

# **TREATISE ON POLITICAL ECONOMY**

**Antoine Montchretien**

**(1615)**



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# INTRODUCTION

This translation of Antoine Montchretien's "Treatise" is given from a transcription of Marcel Rivière's 1889 edition. The editing in the original is poorly structured, so I have provided custom paragraphing, as well as the partitioning of the books into chapters, to provide a more comprehensive reading experience. The original text has no such separation. The subtitles for the books in this translation, as well as the dedications, are accurate to the transcript, and are highlighted by quotation marks, to provide a verbatim reading. I hope you enjoy this effort.



# OPENING DEDICATION

## (“To the King and to the Queen”)

Your Most Christian Majesties,

This discourse, which draws its quality more from truth than artifice and which, compared with its usefulness, will prove, I am sure, shorter than it seems, is dedicated to you collectively, inasmuch as it belongs equally to you all. For, on the one hand, it is not permissible for man to separate what God, nature, and affection have so closely joined. And, on the other hand, it seems necessary that, as you share in the same concerns on the same occasions, that you should also be given the same advice concerning the welfare of your subjects and the repose of your sacred persons, since this is how you graciously receive it from the hands of those who devote themselves to your glory and to the advancement of their country, all that God has placed in them in terms of action, thought and speech. For my part, it is with the most devout reverence that I approach Your Majesties, with the most sincere gratitude that command belongs to you and obedience to us, that your sole authority supremely encompasses the power of all magistrates, both to command and to govern, and that it is not for us to lay hands on the ark to set it right.

In truth, it is easy for us to recognise disorder, for we see and feel it; but it is neither permissible nor possible for us to remedy it. We must be allowed to desire the best form of government, for all our happiness depends on it, but we are not capable of conceiving it as it should be. So many minds will never have a single, consistent opinion, which is essential in this matter. If everyone were free to choose what they thought best, not only would confusion ensue, but we would also obtain the least of what we desire most. Polykleitos, the renowned sculptor, made two statues at the same time; one according to the various fantasies of the people, the other according to the rules of his art. For the first, he constantly transposed and changed something at the suggestion and advice of everyone; but he brought the other to the point of perfection by following his own judgement. Finally, when he exhibited them to the public, one was admired by everyone, but the other was only a source of ridicule and mockery. ‘The one you criticise so much,’ he said, ‘is yours, and the one you praise so much is mine.’ If the nature of the disorders in which we now live required you to make

two different reforms, one according to the appetite of the common people, and the other according to the true maxims of state and police, which the practice of affairs teaches you, I have no doubt that the same would happen.

Leaving aside the imaginations of the vulgar, work only on your masterpiece, and on yourself. For everything that does not stem from uniform counsel is fraught with turbulence in its action and deformity in its end. What remains for us to do, with your permission, is to contribute the best we have, both in knowledge and experience, to the enrichment of your reason, so that, applied with a single discourse and the same judgement to the construction of the work, the whole may succeed to the immortal glory of Your Majesties, to the good of your subjects in general and of each one in particular.

We hope that Your Majesties will demonstrate their political skill and competence in this new restoration of order and affairs, not only by heeding the sound and salutary advice they receive daily from their subjects and most loyal servants, but also by supplementing all their omissions with their own initiative and particular knowledge. The Roman Senate, as Livy recounts, ordered without being asked that soldiers, who had previously received no pay, should be maintained at public expense; when the people heard this, ran to the palace to thank them, and, kissing the hands of the senators, humbly told them that they were rightly their fathers for granting them what they had never thought of, what their tribunes had never asked of them. The gratitude and thanks of the provinces of this kingdom will be no less towards you when they recognise that you also apply your royal intellect to the pursuit of the public good, beyond which, to tell the truth, all enjoyment of comfort should be but an addition. Good is all the more welcome when it is least expected. Our wishes and desires are no measure of what you can do for us; but your goodwill, which we believe to be infinite towards your people and, consequently, the future effects thereof, incomprehensible.

This is what first prompted me to undertake this work, and then to offer it at the feet of Your Majesties, with the most humble request that you accept it as a token of my affection for your service and for the good of my country. If you deign to take the trouble to read it, an honour I promised myself when writing it, you will notice how France today is like that great plane tree, to which its compatriot Themistocles refers, where everyone rushes for shelter and then, as

they leave, breaks off and carries away a branch; that, although it is fertile and abundant in all kinds of goods and conveniences more than any other country on earth, life there is nevertheless made as difficult for many as if they lived in the hot arenas of Africa or in the bitter ice of Scythia; that it was once watered by springs that are open and uncovered, but that, having been neglected for some time, it is no wonder that the streams have dried up; that the men who are considered the happiest live there in noble poverty; that the others, who are born into hardship and labour, if Your Majesties do not provide for them, leave only rich in poverty; although, moreover, the morals of all are equally corrupted by the admiration of riches, and the most enormous vice finds a wife there, while virtue can hardly find a husband.

May Your Majesties, moreover, not neglect to read it, if it pleases them, for the smallness of the matters that seem to be dealt with therein. Truly, the principles I propose are not the most obvious or magnificent, but I can assure you that if you give them the means to progress, they will soon increase and become very great in the end. Those trees of admirable size, where birds build their nests and which provide shade for passers-by and flocks, are produced from very small seeds. In the same way, a little water nourishes grass, fruit and flowers. Thus, the light and gentle rains that fall in summer, after a great heat, give a loving refreshment to the parched earth, from which the fertile vapours that water and fertilise it are generated anew. But just as the sun's strength and heat are needed to draw them upwards, so too must your power and affection be directed towards your people in order to revive in them this action, which languishes as if stifled in the absence of such assistance; so that, living in a happy abundance of all things, they may be obliged to bless your sceptre and to join all their wishes universally to those you make every day for the long duration of your life in perfect health and for the growth of this empire in power and glory.

Your most humble, most obedient servant, and most faithful subject, Your Most Christian Majesties, Ant. de Montchretien.



# CLOSING DEDICATION

## (“The King’s Privilege”)

LOUIS, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre, To our beloved and faithful Councilors holding our Parliaments, Bailiffs, Seneschals, their lieutenants, and to all our other Judges and Officers whom it may concern, Greetings. Our dear and well-beloved Antoine de Montchretien has informed us that he has recently written and composed, with much effort and labor, a book entitled: Economic Treatise on Trade, which he would very much like to have printed for public use. But fearing that after the bookseller who had undertaken its printing would have incurred great expense for this purpose, someone else might wish to print it to deprive him of his labor, he most humbly beseeched us to grant him the necessary and required authorization.

To which, inclined all the more favorably as we wish to reward the said de Montchrétien, we have permitted and granted him, and do hereby permit and grant him, to have the said Economic Treatise on Trade printed by such Printer and Bookseller as he sees fit, so that it may be sold and distributed throughout our Kingdom, countries, and lands under our dominion by the one who prints it. And so that he may not be deprived of either the reward due to the public's benefit from the printing of the said Treatise, or the costs and expenses incurred therein, We have expressly prohibited and forbid all printers and booksellers, and other subjects of whatever rank or condition, from printing or causing to be printed, selling, or distributing the said Economic Treatise on Trade, whether together or separately, under the pretext of any correction, change, or other form or disguise that might be made therein, for a period of ten full and consecutive years, beginning from the day the said Treatise is completed in printing, under penalty of a fine of five hundred pounds, half payable to us and the other half to the one who printed it, to whom We have further declared and do declare acquired and confiscated all copies of the said Treatise that may be found printed by others than to whom the said Montchrétien will have given the power to do so; which we have permitted and do permit him to have seized by officers of justice wherever they may be found, notwithstanding any objections or appeals whatsoever and without prejudice thereof, for which we do not wish to be delayed.

For such is our pleasure.

Given at Paris, the 12th day of August, in the year of grace one thousand six hundred and fifteen, and of our reign the sixth.

Signed by the King in his Council.

De Vabres.

And sealed with the great seal, on a simple tag, of yellow wax.



BOOK ONE: MANUFACTURING

**BOOK ONE**  
**MANUFACTURING**

**(“The Usefulness of Mechanical Arts and Manufacturing”)**

## PART ONE

### (THE MEANING OF POLITICAL ECONOMY)

Those who are called to govern the States must have glory, growth and enrichment as their main goal. What greater and more honourable purpose can Your peaceful Majesties apply themselves to; what more worthy and useful task can the people they admit to the administration of their affairs undertake, than to watch over and work for the order, the employment and accommodation of your peoples? To repair what time may have worsened by renewing and refreshing the good and ancient customs of this kingdom, to supplement and adjust what experience and reason of the times and affairs show to be useful and necessary.

By all the laws that govern this world, it is impossible for the old Estates to remain forever in the same state. Many vicious tendencies accumulate within them, which impede or divert their legitimate actions. But those who cannot restore them to good health must at least maintain them through good governance... Your State is composed of three principal members: (i) the ecclesiastical, (ii) the noble and (iii) the popular. As for the judiciary, I consider it to be the cement and mortar that binds the other three together.

This discourse that I present to Your Majesties does not touch upon it, nor upon the first two. These parts are delicate and require your own hand. It therefore concerns particularly the last, the most negligible in appearance, but in fact very considerable. For it is their first foundation, as in the disposition of the world the earth serves as a pedestal and centre for the other three elements. We can therefore say that without this body, which forms the bulk of the State, the rest could not survive for long without falling back into the mixture and confusion of its original chaos.

This third order is composed of three types of men: (i) labourers, (ii) artisans and (iii) merchants. They stick together and easily incorporate, as they symbolise the same quality and similarity of life, morals and temperaments, actions and conditions. Imagine that they are the fingers of the same hand, which the spirit of public necessity joins together in different ways, as if with a

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single spring; the three channels of common utility, which carry and pour water into the great squares of your cities, where all other men come to drink: the public fountain keepers must take great care to maintain them, lest this humour be lost underground through some leak, or be diverted elsewhere.

Among these three kinds of men are practised the effective arts, commonly called mechanical, having more regard to the hands that exercise them than to their own dignity. We note in mechanics the representations and images of the same prudence that shines in the liberal arts, in proportion to their greater or lesser merit. These are streams flowing from the same source and spreading incessantly through the necessities of human life.

These two great luminaries of philosophy, Plato and Aristotle, and their most famous disciples who followed them, who deliberately or incidentally dealt with the subject of policing, were well aware that common poverty, requiring common assistance, led almost from the outset to the gathering and association of men, from which arose the communion of cities and the habitation of towns. Thus Plato makes some men fit to command and others to obey, some men loving literature, and others agriculture, trade, the liberal arts, and mechanical measures; distinguishing them all according to the various metals, which he adapts to the natural properties of each, so that those who are more inclined towards gold are more inclined towards the most exquisite kind of life, those who are more inclined towards iron are more capable of hard and arduous trades; and so on for the others.

For we who are educated in the best schools, where we learn from the master and governor of all things that all things here below and above are governed by the eternal wisdom of God, and that we reduce everything to this point as the circumference to the centre, we are resolved that it is by no means by chance that we come to our profession, but that by a superior providence each one receives his lot in this public work of life, to which we are without exception born and destined, one and the same spirit working all things in all.

