vessels in the Pool, (104)

101. Ibid, II, Part II, pp. 139-146.

102. A Tour ... I, pp. 342-348.

103. C. Wilson, England's Apprenticeship 1603-1763 (1965) p. 176.

104. A Tour ... I, p. 348.

and that during the French war he had seen "a Fleet of laden Colliers of 600 Sail, with the Norway, East Country, and Hull Fleets, including the Lyn and Yarmouth Fleets; after having all waited for a Wind as well as a Convoy, come up the River almost together, to the number of near 1000 Sail; and yet when they came into this Pool, they all found room, and might have done so if they had been many more." (105)

Analogies with the circulation of the blood were very much in men's minds in the century after Harvey's discovery and particularly in Defoe's:

"Manufactures and Trade are in this Nation like the Blood in the Body, they subsist by their Circulation; if once that Motion ceases, is inverted, or otherwise interrupted, it stagnates and corrupts, or breaks out in Torrents beyond its ordinary Course, and these prove infallibly mortal, ... London is the great Center of this Circulation, the Heart thro' which, by proper Pulsation, these Streams pass in their due Course, hither all the Manufactures in the Nation from the several and remotest Counties are convey'd in gross, as to the vast Center of Trade; and here they pass from the Wholesale to the Merchant, from the ware-house to the Shop, and from thence, by a happy Counter-changing again, are transmitted to the several Parts of the Kingdom again; and upon this Circulation, ... more Families depend, and are maintain'd, than upon the first Working of the whole Manufacture of the Nation." (106)

No other city could form the heart of this circulation of internal trade because only London, and to a lesser degree Bristol, could "furnish a back Carriage by Shopkeepers Goods ... such as Grocery, Oyl, Wine, Fruit, and in a Word, all Goods of Foreign Importation. These corresponded to the return freights of overseas trade, and without them he asked, "how would the Sheffield and Birmingham Carriers bring up their wrought Iron, Things of a heavy Carriage? How would the Warwick People bring up their Cheese?" The London

105. Atlas Maritimus ... p. 19.

106. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 4) p. 15.

wholesale dealers, however, enjoyed a reciprocal benefit for they could not "supply the Country Chapmen with Foreign Goods, without a double Charge for Carriage, which would make the Price so much the dearer to the Buyer" but for the back carriage of goods being sent to London. Therefore, Defoe concluded, "this Circulation is an Alternative to Trade, the Country is a Help to the City, and the City is a Help to the Country." (107) His phraseology here is interesting as it shows how he persisted in the conviction that only a favourable balance of foreign trade brought any addition to the wealth of the country. In 1720 he had written, "our Consumption at Home is, however, useful as it circulates our Stock, separates it into small Parcels among the Poor, and causes the Return to enrich one Family by what another Family spends; and this ... is in inexpressible Benefit to the Nation, tho' not an actual Increase of its Wealth" and he had added "it circulates and separates Things which would otherwise lie collected in Heaps; the Rich would have the Money lie at Home, and the Poor could not live by their Labour; the Rich who had large Crops, would not find Markets for their Corn and Cattle, or the Poor be able to pay for the Consumption: A thousand Ways the Home Consumption is useful; But ... not one Farthing Increase comes to the Publick Stock by anything that is consum'd at Home." (108)

To show how completely London dominated the home trade, he reported that both Exeter and Norwich had claimed to send up more

107. A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade ... (1730)  
pp. 18-19.

108. The Manufacturer, No. 22, January 13, 1720.

goods to the capital each week than the other but that "it was found, for several Months together in the Fore-part or Spring of the Year, each of those Citys sent up the Value of 100000 l. a Week." He added, "I do not say so great a Trade continues still; ... the great Quantity of Goods they both export directly from their own Ports to Holland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, ... and also the great Quantities they send cross the Country ... whereby they begin to interfere with the Trade of London." (109) By this admirable Oeconomy of Trade" which the availability of return carriage afforded, Defoe described how business was "extended into the remotest Parts of the Kingdom."

"Shops are opened in every Parish, nay, in every Village and Hamlet. These smaller Shops diffuse and spread not the Manufactures of the remotest Part of the Country only, but the Product and imported Growth of Foreign Countries and Kingdoms into every Corner of the Island; ... By this Means, the Tea of China, the Coffee of Arabia, the Chocolate of America, the Spices of the Molucca's, the Sugars of the Caribees, and the Fruit of the Mediterranean Islands, are all to be found in the remotest Corners of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Those little Retailing Shops are the Life of all our Trade; ... and here all the Wholesale Trade, as well of Home Manufactures as Foreign Importations, is terminated and finished."

Even the clothier could not clothe himself nor the farmer feed himself without these retailers. They were supplied by wholesale dealers or by large shopkeepers in the larger towns and cities and these in turn were furnished with goods on credit by the wholesale men in London. These last were "the support of the whole Trade" and both home and foreign trade was "in a great measure carried on upon their Stocks." (110)

109. Atlas Maritimus ... p. 109.

110. A Brief State of the Inland ... Trade, pp. 20-22.

Professor Willan's account of the business dealings of an eighteenth-century shopkeeper in the small Westmorland market town of Kirkby Stephen has revealed, even more than the earlier autobiography of the Quaker shopkeeper of Lancaster, (111) how considerable country shopkeeping was within two decades of Defoe's death. Kirkby Stephen, with only 1141 people in the actual township at the census of 1801, was situated in an agricultural district, without communication by water and remote from a large town or a port, in the far north of England, yet it had at least twelve shops. Although people also bought goods at fairs and markets and from pedlars, "shops were more numerous and more important than is commonly realized." As Defoe's account indicates, "the shop sold exotic products, the market local produce." Thus Abraham Dent sold tea, sugar, coffee, treacle, soap, tobacco, rice, sago, lemons, almonds, figs, prunes, currants, raisins, pepper, nutmegs, mace, and cloves among imported products, materials for making clothes such as thread and hooks and eyes, silk, flax ready for spinning, at least forty sorts of cloth, a considerable variety of paper and writing materials, patent medicines, gunpowder for shooting and for blasting and large quantities of wheaten flour. He was also a hosier, and may have been a manufacturer of knitted stockings, but this chief local product "rarely, if ever, figured in the retail trade" and "even the agricultural produce came largely from outside the county," like the flour from Barnard Castle. Between 1756 and 1777 the Dents bought from about 190 suppliers from as far afield as Norwich and Nottingham. From London they obtained scarlet

111. The Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster 1665-1752, edited J.D. Marshall, (Manchester 1967).

and blackcloth, saltpetre, pearl ashes, alum, watches, hops, rum, gin and brandy but Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 60 miles distant, was an important centre of supply of groceries, gunpowder and cloth, some of which might have been sent by the coasting trade from London. The Dents naturally dealt with as many as 34 suppliers in Kendal but their other important centres were Penrith and Lancaster and they obtained their goods by regular carriers.

(112) Thus Defoe was not exaggerating unduly when he wrote "every town in England uses something ... of all the rest; every sort of goods is wanted everywhere;" or "that all the manufactures of England, and most of them also of foreign countries, are to be found in the meanest village, and in the remotest corner of the whole island of Britain, and are to be bought, as it were, at every body's door." Of course he had to add that he had tried to make some calculation of the number of shopkeepers in the kingdom but "we may as well count the stars," although he thought that they were "some hundreds of thousands". He also stated, "if there is made in England, for our home-consumption, the value of one hundred thousand pounds worth of any particular goods, say, for instance ... so many pieces of Serge, or Cloth, if this goes through ten tradesmen's hands before it comes to the last consumer, then there is ten hundred thousand pounds returned in trade for that hundred thousand pounds worth of goods."

(113)

Although this developed home trade shows how unnecessary

112. T.S. Willan, An Eighteenth Century Shopkeeper, Abraham Dent of Kirkby Stephen. (Manchester 1970) passim.  
 113. The Compleat English Tradesman, I, pp. 327, 328, 329-330.

was Defoe's alarm about Mackworth's scheme, it is not surprising that he should ask, "if every Town or Parish shall set to work to make every Sort of Goods they shall use, where will be the Circulation?" Or, that he should describe the plan as "levelling Designs upon our Manufactures." (114) Writing of "the Excellent Order and Method of carrying on our Home Trade in England" he proclaimed "Production and Consumption are the Beginning and End of all Trade" and noted "how the meanest Trifles accumulate a Value, as they pass from Hand to Hand. How they become Important, Rich, Useful and Beautiful, by the Addition of Time, Labour, and the Improvement of Art; and how the meanest Labourer or Mechanick contributes, by unwearied Application, to finish ... those Beauties in Nature, which even he himself does not at all understand." But it was of course the clothing trade which most fully exemplified this process. He regretted that it was not possible "to give the Detail in the narrow Compass of this Work, of all the several Sorts of Workmen, their Engines, Mills, Looms, and other Tackle, with the several Operations, through which our Woollen Manufactures pass before they come to Market" but he claimed that it had been calculated that "there is not a Broad-Cloth that goes to Blackwell Hall, but that 10000 People have something to do, by the Means of it, and all get something out of it before it comes there." He obviously included "all that innumerable Number of Carriages, Horses, and Servants, with all the necessary Appendices of Land Carriage which such a Trade calls for" and the "incredible" number of inns and public houses. He also noted that "the Increase of Trade among those Inns, etc. and by their Means the Consumption of Fodder, Hay, Corn, etc.

with Provisions of all Sorts is unaccountably great." (115) Indeed, Defoe's anxiety to maintain employment appeared most strongly in some of his writing on transport. He was well aware of the great benefit from good communication by water and of the cheapness of water carriage. Thus he knew that Gloucestershire sent its cheese by land to Lecklade and Cricklade on the Thames and so by water to London and that Cheshire's alternative to the long voyage round Wales and Cornwall for the carriage of its cheese to London was to take it by land to Burton-on-Trent "and so down that river to Gainesborough and Hull, and so by sea to London. The Warwickshire men, however, lacked water carriage and either carried it by land once a year to Stourbridge Fair or again by land the 100 miles to London. (116) Yet he could write "notwithstanding in general, it is the Advantage of Commerce, to have all Things done as cheap as possible; yet that as it is the grand Support of Wealth and Trade in England, to have our Product consum'd, and in order to it, to have our People and Cattle employ'd; So, it is not always the Advantage of England, to lessen the Labour of the said People and Cattle, by the Encrease of River-Navigation." (117) On the other hand, in the accompanying text of the 'Atlas Maritimus', published just after the second volume of the 'Tour', he proposed a canal to link the Thames with the Severn and to open the Midlands to water traffic. After listing the navigable rivers which entered the Thames, he added the following note about Oxford: "Here is perhaps the only convenient Place where a Navigation, so much wish'd for, might be

115. A Brief State of the Inland ... Trade, pp. 5-6, 11-12, 18.

116. A Tour, II, p. 131.

117. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 170-171.



artfully made to join the East and West Seas, by making a Canal from the River Evenlode to the West side of Oxfordshire, or the Cherwell on the side of Banbury, to the Avon in Warwickshire; a Design often spoken of, though not yet undertaken, and which would be infinitely advantageous to the Commerce of England, ... and which I take notice of in this place, because I have occasion to mention many of the like Undertakings, done or now doing in several Parts of the World abroad." (118) This was almost identical with the plan which had been suggested by Yarranton in 1676 and he reported that a Bill had been introduced into the Commons ten years before to make a cut from Lecklade into the Bristol Avon above Bath. Yarranton proposed to make the Cherwell navigable to Banbury at a cost of £10,000 and the river Stour to the west from Shipston into the Avon two miles below Stratford for a further £4000 although eight miles of land carriage would still have separated the two improved rivers. (119) Defoe did not give any details of the route of his canal, but possibly he favoured a cut through the Cotswolds at Moreton-in-the Marsh to the river Stour. Of the "like undertakings" abroad, he wrote that a channel had been cut, "or rather open'd" from the Elbe to the Trave, linking Hamburg with the Baltic through Lübeck. In France the trade of Nantes had been exceedingly increased by the Orleans canal joining the Loire and the Seine, but he was most enthusiastic about the Royal Canal from Narbonne to Toulouse and claimed that "the Oil, Olives and other Goods of Lucca, the fine Goods of Leghorn" were being imported into England by this route. He added, however, that "this Trade by the Canal declines of late

118. Atlas Maritimus, p. 18.

119. A. Yarranton, England's Improvement by Sea and Land (1676), pp. 64-65.

very much, the Canal not answering so well in Times of Peace." He also suggested a canal from the river Hudson at Albany to "the River of Canada." Conversely, in addition to the example of Madrid, he ascribed Italy's small internal trade to her shortage of navigable rivers, "not one on all the West shore" and none on the opposite coast below the Po that was navigable "10 Leagues into the Country; ... no such thing as Water-Carriage, but all that part is perform'd by Mules and Horses." (120)

His eagerness to maintain the maximum amount of employment seems to have led him to prefer road transport to river navigation, because it used so many horses which in turn benefited the farmer by their consumption of fodder. Earlier he had observed that the horse was a more useful creature than an idle man for this very reason. (121) "This carriage of goods in England ...", he announced, "is chiefly managed by horses and waggons; the number of which is not to be guess'd at, and is equal, in my opinion, to the whole trade of some nations, and the rather, because of the great improvement of land, which proceeds from the employing so many thousands of horses." (122) Indeed, he says little of the improvements which were taking place on many rivers during the second half of his life and he gives the impression that river transport was less extensive than other sources suggest. If, however, as is probable, his 'Tour' was based on the journeys which he made in the first decade of the eighteenth century, his account may be accurate for that date as many of the Acts for the improvement of particular rivers had only just

120. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 30, 56, 56, 165, 287.

121. Supra, p. 142.

122. The Compleat English Tradesman, I, p. 325.

been passed or did not receive approval until the third wave of improvement schemes in 1719-21. (123) "In most countries in Europe", he insisted, "all their inland-trade is carry'd on by the convenience of navigation, either by coastings on the sea, or by river navigation." He agreed that the English coasting trade, of which he thoroughly approved, was "exceeding great" and employed "a prodigious number of ships" but that the river navigation was not equal to it, although very important in some areas. England had "but a very few navigable rivers" compared with other countries, nor were many of these "navigable to any considerable length from the sea." Except for the Thames, Trent, Severn, Wye, Ouse, Humber, Aire and Calder, which were navigable a considerable distance and received several other navigable rivers into them, he maintained that very few English rivers were navigable much above the first town of note within their mouths. Thus

"the Northern Ouse but to York, the Orwell but to Ipswich, the Yare but to Norwich; the Tyne it self but a very little above Newcastle, not in all above twelve miles; the Tweed not at all above Berwick; the Great Avon but to Bristol, the Exe but to Excester; and the Dee but to Chester; in a word, our river navigation is not to be nam'd for carrying, with the vast bulk of carrying by pack-horses, and by waggons, nor must the carrying by Pedlars on their backs be omitted." (124)

In the 'Tour', he was strangely silent about the Severn, which may have carried more traffic than any other river in Britain in his day, and he said little about the navigation of the Thames. On the other hand he was well aware of the part played by the Aire, navigable to Leeds, and the Calder, navigable to Wakefield, in distributing Yorkshire coal up the Ouse to York or up the

123. T.S. Willan, River Navigation in England 1600-1750 (1936) pp. 28-51, 131-140.

124. The Compleat English Tradesman, I, pp. 325-327.

Trent and in sending cloth to Hull for despatch coastwise or abroad. By the same rivers the people of the West Riding received all their heavy goods which came coastwise from London or were imported at Hull. He also noted that the shipments of Derbyshire lead, Sheffield wrought iron and edge-tools, millstones and grindstones "in very great quantities" made Bawtry wharf be famous all over the south part of the West Riding. Again the extension of the navigation of the Trent from Nottingham to Burton and up the Derwent to Derby was "a great support to and increase of the trade of those counties which border upon it" and 4000 tons of Cheshire cheese were now sent down the river from Burton to Hull. (125) In the 'Atlas' he observed that the Dee was the longest river between the Severn and the Clyde and that but for the silting up of the estuary the port was much better situated for trade than Liverpool. He forecast, however, that the latter was likely to outdistance Bristol, the Mersey being navigable almost to Warrington and was joined by the Weaver which brought down great quantities of rock salt and cheese. Hamburg had "such a Port and River as nothing in Europe excels, if not the Thames." (126) But in general he was misled by comparing British rivers with the much longer rivers of Europe which might have carried a greater tonnage but often served a number of separate states. He observed that France carried on her home trade "with great ease and much less expence" than England because she had so many large navigable rivers. (127) He quite failed to realize the great advantage which Britain enjoyed by its long, deeply-indented coastline and its large river basins

125. A Tour, II, pp. 140-141, 181, 187, 196-197, 207-208.

126. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 16, 17, 30.

127. Atlas Maritimus, p. 147.

penetrating deep into the country and providing outlets for inland industries and bulky natural products so that the rivers were a vital adjunct to the coastal trade. (128) Finally, to Defoe cheapness was usually less important than quality of production or the volume of employment which a particular method of manufacture provided (129) and his fundamental attitude is revealed by his anecdote of an earlier ruler of Russia. This Grand Duke was said to have expelled an English projector who proposed to replace the great Volga barges or ballatons, which needed the labour of 100 to 120 men for the journey from the Caspian to Moscow, by rather smaller boats which, by the use of sails and the work of only 18 to 20 men, would perform the journey in less than half the time. His condemnation of the Russian ruler's action was tempered by this conclusion, "the Folly of this Conduct makes a kind of Jest upon the People of Moscow; but the Moral of the Fable, be it so or not, is good; 'tis certainly the Wealth and Felicity of a Nation, to have the People fully employ'd for Wages, let that Wages be what it will." (130)

Because he thought that most of the internal trade of the country was carried by road, he frequently commented on the condition of the highways and made suggestions for their improvement. The travels which were to give him such an unrivalled knowledge of Britain's economic resources had apparently begun before the "Essay on Projects" and he quickly realized that poor roads were retarding the growth of trade. (131) Later he described how he

128. T.S. Willan, River Navigation in England, pp. 2-5; The Coasting Trade ... (Manchester 1938). P. Mathias, The First Industrial Nation (1969) p. 12.  
 129. Supra, pp. 243-246.  
 130. A Plan of the English Commerce ... pp. 42-44.  
 131. An Essay on Projects ... (1697), p. 73.

saw in a village near Lewes in Sussex "a lady of very good quality ... drawn to church in her coach with six oxen" because the way was "so stiff and deep, that no horses could go in it." (132) He was impressed by the remains of the Roman road system, especially the Fosse Way between Cirencester and Marshfield, and Watling Street although the Romans had not "the five hundredth part of the commerce and carriage that is now." (133) He gave details of the method of construction as he had seen it exposed between Castleford Bridge and Aberford on the way to Tadcaster and York, but concluded that wages were now so high that "it would exhaust the whole nation to build the edifices, the causeways, the aqueducts, and other publick works, which the Romans built with very little expence." (134) He condemned the existing system of parish maintenance of the highways for its expense, unfairness and inefficiency. In spite of "the prodigious Charge the whole country groaned under for the repair of the roads, they remained "in a very ill Posture" and "in many places totally unpassable." The highways rate was "the most Arbitrary and Unequal Tax in the Kingdom; in some places two or three Rates of sixpence per pound in the year, in others the whole Parish cannot raise wherewith to defray the Charge, either by the very bad condition of the Road, or distance of Materials." Lastly the corruption of many of the surveyors led to innumerable "Frauds and Embezlements." He also recognized that standing water was "the Chief, and almost the Only Cause of the deepness and foulness of the Roads." Because there were no drains, water softened the earth to such a degree that it could not bear the weight of horse

132. A Tour ... I, p. 129.

133. Ibid, II, pp. 119-120; An Essay on Projects, pp. 70-71.

134. Ibid, p. 120.

and carriages." (135)

His solution was characteristically bold. He proposed that an Act of Parliament should give wide powers to an improvement commission of at least 15 "Undertakers" to which every county should have power to add 10 when they were dealing with its roads. Any five of these county representatives would advise "in matters of Right and Claim" as he proposed that there should be compensation, independently assessed, in land or money for those landowners who lost land because of the improvements, with a right of appeal to the Lord Chancellor or to a commission appointed by him. The undertakers would have power to press "Wagons, Carts, and Horses, Oxen, and Men" within the particular area, "at a certain Rate of Payment" except that none were to be taken without their consent during haytime, or harvest or upon market days. The ten county representatives were to be empowered to inspect the improvements and if they were not satisfied, to complain to the Lord Chancellor who would then "make a survey". Defoe had observed that in most parts of the country "a convenient distance of Land" was left open on each side of the road "for driving of Cattel, or marching of Troops of Horse" but that this "Overplus" of waste land was "no Benefit at all either to the Traveller as a Road, or to the Poor as a Common, or to the Lord of the Mannor as a Waste." Although it grew "neither Timber nor Grass" it was "as good Land as any of the Neighbouring Enclosures, as capable of Improvement, and to as good pupose."

Therefore the enclosure and improvement of these lands, beyond what was needed for any road widening, was to be the fund which

was to finance his national road plan. This land could be awarded as compensation to those landowners who lost land or could be sold to raise the necessary capital, "always reserving a quantity ... to be let out to Tenants, the Rent to be paid into the Publick Stock or Bank of the Undertakers " to pay for repairs. To provide the necessary labour force and their horses and carts, "every County, City, Town and Parish" was to be rated at a charge equal to eight years existing payments for the repair of highways and to discharge this by supplying the men and their equipment. A certain number of days work on the roads might be substituted for all corporal punishments such as whippings, the stocks and the pillory. Apart from building of bridges, no county should be liable for any further contribution, either in money or labour, for road repairs. As for the vexed question of injury to the poor by enclosure and the claim that this contravened Magna Carta, he argued that the poor gained no benefit from these lands and that they would be amply compensated by the number of new jobs "fit only for Labouring Poor Persons to do" which would be created by his road scheme. He also suggested that the undertakers should be obliged to build cottages, at convenient distances, "which wou'd be useful to the Work." There should be at least two in each place, with an allotment of land, so that a traveller "might travel over all England as through a Street, where he cou'd never want, either Rescue from Thieves, or Directions for his way." If these proposals should prove so effective that there was "no Poor for the Common," there would then be no need "of a Common for the Poor." (136)



Defoe proceeded to illustrate his national plan by detailed proposals for the roads of Islington parish, through which ran "the greatest Road in England, and the most frequented, especially by Cattle for Smithfield Market." Because of the "Clayey Ground, and no Gravel at hand", the parish was unable to keep its roads in repair "and Carts and Horses, and Men too", had been "almost Buried in Holes and Sloughs." Instead "a noble Magnificent Causeway might be Erected" extending for ten miles, forty feet broad and paved in the middle with stone, chalk or gravel, four feet high "and kept always two Feet higher than the Sides", with drainage ditches at each side eight feet broad and six feet deep. He then extended his plan for Islington to the whole county of Middlesex, calling on the City of London to provide £10,000, which might be paid by carriers and drovers, to add to the £20,000 which he estimated was raised by the highway rate for the county. This was to him a just demand because the road from Highgate to Smithfield Market was ruined by the live cattle for London's food supply and yet the cost of repairs fell on the one parish of Islington. In the cases of both Islington and Middlesex the capital and labour were to be provided by the sale of the enclosed and improved surplus common land and the eight years highways rate although he suggested using the labour of criminals or 200 negroes, by arrangement with the Royal African Company, to reduce the cost by half. Every two miles, a cottage with half an acre of land was to be provided rent-free and one shilling a week in wages "to such poor Men of the Parish as shall be approv'd." Each cottager, at least once every day, was to "view his Walk, to open Passage for the Water to run into the Ditches, to fill up Holes or Soft Places." Two "Riders"

were "to be always moving the Rounds to view everything out of Repair, and to make Report to the Directors, and to see that the Cottagers do their Duty." The plan for Middlesex was to embrace 67 miles of "High Post Road", 140 miles of less public cross-roads and 1000 miles of "Bye-Lanes and Passes." The estimated annual income from the waste lands of Middlesex, bordering the roads and allotted to the commissioners, £5000, was to be set aside to meet the cost of repairs. (137)

Although his scheme had some of the defects which were to be found in all the paper plans of an age of projects, Defoe recognized the chief defects of the roads and the remedies which were needed. He defended the wide powers which he proposed to give to his commissioners as absolutely necessary or the work could not be done and insisted that the benefits would far outweigh any damage which might be caused. He underestimated the difficulties which would have been encountered in practice, even if his national road plan had stood any chance of being adopted, and the administrative weaknesses which ruined the existing parochial system of road maintenance would not have been eliminated. It is very unlikely that his poor men of the parish would have proved efficient in their tasks of noting deteriorations in the road surface and of carrying out the necessary repairs. Nearly thirty years later, however, his interest in the state of the roads remained as strong as ever and he devoted sixteen pages of his 'Tour' to the improvements which had resulted from the turnpikes which had been set up during recent years. He pointed out that the chief problem was, "that the soil of all the midland part of

137. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-104.

England, even from sea to sea, is of a deep stiff clay, or marly kind, and it carries a breadth of near 50 miles at least, in some places much more; nor is it possible to go from London to any part of Britain, north, without crossing this clayey dirty part." Not only did the midland counties "drive a very great trade with the city of London, and with one another, perhaps the greatest of any counties in England" but "all the land carriage of the northern counties" with London also had to cross this belt of clay. As a result "the roads had been plow'd so deep, and materials have been in some places so difficult to be had for the repair of the roads, that all the surveyors rates have been able to do nothing." Local shortage of suitable materials for repair was perhaps the chief difficulty. "In some places", he remarked, "they have a real sandy kind of a slate or stone, which they lay with timber and green faggots, and puts them to a very great expence; but this stone does not bind like chalk and gravel, or endure like flint and pebbles, but wears into clay from whence it proceeds." Repair of the roads in Bedfordshire was made more difficult by "the drifts of cattle" which passed up to Smithfield from "Lincolnshire and the fens of the Isle of Ely" and which often worked through in the winter what the turnpike commissioners had mended in the summer. Many of the main highways which radiated from London, such as the Great North Road and Watling Street, suffered from these defects and Baldock Lane was "famous for being so unpassable, that the coaches and travellers were oblig'd to break out of the way even by force, which the people of the country not able to prevent, at length placed gates, and laid their lands open, setting men at the gates to take a voluntary toll, which travellers always chose

to pay, rather than plunge into sloughs and holes, which no horse could wade through."

The road from London to Colchester and forward to Ipswich and Harwich, he considered the most improved but a few pages further he added that the road from Mims to St. Albans was "so well mended, the work so well done, and the materials so good, so plentifully furnish'd, and so faithfully apply'd, that, in short, if possible", it out-did the Essex road. Other good stretches of turnpike road were between Ware and Royston, Barnet and Highgate, and from Dunstable through Hockley-in-the-Hole to Newport Pagnell, formerly "the most dismal piece of ground for travelling, that ever was in England." Nowhere were the tolls "thought a burthen that ever I met with, the benefit of a good road abundantly making amends for that little charge the travellers are put to at the turn-pikes." If these improvements continued he held out the hope that posterity might have better transport than at any time since the Roman occupation. He enumerated the various benefits as follows:-

"... as for trade, it will be encourag'd by it every way; for carriage of all kind of heavy goods will be much easier, the waggoners will either perform in less time, or draw heavier loads, or the same load with fewer horses; the pack-horses will carry heavier burthens, or travel further in a day, and so perform their journey in less time; all which will tend to lessen the rate of carriage, and so bring goods cheaper to market.

The sheep will be able to travel in the winter, and the city not be oblig'd to give great prizes to the butchers for mutton, because it cannot be brought up out of Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, ... the graziers and breeders will not be oblig'd to sell their stock of weathers cheap in October to the farmers within 20 miles of London, because they cannot bring them up; but the ways being always light and sound, the grasiers will keep their stocks themselves, and bring them up to market ... as well in winter as in summer."

As a result, London "would be serv'd with mutton almost as cheap in the winter as in the summer, or the profit of the advance would be to the graziers of Leicester and Lincolnshire, who were the original breeders", a surprising remark from one who rated the services of middlemen so highly, but in this case the farmers near London were guilty of engrossing for they were selling the sheep at an advanced price, "tho' not an ounce fatter than before. Were the Warwickshire roads made as good as they now were in Essex, the carriage of cheese "would be perform'd for little more than half the price that it now is, and the poor would have their provisions much cheaper." The inland market for fish would be extended by better roads and fish from Yarmouth and Ipswich might be sold as far west as Northampton and Coventry. He came to the conclusion that his account of any county would be incomplete unless he mentioned the road improvements "for certainly no publick edifice, almshouse, hospital or nobleman's palace, can be of equal value to the country with this, no nor more an honour and ornament to it." (138)

The almost magical qualities which Defoe ascribed to circulation made him denounce those who interrupted it with unmitigated vehemence, but none roused his antagonism more than "those Enemies to all fair Trade", the "Hawkers, Pedlars, and other Clandestine Traders." Having described the "back carriage" of shopkeepers' goods which London could provide for the particular products of the rest of the country, he exclaimed, "the wretched Pedlar would at once blow up this happy Order of Things; he cuts off the Carriage to and from the Center of Trade, and pretends to carry things a nearer Way, tho' quite out of their own Road: ... he

does all the Mischief to Trade, that its worst Enemy can do ..."

Enlarging on this mischief, he continued,

"He sees Trade run on in a happy Round of Buying and Selling, Importing and Exporting, Carrying up and Carrying down, and that all the Way as it passes, tho' through a Multitude of Hands, it leaves something of Gain every where behind it, and yet lessens not the Value of what it carries on; looking on this Beautiful Order of the Trade with an evil Eye, he projects to cut off the Progress of Things from their Natural Course; shorten the length of the Circulation, which is indeed the Life of the Whole; and thinking to put all the Gain of Five or Six Stages of the Trade, into his own Pocket, he contrives or at least pretends to carry the Goods a shorter Way to the last Consumer; ... making himself the Carrier, Factor, Wholesale-Dealer, Chapman, and Retailer all in one Hand, putting the Gain of all those Trades into the single Purse of a Pedlar; ... He acts like a Man that maliciously turns the Stream of a Mill-River to his own private Use, ... valuing not the starving twenty Mills which lie on the same Stream and must get their Bread, and the Subsistence of their Families by the fair Produce of their Labour." (139)

He dated the increase in the number of pedlars to the decision to license them during William's war and renewed under Anne at the rate of £8 if the pedlar had a horse and £4 if he travelled on foot, (140) "a trifling Payment, compar'd to the fatal Effects of it to Trade." Although pamphlets against this measure appeared in 1706, Defoe does not seem to have used his pen on behalf of the "fair traders" on this occasion, but he was no doubt fully occupied with his long political poem 'Jure Divino' and his strenuous campaign for the Act of Union.

Since 1706 these "Pernititious People" had been like "Moths in Trade", and had eaten into "the very Vitals of our Commerce."

