



A
DISCOURSE
Concerning The
UNION

THIS matter of the UNION being of the greatest concern to *Scotland*. I did apply my self with all the Serioufness I could, to consider it, and I do offer my opinion to the public k in the following manner.
1st. To Consider the present State of the Nation, and if an Union, be not a fit Remedy for our present Condition.

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2dly What sort of an Union seems best.

3dly The Objections against, and the Answers for an Incorporating union.

As to the present State, 'tis agreed to by Every body that we are in a decaying Condition, and I think not only so, but that we are the most neglected if not oppress'd State in Europe, never notic'd but upon Occasion, of some Design, of advancing our Trade or Interest, as soon crush'd by the English as thought on by us: The date of this Misery is as universally acknowledged to be since King James his accession to the Crown of England, our Sovereigns ever since being Engaged in the Interests of a Nation, that are Jealous of us, and think themselves obliged to suppress the Improvements of a Distinct State and people; lest such improvements might one day prove fatal to themselves, and how much the Interest of England will prevail with our Sovereign against our Experience and Common sense easily show.

In short, Every body seems sensible that some remedy should be fallen upon, for our present Miserable state.

There are three Remedies propos'd.

1st The rectifying of our Constitution by fixed Dyets for our Parliament, with power to them to chuse our Ministers and Officers of State: By this Remedy 'tis propos'd to have our Ministry independent of the English, and 'tis reasonable to expect they'll be at Liberty to mind and Contrive the Interest of their own Countrey; But I think this can signifie but little, unless we likewise take away the Negative in Parliament; Our Ministry Safe from English Influence may design good things; but while we Continue a Separat State from England, English Council will still Interpose the Negative, and cross all the good Designs of our Ministry; but no, this I conceive, will be able to do our business.

For 1st 'tis Impracticable, being now that the English are in possession of our Sovereign's Negative; for the same reason that they have hitherto oppress'd us, they'll stop such a Rectification.

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2do Granting that this Remedy could be throghed, 'tis seems to me a very improper remedy, because it lays the foundation of a grudge betwixt the two Nations, which inevitably would break out in an open rupture, and could never End, but in the ruine in one of them, for suppose our Constitution rectified; our Trade upon a right footing, and our Nation in a flourishing Condition; is it possible it could continue so? Would England sit still, and see themselves outstrip in some of the Chief branches of their trade. By a Nation that presently were to use this to their Ruin? no certainly, if Ever England, either by a false step of their Ministry, or a present pinch, (which indeed I cannot foresee) should yield to a Rectifying of our Constitution, we must Expect, that if all other means to Reduce it, fail, they'll have Recourse to open force, and how unfit we are for a War with the English at this time, wee'l see in examining the second Remedy, which is setting up a Distinct King.

The Setting up a distinct King, will not more Certainly than the first remedy, but I think more evidently provoke the Jealousy of England and how unfit we are, to maintain a Separat King and State, and a War with England, may be made Evident upon many Reasons, that I'm unwilling to put in print.

I shall Remember my Countrey of our Confusions and Divisions. We are miserably Divided in Episcopallians and Presbyterians, in Cavaliers & Revolution-foot men, these Divisions seem to make an Election very hard, and if by chance some party should prevail, the choice must fall upon the St. German Pretender, or some other; if upon the St. German Pretender he'll never rest here, if he's beat out here, we are undeniably undone, if he make good his pretensions to England, then we come to the same case we are in at present, and perhaps worse, for then all hopes of an Union must Evanish, and we made a tool, to oppress our Neighbours.

If we can suppose any other body so mad, as to accept our Crown, his Party at home will be very small, when he'll certainly be

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oppos'd, both by the Cavalier and Revolution Party, and all Foreign Assistance is a Chymera; If they should use France, what security have we for our selves, when England, who is now the Barrier of the Liberties of Europe, is either brought low or destroyed; and while France continues so great, Holland must keep time with England.

And I think the person that insinuates something for the K. of Prussia, is not well skill'd in that Prince's Circumstances with his Neighbours, particularly with the Swedes, who now is like to make an unwelcome visit to his Neighbourhood of Saxony: Nor will ever the King of Prussia be tempted so far to distract the Confederate Councils, to the endangering his native Estates; for any thing he can expect here.

I have endeavour'd to show the particular difficulties of these two Remedies: and to conclude the matter, I will ask one question of these Gentlemen, who so flatter themselves: Whether in this separate State, they would pretend we should still be inferior in strength to the English, or that we should exceed them? if we still be inferior, we can never make that Figure, and so never be in that Esteem with the rest of Europe that England is, nor can ever our Subjects pretend to these Advantages, or arrive at that height of Glory, that the English do, far less, to what the Subjects of the Great British Empire might pretend; and it cannot be denied, but that one day the Balance of Europe, may give England leisure to swallow us up. If it be pretended that we may exceed England, in this separate State, the Conclusion is very short, and no man after a serious thought, but, will conclude, that of necessity, before the English suffer us to exceed them, they'll venture a total Extirpation of us, or we of them.

My Opinion is, That there is no way to secure us of what we possess, or a Remedy to better us, but one, I mean, that England and we become one people, by which we become sharers of all the Riches, Plenty and Strength of England.

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The 2d Head I propos'd to consider, is what sort of Union seems best. There are two sorts propos'd, a Federal, and an Incorporate Union.