Returning to the ancients, even though they were so diligent in writing to us about laws, precepts and maxims concerning political government, we should not be surprised if, in such ignorance, they omitted or touched upon, as if by chance, in passing, what concerns the regulation of this point; nor should we be surprised if we find neither near nor far in their books any ordinances or means

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suitable for educating and training a certain number of men in the arts and crafts according to the capacity, disposition, usefulness and necessity of each country, even though the most essential part of a well-regulated state undoubtedly consists in electing and appropriately appointing men suitable for common and particular services, no more and no less than for the good government and conduct of a ship, it is necessary to choose the right captains and pilots, and then to arrange the sailors and shipmates well for the manoeuvre.

Who would not blame careless mechanics for not having the tools appropriate to their trade, or who, having them, would be ignorant of their names and even more so of their uses? And what reproach falls upon the politician, acting in his work not by inanimate means, but by instruments having feeling, movement and reason, if he does not judiciously know to what they can and must be applied, in order to bring forth that great masterpiece of salvation and public utility which must be the supreme law of all his imaginations and actions?

It is true that, in order to excuse these great men for such negligence, one might say that it did not stem from ignorance or lack of curiosity about such an important matter, but rather from a certain preconceived opinion they had that common necessity, which is itself considered the origin of the arts, acting and regulating itself in this matter, would suffice to remedy it; that, as evidence, the matter speaks for itself to those who wish to listen and take heed, as in all assemblies of civilised peoples there is a sufficient number of skilled people to perform public and private services, and all this without any political foresight.

Let us accept this reason out of reverence for antiquity, which we cannot honour too much. But let us also be allowed to assert this truth: that the main point of the government of the State lies in the regulation of the various occupations of its people, and that in human society the order that arises from this is like the principle of its life; that, if this foundation is not well established, the edifice always shakes at the slightest wind and threatens ruin; in short, that without this certain conduct and skill on the part of men, a republic remains far below the perfection and greatness it could achieve.

Let us consider here that, on the one hand, everything we see is, by its very impermanence so visible to our eyes, naturally subject to change and consequently to decay, corruption and ruin; that, moreover, if we look beyond

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the nature of the elements of which we are composed, we see that the poverty that afflicts us comes from our imperfection, our imperfection from our vice, and from our vice the pain that compels us to live in mental and physical labour.

This is like the imbecility found among men, for not one is capable of providing for all his needs, I will not say for many, but even for himself, and from this has come this multiplicity of arts, from which comes not mere ornamentation, but the wealth and ordinary exercise of those families which we have said make up the third member of the State, the demon of industry working diversely in them every day, and through their hands conducting useful things, acquiring wisdom, pleasantness, attractiveness, magnificence, and grandeur. Nature, wise worker and perfect artisan of all that is vegetable, sensitive and reasonable in the world, considering how necessary this industry was for the maintenance of the things she gives us to enjoy and use, conferred it upon man as a heavenly gift.

Let us take a general look at everything that can provide us with food and clothing, maintain our health and our homes, the characteristics of this virtue are so clearly imprinted upon them that, without blindness as obvious as it is voluntary, we cannot doubt that it is an inseparable part of our being, indeed the fundamental basis that nature has chosen to sustain the admirable architecture of its small world. Let us then consider the liberal and mechanical arts, where its light shines most brightly in so many rays; we will find them so necessary, useful and pleasant that the one we look at most will seem the most preferable; and then, descending as if by degrees from one to the other, we will judge that it would be difficult to do without any of them and that all together they form this marvellous chain of gold with several intertwined links, which moves and attracts to itself the things of this world, as well as that which Homer placed in the hands of his Jupiter.

Private affairs determine public affairs. The household comes before the city; the city before the province; the province before the kingdom. Thus, the art of politics depends indirectly on economics; and, as it owes much to it in terms of conformity, it must likewise borrow from it. For good domestic government, properly understood, is a model and pattern for public government, whether one considers right command or faithful obedience, the principal bond between the two. Good political administration is the universal health of the whole body of the State, and consequently the complete disposition of each individual member.

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For it is no less important to take care of the most humble parts than of the most noble, of the hidden than of the visible, since it is from those parts that are destined to serve the others that the labours most necessary for its maintenance and preservation arise.

Let us see how Nature, which the great politician must solely and principally imitate, distributes to all the members of our body, in proportion and measure, the nourishment they need, and that if any one of them does not receive its fair share, the spirits gradually cease to come to it, it atrophies and diminishes, and from it begins the dissolution of our whole body. This serious consideration should lead Your Majesties to diligently care for the common people in your realm. Now, you have many fine means at your disposal to do them well. God has appointed you as his lieutenants to provide for their needs and ensure their salvation. Of all the goods he pours out upon us from his bountiful barrel, you are the distributors of some and the preservers of others.

The main glory of your reign and the increase in the wealth of your people can be reduced to three main means: The regulation and increase of crafts and manufactures, which are now in vogue among us, or may be introduced in the future; The maintenance of navigation, which has declined, even though experience and reason should make it more important than ever; The restoration of trade, which is dying day by day in this kingdom. But, for the present, I will leave aside this point and that of navigation, to dwell on the first, which is the main subject of this discourse, reserving the right to discuss it with you another time, if I understand that Your Majesties find this knowledge as agreeable as it is worthy of them, as it is their duty to regulate and order things and men, and consequently everything that can be imagined and written on this subject.

According to Thales, the first philosopher and great steward, who through the industriousness of his mind can become rich in a year, a man is happy if he is healthy and knowledgeable. And according to Socrates, by the same judgement, knowledge is our only good and ignorance our only evil. He who speaks of the science of any art can become useful to others and can boast, with the wise man Apollonius, that he is a citizen of the whole world; for wherever he goes on earth, if it is inhabited by men, he will find lodging, be loved, and be sought after. Even today, the greatest German lords have their children learn a trade; I do not mention this as an example of duty, but to show how they believe that, in

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the event of banishment, servitude or necessity, they can draw from it help and support for their lives. It is an old proverb that all lands can nourish the arts.

There is no reasonable master who does not treat a skilled slave more favourably than an ignorant one. At the very least, good craftsmen differ from beasts in more than just their appearance. It is science alone that is truly free, as fortune finds little opportunity to exert its influence here. For it is the worst and smallest part of us, frail and worm-eaten, by which we are subject to it; but we are lords and masters of the best part, in which are situated and founded the highest qualities that are in us, good opinions and sound judgements, arts and sciences, discourses tending towards virtue, the immortal desires to do good, the honest affections to acquire honour, which are things of incorruptible substance, and which cannot be stolen from us.

After having made to Your Majesties a general recommendation of the arts and sciences and endeavoured to bring before your eyes their beauty in its own light, let us now join the two great points that make up the whole of human action, the useful and the pleasant. Just as fire ignites when it encounters a combustible body, so too does our natural affection for learning and knowledge warm and inflame itself in the pursuit of the arts, as well as its own natural object. Nature, giving man this beautiful gift of understanding, which elevates him not only above the beasts, but above man, but above the elements and even the heavens, wanted him to be like a blank slate on which he could imprint all kinds of spiritual images without confusion, and that his will be filled, like the first clay, with an insatiable desire to receive many forms, so that from his knowledge, like a well-stocked storehouse, he might draw the arts necessary for the maintenance and accommodation of life, which we may say are as many rays of his reason, flowing and pouring forth from the understanding through the will, upon the sensible operations, from which first and naturally proceeds all the sufficiency he can have.

Man is born to live in continual exercise and occupation. Contemplative life is truly the first and closest to God; but without action it remains imperfect and possibly more harmful than useful to republics. Therefore, action sometimes mixed with contemplation brings great benefits to human society. With civil occupations hindered and as if dormant in the bosom of contemplation, the Republic would necessarily fall into ruin. Now, that action alone is more

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profitable to it than contemplation without action is sufficiently proven by human necessity, and it must be concluded that if the love of truth desires contemplation, the union and profit of our society seeks and demands action. Aristotle rightly says of the one who separates himself from men, that he is either more than a man, having no need of others and being self-sufficient, or less than a man, since man is a social animal by nature and born, by the judgement of his reason, not only for himself, but for the benefit of his fellow citizens, with whom he must unite through mutual services and reciprocal duties. This is what nature teaches us in its various creations, which are all made for one another.

Now, what better testimony can a man give of the good he receives from his contemplation than by communicating it to others? In human society, civility is learned, the desire to please in order to be pleased is kindled; and, just as in the bodies of animals all the parts live, feed, and take on spirit and movement through the connection they have with each other, so too do men maintain themselves united and joined in their society by a chain of common affection and by that Gordian knot of respect for the public good, which can only be dissolved by the sword. It follows that the greatest service one can render to the State is to ensure that no part of it remains idle; and consequently that it is both useful and honourable to cultivate with industry and judgement the natural faculties of the men who live there, to make them suitable for the whole and profitable for the maintenance and preservation of the universal body of which they are animated members, causing action to burst forth from top to bottom, as the only vital spirit that gives it a vigorous pulse, a sign of its perfect health.

Your Majesties possess a great state, pleasant in its layout, abundant in riches, flourishing in its people, powerful in its good and strong cities, invincible in arms, triumphant in glory. Its territory is capable of supporting its infinite number of inhabitants, its fertility provides them with food, its abundance of livestock provides them with clothing; for the maintenance of their health and the contentment of their lives, they have the mildness of the sky, the temperature of the air, and the goodness of the waters. For their defence and housing, the materials are suitable and convenient for building houses and fortifying places. If it is a source of extreme contentment for your people to be born and raised in France, that is to say, in the most beautiful, freest, and happiest climate in the world, your glory should be no less than to hold an empire that can rightly be

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called incomparable. For France alone can do without all its neighbouring lands, but all its neighbouring lands cannot do without it. It has infinite riches, both known and yet to be discovered.

If one considers it carefully, it is the most complete body of any kingdom that the Sun can see from its rising to its setting, whose members are more diverse and yet better related according to the symmetry required for a beautiful state. In each of its provinces, all kinds of beautiful and useful arts can be established. It alone can be the whole world. The smallest province in France provides Your Majesties with its wheat, wine, salt, cloth, wool, iron, oil and woad, making it richer than all the Perus in the world. This is what draws them all to her. But of these great riches, the greatest is the inexhaustible abundance of her men, who know how to manage them: for they are gentle spirits, active and full of intelligence, of fine character, composed of an ingenious, artificial nature, capable of inventing and doing. This statement may seem paradoxical, but it is not. For although France is overflowing with men, and one might think that it is overwhelmed and burdened by them, this is, in a word, only due to a lack of order, and its greatest asset, through ignorance or negligence in employing them, becomes its greatest liability. Moreover, who does not know that this order is the entelechy of states, the first and most perfect act of these great organic bodies, and the well-coordinated harmony of the elements of which they are composed?