139. A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade (1730) pp. 20, 25-27.

140. R.B. Westerfield, Middlemen in English Business ... (New Haven, Conn. 1915) pp. 315-316.

He repudiated the pedlars' claim to "buy at the best Hand," to be furnished with the best goods and to sell them more cheaply, declaring that their whole trade was "a stated and premeditated Fraud." "Fair Dealing" was "the Honour of Trade, and the Credit of the Tradesman." A shopkeeper might somewhat exaggerate the worth of his goods as likewise the buyer in running them down. "But these People", he declared, "can speak no other Dialect; ... their Trade is a Fraud in it self, and must be supported by Falshood, ... they can Trade no longer than they can L - e." He drew a distinction between these "Pyrates in Trade, Thieves to their Country" and the country chapmen who had a more extensive and regular trade and whose credit was sound. Because of this and because they were, in Defoe's opinion, a necessary link in the chain of distribution, they merited and received better treatment from the warehouse men who would never show the pedlar their best goods. The latter was obliged to pay cash because he had no credit and necessarily bought "the worst and meanest Goods." He admitted that in some respects the pedlar's expenses were smaller than the shopkeeper's, but in part this was because he did not contribute his due share of local rates or of national taxation: "It is true they travel as we call it cheap, that they feed their Horse upon the Waste, and them selves upon the Spoil, that they lodge at the meanest Houses ... where they live like them selves, ... they supplant the establish'd settled Shopkeepers, who as above are the Supports of the whole Body, maintain both Church and State, the Civil and Religious Government, feed the Poor, and cloth the Rich: These People do nothing in Civil Government, pay for nothing, bear no Offices, raise no Taxes,

and which is still more, pay no Rent, for they have no Houses nor Legal Settlement: They pay neither Scot or Lot, Church or Poor, but in short, are complete Vagabonds; and ought ... to be treated as such." But he denied that they could operate more cheaply than the shopkeeper in bulk because the latter had the advantage of the carrier's regular transport service and back carriage. Also the shopkeeper carried a larger stock because he relied on a small profit on a large return. In both these cases, however, Defoe was stating the obvious. In making the pedlar "the great support of the Smugglers", he was repeating a common charge of the shopkeepers against their rivals. Because "one clandestine Trade always upholds another", the smugglers could never be completely suppressed while the pedlars continued to provide their outlet. "As the Retailer is the Life of all Trade, so the Pedlar is the Essence of all Clandestine Trade; as the Receiver is the Support of all Thieving, so the Hawker is the Life of all Smuggling; he hands on the Goods to the Consumer." He suggested that the pedlars sometimes pretended that their goods were run when they were not so that the buyers would believe them cheap and he thought that the Commons should consider, "whether a set of People should be any longer continued in Trade, whose greatest Advantage it is to have Customers believe them to be Knaves and Thieves, and who are chiefly traded with upon that Foot." If they were able to undersell the fair trader, this must be the reason. He also attacked pedlars without licences whom he accused of selling "India Silks, Chints, painted Callicoes" which were even prohibited from being worn and yet it was thought that in the towns, and especially in London, these traders outnumbered those who were licensed. The



trade that was left to the shopkeeper was "the trusting Part, where the Money comes slow, and where Losses often falls heavy; so that ... the Shopkeeper has the Milk, and the Pedlar the Cream." His chief complaint, however, against the pedlars was that they interrupted the circulation of trade by inverting "the due Order and Course of Business; for instead of the Customers going to the Shop, they carry the Shop to the Customers; instead of the Country Inhabitants frequenting the Markets which are the proper Places of Trade, they make the Markets walk about to the Inhabitants." (141)

Defoe's pamphlet was probably written to support the shopkeepers' petitions to Parliament during 1730 asking for legislation to suppress the hawkers and pedlars. He also helped their campaign by commending his pamphlet, as if by an unknown author, in the 'Political State of Great Britain' and by printing extracts from it. (142) A broadsheet of the same year repeats so many of his arguments and in the same characteristic phrases such as "the Pedlar being to the Smuggler, the same as the Receiver is to the Thief" that it could well be Defoe's. The writer refers to "this Beautiful Constitution of Trade" being "invaded by the Frauds and Arts of Hawkers, Pedlars and private clandestine Traders", and to pedlars inverting the order of trade and forestalling the markets but the following short extract is even more typical of his thought and style: "By this vagrant way of Trading, the whole Scheme of our Inland-Trade is broken; the Manufactures know no regular Motion; ... The Carriers are inter-

141. A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade, pp. 28-58.

142. The Political State of Great Britain, April 1730.

cepted, and must in time cease to Travel for want of double-Carriage; or the Foreign Goods (which the Shopkeepers must have,) will come heavily charg'd with the said double Carriage; the Inns and Houses of Entertainment on the Road, which are now beyond Comparison, the best in the World, will sink; and ... the whole Commerce feel a sensible and terrible Decay." (143)

His dislike of the pedlar did not extend to the Manchester Men and those who carried "Leeds Cloth, Kersies and Yorkshire-cloth of all sorts upon Horses all over Britain," because he did not think that they interfered with the circulation but rather promoted the sale of goods. He noted that some of them were "very considerable Dealers" who furnished "the Shopkeepers all over Britain with their goods, without cutting or retailing any thing." Presumably, too those pedlars who also kept "Shops, or Chambers, or Ware-houses in the adjoining Market-Towns" and sold their goods in the surrounding villages were less obnoxious than the vagabond pedlars. (144)

The following extract admirably expresses his particular viewpoint.

"There is a maxim in Trade ... especially in the Home-Trade, which will ever remain true, as long as Trade bears its Name in the World, viz. That the more Hands it goes through, the greater publick Advantage it is to the Country it is carried on or managed in: and therefore, it is not always the true Interest of a Manufacture in this or that particular Place, to shorten or lessen the needful Expencc of Trade, tho' it should render the Goods something the cheaper at Market ... it must always be true, that it is our Interest to send our Manufacture as cheap to a foreign Market as we can, especially when they are rivalled by other Manufactures of the same or a like kind. But even in that

143. The Case of the Shopkeepers, Manufacturers and Fair Traders of England ... (1730).
144. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part II, p. 78; Cf. Atlas Maritimus, p. 108.

Case, it were better that Encouragement were given to the Exportation, by taking off Imposts or Duties payable on the said Exportation, and even by Bounties given by the Publick to encourage the Merchant, than by Depredations upon the Trade itself. Every Manufacture; has its proper Channel of Trade, after it is finished as a Manufacture; as it is made in this or that particular Country remote from London, it is, generally speaking, sent up to London for Sale: there it is sold by a Factor or Warehouse-Keeper to the Merchant for Exportation, or to the Shop-Keeper for retailing, or to the Wholesale-Man for sending again into other Countries proper for its Sale ...

It is not an Equivalent to say, that the Wearer or Consumer shall buy the Cloth or Stuff Six Pence or a Shilling a Yard, or a Suit of Cloaths Two or Three Shillings the cheaper; Equivalent to the finding Bread and Subsistence, as it passes, for six or seven Families, who might otherwise gain their Living by that Manufacture, if it went in the ordinary Channel."

Defoe illustrated his point by supposing that C, a Northampton shop-keeper, and "an over-grown Tradesman", sent to a Warminster clothier directly for pieces of broad cloth, and bought it a penny per yard cheaper than Mr. A, his Blackwell-hall factor sold it to Mr. B, the woollen draper. By sending wool direct to the clothier he bought his cloth 2s.6d. per yard cheaper than his neighbour shopkeeper and gained all the custom. But all the following intermediaries were ruined, the Warminster carrier who had been paid 2d. per yard on the cloth, the Blackwell-hall factor whose  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent commission amounted to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per yard on cloth which sold for 15s. a yard, the woollen draper who charged 9d. or 1s. per yard for his 6 to 9 months credit and the Northampton carrier who received  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per yard, or a total addition to the price of 1s.8d. per yard. "Thus the Channel of Trade is turn'd, the Stream is cut off" and no one except C received any benefit from "this Spoil upon Trade." "This, he proclaimed, "is cutting off the Circulation of Trade; this is

managing Trade with a few Hands: And if this Practice, which is indeed evidently begun, was come to be universal, a Million of people in England, that now live handsomely by Trade, would be destitute of Employment, and their Families in Time, want Bread." The gentry, the "last Consumers," would ultimately suffer too from this "Want of Employment" because people would leave the area and therefore the produce of the land would not be consumed, leading to a reduction in rents. "Certainly," he concluded, "the Gentlemen find their Interest in the Dearness of the Manufacture, if it may be call'd Dearness ... 'tis highly their Advantage to have Multitudes of People upon their Lands, and nothing can keep the People together like something that can find them Employment." (145)

Defoe also disliked the changes which were taking place in "the Corn-trade, the Butter and Cheese-trade, and the Malting-trade; three articles which employ so much of the Lands of England, and such an innumerable number of our People and Cattle, that they are, ... a quarter part of the whole inland Commerce." First, he disapproved of corn factors searching out the farmers to buy corn in the barn before it was threshed or in the field before it was ripe, a "subtle business" and very profitable because they were able to take advantage of the farmers' need and, by advancing money, buy cheap when there was a prospect of sharp increase in price. Secondly, the meal-men, who had previously been the general buyers of corn within a 30 or 40 mile radius of London, had been supplanted by the London bakers who had "cut out the Meal-shops in London." Similarly they had been displaced

by the millers in the country who now bought the corn and ground it for themselves, with the result that the baker now went to the miller for his meal and the miller went to the market for the corn. "This is an anticipation in Trade", he pronounced "and is against a stated wholesome rule of Commerce, That Trade ought to pass thro' as many hands as it can; and that the circulation of Trade, like that of the blood, is the Life of the Commerce." The millers "who in former times were esteemed People of a very mean Employment", had become "men of vast Business" and it was now not uncommon for mills upon some of the large rivers near London to be let for £300 or £400 a year rent. In the third place, maltsters were now no longer farmers. As the demand for malt increased, the most considerable farmers who had malted their own barley began to buy further supplies from the smaller farmers within a radius of twenty to forty miles. They finally "left off Ploughing" or other men established themselves purely as maltsters. But the new practice which he most deplored was the buying and selling of both corn and malt by the factors "by samples only" though it was "an unlawful way of Dealing, and many ways prejudicial to the Markets." Defoe described it as follows:

"The Farmer, who has perhaps twenty load of What in his Barn, rubs out only a few handfuls of it with his hand, and puts it into a little money-bag, and with this sample, ... in his pocket, away he goes to Market. When he comes thither, he stands with his little bag in his hand, at a particular place where such business is done, and thither the Factors or Buyers come also; the Factor looks on the sample, asks his price, bids, and then buys; and that not a sack or a load, but the whole quantity; and away they go to the next inn, to adjust the bargain, ... Thus the whole barn, or stack,

or mow of Corn is sold at once ... but 'tis odds but the Factor deals with him ever after, by coming to his house; and so the farmer troubles the Market no more.

This kind of trade is chiefly carried on in those Market-Towns which are a small distance from London, ... such as Rumford, Dartford, Grayes, Rochester, Maidstone, Chelmsford, Malden, Colchester, Ipswich ... and particularly at Margate and Whitstaple, on one side; and to the coast of Suffolk ..."

The place where the farmers and factors transacted their business was like a little exchange, a hundred times the quantity of corn which was on view in sacks in the market hall being bought and sold there. Whereas very few wagons with corn were to be seen in the market on market day, the rest of the week the wagons and carts were "continually coming all Night and all Day, laden with Corn." But this was really "a clandestine Trade, utterly unlawful" and opening a door "to the fatal and forbidden Trade of engrossing, regrating, forestalling the Markets" which was so injurious to the poor in times of scarcity. Defoe's chief concern, however, seems to have been the "great injury to the Markets as well as to the Market-Towns in preventing the concourse of People, and horses, and carriage to the place, which affects the whole Trade of that Market, ... as also to the market as a property." (146)

He believed that the increase in the price of a commodity by passing through a number of hands and by the cost of carriage was an actual increase in its value. Thus coal could be bought for 2s. or 4s. per chaldron at the pit and was sold to the consumer for five to ten times that sum, "merely by the expence of carrying." Even Wakefield coal which was taken to York "all

the way by water" increased in price from 1d. to 1½d. per bushel to 7d. or 8d. at the cheapest, although it was not subject to any tax like that levied on the "sea coal" brought into London to pay for the rebuilding of St. Paul's. He reckoned "seven several removes" between the loading of Newcastle coal into the baskets or tubs at the bottom of the mine shaft and its delivery by carts, 15 or 20 miles from the river barges at Oxford or Abingdon, with a consequent increase in price from under 5s. per chaldron to sometimes 45s. to 50s. Therefore, he concluded, "as the workmanship adds to the value of Manufactures, so the carriage to that of heavy Goods." (147)

The same concern for the maximum amount of employment appears in his strictures on the over-grown tradesman, "a mere trading dragoon," in which he condemned many of the practices of the monopolist:

"... How often have we seen one over-rich Tradesman attempt, at an India Sale, to buy all the Coffee, another all the Pepper, ... and then put their own Price upon those Goods ... and so impose upon the whole Nation. ... Trade ought to circulate through as many Hands as possible, it is not for the Advantage of the Trade in general to be managed by a few Tradesmen. In the first place; it is more in the Power of these few to make Combinations in Trade ... two or three great rich Men are able to join together, and to buy up any Quantity of Goods ... It is certainly better that fifty Tradesmen were carrying on a particular Trade, with every Man a 1000 l. Stock, than one great over-grown Tradesman with 50000 l. Stock; for, besides that by so much Trade being engrossed in one Hand, as would maintain fifty Families, 'tis also in the Power of that one Tradesman, to oppress, and perhaps injure an hundred more, ... In a Word, an over grown Tradesman is a publick Grievance in Trade. 1. As by his growing Stock, he has the Opportunity of watching Advantages; of buying only of the poorest Dealers, and when they wanting Money, are obliged to sell, though to Loss, rather than not raise immediate Cash to keep the Wheel of their Trade a-going ...

2. By the vast Stock they have in Trade, they give large Credit where they think the Tradesmen they deal with are safe; and by keeping such Men always in their Books, they secure the Customer, and make him pay a better Price than otherwise he would do; so making themselves whole that Way, for what they sell at Under-Rates at other Times, and to other Men.
3. Where they are rival'd by any other Tradesmen, they immediately sell their Goods at Under prizes, to get and secure the Trade from that Rival; and this they will do, so long, 'till they shall tire the other out, and cause them to give it over;
4. Upon all Occasions, these Men stand ready to buy ... the good Bargains, to get all the Penyworths, which other Tradesmen cannot do for want of Money."

Yet they were "a general Calamity to the whole Nation ... in its trading Capacity only, for otherwise, to have Men be Masters of large Stocks gain'd in Trade, is an Encouragement to Trade itself, and a Benefit to the Publick." Not only was the overgrown tradesman "a trading Tyrant" over other tradesman, but "he tyrannizes over Trade itself; for while it is the true Interest of Trade to be extended, and dilated in such a Manner, that as many Families and as many People as possible, may be employ'd in, and maintain'd by it; he, on the contrary, contracts it, crowds it into a narrow Compass, manages as much in his own little Circle, and perhaps with four or five servants, as would, and might, and indeed ought to employ and maintain twenty Families of Head-Tradesmen such as himself, ..." He was also guilty of breeding up apprentices "to nothing" because they could not set up in business near him when they were out of their time. He was "a Calamity in Trade" because "Trade should be a current Channel, and ought to flow for the Benefit of the whole Body." (148)

Therefore his desire to see the maximum number of people maintained in employment by the circulation of internal trade



did not include those who were guilty of monopolistic practices and in June 1710 he began a campaign in the 'Review', which continued into 1712, against the encroaching middlemen in the marketing of London's supplies of "sea coal." After they were incorporated as a London Company in 1700, the Thames lightermen had seized control of the unloading of the coal ships from their former employers, the woodmongers, by their monopoly of their small boats and by acting as "crimps" or brokers between the masters of the ships and their London buyers. On the Tyne a new group of middlemen appeared, the fitters, also members of a gild organization, the Newcastle Company of Hostmen. In addition to their own investments in the collieries, they bought coal from other owners and sold it to the masters of the coal ships. They reduced the keelmen who ferried the coal from the staithes to the ships to precarious wage-earners, while the masters of the colliers were squeezed between the Newcastle fitters and the lightermen in London. (149) The masters tried to safeguard their position by entering into an agreement "not to run before one another, out or home," which the lightermen denounced as a combination. Because the ships had taken three months for a voyage which they generally made in one, London had 100,000 chaldrons less than the normal supply of coal (150) and Defoe forecast a rise of £3 per chaldron before Christmas.

(151) This was "the worst kind of dearness" in that it was a price increase to the poor and not to the rich, since the poor

149. J.U. Nef, The Rise of the British Coal Industry (1932) I, pp. 401-408; E.R. Turner, "The English Coal Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries", American Historical Review, vol. xxvii (1921) pp. 17-20.
150. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 33) p. 127.
151. Ibid, (No. 34) p. 131.

could not buy ahead. (152) Yet his sympathies were entirely with the ships masters as they also were with the other victims of the monopolists, the Tyneside keelmen. To sue the masters for confederating was no solution as no law in England could "bind Men to work for Nothing, much less to sail a Voyage ... If the Masters were not Gall'd, ... they would fetch Coal fast enough." (153) In support of their case, he printed a presumably fictitious affidavit of "Solomon Loadsman", master of the "Friendship", in a Review Miscellany, giving the financial results of four voyages in 1709-1710 which had produced a profit of £38.15s. on a ship costing £2,200 in May 1709. (154) Defoe, however, shared the general concern for the Newcastle coal trade as the traditional breeding ground of mariners.

Apparently the lightermen had defended their monopoly by the specious plea that it enabled them to keep down the price of coal to the London consumer, but Defoe retorted that his observation of "the Monopolizing, Encroaching, Invading part of the Trading World" had led him to formulate the following maxim, "those that run down the Price of Goods on a general Head of Trade, do it with a prospect of Selling Dear, and those that keep up the Prices have the like view of Buying Cheap." He considered

152. Ibid., (No. 39) p. 151.

153. Ibid., (No. 35) p. 135.

154. Ibid., (No. 40) pp. 155-156; cf. Henry Liddell's letter to William Cotesworth in July 1711, quoted by E. Hughes, North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century (Oxford 1952) I, p. 161, "Scarce a master that comes over the Bar that can clear £10 a voyage ... the common saylors are reduced to such a low ebb that they cannot so much as feed their familys with Bread and water." In 1730, The Case of the Owners of Ships Employed in the Coal Trade argued that the freight charges for other bulk commodities, such as corn and Portland stone, were at least double those for coal and that a coal ship which cost £2000 was only worth half that figure after ten years.

it unlikely that the price of coal could be reduced in view of the taxes to which it had been subjected during the war, such as the extra charge of 3s. per chaldron imposed by the last Parliament. Any reduction would only be temporary for "to make the Colliers sell them Cheaper than they can bring them, tho' it may tickle us with a low Price just now, must, when it has ruin'd the Masters and Owners, make all good again out of the Pockets of the Buyers." (155)

Defoe described the arrangement by the ships masters as "no more a Combination than Travellers Combine to go together for fear of Highway-men;" than the Grand Alliance was "a Combination against French Tyranny." (156) He agreed that combinations, whether legally established or "Couch'd by crafty Men", were generally "in their nature injurious to Trade, oppressive to particular Men, and tending to Monopolies" and that this was the reason why English laws were so strict "against Monopolies, Engrossings, Forestalling of Markets, and exclusive Privileges in Trade." But it was necessary to distinguish between "Confederating against the very Being and Prosperity of the Trade, and honest Men Combining together to prevent unjust Encroachments" and the really dangerous confederacy was that between the fitters at Newcastle "as Tools to the Coal Owners" and the London lightermen. He accused some coalowners of entering into a contract with ten lightermen and of paying them £1500 a year, "some say a great deal more", by which coal from their collieries would have preference on the London markets. (157) He claimed

155. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 30) p. 115.

156. Ibid, (No. 31) p. 120.

157. Ibid, (No. 32) pp. 123-124.

that by this agreement the owners had been able to raise the price of their coals by 1s., 2s. or even 3s. per chaldron while reducing their measure "almost an Eighth part," but he believed that the lightermen, who played "Jack-a-both sides with the whole Trade" were more to blame than the owners: (158)

"... the Knavery of this Project began all at L(ondon) ... It is true the Coal-Owners are the Gainers, and being inform'd by this knot of Sinners, that they could so Manage the Market here, as to raise the Value of the Coals, and put the whole Command of the Trade into their Hands, ... The Coal-Owners, whose Charge is great, and Gain low, were willing to Embrace any Opportunity fairly, to raise the Value of their Estates and no Man can blame them - ... they did not Examin into the Clandestine Methods of the Lighter-men." (159)

A month earlier, he had given the following catalogue of their malpractices:-

"Such as Buying at a Market Price and then bringing a Ship to Sell lower - That they may bring down the last Seller and Abate him to loss, or make him sue for his Mony. Such as Buying and beginning to Work upon a Ship, and then delay sending Lighters for the Coal - Making them Pretences of the want of Boats ... or the Badness of the Coals, or the Want of Sale - and thus making the Ships lye till tyr'd with the Expence, they bring the Masters to abate 1s. or 2s. per Chaldron. Such as keeping Masters from the Gate, the Market; perswading them there are no Buyers; keeping Buyers from the Gate, pretending there are no Coals; ... Such as delivering whole Fleets into their small Craft... that the Ships being gone, they may get an Advance of Price from their Customers, on Pretence of Scarcity. Such as delivering only such and such Ships whose Coal belongs to their Contractors at New-castle, giving them all the Dispatch they can."

He had also listed "infinite Perplexities in Payment" by the lightermen, such as giving "Notes under their single Hands at 20 Days sight" only current at Newcastle to those fitters who were in the combination so that the ships masters were obliged to obtain their coal from them. (160)

158. Ibid., (No. 37) pp. 143-144.  
 159. Ibid., (No. 46) p. 180.  
 160. Ibid., (No. 33) p. 128.

This was not the first time that he had complained of the lightermen. Early in the Spanish Succession War he alleged that a rise in the price of coal from 35s. to 55s. a chaldron was "chiefly occasion'd by the Jugling and Frauds of the Crimps and Lighter-men, more than by Defects in Convoys, Want of Seamen, or the like." He had raised the question in one of his supplements at the end of the earlier issues of the 'Review', which he called "Mercure Scandale: or Advice from the Scandalous Club", and in which he tried to provide lighter fare for his readers. He introduced a coal-merchant who had been brought before this fictitious Society for blaspheming, in that he had blamed God for sending such warm weather in April that it had brought down the price of coals "in spite of all their Forg'd News, buying up Quantities, and such like Practices." This coal jobber admitted to being the agent of the lightermen, to having written a false letter of colliers being captured by the French and of having been guilty of keeping 50 or 60 vessels back when a large fleet of colliers came into the Thames. (161) In 1709 Defoe again declared that the coal-jobbers were the lightermen and crimps who made use of so many stock-jobbing villainies that the Romelands at Billingsgate began "to show herself one of Exchange-Alley's Bastards." (162)

Defoe's remedy was the traditional attempt to enforce a just price by regulations.

161. Ibid, Vol. I, (No. 10) pp. 55-56; (No. 11) p. 60. He used his Mercure Scandale for lighter attacks on moral failings and social absurdities which anticipated the later "Spectators" and "Tatlers". See P. Dottin, op. cit., pp. 118-120; J. Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

162. Ibid, Vol. VI, (No.84) p. 335.

- "1. That during the Continuance of these heavy Taxes upon Coals, the Measure and Prices of Coals shall be adjusted and stated at New-castle - For there have been Encroachments and Invasions there, as, well as at London; and, perhaps some Newcastle Knavery, may prove the Original of some London Knavery: ...
2. That as the Assize and Price of Bread is settled by Parliament, in proportion to the Rising or Falling of the Prices of Corn, so the Rates of Coals should be affix'd in the Parliament of London, in due Proportions to the Circumstances of the Navigation - Such as War or Peace, Price of Wages, Season of the Year, etc. and proper Magistrates ... may be appointed to do this.
3. That, as in the Case of Provisions, we have Laws in some part of Britain, that Butchers shall not be Graziers, ... so we might have a Law, that Lightermen, Fitters, Mesters, and such like little depending Fellows, who feed upon the Life Blood of the Colliery, should not be permitted to turn Dealers in, much less Engrossers of Coals; ... which really is none of their Business.
4. That Coal-Jobbing be forbidden by Law - an Evil growing upon us at Billingsgate, like Stock-Jobbing on the Exchange ..." (163)

He certainly recognized the difficulties of the trade which he described as "an Article of our Commerce driven with as little Gain and as great Hazard, as any Branch of Trade in this Nation." This made "the least Invasion upon its Freedom the more sensible, and all Interruptions the more Mischievous." (164) In only two years, 1699 and 1701, since 1688 had the quantity of coal shipped from the Tyne approached the peak figure of that year, (165) and Charles Povey, who began his business career as a wholesaler of coals in Wapping, believed that the slump in the trade, which had halved freight charges, was at the root of a general decay of trade, (166) although he also attacked the "indirect practices (167) The "most advanced experiment in industrial organization

163. Ibid, Vol. VII, (No. 30) p. 115.

164. Ibid, (No. 37) p. 144.

165. E. Hughes, op. cit., pp. 160-161.

166. C. Povey, The Unhappiness of England as to its Trade by Sea and Land truly stated (1701) pp. 4-5; for his colourful career, see P.G.M. Dickson. The Sun Insurance Officer 1710 1960 (1960) pp. 18-31.

167. C. Povey, Discovery of Indirect Practices in the Coal Trade

that England had yet seen," the noted Regulation of 1709, in which William Colesworth and Henry Liddell were the dominant figures, was a vigorous attempt to preserve the owners' profits during these difficult years when keelmen, owners and ships' masters were suffering from "a glutted market, intense competition and redundant numbers." (168)

Defoe denounced the owners' attempts to regulate the trade at Newcastle as "the most preposterous Error; by which we should in one Year put it into the Power of about 24 or 26 Men, to have raised a Tax of an hundred Thousand Pounds a Year upon the City of London; and have made many Thousand Families of Sailers, Owners of Ships, Masters, and poor Keelmen, the most Subjected Slaves that ever this Free Nation saw." He described their Coal Office at Newcastle, "where they made By-Laws, impos'd Regulations and Fines upon the poor Keelmen, by their own Arbitrary Authority" as "that New Star-Chamber" and claimed that it was intended that the London trade should always pay 12s.6d. per chaldron more than other areas. (169) He also defended the strike of the keelmen when they resisted the pressure put on them by the fitters who were probably losing control of the trade on the Tyne to this new organization of the owners. If the keelmen were "tumultuous", that was only to be expected for "had such a Stop of Trade, and in such a manner, happn'd to your Weavers in Spittlefields, the Authors must have fled the Town before now." (170) When there was further trouble in 1712, he announced "if once they get the Keel-Men at their Mercy, it shall for ever

168. E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-180.

169. *Review*, Vol. VII, (No. 42) pp. 163-164.

170. *Ibid.* (No. 44) pp. 171-172.

be in their Power to put what Price upon their Coals they please, and the City of London in particular, shall pay a larger Tax to them, than ever they yet paid for the Building of Churches." (171)

Defoe seems to have been unaware of the extent of this cartel and put most blame on first the lightermen, and then the fitters for the troubles in the trade. It was probably well for the coalowners that he did not know of their decisions to restrict their output for Henry Liddell certainly recognized the power of Defoe's pen. He wrote to Cotesworth with reference to Defoe's visit to Newcastle at the end of 1710, to ask if he had had "any discourse with Dan D(ef)oe when in the Country? What sort of Spirit possesses that man, who seems by the print, of which he is suspected to be ye Author, to encourage modestly speaking a Refractoriness among that sort of people?" (172) Two months later, he wrote again to William Cotesworth to warn him against quarrelling with "the Dealers", that is, the lightermen, because of the possibility that "their natural Malice and Spirit of Revenge" would lead them to reveal the agreement between them. The chief danger would be a leak of the information that "some of the Ten had received £50 for the sale of Field-house coals contrary to the stipulation" with the group as a whole. He continued, "if this Letter (the agreement) were exposed, as certainly it would be by them, if disobliged, the 'Review' would lay hold of itt and handle us as last year, that it was a plain proof of a design'd Monopoly, so that what now seems to sleep would be raised up against us." (173) Defoe,

171. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, (No. 142) p. 569.

172. E. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 173. Letter of 4 December 1710.

173. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181. Letter of 8 February 1711.



however, was unable to arrest the growth of monopoly in the coal trade. Although public disquiet produced legislation in 1711, the Act was directed against all combinations in the trade, including the recent action by the ships masters, and it did not succeed in restricting the activities of the various sections. The Regulation, which had not controlled half the output of coal, broke up in 1715 but was replaced by the Grand Alliance in 1715 and in 1730 it was stated that 12 lightermen still controlled half the sales of London coal. (174)

Liddell described the bulk of the lightermen as "people of little or no substance" who tended to "force a Trade" on the credit which they could secure from the coalowners but were liable to have difficulty in settling their accounts later. (175) Similarly, Defoe's attitude towards these middlemen seems to have been coloured by the fact that they were "little depending fellows" who obstructed trade rather than extended it, whereas he looked upon the substantial wholesale dealer as the key figure in inland trade. This appeared most strongly in the summer of 1712 when he was objecting against any further taxes on trade, and particularly against a proposal to tax stocks of goods. He did not object to taxing stock in the hands of the importer for this was "no more than Taxing the Importation a little back, perhaps half a Year, or less, and is of no great Consequence." But a tax upon the stock of the wholesale dealer was likely to ruin the whole inland trade, particularly the importation of foreign goods.

174. *Ibid.*, pp. 183-248; cf. J.U. Nef, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 97-100, 178-179.

175. *Ibid.*, p. 180. J.U. Nef, *op. cit.*, I, p. 398 refers to Povey's estimate that the ordinary overhead charges of a London coal merchant were from £350 to £400 a year.

"The Wholesale Trader is the Medium between the Merchant and the Retailer; He buys of the first and sells to the last, and has nothing to do immediately, with either the Consumer at Home, or the Producer Abroad: It is the Wholesale Man that gives Spirit and Life to our Trade; 'tis on his Stock the Retailer Trades, and by his Cash the Merchant supports his Credit: He sweeps off whole Cargoes, clears the Warehouses, the Wharfs, the Ships, and is the Nation's Magazine of Commerce: He buys in Quantities, lays in a vast Stock, and gives Credit all over the Nation."

If stocks of goods were to be taxed, he would not buy large quantities for fear not only of being taxed after they were bought but of being left with a large stock on his hands because the tax had reduced the retailers' sales. This "not only Ruins the present Wholesale Men, but it Ruins the future Wholesale Trade; for the Wholesale Men not daring to buy Quantities, all your Companies and Merchants must turn Pedlars, and the Publick Sales of Goods must be divided into small Lots so that every Coffee Man, every private Family, every Retailer, will buy their Coffee, their Tea, their Drugs etc. of the Merchants, and at the East-India Sales, and the very Being and Occasion for a Wholesale-Man sinks and dies away at once." But

"Evils in Trade never rest where they begin; the Ruin of the Wholesale-Man is the Ruin of Trade in General, for the Merchants or Importers cannot drive half the Trade they do, if they must wait the Consumption of their Goods, and sell them about in small Lots and little Parcels only, as People want them. The life of Trade consists in two Things; (1) The quick returns to the Merchant (2) The many Hands and Stock, thro' which, and by which, it is Managed. By the first, the Importer, who fetches the Goods home is enabled to Trade - The Merchant's Stock is supposed to lye in the Factors hands, in Shipping in Adventures, and the like: if when his Goods arrive, he can not sell them in Bulk, and receive his Money in Lump, and at a short Day, he cannot Trade, he cannot pay his Bills, fit out his Ships, send out his Cargoes etc. His Trade will be reduc'd to less than half what it will otherwise be. Again, The Retailer is a Man generally of a weak Stock, a narrow Compass, and a small Trade; he must have Credit, and long Credit too; if he can have no Credit, he can Buy but a little, just from Hand to

Mouth, like a poor House-keeper that buys his Coals by the Peck; he cannot go to the Merchant, or to the Companies Sale, but is obliged to the Wholesale Men for the Capacity he is in to Trade, and Trades upon their Stocks. The Wholesale-Man is the Life of both these; he is the middle between the Extremes; his Stock is large, his Courage in Trade generally good; he ventures here in buying great Quantities, there, in buying great Quantities, there, in giving great Credit, and by him alone, both the Merchant and the Retailer are Supported; he finds the Merchant Money, the Shopkeeper Stocks, and Trade a Circulation." (176)

Six months later, before peace was finally concluded at Utrecht, he considered that trade was undoubtedly decayed by reason of the heavy taxation and the withdrawal of capital from trade into the funds.

