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Of the Jealousy of Trade David Hume

endeavoured to remove one species of ill-founded jealousy, is so prevalent among commercial nations, it may not be to mention another, which seems equally groundless. Nothing more usual, among states which have made some advances in, than to look on the progress of their neighbours with aye, to consider all trading states as their rivals, to suppose that it is impossible for any of them to flourish, at their expence. In opposition to this narrow and malignant, I will venture to assert, that the encrease of riches and commerce in any one nation, instead of hurting, commonly the riches and commerce of all its neighbours; and that state can scarcely carry its trade and industry very far, where the surrounding states are buried in ignorance, sloth, and.

It is obvious, that the domestic industry of a people cannot hurt by the greatest prosperity of their neighbours; and as a branch of commerce is undoubtedly the most important in any kingdom, we are so far removed from all reason of. But I go farther, and observe, that where an open is preserved among nations, it is impossible but domestic industry of every one must receive an encrease from improvements of the others. Compare the situation of GREAT at present, with what it was two centuries ago. All the both of agriculture and manufactures were then extremely and imperfect. Every improvement, which we have since made, arisen from our imitation of foreigners; and we ought so far to esteem it happy, that they had previously made advances in and ingenuity. But this intercourse is still upheld to our advantage: Notwithstanding the advanced state of our, we daily adopt, in every art, the inventions and of our neighbours. The commodity is first imported abroad, to our great discontent, while we imagine that it is of our money: Afterwards, the art itself is gradually, to our visible advantage: Yet we continue still to, that our neighbours should possess any art, industry, and; forgetting that, had they not first instructed us, we have been at present barbarians; and did they not still their instructions, the arts must fall into a state of, and lose that emulation and novelty, which contribute so to their advancement.

The encrease of domestic industry lays the foundation of commerce. Where a great number of commodities are raised and perfected for the home-market, there will always be found which can be exported with advantage. But if our neighbours no art or cultivation, they cannot take them; because they have nothing to give in exchange. In this respect, states in the same condition as individuals. A single man can be industrious, where all his fellow-citizens are idle. Riches of the several members of a community contribute to my riches, whatever profession I may follow. They the produce of my industry, and afford me the produce of my return.

Nor needs any state entertain apprehensions, that they will improve to such a degree in every art and, as to have no demand from them. Nature, by giving a of geniuses, climates, and soils, to different nations, secured their mutual intercourse and commerce, as long as all remain industrious and civilized. Nay, the more the arts in any state, the more will be its demands from its neighbours. The inhabitants, having become opulent and skilful, desire to have every commodity in the utmost; and as they have plenty of commodities to give in, they make large importations from every foreign. The industry of the nations, from whom they import, is also encreased, by the sale of the commodities which they give in exchange.

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But what if a nation has any staple commodity, such as the manufacture is in ENGLAND? Must not the interfering of neighbours in that manufacture be a loss to us? I answer, when any commodity is denominated the staple of a kingdom, is supposed that this kingdom has some peculiar and natural for raising the commodity; and if, notwithstanding advantages, they lose such a manufacture, they ought to their own idleness, or bad government, not the industry of neighbours. It ought also to be considered, that, by the of industry among the neighbouring nations, the of every particular species of commodity is also; and though foreign manufactures interfere with them in market, the demand for their product may still continue, or increase. And should it diminish, ought the consequence to esteemed so fatal? If the spirit of industry be preserved, it easily be diverted from one branch to another; and the of wool, for instance, be employed in linen, silk, or any other commodities, for which there appears to be a. We need not apprehend, that all the objects of industry be exhausted, or that our manufacturers, while they remain an equal footing with those of our neighbours, will be in of wanting employment. The emulation among rival nations rather to keep industry alive in all of them: And any is happier who possess a variety of manufactures, than if enjoyed one single great manufacture, in which they are all. Their situation is less precarious; and they will feel sensibly those revolutions and uncertainties, to which every branch of commerce will always be exposed.

The only commercial state, that ought to dread the and industry of their neighbours, is such a one as DUTCH, who enjoying no extent of land, nor possessing any of native commodities, flourish only by their being the, and factors, and carriers of others. Such a people may apprehend, that, as soon as the neighbouring state to know and pursue their interest, they will take into their hands the management of their affairs, and deprive them of that profit, which they formerly reaped from it. But this consequence may naturally be dreaded, it is very long it takes place; and by art and industry it may be warded for many generations, if not wholly eluded. The advantage of stocks and correspondence is so great, that it is not overcome; and as all the transactions increase by the of industry in the neighbouring states, even a people commerce stands on this precarious basis, may at first reap considerable profit from the flourishing condition of their. The DUTCH, having mortgaged all their revenues, makes such a figure in political transactions as formerly'. but commerce is surely equal to what it was in the middle of last century, when they were reckoned among the great powers EUROPE.

Were our narrow and malignant politics to meet with success, should reduce all our neighbouring nations to the same state of sloth and ignorance that prevails in MOROCCO and the coast of. But what would be the consequence? They could send us no: They could take none from us: Our domestic commerce would languish for want of emulation, example, and: And we ourselves should soon fall into the same condition, to which we had reduced them. I shall therefore to acknowledge, that, not only as a man, but as a BRITISH, I pray for the flourishing commerce of GERMANY, SPAIN, and even FRANCE itself. I am at least certain, that GREAT, and all those nations, would flourish more, did their and ministers adopt such enlarged and benevolent towards each other.