No animal is born into the world more foolish than man; but in a few years he can be made capable of great service. Whoever can make good use of this living instrument, this useful creature, capable of any discipline and any task, can boast of having achieved the highest level of economy in his household. And in matters of policing, the northern peoples make better and more regular use of it than we do today. Several great Roman men have derived great benefits from it in their private lives. Cato, among others, the elder Crassus and Cassius, the former of whom, as we read, spared neither time, expense nor diligence in instructing and training servants in this skill, which can make them fit to serve well and be profitable. We even find that he made a trade and merchandise of it. In France, we generally lack this knowledge; and yet we do not enjoy such a proper and domestic good enough to know how to use it, or we neglect it with too much nonchalance, to our detriment and to the detriment of the public.

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Hence, most of our men are forced to seek employment and work elsewhere, some in Spain, some in England, some in Germany, and some in Flanders.

How many more years will Raudent remain among us, able-bodied, robust, in the prime of life and health, wandering day and night here and there, without any profession or fixed abode? Everyone sees him every day with astonishment. The crossroads of cities and the main roads are swarming with them, and their importance draws from the hands of charity what it was accustomed to grant only to the old, the weak and the destitute. Truly, France has this glory, uncommunicable to any other country, that it has been established since ancient times as the true home of liberty; that slavery finds no foothold there; that even the serf of a foreigner is freed as soon as he sets foot there. But since, for good and Christian reasons, servitude has been abolished, it remains for the public to take care to employ men in crafts and works that combine private profit with the common good.

The man most knowledgeable in matters of policing is not the one who, through harsh punishment, exterminates brigands and thieves, but the one who, through the occupation he gives to those who are committed to his government, prevents there from being any. What can be achieved by establishing in each province of this kingdom several different workshops for various types of manufacturing, depending on what is convenient there. This will undoubtedly create fine nurseries of craftsmen, which will bring great wealth to the country. And this will undoubtedly bring down a thousand kings and a thousand gallows, without resorting to the thunderbolts of Justice, whose spectacles are as horrible as they are necessary.

There are several kinds of serfs; but those who are serfs by choice are more natural, having no shame in leading a miserable and needy life. These are Frenchmen unworthy of the name of liberty, and whom, with all justice and natural equity, one can compel to work. Thus industry will be promoted among a large number of men who languish uselessly. Thus the public will be relieved, and it will be proven that there is no art so small that it does not provide food and clothing for its man. Thus trade will increase, which is properly only the result of artifice; which is the basin of its fountain from which public necessity drinks, and which spills over its edges enough water to satisfy strangers, without allowing them to draw from it as they do.

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Our late King, of immortal memory, made known to many subjects his honourable passion for embellishing his kingdom with all kinds of artifice. He willingly accepted what was proposed to him for this purpose, favoured it with advantageous privileges, and sometimes provided the main nerve that gave it movement. His royal care flowed curiously through all the members of this State and was judiciously applied to whatever appeared likely to contribute to its greatness. These good intentions, which God undoubtedly placed in his heart for the benefit of his people, were followed by various outcomes, some profitable, others not at all in keeping with the sincerity of his intentions, but all of which serve to recognise him as a great prince and good king. He who attempts many things cannot succeed in all of them as he would wish.

In this laudable desire that possessed him, and which you must inherit as well as his sceptre, Your Majesties will allow me to point out to them a point worthy of principal observation, where error is common and almost natural to all men. It is that we usually value foreign things more than our own, and that we seek far away what we have close at hand. To see our neighbour's wife as beautiful in our eyes, pleasing to our imagination, we must not suddenly hate and despise our own wife. It would be more appropriate to judge dispassionately whether the unfamiliar makeup, the new look of a face, or the unfamiliar adornment does not corrupt our vision and bring illusions to our judgement, thereby corrupting it and giving it an advantage over the familiar and natural beauty that we possess, for in that case, would it not be better to add what we like, since it is possible for us to do so, and take every opportunity for contentment in what we have at hand, which we can enjoy without cost, acquire without effort, and preserve without danger?

I wish to make it clear to Your Majesties that France, your sole love and your dearest delight, is full of these fine arts and useful crafts, which foreigners who practise them like us would like to deceive us forever, appropriating for themselves, against all rights, this naive and legitimate industry. But anyone who wishes to judge this matter with sound judgement, without being swayed by opinion or appearances, will find that they have nothing more, I will not say, but that which is as perfect in their hands as in yours. All they borrow is a little foreign lustre and colour that our men could give them if they did not neglect it, being naturally endowed with a singular gentleness and propriety more than any

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others. There is therefore only this one flaw, if it can be called a flaw, that they cannot be charlatans either with their hands or their words; that they do not inflate the true value of the essence of things with vain superficiality; and that, in a word, they show themselves to be more apt to do good than to boast about it. Let us add to this a vice that is more ours than theirs, which is that most of us do not know how to recognise their competence, and that this leads them to distrust themselves.

Finally, to conclude with their faults rather than their virtues, they do not proceed in their work with sufficient order, and this is undoubtedly a great hindrance to their natural industriousness. The most royal exercise that Your Majesties can undertake is to restore order to what has been disrupted, to regulate and distinguish the arts that have fallen into monstrous confusion, and to re-establish trade and commerce that have been disrupted and troubled for a long time. If you could extract these three points from the chaos in which they are jumbled together and give them a proper and suitable form, then boast of having accomplished a great work, and that from its projection onto the imperfect metals of your subjects you will draw infinite treasures, inestimable fruits, and incomprehensible benefits.

Among labourers, it is not the one who has the most land who gets the most out of his labour, but the one who knows best the natural quality of each of his plots, which seed is most suitable for them and in which season he must sow them. The wealth of a state does not depend simply on its size or the abundance of its people, but on leaving no land uncultivated and judiciously assigning each person to their proper office. In any administration, there is no negligence more pernicious than not knowing those whom one commands, no laziness more prejudicial than not exploring what they are most naturally suited to. All this boils down to this point: that in the State as well as in the family, it is a mixed blessing of the greatest benefit to manage men well according to their particular and proper inclinations. And on consideration of this relationship they have with each other, with regard to the point of utility, combined with several other reasons that would be long to deduce, it is quite appropriate to maintain, contrary to the opinion of Aristotle and Xenophon, that one cannot divide the economy of the state without dismantling the main part of its whole, and that the science of acquiring goods, as they call it, is common to republics as well as to families. For my part, I cannot help but be astonished that in their political

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treatises, otherwise so diligently written, they have forgotten this public household, to which the necessities and burdens of the State oblige us to pay particular attention.

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# PART TWO

### (THE ANATOMY OF A STATE)

There is a great and very close resemblance between well-composed bodies of states and bodies of animals. Animals are governed by three faculties that are more different than diverse, which doctors call souls. The first is the vegetative soul, which they share with trees and plants, and which resides in the liver and the blood that is produced there. This soul nourishes the body and is dispersed in its members along with the blood in its veins. The ploughmen and labourers working the earth, hold the place of this soul in the Republic. The second is the sensitivity, which resides in the heart, the source of natural heat, and from the heart spreads throughout the body via the arteries. In the State, craftsmen and tradesmen are properly like this faculty. The third is the animal and has its seat in the brain, where it presides over instincts and actions and through the organs of the nerves divided into several branches, gives movement to the whole body. The merchants who are in civil society can with much reason be assigned to the latter. Through these three kinds of men, (i) labourers, (ii) craftsmen and (iii) merchants, every state is maintained, sustained and nurtured. Through them all profit comes and is made, and are the various digestion, no more and no less than in the natural body, always transmuted into something better.

All wealth, which comes and goes in republics, as from one hand to the other, passes through these three degrees of honour, designed to develop and perfect the child of profit, which is born, moreover, as from two living springs that never dry up, from the mind and the hand, operating separately or jointly in natural subjects. Whether we look at one or the other, your peoples have the most vivid and abundant sources of it. For this reason there is no clay in their bottoms. They have no need to seek this fire from their neighbours. They are composed of a choleric humour, to which Galien gives prudence in negotiations and activity in work.

Moreover, we must not draw any conclusions to their disadvantage from the fact that several famous men, following in the footsteps of Caesar, Tacitus and Trebellius Polio, have considered them to be light. All the more so when, if the intention of these judicious authors is fully explored, even though they are passionate about other things and do not favour us, it will be judged that this title is more honourable than offensive to us; and that under a word of

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ambiguous interpretation they would designate our best listeners, that natural lightness and promptness which we have in all things. For it is indeed true that there is no nation in the world with a sharper mind than the French, better born to arms, letters, merchandise and artifice. Your Majesties can see this enough every day, as they pass through the rushes of your great city of Paris, which is not a city, but a nation, as Aristotle of Babilone said; and, to stoop as far as truth allows, which is not a nation, but a world.

For the glory of weapons, this is a point seen at the tip of the spear, two thousand years ago. For the honour of letters, and especially of elogution, since the famous Athens and the great Rome, no one disputes it with us; even so we have a good share in that of the latter. As for the abundance of merchandise and the men who work in it, there are more merchants in France and more trade harvests than there are men in any other kingdom whatsoever, than there are useless herbs and fodder. As for the industry of arts, it is from us that all other peoples derive it. And we still have, as if by right of precipice, more than they do. You lack only one thing, O great State: knowledge of yourself and the use of your strength!

Honour nourishes the arts and the arts nourish men. It is from the affection shown to them by great kings, princes and lords that flows and insinuates into them the sap that sustains them. Thus painting and sculpture became popular in Greece and Asia under the great Alexander. This is how letters came into vogue among us under the great king Frangois. And since then, in our time, arms and the structure of buildings have flourished under our great Henry. When your Majesties wish to favour fine minds and reach out to them to draw them out of the crowd of the people, where they are pressed down, hidden and held back by a fatal necessity, they will discover by this means and open up a thousand sources of profit perennially increasing in glory and prosperity. Then, once their waves of gold, more precious than those of the Pactolus, have taken their course not only through this kingdom, but from this kingdom throughout the world, people will come from both ends of the earth to drink and enjoy themselves, but your natural subjects first. For it will never be reasonable, either by law or by example, for foreigners to be equal in privileges and to compete with citizens in all advantages. Human society commands us to do good to all, but to our servants over all. We would need a small piece of the Anglo-Saxon spirit in this situation.

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It was not without great consideration that Solon, a great man of trade and negotiation, made a law which did not allow a foreigner the right of the bourgeoisie in Athens unless he was exiled from his country. Our twelfth King Louis, having the same regard for those whom he had admitted to the use and participation of our rights as Solon had for those whom he wished to ban from his republic, revoked the privilege of naturality from all foreigners who had withdrawn from his kingdom. For certain reasons, they may be forced in times of peace as in times of war, or admitted subject to certain conditions. Let them have free access among us, as they have always had more than anywhere else in the world; but at the very least, let their negotiations and privileges be limited and circumstantial.