"1. The Circulation of Trade in England is ruin'd, and things go in strait Lines, that formerly took large Circles, and every thing is gone back to its Original ... There are fewer Hands engaged in every Commodity than there used to be between the Maker and Consumer ... we shall find you Graves of whole Denominations of Trades wholly lost in Business, so that tho' six times the Quantity of the Manufactures were made and consumed, yet not one sixth part of the People shall be employed in the doing it. This is Depopulation in Trade, ... 2. Credit in Trade is decay'd; ... Tradesmen cannot make a Third part of the Returns now they did formerly, nor give a third part of the Credit they used to give; The Retailer Trades wholly upon his own Stock, ... this contracts his yearly return, ... 3. The Mediums of Trade are destroy'd ... This Wholesale Trade, was like Joseph's publick Magazine of Corn for the Egyptians, which kept up their Supply, when they had nothing to buy with, neither Money or Land ... The wholesale Dealers in this City, were the Men, upon whose Capital Stock, I may almost say, one half of the Kingdom Traded; ..." (177)

An increase of retailers was associated with this contraction of wholesale dealing, "the Encrease of Pedlars and travelling Chapmen, and the Encrease of all those who help to destroy the Circulation of our Home Trade." (178)

176. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 188) pp. 173-5.  
 177. Ibid., Vol. IX, (No. 51) p. 101.  
 178. Ibid., (No. 52) p. 104.

The above concern for the maintenance of full employment, coupled with his preference for the regular "channels of trade", was responsible for his ambivalent attitude towards invention. In 1697 he commended the knitting frame "to be seen in every Stocking-Weaver's Garret" as an example of a "true genuine Contrivance, without borrowing from any former use." Built "with admirable Symetry", it worked with "a very happy Success." (179) The threat of parish workshops throughout England caused him to revise his opinion and to use it as an illustration of how an established trade could be displaced: "Now as the knitting Frame performs that in a Day which would otherwise employ a poor Woman eight or ten Days, by consequence a few Frames perform'd the Work of many Thousands poor People; and the Consumption being not increas'd, ... in a few years the Manufacture there wholly sunk ... and whereas the Hose Trade from Norfolk once return'd at least 5000 shillings per Week, and as some say twice that Sum, 'tis not now worth naming." (180) Contending that 500 frame work weavers could do the work 5000 knitters did before, he protested, "Nothing obeys the Course of Nature more exactly than Trade, Causes and Consequences follow as directly as Day and Night; if one Man can do two Mens Work, one of the two must stand still; if a Manufacture grows in one place, that or another will sink somewhere else; and I wonder from what weak Thoughts in Trade, any Man could form a Notion, that vast Quantities of Goods shall be made in one place, and not the less ... in another place." (181) Yet by the time he came to write his 'Tour', he seems to have

179. Essay upon Projects, pp. 23-24.

180. Giving Alms No Charity, pp. 18-19.

181. Review, Vol. II, (No. 7) p. 26.

fully accepted this invention. At Leicester he remarked, "they have a considerable manufacture carry'd on here, and in several of the market towns round for weaving of stockings by frames; and one would scarce think it possible so small an article of trade could employ such multitudes of people as it does; for the whole county seems to be employ'd in it, as also Nottingham and Darby." (182) Defoe was basically an expansionist. As Sir George Clark pointed out, his "instincts were all on the side of invention. He made Robinson Crusoe triumph over his adversities by applying reason to the mechanical arts:" (183) "By making the most rational judgment of things," said Crusoe, "every man may be, in time, master of every mechanic art," even if he had never handled a tool before. (184) Defoe's final comment on his story of the Russian Grand Duke was, "The poor Muscovite Wretches who mann'd the Ballatoon with one hundred and twenty Men, liv'd on that Employ; that is to say, they did not immediately perish; but the Truth is, they might be said to starve at it, not live at it." (185) Sir George Clark says that Defoe was inconsistent because he was not a systematic writer and therefore could not resolve his dilemma. Believing that there was a serious danger of over-production because of the stagnation of the traditional markets for British cloth in northern Europe, he obviously did not welcome new machines which would greatly increase output. It is also significant that there is scarcely any mention of a mechanical invention in either the 'Essay upon Projects' or in the 'General History of the Discoveries, and Improvements in Useful Arts' where the emphasis is

182. A Tour, II, pp. 88-89.

183. G.N. Clark, Science and Social Welfare in the Age of Newton (Oxford 1937) pp. 113-115.

184. Robinson Crusoe. (Shakespeare Head edn. Oxford 1927) I, p. 7

185. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 46.

on geographical discoveries and on inventions such as the mariner's compass which facilitated these and thus opened the possibility of new markets.

Believing that high wages would usually produce better workmanship and therefore the quality goods which he thought would always sell abroad, he also recognized that this gave the British labourers a higher standard of living and increased home demand:

"It is upon these two Classes of People, the Manufacturers and the Shopkeepers, that I build the Hypothesis which I have taken upon me to offer to the Publick, 'tis upon the Gain they make either by their Labour, or their Industry in Trade, and upon their inconceivable Numbers, that the Home Consumption of our own Produce, and of the Produce of foreign Nations imported here, is so exceeding great, and that our Trade is raised up to such a Prodigy of Magnitude, ... .. They eat well, and they drink well; for their eating, (viz.) of Flesh Meat, such as Beef, Mutton, Bacon etc. in Proportion to their Circumstances, 'tis to a Fault, nay, even to Profusion; ... for the rest, we see their Houses and Lodgings tolerably furnished, at least stuff'd well with useful and necessary household Goods: Even those we call poor People, Journey-men, working and Pains-taking People do this; they lye warm, live in Plenty, work hard, and (need) know no Want. These are the People that carry off the Gross of your Consumption; 'tis for these your Markets are kept open late on Saturday Nights; because they usually receive their Week's Wages late: 'Tis by these the Number of Alehouses subsist, so many Brewers get Estates, and such a vast Revenue of Excise is raised; by these the vast Quantity of Meal and Malt is consumed: And, in a Word, these are the Life of our whole Commerce, and all by their Multitude: Their Numbers are not Hundreds or Thousands, or Hundreds of Thousands, but Millions; 'tis by their Multitude, I say, that all the Wheels of Trade are set on Foot, the Manufacture and Produce of the Land and Sea, finished, cur'd, and fitted for the Markets Abroad; 'tis by the Largeness of their Gettings, that they are supported, and by the Largeness of their Number the whole Country is supported; by their Wages they are able to live plentifully, and it is by their expensive, generous, free way of living, that the Home Consumption is rais'd to such a Bulk, as well of our own, as of foreign Production: If their Wages were low and despicable, so would be their Living; if they got little, they could spend but little, and Trade would presently feel it; as their Gain is more or less, the Wealth and Strength of

the whole Kingdom would rise or fall: For ... upon their Wages it all depends; the Price of Provisions depends on the Consumption of the Quantity; upon the Rate of Provisions the Rent of Lands, upon the Rent of Lands the Value of the Taxes, and upon the Value of Taxes, the Strength and Power of the whole Body: So that these are originally the first Spring of all the Motion. In like manner it affects foreign Trade; if the Poors Wages abate, the Consumption of Quantity also, as above, would abate; if the Quantity abates, the foreign Importation would abate, the Brandy, the Oyl, the Fruit, the Sugar, the Tobacco: For if the Poor have not the Money, they can't spare it for Superfluities, as those foreign Articles generally are, but must preserve it for Necessity; upon their Necessity depends the Consumption of the ordinary Food, which is the Home Produce; and upon their Superfluity depends the Consumption of their Extraordinaries, which is the foreign Importation. Even the Wine, the Spice, the Coffee, and the Tea, after the Gentry have taken the nice and fine Species off, are beholding to the mean, middling and trading People to carry off the coarser Part, and the Bulk of the Quantity goes off that way too: So that these are the People that are the Life of Trade."

He conceded that the gentry were the chief support of the silk industry and that they bought "the finest Hollands, Cambricks Muslins etc." But again the middling tradesmen followed so close at their heels that it was questionable whether they "by the help of Numbers do not out go them, even there also; not to mention the vast Quantity of Linens of other Kind, which they consume every Day, imported from Ireland, France, Russia, Poland and Germany." (186)

He was fully aware of the part which rising expectations amongst the mass of the population might play in stimulating demand: "As the people get greater wages, so they, I mean the same poorer part of the people, clothe better, and furnish better

and this increases the consumption of the very manufactures they make; then that consumption increases the quantity made, and this creates what we call Inland trade, by which innumerable families are employ'd, and the increase of the people maintain'd; and by which increase of trade and people the present growing prosperity of this nation is produced." (187) But even this large internal demand, which not only consumed home produce but provided return cargoes to promote the sale of British goods abroad, might ... not be sufficient if Britain succeeded in keeping all her wool at home and continued to develop new manufactures. On the other hand, he always looked on the British colonies as part of the home market. Claiming that the home trade of the British Isles was greater than that of the rest of Europe, he added, "as to our Plantations or Colonies, they are naturally to be included, their people being our own, and their consumption always to be reckon'd as part of our own, their Produce our Produce, and their Wealth our Wealth." (188) In another pamphlet, he was possibly even more specific: "In this Article of the Circulation of our Home Trade all our Exportation to the British Colonies and Plantations ... is to be reckoned: For as these are to be esteemed our own Dominions, so the Trade to and from them ought to be esteemed as a mere Coasting Trade, and no other." (189) Therefore the development and extension of the colonies was the final key to this problem of employment and effective demand:

187. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. I, pp. 318-319.  
 188. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part II, Intro, pp. 10-11; Vol. I, pp. 321-322; Cf. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 54.  
 189. Atlas Maritimus, p. 110.





DEFOE AND THE COLONIES

Defoe fully shared the contemporary opinion that the plantation colonies, particularly the West Indian islands, were the most important of British colonial possessions. (1) This was the chief reason why he defended and wished to extend England's share of the African slave trade and their mutual dependence was strongly emphasized in the 'Review' of January 10th 1713: No possible trading disaster, he affirmed,

"could be so great a Blow to Trade in general, as the Ruin of the African Trade in particular; and those who know how far our Plantation Trade is Blended and Interwoven with the Trade to Africa, and that they can no more be parted than the Child and the Nurse, need have no time spent to convince them of this; The Case is as plain as Cause and Consequence: Mark the Climax. No African Trade, no Negroes no Negroes, no Sugars, Gingers, Indicos, etc. no Sugars etc. no Islands; no Islands, no Continent; no Continent, no Trade; that is to say, farewell all your American Trade, your West-India Trade, ... it is all gone at once, Virginia excepted." (2)

Because he believed that white labour was not profitable in the West Indies, he was opposed to the settlement of the Palatine refugees there in 1709 although he had strongly supported their entry into England. The planters, he said, must have people used to the hot climate, "entirely subjected to the Government and Correction of the cruellest Masters; that they may be whipp'd forward like Horses, that can live on what is next to the Offfall of Food, ... that have the Strength of the Ox, ... and that suffer every thing the Horse suffers, but being flead when they are dead, which would be done too, if they could get 6d. for the Hide - These they get their Wealth from," ending with a character-

1. J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... pp. 66-69; Sir J. Child, A New Discourse ... pp. 197-205; J. Houghton, A Collection ... (1681) No. 3, pp. 35-38.
2. Review, Vol. IX, (No. 44) pp. 87-88.

istic moral aside, no sooner mentioned than dismissed," - And these, I doubt, they have much to answer about, as to Cruelties and Barbarities; which it is not my present Work to enquire into." (3) It was the particular merit of "the improving English Genius" that they had exploited to the utmost "a few little despicable Islands not worth the Spaniards possessing, hardly worth their naming, in Comparison of their vast Possessions on the Continent; nay not worth naming in Comparison of the vast Islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, one of which is bigger than all our Islands put together, and yet Cuba and Hispaniola, tho' equally rich ... and infinitely full of natural Wealth, are left unplanted." (4) By contrast, Barbados was "one of the richest and most fertile Soils" in the world, although if it were devoted to subsistence farming instead of a lucrative cash crop, it would not support one-third of its population or produce one-twentieth of its annual value. It was "infinitely their Advantage" to have many more mouths than they could feed:

"they maintain 50000 Slaves and Servants, they support a most intollerable Luxury and Gallantry, they live at a prodigious Expense, they maintain their own Government, and remit to England a vast Wealth every Year. It is no Grievance, but a Gain to them, that they do not sow Corn enough to feed their Cocks and Hens, that they have no Horses for their Work, Oxen for their Flesh, or Swine for Pork, nor Food for them if they had them there; It is infinitely their Gain to send to Ireland for Beef, to Virginia for Pork, New York for Peas and Flower, New England for Horses, and to Old England for Beer, besides buying all their Clothes and Necessities from hence. This is a full Proof that no Nation, that has a rich Produce, can have too many People; and if England was as full of People, as the Land of Canaan was, they would be rich in Proportion." (5)

3. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 47) p. 186.
4. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 228.
5. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 47) p. 186.

Whereas Barbados had "hardly an Inch of Ground" that could produce "one Ounce of anything more", Jamaica still needed people, for its full development. . . Yet it was an even more striking example of English improvement, because it had been formerly in the neglectful hands of the Spaniards. While they had introduced the cultivation of cocoa, pimento and indigo, the English had made the island "the greatest Article in all our West India Commerce" with a greater volume of trade than all the other English islands put together. (6)

Defoe, however, had surprisingly little more to say about the West Indies and, in marked contrast to his fellow writers on colonial trade, had a vision of the immense future possibilities of the mainland colonies, even the much-criticized New England which Child called "the most prejudicial Plantation to the Kingdom of England." (7) Carew Reynel even wished that Virginia and New England could have been moved further south so that they would not "take the Bread out of our mouths, by supplying Barbados, Jamaica, and the Southern Plantations with the same Commodities as we do." (8) To Defoe, the mainland colonies were an even better illustration than the West Indies of the English national temper for improvement, which, he suggested, was such a marked characteristic of his countrymen that they could be said proverbially to be "better to improve than to invent." The Spaniards, after almost two hundred years of peaceful possession of the most favoured regions of America, had not made them much more productive than they were before, whereas the English "tho' planting near

6. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 232.

7. Sir J. Child, op. cit., p. 193.

8. Carew Reynel, The True English Interest . . ., p. 34.

100 Years after them, and taking ... the Fag-end of the Discovery, the northern, cold, and barrent Parts, without Silver and Gold, without Mine or Mineral ... (had) brought Gold out of their Dross. They had triumphed over the difficulties of temperature, terrain and native hostility to such effect that they had transformed "the Leavings of the Spaniards" into "the richest, the most improved, and the most flourishing Colonies in all that Part of the World." Defoe suggested that England's mainland and island colonies were more valuable than Spain's vast American possessions but, like all his contemporaries, still bewitched by the flow of treasure from the New World, he was obliged to add the consumption of British manufactures in the colonies and the value of the inter-colonial trade to tilt the balance definitely in England's favour. He also reminded his readers that most of the gold and silver which reached Spain had to be re-exported to pay for essential imports, including the goods which she sent to her colonies

(9) As a further demonstration that the Spaniards were not "Men for Improvement", he declared that there was no possibility that they would make a canal from the River Chagre to Panama, whereas if the French or Peter the Great had been in possession of the isthmus, it would have been done "long ago." (10)

It was, however, the possibility that the English mainland colonies might replace the Baltic countries as the chief source of supply of naval stores which was chiefly responsible for Defoe's favourable attitude towards these generally-underrated

9. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 227-231. Cf. The Complete English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part 2, Intro. p. 17.
10. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 304.

territories. Instead of the drain of specie and coin to Northern Europe, especially to Norway, these essential imports would be purchased by British manufactures, at "the Rate of 100 to 150 per Cent advance." (11) Whereas two-thirds of these goods were imported in foreign ships, navigated by foreign seamen, he thought that 400 ships, navigated by 10,000 seamen, plus 100,000 American colonists and 500,000 men at home would be employed in a trade which waited at England's own door. (12) Two years later, he revised these estimates upwards and now maintained that ten years of this projected Atlantic trade in naval stores would "cause to be built a thousand Sail of very great Ships, and twice the Number of small Vessels." These would employ 20,000 seamen, "inclusive of those employ'd in building Vessels, and managing small Vessels in the Rivers there, for bringing Goods to the Ships." The population of the colonies would rise by almost 100,000, and in twenty years by three times that figure, with a consequent vast increase in their consumption of English goods. (13) Later, he added that the trade would also provide the northern mainland colonies with "returns" to pay for these imports of manufactured goods from England and enable them to keep the silver which they obtained from their trade with the West Indies instead of sending it to England. Thus "there would be a Circulation of current Money in the Colonies on the Continent a Thing they have of late been Strangers to." (14) The importance of these return cargoes is underlined by the available trade

11. Ibid, p. 331.

12. Review, Vol. I, (No. 96) p. 398.

13. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 135) p. 540.

14. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 270. American currency difficulties continued until the War of Independence.

statistics. In 1697, Barbados had a larger share of British foreign trade than the three "bread colonies", New England, New York and Pennsylvania, combined. Twenty years later, British imports from Montserrat were worth three times those from Pennsylvania and those from Nevis almost double those from New York. In return Barbados and Antigua together were as valuable to British exporters as New York, and Montserrat and Nevis were jointly a better market than Pennsylvania. (15)

The initial difficulty "in turning the Current of the Norway Trade to our own Colonies and Plantations" was that naval stores from America cost so much more than those imported from northern Europe. For Defoe the high cost of colonial labour was due to shortage of hands rather than high food prices, because he believed that New England was in danger of producing a glut of foodstuffs, and he suggested that African slaves could easily be furnished until the increase in the number of colonists should reduce the price of labour to "a just proportion of Value." The higher freight charges of the longer Atlantic crossing, however, would remain and he proposed to offset these by a duty of at least 20 per cent. on the value of the imports of naval stores from Europe and "a Tonnage on the Ships" and by a bounty of 20 per cent to be paid to the importer of the colonial product which should also enter duty free. To free the British taxpayer from any additional burden, the cost of the bounty was to be defrayed by a tax of 5 per cent on the English manufactures exported to

15. E. Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (1944) pp. 53-55, based on Sir C. Whitworth's The State of the Trade of Great Britain, 1697-1773 (1776).

17. A. S. Wood, The Slave Trade (1936) p. 100.

the colonies. (16) Although the colonists would thus be paying the bounty "seemingly bestow'd on them", he believed that they would not complain because they would enjoy a much greater benefit from the expansion of their trade in shipbuilding materials. (17) By 1728, however, he entirely condemned bounties to the importer as "a meer Charge upon the Nation" and only removing "the Burthen from private Hands to the Publick." Instead, he now proposed a 10 per cent duty on the English goods sent to the American colonies and that this money should be paid to the commanders of the ships on the actual tonnage of the naval goods loaded by them for England. From another standpoint, this tax would be "in a manner" paid to the colonists themselves and was only "taking the Money out of one Pocket, and putting it into the other." (18)

Defoe's hopes from this particular colonial trade were never realized. Although the Lords of Trade and Plantations, and especially their Surveyor-General in New England, John Bridger, made strenuous efforts to promote the growth of naval stores in America, expending nearly £1½ million in bounties in the seventy years before 1776, they were unable to overcome the short-term interests of the local inhabitants who refused to co-operate in a policy of reserving the tallest pines for the Royal Navy in an area where there was so much timber and where cutting lumber for general export was much more profitable. Even in the most favourable year, 1713, the number of New England masts sent to Britain was only one-eighth of her total imports of ship's masts. (19) Defoe had to admit that the value of

16. Review, Vol. I, (No. 97) p. 401.

17. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 135) p. 540.

18. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 265-266.

19. R.G. Albion, Forests and Sea Power, (Camb., Mass. 1926) pp. 239-280.



American turpentine was not large while masts, although very good, were "too dear to bring many" except for the Navy. He had claimed that the freight charges would be paid to ourselves and thereby an added recommendation, but the distance made the cost at least three times that of Norwegian timber and the "Broad Arrow" policy proved a failure. (20)

Whereas most English writers on economics only reconciled themselves to the possession of New England because of the prospect of developing this alternative and secure supply of these strategically-vital commodities, Defoe was alive to other possibilities of growth. He seized every opportunity to comment on the development of some new product or the exploitation of new deposits of minerals. This was true even in the last few months of his life. In April 1730 he was enthusiastically noting that we received over 5000 tons of rice each year from Carolina and that it had "become a very great Article in the Re-Exportations from hence to Holland, Hamburgh and the Baltick." Two months later, he welcomed the Act allowing the colonists to send their rice directly to any European port south of Cape Finistere. In September, he claimed that all the northern parts of Europe were likely to be supplied with rice from Carolina and that the Spaniards and Italians had begun to demand it because the quality was admitted to be much better than that from Turkey or Egypt. Similarly in the April he had rejoiced in the news of "a very considerable Quantity of Iron" in Pennsylvania and Maryland and that they had produced bar iron which had already been brought to Britain. He continued, "Pennsylvania is a very improving

20. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 329; Albion, op. cit., p. 280.

Province, and produces even in an Equality the same Metals and Minerals that Old England is able to furnish, not even Coals themselves excepted." Eventually they would find out the methods of manufacture so that instead of Britain supplying them with hardware, "they may supply all their over-plus Fund of Metals to us." Their greatest need, however, would be labour so that it would not be possible "that they should arrive to that Part in many Scores of Years, perhaps Hundreds." Otherwise, we can be sure that he would have been less enthusiastic, but he added that although these were "dormant Blessings ... they shew us a most glorious Fund for Improvement, which in Time will make what we call the English Empire in America, the most Powerful of all the European Settlements in those Parts of the World." (21) He estimated the imports of whale oil from New England at 2000 tons a year which would compensate for the British loss of the Greenland fishery, but he was most impressed by their progress in ship-building where they not only built almost all the ships employed in their trade with the West Indies but also "large Ships for the Merchants of London and of Barbados, and many more for mere Sale, which are sent to England to Market." Further, their ships had the reputation of being very well built. Hudson's Bay employed three ships a year in the fur trade and the last ship had brought 150,000 beaver skins, although elsewhere Defoe thought that the trade was declining. (22) He was pleased to learn that not far inland the soil was fruitful and that the weather was milder than upon the shore so that "a good flourishing Settlement" could be made there, "notwithstanding the long

21. The Political State of Great Britain, Vol. XXXIX, pp. 344-346; Vol. XL, pp. 239-240.

22. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 326-327; Review, Vol. V, (No. 46) p. 182.

Winters and the severe Cold", the country lying south of 52° North, or about the latitude of London. To Defoe, colonies in cold climates were "not without their Advantages in Trade" because of their returns and were particularly profitable to England because they would call for more woollen goods. He observed that there was "a much greater Consumption of the British Manufactures" in the mainland colonies, "in proportion to the People" than in the West Indies. It was undoubtedly "the Interest of Great Britain to increase as much as possible the peopling the Northern Colonies, ... and by civilizing the Natives to bring them into a proper Method of Covering and Clothing; especially since their exports of furs would pay for their clothes. (23)

A shortage of people was, indeed, in Defoe's estimation, the greatest obstacle to the development of these mainland colonies. In 1730 he found the recent emigration to Pennsylvania "a very great Improvement" and said that if five times as many were to go there, it would be "so much the greater Advantage; for as much as the Prosperity of any Colony consists in the Numbers of People coming to plant among them." (24) At the time of the Union, in a striking anticipation of one future trend, he looked to Scotland to remedy this shortage of manpower which was preventing the exploitation of the natural resources of the mainland colonies, particularly mineral wealth like the iron of Pennsylvania. Instead of the Scots supplying

23. Atlas Maritimus ... p. 328.

24. The Political State of Great Britain, Vol. XL, p. 18.

recruits for the armies of so many European nations from her "inexhaustible Treasure of Men", they would "People our Colonies, and extend our Borders on the Continent of America, a Part of that World which this Nation has room in, to grow equally populous and terrible to what they are at home, and whose growing Wealth is all our own, and can never be thought too great." (25) No part of America would gain more from this influx of people than New England. (26) In the first of a series of articles in the 'Review' in December 1707, which followed the vote by Parliament to enquire into the state of the Plantations and British trade there, he rebutted the view that England gained nothing by her colonies and laid down two maxims which should govern the relations between the mother country and her overseas possessions. In the first of these, he declared, "we ought to make their Safety and their Prosperity our own, for that they are a part of our selves, and their Wealth is really our Wealth; we are Great in their Greatness, and Rich in their Encrease, both as we are the Center of their Wealth, and as they are the Supply of ours; and those who talk of the Plantations Exhausting us of our People, etc. know not; or do not consider what they say, since sending our People to the Colonies is no more, ... than sending People out of Middlesex into Yorkshire, where they are still in the same Government, employ'd to the Benefit of the same Publick Stock, and in the Strength and Defence of the same United Body." (27)

25. An Essay at Removing National Prejudices ... Part I, p. 27, Part II, pp. 5-6.

26. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 331.

27. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 126) p. 504.

As always with Defoe, his comments on emigration need to be examined in their particular context. When he wrote "to Export the People, instead of the Labour of the People is ... letting out the Life-Blood of a Nation" this was not a general statement of the results of emigration but was made with special reference to Scotland, which, in Defoe's view, had suffered so much by the depletion of her manpower that her own resources had remained undeveloped. (28) Again, in October 1707 the possibility of an end to the conflict with France caused him to examine his own conditions for peace. He rejected any idea that Britain should try to acquire any French territory in Europe and emphasized the cardinal importance of securing safeguards for British overseas trade. In developing this theme his journalistic fancy led him to portray his countrymen as completely content with their own land and thus different from other nations:

"The Spaniards go away to Mexico and Peru, the Dutch to Batavia and the Portuguese to Brazil, where the Ease, the Plenty, the Climate, and the Convenience of Living, so much excell their own, that they care not to return. ... Thus the Dutch, some tell us, are as Populous in the East Indies as in Holland, the Portuguese as numerous in the Brazils as in Europe, and the Spaniards much more in Mexico than in Castile - But England is the true Center of all her own People; the Rich stay at Home, because they can no where live more Deliciously, Pleasantly, and agreeably than there. The Poor stay at home, because they can no where gain so much Money, or get so much Wages as at their own Doors.

And this is the Reason why there are fewer English in Foreign Parts than of any other Nation, and fewer Soldiers, and harder to be rais'd than in any other Nation. What should they go Abroad for, that live so well at Home; what should make the Soldier fight at 3s.6d. a Week that can work at home, and get near that in a Day? 'Tis Poverty makes Nations scatter, and want of Bread drives Men into the Army." (29)

28. A Fifth Essay at removing National Prejudices ... (1707) p. 15; Supra, pp. 842-843.  
 29. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 101) pp. 402-403; cf. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. I, pp. 316-317.

Defoe genuinely believed that the high standard of living in England made both colonization and recruitment for the armed forces difficult but he still looked to the numerous English poor, who otherwise "would eat us up" by the increase of the poor rate to twenty shillings in the pound, to provide the emigrants to develop the empty spaces of America. Although he believed that England itself was under populated, he meant by people who were effectively employed and he was thus able to ask if she could not "spare enough of the unprofitable Part of our People, those who are rather said to starve among us than to live? Who, if they were well settled there, would be Industrious, Thrive, and grow Rich." Whereas our exports of cloth were meeting increased competition in Europe, our colonies would constitute an ever-expanding market. He postulated the following cycle, "The Manufactures support the Poor, Foreign Commerce supports the Manufactures, and planting Colonies supports the Commerce." Defoe, however, was not advocating a forced migration of the English poor and said that he was to be understood to mean "go freely, and voluntarily" to America. To transport the poor "would be sending them away because they are poor; but those who being destitute of Employment here, are willing to seek it Abroad, would have a visible Advantage, and would soon give Encouragement to others to follow them, and Thousands of such Families would raise themselves there by their Industry, and grow rich; for where Wages is high, and Provisions low, as is the Case there, ... the diligent labouring Man, ... from a meer Labourer he becomes a Planter, and settles his Family upon the Land he gains, and so grows rich of Course." The consequence of this development of colonial products would necessarily be

increased trade, calling for more ships and therefore an increase in seamen. . . "Thus your Strength, as well as Wealth, grows with your Colonies, the Climax is really pleasant to look upon." (30)

Defoe frequently enlarged upon the opportunities awaiting the diligent poor in America. They "go there poor, and come back rich; there they plant, trade, thrive and encrease; even your transported Felons, sent to Virginia instead of Tyburn; Thousands of them, if we are not misinform'd, have, by turning their Hands to Industry and Improvement, and, which is best of all, to Honesty, become rich substantial Planters and Merchants, settled large Families, and been famous in the Country: nay, we have seen many of them made Magistrates, Officers of Militia, Captains of the good Ships, and Masters of good Estates." (31)

M. E. Novak, in his excellent analysis of the influence of Defoe's economic ideas on the novels, devotes a chapter to Defoe's fiction as a vehicle of colonial propaganda. For the potential emigrant to America, he thinks that in 'Moll Flanders' and 'Colonel Jack', "Defoe offered a relatively realistic picture of a land in which diligence was often visited with success." (32)

When Moll first arrives in America in the mid-seventeenth century, she learns from her mother-in-law, who is in fact also her mother, that there are only two kinds of inhabitants in Virginia, servants and convicts, and that all are treated equally when they have served their time. Then "they have encouragement given them to plant for themselves" being allotted land, "and as the merchants

30. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 271-275.

