

SIR MARTIN WESTCOMB, and consul RUSSEL, in a letter to Sir PAUL METHUEN, at MADRID, dated the 22d of May 1715, express themselves thus: "The alteration they have made in regard to the duties which were paid in the reign of CHARLES II. has interrupted our trade, and will infallibly ruin it. Don JUAN ANTONIO ZAVALOS has caused an order to be published, by which all the favours granted to our merchants, and constantly enjoyed by them, are revoked; so that for the future all merchandize must pay all the duties of entry and export, according to the valuation of the tariffs, which in some kinds of merchandize will amount to 25 *per cent.* and in others even to 28."

THE rigorous and oppressive impositions, complained of in these letters, were not only contrary to several treaties, made and concluded between GREAT BRITAIN and SPAIN, but also to the engagements of LEWIS XIV. who, in the name of SPAIN, and in quality of plenipotentiary of his Grandson, previous to the suspension of arms, promised to the English,

"FIRST, That all the advantages, rights, and privileges, which the Spaniards had granted, or might in time to come grant to the French, or to the *most favoured nation*, should be granted to the subjects of GREAT BRITAIN.

"SECONDLY, That all merchandize of the growth and manufacture of GREAT BRITAIN, that should be sent to the INDIES from the ports of SPAIN, should be exempt from the duties of entry and export in SPAIN, and from those of entry in the INDIES. And that these conditions and these promises should be extended in the treaty of peace, in the most ample and convenient manner."

LEWIS and PHILIP had hardly gained their ends, by these promises, than they took off the mask, and interpreted them, as it best suited their own advantage; for even before the peace between the two Crowns was entirely settled, Lord LEXINGTON wrote home to the following purpose: "Affairs are not here
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“ upon the same footing on which they were before the suspension of arms ; for the King has told me in express terms, We know that peace is as necessary to you as to us, and that you will not break with us for trifles.”——

THE chief of the *Treaties*, mentioned above as infringed upon by PHILIP, and which relates to the general state of commerce between GREAT BRITAIN and SPAIN, is that of 1667 : for the treaty of 1670 chiefly respects AMERICA. It was regulated by the treaty of 1667, that the trading subjects of either crown should reciprocally pay no higher imposts and duties, than the inhabitants of the places themselves, where the goods were bought or freighted, usually paid ; that they should enjoy the same privileges as the natural subjects of each country enjoyed ; that it should not be lawful in either kingdom, under any pretence whatever, to detain the traders in the ports or harbours, or after their departure to sue at law their factors or merchants, on account of any merchandize put on board their vessels ; that English vessels arriving in the ports of SPAIN, or others, subject to the dominion of that crown, should be exempted from all visit or search of officers of contraband merchandize ; that any ships belonging either to SPAIN or ENGLAND, might, if it suited their convenience, land part of their cargo, in any road, and proceed to sea with the remainder, without giving any account to the custom-house ; and that, in return for merchandize sold, the payments should not be made *in copper money*, or in any other specie, but what the merchants should actually agree for. There is no occasion to mention any more articles of this famous treaty, since from those already given, it is sufficiently evident, that the trade was settled upon a footing very advantageous to both parties : and I cannot help wishing, that each nation saw so clearly their mutual interest in the observance of every article of this treaty, as might tempt them to form, upon the same principles, such a solid *Commercial Compact*, as should never be dissolved.

NOTWITHSTANDING the arts of French insinuation, our traffic with SPAIN is very considerable, and chiefly in the following articles.—We export to that country large quantities

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of dried and salted fish, called by them *bacalas*; likewise broad cloths, and woollen stuffs of various kinds to a great amount; silk stuffs, cutlery ware, warlike and naval stores, particularly cables and anchors; also watches, wrought brass, and prince's metal, toys, mathematical instruments, cabinet work, particularly of mahogany, wrought and unwrought tin, leather, lead, corn, dry and salted meat, cattle, butter, cheese, beer, hats, linen, vitriol, pepper, rice, and other products of our American Colonies; and, if we attended to it, we might supply them with great quantities of timber from those Colonies, as the Spaniards, tho' they have in some parts fine woods of excellent oak, yet from their inexpertness in felling trees, and want of roads, are in a manner entirely deprived of the use of them.

FROM SPAIN we receive the following articles: Wines, oil, vinegar, fruits of various kinds, viz. olives, raisins of the sun, raisins dried with ashes, called by them *passas de lexia*; raisins from ALMUNEGAR, a city on the coast of ANDALUSIA, famous for that produce; chefnuts, almonds, figs, citrons, lemons, oranges, cacao-nuts, Spanish pepper, pomegranates, fine wool, indigo, cochineal, materials for dying, kali, or barillia, and sofa, for the making of soap and glass, chiefly from ALICANT; quicksilver; some wrought silks, particularly from VALENTIA; and of late raw silk, balsam of Peru, vanillas, cake-chocolate of GUAJACA, salsaparilla, salted sea-brizzle, saltpetre, salt from CADIZ, salt from PORT ST. MARY'S, woollen counterpanes, and a remarkable fine sort of blankets from SEGOVIA, iron from BISCAY, sword blades, particularly from TOLEDO, gun and pistol barrels from GUIPUSCOA and BARCELONA, vermilion, borax, hams, snuff from SEVILLE and the HAVANNAH, soap, formerly a considerable article, but as we now make it ourselves, only a trifle, tho' there is still much of it annually run into SCOTLAND; and several roots and drugs of the growths of SPAIN and AMERICA, employed in medicine.