The ancient Greeks called them enemies, as did the Latins, according to the remark made by Cicero in the twelve tables; and even today they are called our 'hostes' in our common language. In some seasons, the reason of the State commands the princes to attract them. Thus our eleventh Louis repopulated his city of Bordeaux, allowing all foreigners, both friends and enemies, especially the English, to enjoy his privileges. Thus Richard, King of England, filled his main city of London with craftsmen and merchants, granting native rights to all those who lived there for ten years. Thus the great king Frangois, having built Le Havre in Normandy, in a short time domiciled a large number of families, attracted to his new walls by the exemptions he gave them. Now that France has no more emptiness than nature, you don't have to work very hard on your royal thoughts to evoke foreigners. They come of their own accord, but more to take away than to bring.

Your Majesties must, of course, receive a little better than others and more willingly those who, as for the payment of our bourgeoisie, can communicate to us some profitable and advantageous industry. The examples of our neighbours, who make better use of us than we do ourselves, lead and instruct us in this. A fine mind must enjoy its natural rights in everything. There is often as much distance between one man and another as between man and beast. Emulation is in all things a great spur to good deeds. There is no shorter way to make those who practise them reach the top very quickly than to make them compete in industry as if in a powder fight for honour and prizes. This forces them to look

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after themselves more closely, to consider carefully everything that can help them to facilitate their art, and to organise their work better.

Consider that even in theatres our singers and comedians are all languid, unchalant and unwilling to show what they know when they perform alone in a village; but, if there is another company, then by uncontention and envy who will win the prize they make every effort to do well, and not only prepare themselves, but their stage and their instruments themselves, with all the care and variety they can bring to it. In this public work divided into so many arts and trades, your subjects must be made to observe one thing above all: not to mix and diversify it so much in one hand. The Germans and Flemings are more imitable, who willingly do only one job. So they do it better, whereas our French, wanting to do everything, are forced to do it badly. This is a great hindrance and distraction from the right path, which leads to the perfection of a singular thing. The mind becomes weaker, applying itself attentively to various subjects, and cannot have the time or the strength to find what it is looking for, what is good, when it is diverted by necessity or curiosity.

To remedy this and prevent the fickleness of our inclination to change, Your Majesties will allow, if they please, that in the various provinces of France, several workshops be set up for the devices that are universally needed, giving the superintendence and management of these, with useful and honourable privileges, to capable minds with the intelligence required for each according to their species, so that they can divide the tasks and labours between the craftsmen according to their ability or natural ability. And from this well-established order will arise the exquisite science and excellent practice of the arts and trades for the good and utility of your subjects, to the recommendation of your prudence and to the glory of this State.

But, inasmuch as we are not perfect and do not live with perfect people, let us speak of this point according to the course of the world, where everyone takes his aim at profit, and turns his eye wherever he sees some glimmer of usefulness, to which man is inclined, either by nature, or by food and custom that is said to be second nature. Also the most skilful, and who have better studied the book of affairs by (being) determined from common experience, have held that the various necessities that each felt in his particular, were the first cause of general communities. For the most common bonding of men and

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their most frequent coming together depends on the help they give each other and the mutual services they render each other from hand to hand, but in such a way that each is more inclined to his own particular benefit as if from his own movement and to speak of this other general movement that nature gives him, without his being almost aware of it, as his primary motive. So much hassle, so much labour by so many men, has no other aim than gain. The circle of business is reduced to this centre; the necessity of movement circumscribes this point.

Nature gives us being; we get good being partly from discipline, partly from art. Leaving aside discipline, which, if it could be done as easily as we might wish, should be the same and equal for all, since it is important for the good of the State that all live well and honourably, let us stop our discussion on the arts, which, as we have already said, are as diverse among men as the customs of life are different. To speak of them generally as they are practised, I will reduce them to those which provide us with the necessary, the useful, the healthy and the pleasant, insofar as they all work for some end, and their end consists principally in these things.

If we want to repeat this point from its origin, since the earth, cursed by the transgression of our first kinsmen, was condemned to bear brambles and thorns, toil and labour were given to us and handed down to us as if by right of succession, according to this decree: "You shall eat your bread by the sweat of your brow". So life and work are inseparably linked. So we cannot live without food, and we cannot have this food without tilling the earth, and from it men take it, insofar as all live naturally from their mothers. Of this laborious agriculture which, continually, fights against its sterility and the strength, by doing it well, to give some reward for so much toil and to pay the wear and tear of so many loans. Hence the care required for planting and maintaining vines and other fruit trees. From there, the water recirculated to water the meadows, in order to germinate and grow herbs. Then there is the care and feeding of the livestock, whose flesh we eat and whose clothes we remove for clothing. It is mainly in these things that the rustic life is occupied, of which agriculture is the work and the science.

If we are to abide by the maxim that the most ancient is the best, then the art of farming is certainly the best of all, and the ancients called it holy and sacred either because they considered it to be such, or because those who practise it are

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tranquil and peaceful, friends of simplicity, enemies of tumult and of all discord. To cut a long story short, ploughing, and this is the opinion of Aristotle and Cato, must be considered the beginning of all faculties and riches, under which or with which is included the cattle. In the time of our fathers, the best people, even our nobility, lived in the fields, with as much contentment as rest of mind. Since the cities have been frequented, mischief has increased, idleness has formed, luxury has been fed, and idleness has become fashionable. Between us now, as between the Thespians, it is a shame to handle the earth. Who can have changed the nature of things? Was it reason or opinion? Was it virtue or vice?

Notwithstanding this disdain for ploughing and this contempt for ploughmen, I don't think there is any country in the world where more of the one is made, where more of the other is found, than in France. More men would still be employed in this noble work, for the great good and profit of this kingdom, if most of them, convinced of a false honour and often illegitimate gain, did not throw themselves, as in a safe harbour, sheltered from storms and tempests, into the arms of public offices, This superfluous and burdensome exercise ceasing, they would be forced to go back to cultivating their own land, now entrusted to farmers, mercenaries or servants who are more concerned with increasing its value and fatness than with tending and improving it. It is true that our peasants have degenerated a great deal and are becoming worse every day; our land, likewise, seems to be suffering as a result, but that is our fault.

They forget us as we have forgotten them; they despise us as we have despised them; they are anxious to do good and those who do it to them or make them do it only as little as they can. They are treated like slaves; they only work for pay. Let us not blame the untimeliness of the seasons or the malignity of the stars for this, even if it were possible to avenge them; the closest cause of their infertility is the poverty of the farmers. How few there are who own them in their own right, and as their work is all for others, do they not lose the care and desire to do it well? How many of them are not distracted by their disputes and squabbles? And yet, is the land free of the weeds that choke the good seeds? How many are there whose harnesses are dying of hunger, and who are themselves malnourished? And how will they be able to work hard and tread on the ploughshares? All of these problems have been apparent for many years and will become more noticeable and more frequent if Your Majesties do not, out of their goodness, order them to do so.

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As the humours always flow to the lower and debilitated parts, it is always the people who suffer most from all these burdens. It could be said that ploughmen are the feet of the State, for they support it and bear all the burden of the body. Your Majesties must guard against weariness, for if they grew weary, the head would suffer like the other members. He would no longer go where he wanted if he lacked them. You must therefore take very special care of them. It is through them that you bind your armies, that you pay your garrisons, that you equip your places, that you fill your savings. It is through them that your nobility lives and that your towns are fed. And, if we take it this way, we can say that they are still to the State what the liver is to the body. One produces the blood by which spirits are carried and distributed to all the members; the others provide the food by which life is sustained; so that you yourself need their help as well as your subjects, who all together, I have no doubt, speaking through the mouths of your three States assembled, will intercede very humbly with Your Majesties on behalf of their nourishers and will obtain the satisfaction and contentment that deserve so much labour taken for the public, soaked in sweat and very often in tears.

If, naturally, one is obliged to love and preserve some, is it not those who sustain oneself and others? If charity must have a certain outlook and distribute the effects of its piety by certain degrees, for whom should it be used sooner than for weak and innocent men? If justice, to which God entrusts the protection of the poor as well as the maintenance of the rich, is subject to watch over the good of all, on whom will it bind its eyes more openly than on those who are exposed to any insult? For the rebels themselves, numbers often provide an opportunity for forgiveness and salvation. What need is there to flee from those who are always ready to obey? We always relieve the most willing as much as we can.

And what people should be more shunned than those who stretch out their neck to the yoke and, having received it, bear it so gently? In conclusion, anyone called to govern the people must love them in order to be loved by them. For their love is their firmest bulwark and their impregnable fortress. Whoever loves them does not impose burdens on them that he would not like to touch with his fingertips; for he himself weighs them down and judges them carefully whether they are equal or disproportionate to their strength. And whoever spares them in

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their burdens, measures them to his advantage in case of need. For everything they have is his by power and goodwill. You have to work to feed yourself and feed yourself to work.

## **PART THREE**

### **(THE ART OF ARTS)**

This is why I have briefly dealt with what has been said above about agriculture, in order to move on to the particular subject of manual labour on some natural subject. For natural things are the principles of artificial things, which properly belong to man, according to the Trimagist, who says that "the rays of God are actions; those of the world are natures; those of man are arts and sciences." The arts, in truth, are not as absolutely necessary to our life as agriculture; but they are made so by usage and custom, and without them it would be lacking and imperfect.

Thus art, which is merely an imitation of nature, applying itself to the handling of several things, which without it would remain useless or of little use, faggots them into many kinds, according to the intention of the person exercising it, either for his own convenience or for that of others, which makes it more or less practicable, according to whether it is more or less great. Natural things that are more easily communicated, as being more perfect and closer to divine virtue, are more highly esteemed. For example, the air we breathe, the light we see, the fire that moves us. In this way, the artificial ones that are more widely used merit first place in a State, for the sake of utility. Every society must be abundantly supplied with them and from itself. It must not borrow elsewhere what it needs: for, being able to have only the mercy of others, it becomes weaker by the same amount.

Whether she probes the earth in several places, digging down to Vargile, according to Plato's precept, to obtain this water, it is only necessity alone that should compel her to take elsewhere what she does not have. What each person takes with them is properly their own, not what they have acquired or borrowed from others. To provide themselves with all commodities, they must spare no labour. This can only be done through all the useful and honest arts. Since usefulness is our main consideration, which of the arts should we start with than forging, without which the others cannot be used? As some naturalists say, that in the beginning, the world did not want to be a world, and that the bodies did not want to join and measure together to give nature a common form, so that everything remained in turmoil and combustion, until, as the earth grew in size by means of the bodies attached to it, it began to give itself and its surroundings

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a firm and secure base for all the other bodies, It is thus possible to imagine that the arts, confused and confused in the ideas of the first men, not wanting to be incorporated from several different parts and stubbornly mixing them, would never have achieved the union and correspondence in which we now see them, if this art, which contains them all in power and reduces them all in action, had not given them a firm and lasting consistency in the future.