31. Ibid., pp. 273-274.

32. M.E. Novak, Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe, (Berkeley, Calif. 1962) pp. 140-155.

will trust them with tools and necessaries, upon the credit of their crop ... so they again plant every year a little more than the year before." Thus, "many a Newgate-bird becomes a great man" and she instances "several justices of the peace, officers of the trained bands, and magistrates of the towns they live in, that have been burnt in the hand." (33) Similarly in 'Colonel Jack', after his hero has been successfully established as a planter by his kind master, Defoe, as if to emphasize that success in Virginia does not depend on such good fortune, takes "a man in the meanest circumstances of a servant, who has served out his five or seven years (suppose a transported wretch for seven years)." He receives the customary fifty acres and credit "for tools, clothes, nails, ironwork" and sometimes a few live-stock. Defoe continues, "from this little beginning have some of the most considerable planters in Virginia, and in Maryland also, raised themselves, namely from being without a hat or a hoe, to estates of £40,000 or £50,000. And in this method, ... no diligent man ever miscarried if he had health to work and was a good husband; ... he must gradually increase in substance, till at length he gets enough to buy Negroes and other servants, and then never works himself any more." He adds that "innumerable people have thus raised themselves from the worst circumstances in the world, namely from the condemned hole in Newgate." (34)

Defoe was naturally impatient with those who were opposed

33. Moll Flanders (Everyman reprint 1955) pp. 73-74.

34. Colonel Jack (Shakespeare Head edition, Oxford 1927). pp. 163-164. Cf. Applebee's Weekly Journal, Jan. 26, 1723. A letter from a "correspondent" expressed surprise at the number of convicts who returned from Virginia at the peril of their lives when their labour was the easiest of its kind for any criminals and where the opportunities for advancement were so great.



to the development of the colonies on the grounds that they would become independent as soon as they could stand on their own feet. He countered that it had previously been "a Court Maxim in England, while the Courts were afraid of the Peoples Greatness, to keep the Colonies under, and the Notions of their setting up for an Independency have been started to ... justify the Maxim ... But these Principles with respect to the Colonies, have never been broach'd nor maintain'd, but by a Party, whose Aim was Oppression. This was the mighty frightful Chimera that prevented England encouraging the Proposal of a Copper Mine in New England, ... this Court-whymisic ... has for twenty years before the Revolution been the Bane of our Colonies Prosperity, New England had by this time been our Store-house for Naval Provisions, and a Nursery of Seamen, and perhaps been of twice the Magnitude it is now of; but for this fatal and most preposterous Jealousie, ..." (35) In another issue of the 'Review' he blamed this delay on "that unhappy, scandalous Temper of keeping down Phanaticks." (36) Therefore, he again laid down a maxim, "that to encourage, encrease, and improve our Plantations by all possible Means, is the most, if not the only effectual Method in the World to secure us against their setting up for an Independency of Government." (37) To be afraid of making the colonies too prosperous was, "as if a Father, in the educating his Child, should fear to make him too wise, or to give him too much Learning." (38) His solution was to bind the colonies to England by strong ties of economic dependence as in his proposals

35. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 126) p. 304.

36. Ibid, (No. 135) p. 540.

37. Ibid, (No. 126) p. 304.

38. Ibid, (No. 134) p. 536.

for establishing a colonial trade in naval stores: "make them great, and rich, and strong, give them People and Money, and you secure them to be for ever your own, that never will, no never can set up for them selves ... without putting a full Stop to their Prosperity ..." (39) If they should nevertheless decide to "cast off the English Yoke", he believed that they must either "put themselves under the Protection of another Nation" or become "perfectly independent of all Nations." (40) The first alternative was only to exchange one form of dependency for another and Defoe claimed that no other colonizing nation could offer the same advantages to the Americans, whom, he assumed, were the only colonists who might consider a rupture. Whilst the Dutch might supply them with manufactures almost as cheaply, they would not prejudice their Baltic trade, "the Mart of their Wealth" and their chief market for their herrings, to encourage the production of naval stores in New England, especially as they were so much nearer to Norway and further from America. Similarly, Surinam and Curacao, the main Dutch colonies in America, would not be able to absorb the mainland colonies' surplus production of foodstuffs. In Defoe's opinion they were "not sufficient to employ one Creek in our Collonies, viz. The River of New York" so that the English colonies "would only change the Master that fed them, for another that would starve them." Leaving aside the question of religion, the same economic arguments would prevent any close links between the English colonies and France. The French colonies in Canada would have the same timber resources calling for development and their West Indian islands would not consume the same quantities of foodstuffs as the single British island

39. *Ibid.*, (No. 137) pp. 547-548.

40. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, (No. 136) p. 544.

of Barbados. The alternative of Spain or Portugal was not worth considering. (41) If the English colonies should be so blind to their economic interest as to attempt to stand alone, there would be no need to attack them; only to stop trading with them, especially by closing their West Indian markets. Defoe thought that the colonies of New England and New York produced six times as much corn and cattle as they needed for their own consumption and that they could not pay for their essential imports from England without the bullion, sugar and molasses which they acquired by their trade with England's island colonies in the Caribbean. Although they in turn depended on the mainland colonies for their foodstuffs, Ireland was capable of meeting their needs. Thus the English colonies were "clenched in an entire Dependance" upon the mother country. (42) Nevertheless it was vitally important to develop the colonies so that they could produce more goods to exchange for their imports from England. In 1709 Defoe thought that the trade of the West Indies was ceasing to grow whereas the output of foodstuffs in New England and other "bread colonies" was increasing. If this caused a glut in their trade, there was a danger that they might turn their hands to British manufactures, although he did not believe that this was an immediate danger while the rate of labour remained at fourpence or fivepence a day in the American colonies. The high prices of British manufactures in America resulting from the inadequate return cargoes were a more serious threat, "for the selling our Manufactures in America at 100 per Cent. Advance, nay tho' it were

41. *Ibid.*, (No. 138) pp. 551-552; (No. 139) p. 556.

42. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, (No. 137) p. 548.

500 per Cent. is not at all our Gain." America had "Treasures of Trade" by which they might "both enrich us and employ themselves" so that if these could be exploited and the price of English goods thereby reduced by 80 per cent., there need be no fear of American competition in manufactures, while the colonies would be reduced to a still greater dependence upon England. (43)

Since Defoe was so eager to see the rapid growth of these colonies, he was soon aware of the danger which the French expansionist plans in North America presented along the entire western frontier. As early as 1700, when he was trying to warn his countrymen that France threatened to acquire a stranglehold on Spain's foreign trade, he asked "What will the Virginia Colonies be worth when the French come to be strong in the Lakes of Canada, and have a free Commerce from Quebeck to Mexico behind ye?" (44) In 1708, during the war which followed, he further demanded, "Were the French Masters of New Spain, ... how long ... should we possess any of our Plantations in America, especially our Island Collonies?" If the French strengthened their position in Canada, New England could soon fall into their hands, but they were equally vulnerable if we made New England "as great and strong." France was virtually investing "all our Main-Land Colonies, lying on our Backs for above 800 Miles in Length" while the Spaniards could attack the islands from Havana before we could despatch a fleet to help them. Therefore a force large enough to withstand their combined strength would

43. Ibid., (No. 138) pp. 551-552; (No. 139) p. 556; Vol. VI, (No. 46) pp. 181-183. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 330-331.

44. "The Two Great Questions considered ..." in A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 361.

cost more than 100,000 men in Flanders, so that the only long-term solution was to put the colonists in a position to defend themselves and to help each other. (45) When the question of peace began to be so keenly debated in 1711, he declared, "I wish some-body would think of a good English Barrier to our American Colonies, by obliging the French to restore Canada and New-found-land, both which were our Ancient Right." (46) The ignominious failure of Colonel Hill's badly-led expedition against Canada caused him to return to this notion of a barrier against French aggression in America, just as necessary as the Dutch fortified towns in Flanders against French attacks in Europe. By their strong strategic position, he continued, the French "not only proscribe our Commerce, and straighten our People, but raise Rebellions, Wars and Combinations against us, among the Indians ... That several Flourishing Settlements of the English have been Ruin'd by the French on that side, and the English quite Supplanted and Removed." " (47) Therefore, it was essential that there should be "a Barrier in the Wilderness" of North America, a limit beyond which the French should not be allowed to advance. (48)

But it was the danger from the French in Central and South America that was more menacing than their aggressive activities in the north of the continent, in particular the possibility that they would secure control of the Spanish colonial trade and establish themselves on the Pacific coast. It was the

45. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 141) p. 564; (No. 142) p. 568.

46. Ibid, Vol. VIII, (No. 114) p. 460.

47. Ibid, Vol. VIII, (No. 134) p. 539.

48. Ibid, (No. 142) p. 570; (No. 129) p. 519.

importance which he attached to bullion which determined Defoe's attitude to this trade. Although he made the customary criticisms of Spain's failure to develop her colonies and believed that Britain's productive capacity was a much greater asset than the silver of Potosi, he obviously thought that, with better management of her economic affairs, the flow of bullion which entered Spain each year could have made her mistress of the world. Mexico, he said, was probably "the Richest City in the World" with "Thirty Thousand Coaches, Three Hundred Thousand Servants or Slaves, and Warehouses pil'd up to the Roofs with Bags and Bars of Silver." One ship had been "ordinarily known to bring into Cadiz above 400 Tun Weight of Silver" and he instanced the "Great Carrick, Madre de Deos" which brought into Cadiz six million pieces of eight and a ton of gold in Philip II's reign. Although he admitted that the treasure now came in smaller ships, some of them were of 700, 800 or 1000 tons burthen, and in July 1711 he claimed that the last flotilla, of only six ships, had "brought Home the Value of 11 Millions of Pieces of eight ... whereof above 6 Millions in Bullion." (49) Therefore he argued that if "a Politic Active Prince" should come to occupy the Spanish throne and "bring their Trade to a New Model, Encourage Manufactures and Industry, and set the Inhabitants to improve themselves; (so) that the Immense Treasure they possess might not necessarily flow from them to other Countries ... they would recover themselves, and be the Greatest Nation in the World." (50) He

49. Ibid., (No. 43) pp. 174-175.

50. The Succession of Spain Consider'd ... (1711) pp. 10-11.

also quoted with approval the speech of Sir Benjamin Rudyard in the House of Commons in James I's last Parliament, in which he had asserted that it was his mines in the New World, not his vast territories, that enabled the King of Spain to aim at universal monarchy. (51) If both the treasure and the trade of these rich lands fell into the vigorous, improving hands of the French, the danger for Britain and Europe was obvious. Early in the Spanish War, in January, 1705, he declared that French control of Spain "wounded us in two of the most sensible Parts" and struck at the foundation of English trade, "the Export of our Manufactures and the Import of our Bullion." Further, by "mannageing that Supine People, they have opened the Sluices of their Silver, and made New Channels for it to run in, so that the Current lyes directly from Peru to Paris, and from Mexico to France." Whereas the Spaniards were content to send a flota once in three years, "the French Ships, on pretence of sending Orders, Intelligence, and other frivolous Occasions, are continually running between Brest and the Havana, fill the Spanish Colonys with French Toys, and slight Manufactures, and thereby Supplant the English Trade for the Future, ... and come back straighted with solid Bullion, the Sinews of War, and the Soul of Trade." (52) Two years later, he claimed that the return of bullion had more than made amends for the men and supplies which the French had poured into Spain, "so that his trading, merchandizing People desire nothing more than the Continuance of the War." (53) In 1707, however, believing that the Allies had the superior economic

51. A True Account of the Design, and Advantages of the South-Sea Trade. (1711) pp. 10-13.

52. Review, Vol. I, (No. 93) p. 386.

53. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 47) p. 188.

and financial resources and that "he that is Beggar'd first, must give out first," Defoe was confident of ultimate victory.

(54) Yet the French influx of treasure threatened to turn the dictum that wars were now won by the longest purse rather than by the longest sword to the advantage of France. (55) Therefore, in October of that year, he proposed an attack on the Spanish flota which assembled twice a year at Havana. This would save England the trouble of finding £6½ million for the war the following year, while "the Loss of such a Sum to the French and Spaniards would be a Blow superiour to Hockstadt or Ramellies." The magnificent efforts of the French, in this war, which had been "the Wonder of this Age" had been made possible by this flow of money such as the twelve million pieces of eight which had been brought by five ships into Brest and three into Spain. (56) By 1711, he was using this steady supply of bullion both for propaganda for Harley's new venture of the South Sea Company and as one of his strongest arguments for bringing the war to an end or for a determined attempt to dislodge the French from the position which they had usurped in the West Indies, by which he meant the whole of Spanish America. Had this been attempted seven years earlier, the war would have been terminated five years ago and until they were recovered, it would never be brought to an end. (57)

Defoe was profoundly disturbed by the commanding position

54. Ibid., (No. 62) p. 248.  
 55. "The Two Great Questions Consider'd ..." in A True Collection, Vol. I, p. 362.  
 56. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 106) p. 422.  
 57. Ibid., Vol. VIII (No. 45) p. 184; (No. 86) pp. 346-367; A True Account of the Design ... of the South Sea Trade, pp. 8-9.



which the French had secured in the Spanish colonial trade and the commercial and military bases which they had acquired and which he was sure they would try to retain after the war. They had taken possession of a great part of New Spain by pretending to strengthen its defences, which, however, they had done "but too well." Not only had they established a citadel at the entrance to Lima, but they had four more considerable fortifications further southwards. They were "planted ... over the whole Kingdom of Chili" and had over fifty ships, "all Ships of Force", trading in the Pacific. They were able to defeat any force of merchant vessels which Britain might send, for they could concentrate thirty of these ships, each one carrying thirty-four to forty guns. Although under Spanish governors, they had garrisons at Cartagena, Havana, Portobello and Panama and the defences of each had been strengthened. (58) They had so engrossed the colonial trade as to produce protests from the Spanish merchants, notably from the Chamber of Commerce in Seville, but the early reverses suffered by the Spanish army in Spain had led to a new treaty of alliance which was even more advantageous to the French. (59) Whereas Britain was restricted to a clandestine trade by sloops between Jamaica and Nicaragua, Guatemala and St. Martha, France had "an open allow'd trade with the whole Country." (60) Thus they had "laid a Foundation, not only to keep Old-Spain in a perpetual Dependence upon them, by depriving them of that Commerce in which their Riches and Subsistence mainly consist, but also ... to supplant all the rest of the World in the Beneficial Trade to

58. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 44) pp. 178-179; (No. 45) p. 183; (No. 47) p. 190.

59. A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, pp. 6-7.

60. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 47) p. 190.

Old and New Spain; and to encrease the Wealth and Power of France to such a Degree as ... to put that ambitious Crown in a Condition to give Laws to Europe, and revive her lately baffled Project of an Universal Monarchy." (61)

Alarmed by this growth of French power, Defoe, even more strongly than his great rival, Swift, deplored Britain's failure to seize some part of Spanish America during the war. (62) When the South Sea Company was launched, he claimed that he had proposed to William III, "in the beginning of the War, for the carrying the War not into Old Spain, but into New Spain" and that the King had "fully purpos'd to put (this) in Execution" but for his untimely death. (63) This may be a true statement for in his pamphlet, 'Reasons against a War with France' of 1701, he wrote,

"... I must say in case of a War with Spain;  
If our Fleets do not surprize their Galleons, and wholly Interrupt the Commerce of Spain with their Indies.  
If our Plantations are not Enrich'd by Constant Depredations upon the Spaniards in America  
If we do not take from them the Islands of Cuba and Hispaniola.  
If we do not Land on the Continent, and share with them in the Treasures of that Rich Country.  
We must either be acted by very ill Councils at home, or have false and ridiculous Management Abroad." (64)

Ten years later, he blamed the British ministers for neglecting our interests and allowing our enemies to "run away with a Trade so advantageous to them, and which it was so easie in the beginning of this War for us to prevent." They could

61. A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, pp. 8-9.
62. J. Swift, Conduct of the Allies, (1711).
63. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 41) p. 165; (No. 50) p. 202; An Essay on the South Sea Trade ... (1711) p. 46.
64. "Reasons against a War with France" in A True Collection, p. 200. Cf. A Secret History of One Year (1714) p. 40. "the Design His Ma(jesty) had laid for a South Sea Company by a Conquest on the Continent of AMERICA,"

"have planted the Queen of England's Standard upon the Gates of Lima and Panama, and cut off by the Isthmus of Darien, all the South Parts of America from the Spaniards. What Resistance could Cartagena or Porto-Bello have made to our Fleets, had ten or twelve thousand Men, Regular Forces, been sent thither, instead of the Thousands that Perish'd in Portugal and Spain - While yet the French had no Footing there, and the Spaniards in no Posture to oppose us?" (65) He considered that they had shown a culpable disregard of vital British interests in that they had taken no advantage of the clause in the Treaty of Grand Alliance which allowed them and the Dutch to seize what lands and cities they could of the Spanish dominions in the Indies and to keep what they captured. (66) He described this treaty as "a Treaty of Partition" which had "expressly stipulated that whatsoever the English and Dutch could possess themselves of belonging to the Spanish Monarchy in America, should be their own without any limitation, nay, tho' the whole Empires of Mexico and Peru should be taken." (67) It seemed to him that we had been fighting, "like Knights-Errants, for Honour's Sake ... without any Regard to our private Interest ... instead of making a good Use, either of the Necessities and Streights of the House of Austria, or of the Misfortunes of the Common Enemy." In marked contrast, the French, in spite of all the reverses which they had suffered in Europe, had seized every opportunity to establish themselves in America at the expense of their allies, the Spaniards. (68) What made

65. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 53) p. 218.

66. English Historical Documents, Vol. VIII, p. 874.

67. The Felonious Treaty (1711) p. 45.

68. A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, p. 5.

the British failure so unaccountable was the fact that they had naval strength to profit by the Spanish weakness. England and Holland "should have turned their naval power, which were eminently superiour to those of France, to the conquest of the Spanish West Indies, by which the channel of trade, or return of bullion, which now enriches the enemies of both, had been ours." (69) Although he never subscribed to a purely maritime strategy and always maintained that Flanders was the main theatre of the war, he was disappointed that we had made no attack on "a vast unguarded Coast for above a thousand Miles." (70) Urging that the much more formidable fighting strength of the French should not prevent an attempt to dislodge them from the West Indies, he declared that we had already, in the course of the war, "compass'd Things of far greater Difficulty; such as the Taking of Barcelona, Gibraltar and Port-Mahon: And ... did not Colonel Nicholson, with inconsiderable Forces, make himself Master of Port Royal in Nova Scotia." (71) Whenever war with Spain seemed imminent, he advocated the same strategy. In 1718, he told those who were alarmed at the renewal of hostilities to "remember what infinite Advantages our superiority at Sea gives our Subjects in a War with Spain ... infinite Advantages may be made of it in the Spanish West Indies, Capable to make full Reparation for all the Damages our Trade can suffer." (72) During the short struggle of 1727-29, he wrote three pamphlets in support of the conflict, each emphasizing the rich prizes which could be gained and the opportunities for colonial

69. An Appeal to Honour and Justice ... (1715) p. 210.

70. The Evident Approach of a War ... (1727) p. 48.

71. A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, p. 27.

72. The Case of the War in Italy Stated ... (1717) p. 33.

expansion. (73) "But where", he asked, "is the Nation of the World that we can get more by, and are likely to lose less by, in case of a War? In how many Places in the World are they exposed even to our Adventurers and Letter-of-Mart Men, where they cannot defend them selves against five hundred Men, and yet have immense Riches to lose? How easie is it, not only to insult their West-India Colonies, but even to dispossess them; and to take from them the immense Riches of Mexico and Peru?" (74)

As the Spanish Succession War drew to a close, he urged the British claims to compensation in America for her immense efforts during the long conflict. In January 1712, six months before the proposed terms were officially revealed, he asked "Why We alone, of all the Confederates, should spend so much, and get so little ... The Emperor has great Dominions ... and more he may have; the Duke of Savoy, the King of Portugal, the King of Prussia all have their Stipulated Portions, ... but nothing to England, nothing to recover our Exhausted Treasure, and help pay off an immense Debt." (75) Although he demanded a barrier against the French in North America, his greatest hopes were centred on the west coast of South America. In two pamphlets of 1711, he offered two schemes of partition in each, according to whether Spain and the Indies went to Charles III or to Philip V. In the second alternative, he asked for the Canaries, Minorca and Port Mahone for England and "four Ports as shall be

73. The Evident Advantages to Great Britain ... (1727),  
The Evident Approach of a War ... , Reasons for a War ...  
 (1729)
74. The Evident Approach of a War ... p. 9.
75. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 124) p. 499.

named in Chili and Peru, and a freedom of commerce to all the Spanish Dominions, South of the Equinox on the west coast of America." (76) In the similar scheme in the second pamphlet, he specified that the four ports should have "sufficient Extent of the Country round" and added the island of Hispaniola to the American demands. (77) In May 1712, he demanded that England and Holland should have "a safe footing in the Wealthy Countries of Peru and Chile." (78) So eager was he that Britain should acquire territory in the southern part of South America that in August 1716 he was ready to propose that she should exchange both Gibraltar and the whole island of Minorca "for the entire possession of the Buenos Aires, or such other Equivalent share of America as might be equal to the Spaniard, and perhaps much more to the Advantage of Great-Britain than those Places in the Streights, which are hitherto at least an Hundred Thousand Pounds a Year Expence to us without being in time of Peace of any Consequence to us, Compar'd to a good Collony upon the Terra Firma in America, which we are Capable of Improving to a prodigious degree." (79)

By 1711, however, after the failure of Hill's attempt to seize Quebec, Defoe probably came to realize that defects of organization and supply would make such overseas expeditions against the long-established Spanish colonies of Cuba, Hispaniola Mexico and Peru more difficult than he suggested in his pamphlets

76. Reasons why this Nation ought to put a Speedy End to this Expensive War (1711) pp. 44-47.
77. Reasons for a War ... (1729) p. 8.
78. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 181) p. 727.
79. Mercurius Politicus, August 1716.

and in the 'Review'. Moreover, war weariness in England made it unlikely that they would even be launched. Therefore, he began to lay emphasis on the great empty spaces which still remained in South America and to claim that the Spaniards were only in actual control of the coastal fringes. Effective occupation was the only valid title to colonial territory. "What Title", he asked, "What Claim do we make to our Colonies Abroad, either in Virginia, the Indies, Africa, and the Gold Coast, or any where else? ... that we should pretend to prohibit others settling there also? And therefore I think the Scots Settlement at Darien, had no just pretence against it from the Spaniards, but it was the Property of the Scots as much as of the Spaniards." (80) If the English had encouraged their Scottish brethren, Darien might have been, by 1711 "an excellent Footing for the South Sea Trade." (81) In any case, we had a right, by Drake's prior discovery, to "the great Island of California". (82) But Defoe believed that there was room for both Spaniards and English in this large continent. He wrote in the 'Review', "there is Room enough on the Western Coast of South America, call'd the South Seas, for us to Fix, Plant, Settle, and Establish a Flourishing Trade, without Injuring, Encroaching on, or perhaps in the least Invading the Property or Commerce of the Spaniards." While the British were entitled, by the Grand Alliance, to seize any Spanish territory, he did not think that they were "Empower'd to take any Place by Force" once peace had been signed, but this statement obviously

80. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 13) p. 51.

81. Ibid, (No. 49) p. 198.

82. A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, p. 30.

only applied to established colonies. (83) Although the Spaniards would never admit the British to an open, direct trade with their American colonies, any settlements established by Britain in South America would always be "an open port and market for them to buy" by private, that is clandestine, trade, as at Jamaica. (84) Therefore, there must "necessarily follow as much Trade with them as we shall care to drive, and to mutual Advantage, without any Detriment to the Trade formerly carried on by Old Spain." (85) The final argument by which he justified a new English colony in lands claimed by Spain was the old charge that the Spaniards had failed to improve their territories. He instanced a rich deposit of copper which outcropped in the valley of Eupori, in the province of St. Martha to the east of the River Magdalena and which, under good management, would produce a million pounds a year, "and be equal to any of the Mountains of Peru, Potosi only excepted. But the Spaniards wholly neglect it, and yet will suffer no other Nation to take it neither; exactly like the Dog in the Manger, that would neither eat the Oats himself, or let the Horse eat them." Similarly there was a very large salt pit at Cape Salinas, "sufficient for all nations", but when the Spaniards built a fort to prevent the Dutch from Surinam from using it, they failed to exact a duty or to sell the salt at a good price. "But", he declared, "neither to suffer others to fetch it, nor make use of it them selves, is indeed a little Spanish." (86) In the 'New Voyage Round the World', the Spanish planter

83. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 49), pp. 198-199; A True Account ... of the South Sea Trade, p. 29.

84. An Essay on the South Sea Trade ... p. 40; Letter to Harley, July 1711, H.M.C. (Portland MSS.) vol. v, p. 61.

85. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 58) p. 235.

86. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ... pp. 306-307.



whose gratitude they secure by releasing him from some English privateers and with whom they later journey into the interior of Chile, becomes the spokesman for Defoe's views on the paucity of the Spanish inhabitants of America and their failure to develop its resources. He assures the English commander of the voyage, "We Spaniards are the worst nation in the world that such a treasure as this could have belonged to; for if it had fallen into any other hands than ours, they would have searched farther into it before now." He proceeds to inform him that "there is not one Spaniard to a thousand acres of land ... throughout New Spain" and that most of those are concentrated in the relatively poorer territory of Mexico so that "there are more Spaniards in Mexico than in both those two prodigious empires of Chili and Peru." He estimates the adult male Spaniards in Chile at no more than 2,500, and those in Peru at 7,000. (87)

Defoe selected two areas of South America for his projected English colonies, one in the north of the continent and the other in the south. He alleged that "the Pride of the Spaniards and of the Portuguese, always prompted them to call every Place their own, on which they have but set their Foot" so that the Spaniards called the territory south of the Orinoco, Nova Andalusia while the Portuguese claimed the same area, to the north of the Amazon, as Brazil, although neither was in effective possession. He estimated this area, "reaching from Popayana within 30 or 40 Leagues of the South-Sea, to the Mouth of these two great Rivers", at 2000 miles from east to west and near 1000 miles from north to south, and claimed that it

was "exceeding populous, fertile and rich; ... infinitely full of great Cities, and unknown Nations of People." (88) This region had the added attraction that it was where one of his heroes, "one of the most illustrious Commoners that England, or perhaps the whole World ever bred", namely Sir Walter Raleigh, made "the greatest Enterprize that ever was undertaken by any private Person in the World." Because of Gondomar's influence on James I, in the event we lost, "the Sovereignty of the Richest, most Populous, and most Fertile Country in the World; a Country richer in Gold and Silver than Mexico and Peru; full of Inhabitants ... among whom an infinite Consumption of our Woollen Manufactures might have been expected, and a Return of that most desirable of all Returns ready Money, by which such a new Branch of Commerce would have been made in the World, that our Merchants would have no more need to Quarrel one with another, or contend about the Property of Trade; for there would have been room to Trade at large, for as much as all the rest of our Trade with the other Parts of the World amounts to." As befitted the fabled site of El Dorado, it was an "inexhaustible Fountain of Gold." If the South Sea Company were now able to complete his project, "in a few years the Consumption of our own Manufactures, and even of all sorts of European Goods, to cloath such innumerable Populous Nations, who have such a Return of Gold to pay for it, would be infinitely greater than all our present Export to, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Turkey put together", which he thought were four of our best markets for cloth. (89)

88. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 313.

89. An Historical Account of the Voyages and Adventures of Sir Walter Raleigh ... (1720) pp. 25-44.

No area could offer a more alluring prospect of riches, and either Chile or Patagonia, but preferably both, complementing each other, were earmarked by Defoe to provide the new expending markets for the products of both Britain and New England and to supply the steady stream of bullion flowing direct to the British Isles to make good their deficiency in gold and silver mines. This was indeed his American dream. "Are there not", he asked the readers of the 'Review', "vast Tracts of Land in the Latitudes South as they are North, in America, where the Spaniards hardly meddle, and with this Addition, that besides the equal Fruitfulness of the Soil and Climate, they have the Advantage of a Quantity of Silver and Gold, to make an effectual Foundation of all manner of Commerce? Are not the Countries in those Latitudes, infinite beyond the Plantations of New England, Virginia, etc. in the Fruitfulness of the Soil, Kind of Production, and other Advantages? Will not a vast Variety of unforeseen Advantages in Trade follow an English Settlement upon the East or West Shoars of South America, to the Consumption of our Manufactures, and the Enriching us by a Return of vast Wealth in Specie?" (90) A new colony in America might provide a market for the increasing production of foodstuffs in New England, "the Glut of which ... is at present, the Calamity of those Places." (91) because of the alarming possibility to Defoe, that this food surplus might cause those colonists to turn to manufacturing. (92) As late as 1729, he was hoping that a colony in South America would also provide the new market which would enable England to manufacture all

90. Review, Vol. VIII, (No. 58) p. 235.

91. Ibid. (No. 50), pp. 203-204.

92. Supra, p. 1007

the available Irish wool. (93)

On every count, Chile was the most inviting area for a new plantation. "How easy it would be", he observed, "for the English to dispossess the Spaniards of the whole Kingdom of Chili, the richest in Gold, the weakest in Strength, and capable of being improv'd, even to Prodigy, far beyond any of the other Dominions of the Spaniards in America." (94) He repeatedly stressed that the territory was almost defenceless, that it had never been entirely subdued by the Spaniards, that the numerous natives hated their cruel and tyrannic masters and that they would be ready to assist any nation that would deliver them from their slavery. (95) On the other hand, in 'The New Voyage', he maintained that the natives in the north of Chile were tractable and inoffensive, but they were ten thousand to each Spaniard. (96) Once the British were established there, it would be difficult for the Spaniards to dislodge them by land from their other colonies such as Peru and they would not be strong enough to attempt this from the sea. The temperate climate and fertile soil made Chile "particularly proper for an English colony" just as the absence of these features had been the ruin of the design at Darien." In latitude it corresponded to Carolina which was considered to be "the most healthy of all our colonies in the north part of America." Baldavia or Valdivia was an excellent port with good river communication

93. An Humble Proposal to the People of England, For the Increase of their Trade, ... (1729) p. 43.

94. Reasons for a War ... pp. 28-29.

95. Enclosure to Harley, H.M.C. (Portland) v. 59.

96. A New Voyage round the World ..., pp. 380-381, 401.

into the interior. The English settlers would produce rice, cocoa, wine, sugar and spices, but especially gold and salt-petre. He claimed that gold was more plentiful than on the Guinea coast and that the Spaniards "would have much more if their improvident pride would permit them to encourage the natives to bring it in." (97) The riches revealed by Cortes and Pizarro and the subsequent flow of treasure from the New World had made such a profound impression on Europeans that Defoe, like all his countrymen, held the most extravagant notions of the wealth of the Indies. He repeated Sir John Narborough's story that at Baldivia, "the Hilts of the private Soldiers Swords were Silver, and their Officers Gold; as also the Heads of their Half-Pikes and the Plates at the Butt-ends of their Fusils all of Gold, and those of the Soldiers of Silver." At the capital, St. Jago, "private citizens and merchants, not only officers of state, were "serv'd all in Gold, and the ordinary Vessels, not their Table-Furniture only, ... but even their Kitchens, and the Utensils of their Cooks and Pantries at least Silver, but often Gold ... all those necessary things of Gold, which in Europe we make ordinarily of Tin, Pewter, Brass and Iron." He added that a geographer had called Santiago "the richest City in the Universe." (98) The Spanish planter asserted that more gold every year was washed down from the Andes of Chile into the sea and lost there, than all the riches that went from New Spain to Europe in twenty years. When the commander and his party were his guests at his house near Villa Rica, they drank wine and chocolate from

97. Enclosure to Harley, H.M.C. (Portland), v. 58-60.

98. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 318-320.

gold cups and water was served in large silver decanters that held five quarts apiece. The commander was at first of the opinion that their host "had borrowed all the plate in the town to furnish out his sideboard and table," but noted that gold was so abundant that the Spaniards gave excessive prices for everything, "even ten or twenty for one." A lake in the interior was known as the Golden Lake because of the gold which was washed down by the rivers that drained into it and gold was so plentiful in the mountains that every poor Chilean could gather as much as he pleased. (99)

Defoe proposed to his patron, Harley, that an initial settlement should be made on the coast of Patagonia, between the Plate River and the Magellan Straits, to safeguard the sea passage to Chile, "to supply the colony itself with corn and cattle in case of need, and also for the refreshment, and, perhaps, wintering of our men and ships" on the long voyage to the west coast. He considered "that a colony on the coast of Chili could not be so well maintained as by the assistance of such a sister colony" and that land communication could be established between the two, a journey of not more than 360 miles compared with a sea voyage of nearly 2000. (100) The chief purpose of the commander of the "New Voyage" in visiting the Chilean planter was to discover if such communication through the Andes was practicable and he then sent a party of fifty-three men under the command of the lieutenant of the Madagascar ship on this journey to the east coast, which formed the climax of the whole enterprise. (101) In a pamphlet which appeared

