CONSIDERATIONS

ONTHE

Importation and Exportation of Beaver;

WITH

REMARKS on the HATTER'S CASE.

EAVER has for many Years past been imported into England, in a greater or less Degree, from all or most of the British Settlements on the Continent of North America; viz. from Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pensilvania, New-York, New-England, Hud-son's-Bay, and Newfoundland, as appears by the Custom-house Accounts of the Imports thereof.

The Hudson's-Bay Trade being in the Hands of a Company, they are obliged to bring all their Beaver to England: But the said other Colonies in America are under no such Restraint, and do manusacture the Beaver there themselves into Hats, or otherways dispose thereof, as they find it most for their Interest, notwithstanding any Law to the contrary: And nothing but the Profit to arise from Beaver in England, will induce them to bring it hither.

Of the Beaver imported into England, considerable Part has always been exported abroad, chiefly for Garments: And the lowest Prices have never induced the Hatters here, to take off any thing near the Quantity imported; so that if Foreigners had not taken off the surplus Quantity, it must have stopped the Importation.

The Hatters are now applying to the Legislature, to discourage the Exportation of Beaver from England, and thereby to reduce the Price of it: And, as the Grounds for such their Application, have, in a printed Case delivered by them, suggested, that the foreign Hat-trade has of late Years declined, and that owing principally to the Dearness of Beaver.

As to the Truth of which Pretence, that the foreign Hat-trade has declined of late Years, the following Remarks are made: And the Policy of giving into a Measure, to reduce the Price of Beaver, by discouraging the Exportation, is submitted to Consideration.

That the foreign Trade for Castor and Beaver Hats has not, of late Years, declined, appears most manifest from the Custom-house Accounts of the Exports thereof; which, on the contrary, shew the Exports have increased within these Twenty Years, to near double what they were.

And, in Confirmation of the Hatters Trade being increased, they are, at this Time, forced to employ therein great Numbers of Persons Non-freemen; and there is not the least Complaint of any of their Hands being out of Work.

That, further, the foreign Trade, in general, for Hats, does not depend fo much on Beaver, how specious a Pretence soever that may be made by the Hatters; as is apparent from the continual Increase of the Exportation of Hats for these Twenty Years past; and the Two last Years being the greatest of all.

And though the Import of Beaver has been less of late, and particularly from New-York, and the Rest of the Northern Colonies; yet, within these Two Years, the Advance on the Price has brought a considerable Increase from thence: And a Prohibition of the Export of Beaver from England, or other Discouragement, to reduce the Price of it here, which is what the Hatters aim at, can never be a means of increasing the Import into England, but must necessarily be attended with quite the contrary Essect, to the Loss of this Nation; since all the Beaver that is imported from America is purchased by the Produce, Labour, and Manusacture of Great Britain.

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