We will call it the art of the arts, the common element of their elements, the hand of all working hands, the first instinct of invention; and we will say that it is, alongside the others, which are moved by it, the mover and organ of movement; the means that the imagination, stirred by curious research, has found in nature to bring to perfection everything that depends on artificial operation. His labour is also employed on a metal that can be transformed into any shape you want, that can be turned into all sorts of uses, that has so much strength on the most solid bodies, that explains the way to all works, that indeed throws many men into their grave before time, but that also preserves and gives life to many others. This art, therefore, so great, so universal, so necessary to all your peoples, so dear to the Barbarians, so sought after by the savages, must be singularly commended to you, when there would be no other consideration than this: that through the weapons it manufactures, the glory of this State has risen to Heaven, its boundaries have spread from sea to sea, and its virtue - this name properly belongs to our value - has made all the peoples of the earth tremble.

I say this to shut the mouths of those who would accuse me of speaking to such high and exalted Majesties about things which they consider to be so low and mechanical, without considering that all this discourse tends only to bring your eyes back to your poor people to recognise what their life and exercise is in order to induce you to reopen the sources of their gain, whose streams are gradually drying up and will soon run dry, to put the work of this Kingdom back on credit, to relegate idleness to foreigners, in short to give everyone the opportunity to be content, to complain to no-one but themselves. To continue my speech, I dare to assure Your Majesties, - and when, and if I prove with necessity the usefulness of the art of which I speak, - that there are more than five hundred thousand people in your State who live as salamanders in the midst of this fire, that it extends to the rest in so many different trades that it would take several pages to enumerate them.

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I think I have now done the main thing if I can make Your Majesties understand that not a single one is missing and that all of them can be practised perfectly, that our neighbours have learnt them from us and that the schoolboys do not yet feel the masters. England is a sufficient example of this, which since our civil wars, taking advantage of the confusion in this Kingdom, has learned so well from the skill of our men, who came to her as if to a port of refuge, that she now practises with glory and profit these same Arts that we had long kept as our property, from whose work we alone made do; in such a way that we have even entertained our gain, now retained by his labour for herself. Our men still live with her and their children are to her like trophies of our deprivation. It is to them alone that they owe the manufacture of all kinds of weapons, locksmithing, cutlery and all other trades of a similar nature. What I say about England, I say about Flanders and especially about Holland. For in this very subject, it owes us more than it owes the Germans, even though it is so similar to them in genius, language and customs.

Germany has always claimed a large share of the credit for ironworking; but the work we make of it, apart from the opinion which puts a price on foreign things, has always been well worth and is worth just as much as theirs; and when I say better, the proof will not contradict me. It is the custom of people to prefer labour to foreign artifice; of us of all people, who love nothing so much as what we do not know. Who can do it himself, must he do it through someone else? Is he a good farmer, who puts his hand in his purse to buy what he can gather from his own land, who in order to make someone else's land worthwhile leaves his own fallow, who, having arms, cannot find them to work and turns to his neighbour? Your Majesties have enough men in this kingdom, as industrious or more industrious than foreigners. Give them a way to show what they know how to do, and they will do wonders. This way is to no longer allow their labours to be choked by those of others, but instead to allocate to them all the manufacturing composed of iron and steel, so that from now on they do not just live, which they do with difficulty, but that they live by making a profit from their work, and this will undoubtedly result in the glory, strength and wealth of this State. Otherwise, there can be no doubt that, as they continue to lack earnings, these very necessary arts, which are already very hard-working, will in future be abandoned as unsuccessful, which cannot happen without universal damage. Remedy this in time. Do not let the forge window go out; it is easier to keep it than to relight it if it is dead.

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Firstly, I represent to Your Majesties that all hardware, in the manufacture of which both inside and outside the kingdom, not only towns but entire provinces are engaged, can be made abundantly and at a very reasonable price in the countries of your Lordships, that to admit and receive foreign hardware there is to take the lives of several thousand of your subjects of whom this industry is the heritage and this work the basis of their income; it is to diminish your own wealth, which is made and increased by that of your peoples. It is to cut the sinews of your State and seek to keep the instruments of its value by borrowing from others. If you did not have such men, they would have to be summoned from all sides, in their hands is the main service of the Republic. The Turks and many other peoples are well aware of this, and they keep them when they can catch them. Too many of them once left this kingdom. If they had remained here, we would be stronger and richer. In the time of our fathers, what thing was more forbidden than carrying iron and weapons to barbarians? What did they think of those who showed them how to handle and manufacture them? It's like cutting your own throat with your own coat.

As far as major works are concerned, if Your Majesties consider the profit that can be made from them as much as foreigners feel it, they will give orders for the country to provide itself with them, through work that is as abundant as it is legitimate. If it can easily do so, it will prove itself by effect when it pleases you to order it. If he can do it better than anyone else, every day experience proves it by the value and price of his work. So make us happy with the fruit of our industry, that is to say, give us back to ourselves. Make us worth what we are worth. Make us known for what we are, so that people cease to think that rough and coarse men have more delicate hands than us, more ingenious minds, bodies that are more patient with work, or that, on the contrary, artifice is natural, industry ordinary and labour pleasant.

The thing itself seems to persuade us of what we have not yet been able to recognise and practise by judgement. Let us stop and look at one particular example, as it would take too much time and too many words to go into everything in detail. There is a great deal of counterfeiting going on in this kingdom. Every year Germany uses almost all its hammers to forge them for us. Almost the whole of Lorraine imitates and seconds it in this work; both are driven by profit. And yet what do our craftsmen, who are much better and more

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loyal, do? They hunger and languish. Is it because they don't know how to make this work? Nothing less; their tools sell for twice as much. This is the grievance, we are looking for cheapness, and yet we approve of the abundance in which it is found.

He who knows little of the nature and use of things esteems them otherwise than by their end. One would give lead the shape and form of a scythe, but not the quality required to cut grass; one would make a sickle of tin, but its teeth would be too soft to cut wheat. You could make a gold or silver cob, but, if you thought you could, it would not be so much for the service as for the material. This makes it easy to understand that all tools have their price for their use and that it decreases the more they leave it and are less capable of it, I am constantly assured that by working faithfully they cannot give them at such a low price as the French, who are doubly obliged and to flee well, both to earn and to avoid the decay which would ruin them. But of the foreigners, if there are any good ones, one among six, that is a lot; I am talking about the best; for the others, barely two or three per hundred.

So who does not know in what esteem all this work is held by France? Who, walking through the countryside, does not hear the complaints of poor labourers deceived in their purchase? Who, in the towns, does not see the rubbish that the merchants have in their shops? The remedy for no longer being deceived in this way, and for retaining in France more than eight hundred thousand livres that these goods generate every year, is to restore the factory industry, which is losing ground, and for this purpose, as I have predicted, to set up a workshop in each province, the labour of which, combined with that done in the country, which is much more legitimate than abroad, will be able to supply it usefully, and even with savings. Because Germany and Lorraine are no longer abundant in this kingdom, it will be easy to reduce the price, by the certainty of unloading, which is the only and most important factor in manufacturing. Nothing causes so much vility as abundance; abundance comes from the labour of many; and the labour of many cannot be lacking and in things that sell well. In this way, the country will be doubly profited, by the manufacture of work and by the employment of its men. In this way the work will become more legitimate, recognised as such by those to whom it is shown, or rejected if it is something else. Thus the fraud that will be practised in this art will be

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detrimental to its authors more than to the public; for now who is not caught in it?

First of all, everything that has the appearance of a fake is sold as a fake, iron as well as steel; they cannot be discerned with the eye. There is some deceit, it is only for the form; it is done by people without knowledge. Moreover, it is not only in the large cities that they are debited, but in the towns and villages where the assemblies and marches are held. More than a hundred thousand of them are brought in from all sides, and they are carried here and there through our provinces, and God knows who is not deceived. I say the same of sickles, and of all other such merchandise, for the sale of which the fairs use the cheap price as a lure on which the people are induced to throw themselves by poverty, and very often and for lack of anything better. The inconvenience for those who handle the arts of forging has never been so great as it is at present. I will make Your Majesties aware of this when the opportunity arises.

Germany is very keen on this type of work. The largest towns are populated by its craftsmen, who mainly unload in France, because it is the country in the world where everything is done better and more quickly. However, they have never had it so easy as in recent years, when, instead of long and costly land carriages, the Dutch have opened up and made it easier for them to use sea carriages, which are now used to bring in these heavy and massive goods at much lower cost. Thus your men, who, because of the distance of the places and the long crossing of the roads, were less inconvenienced by the foreign manufacture, are now suffocated by it, or even see themselves almost all forced to give up work. Added to this is the fact that there is no one with the spirit or the means, who has yet begun to use the machinery by which these works are easily advanced and completed; This is not due to a lack of knowledge and expertise, but rather to the fear we have of not being unloaded with the merchandise, should it be undertaken in bulk; which will gladly be done to the satisfaction of Your Majesties and to the public good, if the necessary order is brought to it. Only a skilful and courageous man is needed to put several of them on the right track.

Nothing can be done without means, but everything with means. We have the three main ones: (i) places, (ii) materials, (iii) men, and, to give shape to things, (iv) industry; for places, (v) woods and (vi) water; for materials, (vii) steel and

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(viii) iron; for men, (ix) good craftsmen; when I say good, that is to say capable of carrying out and perfecting all work well. I will not say here that, if the goods made in Germany, Lorraine, Flanders, England and other places were no longer available in this kingdom, the nicest craftsmen of these countries, who would not be so well employed as they are now, would flock there from all over to look for work. For it would then be up to us, following their own examples, to accept or refuse them. If they were willing or able to teach us something, I would consider them worthy of the hostel; if not, I would advise us to join our own. You can never have too many artisans in a state. The first reason: for the fact that the Republic suffers a great deal of inconvenience for want of them, and allows its faculties to be wasted on foreigners, who provide it with hand-made works. The second, insofar as there is nothing more dangerous than when subjects are divided into two parts, without means, and the artisans are as means between the poor and the rich, the good and the evil, the wise and the foolish, they can prevent the seditions of some and the factions of others.

I will not detain your consideration any longer on the dependencies of the forge. I only ask your Majesties to imagine that, as all the trades and manual labour that you see practised everywhere need, as I have said, its assistance, it occupies an infinite number of men, so that from there you will conceive a desire to attribute all the exercises and profits of it to your subjects, to preserve for them this champion of artifice, the greatest of all. Force the nature of fire, which is said to be incapable of generalization, and allow it to generate an inestimable gain for France, which, passing through the hands of many, will flow in small streams to the bottom of your savings and swell them greatly.

Give yourself the satisfaction of seeing laziness driven out of the boutiques to hammer blows, of seeing iron transmute into gold in the hands of your men, instead of France's gold being transformed into iron by the artifice of foreigners. Give yourself the glory of having the best craftsmen in the world and the most industrious in everything to do with weapons of war or instruments of peace. Give yourselves the glory of having in your country something to defend and something to attack, when courage and reason oblige you to do one or the other. And, remembering that all States are preserved by the same means as they were acquired, value everything that provides the means for these means. The military profession has always been considered heroic, and it is true if anything in the world is. It is through it that men acquire glory and obedience; before it

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the laws are silent and the magistrates submit; to it the arts and sciences pay homage; from it is the acquisition of peace and the maintenance of rest, from which proceeds the good and the happiness of men. But from whence are the instruments she uses to make such fine works as forging? and must not some honour remain with her craftsmen?