99. A New Voyage round the World, pp. 360-361, 370-372, 408-409, 425.

100. H.M.C. (Portland), v. 60.

101. A New Voyage round the World, pp. 424-456.

within a year of the "New Voyage", Defoe enlarged on this proposed settlement in "a large tract of land in America unpossess'd at present by any European Nation; abandon'd for so long, as that, even the Spaniards themselves do not, and cannot ... lay any claim to it," between "the Plains of St. Andrew ... about 120 Miles South of the Rio de la Plata, ... and reaching to Port St. Julien ... (about) 840 Miles from North-East to South-West." It was "particularly adapted for a Colony of England, by the aptness of the Climate and of the Soil, for all the usual growth of England, such as English Corn for Bread, Barley for Malt, Apples and such other kinds for Cyder etc. In short, the Country is as it were singled out for Englishmen, not only to live in, but to live in just after the manner of English People's Living ... Nor is the Country over-grown with Woods, as in New-England, Virginia, and all the Northern Colonies, where there is no present Planting till after immense Labour and Expencc to clear the Ground of Timber." Further, there were no wild animals and the natives were not sufficiently numerous to be dangerous. This was the country where Sir John Narborough had wintered in 1670 and which he had compared to Newmarket Heath, bearing "exceeding sweet and good Grass." (102) The ships in the "New Voyage" anchor in the bay which Sir John called Port Desire and find a cross which he had erected, carrying an inscription on a copper plate of English ownership. (103) Black cattle, which the Spaniards had brought to Buenos Aires, had increased so rapidly to the south of the River Plate that ... they were now hunted. Again there is the expectation that

102. A General History of Discoveries ... in Useful Arts (1725) pp. 287-292.

103. A New Voyage round the World ... pp. 420-421.

communication would be established with Chile and the possibility that the colonists would in time be able to seize a harbour on the west coast. Defoe used this prospect of a further "great market for all kinds of European Goods" to counter the usual objections to a colony which, although in the southern hemisphere would be, like New England, in the same latitudes as England. It would therefore, produce the same commodities rather than the tropical products from the West Indies which could be re-exported at a profit. As he remarked, "without Commerce, say the enquiring World, of what use is a Colony?" He was now so concerned to find new markets for English cloth and other manufactures that this aspect of colonies had come to seem much the most important and he announced, "Numbers of People make Commerce in the very consequence of their living together ... as they must have all their Clothes, Utensils, and Furniture, from Europe, there wou'd be immediately, with a new encrease of People, a new Consumption of the Woollen and Linen Manufactures of Europe, besides all the necessary demands of Iron, Brass, Lead, Tin, Copper etc. in all the necessary Materials for the Conveniencies of Life." He contended that this territory could prove more valuable than all the colonies that Britain possessed in America and that there was in view "an Ocean of Commerce, and a Sea of Wealth, were it rightly pursued." To the queries what returns this colony would make, what freight for the ships and how would they pay for the English goods which they imported, he replied with his customary vehemence, "'tis only the best ... furnish'd with Returns of any Country wherever the English are yet planted on the Continent of America." By contrast, New



England and New York, were it not for their provision trade to the West Indies, "wou'd not be able to pay England for the Clothes they wear; and ... wou'd be an insupportable Burthen to us and to them selves." Their returns of "Peltry, Train-Oil, Turpentine" "... wou'd not in their Value load the tenth part of the Ships that go thither, or pay for one-twentieth part of the Goods they consume." Convinced that the Chilean side of the Andes was rich in gold, he thought that the same would be true of their eastern slopes and asserted that there was "a moral Certainty of Gold" and also of saltpetre, "in its proportion as sure a Wealth as gold itself." In addition to the hides of black cattle, there were "Deer Skins, Ostrich Feathers and Seal Skins in great abundance, while the sea was "full of Fish." The colonists might be able to supply flour to the Portuguese in Brazil, but if this trade could not be developed, it was no further from Patagonia to the West Indies than it was from Ireland. This led him to the conclusion that the world could not show a prospective colony which was "more Promising, more capable of infinite Advantages, or every way more suited to the British Nation." (104)

It is true that one of Defoe's letters to Harley in July 1711 shows that this emphasis on colonial settlement rather than trade with Spanish America was, at that date, partly designed to advance his patron's new project. It seems that hostile critics had already tried to discredit the scheme by calling in question any possibility that Spain would allow a direct trade with her colonial empire. Therefore, he suggested

to his benefactor,

" ... That all proposals for the carrying on a trade to the South Seas should be made so that the ... substance or main stress of the design may turn upon making a settlement or colony (or several such) on the continent of America, and supporting it by the Government for improvement. Not laying any (or not so great) weight on an immediate commerce through the Spanish dominions (which people have already a notion cannot be obtained), as on the real advantages of having an English colony on the continent of America, and in the midst of the gold, silver and other productions with which the Spaniards have so enriched themselves, and which the English are much more capable to improve than they.

.....  
 No man can object against the advantages of a Colony, provided the place be well chosen; and even those places in which the Spaniards could make little or no advantage shall be infinitely profitable to us; since England is qualified to grow rich even when the Spanish Settlements would perish and starve; because we are possessed of so many other Colonies which would be their support.

.....  
 That a settlement made in America would be infinitely advantageous to England though there were to be no free trade with the Spaniards, is easy to prove; nor will the people be hard to take in the notion of it and understand it. The advantages are manifest and may be handsomely enlarged on, if New England, New York, etc. and our Colonies on the north, where the Spaniards thought it not worth while to plant, and where mere husbandry and labour have brought so great a trade. Planting on the south and west of America, where the soil and country are so naturally rich, and gold and silver are the immediate return, will much sooner and with much more ease make the trade great and the plantation flourish. ... To carry on such a proposal and make it more intelligible I humbly suggest that schemes of proper places for such settlements ... may be laid before your lordship, and if approved by you may be made public; and that people may be taken off from amusing themselves about difficulties and impossibilities, and may be led to a probable view of the thing which may be intelligible and encouraging, which schemes I shall humbly lay before you whenever you shall please to command me." (105)

Defoe, however, was not trying to mislead British public

opinion as to the true nature of the new enterprise. Instead, the closing paragraph of his letter indicates his desperate need at this date to find ways in which he could be serviceable to his first employer, after the dramatic turn of events in 1710 had made Harley the leading minister of the Queen. For nine months, in both pamphlets and articles in the 'Review', he had tried to counter the Whigs' attempt to undermine confidence in the financial standing of the new Government or had endeavoured to undo the harm which Tory zeal had caused in Anglo-Scottish relations, but the founding of the South Sea Company in May 1711 seemed just the opportunity he had been looking for to attach himself more closely to his patron. (106) But in commending Harley's new venture, he did not want this enterprise to interfere with the existing indirect British trade with Spanish America through Old Spain and he genuinely hoped that it would try to establish a settlement in South America. (107)

There were other pamphlets during the Spanish Succession War which looked to increased trade with Spanish America or to a British settlement there to divert the bullion which flowed to Spain and France towards Britain and thus to deny to the French the means to continue the war. One writer voiced the fear that the French would "inspire the Spaniards with their active and martial Temper," (108) but they all thought that conquest would be easy because the Spaniards were so thinly scattered. (109) One envisaged another attempt near Darien,

106. *Supra*, pp. 411-431.

107. *Supra*, pp. 590-595.

108. (Anon) "Proposals for carrying on an effectual War in America ..." (1702) in *Harleian Miscellany*, I, pp. 379-384.

109. *Ibid*, p. 382; (Anon) *An Account of what will Do ...* (1707) p. 14.

at Santa Maria, (110) a second chose Tierra del Fuego (111) and a third was almost as enthusiastic as Defoe about the advantages of Chile for a British colony. This writer also observed that the Chileans had never been subdued and resented the cruel Spanish yoke so bitterly that they would probably support the British invaders if they maintained "a fair Carriage to the Indians." He also quoted Sir John Narborough's remarks on the territory and he too believed that Chile had the richest deposits of gold in America so that "all the Household Furniture" was made of silver or gold. He even outdid Defoe in his glowing description of the country claiming that it offered "as great Plenty of Milk and Wool as is possible for Sheep and Cows to afford in most plentiful Pasture; it yields as much Honey, Wheat and generous Wine as more than serves for its own Use. The Strawberries and Apples growing about wild are wonderful sweet; the Wholesome Delicacy of the drinking Water which runs through Veins of Gold are in high Esteem among the Spaniards. No Thunder is heard throughout the Year; Lightning, stormy Winds and Tempests are not known; the whole Country produces no poisonous Creature, nor hurtful wild Beast." (112) No other publicist, however stressed the field for development in Spanish America as vigorously or as regularly as Defoe.

This emphasis on improvement permeates all his writings on colonial affairs. All the propagandists for colonial expansion justified their proposals for seizing Spanish territory by

110. An Account of what will Do ...

111. (Anon) The Considerable Advantages of a South Sea Trade ... (1711).

112. (Anon) A View of the Coasts, Countrys and Islands ... (1711) pp. 47-56, 57, 210-229.

their conviction that the English were so much more industrious than the Spanish colonists, but Defoe was the most eager for the founding of new colonies throughout the world and for the utmost development of the existing settlements. Almost at the end of his career, he was asking, "why then do we not increase our possessions, plant new colonies, and better people our old ones? Both might be done to infinite advantage." (113) The only requirement was hard-working settlers. "No Plantation", he contended, "undertaken by sufficient Numbers of industrious People can fail of Success, if the Fertility of the Soil is such, as ... to produce ... a sufficient encrease for their Subsistence." (114) Sir George Clark has remarked how "from this side and from that, the belief in improvement flowed in on the economic writers." (115) Defoe was in fact ambivalent in his attitude towards technological change and sometimes mistrusted it if it was likely to reduce employment in a particular industry, but he was consistent in his enthusiasm for the introduction of new crops even though these might compete with the products of other British colonies and with established trades. Nowhere was this more in evidence than in his writings on Africa, which he described as "the worst Quarter of the world" because it was cultivated "in the worst manner" and "inhabited by the worst People of any Country under the Sun" but which, in the richness of its soil and its ideal situation for trade between the other three continents, could be "the best Quarter of the

113. An Humble Proposal ... p. 43. Compare A General History of Discoveries ... p. 306. "There are no doubt new Countries and Lands yet to be discover'd, new Colonies to be planted, ... and ... those already planted are capable of new Improvement."
114. A General History of the Discoveries ... in Useful Arts p. 286.
115. Sir G. Clark, Science and Social Welfare in the Age of Newton (1937) p. 94.

Quarter of the Four." (116) He looked forward to the complete suppression of the Barbary Corsairs and the division of north Africa between the nations in proportion to their part in the conquest. The area, being then in the possession of "new Nations made rich by Commerce and the Country adjacent cultivated and peopled after the Manner of Europe", the resulting trade would be twenty times greater, apart from the removal of "a merciless Crew" of sea robbers. In West Africa, the land was already in British possession which made the failure to exploit its riches all the more unaccountable. "A vast extended Country", he announced, "pleasant Vallies, the Banks of charming Rivers, spacious Plains, capable of Improvement and Cultivation, to infinite Advantage, lie waste and untouch'd, over-run with Shrubage and useless Trees; as a Forest trod under Foot with wild Creatures; and the yet wilder Negroes, who just plant their Maize, and a few Roots and Herbs, like as we do for our Garden-stuff, and all the rest is left naked, and thrown up to the Wilderness." He was surprised that "diligent Nations" such as the Dutch and the English did not display their usual spirit of enterprise in West Africa, as he was convinced that the same latitudes throughout the world had the same climates and thus should produce "the same Harvest, the same Plants, Fruits, Druggs; or, whatever grows and is produced in one, why should it not be planted, grow, and produce the same in another?" (117) He had already commended the Dutch for their initiative in growing coffee and sugar in Java, (118) and he now asked if the Dutch could also grow coffee in Surinam, the

116. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis ... p. 236.

117. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 245, 248.

118. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, p. 227.

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Portuguese in Brazil and the French in Madagascar, why should not the British also grow it at Sierra Leone and "upon all the Grain Coast, Tooth Coast, Gold and Slave Coast." He accepted the story that a tea plant grew in the Governor's garden at Cape Coast Castle when Sir Dalby Thomas was Governor, as proof that a similar attempt with tea would also succeed. He concluded that "all or most of the Productions, either of the East or West Indies" might be grown in West Africa, "such as the Cotton, Ginger, Sugar, Cocoa, Piemento, Indigo, and several others known at Jamaica; as also the Cochineal, the Vinelloes, and even the Peruvian Bark also, if Industry and Application were set on work to plant them." (119) Similarly, the cultivation of spices would avoid the drain of bullion to the East. This would also be the solution to the difficulties of the Royal African Company, for "would the Company apply to Planting, ... build Forts and Strengths within Land, drive the Negroes by force farther off, ... they would not only reap the rich Product from the fertile Soil, but remove the Gold Trade, Slave Trade, and Ivory Trade from the Sea Coast to their inland Frontiers; and the separate Traders would be at once defeated without an Act of Parliament." He claimed that the Portuguese had no trouble from separate traders because they had "possessed the Coast as a Colony", but he criticised them for failing to raise crops of coffee, spices and tea for fear of damaging their colonies in Brazil, especially since these were the products of the East Indies from which they had been ousted by the Dutch. If the African Company, on the other hand, would set up colonies and develop the natural wealth of the region, it "would be raising



a Product in Guinea, infinitely more profitable than the Gold it self; it would in a few Years remove both the Indies into Africa, and make the Trade to Guinea the richest and greatest Commerce in the World." (120) His enthusiasm for colonial development followed naturally from the contemporary view that the chief value of colonies was as sources of supply in providing Britain with products which otherwise she would have to import from foreign countries. (121) He expressed this rather tortuously in the 'Review' in 1713: "... our Colonies prevent our Wanting some Things, which other Parts might be said to supply us with, if we had them not there." (122) Should, however, the cultivation of a crop already being grown in one colony be attempted in another? Defoe first touched on this question in 1709, when the dispute between the Royal African Company and the interlopers was at one of its peaks. Dealing with the specific subject of indigo, he asked, "Can all our Colonies supply us with Indico for our Business? Do we not fetch vast Quantities every Year from the East-Indies, and pay our Bullion for it? - And does not the Dearness of it render the Dyeing of our Manufactures dear, by which our Neighbours out do us ...?" He continued, "I do affirm, if the African Company, or any Company could plant and make in Africa a thousand Tun of Indico a Year, and bring it hither, it would be so much clear to this Nation, ... and the Colonies be not injur'd. ... could all the Cotton, Pepper, Indico, Salt-peter, or any other Commodities we now bring from the East Indies be produced in Afric, ... it would soon show us, ... that the African Trade is in its Degree the most profitable Trade in this Nation; and

120. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 251, 271-272.

121. G.L. Beer - The Old Colonial System 1650-1754 (New York 1912) pp. 37-38; J. Cary, An Essay on the State of England ... pp. 66-68.

122. Review. Vol. IX. (No. 57) p. 113.

the Reason is plain, viz. That our Colonies cannot supply us, with Indico and Cotton; if they can, why do you not prohibit them from Spain and the Indies! ... it is the undoubted Advantage of this Nation to plant, raise, or produce any Commodity tho' now growing in our own Colonies, while our said Colonies are not able to produce the Quantity we want, and that we are oblig'd to buy it in other Countries for our ready Money."

(123) Sugar, however, was not only the chief product of the West Indies, which were generally esteemed to be the most valuable of all the British colonies, but the basis of their prosperity. Moreover, it was almost the only crop, in that the inhabitants had ceased to grow even their own food. In his introduction to the 'Atlas Maritimus', he considered the possibility that the development of West Africa could "be fatal to our Island Colonies." He observed that the crop would be produced within "only eighteen or twenty Days sail of our own Country" and concluded "that such a Colony would be infinitely of more Advantage to England, than it is now by the continuing the Trade at so great a distance, with so difficult a Navigation, and at the Expence of so many thousand Lives, which the unwholesom Climate of the Island of Jamaica, only destroys in a Year." As for New England and the other bread colonies of North America, they would have an added advantage in supplying West Africa rather than the West Indies with provisions as they would have a return cargo of salt from the Cape Verde Islands and wine from Madeira and the Canaries. (124) Later, he discussed the problem in more detail in his 'Plan of the English Commerce'. Negro slaves would be available for a tenth of their cost in

123. Ibid. Vol. V, (No. 150) p. 600.

124. Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis, pp. 252, 275.

in Barbados and Jamaica and there would be no great danger of their escaping as they were procured from distant parts of Africa, and did, not even know the language of the natives of the adjoining territories. The Guinea coast could supply food and there would be no need to fetch it from Ireland or New England "at a very monstrous rate". The voyage from England to West Africa was a "safe Passage" and often took only twelve to fifteen days compared to six to ten weeks between Jamaica and London. Lest "any weak-headed Christian" should suggest "that this would be to anticipate our West India Trade, supplant our other Colonies, and weaken us on one Hand, while it strengthens us on another", Defoe made the following two points: "1st, the great Improvements proposed, without meddling either with Sugar, Ginger, or any of our Island Productions, ... 2dly, ... that as it is evident all our Island Colonies are not at this Time sufficient to supply our Markets with Sugar, including the Quantity demanded for Exportation, the Quantity cannot easily be too great; ... so that those phlegmatick Objections are easily to be answered, ... Let us see the Improvement begun, and let us see the Danger begun, of overcharging our Markets, and hurting the Trade of our Islands, and let us hear if the Islands complain; it is then Time enough to answer those Scruples ..." (125) Obviously, he did not consider it an immediate problem and therefore did not face up to the issue, but it is to be doubted if he was really prepared to sacrifice the West Indies, although he dreamed of West Africa as a future ideal colony producing all the tropical commodities of both the eastern and western hemispheres within easy access of

125. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 250-251, 256-257.

Britain. Thirteen years earlier he had written, "Some attempts have been made for the Planting this part of the World with Cotton, Ginger, Sugar, Indico etc. but the mistaken Policy of Trade among those who fancy they understand it, has put a check to that encrease of Commerce which is yet reserv'd for wiser Posterity, till when, we continue foolishly to carry the Negroes to the Plantation, when we might bring the Plantations to the Negroes, and make the Coast of Africa as great as TLN of the Islands, either of Barbadoes or Jamaica." (126)

Colonies not only increased Britain's wealth from trade but necessarily strengthened her maritime power. Defoe confirmed this by one of his chains of "cause and consequence" by which he loved to clinch an argument: "An Encrease of Colonies encreases People, People encrease the Consumption of Manufactures, Manufactures Trade, Trade Navigation, Navigation Seamen, and altogether encrease the Wealth, Strength, and Prosperity of England." (127) Most of his contemporaries looked on the increased number of ships in the colonial trade as an undoubted benefit from the possession of colonies, although earlier the author of 'Britannia Languens' had blamed many of England's difficulties on the plantations, particularly the failure to develop her fisheries which provided the nursery of seamen to man the English navy in wartime. (128) Similarly, Davenant thought it would be highly dangerous to allow the New Englanders to build warships and was doubtful about the policy of encouraging the production of naval stores there lest they should decide

126. A General History of Trade, July 1713.

127. A Plan of the English Commerce, p. 276.

128. Reprinted in J.R. McCulloch, Early Tracts on Commerce, pp. 370, 409.

to become independent and seize the West Indian trade or ignore the Navigation Acts. (129)

Lastly, Defoe thought of colonial expansion in terms of a wider market for British manufactures, not merely from the demands of British settlers and their descendants, but also, from the native population as they became civilized. He instanced the American Indians, contrasting their limited possessions before the Europeans arrived, when they had "neither Houses, Cattle, Clothes, Tools, Weapons, Ammunition, or Household Stuff" with their later demands for a long list of British goods from blankets to nails, which they were able to buy with their "peltry." (130) He obviously thought that they had no native crafts and as he characteristically exaggerated the numbers of native inhabitants, the possibilities for expansion seemed limitless, particularly as he believed that there were many lands yet to be discovered in the world, including "a Terra Borealis as well as a Terra Australis incognito." (131) He referred to "vastly populous Nations, nay Empires, where are Millions of People yet to trade with." Colonization necessarily increased trade by "enlarging the Field of Action; it calls in more Hands to assist in the Publick Prosperity; it employs profitably the unprofitable Numbers of your Poor, and lays a Foundation of an extended Trade, and therefore of a still larger Exportation from Home." Therefore, the English people should "encrease the Colonies of their own Nation in all the remote Parts, ... and ... civilize and instruct the Savages

129. C. Davenant, *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 8-10.

130. *A Plan of the English Commerce*, pp. 254-256.

131. *Atlas Maritimus et Commercialis*, p. 278.

and Natives of those Countries ... so as to bring them by the softest and gentlest Methods to fall into the Customs and Usage of their own Country, and incorporate among our People as one Nation." (132) Although Chile, Patagonia and the Guinea Coast were his favoured sites for new settlements, Madagascar, which figures in so many of Defoe's accounts of piratical activity, was another possible area. Captain Singleton had the idea of retiring from piracy and establishing a colony there which was also the site of Captain Misson's utopian enterprise, while Captain Tew's quartermaster also successfully founded a settlement on the island. Defoe included a good deal of colonial propaganda in his 'History of the Pyrates'. The quartermaster resisted Captain Tew's invitation to migrate to Libertalia but gave his former commander a paper setting out the advantages of making an English colony on Madagascar and offered to submit to "a Commission from a lawful Government." Defoe claimed that the island

"affords all the Necessaries of Life, and yields to none either in the Wholesomeness of the Air, or Fruitfulness of the Soil: The Seas around it are well stor'd with Fish, the Woods with Fowl, and the Intrails of the Earth are enrich'd with Mines of excellent Iron, ... and doubtless there are here both Gold and Silver Mines in the Mountains.

The Soil will produce Sugar, Cotton, Indigo and other Growths of our American Colonies, at a far inferior Expence."

He compared the £100 which it would cost to erect a windmill to crush the sugar cane in Barbados with the negligible charge in Madagascar, while negroes which were now valued at £30 to £50 in Barbados could probably be bought for 10s. Because all the food had to be imported in Barbados, the negroes were

"half-starved" so that the Madagascar slaves would be able to do much more work. The rich timber resources of the island would furnish "all Sorts of medicinal and dying Woods" and iron-wood, cedar and mahogany. The climate and soil would also be suitable for many of the goods brought from Asia, such as silk and cotton. The natives seemed to be "very humane" and the settlement would not only be "a Curb on Pyrates" but also a calling station for the East India Company's ships. In the account of Captain Edward England, the list of commodities included "Oxen, Goats, Sheep, Poultry, Fish, Citrons, Oranges, Tamarinds, Dates, Coco-Nuts, Bananas, Wax, Honey, Rice ... or any other Thing they will take Pains to plant" and ebony. (133) There were, however, many other areas "not taken up nor claim'd, or pretended to by Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutch, or French, Dane or Swede, Pope or Devil; Places where 100,000 People may immediately plant and build, find Food, and subsist plentifully; the Soil fruitful, the Climate comfortable, the Air healthy, unmolested by Savages and Canibals, as in North America; unravaged by Lions and Tygers, Elephants and Monsters, as in Africa; fill'd with Cattle useful and eatable, tame and tractable, abounding with Fish, Fowl, Flesh, wanting nothing but to be inhabited by Christians, and ally'd to the rest of the Christian World by Commerce and Navigation." Defoe was well aware that much hard, unremitting toil would be necessary to establish these new ventures, but he presumed that the emigrants would be industrious, not "Drones and Solomon's Sluggards" and he was

133. Captain Singleton (Shakespeare Head edition, Oxford 1927) pp. 221-222; Captain Charles Johnson (Defoe), A General History of the Pyrates, edited in one volume, M. Schonhorn (1972), pp. 434-436, 130. In 1707, Review, Vol. IV (No. 107) pp. 427-428, Defoe had been in favour of accepting the Madagascar pirates' reputed offer of a large sum of money for their pardon.

avowedly writing colonial propaganda. (134)

Defoe was thus the most expansionist of all contemporary English writers on colonies and in general one of the most liberal. The views of Carew Reynel and John Cary have already been noted. Sir William Petty wished that the people of New England could be transported back to England or to Ireland. (135) Roger Coke thought that we had suffered in competition with the Dutch because so many had emigrated to America. (136) Although Sir Josiah Child thought that one Englishman abroad was as productive as four at home and Charles Davenant thought that he was at least seven times more valuable, they were writing of an Englishman in the plantation colonies of the West Indies and they certainly did not put the same value on a New England colonist. (137) Davenant reconciled himself to the loss of about a thousand emigrants a year for the previous eighty years by believing that they were generally people whom "their crimes and debaucheries would quickly destroy at home, or whom their wants would confine in prisons or force to beg." The northern colonies had "drained us most of people" although they yielded commodities of little value." He accepted their production of foodstuffs for the West Indies because these were "unimproved product of the earth", much less valuable than the manufactures which they imported from England at four-fifths advance in price. Defoe thought that this hindered the growth of trade and hoped that the colonists would be able to find more return commodities. (138) Finally, Davenant thought that "the negli-

134. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 275, 276-277.

135. "Political Arithmetick" in Economic Writings of Sir William Petty, ed. Hull, I, pp. 301-302.

136. R. Coke, A Discourse of Trade, pp. 7-9.

137. Sir J. Child, A New Discourse of Trade, p. 179;  
C. Davenant, Works, II, pp. 8-10.

138. Supra, p. 994.



gence of former times" had allowed too many mainland colonies to be established in North America. (139) William Wood believed in freeing trade from some current restrictions and would have allowed the British colonies to trade with foreign colonies and to bring their produce here even though it competed with our own plantation produce, yet he was convinced that the rest of the Laws of Trade must be upheld. He followed Davenant in his estimate of the value of the plantation colonies and said that without these, the northern colonies would be "prejudicial Colonies to their Mother Country." (140)

Defoe agreed that there must be firm central control of the colonies by the British government,

"the Plantations can never thrive, but by the Laws, Management, and Direction made and regulated at Home in Britain; 'tis from hence they receive Governours and Strength, are supplied with Ships to guard their Countries and Convoys to secure their Trade, and if this be ill directed, the Plantations must decay, and must decline." (141)

Writing in support of the African Company in 1711, he also claimed that successful English colonization in any continent had only been achieved through the agency of chartered companies and supported this dictum by the following three propositions:

1. That without Companies Establish'd with Exclusive Privileges, they were never Successfully Undertaken.
2. That when Undertaken, if they had not been Supported by a Company, they could not have been Maintain'd.
3. Such Attempts as have been made to Plant and settle upon New Discoverys without a Company, have not only miscarried, but have been rescu'd, preserv'd, and after carried on by a Company."

He made an exception for certain islands where Britain had had complete possession and where there was no serious native oppo-

139. C. Davenant in Works, II, pp. 20-29.

140. W. Wood, A Survey of Trade, Part III, pp. 132-151.

141. Review, Vol. IV, (No. 126) p. 504.

sition or rival claimants and yet even in some of these she had been supplanted "for want of a Company to carry on the Plantations; as in Tobago, Hispaniola" and, in 1711, he also feared that Newfoundland must be added. (142) On the other hand, he had a much larger vision than most of his contemporaries of future commercial prosperity and imperial greatness, as in this passage written in December 1707:

"... let them be divided from us by never so great a Gulph of Waters, they are united to us by the strictest National Ties in the World, such as are in their Being natural, in their Advantage reciprocal ... If they die, we decay; if we decay they die; if we cannot support them, they fall; if they fall, we must in Proportion sink; their Blood runs thro' our Veins, I speak in the Language of Commerce, is formed, centers and circulates with ours; they are every Way a Part of our selves, and who ever goes about to lessen our Concern for them, divides us against our selves, raises a War between the Members and the Belly, and is an inveterate Enemy to both; ... all your Want of Seamen and Want of Trade might have here a Supply: To and from these, you might have the greatest Spring of Commerce and Navigation now in the World, and even these Colonies are able to make you in Time the greatest Nation in the World." (143)

Defoe's main works of colonial propaganda were published in the period of comparative stagnation of trade which followed the Treaty of Utrecht until recovery began in 1730 and led to the first period of rapid growth in mid-century. Northern Europe remained a very disappointing market for English manufactures, there was increased difficulty in exporting to the heavily-protected markets of central Europe, the failure of the proposed commercial treaty prevented any expansion of the small direct trade with France, there was increased competition from France in the Levant trade, differences with Spain caused

142. *Ibid*, Vol. VIII, (No. 1) p.3.

143. *Ibid*, Vol. IV, (No. 134) p. 536.

a serious decline in the previously-valuable trade with Old Spain and thus in the usual channel of trade with Spanish America while the Asiento contract and the very limited new commercial privileges in the Spanish empire proved more productive of disputes than of trade. Defoe believed that the superior workmanship of the British labourer would enable him to compete with the lower wages of his foreign rivals, but the main reason for his continued optimism in the future of British trade was his hope of new markets in his projects for new settlements. As the growth of Britain's trade in the eighteenth century was almost entirely due to the large increase in her colonial trade and was marked by a pronounced swing from the traditional markets of Europe to more distant markets in America, Africa and the Far East, his general vision of future trends proved sound, although the expansion came mainly from the development of existing colonies, particularly those in North America, rather than from the new ventures which he tried to promote in Africa and South America. (144)

144. T.S. Ashton's introduction to E.B. Schumpeter, English Overseas Trade Statistics 1697-1808 (1960) pp. 10-11; P. Deane and W.A. Cole, British Economic Growth 1688-1959, (1962) pp. 47-49, 83-89; R. Davis, "English Foreign Trade, 1700-1774", Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd. Series, Vol. XV, (1962); J.O. McLachlan, Trade and Peace with Old Spain, 1667-1750, (1940); A.C. Wood, A History of the Levant Company (1935).

CONCLUSION

By the year 1700, the development of home and overseas trade had already attained a complexity which captivated a writer with such a keen sense of the paradoxical as Defoe. This was also responsible for his feeling that trade was a mystery which few could fully comprehend and yet a subject which he knew would always interest his predominantly urban Whig readers. Although he had begun his chief newspaper on February 26, 1704, under the title of "A Weekly Review of the Affairs of France, and of all Europe as influenced by that Nation" to warn his countrymen of the formidable task which faced them in the War of the Spanish Succession, he had begun to devote whole issues to trade before the end of the year. (1) As he closed the first volume, he felt obliged to excuse his digressions from his original plan by the following statement:

"In the bringing the story of France down to the matter of Trade, I confess myself surprizingly drawn into a vast Wilderness of a Subject, so large, that I know not where it will end; the Misfortune of which is, that thinking to have finished it with this Volume, I found my self strangely deceiv'd, and indeed amazed, when I found ... hardly enough of it entred upon to say, it began.

... I am oblig'd to content my self with taking what is here as an Introduction to the next Volume, and to give this Notice, that the matter of our English Trade appears to be a thing of such Consequence to be treated of, so much pretended to, and so little understood, that nothing could be more profitable to the Readers, more advantageous to the publick Interest of this Nation, or more suitable to the Greatness of this Undertaking, than to make an Essay at the Evils, Causes, and Remedies of our general Negoce."