I HAVE not specified the *logwood* as an article of importation from SPAIN; for however it may have been such formerly, we may now hope to supply ourselves with it; as it appears by the

XVI. article of the present Preliminaries of Peace, that we have at length happily obtained the free and unmolested liberty of cutting it in the Bay of HONDURAS, on condition of demolishing all our fortifications erected there, and in other parts of Spanish AMERICA. But I could wish, that the liberty of cutting it had also been extended in express terms to the Bay of CAMPEACHY. Those who know the value of this article, will receive great pleasure on seeing it now well settled; for whatever our pretensions were, we certainly had but a very disputable title to this important branch of trade; and this will even appear from the perusal of the memorial of the Board of Trade, laid before his Majesty GEORGE I. and drawn up expressly to prove that claim.

THE Spanish trade to SOUTH AMERICA is carried on by annual ships, usually divided into three classes, the *Flota*, the *Register Ships*, and *Galleons*; of which the following is the most accurate account I could meet with.

THE *Flota* is a fleet consisting of three men of war, and fourteen or fifteen merchant ships, from 400 to 1000 tons burthen; they are loaded almost with every sort of goods which EUROPE produces for export; all sorts of woollens, linens, silks, velvets, laces, glass, paper, and cutlery; all sorts of wrought iron, watches, clocks, quicksilver for the use of their miners, horse-furniture, shoes, stockings, books, pictures, military stores, wines, fruits, &c. so that all the trading parts of EUROPE are highly interested in the cargo of this fleet. SPAIN itself sends out little more than the wine and fruit; this, with the freight, and commissions to the merchant, and the duty to the King, is almost all the advantage, which that kingdom derives from her commerce with the INDIES. This fleet is fitted out at CADIZ, and bound to LA VERA CRUZ: they are not permitted to break bulk on any account, till they arrive there. When all the goods are landed and disposed of at LA VERA CRUZ, the fleet takes in the plate, precious stones, cochineal, indigo, cacao, tobacco, sugar, and hides, which are the returns for Old SPAIN. From LA VERA CRUZ they sail to the HAVANNA in the Island of CUBA, which is the place of their rendezvous, where they meet the

Galleons. These are another fleet, which carry on all the trade of TERRA FIRMA, by CARTHAGENA, and of PERU, by PANAMA and PORTOBELLO, in the same manner as the *Flota* serves for the trade of New SPAIN. When the Flota arrives at the HAVANNAH, and joins the *Galleons* and Register ships, which assemble at the same port from all quarters, some of the cleanest and best sailing vessels are dispatched to Old SPAIN with advice of the contents of these several *fleets*, as well as with treasure and goods of their own, that the court may judge what *indulto*, or duty, is proper to be laid on them, and what convoy is necessary for their safety.

REGISTER *ships* are sent out by merchants at CADIZ or SEVILLE, when they judge that goods must be wanted at any certain port in the WEST-INDIES. The course is, to petition the council of the INDIES for licence to send a ship of 300 tons burthen, or under, to that port: they pay for this licence 40,000, or 50,000 dollars, besides presents to the officers, in proportion to the connivance necessary to their design. For tho' the licence runs only to 300 tons at most, the vessel fitted out is seldom less than 600. This ship and cargo are registered at the pretended burthen. It is required too, that a certificate be brought from the King's officer at the port to which the register ship is bound, that she does not exceed the size at which she is registered; all this passes of course. These are what they call *Register ships*, and by these the trade of Spanish AMERICA has been carried on principally for some years past: which practice has been thought as much to the prejudice of their trade, as it is contrary to all their former maxims for carrying it on.

LA VERA CRUZ is situated on the south-west part of the Gulph of MEXICO, and to the south-east of that city.

THE fleet which is called *the Galleons*, consists of eight men of war of 500 tons each, designed principally to supply PERU with military stores; but in reality laden, not only with those, but with every other kind of merchandize on a private account, so as to be in too weak a condition either to defend themselves,

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or protect others. Under the convoy of these are twelve fail of merchant ships, not inferior to the Galleons in burthen. This fleet of the *Galleons* is regulated in much the same manner with the *Flota*, and is destined for the *exclusive* commerce of TERRA FIRMA, and the SOUTH-SEA, as the *Flota* is for that of MEXICO.