To conclude finally with the usefulness of this art, I say and maintain before Your Majesties that it is more precious than any other of a similar nature, since of all goods this one is the most perfect and closest to the divine quality, which is more common and spreads to many at all times. And in this way the point will remain established: that gold is valued more for its price, but that iron must be valued more for its use.

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# PART FOUR

### (THE ART OF CLOTHING)

After the arts which contribute their industry to the maintenance of life, and to the manufacture of works, I find five principal ones concerning the clothing of man: (i) footwear, (ii) cloth weaving, (iii) wool drapery, (iv) silk manufacture and (v) leather tanning. Ever since our first parents applied fig leaves to their naked bodies, the care of dressing has been natural and invention has always increased. What was at first a sign of shame to them has become a source of pride and glory to us. Peacocks that are on the receiving end of Favour's goad do not display their fine feathers any better than men touched by vanity, their fine clothes, when they want to blend in well, and intend to please the ladies. Today even many take advantage of this over others who do not appear so much by their outward adornment, but who very often harbour more courage, merit and virtue within. Be that as it may, it is mainly in this subject that luxury is born, grows and reigns, the offspring of false glory, to which nothing is ever too close, and from which come those excessive deprivations which usually cause the ruin of the best houses and the poverty of the most illustrious families. Because of him these words of reproach, such a one carries a wood, a mill, a meadow on his back.

It is not in our time, but at all times, that the need for clothing has turned into vain pomp. The best Estates have suffered great disorders, which have often been forced to remedy by severe laws, even our own several times, and now it is needed more than ever; because, to speak the truth, it is now impossible to make a distinction from the outside. The shopkeeper is dressed like a gentleman. The latter can no longer be known by anything other than good credence and good manners. If this is missing, God forbid any difference. Who can fail to notice how this conformity of ornament introduces corruption into our ancient discipline? Who does not see how the villain who sees himself as brave wants to be on a par with the nobleman, believing that dress makes the man? Who does not see as the gentleman, feeling despised by the bourgeois, to return what he is given, despises the lord? If we continue thus, there will no longer be any question of being; there will only have to be appearance.

The more you shine, the better the gold. But keep your finger on the pulse!  
What order can be expected from this debt, which turns into a habit, and this

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habit into a custom? What obedience for the future to superiors? Who will take more and greater glory from the honour of being commanded? If Your Majesties do not remove us from this confusion and indifference, that is the end of it; all will generally give up true and solid virtue, all will melt away after vanity. Discipline will be banished from the troops and order from the armies. Naive valour will be forced to give in to vain pomp. Insolence will flourish in the cities, tyranny in the fields. Men will become effeminate through too many delights, and women will lose the strength of their households through chastity.

Let us take up the right thread again and begin as if by another leader: of this art which forms its work on the mould of our tests. The need we have to cover it from the heat and protect it from the cold has put it into practice. How useful experience teaches us, our two extremes having such a correspondence together; that the same passion afflicts them, as the same sentiment is favourable to them. This word gives us enough to understand: "Keep your feet and head warm. When you die, live like a beast." Besides, I can't think of any trade that is so purely and frankly lost to us. For I believe that just as many woollen, cotton or beaver hair bats are worn in France, they are made by our hand. Looking for the reasons why foreigners so keen to introduce their manufactures to us have not yet put their fingers to those, I find only one: It is that our head changes shape too often and that on this point alone they cannot take advantage of our inconsistency; but, if they cannot win on the form, they cheat us.

How many master clothmakers have been ruined, and are being ruined every day, by the fraud of the Spanish wools that the Flemish bring us in wool sweat? This is because they sell it all wrapped up. If you unfold it and untwist it, you'll find twenty or thirty pounds of ballast or stones wrapped in the wool, and the wool is also full of sand. One who wanted to notice it judged the waste to be more than a quarter per pound. The Spaniards have this trick that, when they want to shear their sheep, they bathe them and then run them through the sand, so as to sprinkle the wool with it; then they cut it and mix it into bundles.

Double deception: because he himself made it peel and rot. All this can be seen from a lawsuit brought before the Rouen Court of Parliament by some master chapeliers against a Flemish merchant. To remedy this, it would be necessary to order that the wool that has come in be unpacked and put in a granary, then inspected. This would oblige the Flemish postmen who are in Spain, and who possibly consent to fraud, to order it from beyond.

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From this would come another convenience, which is that goods made of foreign cloth, most of which is rotten, and which consequently cannot be worth anything and drinks rain like a sponge, would become of better use, inasmuch as very often it is only worth breaking. This regulation is practised in Lion, where the chapelliers have obtained that the wools are washed and cleaned before being offered for sale. Furthermore, the above should not give rise to the opinion that foreign wools are better than our own, or that we cannot do without them. For, as far as the former is concerned, it is a certainty that Berri wools are softer and better than those from Spain itself, as can be seen from the cappellerie which sells them in Bourges, Orléans, Paris and Lion. As for the second, if we lost all our wool, we would have plenty to sell.

As the flesh is closer than the shirt, the shirt is also closer than the pourpoint, which prevents us from talking about the manufacture of cloth before the drapery. Of all the manufactures that can give in this kingdom, means of living to many people, we have the advantage that in France it is more faithfully and abundantly practised than anywhere else, and that no other country has such good fabrics or more exquisite craftsmanship. The Dutch, who have taken it upon themselves to abolish the practice and take away our former credit, have wanted to encroach on all of our works, especially on this one. But they have found it easier to persuade us than the Barbarians themselves, who, forming their judgement and regulating their choice by essential goodness and by the best use of things, not on the basis of an anticipated opinion, have always preferred French cloth to Dutch cloth, have always discovered the suppositions and counterfeits of the Flemings, even though they packaged their merchandise as is ours, and marked it with the mark of our customs.

For any kind of disguise is not a crime among these people, even if they can gain some advantage from it. Their endeavours succeeded better with Henry the Great, father and husband of Your Majesties, from whom in the end they obtained permission and financial assistance to establish their factory in this kingdom. All the good that has come from this has been the degradation of the trunk cloths that are made there, which are good and fair, to the sole loss of your subjects: because, with regard to artifice and manufacture, our craftsmen have shown how much more industrious and delicate their hands are than all the others and that they were right to oppose those who came to their own house to

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take away from them the glory and the fruit of such a beautiful and universal industry.

It seems to me that I should point out to Your Majesties how it cannot be that our white canvases do not always surpass the Dutch in goodness and value; for, in the event that our hides are the same, our cleaning, in the judgement of those who know about it, is always natural and better than that which they are forced to use, especially as our waters are fresh, and theirs are muddy, i.e. half salted; Hence this acrimony, which actually whitens, but also eats away at and consumes the cloths, causing them to lose half their use and duration. So now, with the freedom they have to live and manage in France, they prefer to come and get used to clean and convenient places for laundering in this factory than to work there themselves. If Your Majesties do not take care of their subjects, to restore them to their rightful position and remove the usurpers, whose numbers are increasing every day, they will lose ownership of this factory. For as of now it will be found that there are more of our own men, released from the service of their masters or by promise or by increased rent, who work for them, than for those of the country.

Your Majesties must remember that men who are idle and do nothing are led to do evil; that for the good, peace, and wealth of the State, they must preserve in all things and everywhere the exercise of families, which are the nurseries of the Republic; that this exercise must be considered doubly: by men and by women; that idleness corrupts the vigor of some and the chastity of others; that this exercise, being common to both sexes, but principally to those of both sexes who love and seek peace and who live in all simplicity, must be so carefully maintained. In addition, the women, who put almost all their manpower into this manufacture, and who often get more out of it by staying in their homes than their husbands do by worrying so much about it, deserve your compassion, and that, joining their prayers to the usefulness and necessity we have of this work, you keep it in their full and complete possession. But moreover, the advantage that you derive from it over other peoples obliges you to renew and practice the means of retaining it all and to take the opportunity to transport, sell, and distribute it by the hand of your own people, as has been done in the past.

For to conclude this point, Your Majesties will consider, if it pleases them, that we have no better expedient than this to accommodate ourselves to foreign

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trade, principally that of Spain, which alone takes the place of all others, because, first, the cloth for making sails cannot be obtained elsewhere; secondly, trade with the Indies can only be conducted using white cloth and conscription from Normandy, Brittany, and other provinces of this kingdom; for as regards those from Holland, Flanders, and Germany, very little is transported there. Thus, it remains clear that this industry is one of France's main sources of wealth; that for it, the Poutossi expends almost all its resources; and that without it, even the Spanish would be unable to bring it to Spain. If they have ships, we have wings; and these others, who seek to profit at our expense in every way, right and left, and often use them to fly and approach the East and the West, the North and the South, in the space of a few days; but enough said on this point; let us move on to others.

Necessity drives the work, and use produces abundance. Care and artifice always have their eyes open and their hands at work to fill the gap. If we did not need so much linen, why would so much be made? The same applies to clothing. I don't know whether to praise or blame the temperature of our climates, which, on the one hand, forces us to toil so long and continuously, and, on the other, cures us of the evil of idleness by means of moderation. For why do we work except to acquire life and clothing? Isn't all the rest, if we were wise, superfluous? However, if the care of a gainer is not of nature, we can say that it proceeds in some way from reason, which imbues us with this affection, in order to induce us with more charm and attraction to make ourselves useful to one another, and throws when and where in our hearts the first seed of this charity, which commands us not only to feed, but to clothe the poor. So we were born with a desire to love and help our fellow men; and, if we do otherwise, we will degenerate. We also have the commandment of our master, who obliges us to do this, telling us: "What you do to one of these little ones, I'll do to myself." But that's beside the point; let's get back to our subject.

Of all clothes, the most common are made of cloth. Anyone who can imagine the many thousands of men who swarm in this kingdom will cease to be amazed at the sheer number required, and will understand when and how the labor of so many people can be continuously employed. As drapery is necessary for the use of all, great and small, rich and poor, it is almost practiced in all the provinces of this kingdom, although more abundantly in some than in others. This is because, depending on the convenience of wool, not all of them can be used to

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the same profit, and so they are not used equally. But in any case, if there's one that can't supply itself, another can more than satisfy it. As, for example, Berry, Picardy and Normandy, with the quantity of fabrics and workers they have, can they not accommodate Bretagne and several other provinces with this manufacture, if need be? Is it our necessity which brings it from England? or our suffering that introduces it? Are we obliged, for want of it, to unload it of what it has of superfluous?

Or, if for lack of policy we allow our industry to be destroyed and our labor to be diverted, what game are we playing by allowing our wool to be transported, and our artisans to lose their way? Are we blind or insane? Foreigners, to our knowledge and belief, sell their most vicious and poorly packaged merchandise in public stores and markets, and the good and loyal French woman is condemned to keep the shop! They are always inventing some new trade to catch us, while the fidelity of the artifice expires and dies of hunger in our hands! For what draper has ever had such a reputation for goodness and beauty as ours of the bucket? A tenth part of our world at least, who once worked and lived, even profited from this trade, cries out and complains either of remaining idle or of no longer having the means to employ themselves, while foreign liberty gains foot by foot and wants to usurp full possession of it.