1. Review, Vol. I, Nos. 81-86 of 12-30 December 1704. Trade was the subject of the remaining issues of Vol. I.

He claimed that letters from his readers and "a Croud of Entreaties from Persons of the best Judgement" to continue his recent practice were a sufficient reason for his departure from his original plan, to which his title "at first too streightly" bound him. (2) If the work were to extend to twenty or thirty volumes, it would not seem preposterous to devote a whole volume to "the most delightful as well as profitable Subject of the English Trade," (3) but he was obliged to acknowledge at the end of the second volume that this aim had suffered "a powerful Diversion," namely the violent election campaign of 1705. He hoped that he would be able to complete his discussion of "a vast Scheme of Trade" in the next volume, (4) but his advocacy of the Union with Scotland necessarily took up many of the pages of both the third and fourth volumes. Towards the end of the fourth volume, he again had to acknowledge that "Feud, Parties and daily Occurrences" had prevented him from making trade the chief subject of a whole volume. (5) In November 1709 he expressed his readiness to desist from "this Paper War" so that the "Pen and Ink Rabble" might be suppressed on both sides, and insisted that this was not the first time that he had offered "to lay down the 'Review', or turn it wholly, and singly to the Subject of Commerce," in which he could please them all. (6) In 1710, an advertisement appeared at the end

2. The title successively became, with the third volume "A Review of the State of the English Nation", with the fourth volume and the Union with Scotland "A Review of the State of the British Nation" and "The Review" with the ninth and final volume.
3. Review, Vol. I. Preface.
4. Ibid. Vol. II, Preface.
5. Ibid., Vol. IV, (No. 147) p. 588.
6. Ibid., Vol. VI, (No. 91) p. 364.

of the issue for July 8, announcing that he had received many importunate letters urging them to proceed with his "promis'd Discourses upon Trade". Therefore, he gave notice that

"finding it impossible to have his Essays upon Trade pursu'd in this Paper, in such an uninterrupted Manner as a Subject of that Consequence requires; some Gentlemen ... have made a Proposal, For the Writing a REVIEW to be entirely taken up upon the Subject of Trade, with a Miscellany, or a Part reserv'd to handle particular Cases in Trade - And expressly condition'd not to meddle with Matters of State, Divisions of Parties, or any thing relating to the Affairs of Government, Civil or Ecclesiastick." (7)

He asked for subscriptions to launch this new periodical but presumably the response was inadequate for he began his next volume with the admission that he would be "very glad to set a-part this Paper wholly to that Work," but that the deep divisions between the parties made this impossible. (8) Finally, in the last volume, after remarking with his tongue in his cheek that he never told a long story, he expressed his journalistic satisfaction that the subject of trade was "so copious" that it could never be exhausted and economic matters did fill many of the remaining pages of the 'Review'. (9)

Thus Defoe found it impossible to maintain a continuous discussion on matters of trade, even by using the Miscellanea section at the end of many of the issues because current political controversies continually obtruded. As publicist for

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, (No. 45) p. 176.

8. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, (No. 1) p. 3.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, (No. 41) p. 81; (No. 43) p. 85.

the Godolphin - Marlborough administration and then for Harley's ministry, he felt obliged to engage in any political dispute such as the Tack of November 1704, or the affair of Dr. Sacheverell in the winter of 1709-1710, which happened to occupy the centre of the stage. But journalism was not his only activity. Throughout the nine years of the 'Review', his secret service tours of England and Scotland on behalf of Harley or Godolphin totalled no less than three years and he told his readers how difficult it was to continue to publish it three times a week "and yet at the same Time reside for 16 Months together at almost 400 Miles Distance from London, and sometimes at more." (10) Only with the 'Mercator' did he have a regular platform for his economic beliefs, but this journal was expressly founded to defend the proposed commercial treaty with France and his views had to be tailored to this project. In the aftermath of the collapse of Harley's government, his chief journalistic activity comprised attempts to defend his former employer, and first benefactor, from the threat of impeachment and at the same time to rehabilitate himself with the new Whig ministers, (11) but throughout this first Hanoverian decade he was also much occupied with the menace of Jacobitism, religious tracts and the Bangorian controversy (12) and finally with his new venture into the exciting world of fiction. Within two years of the demise of the 'Mercator', he had again a weekly channel for his reflections

10. *Ibid*, Vol. IV, Preface.

11. J. Sutherland, *Defoe*, pp. 207-221. See also my Leeds M.A. Thesis, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-251, 312.

12. Defoe published 15 pamphlets in 1717-1719 on various aspects of the disputes centring on Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor.

on the affairs of the day, but his government brief to moderate the Toryism of newspapers such as 'Mercurius Politicus' and 'Appleebee's Weekly Journal' (13) restricted any extensive comment on economic issues except during the debate about the debt conversion proposals of 1717 and the speculation crisis of 1719-1721. Therefore, until 1724 the publication of his economic ideas had been largely prompted by some particular controversy, such as the struggle between the two East India companies or proposals to relieve insolvent debtors, and it was only in his closing years that he came nearest to formulating a corpus of economic doctrine with the appearance of the three volumes of his 'Tour', 'A History of the Principal Discoveries ... in Useful Arts', the two volumes of the 'Complete English Tradesman', 'A Brief Deduction of the Original, Progress, and Immense Greatness of the British Woollen Manufacture', 'A Plan of the English Commerce', 'Atlas Maritimus and Commercialis', 'An Humble Proposal', 'The Advantages of Peace and Commerce', and 'A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade'.

But he wrote more than forty other pamphlets during these seven years and throughout his career he must always have written at great speed. (14) As ministerial propagandist, secret agent and busy journalist who was invariably deeply engaged in any dispute of the day, political, religious or economic, he did not have the time to think deeply on economic issues and to produce a consistent theory.

13. *Supra*, p. 462.

14. P.S. Buck, The Politics of Mercantilism (New York 1942) p. 33, half suggested "that Defoe must really have been a propaganda organisation, for his output surely exceeded that of a single pen, even in his long lifetime."



There was of course no coherent system of economics already in existence. Most of the pamphlets and broadsheets were propaganda for special interests, as the Bristol merchant, John Cary, expressed the views of the clothiers and outports of the south-western counties, and they appealed to some current economic dogma, such as an expected increase in population or in the value of land or in the use of English shipping, in support of their case. They attacked or defended the Bank of England or the great chartered trading companies, or promoted projects such as land banks or new manufactures, or suggested an alteration in some particular tax or tariff, or called for yet another attempt to develop the fisheries, to solve the problem of poor relief or to stop the illegal export of our precious raw wool and fuller's earth. Similarly Defoe may have been paid to defend the Royal African Company but of this there is no evidence and it is unlikely that any payment would have substantially altered his views on this question. He was bound to Harley by a deep sense of obligation for his delivery from Newgate and as the source of his government "bounty", but he followed an independent line on his patron's South Sea Company from the beginning. To Defoe, it was primarily a financial corporation to fund the floating debt which had produced the credit crisis of 1710. He hoped that it would realize one of his cherished schemes of colonization in South America, but it would be unlikely, indeed unable, to embark on direct trade with any part of New Spain and would seriously damage Britain's vital trade interests in Old Spain if it tried.

(15) He had not engaged in any trading activity, apart from

his references to some small ventures in Scotland at the time of the Union, (16) since his imprisonment in 1703 put an end to his tile manufacture and none of his economic pamphlets, apart from those in support of the French commercial treaty, seem to have been written at any one's bidding. In these publications he was a freelance journalist who tried to look at the British economy as a whole and even attempted a survey of world trade which was quite comprehensive as far as European countries were concerned. He wrote his pamphlets to earn money, because he could not resist his journalistic impulse to contribute to a particular controversy and because he was so anxious that Britain should maximize her unique advantages for industry and commerce and become even more firmly established as the greatest trading nation in the world.

As in his political thinking, (17) he was eclectic, familiar with the works of Mun, Petty, Yarranton, Child, Davenant, Paterson, Law, Locke and Hutcheson, (18) but with characteristic ideas of his own, although he was less original than was at one time thought. We no longer think of him as the convinced free trader of William Chadwick and William Lee in the mid-nineteenth century, (19) but he was the first English writer on economics to recognize the great importance of the home market. "Of all Trade, our Home Trade is the Life, the Soul, the Support of all

16. Supra, p. 830; B.M. Add MS. 28094, f. 165.

17. See my Leeds M.A. thesis, op. cit., pp. 323-324.

18. He either named these authors or their works were in his library.

19. Pat Rogers, Defoe, The Critical Heritage (1972) pp. 20-22. Even James Sutherland regarded him as a moderate free trader in 1937, op. cit., p. 130.

the rest", he wrote in 1726. (20) This may have been in part because he had travelled so extensively throughout Britain, for by 1711 he claimed that he had been in every English county except one. (21) Certainly the home market was very much larger than the export trade, with the volume of manufactured exports virtually stationary between 1708 and 1735 and with no marked rise until 1748. (22)

Defoe was also one of the very small minority of writers who supported high wages. (23) He was proud of the higher standard of living of the average Englishman compared with the inhabitants of other European countries, but one of the main reasons for his approval of high wages was his belief that this was responsible for the superior quality of British merchandise. (24) Despite his eagerness to secure full employment, this was also the reason why he claimed that it would be better to restrict output than to accept "all the fatal consequences" of reducing the wages of the poor. (25) The few inconsistencies in his attitude are not serious. His strong criticisms of the high wages and insubordination of servants belong to his later years and servants were not engaged in primary production or in manufacture. The instances drawn from his own experience as a manufacturer of the Englishman's frequent preference for

20. A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade, p. 58.

21. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 143) p. 570.

22. A.H. John, "Agricultural Productivity 1700-1760" in E.S. Jones (ed.) Agriculture and Economic Growth in England 1650-1815 (1967) p. 190.

23. Others were Cary, Child and Sir Thomas Culpepper, junior.

24. Supra, p. 155.

25. Review, Vol. II (No. 21) p. 82.

more leisure rather than extra money during good trade were also supported by other pamphleteers and may well have been a common practice in pre-industrial Britain. His conclusion that he never knew a servant or a workman "one farthing the better for the Encrease of his wages was a reflection on their "profuse Extravagant Humour" and did not change his conviction that high wages should be maintained. (26) While his plan for manning the navy by a reserve of seamen on the French pattern would have meant a large reduction in merchant seamen's wages, these had doubled during the war and critics of the Navigation Acts had always pointed to the cheaper freight charges of the Dutch, Britain's most serious rival in the shipping trade. Also his scheme offered the seaman security of employment throughout the year. (27) On the other hand, examples of current orthodoxy abound: "So much only of what we Export, is a Gain to the Publick Stock, as that Export produces more than it cost the Nation to Produce and Export it", or "No Trade, carrying out Money, and returning what is consum'd at Home, can be gainful to the Nation", or "That Trade which returns the most valuable Import for the most trifling Export must, in proportion to the Quantity, be the most profitable Trade to a Nation." (28) But the importance of the context in evaluating all Defoe's statements has already been emphasized. The first occurred in an issue of the 'Mercator' where he seems to have been trying to show that he was more orthodox than his opponents in the 'British Merchant' and the 'Guardian' by protesting that the cost of subsistence of the British

26. *Supra*, pp. 161-162, 170-172.

27. *Supra*, pp. 278-285.

28. *Supra*, pp. 34, 753, 789.

labourer must be added to the costs of production. The second appeared in an issue of the 'Manufacturer' during the second great controversy about the damage done by foreign calicoes to our home manufactures of silk and wool and the third was made in support of the monopoly of the Royal African Company. But he was always prone to extol the supreme, even the exclusive, advantage of the export trade:

"Now 'tis most certain, that we live and thrive in these Nations by what we carry out, not by what we bring Home; and were it possible for us to want nothing from Abroad, and bring nothing but just such Things as relate to the Manufactures which we carry out, or such Things as we are to export again to other Nations, our Trade must be then much more profitable than it is now, because all the Returns of Foreign Goods which are expended among ourselves are, so far as the Consumption at Home extends, so much dead Loss to the Common Stock; and nothing is Gain to us, the Labour of our Seamen excepted, but so much of our own Produce, whether of Labour or of Land, as is consum'd Abroad." (29)

He did not always accept that exports of natural produce could be an addition to national wealth. He agreed that improvement of the land was an increase of the public stock, but on another occasion he insisted that this increase came only from the export of manufactures, presumably because the natural product had not been the subject of any further improvement (30) Many English imports, however, received further applications of art before they were consumed, (31) whereas the Dutch, who had few manufactures, bought to sell again and were only carriers of trade. (32) Defoe always recognized that Britain must have a large import trade to maintain the sales of British exports,

29. Applebee's Journal, September 17, 1720.

30. Supra, pp. 103, 34-35.

31. E.A.J. Johnson, Predecessors of Adam Smith, pp. 264-277 discusses art as a factor of production in contemporary economic thought.

32. Supra, pp. 25-26.

that no nations could unite in trade without a reciprocal return. Thus he insisted that Britain had an advantage over her competitors, France and Holland, in trade with the Iberian peninsula because she was a much better market for Spanish and Portuguese wine and fruit. Even retained imports consumed here promoted the exports of British products and without return cargoes the "back freight" must be a charge on the goods sent abroad. (33) These demands of Britain's large home market were an important reason for his chauvinistic claim that Britain had not only the largest export of her own produce and manufactures but an even greater import trade than the Dutch. (34) But he was concerned to emphasize that she had the least import of foreign manufactures, indeed that she had the least need to import goods from other nations. (35) Raw materials and commodities which satisfied strategic needs, such as saltpetre, and naval supplies, were acceptable imports to all writers, but his own experience as an importer of wine may have helped him to appreciate that most international trade was, in fact, in luxury goods. He conceded that there were very few articles which any nation needed to buy from another and that except for fishing vessels and the transport of coal, salt and corn, nearly all other British ships were carrying luxury cargoes. One of his repeated axioms was that wealth and luxury increased together and he was aware that his favourite broadcloth, as a quality product, was a luxury abroad. Exportation and consumption were, therefore, "the two Essential Articles of Commerce." (36).

33. Supra, pp. 263-264, 584-586.

34. Supra, p. 24.

35. Supra, p. 30.

36. Supra, pp. 43-44, 608, 59, 29.

Although Defoe invoked the distinctive mercantile concept of the balance of trade (37) to support a particular contention, the latter was always the most important consideration, and the doctrine itself was subject to certain qualifications. While we traded to Holland "to more real Advantage in the General Ballance" than to any other country after Spain, he acknowledged that it was in fact difficult to determine the balance in the direct trade in commodities and that even this generally-accepted favourable balance could easily become adverse by changes which were by no means abnormal. (38) He also stressed the importance of indirect or "oblique channels" of trade when he was calling for an open trade with France, especially when he was trying to convince his readers in 1713 that there was already a large market in France for British cloth despite the ban on the direct trade. (39) Even such a categorical statement as that bullion is "the best of all Returns, and is in itself the Ballance" must not be interpreted as crude bullionism. (40) Quite early in his career as a propagandist, he recognized that the East India trade could not be carried on without an export of bullion and he only became seriously concerned at this loss after the Spanish Succession War not only interrupted the supply from America but diverted some of it to France. (41) As his alarm at the

37. Heckscher, op. cit., I, pp. 26-27, makes this one of his five features of mercantilism; Professor Viner, Studies in the Theory of International Trade, p. 55, rejects E.A.J. Johnson's contention, op. cit., p. 275 that "not ten per cent. of English mercantilist literature was devoted to the ill-fated doctrine of the balance of trade" and maintains "that not ten per cent. of it was free from concern ... in the state of the balance of trade, and the means whereby it could be improved."
38. Supra, pp. 557-559. Cf. J. Pollexfen, Of Trade ... Also, Of Coyne, Bullion ... pp. 87-88.
39. Supra, pp. 662-664.
40. Supra, p. 325.
41. Supra, pp. 731-733, 568, 323-324.

importation of Indian calicoes increased, so did his complaints that the natural course of trade was being inverted by money going out to fetch goods in, which was "letting out the Blood" in trade, that is, reducing the amount available for circulation within the country. (42) Again in emphasizing the drain of both currency and bullion because of the persistent adverse trade balance with Norway, he was probably hoping to stimulate the government into greater efforts to develop alternative sources of supply of naval stores in the New England colonies. In fact, he seems to have been thoroughly conversant with the extent to which the bill of exchange reduced the need for much transfer of specie in an already developed system of multi-lateral trade. (43)

One "invisible" item in trade had soon been recognized and Defoe shared the general tendency to exaggerate the contribution which shipping made to the nation's economy. He estimated that Britain had more tonnage employed in the coasting trade in coal or in the West Indies trade than France had in the whole of her shipping and it is not surprising that he considered that the value of navigation was equal to one-third of Britain's total trade. (44) Naturally, he consistently supported the Navigation Acts although he admitted that Dutch ships were cheaper to build and to man. The Acts also prevented acquisition of British overseas possessions by any rival colonial power and he logically condemned British infractions

42. Supra, pp. 764.

43. Supra, pp. 571-574.

44. Supra, pp. 264, 273.



of the similar restrictions which Spain placed on her trade with her colonies. (45) Although he shared the general assumption that the fisheries were an invaluable training ground for seamen and hoped that English capital would enable the Scots to make spectacular progress in their fisheries, Defoe was usually refreshingly realistic about the comparative failure of the British to develop the herring fishery off their east coast. He ascribed the striking Dutch success to superior organization rather than to some peculiar villainy and did not recognize national claims to sovereignty over the seas. (46)

In nothing was Defoe more typical of his age than in his concern for full employment at the same time that he hoped that foreign immigrants would add another million to his estimated population of ten millions. Various historians have maintained that one of the most characteristic features of English mercantilist literature is this urge to develop English resources to the utmost in order to provide the maximum opportunities for setting the poor to work. (47) Defoe believed that increased prosperity had always been associated with an expanding population and <sup>that</sup> there was now an overall shortage of labour in England which was hindering her further economic progress. His dictum that there was more labour than hands to perform it was, however, one of those paradoxes which, as a journalist, he found so irresistible and denoted an ominous condition of under-employment,

45. *Supra*, pp. 258, 266-269, 804.

46. *Supra*, pp. 294-295, 289-292.

47. E.A.J. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-289; D.C. Coleman, "Labour in the English economy of the seventeenth century," *Ec. H.R.*, 2nd. ser. vol. VIII, p. 293; W.D. Grampp, "The Liberal Elements in English Mercantilism" *Economica* Vol. LXVI, pp. 465-501.

since the high wages in England were conclusive proof that there was no pool of surplus labour apart from the large numbers of idle able-bodied poor. (48) Other reasons why the potential labour force was not fully utilized were the seasonal unemployment especially in farming, the absenteeism associated with the low level of expectation of the mass of the population and the high proportion of dependants in a pre-industrialized society. Of these, the younger women and female children were "the most idle, useless and burthen-some Part of our Hands" and he contrasted the shortage of jobs in the "unemploy'd counties" with the manufacturing counties where industrial development in the countryside provided supplementary employment, especially for the wife and children of a poor husbandman. (49) Because of this chronic under-employment, "Employment of our own Poor and Consumption of our own Growth" was "the first Principle of Commerce". Were it not for trade, the poor would soon "over run England for want of Employ." (50) The problem of finding work for children, except in a few favoured woollen towns, such as Taunton and Halifax, made him look to the immigration of adult workers, such as the poor Palatines, for the larger labour force which alone could provide an increased output in an age of limited technological advance. At the same time, to disarm opposition, he emphasized their importance as consumers of farm produce and claimed that they would not displace any English labour because they would make more work than they would perform. (51) His

48. Supra, pp. 93, 99-100, 105, 123.

49. Supra, pp. 231-232, 120-121.

50. Supra, pp. 228, 92.

51. Supra, p. 114.

recognition of an acute problem of underemployment, however, failed to moderate his harsh attitude towards the able-bodied poor because he was convinced that they were not making a genuine attempt to find the work that was to be had, but it did affect his outlook on the use of machinery or of any plan to use fewer men as in his statement that we did not encourage the use of sawmills in English shipyards although he admitted that they cheapened production in Holland. (52). Similarly he was unable to condemn wholeheartedly the Russian Grand Duke's rejection of the English projector's scheme for sailing boats on the Volga because they would make the labour of so many of his subjects redundant. (53) It also explains his intense opposition to any project such as Mackworth's which he thought threatened the livelihood of workers in established industries, especially in wool, "the Fund of all our Prosperity and Success". Therefore the rule to be followed was "the smaller Manufactures are to give way to the great; the new invented ones are to yield to the ancient Standard, and always those Manufactures are to be preferr'd, which employ most People, or consume the most of the National Produce." (54) To employ the poor in parish workhouses was never the real reason for his strident denunciation of the scheme for he suggested that new industries, such as the manufacture of sailcloth which did not compete with the established manufacture could be developed in workhouses. He also put forward his own plan for a college of industry which included some of

52. Supra, p. 114.

53. Supra, p. 953.

54. Supra, pp. 129-132, 227-228.

the usual suggestions for fostering the fisheries such as using the poor to make ropes, sails and nets. (55) The unemployment which Indian calicoes were said to be producing in the woollen and silk industries was much more serious than the assumed loss of bullion for even in the summer of 1720 Defoe, in his character of Captain Singleton, accepted the East India Company's defence that their trade ultimately netted three times the money which they sent out. (56) But it was not merely the threat from Asiatic textiles. While he welcomed the progress made by the English silk industry so that now we employed our own poor instead of the poor of the French and Italian silk centres, yet silk was "a modern manufacture" which was only acceptable because the raw material was a return for our cloth exports to Italy and Turkey. Wool was the "eldest Child of the Nation's Commerce" but silk was only "a foster Child taken into the Family." (57) His conservatism towards newer textile industries also embraced the new fabrics in the woollen manufacture and specifically because they did not employ so many hands nor use as much wool as his favourite broadcloth. (58) When he referred to "the Improvements that the Industry of Strangers" assisted by "the Indolence of the British Manufacturers" had achieved, he was not castigating his countrymen for omitting to diversify their wares but

55. *Supra*, pp. 132, 138-140.

56. *Supra*, p. 771. "Captain Singleton" appeared in June 1720, after his five pamphlets of 1719-1720 against the importation and wearing of calicoes and after the "Manufacturer" had ceased publication in February.

57. *Supra*, pp. 228-229.

58. *Supra*, pp. 241-245.

for failing to maintain the quality of their broadcloth and for taking the line of least resistance by imitating the less substantial French cloths. (59) While manufacture was the hospital which fed the poor, navigation was an even more advantageous field of employment. Because of its "multiplier" effect in nourishing so many ancillary trades, £1,000 invested in shipbuilding employed more poor than the like sum spent in any manufacture, even in wool. At each new fitting out, a ship was again "a Milch Cow to the poor Tradesman" and once at sea she employed fifteen or sixteen families. She also provided "foreign-paid incomes" since these families were fed and clothed by other nations by their payments for freight. (60) But even inward freights which could not be passed on to the foreign customer provided so much employment and encouraged so many other trades that they were worth as much as his cherished woollen manufacture to the nation. (61) Finally, employment was the touchstone which determined his contrasting attitudes towards trade with Scotland and with Ireland. Whereas there was no danger that Scotland would "rob us of the most capital Article of our Prosperity the Employment of our Poor", Ireland would be dangerously competitive and would pose the same threat as "our Vagrant Poor" at home. When the imports of Irish yarn increased after the English Parliament had prohibited the exports of Irish cloth, he complained that this anticipated English spinning and caused so much unemployment that £240,000 was taken from "the Employment of the Poor of

59. A Brief Deduction, p. 50.

60. Supra, pp. 210, 272, 275-276.

61. Supra, pp. 269-272.

England and paid to the Poor of Ireland. (62)

In maintaining the sales of British exports, Defoe believed that quality was of the first importance. Although English wages were the highest in Europe, English manufactures were the cheapest in the end because they were the best available at any market. The high wages enabled the English workmen to live well and to work harder and more effectively than his continental rival, but not to work longer hours because the English vice of drunkenness took him so often to the alehouse. (63) The generally-accepted maxim that cheapness caused consumption was an "old worn out notion" and was only really true between goods of like quality. "It is not always the Interest of Trade", he protested, "to have the Manufacture be brought down to a low Price, especially if the Goodness of the Goods sinks with the Rate; But to keep up the Manufacture to its Goodness, tho the Price be higher than its Neighbours, is a Credit to the Manufacture, and to the Nation that make them." Thus in Turkey, although the French cloths were cheaper and looked as attractive as the English broadcloths, the latter, because of their superior quality, were always sold first. It was the interest of the tradesmen to maintain "the Goodness and Value of their Goods" so that the higher price might be lower in proportion, while the higher price enabled them to pay the high wages on which this goodness depended. (64) But the conservative Defoe also looked to the enforcement of the

62. Supra, pp. 835, 879-880, 895.

63. Supra, pp. 155-157, 159-165.

64. The Complete English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 122-125; A Tour, I, p. 32; Supra, pp. 153-155.

old regulations to maintain the quality of British manufactures, at a time when these controls were being generally abandoned. Thus he claimed that the quality of the famous Colchester bays had declined since the manufacture had spread into the surrounding villages outside the jurisdiction of the Bay Hall. (65)

One of his objections to Mackworth's plan was that when cloth was made in every parish, foreigners would not know the respective English woollens from each other whereas they had always been bought abroad "by the Character and Reputation of the Places" where they were made. (66) In 1711, again insisting that "honest finishing" was "the Life of the Sale" of English goods abroad, he contended that if the Scots "could come once to a regular sorting of their Manufactures, and keeping them up to their just Lengths, Breadths, Substance and Goodness," they were as capable of improvement in trade "as any Nation in the World." (67) Defending the City garbling office against criticisms in 1708, he again argued that the reputation of English goods would be damaged if inspection were to be abandoned and that the complainers were asking for "a Licence for a fraudulent Trade." (68) He believed that a decline in the "credit" of a manufacture was soon reflected in a drop in its sales and when English woollens faced increasing competition in north European markets in the 1720s, he argued that this was only in the cheaper coarser grades and that the quality of fabrics such as broadcloth and Spanish cloth were not affected. (69) Naturally, most of his illustrations were drawn from the woollen manufacture, but he also maintained that

65. Supra, pp. 245-246.

66. Giving Alms No Charity, pp. 21-22.

67. Review, Vol. VII, (No. 143) p. 571.

68. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 159) pp. 635-636.

69. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 137-139, 187;

A Brief Deduction ... p. 47.

English ships were cheaper than Dutch ships in the end because they were better built. (70) and that a fall in the quality of Turkish raw silk had reduced the imports into Britain and consequently had restricted the sales of British cloth in Turkey. (71)

Defoe's emphasis on quality reflected his conviction that Britain had an unrivalled supply of the finest wool in the world which was fashioned by the most skilful operatives, except for the advantage which he believed the Dutch held in dyeing. Quality would also seem much more important than cheap production when it was generally agreed that the volume of world trade could not be extended except by the discovery of new lands or by an increase in population and when so much of that trade was in luxury goods and there was no conception of a mass market. Discounting Defoe's habitual exaggeration, this was why he could envisage Britain clothing the whole world, if she could keep all her wool at home. (72) But it was not only the total amount of world trade which was limited, it was also undesirable to exceed the normal production in an industry or the usual traffic in a particular trade. Early in his career, he had expressed his alarm lest the competition between the two East India Companies should increase the trade beyond a reasonable level, (73) and in 1728 he exonerated the silk trade from the charge of having displaced the woollen industry in Spitalfields. Here the woollen manufacturers had been

70. Supra, pp. 258-262.

71. Supra, p. 613.

72. A Brief Deduction ... p. 3.

73. Supra, p. 727. Cf. An Enquiry into the Disposal of the Equivalent (1707) p. 2; the two East India Companies would have ruined themselves.



"to keep every Thing in its native Channel, preserve every Ballance, and prevent the Labour or Produce of one Part interfering with another - When every Branch of a Nation have their proper Work, they help, assist and rejoyce in one another; and this Variety is what I have so often call'd the Circulation of Trade - But when you clash in your Labour, and fall into one another's Business, you grow Thieves and Pirates in Trade, ... and joyn in crushing your general Interest." (78)

As he never lost his faith in the marked superiority of English cloth over any other fabric, when he was confronted by the increasing difficulties of selling it in our traditional markets in northern and central Europe, he could only explain the discrepancy by the theory that the industry had grown too large for its available outlets and that the merchants should adjust the output in order to avoid the dislocations caused by alternating booms and slumps. As the nation seemed to be too full of trade, the clothier should resist the temptation to launch out too far in response to a temporary increase in overseas demand, such as that occasioned by the outbreak of plague in Marseilles in 1720 which for a time reduced French competition. Possibly influenced by his own experience of over-trading, he advised him to be content with his due share of the trade, to restrict his workforce to the "ordinary Numbers employ'd in the manufacture" and so avoid glutting the market. (79) The conduct of the British people, however, was much more damaging to the woollen industry than all the prohibitions abroad. When other countries were striving to encourage their own inferior manufactures in the legitimate desire to employ their own poor, he accused his countrymen of the most unaccountable neglect in thus despising the work of their own hands. (80)

78. Review, Vol. VI, (No. 46) p. 184.

79. Supra, pp. 246-249.

80. Supra, pp. 250-251.

Defoe's wish to preserve the main arteries of trade made him an inveterate enemy to all forms of clandestine trading, even when they seemed profitable to the imperial economy as in the case of the Jamaica sloop trade with Spanish America. (81) It was never any advantage to forestall the market end of trade and just as the hawkers and pedlars interrupted the circulation of Britain's home trade, so the sloop trade "anticipated" Britain's trade with Spanish America through Cadiz although he could not conceal his pleasure at the great increase in the trade of Jamaica. (82) The log cutting by the buccan- eers in Honduras and the infractions of the Levant Company's monopoly by the trade carried on by the Italian merchants and by the East India Company's diversion of some of its required export of British manufactures to Persia were other examples which he noted of clandestine trade. (83) This concern for the regular circulation of trade appeared most strongly in his discussions of British home trade where every manufacture had its proper channel of trade and was "removed" five or six before it reached the last consumer. (84) Hawking was even more directly linked with clandestine trade by the accusation that "the wretched pedlar" was only able to offer a cheaper price than the retail shopkeeper because he did not make any contribution to civil government and because he was "the life of all smuggling", including the detestable calicoes. (85) But it was the threat to employment which was most serious.