As soon as this *Galleon* fleet arrives at CARTHAGENA, expresses are dispatched to PORTOBELLO, and to all the adjacent towns, but particularly to PANAMA, that they may get ready all the treasure which is deposited there, to meet the *Galleons* at PORTOBELLO; at which place all the persons concerned in the various branches of this extensive trade, assemble. There is no part of the world where business of such great importance is negotiated in so short a time; for in a fortnight the fair is over. During the fair, heaps of wedges and ingots of silver are thrown about upon the wharfs, as things of no value. The display of gold, silver, and precious stones on one hand, and of the various and rare workmanship of the several ingenious fabrics of EUROPE on the other, are truly astonishing.

CARTHAGENA is situated on the most northern point of TERRA FIRMA: PORTOBELLO and PANAMA are on the opposite sides of the Isthmus of DARIEN; the first on the north-east side, and the other on the south-west.

THE whole trade between the EAST INDIES and Spanish AMERICA, is carried on by one great *Galleon*, which arrives at ACAPULCO from the PHILIPPINE islands, on the coast of CHINA, in the month of December. They see no other land in their whole voyage of 3000 leagues, which they perform in five months, than the LITTLE LADRONES. The ship is laden with all the rich commodities of the East, as cloves, pepper, cinnamon, nutmegs, mace, china, japan wares, callicoes plain and painted, muslins of every sort, silks, precious stones, rich drugs, and gold dust. At the same time the rich ship from LIMA

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comes in, and is not computed to bring less than two millions of pieces of eight in silver, (450,000 l. Sterl.) Several other ships, from the different parts of CHILI and PERU, meet upon the same occasion; and besides the traffic for the Philippine commodities, this causes a very large dealing for every thing which those countries have to exchange with one another, as well as for the purchase of all sorts of European goods. The fair at ACAPULCO lasts sometimes for thirty days. As soon as the goods are disposed of, the galleon prepares to set out on her voyage to the PHILIPPINES with her returns, chiefly in silver, but with some European goods too, and some other commodities of AMERICA. I speak here, as though there were but one vessel on the trade with the PHILIPPINES; and in fact there is only nominally *one* trading vessel, the galleon itself, of about 1200 tons; but another attends her commonly as a sort of convoy, which generally carries such a quantity of goods, as in great measure disables her from performing that office. The galleon has often above 1000 people on board, either interested in the cargo, or merely passengers; and there is no trade in which so large profits are made; the captain of the vessel, the pilots, the mates, and even the common sailors, making, in one voyage, what in their several ranks may be considered as easy fortunes. It is said by the writer of Lord ANSON'S voyage, that the Jesuits have the profits of this ship to support their missions.

THIS commerce to so vast a value, though carried on directly between different parts of the King of SPAIN'S own dominions, enriches them in proportion but very little; the far greater part of every thing which comes from the PHILIPPINES, being the produce, or fabric of other countries. The Spaniards add none of the artificial value of labour to any thing. The Chinese are largely interested in this cargo; and it is to them they are indebted for the manufacturing such of their plate, as is wrought into any better fashion than rude ingots, or inelegant coins. When this ACAPULCO Fair is over, the town is comparatively deserted; however, it remains for the whole year the most considerable port in MEXICO for the trade with PERU and CHILI, which is not very great.

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The East-India goods brought here are carried on truces to MEXICO, from whence what exceeds their own consumption is sent by land-carriage to LA VERA CRUZ, to pass over to TERRA FIRMA, to the islands, and some even to OLD SPAIN, tho' in no great quantity.

ACAPULCO lies two hundred miles south of MEXICO, on the SOUTH SEA. MEXICO, though no port, nor communicating with the sea by any navigable river, has a prodigious commerce, and is itself the center of all the trade that is carried on between AMERICA and EUROPE, on one hand, and between AMERICA and the EAST INDIES on the other; for here the principal merchants reside, the greatest part of the business is negociated, and the goods that pass from ACAPULCO to LA VERA CRUZ, or from LA VERA CRUZ to ACAPULCO, for the use of the PHILIPPINES, and in a great measure for the use of PERU and LIMA, all pass through this city, and employ an incredible number of horses and mules in the carriage: Hither all the gold and silver is sent to be coined; here the king's fifth is deposited; and here is wrought all that immense quantity of utensils, and ornaments in plate, which is every year sent into EUROPE. Every thing here has the greatest air of magnificence and wealth. The shops glitter on all sides with the exposure of gold, silver, and jewels, and surprize yet more by the work of the imagination upon the treasures which fill great chests piled up to the ceilings, whilst they wait the time of being sent to OLD SPAIN.

THE trade between SPAIN and her colonies in AMERICA, which has been just described, is the most considerable part of their external commerce, and the great support of their navy; for, till our late breach with FRANCE, very few of their ships navigated into foreign parts; and the chief source that supplied the balance of their trade with other nations, arose from this branch. Their *internal* traffic is by no means proportionate to the numbers of their people, the natural advantages of their situation and climate, the abundance of raw materials which the country produces, and their INDIES supply them with; especially when we reflect on the many years of peace which they have enjoyed.