Our scholars teach us the law. For who does not know that the English learned this craft from us? Anyone who came back to Hanton and other places where it is more practiced, and did not know how it is, would be very astonished to hear in almost all the workshops only the French language. Still among the English live several of our people, who have put or wanted to put the shuttle in the hand. Previously they brought to this kingdom a part of their wool to be put to work; and the other to Flanders by treaty of the kings made and continued with the counts. The stop was at Bruges, a city formerly very rich and renowned for the manufacture and trade of drapery, indeed the capital of the country.

Also, whoever considers firstly the profit that comes from it, secondly the number of men, women and children who can be employed there, will suddenly conclude, according to necessity, that everyone generally has them, that in any well-regulated state, they must be very carefully maintained and preserved, without allowing them to be removed or diverted. For how can we retain the quality of good housekeepers, if we once cease to clothe ourselves with the

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wool of our sheep, or if, allowing it to be taken from our hands, we receive it from others, fashioned with as much infidelity as makeup? At the very least, whoever buys three alders of French cloth to make a coat does not lose half an alder at the first rain. Whoever does not know that the English are giving him the gift and are putting him to shame has hardly been among them.

A few years ago, they brought some from a voyage and more than a hundred thousand crowns into this kingdom. It was arrested by the bailiff of Roien, at the request of the draper guards, and confiscated for being a victim and not conditioned according to the treaty of the Princes. Rightly so, it was said publicly in London, based on the rumor that spread. Through the kindness of our King, they obtained his release, a favor that in such a case we would undoubtedly never have obtained from them, since they maintain such strictness that the best drapery in France, brought to England, is confiscated and burned. Let us see next how they manage their misfortunes and turn them into advantages. To avoid falling into such a penalty, they seek and obtain permission to take away their merchandise, which is not deemed good and fair, without paying tax or duty, and thereby open up a means to deceive us and thereby defraud the King's rights. For, moreover, they do not stop selling and distributing it in open markets; it never crosses the sea again. Are we obliged by contract to allow ourselves to be deceived in this way? And until and for how long?

It cannot be denied that a large quantity of drapery is manufactured in France, but not nearly half as much as was made in the past. This is due in part to silk, which has become too fashionable among us. But the main cause, however, comes from the course that foreign merchandise takes there, and if it is not cut off, our rivers will become small streams and our brooks will dry up altogether in the end. We already know before our eyes how this misdeed is wasted. In a certain village of this kingdom, where more than four or five hundred thousand pounds were made, it is now not worth thirty thousand. Let us judge by the proportion of cities. We hear the people everywhere complaining about this domestic manufacture, that they are reduced to being idle and dying of hunger, for lack of work.

These examples already show the bad consequence of admitting it and the just reason to exclude it. But what will happen if the English, as they boast, obtain

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permission from your Majesties to establish their manufacture in France itself? Truly, if this is the case, it is only to spoil everything. How much wiser are the Flemings, who for a few days have forbidden the import of cloth from England, having recognized that for this reason the work of their men was already beginning to diminish, especially in this respect for its ease, which is such that for four years up to eighty, all sorts of people, even the blind and the penguins, can be employed there and earn their bread.

The same thing happened a few years ago to a hundred from Hamburg, especially since the English did not want to use the men of the country in their trade, as at present they do not and do not want to do in France. Your Majesties are conjured to bring to all the above the order required by the very humble prayers and supplications of an infinite number of your subjects, by the tender sighs of women, by the pitiful cries of their children. Allow all of you to demonstrate together in all submission that their profession is the only heritage of them and their posterity; that apart from freedom they have nothing but this income; that, if foreigners wish to appropriate its use, they are doing no more or less than those who, through tyranny, would want to exterminate someone from their possession; that being born in France, it is right that they live there, which they could not do if the only means they have were taken away from them; that being destined to work, they must also be employed in that. The request of the people and their prince is useful, just and legitimate, which asks for the banishment of Power, mother of all vices, cause of all sins, which offers and subjects the authors to serve loyally for the good of his state, which seeks by his grace a reasonable order, by which they are made to enjoy the natural privileges, with which they came into the world and by which they can justly take advantage to the detriment of all others.

After woolen drapery comes silk drapery, or rather, it precedes it, as in price, in rarity, in use, in our luxury. To confess the truth, from it comes to men a great ornament worthy of a great state. The reign of Solomon itself read some recommendations of it. Also, it makes the spirit and wealth of a people shine, but this is mainly when they owe it to their own care, to their own industry, without drawing it by force of money, from foreign hands: for in this case, the cost should make them lose the taste for it. However, it is on the contrary for our eyes, because it serves as bait; it is an attraction to our curiosity. We have the opinion of being better dressed when we are more expensively dressed. I would

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believe that this error could never be overcome in us, if we did not have the example of our King Henry II, who brought his entire court, and consequently the nobility of his kingdom, back to the first use of cloth in less than two years.

This proves to us the truth of these verses: "Commonly the subjects of a province, Forms its morals to the mold of its prince." Modesty is a beautiful virtue in man. It is the outward witness of a soul well composed within. It is true that it does not always depend on the simplicity of dress and that its brightest rays spring from our words, burst forth from our morals. Modesty, the faithful guardian of virtues, shines as well under silk as under the burlap. The mean and sordid dress is a monster of I know not what vileness. And without doubt it is a thing worthy of the care of a brave prince to provide for the honesty and kindness of the clothing of his subjects, following the example of Augustus, who, after having pacified the Empire, seeing the senators too mechanically dressed for his liking, made them regain a decorous propriety, a magnificence lioness and worthy of Roman grandeur. Also our great Henry, prince of immortal memory, after having by the valour of his sword raised the honour of this State, restored peace everywhere and re-established order in the provinces, took with him the design of making silk abound in this kingdom, so that his subjects could adorn themselves with it, with as much ornament, but less costliness than in the past, which without doubt would have been of little consequence to his satisfaction, to the good and to the honour of his people, if those, on whom his Majesty relied the conduct of this affair, could second with a judgment equal to his affection.

All that has come back to us of good is that the desire that it aroused in many to make the most of the profit from silk has produced the fruit that it now produces in Provence, Languedoc, Dauphiné, Touraine, Lionnois, Beaujolois and various other places in France, and more than four or five hundred thousand pounds; evident proof that it can provide itself with the best in the world, without buying it so dearly from foreigners. For as far as manufacturing is concerned, does not everyone know that for a long time we have had it in Lion and Tours? It has found the temperature of this city so mild and so agreeable, the people so ingenious and delicate in the handling of silk and so suitable for the food of worms, the soil so suitable for the production of mulberries, that one can judge how much more can be done there. And doubtless, if the royal hand had spread

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its golden cloud there, from this arrogance it would have given rise to forests of sere.

Several considerations are required for the establishment of some artifice in some place.

Several observations are desired. Very often, failing in one, a well-begun design meets a bad end. The undertaking is not blameworthy, but the conduct. The good ploughman, before sowing his seed in the field, diligently searches for and recognizes the quality, in order to know which grain will be most suitable there; for not all grow well everywhere. And those who wish to build trees judge the soil by the wild shoots it produces, and by the plants that naturally grow there: for ordinarily apple and pear trees, oaks, firs, beech trees, and elms, do not find such a tasty ground. and not all kinds of vines bear fruit equally in the same vineyard. It is difficult to force the genius of a place, but easy to recognize it. It often grows certain seeds of its own accord, and gives in such a short time the natural testimonies of its fertility that the good manager, seconding it with his industry, sometimes draws from it a fruit greater than his hopes.

If we did not lose courage so soon in our designs, encountering some difficulty, if we had as much conduct and perseverance in managing the good artifices that we have in hand, as our nearest neighbors have, or, finally, if their example had as much power over us as it should, we would have made it appear long ago in this subject. Without doubt, if they had the convenience that we have for the climate and for the men, they would now provide us with an abundance of silk; Italy would do nothing more there, But for us, being such as we are or as we wish to be (for if we wanted we would be different), what use is it that all the gold and silver of Peru and Mexico comes to overflow in France, if this pump exhausts it and transports it elsewhere? It is up to your Majesties to advise on this; They have two great means at hand: either to prohibit the too frequent use of silk in this Kingdom, or to order and arrange the entire manufacture there.

However, your subjects will take the time to employ the industry they have and to take advantage of it; so much so that silk born, nurtured, and fashioned among them will become more abundant there than wool and hemp, than canvas and cloth. I need not say here how many people of all sexes and ages will derive exercise and profit from it. This will be easily imagined by anyone who knows the true appetites for luxury to which our nation is subject, and the passion it has

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for beautiful and fitting things. It is to France itself that all artefacts, which must pass through several and diverse hands, belong: for, being, as it is, the country of men and of hard-working men, they can be completed there with more diligence and ease than anywhere else. The proof will be attested when your Majesties once put in their minds the desire to see it. The first flash that they will give of this affection will already be half of the work, at least for a long time since one has been beyond the difficulty of the principles; one must only continue the work and increase it in proportion to the necessity, in the places where it has begun.

It will be seen by this means well to the point that it will be desired. It is one of the greatest blows that you can strike for the good and utility of this State; for you will thus retain several millions who are transported there each year. Thus, so much gold and silver that leaves the hands of your subjects will return to the same water, perpetually maintaining the flow of this fountain of Hieron. A great artifice for the good politician, who seeks above all, in all, and through all, the profit and enrichment of his people! What I say about the manufacture of velvets, satins, and taffetas includes that of silk stockings for the same reasons. It is nothing but a superfluous and detrimental curiosity to the state, which makes us seek out foreigners. Those made in France must satisfy the French, just as those made in England satisfy the English. By ordering this, Your Majesties will bring great savings to your subjects, and at the same time, great profit. For it is said that for this merchandise, more than a million crowns leave your Kingdom every year. This excessive sum will not cause astonishment to those who cast their eyes on so many legs adorned with them, and for which such a large number are often required. This was not the case in the time of our good old fathers, when Princes and Lords rarely used them.

Now that time and the world have changed, I do not wish to blame the custom, provided that the benefit remains; otherwise it costs us too dearly. Moreover, that France can provide them itself is well known by the skill of making them with dexterity and promptness, which is practiced in the city of Rouen. When I spoke of the weaving of linens and of wool and silk drapery, I think, for the same considerations and similar advantages, I have concluded that all fustians and hawkers should be manufactured in this Kingdom, where the industry is practiced as much and better than elsewhere? Where the convenience is the same and possibly greater. For why should we be in need of others in anything,

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rich as we are in and of ourselves? We speak among us of fustians from England and hawkers from the Island; but we are most often imposed by foreignness: for all or most of these fabrics are of the French fashion, and are no worse for it. It is in the same way that we are deceived by the lace of Flanders, which is not such in truth except insofar as the Flemings have it made and our women, and then resell it more expensively, using opinion as an attraction, to deceive our foreign name.