81. Supra, pp. 593.

82. Supra, pp. 594-595.

83. Supra, pp. 594.

84. Supra, pp. 967, 962.

85. Supra, p. 964.

The former tradesman valued circulation so much more highly than mechanic employment in manufactures that he estimated that it employed ten times as many people. (86) He told Mackworth that it was the particular excellence of the woollen manufacture that it was so organized as to go through as many hands as possible and he later estimated that cutting off the home circulation of goods could throw a million people out of work. (87) For Defoe this seems a modest estimate when he was ready to give currency to the calculation that 10,000 people had benefited in some degree by the time a single piece of broadcloth reached Blackwell Hall! (88) All anticipations of trade diminished the circulation and he also attacked the corn factors, the millers and the maltsters for the new practices which they had introduced into the corn trade. (89) Like workmanship in the case of manufactures, the carriage of heavy goods even added to their value, as in the seven "removes" in the coal trade (90) between Tyneside and Oxford. In the suggestions which he issued in case the infection at Marseilles should spread to Britain, he completely repudiated any attempt to interfere with this circulation. Infected houses might again be shut up but "the cutting off of the communication of one part of the country with another in England would be such a general interruption of trade, that it would entirely ruin the countries and towns so cut off, and the people would be very tumultuous and uneasy." (91) Yet, however much he might

86. Supra, p. 931.

87. Supra, pp. 935, 968. Earlier he had given a figure of two millions, Supra, p. 932.

88. Supra, p. 947.

89. Supra, pp. 968-970.

90. Supra, p. 971.

91. Due Preparations for the Plague ... (1722) p. 15.

rhapsodize about the benefits from circulation, he was forced to conclude that it was only "an Alternative to Trade" which distributed goods to such general advantage that it was useful in a thousand ways, but did not increase the public stock by one farthing. (92)

Defoe shared the identification of state power with commercial progress which was common ground for all the contemporary writers on trade. Despite the valour and vigour of her people, the influence of Scotland in the world and her low standard of living were the inevitable result of her small trade whereas the great increase in the strength of the maritime powers had matched the growth of their commerce. Further, since the volume of world trade was limited, if any nation came to dominate that trade she would govern the world. If Philip II of Spain had abandoned his pursuit of religious uniformity and had then used the wealth of his industrious Netherlands to support his splendid infantry, he could have established this universal monarchy. The French, however, were now believed to be trying to secure such a monopoly of trade and Defoe's economic ideas reflected this intense commercial rivalry. (93) France and Holland remained dangerous competitors and would be still more formidable if they had England's wool. (94) Despite his criticisms of the East India trade, he was never ready to abandon it to the Dutch because that would be "building up the Dutch upon the Ruins of Great Britain." (95)

92. Supra, p. 943.

93. Supra, pp. 4, 62.

94. Supra, p. 212.

95. Supra, p. 778.

His support for the great chartered companies owed much to these convictions - his preference for settled trades and his assumption that keen competition between nations was the normal condition of world trade. Commerce with distant regions where there was no regular authority, or where trade depended on the whim of a despotic ruler, needed the protection of forts but these were also required against rival European nations and would only be maintained by an exclusive company. In English foreign trade monopoly powers were only granted where private trade was impossible without the use of force because there were no regular diplomatic links with the particular territory. (96) Under these conditions, competition between a privileged company and interlopers for the share which the British company had managed to secure could only reduce profits and weaken the monopolists who would be less able to withstand the foreign rivals. Thus the separate traders could only be "Raparees or Highway-men of Trade". (97) There were of course other reasons why he upheld the chartered companies. The Levant Company exported so much broadcloth, the East India Company imported such desirable commodities as saltpetre, spices and drugs and drove a profitable trade, while only the Royal African Company could ensure that sufficient supply of negro slaves on which the West Indian sugar plantations depended. (98) There was the further attraction that by the grant of a monopoly, governmental control could be more effective, that "a thousand ways" might be taken to secure the trade. (99) Apart

96. Supra, pp. 790-793.

97. Supra, pp. 798-800.

98. Supra, pp. 726 789-790.

from the special case of overseas trade, however, Defoe was generally hostile to monopoly powers. Referring to the way in which patents and monopolies had undermined trade before the Civil War, he owned that the liberty of trade established in 1689 had been one of the chief benefits of the Revolution settlement, "nor has it been any of the least Occasions of the growing Wealth of this Nation, that the Parliaments of England have limited the Extent of Patents and Grants for exclusive Priviledges in Trade, and have been very wary and backward in passing or consenting to such Grants; as may be seen in the Struggles and Conditions made in the Case of the East India Company's Banks etc. who have obtain'd Charters and Settlements in these few last Years." (100) His antagonism towards monopolistic practices in any branch of the home trade was amply demonstrated by his vigorous efforts on behalf of the Tyneside keelmen and against the allies of the Newcastle hostmen-fitters, the lightermen of London, while his attacks on the corn factors looked back to the old regulations against forestalling. (101) Although he was proud to be a London freeman, he attacked the restrictions which "corporation tyranny" imposed upon trade in many provincial towns and he was usually aware of the danger that financial power might come to be concentrated in too few hands. (102) Thus he strongly criticized the Old East India Company for misusing its financial strength in its attempt to crush its new rival (103) and "that triumvirate

100. Review, Vol. V. (No. 107) pp. 425-426.

101. Supra, pp. 346-350, 973-981, 968-970.

102. Supra, pp. 111, 492.

103. Supra, p. 493.

of modern thieving", the directors of the Sword Blade Bank. (104) He also objected to the Treasury practice of a closed subscription to a new issue of stock. (105) Probably because the Bank of England was not the true national bank which he had advocated, he criticized its practices on a number of occasions and accused it of being "only a great Trade carri'd on for the private Gain of a few." (106) Curiously, he was not alarmed by the huge concentration of financial power in the South Sea Company, possibly because the prospect of a great increase of business activity by realizing the expansive possibilities of a fund of credit outweighed any such danger. (107)

Because of the vigorous trade war, which he presumed was the normal condition of international commerce, and because the prize of success was so vital, Defoe was firmly convinced that there must be firm governmental regulation of British trade to strengthen British power in competition with other states. Both the proposition that the nation might lose although private traders gained, and its converse, were accepted as axiomatic. Hoping that the South Sea Company would make a new and vigorous effort to recover Britain's position in the Greenland whaling trade, he argued that they could be the means of a gain to the public stock even if they failed to make any profit. (108) Therefore, the government as "the Physitian of the Nation's Trade" must harmonize the conflicting interests

104. Supra, pp. 495-496.

105. Supra, pp. 498-500.

106. Supra, pp. 325-326, 336, 341.

107. Supra, p. 522.

108. Supra, p. 301.

of the various "cobblers" of the nation's commerce and give active help to the merchants to enable them to drive their trade. (109) Professor Wilson has argued persuasively that the trade policies of British governments of the seventeenth century and later were not dictated by the various pressure groups but that ministers and their immediate advisers determined the policy which they considered would best further the interests of the state despite the number of competing claims. (110) As Defoe traced the foundation of the English woollen industry to the personal initiative of Henry VII and Elizabeth I, (111) when he was at last compelled to admit that the French had made considerable progress in the manufacture of woollen cloth, he ascribed it to the "indefatigable Vigilance" of "that Pattern of Industry, M. Colbert":

"... first he inform'd himself of the various sorts of British Manufactures sold in every foreign Market, of which he had Pieces and Patterns brought him, and then he erected particular Works for the making those very Goods, encouraging also the Merchant to export them by causing Credit to be given them by the publick Stock ... particularly done with the Turkey Merchants in Marseilles, who had Credit till the return of their Ships from Smyrna and Scanderoon." (112)

Defoe, however, did not want such close government control in Britain, but rather looked to parliament and ministry to provide a favourable framework in which the merchant could drive his legitimate overseas trade for the benefit of the whole economy. His views on what constituted the "Credit of the Nation in Trade" in February 1711 comprised the maintenance of the quality of

110. C. Wilson, "Government Policy and Private Interest in Modern English History" in Historical Studies VI (ed. Moody, T.W., June 1965) pp. 85-98.
111. Supra, pp. 186-187.
112. Atlas Maritimus, pp. 145-146.



raw materials and manufactures and

"the care of the Publick, to Enlarge, Encourage, Protect, and Support, the Commerce, by necessary Bounties, well-proportion'd Customs, due Prohibitions, and avoiding all Clogs and Discouragements to the Merchants, such as foolish Prohibitions, discouraging Monopolies, and the like.

3. Wholesome, and summary Justice, in Disputes about Property in Trade, good Laws to secure the Property of the Creditor, and yet Merciful Bounds set for Relief of the Unfortunate Debtor, ...

4. Establishing by just Laws and on good Foundations, all kind of Advantageous Societies in Trade; where separate Trade may not be Quallified to the Circumstances; such as Banks for Circulating Cash, securing the Deposits of the Merchants from Insults of Thieves, Treachery of Servants, Accidents of Fire, and the like; and also for raising Paper-Credit to the Assistance of Commerce, as an Equivalent to the Indigence of the Coin, such also as Companies, Corporations, Societies, Patents, and the like." (113)

Government help was also essential for establishing new industries. Proposing that England should start to make calicoes in her own workhouses instead of importing them from India, he announced, "all Manufactures must have a Beginning, and in the Infancy of things, the Government must assist." (114) During the recession at the beginning of the Spanish Succession War, he found trade "under a sensible miserable Decay in all its Branches, and yet within view of the highest and most Fortunate Improvements, easie to be brought to pass, but slothfully and supinely neglected." (115) In his hopes for the expansion of trade into new lands in the 1720s, he insisted that "Trade and new Discovery must be the nursery and the darling of the Government they live under; the Merchant must receive the countenance and assistance of the Government he lives under, or Trade never rises with advantage." (116) In 1729, government assistance

113. Review, Vol. VII (No. 143) p. 571.

114. Ibid, Vol. IV, (No. 15) p. 59.

115. Ibid, Vol. II (No. 2) p. 5.

116. A General History of Discoveries and Improvements ... p. 164

was still vital: "Trade is a Circulation of Wealth, which never fails its Course, if encourag'd." (117) On other occasions, however, he conceded that it was not easy to control trade and that there were times when it defied all the rules of logic. Bemoaning the successes of the French privateers, he asked how it came about that England should grow rich in the face of such losses, or East India stock rise when ships were captured, "Mine Adventurers raise Annuities when Funds fall, loose their Vein of Oar in the Mine, and yet find it in the Shares." It was because of these paradoxes that he concluded,

"Trade is a Mystery, which will never be completely discover'd or understood; it has its Critical Juncture and Seasons, when acted by no visible Causes, it suffers Convulsion, Fitts, hysterical Disorders, and most unaccountable Emotions - Sometimes it is acted by the evil Spirit of general Vogue, and like a meer Possession 'tis hurry'd out of all manner of common Measures, today it obeys the Course of things, ... tomorrow it suffers Violence from the Storms and Vapours of Human Fancy, ... and then all runs counter, ... A Sort of Lunacy in Trade attends all its Circumstances, and no Man can give a rational Account of it.

From hence proceeds Damps and Deadness in Credit upon well lay'd and sufficiently supported Designs, as Land Banks, perpetual Funds, etc. which tho' the real Substance was at bottom to support, and all Disaster or Disorder made impossible, yet obtain'd nothing, but dy'd in their Infancy, only for being born in an ill Hour; when the predominant Distemper of a bewildered bewitching Vapour possess'd the general Climate of Trade, and infected the Brains of the People.

On the other hand, Multitude of Mushrooms have obtain'd upon the World, whose Birth was the Produce of meer Vapour and Exhalation; who, as they sprung up in the dark Midnight Moments of Trade, when her Eyes were shut, and when she was as it were doz'd with Dreams, and hagrid with wandring Ghosts of Trade Whymsies; so they were born to evaporate by Time, and dye in the handling, that by the Nature of them were destin'd to dissolve like a Cloud, and Spin out their own Bowels like the Spider; that had nothing material in them, but being meerly imaginary in their Substance, must of Course be lost in the handing up and down, and

leave nothing but Cobweb, and a tangl'd Husk of Emptyness in the Fingers of those Fools that were deceiv'd with the Appearance." (118)

True to his belief in intrinsic value, Defoe could only explain the apparent random fluctuations of trade by half-suggesting that they were subject to occult influences, or at least were entirely irrational. Writing, in December 1704, of the change in taste which, coupled with the tariff preference, had made Portuguese wine so much more acceptable to English palates that it had displaced French wine, he observed how strange it was that trade should run "in Channels and Eddies, and will sometimes, like the Tides, shift the Course, change the Streams, and remove or fix Banks and Sands here or there, and on a sudden return to them again." (119). Professor Sperling has noted the tendency for economic theory to lag well behind the most advanced practice and how the ideas of mercantilists such as Thomas Mun "remained in vogue long after economic changes had made them lamentably outmoded." (120). It is true that Defoe was an acute observer of anything to do with trade, but his practical acquaintance ceased with his imprisonment in Newgate in 1703 which ruined his tile-making venture. Therefore, he tended to repeat old arguments that were now out of date. Thus he described English dyers as "bunglers at their trade" when they had made so much progress that few undyed white cloths were now sent to Holland. Similarly he continued to sing the praises of English broadcloth and even to deplore the extent

118. Review, Vol. III (No. 126) pp. 502-503.

119. Ibid, Vol. I (No. 86) p. 358.

120. J. Sperling, "The International Payments Mechanism in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", Ec. H.R. 2nd. series, Vol. XIV (1962) pp. 446-450.

to which English clothiers had imitated the lighter fabrics from abroad, long after it was obvious that the "new draperies" were proving one of the success stories of Britain's overseas trade. (121) But it is probable that his constant appreciation of the severe strains which the Spanish Succession War imposed on the British economy reinforced his natural conservatism and made him more prone to look back to the good old days of trade when it flowed in its regular channels. In the aftermath of the recent credit crisis, in the autumn of 1711, he deplored the decline in commercial morality so that "new and unheard of Notions about Honesty" had crept into trade and practices which would have been regarded as "downright Cheating" were now accepted as fair and upright. "We do not think of Trade as we us'd to think," he concluded, "nor act in Trade as we us'd to act." (122) Moreover, the fact that his longer economic treatises were all published during those years of trade depression, 1726-1730, accentuated the conservatism of his late years, especially in his reflections on the woollen industry.

Defoe's orthodox economic ideas are also shown in the mercantilist framework within which he argued the case for the commercial treaty with France, for the economic benefits which both Scotland and England would derive from the Act of Union, and against an economic union with Ireland. Pointing to the "secret circulation of commerce" by which he said that British cloth reached parts of France through Holland and Flanders, he claimed that this was an exportation without any corresponding

121. Supra, pp. 241-243, 557-558.

122. Review, Vol. VIII (No. 81) p. 326; Cf. Vol. III (No. 75) 303.

importation because the returns were made to the Dutch who thus provided Britain with foreign paid incomes. (123) He shared his opponents' objections to the importation of foreign luxuries such as wine and brandy to such an extent that he had already written in the 'Review' that bringing in these commodities without high duties was "one of the fatallest trades" that England had had. Unless other countries took our exports in return for their produce we were "Felo de se in Trade". When he was campaigning for the opening of trade with France in March 1711, he had testified that "consumption of Wine, as of all Goods of Foreign Growth consumed in England" was "so much dead Loss". He also admitted that if he believed that the French could make woollen goods that were at all competitive with those produced in England, he would vote against the treaty. (124) In 1706 he accused the Scottish merchants of importing so many consumable commodities that there had been a four-fold increase in luxury. Although their trade was profitable to themselves, it was not to Scotland in that they were exporting primary products for French wine, "instead of the required Balance in specie or Bullion." In urging that the logic of Union demanded that the Darien Company must be finally abandoned, he argued that their settlement could never have established a trade with Spanish America and that if they had tried to bring Asiatic products across the Pacific; there was no room for two companies in the East India trade. Scotland could not support such a trade because the backwardness of her

123. Supra, pp. 662-664.

124. Supra, pp. 709, 712.

economy would not allow her to replenish the "ready money" which she would be obliged to export. (125) Although he admitted that his attitude was morally indefensible, he was so afraid of low-cost Irish competition for English manufactures that it was necessary to treat Ireland as a conquered country. Otherwise Ireland would be like "a great Workhouse in London" and "a kind of a back door" through which England's wealth would drain away to other countries. While he had criticized the Scottish nobility and gentry for not investing enough of their profits from trade with England in Scotland after 1707, he had tried to silence any English objections to the Union by the argument that Scottish wealth must circulate "thro' our Hands". Yet, he was unable to accept that this would be the result of a union with Ireland, although other writers used this specific argument to support such a union. (126)

As he looked on land as the best foundation for a bank, (127) it is not surprising that Defoe shared the common desire for a national land register to confirm property rights which was thought to be one reason for Dutch prosperity. (128) Assuming, for the sake of argument, that Scottish land should not be improved after the Union, he declared, "the very Security of the Title of Land in Scotland, a thing sorely wanted in England, will immediately upon an Union raise the Values of Land, at least two Years Purchase, and I prove it by the West-ridings of Yorkshire, the only County in England that has obtain'd a

125. Supra, pp. 822, 825, 844-845.

126. Supra, pp. 879-880, 881-884, 892.

127. Supra, pp. 338-340.

128. (Philanglus) "Britannia Languens" (1680), McCulloch, op. cit., p. 285.

Register, since which, and in about eight or nine Years, the Lands in that Division are advanc'd near five Years Purchase in the Value, only for the Security of a Title." (129) His strictures on the failure of lawyers to acquaint themselves with commercial practices so that they mumbled the language of trade "like the Ass chewing of Thistles" show that he also supported another long-standing demand by the economic pamphleteers, a court merchant. Until such a tribunal should be established, merchants would do better to refer their disputes to the arbitration of other merchants, instead of throwing away their money in lawsuits. (130)

Finally, the following general statement of his economic outlook shows his regard for the regular course of trade, emphasizes the contribution made by the improving artist to the country's prosperity and even allows the home trade to make a small but significant contribution to the general stock:

"The general Commerce of this Nation consists of the plain, honest, and downright way of Trade, making and manufacturing our Wool, and other Produce of the Land, exporting our Manufactures and the Growth of our Country, importing such Foreign Goods as we want, and circulating our Home Consumption; upon this depends our Navigation, and the Employment of our People; the first produces our Increase of Shipping, Nursery of Seamen, and all the many Trades and Employments that depend upon the building, repairing and fitting our Ships, with the Increase of our Colonies, and Consumption of Provisions, all great Articles of our Wealth, and essential to our Prosperity; the last carries on the Consumption of our Provisions, the Increase of Inland Trade, the raising the Value of Land, and the multiplying our People, all which tend to, and are essential Parts of our Strength and Wealth as a Nation.

129. Review, Vol. III (No. 158) pp. 629-630.

130. A General History of Trade, June 1713, pp. 18-19.

Thus every poor Man's Labour is an Encrease of the publick Stock; the Cloaths he wears, be they never so mean, employ some of the People, and consume some Part of our Wool; the Food he eats, be it never so little, grew on some Body's Land, was the Produce of some Part of the Country or other, and tends in some Degree (tho' little) to the publick Advantage.

Every Artist is a Help to Manufacture in general, an Improver of publick Labour, and assistant to the Poor in procuring them Employment, which is their Bread; whoever he be, that improves Art to any Degree that was not known before, is a publick Advantage to the General, as he finds Employment for some Body that had not Employment before: Thus every Manufacturer, that makes that at home, which till then was brought from abroad, is a Blessing to his Country, an Advantage to the general Stock, and encreases both Wealth and People." (131)

The miracle of Dutch economic development was a constant reminder that trade raised "new Species of Wealth that Nature knew nothing of." (132) The manufacture of cloth, from English raw materials before Elizabeth I's reign, had made the Seventeen Provinces the most populous region in history apart from the land of Canaan, although it was less habitable than adjoining countries and "in some Places not fit for People to live in at all, a meer Bog or Fen, in daily hazard of drowning, and under a thousand Inconveniences from the Sea. (133) Indeed Holland was the prime example of the transformation wrought by that arch-schematist, the universal merchant, far more important than the improving artist:

"... what infinite Crowds of People flock into Holland; Cities without Number, and Towns thick like the Houses in other Countries, that the whole Country seems to be one populous City; People in such Multitude, that all the Land in the Country can't find Butter and Cheese for them; ...

131. Review, Vol. V. (No. 107) p. 426.

132. Supra, p. 310.

133. Review, Vol. V. (No. 144), p. 574.



All these attend upon Trade by Trade, they possess the World, and have greater Stocks of Goods in each Country's Growth, than the Countries from whence they have them can show.

Their Rivers are throng'd with Shipping like a Wood; their Naval Stores are inexhaustible; they can build a Navy, and fit it to Sea, sooner than any Nation in the World; and yet have neither the Timber or Plank, the Iron-Work or Cordage, the Pitch or the Tar, the Hemp or the Rosin, in any part of the Country.

All this is done by Trade; the Merchant makes a wet Bog become a populous State; enriches Beggars, enobles Mechannicks, raises not Families only, but Towns, Cities, Provinces and Kingdoms." (134)

Despite his occasional restrictionist attitudes, Defoe wanted Britain to secure the largest possible share of the limited volume of world trade. The demands of "People living in Bodies" always stimulated production, especially when they were concentrated in a capital city. But increased production demanded wider overseas markets which could only be secured by the enterprise of the merchant assisted by the government. "The Encouragement of the Merchant is one of the great Concerns of a just Government; because they are the great Wheels of Trade, ... Taxes, Duties, Payments of Customs, and the vast Revenue which Trade is to the Publick, is all rais'd from the Merchants, who are the most Valuable People of the Nation, in that respect, and therefore all Governments think themselves concern'd to use them tenderly, and cherish them upon all Occasions." (135) As trade with Britain's traditional markets in northern and central Europe became more difficult, he became increasingly concerned to find new outlets for her exports.

134. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, (No. 2) p. 7.

135. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII (No. 71) p. 287.

He bitterly regretted that south-eastern Europe was in the hands of those enemies to trade, the Turks, who denied Britain access to a whole new reign for trade from the Danube to the Volga. (136) They also barred the "Doors of Commerce" by the Nile valley into Ethiopia, "a Country stor'd with such an immense Wealth, such quantities of Gold, such exquisite Product for Trade, such rich Game and Drugs, such numbers of Cattle, quantities of Corn, and such a docible People are able, ... to bring ten times more Wealth into Europe by Trade, than all the Empires of New Spain, at least under their present Management." (137)

In 1720 he abandoned his support for the Levant Company as one of the chief markets for broadcloth because he accepted the allegation that it had been guilty of restricting the trade in order to obtain a high return from a limited sale and because he hoped for a similar expansion of trade to that which had followed the end of the Muscovy Company's monopoly. (138) In 1730, in another context, he observed that it was a maxim in trade "that light Gain makes a heavy Purse ... that a small Profit on a large Return makes the Tradesman Rich." (139)

Although he instanced the Dutch restrictions on their colonial trade as proof that not all prohibitions were destructive to trade and he finally came to campaign for a complete ban on the wearing as well as on the import of Indian calicoes, he usually preferred to control a harmful trade by tariffs rather than by embargoes. Prohibitions and high duties only encouraged

136. Atlas Maritimus, p. 172.

137. A General History of the Discoveries and Improvements ... pp. 7-8; on p. 302 he suggested that this trade could prove more profitable than both the Indies; Cf. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 258-261.

138. Supra, pp. 616-619.

139. A Brief State of the Inland or Home Trade, pp. 33-34.

smuggling which was a greater threat to the home industry. (140) The prohibition of the imports of Flanders lace had produced retaliatory action which had seriously affected the exports of British cloth to the Spanish Netherlands. (141) Early in his career he had observed that even the attempts to deprive the French of war materials were completely ineffectual and that we should follow the Dutch example of trading with the enemy. Because both England and Holland had a natural trade with France, England had only succeeded in trading there at second hand, to the profit of the Dutch. (142) The chief difference between Defoe and his opponents in 1713 was that they feared that the commercial treaty would produce a flood of French imports, whereas he expected that "a Country of vast Extent, full of People" with a fifth of "the Trading Part of Europe" must ultimately buy large quantities of the superior English cloth which they could not rival without the essential raw materials. This "rich Morsel" would more than compensate for any reduction in English cloth exports to Portugal. It was the prohibition by the English government of exports of manufactures to France that was most intolerable - "IN War, or OUT of War, Trading Nations never shut the Doors of their own Commerce." (143) But the petitions from the iron manufacturing centres against the ban on imports of Swedish iron in 1717 produced this further comment:

"... the manifest Injury which Trading Nations always bring upon them selves, when, through the Necessity of their Affairs, ... they are

140. *Supra*, pp. 643, 747-748, 674-675.

141. *Supra*, p. 649.

142. *Supra*, pp. 636-637, 640, 643-644.

143. *Supra*, pp. 650, 692-693, 708-709.

obliged to prohibit any Branches of their Foreign Trade, whether it be of Importation or Exportation, there being very few Countries so poor, so barren, so remote, but from whence something is to be fetch'd that we find wanting to our selves, and absolutely necessary for the carrying on our own Manufactures." (144)

Although current orthodoxy compelled him to insist that home consumption did not contribute one farthing increase to the public stock, (145) Defoe obviously hoped for an expansion of home demand by an increase in the purchasing power of the lower income groups. The poor could not earn little and spend much. Rejecting the popular view that the price of food governed the rate of wages, he warned the landed interest that any attempt to reduce wages in other employment would affect land because the price of provisions would be bound to follow. (146) Arguing in 1712 against any further increases in taxation of commodities to meet the cost of the war, he protested that "the Labouring and Industrious Trades-men and Manufacturers" constituted the most numerous section of the community and were "the Life of our Commerce." Their consumption of home produce ultimately paid the land tax. (147) Because a rise in wages was the mark of a developing economy, one of the most pressing needs in Scotland was "to raise the Wages of their Poor." (148)

It was not merely a question of low wages but that he was well aware of the "vicious circle" of self-perpetuating

144. Mercurius Politicus, February 1717/1718, p. 102.

145. Supra, p. 899.

146. Supra, pp. 153-154.

147. Supra, p. 459.

148. Supra, p. 836.

poverty." (149) He was irritated by the disinclination of so many workers, even in his own tile factory, to earn more than a bare subsistence for their families plus money to spend at the tavern. (150) He took comfort from his observation that high wages sorted the people into more social classes which would presumably raise the level of expectation of all except the poorest. (151) High wages were, therefore, "the vast hinge" on which the wealth of the nation turned. (152) This was one of the chief reasons why he could not condemn the increase in luxury, although he could not condone it on moral grounds, (153) and in 1713 he welcomed the signs of Keynes's greater "propensity to consume":

"This new method of Living, saving the Errors of it, as it may be reckon'd a Vice; is however the great support of Trade in the World; again, that Trade encreases Wealth, raises Families, lifts the Poor up from the low and necessitous way of living, to subsist comfortably and plentifully on their Labour, this again prompts and encourages Diligence ... and encreases the Consumption of those Imports which Commerce supplies on the other.

This new way of Living, as it has alter'd the Dyet, so it has alter'd the Habits and Furniture of the People; ... and their costly Furniture, and costly Clothes, make up the three great Articles of Trade." (154)

This new tendency was obviously most marked amongst the richer inhabitants, but Defoe realized the importance of mass demand. It was the manufacturers and tradesmen who supported the consumption of domestic produce and of foreign imports. Even the journeymen slept warm and ate well and the trade of the

149. J.D. Chambers, Population, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial England (1972) p. 150. Professor Chambers also observes that in the 1740s Lewis Paul failed to develop his spinning machine "largely it would seem through undisciplined workmen taking advantage of the shortness of labour". p.146.
150. Supra, pp. 161-165.
151. Supra, p. 155
152. Review, Vol. II (No. 18) p. 69.
153. Supra, pp. 39-58.
154. A General History of Trade, July 1713, p. 27.

whole kingdom depended on the wages of the millions of the mean, middling and trading People." (155) As he summed up the state of the home trade in 1727, "the people grow rich by the people; they support one another; ... Money begets Money, Trade circulates, and the tide of Money flows in with it, one hand washes the other hand, and both hands wash the Face. Here we see the Tradesman depends upon the poor as well as the rich, and all together makes Trade." (156)

He welcomed the extent to which this circulation of inland trade was extended by personal credit which enabled the tradesman to do so much more business that it was as "marrow to his bones". Characteristically, he thought that England made the greatest use of this "equivalent in trade" so that half of her manufactures and two-thirds of her total trade were supported by credit. (157) Thus England was able to trade £20 million beyond her real stock, but he considered that further expansion would be possible if a true central bank "proportion'd to the Trade of the Country", could be established. He regarded the initial capital of £1,200,000 of the Bank of England as quite inadequate and that even if half the stock had not been employed in government business, it was only one-fifth of what was needed to manage the banking business of London alone. He proposed that the capital should be increased to £5 million and that its activities should embrace the whole country. Indeed, of the seven "offices" into which he divided the business of

155. Supra, pp. 986-987.

156. Complete English Tradesman, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 118.

157. Supra, pp. 360-361.

banking, the sixth, for inland exchanges, was to be the largest. (158) The need to develop further credit instruments to finance internal trade produced his suggestion for making current the tradesmen's bills of exchange which, he hoped, would add £20 million to the "Running Cash of the Nation." (159) He greatly admired Godolphin's skill as a finance minister and considered that the expansion of public credit, by which he had coined £50 million, had amounted to a doubling upon the Public General Stock. (160) But while the funds were "a Mortgage upon the Protestant Succession", they diverted money from trade and therefore caused a decay of personal and paper credit. It was not only the original purchase of government securities but he also believed that one-third of the £6 million interest paid each year was reinvested in the funds, even when the approach of peace in 1713 should have provided opportunities for greater profits in overseas trade. (161)

Although Defoe had been a manager-trustee for the government lotteries of 1695-96, he was a severe critic of wagering on moral grounds and as an interruption of the natural circulation of money. (162) In both wagering and stock-jobbing one man only gained what others lost and therefore there was again no increase of the public stock. There was only an advance in the imaginary value, no increase in the intrinsic worth, a concept which had a particular appeal to Defoe and made him a

158. Supra, pp. 327-331.

159. Supra, pp. 365-367.

160. Supra, pp. 401, 405-407.

161. Supra, pp. 403, 471-473.

162. P. Dottin, The Life and Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe, p. 64. Supra, pp. 350-356.

supporter of Locke against Lowndes in their celebrated argument before the recoinage of 1696. (163) His trenchant attacks on this "legerdemain in trade", stock-jobbing, also stemmed from the presumption that dishonest projects inevitably attracted these "banditts" and that even worthy ventures were apt to be ruined by their activities. (164) Their intervention in the market for "Publick Capital Stocks" was particularly reprehensible for the backing by the credit of the government ought to make their intrinsic value inviolable and completely independent of invasion scares and "puffs of Exchange Alley Wind." (165) But his commitment to full employment made him support some measure of inflation because this would lead to more business activity. Thus his attacks on the Alley were usually directed against the bears who ran down government securities below their intrinsic value, not against advances in stock prices which helped the flow of investment into the funds and made public credit "more fluid". This attitude made him predisposed to accept many of the ideas of John Law, even including the advantages of paper money. (166)

As he admired the boldness of Law's activities in France until his final desperate moves, Defoe was a staunch supporter of the financial operations of the "more substantial" English Mississippi, the South Sea Company, although his campaign to prevent any further decline of its stock after the Bubble burst

163. *Supra*, pp. 487-488, 318.

164. *Supra*, pp. 476, 489-490.

165. *Supra*, pp. 483-485.

166. *Supra*, pp. 321, 506, 517.



was inspired by his belief in its intrinsic worth and by the need to restore public credit. (167) Since by credit imaginary wealth was made equal to real wealth, the Company's fund of credit, the greatest ever put into the hands of any public body and in itself an intrinsic, must produce "a proportionable Flux of Money." (168)

Despite his strong objections to any sudden disturbance of the social pyramid, he argued that the growth of public credit was "a general Good to the Nation" and that it was impossible for it to ruin trade because the increased personal expenditure, especially by the new rich, had considerably expanded London's retail trade. (169) The weeks before the crash were thus a period of greater prosperity than any previously known and even after the debacle the scheme remained "the best Project in the World". (170) That one who was usually such a shrewd observer of the contemporary scene as Defoe should be unable to make any criticism of the boom shows the attraction of the "fund of credit" principle and the overriding force exerted by the prospect of economic growth, especially as he had foreseen the possibility that the stock might be "stock-jobbed up" when the Company was launched in 1711. (171) Even in 1729 he could still write, "By this strange thing call'd Credit, all the mighty Wonders of an exalted Commerce are perform'd; a Tradesman beginning with a Thousand Pound Cash, and a good Character, shall store his Shop or Warehouse

167. Supra, pp. 513-514, 518, 540-541, 548.

168. Supra, pp. 521, 549-550.

169. Supra, pp. 535-538, 520, 524-525.

170. Supra, pp. 525, 540-541.

171. Supra, p. 446.

with 5000 l. in Goods, and may trade for 10000, nay for 20000 l. per Annum; and so long as he manages prudently, pays currently, ... shall run almost what Length he pleases in his Trade." Assuming that "the Stock of the whole Trade of Great Britain" was £10 million, he suggested that the expansion of trade by credit might enable a total value of £100 million to be realized in one year. (172) His other views on credit were markedly conservative - retail credit was "a leprosy in trade" which was a chief cause of bankruptcy, the expansion of bank credit must be based on the convertibility of banknotes and both John Law and the Bank of England had failed to recognize the principle that there could be no credit without cash. (173) He condemned the new coinage schemes of both Mackworth and Povey and finally called for a restriction of paper currency. (174)

When Defoe came to realize that it was impossible to reduce the heavy burden of debt by the mere power of a fund of credit and that such an expansion of credit was beyond the existing cash and credit resources of the nation, he turned to the two remaining solutions of the problem of stagnant trade with Britain's traditional markets. (175) The first was the old but pessimistic remedy of persuading the British people to wear their own superior but dearer cloths, but it was the second on which he pinned his hopes for the future.