I never saw a formal Scheme of a Federal Union, nor do I think, a tolerable one can be devised. For while we are a distinct Sovereignty, there is still hazard of a Rupture, and when we see England jealous now in our low Condition, because of that hazard, how can we ever expect, (as is said above) that ever England will yield to the bettering our Condition? and the English Council have already declar'd themselves so positively upon this head, that there is no ground left for any further Dispute.

And if upon the present Juncture, as some alledge, we may force it from England, we cannot long enjoy it, and the hazard and difficulties of foreign assistance, are abundantly expos'd above.

Now I come to consider the Objections against, and the Answers for an Incorporating Union.

Obj. The Parliament cannot make an Incorporating Union, because the Parliament cannot alter fundamentals: And to strengthen this, they instance the Opinion of our Lawyers, Nisbet & McKenzie,

I never have regard to any mans opinion, but as I find it reasonable, and I'm always jealous of Courtiers, as they were at that time, and 'tis certain the politick of the Court of that time, was to oppose an Union. I'm sure any man that would examine the Laws made during these two Gentlemen's Ministry, will see very great Alterations, made in that which they call Fundamentals, and they going along with it: But to answer distinctly to the point; A People may be in a great hazard, (upon occasion) from their Constitution, as from any subsequent Laws, and therefore their Constitution ought to be alter'd, when occasion requires, which must be done by our Parliament; and to gather the whole Mob of

of the Nation together, to judge of the most intricate points of Government, and how to begin or end with such a Meeting, I cannot understand.

And *de facto* our King and Parliament have upon many occasions alter'd that which they call *Fundamentals*, instance, the change of the Succession from the nearest Agnate of age to an Infant of the straight Line. The assuming of Females into the Entail of the Crown. The assuming into the Body of the Parliament, & Discharging again of Church men, seem'd to me to put the matter beyond all Dispute.

There is a partial Objection made, I mean by a Party of the Nation, and that is, That Presbytery, a matter of Conscience, is in hazard by this Union: For my own part, this Objection should weigh little with me, for I could never yet find out, where either the *Jus Divinum* of Episcopacy, or Presbytery was founded in Scripture, nor do I believe, that ever any reasonable Man thought otherwise, who was not imposed on by Interest or Breeding: but this Presbyterian fear seems to me very groundless. Presbytery may be secur'd in *Scotland* with an irritancy, that in case the Parliament of *Great-Britain*, should touch Presbytery in *Scotland*, the Union should *de facto* be dissolved, and the same Security given for Episcopacy in *England*, Presbytery will be secur'd in *Scotland* from all hazard from the Church of *England*, because the Church of *England's* Security will be upon the same footing: but if there should be found difficulty, to get such Articles agreed too, the Addition of the *Scots* Representative to the Parliament of *England* will be mostly Presbyterian, and make the Presbyterian party of the Parliament of *Great-Britain* much stronger in proportion to the Episcopal party, than it is now in the Parliament of *England*; I say that Consideration, and the tenderness the Parliament of *Great-Britain* must always shew to innovate any thing in *Scotland*, seems an good Security, as Presbytery has in a separate State.

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'Tis objected, The great Resort of our Nobility and Gentry to *London*, will follow upon this Union, which will draw our Riches thither: To which I answer, That is infinitely more than compensats by our free Trade, in these particulars, beside others, the taking off the Imposition upon *Linnen-cloth*, *Cattel*, *Coal*, &c.

And the Importation of *English* Wool to *Scotland*, will be an extraordinary Advantage to our Cloath Manufactures, for 'tis Dearth of *English* Wool, occasion'd by the hazard of importing, is the best reason I know of, given for the decay of our Cloath Manufactures; No body needs apprehend from this, any hazard of the falling of the price of our *Scots* Wool; for just now we import as much *English* Wool as we have occasion for, but 'tis the hazard of importing ruins our Manufactures, and when we have *English* Wool cheaper, our Manufactures must improve, which certainly will make greater consumpt of our own Wool.

'Tis objected, What Guarantee have we? I answer, The best Security ever was thought on or desir'd in any Treaty, viz. The Interest of *England*: The Security and Interest of *England* will be so greatly advanced by an Union with *Scotland*, and that Interest and Security still advanced by a further Improvement of *Scotland*, That as I never heard any Reason, so I believe there never will be any found, but a naked fear, occasion'd by a National prejudice. And it is the same reason, makes me think a numerous Representative in the *British* Parliament, but a burden to this Nation, a few may represent matters, and there never will be occasion for a National Party.

So much in General to Dispose my Countrey men to what I think their Interest, I know there are objections prepar'd against the particular Articles of the Treaty, which as soon as I see publick, I shall Discover my opinion about them. In the mean time I will say, that if any thing be found amiss or unequal, I'm perswaded

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 swaded, the English will as readily help it, being the party that has most at the Stake, and must alter an *Union*, ever esteem our wellfare their own Interest.

I do Love my Country as well as any Man and though this may seem a needless Assertion, seeing I Discover not my Name; yet for my own pleasure, I do say I Love my Counirey as well as any Man, and I have as great veneration for the great Achievements of our Heroical *Progenitors*; and I think these who are Instrumental, in carrying on this *Union*, do as great service to this Nation as any of our Heroes, and no doubt their Memory will have an Equal Return from Posterity.

I am firmly perswaded, that if self-de- signs and prejudices were laid aside, this *Union* would appear, the happiest prospect ever this Island had.

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