172. Some Objections Humbly offered ... Relating to the present intended Relief of Prisoners ... pp. 15-16.

173. Supra, pp. 363-365, 336-337.

174. Supra, p. 555.

175. Supra, p. 552.

In December 1719, he had claimed that trade, "without enlarging the British Territories", had given Britain "a kind of additional Empire", (176) but he had also already envisaged a completely self-sufficient commonwealth - "were all, or the greater part of our Foreign Trade to die, and be no more, our own Colonies in Africk and America, are capable of so much Improvement, as is sufficient of them selves to Support our Manufactures, Employ our Shipping, enrich our People, and form all the necessary Articles of Trade within our selves." (177) As "the Sum of all Improvement in Trade" was "the finding out some Market for the Sale or Vent of Merchandize, where there was no Sale or Vent for those Goods before", (178) the answer to the new tariff barriers in Europe was further colonization. There were undoubtedly "new Countries and Lands yet to be discover'd, new Colonies to be planted" and those already planted were capable of additional improvement by the cultivation of new crops. There was "much more of America undiscover'd, and at least unconquer'd and unpossess'd, than all the rest put together" and in South America the Spanish territories did not extend more than one hundred miles inland. (179) He did not minimize the difficulties of establishing new settlements, for, he admitted, "the Settling a Collony, however prosperous in its beginning is a Work of time, and must take up not many Years only, but Ages of Years." (180) He had adduced the cost and hardships of the Atlantic crossing when he was urging

176. Mercurius Politicus, December 1719, p. 791.

177. Review, Vol. I, (No. 97) p. 402.

178. Supra, p. 89.

179. A General History of Discoveries ... pp. 306-307, 275-276.

180. The Chimera, p. 16.

that the refugees from the Palatinate should be settled in Ireland, Scotland and agricultural communities in England in preference to any part of North or South America. (181) The high standard of living which he believed to exist in England was a further bar to large-scale emigration for nowhere else in Europe were "the Commonalty and Yeomanry so well cloathed" or lived "so plentifully." (182) This was the reason "that, in order to supply our Colonies and Plantations with people, besides the encouragement given in those Colonies to all people that will come thither to plant and to settle, we are obliged to send away thither all our petty offenders, and all the criminals that we think fit to spare from the Gallows, besides that we formerly call'd the Kidnapping trade, that is to say, the arts made use of to wheedle and draw away young, vagrant and indigent people, and people of desperate fortunes, to sell themselves, that is bind themselves for servants, the numbers of which are very great." (183) But notwithstanding these various obstacles, he remained convinced that "no Plantation undertaken by sufficient Numbers of industrious People" could fail if the soil was sufficiently fertile to provide them with subsistence. (184) In spite of the natural conservatism of his economic outlook, in his forceful propaganda for further colonization Defoe's final answer to England's export problems in the 1720s was typically resilient and dynamic. For conservative as he was in much of

181. Supra, pp. 115-116.

182. A Seasonable Warning or the Pope and King of France Unmasked (1706) p. 10.

183. The Compleat English Tradesman, Vol. I, p. 317.

184. A General History of Discoveries, pp. 286-287.

his economic thinking, James Sutherland justly observes that "on almost every issue in which he was involved Defoe was looking forward to the future." (185) E.A.J. Johnson found him "less pessimistic concerning British policy than most of his contemporaries," (186) and Heckscher referred to his "American" optimism and his chauvinistic self-satisfaction in economic matters." (187)

On May 21, 1713, during a vigorous campaign to reopen trade with France, Defoe made a strong claim for his consistency throughout the pages of the 'Review', maintaining that "whatever Clamours" some had made, "that as great a Work as this Paper is, and as many Volumes as I have written of it, there will not be found one thing in it, which if honestly and impartially taken, and not wrecked by Party and Prejudice, will contradict another." (188) Since 1704, he had repeatedly argued that England should follow the Dutch practice of trading with the enemy, but he realized that he was open to misrepresentation on this issue and probably decided to anticipate any allegation that he had changed his front. He had accepted the current fallacy that England had suffered a huge deficit in her trade with France until high duties were imposed on French wine and brandy and now, to secure the recently-published trade treaty, he was countenancing some reduction in these duties, although he still insisted that the imports from France must continue to be controlled by high tariffs. (189)

185. J. Sutherland, Daniel Defoe  
 186. E.A.J. Johnson, op. cit., p. 306.  
 187. E. Heckscher, op. cit., II, p. 171.  
 188. Review, Vol. IX (No. 97) p. 195.  
 189. Ibid

His claim was justified in the nine volumes of the 'Review' where he was the known author, but in his anonymous pamphlets he was occasionally guilty of adjusting his opinions to serve a particular purpose. Yet his later criticism of the Palatine immigrants significantly appeared in one of the Tory journals which he was "editing" for the Whigs. (190) He had paid glowing tributes to Godolphin's exquisite management" of the war finances in calling forth loans to remedy the inability of specie to meet the annual cost of the war which Defoe thought was more than the current total of the coin, but in his strenuous support of Harley's efforts to restore public credit he unfairly blamed the "General of Generals" for concealing the amount of the floating debt. (191) His contention that a larger proportion of the cost of both the wars against France should have been raised by taxation appeared in the same Tory journal when reduction of the national debt was the subject of general debate. (192) The small differences in emphasis in his propaganda for the Act of Union, according to whether he was writing for English or Scottish readers are not material, but he was also capable of playing on current prejudices such as the assumed drain of silver by the Baltic trade. (193) Similarly he only used the export of bullion argument against the East India Company when he was alarmed by the threat to his cherished woollen manufacture from the importation of Indian textiles. (194) When measures, which he considered

190. Supra, pp. 118-119.

191. Supra, pp. 405-406, 437-438.

192. Supra, p. 469.

193. Supra, pp. 571-572.

194. Supra, pp. 730-732.

effective, had been taken to safeguard British manufactures he was again ready to accept that trade with India was both necessary and profitable. In the last year of his life, he rejoiced at the large customs revenue from imports of tea and concluded "And could it be brought about that the East India Trade could but take off, any considerable Quantity of the Product of Europe in Goods, so as to carry out a less Quantity of Bullion, as I think it is easy to prove they might do ... it will be granted that the Trade to India might be made the most advantageous Branch of all the British Commerce." (195) The next month, he printed a full list of the cargoes of three East India ships, to prove that trade was not decayed, and commented that the "greatest part of the Piece Goods", which formed the bulk of these cargoes, were re-exported so that it was easy to prove that the East India Company ultimately brought into England more money than they carried out. (196)

A more serious difficulty arises from his apparent triple denial of the cause which he had promoted in the 'Mercator'. In the first, in 1714, he accused three leaders of the late Tory ministry, of whom one was Harley, of loading the nation with heavy taxes, weakening the British defences by reducing the Dutch Barrier, and allowing the French to replace Dunkirk by another harbour at Mardyke. In addition, "they made up a Bill of Commerce with France, which had it been made good by

195: The Political State of Great Britain, August, 1730, pp. 130-131.

196: Ibid, September 1730, pp. 244-248.

P -, would intirely have ruin'd our Trade". (197) This pamphlet, however, was written to avert the threat of impeachment from his late employer, Harley, by implicating other members of the ministry, such as the Duke of Shrewsbury, who was still employed, and perforce had to appear to be a Whig publication. In his political apologia of the same year, but published in January 1715, he tried to play down his part in the commercial treaty, declaring "What part I had in the 'Mercator' is well known; ... I would, at any time, defend every part of the 'Mercator' which was of my doing. But to say the 'Mercator' was mine, is false; I neither was the author of it, had the property of it, the printing of it, or the profit by it. I have never had any payment or reward for writing any part of it; nor had I the power to put what I would into it ..." (198) Because the royal "bounty" which he received for his government employment, and which in 1714 totalled £500 when the "Mercator" came to an end in July, did not specify any particular service, he could claim that he was not rewarded for this journal, but there seems no doubt that he wrote every word of each 'Mercator'. (199) Again, however, Defoe was himself in a desperate position at the end of 1714. He had enraged the Whigs by his support for both the peace treaty and the bill of commerce and especially by his bitter attack on them for deserting their constant allies, the Dissenters, in their deal with the Earl of Nottingham to

197. Impeachment or No Impeachment:... (1714) pp. 7-8. P - would be Parliament.
198. An Appeal to Honour and Justice ... (1715, Shakespeare Head edition, 1928) p. 230.
199. L. Hanson, Government and the Press, p. 96. British Merchant, No. 3, November 24, 1719.



support his Occasional Conformity Bill. It was imperative that Defoe should try to rehabilitate himself with his former Whig associates and in this case pretend that he was only an occasional contributor to a newspaper under other direction. The third admission, in December 1719, is even more damaging in that he seemed to have repudiated the views which he had expressed in 1713-14. The author of a new 'British Merchant' had written that he hoped "that the Manufacturer may pretend now to save the Woollen Manufactures, for the very same Motives that the MERCATOR, but a few Years since would have destroy'd them." Defoe dismissed the association as irrelevant but added, "If I had then a worse Cause upon my Hands, thank God, I have a better now; and, I think he and I have exactly chang'd Circumstances: Namely, that if I had a bad Case to handle, I did the best for my Clients; as he having a bad Cause now in his Hands does the best for his; only with this unhappy Difference, to his Advantage, that he is like to be paid for his Work, which I never was." He claimed that some men who had opposed his conduct of the 'Mercator' now approved of his management of the 'Manufacturer' and that if he had not refused the offer, his opponent would not now be writing against him. With his usual audacity he concluded, "Truth and I, Sir, to all the World and you ... keep your Temper ... What's all this to the Callicoes?" (200) The light-hearted nature of Defoe's reply does not show that he only wrote what he was paid to write but was rather his way of trying to brush off

the charge against him. He was now serving the Whigs and it was necessary to repudiate his advocacy of the Tory commercial treaty with France, which was not likely to be revived in the foreseeable future. His was the only pen which had been active for the treaty in 1713 and it had been unable to overcome the contemporary economic prejudice against the particular nature of the imports from France and the political hostility to our powerful rival. It has already been emphasized that he shared the economic doctrines of his opponents and that he was only ready to contemplate a reduction of the duties on French goods in 1713 because he believed that the recently-established manufactures of silk, linen, glass and white paper could now withstand French competition, that high duties would remain on French wine and brandy, that the imports of Portuguese wine would be little affected, that the Portuguese would be obliged to continue to buy large quantities of British cloth and that the export opportunities for this cloth in the large French market outweighed all disadvantages. (201)

The fact that Defoe sensibly revised his ideas on reflection or when new evidence showed that some modification was necessary does not denote inconsistency. He had warmly welcomed the improvements in English distilling because they provided another market for home-grown corn and would reduce the imports of smuggled French brandy, but he strongly attacked the evils of cheap gin drinking once he became aware of them. Yet he claimed that cheap Dutch gin was mainly responsible and

201. Supra, pp. 642-646, 667-670, 673, 677-679, 692-693, 702-704, 714.

it was the damage to the health of future generations of labourers which would necessarily reduce their output which he found most disturbing. (202) As a faithful follower of Locke and convinced supporter of the property rights confirmed by the 1688 Revolution, he first regarded the government annuities as a fixed sale which could not legally be redeemed, but as he realized that the heavy burden of debt was likely to remain for the rest of the century he gave his support to Walpole's conversion proposals of 1717. (203) The harsh treatment of debtors in England caused him to commend the Scottish practice whereby a man's effects could be seized but not his person until after judgement against him, but he quickly revised this opinion as he came to accept that imprisonment for debt was the essential basis of the great structure of personal credit in England whereas the Scottish method hampered the growth of trade. (204) In 1712 he protested that the "immense Summs" drawn out of trade for investment in the funds had been "perfectly useless to the Nation" and had not added one shilling to the general stock, "but were just like two Boys playing at one-and-thirty for nothing, or a Man putting his Money out of one Pocket into another." (205) Yet he came to accept that there would be a market in the funds as long as government borrowing continued. (206)

Indeed the discrepancies are few and usually disappear

202. Supra, pp. 45-46, 921-922, 54-56.

203. Supra, pp. 436, 462-463.

204. Supra, pp. 386-388, 395.

205. Review, Vol. IX (No. 39) p. 78.

206. Supra, p. 506.

when examined in their context. Despite his huge output in a long journalistic career of nearly thirty-five years, Defoe was remarkably consistent in his economic views, elaborating the same ideas in his later pamphlets that he had originally expressed in his "Essay upon Projects" or in the early issues of the 'Review'. There are of course the distortions which arose from the background of controversy to so many of his pronouncements with the result that his vigorous presentation of his case made him prone to exaggeration and over-statement. While this adds vividness and colour to his writings on economics, it is also responsible for some absurd statements such as the claim that the superior quality of English cloth gave it a kind of beauty even in its rags, or the contemptuous references to French cloth as cabbage-net bays or dog's hair broadcloth, or that sailing in ballast was beneficial because it called for a greater use of shipping. (207) All three, however, were made when he was strenuously engaged in his single-handed defence of the commercial treaty with France against all the opponents that the Whigs could muster and his robust common sense is usually much more evident. At a time when most imports were suspect, he recognized that "all Prohibitions, where the Value is high, serve but to whet the unfair Merchant" and that "high Duties encourage Smuggling, as rich Travellers tempt Highwaymen." (208) Although his alarm at the continued loss of our invaluable raw wool made him share the exaggerated estimates of the owling trade, es-

207. Supra, pp. 208, 210, 272-273, 668.

208. Review, Vol. IX (No. 88) p. 186; Applebee's Journal  
January 25, 1724.

pecially from Ireland, he realized that the high charges and irregular supplies of this British wool must seriously reduce the French threat to our cloth exports. (209) At other times, however, he could only account for the increased competition from French cloth by the assumption that the English measures against smuggling were quite ineffective. (210) He also came to see that his belief in the unrivalled excellence of British wool did not prevent other countries from making their own cheaper fabrics. (211) While he was as keen as any other Englishmen to develop our fisheries, especially after the Union with Scotland, he took a very realistic view of the difficulties which needed to be surmounted. (212) His views on the law of bankruptcy, on banking and insurance, with the one exception of life insurance, were ahead of most contemporary thought, as was his belief in the economic advantages of high wages and in the importance of the home trade. In the credit crisis of 1710-11 he correctly deduced that the new Tory government would be able to borrow the money which it needed in spite of the Whig assumption that their financial strength would enable them to recover their places by withholding credit from their successors. (213) He wanted Harley to separate the financial and the trading activities of the South Sea Company and he correctly regarded it as a financial corporation from the outset. (214) The importance which he attached to an increase in population was a valid assessment,

209. Supra, pp. 200-202, 897A.  
 210. Supra, pp. 572-574.  
 211. Supra, pp. 138-140.  
 212. Supra, pp. 289-292.  
 213. Supra, pp. 429-432.  
 214. Supra, p. 446.

in the circumstances of early eighteenth-century England, of the part which it could play in promoting economic growth. Recently Professor Chambers has again stressed that "population change was itself a profoundly important factor in economic change" and that the increases in Lancashire, the Midlands, the Home Counties and especially in London were closely linked with the economic advances of the second decade of the century. (215) Defoe's emphasis on the economic importance of his native London was not misplaced as it may have had one-quarter of the national income as well as two-thirds of its sea-borne trade and one-tenth of its population. Professor John has noted that the early eighteenth century fall in the cost of living associated with rising agricultural productivity released a margin of purchasing power among the lower income groups which helped to stimulate home demand and that many of the growth points of the economy stemmed from a buoyant home market. (216)

If Defoe had few original ideas in economics, why is he important both in the development of economic thought and in British economic history? The greatest journalist of any age, he was obviously the outstanding figure in the new journalism which developed with the appearance of a much larger reading public after the lapse of the press censorship in 1695 and P.S. Buck has described him as "a gauge of public opinion". (217)

215. J.D. Chambers, Population, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial England (1972) pp. 23, 129, 141-143, Cf. P.Deane and W.A. Cole, op. cit., p. 61.
216. A.H. John, "Agricultural Productivity and Economic Growth in England 1700-1760" reprinted in E.L. Jones, Agriculture and Economic Growth in England 1650-1815 (1967) pp. 179-193. Also editor's introduction pp. 36-46 on the development of a market for industrial goods.
217. P.S. Buck, op. cit., p. 83.

Certainly, during the last fifty years of the pre-industrial age, Defoe showed the strength which the old concepts of a largely-static, underdeveloped agricultural economy still exercised, but these ideas were changing as foreign trade expanded and merely to express prevailing views was too passive a role for such a vigorous and independent controversialist. He was constantly seeking to influence public opinion in favour of reformation of manners, of improving the lot of the poor, debtor, of resettling the Palatine refugees, of maintaining the Royal African Company against the separate traders and of supporting the Newcastle keelmen, to name only a few of the causes for which he campaigned in the 'Review' or in separate pamphlets; and in certain directions such as the economy of high wages, the expansion of credit, the importance of the home market and the need to find new markets by the extension of mass demand and by further colonization he was anticipating future developments.

J.A. Schumpeter, while he recognized Defoe's brilliance as a writer, would not give him a place in the development of economic analysis, and decided that his work belonged rather to the sphere of economic journalism. (218) It is likely that Defoe would have accepted this judgement. Complaining of the ignorance in "so essential an Art of the general Good" as trade, he wrote that<sup>as</sup> "a superficial Knowledge of Letters serves to make a Man a Pedant, but not a Scholar ... so a superficial Knowledge of Trade, may make a Man a Stock-jobber

but not a Merchant." (219) Earlier, he had made this comment on the difficulties which governments found in trying to control trade in the national interest, "But Customs in Trade, frequently make Jest of Acts of Parliament, and will go on their own way, tho' to the Destruction of the Common Interest, in Spight of all the wholesome Laws can be made. 'Tis only opening the Eyes of the Men in Trade, that can bring these things to pass." (220) Defoe was always trying to open the eyes of his compatriots. In his attempts to remove national prejudices to the Act of Union on both sides of the border, his unique sympathy for the Scots and understanding of their susceptibilities helped his work of propaganda which was based on a realistic appreciation of the economic situation of Scotland and of the opportunities for growth which the Union provided. (221) In 1720-21, as in 1710-11, he did his utmost to restore financial confidence as the boom collapsed and men were ruining themselves that they might not be ruined, trying to persuade them that his estimate of the intrinsic value of the stock demonstrated the essential soundness of the company and that even the precipitate rise in the price of its shares had been justified by its large fund of credit. (222)

John Fransham, the Norwich linen draper, was probably a typical reader in the provinces. His letters to Defoe show him both subscribing and obtaining other subscribers to "Jure Divino" and the "Consolidator" in 1705 and persuading the

219. A General History of Trade, June 1713, p. 18.

220. Review, Vol. III (No. 6) p. 23.

221. Supra, pp. 827-84.

222. Supra, pp. 413-428, 540-551.



proprietor of the chief coffee house to take the 'Review'.

(223) Although an early estimate of its London circulation gave only 400 copies for each of its bi-weekly issues, compared with the 3000 of the 'Post Boy' and even 4000 for the Saturday edition of the 'Post Man', this may have been made only a few weeks after its first appearance on 19 February, 1704. Publication three times a week from 22 March 1705 suggests a rise in circulation (224) and by May Defoe was sending Fransham the 100 copies of each issue that he had ordered. (225) Coffee-house circulation increased a journal's reading public at least tenfold and probably much more and its influence was further extended when a coffee-house politician expanded its arguments, (226) as Fransham told Defoe that he had read the 'Review' to several gentlemen in Norwich. (227) An advertisement inserted in June 1709 said that the paper had been reprinted three times a week in Edinburgh since 25 March and published in "all the principal Towns and Cities of Scotland." A note added that the counties of Northumberland and Westmorland were supplied with the paper from Scotland as were the towns of Belfast, Carrickfergus and Londonderry in Ireland. (228) Defoe had steadily improved its format until it became "by far the best looking paper of the time," (229) and his High Church antagonist, Charles Leslie, was obliged to launch his 'Rehearsal' to combat

223. G.H. Healey, ed., The Letters of Daniel Defoe (Oxford 1955) pp. 64-71, 83-85.
224. J. Sutherland, "The Circulation of Newspapers and Literary Periodicals, 1700-1730." The Library, 4th Series, Vol. XV (1935) pp. 110-124.
225. G.H. Healey, op. cit., p. 85.
226. J. Sutherland, loc. cit., p. 124.
227. G.H. Healey, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
228. Review, Vol. VI (No. 33) p. 132.
229. P. Dottin, op. cit., p. 118.

its influence. After remarking that replies could be produced to pamphlets and that in any case few people read books, he protested, "but they will gather about one that can read, and listen to an Observator or Review (as I have seen them in the streets) where all the principles of rebellion are instilled into them." (230) In December 1710, a collector of the window tax, J. Durden, wrote to Harley from Scarborough on the state of political opinion in north Yorkshire. He informed him that Swift's 'Examiner' was doing "excellent service in these, as I doubt not it has in other parts" and was proving "a weekly antidote to that weekly poison so widely scattered through the nation by those two public libellers and incendiaries 'The Observator', 'The Review' and others. (231) Defoe had already complained that attempts had been made to silence his journal by seizing the copies from the coffee houses and later he was to accuse his opponents of buying up the street sellers' stock in order to destroy an issue. (232) The chagrin of his new adversaries in the dispute about the French Commercial treaty was revealed by their grumbles that the 'Mercator' was "twice a week industriously sent into the Country" by means of the carriers, carriage paid. (233)

The virulent attacks which Defoe had to face from both Tory and Whig critics indicate that his journals attained a wide circulation. They impugned his motives and condemned his style. To one Tory he was the vilest "of all the Writers

230. C. Leslie, The Rehearsal (1704) No. 1 Preface.

231. H.M.C. (Portland) IV, p. 641. Swift, however, restricted himself almost entirely to political comment like the journal's first author who had pointedly declared that he would leave "the Africa Company and the Coles to the 'Review'". Examiner No. 1, 3 August, 1710.

232. Review, Vol. III (No. 26) p. 104; Vol. VI (No. 149) p. 596.

233. Supra, p. 719.

that have Prostituted their Pens, either to encourage Faction, oblige a Party, or for their own Mercenary Ends." (234)

Another described him as "the greatest Tautologist in the World" so that the discriminating reader would buy the first number when Defoe began a new topic and this would serve him for the next three months, for all the succeeding issues would be "the same thing, only turn'd into other Words." (235) Tory critics also derided the intelligence and social status of his readers. Swift dismissed both Defoe and Tutchin as "stupid, illiterate scribblers" but admitted that Defoe's "mock authoritative manner" and Tutchin's "insipid mirth", although "unsupportable to reasonable ears," had yet done much mischief because they were "of a level with great numbers among the lowest part of mankind." (236) In Ned Ward's opinion the 'Review' and the 'Observator' were "read most by cobbler and by porters" but while Defoe's audience no doubt included small shopkeepers and craftsmen, he probably spoke to a wide segment of the commercial middle class. (237) Mr. R.I. Cook has put forward the view that one reason for his undoubted popularity was his deliberate exploitation of his personality to create a close rapport with his readers, giving them many biographical details to create a character with whom many of his self-made tradesmen readers could identify. (238) Certainly, among Defoe's many persona,

234. (Anon) Judas Discover'd, and Catch'd at last .. (1713) p.3.  
 235. "The Review Review'd. In a Letter to the Prophet Daniel in Scotland" reprinted from the Yale University Library copy by M. E. Novak, "A Whiff of Scandal in the Life of Daniel Defoe" Huntington Library Quarterly, Vol. 34 (1970-71) pp. 35-43.  
 236. J. Swift, The Examiner, No. 14, 2 November 1710.  
 237. Ned Ward, Vulgus Britannicus (1710) p. 120.  
 238. R.I. Cook, "'Mr. Examiner' and 'Mr. Review': The Tory Apologetics of Swift and Defoe." Huntington Library Quarterly Vol. XXIX (1965-66) pp. 133-145.

True-born Englishman, Dissenter, Quaker, Scot, Man in the Moon, Captain Tom, Andrew Moreton etc. etc., the ebullient, vigorous and outspoken Mr. Review is the most engaging. More recently, Professor Sutherland has analysed Defoe's skill as a journalist and pamphleteer, noting how each pamphlet was admirably suited to the occasion and to its particular audience, with the argument clearly presented and persuasively developed. From the outset "no writer ever established a more immediate and friendly familiarity with his readers." (239) His avowed aim was to persuade them by being "explicit, easie, free and very plain" upon the subject of trade, (240) and he advised his complete tradesman that the most effective style was "easy, plain and familiar language." (241) Thus his ability to simplify complex issues was reinforced by a natural, straightforward, conversational style enlivened by "his ready command of simile and metaphor", relevant anecdote, ready wit and vivid phraseology. Because he was such "an uncommon example of the common man" and could speak to his fellow tradesmen so directly and effectively, he must have exercised widespread influence. (242)

It was only to be expected that the progressive outlook of Defoe should receive more attention than his natural conservatism but in 1937 James Sutherland complained that he had not received the credit that was due to him as "a distinguished amateur in the field of political economy" although "there

239. J. Sutherland, Daniel Defoe: A Critical Study (Camb. Mass. 1971) pp. 23-24, 74. See also J. Sutherland, Defoe (1937) pp. 110-125.

240. Review, Vol. I, Preface.

241. The Complete English Tradesman, I, p. 26.

242. J. Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 74-80.

never was a more inquiring mind than his in all matters relating to trade and commerce." (243) Professor Mathias, however, has recently described him as "the keenest observer of economic growth of his time" in his 'Tour'. (244) Even ... Heckscher, who did not usually allow much merit to mercantilist pamphleteers and regarded Defoe as a fresh and vigorous but "decidedly superficial writer", concluded that he made the most profound criticisms by any mercantilist author of one of the most important contemporary doctrines, the necessity of low wages. Although Defoe's dictum that the poor could not earn little and buy much was not far removed from the reasons, which Cary gave for his condemnation of low wages, Heckscher seized on this comment in Defoe's 'Plan' as one which denied categorically "the fundamental mercantilist idea that a country might become rich through the poverty of its people." (245) Defoe stated that if economists wished to promote manufactures by reducing the wages of those who made them "to the rate of those in China or India" there was no doubt that they might initially increase sales, but he asked, "what would be the Advantage? They would sell their Goods and ruin their People; the Benefit of which in the Gross, I confess I do not understand." (246)

This progressive outlook was in fact more apparent in his attitude towards social problems than in his economic thought

- 243. J. Sutherland, Defoe, p. 134.
- 244. P. Mathias, The First Industrial Nation, p. 161.
- 245. E. Heckscher, Mercantilism, II, pp. 170-172.
- 246. A Plan of the English Commerce, pp. 47-49.

and David Ogg argued that "no other writer had shown such an acute awareness of those things which contemporaries condoned and we condemn." Because he was "probably the first Englishman to realize the social and economic background of crime, ... His attitude to social problems was, therefore, not only more humanitarian, it was more penetrating than that of his age." (247) Indeed, Defoe provides many examples of what Professor Wilson has so aptly called "the other face of mercantilism." (248) Apart from his efforts on behalf of the keelmen's charity and his suggestions for insurance schemes, he was keenly aware of the hard lot of the seaman and he condemned prison conditions, the bankruptcy laws and high taxation on the necessities of the poor. (249) Even the severe attitude of "Giving Alms no Charity" towards the able-bodied begging poor is relieved by his recognition that the worst poverty was in large families which had been deprived of the labour of the father and that the sick and infirm ought still to be "the Charge and Care of the Respective Parishes where such unhappy People chance to live." (250) As Professor Mathias justly remarks, "Defoe, Hanway and a long train of philanthropists - the most humane of men in their generation - could only see the advantage in extending the opportunities for women's and children's labour." (251)

247. D. Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, pp. 322-323.
248. C. Wilson, "The Other Face of Mercantilism" Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, Vol. IX (1959).
249. Supra, pp. 342-350, 285-287, 373-389, 393-394.
250. Giving Alms No Charity, pp. 12, 25.
251. P. Mathias, op. cit., p. 201.

As a further example of Defoe's "intelligent journalism", David Ogg cited his efforts to raise the status of trade and tradesmen. Everyone recognized the importance of trade, "but social convention still decreed that connexion with retail trade implied something mean and even dishonourable." (252) Defoe never ceased to castigate such stupidity in a trading nation. Writing of "the Dignity of Trade in England more than in other Countries", he claimed that fewer of the nobility and gentry had advanced themselves by the sword than in other countries. Instead "Trade and Learning had been the two chief steps" by which the English gentry had raised their families and their fortunes. He had no regard for gentility devoid of merit and questioned the understanding of those who tried to depreciate the trading part of the nation, "so infinitely superior in numbers and in wealth to the families who call themselves gentry." It was with obvious satisfaction that he commended the social mobility in England which allowed the younger branches of the gentry to descend again "into the spring from whence they flow'd." (253) The fact that no other country, not even Holland, produced any writer who can be compared with Defoe shows the importance which trade had come to assume in the life of the nation and Britain's continued advance during the rest of the century may have owed more than a little to that continuous and extensive discussion of economic issues which he had sustained throughout three decades and which had furthered the economic education of his middling tradesmen.

252. D. Ogg, op. cit., p. 323.

253. The Complete English Tradesman, I, pp. 306-307.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is divided into four sections:-

- A. Defoe's works and books about Defoe.
  1. Defoe's pamphlets and novels arranged chronologically.
  2. Defoe's periodical writing.
  3. Defoe's letters.
  4. Defoe's library.
  5. Biographies and critical studies of Defoe.
- B. Contemporary printed and manuscript sources, arranged alphabetically by author or by the title of anonymous pamphlets.
- C. Printed collections of documents, records or statistics.
- D. Secondary works and articles.

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Because full bibliographical details are given in Professor J.R. Moore's excellent "A Check List of the Writings of Daniel Defoe" (Indiana University Humanities Series No. 47, 1900; now in a second edition, 1971) I have only given as much of the title of Defoe's works as will give a clear indication of the subject of the pamphlet or is otherwise significant. I have followed the same principle in the titles of contemporary pamphlets.

Unless otherwise indicated, all references to the works of Defoe and his contemporaries are to the first edition and to the British Museum copy.

I am greatly indebted to the Library of Liverpool University for the loan of microfilm copies of Defoe's works in the National Library of Scotland and in various American libraries.

The bibliography is confined to works specifically cited in the footnotes and throughout the place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.



A. Defoe's works and books about Defoe.

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