English merchants know how to take advantage of this common error over their compatriots. Every day they are heard crying out to the London lords: combs from France, garters from France, aiguillettes from France, belts from France, and so on, even though all these things are made in their own country and by themselves. It is for their own benefit that they show themselves thus grateful that we have taught them their properties, their use, and their method; for otherwise they would not do it, I assure you.

Noting here the more common and profitable arts that provide us with clothing, I must make a passing remark about dyes, which give them the various colors that we see changing in many ways every day. It is in this subject, as much or more than in any other, that the invention of the mind is exercised, in imitation of nature, which delights in producing in the world the different enamel of an infinity of flowers. Of all our senses, the most delicate is the eye. It is the least subject to weariness. The variety of objects pleases it; it carries itself with contentment from one color to another, maintaining and gathering by this sweet change the strength and vigor of its spirits. This affection of its passes to common sense and from there gives to fantasy, which, to please its principal rapporteur, lets itself go to what pleases it to the point of participating in its contentment, of the process, the state and the research that we make of paintings and dyes.

As for the look of the former, we have them only by voluptuousness; but as for the latter, they are now made for us as necessary by use. I don't believe there is a country in the world where clothing is produced that doesn't similarly practice it at some level. And no doubt the invention of coloring cloth followed closely behind that of manufacturing it. As for us, we have nothing to desire in this art. Our men have long since perfected it. Thus, it has always remained free and untouched to us until now, and the English, no longer content with bringing us

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their cloth in white, still want to bring them dyed, although the dye they make is worthless at all, because instead of the woad we have, which they lack to stiffen their cloth, they use india, which has always been prohibited in France as the basis for an illegitimate and false dye. Your Majesties must never allow this, especially since it would lead to the obvious ruin of the dyers, who are more than sufficient in number in this Kingdom, whose loyalty would be forced to decline, and when the proper use of their dyes, especially since so many men who live and are employed under them would be reduced to begging, especially since this suffering would ultimately deprive the little exercise and profit that remains to the poor shearers, pressers, and other artisans, who work on the arrangement of cloth, which would be as much as depriving them of their lives.

For all the above, your subjects must beg your Majesties to grant them, through your authority, the means and power to use and benefit from their own industry, in such a way that the profit remains theirs; to not allow others to take the scythe to their harvest; as well as reason desires that each one works on his own funds and enjoys the fruit he produces and that we do not allow to die, for lack of gain, so many fine arts, which France has nourished for so long with profit, honour and contentment; in short, that we do not make this great, robust, and invincible body of state, crippled from its principal functions, by a torpor of cowardly and lazy idleness. Otherwise, what can we judge by the certain and indubitable prognoses that we see, if not that your subjects will all go and become mercenaries of foreigners; that their hands will be moved by them, and for them only; that if their work is enough for us, it will cease, because our industry will have become their slave and tributary, and they will no longer want to use it.

I think I have briefly understood everything that is used in men's clothing; all that is missing is the fashion, which in the time of our fathers was entirely in the hands of the tailors of the country; we alone carried the scissors that could disguise and change it as we saw fit. But now the Scots and Flemings have taught us our fashions. They cut and trim in the best of our cities; even with such ingratitude towards France, their wet nurse, that they would be very sorry to give bread to earn for her natural and legitimate children; for, except in times of great need, they only want to use the men of their nation. And, coarse as we are, we cannot learn the lesson they teach us among ourselves! We cannot learn it from our own people who have been among them! If we were skillful, we

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would draw great consequences from these propositions, important conclusions from these principles. We would learn to live and to make our own people live: "Everyone's own is not too much"; that would be our maxim.

You forgot to mention tanning, an art as necessary as it is common, which, despite the great profit it brings, would not have remained as complete, as it has done until now, in the hands of the French, if those who practice it had not retained, mainly in the principal cities, free and clear ownership, by means of their exacting inspections, on the preparation of foreign leathers. This trade is among the richest in the kingdom, and the custom of so many men who use it makes it so. In recent years, it has fallen far from its goodness, both in its profit and in its work, the vice of which generally matters to all, and yet there would be a great need to reform the abuses committed there in various ways. This would save many illnesses, which come from the cold humidity that men suffer in their feet, for lack of good shoes.

The public is also interested in it, especially since the poorly nourished leather of bark in the plain and also not very faithfully cured, has neither the resistance to water, nor the duration that would be required. As for the moroccos, besides that there are very large numbers made in this kingdom, even enough to supply it, if those who pretend to bring us some did not transport them to their homes, there can still be made more, and better ones than in other countries of the world, who would want to choose the places; for we have skins in great abundance, and waters naturally good for that. These are the leathers that we have of ourselves for the most part; for the rest, it comes to us from Barbary, Cape Verde and Peru; but all of it is badly damaged by foreigners. Notwithstanding, I cannot go beyond this without marveling at how much leather from France and elsewhere can barely supply the three parts of the people of this kingdom, leaving at least a fourth which only uses wooden shoes or ropes.

The fashion remains entirely in our hands until now, although the Flemings are so frugal as to bring us their old shoes in full swing, not contenting themselves with coming to us to make new ones for us. It is because, as one might believe, that France has such a great need for shoemakers, that it is forced to call on them from overseas. It is well, at the very least, that we do not lack the

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assistance of our allies, not in the least things. It is a great sign that they greatly love our property, that they are so eager to come and serve us.

## PART FIVE

### (ON VARIOUS OTHER ARTS)

Having spoken of what is mainly used for clothing, it is necessary in passing to say something about buildings. The insults of the weather, sometimes cold, sometimes hot, oblige us to cover ourselves with them and guard against them. It is nature herself, in love with her being and her preservation, that leads us to build and construct. We see how she teaches the wildest animals of the earth to withdraw into the cover of nests and gives the birds of the sky the invention of building nests. I believe, then, that houses have always been built, and this by a natural instinct. But simplicity has been added to convenience and finally magnificence. The care that our ancestors had of buildings, both private and public, has come down to us as if from hand to hand; and the need that we have every day obliges us either to repair the old ones or to build new ones. The great and wise Romans showed themselves so curious on this point that they had and observed laws concerning the location, the firmness, the form and the stages of the buildings.

Moreover, they had every year the election of a magistrate, who had the hand to make them well and duly practiced. Between us, the freedom to build is such as one wishes to take, provided that it is without prejudice to the right of others. For the materials of the buildings, such as stone, wood, lime, brick, etc. , and for men, such as masons, stonemasons, carpenters, plasterers, etc., I believe that there is a country in the world which is better provided with them than France. We know this more and more every day, from these great buildings which are undertaken and completed in such a short time that nature itself is astonished by the promptness and skill of the artifice.

Our excess is great in everything, and we would be very fortunate if it were brought back to moderation. Now, as well as formerly, we were treated with certain people, we can be reproached for building as if we were never going to die, and feasting as if we were going to die tomorrow. In truth, the latter is the work of a pig; but the former smells of its man. For undoubtedly, countries could not have more beautiful and more lasting ornaments than superb dwellings. Add to this, that in addition to the satisfaction they bring and those who have built them, many poor people are employed there for the relief of the people. When Alexander, after the conquest of Egypt, wished to build the city of

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Alexandria and populate it with Greeks, he chose a site abundant in all goods and capable of feeding all kinds of people. An example by which Your Majesties can understand that caring for the comfort, wealth, and convenience of a people is truly a royal concern.

Speaking to Your Majesties of the principal manufactures of France, I would declare myself a sworn enemy of the sacred Muses if I were to pass over in silence the noble art of printing, by which the labors of so many learned men are brought to light and consecrated to the eternity of the centuries, by which we are instructed in all our duties, by which God communicates Himself to us and us to Him, by which we are given knowledge of divine and human things, by which we converse familiarly with all the greatest men of all ages, by which the memory of so many fine minds is preserved, by which we are praised in the future, if we do things worthy of praise, and by which you yourself must hope to be immortal.

It was a German, a native of Mainz, and so it is said, who first used this art in Christianity around the year 1400, at the same time as Berthold Schwarz, a monk and alchemist of the same nation, invented artillery, a true thunderbolt from hell, to the universal detriment of the whole world, as printing is to the utility, glory and ornament of all people of virtue. He first used wooden characters which can still be seen in Strasbourg with the first press from which he printed, which is, in perpetual memory, consecrated in the cathedral church of the place. Since then, as it is easy to add to things invented, metal characters have been discovered and put into use, from which the complete perfection of this art has come.

Thus we must confess that we owe it to Germany; but England and Holland also owe us the knowledge and practice they possess of it. Now that all Christian peoples are in possession of it, it remains to devise a means of preserving its maintenance and profit, as they all do in their respective places. The traffic in books is so great and so universal that it has not been disdained by even princes, and by entire states. Phillebert, Duke of Savoy, father of the one who now lives, a prince highly esteemed for the adequacy of his mind, knew how to accommodate himself so advantageously to this trade that the Venetians were moved to such envy that they never stopped until they had diverted him from

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his hands, by an artifice which shows that in matters of profit there are few people who remain faithful.

Who does not know, moreover, how much convenience Germany derives from it, and that it makes the greatest and best part of its fairs? Also the Flemings, who have very delicate noses to sniff out any odor of gain, have hardly left this practice behind, but, having aroused it in several principal cities, employ all sorts of poor people of the country at a very low price, and oblige the journeymen to fifteen cents a day more than the French, who only derive twenty-five cents from it, making the crew do the composition. Thus, through this increased task, they have found a way to sell their work, which they send us cheaper—almost half—than ours can; and when they have decided to supply us with several books, which are more commonly used and therefore more readily available. This is how they deprive our printers and booksellers (in whose opinion our books are not the best or the best made, but those that sell best and fastest) of the ordinary exercise of their art and the mediocre profit they were accustomed to making.

I can say without exaggeration that there are fifty thousand people in your kingdom who work in printing and bookselling, who have no other means for their livelihood, no other income for their upkeep. As the mind is admirable in its various productions, it is so charitable towards its children that it tries, by means and with the help of this art, to preserve their life and duration with passionate care; it loves them, embraces them and looks at them with contentment, seeing imprinted there an immortal image of itself, with extreme pleasure; it remembers that they were conceived from the acquaintance it had with the beautiful and agreeable muses; then, as if by a reflection of the love of his own, he is brought to the love of others, who are born of the same divine seed, and in them, as in a mirror, contemplates the beautiful features and outlines of their authors, admires their perfection, becomes desperately in love with them, and from time to time gives them a few kisses in his study, from which, as if by a secret flame that he attracts, he is inflamed with the affection of virtue, honour, and glory.

To return to my subject, since printing has now passed from one nation to another, it cannot produce as much profit for those who practice it as it did in the past, when few people worked at it and among these peoples, few men. Add

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to its more common use that, since the revival of letters, libraries have been stocked with books, so that there are always many left, although, through the ravages of wars, many have been consumed. This furniture is not worn like clothing: what was useful to the father can be used by the son, and so on from hand to hand, depending on the care taken to preserve it. I have no doubt, however, that if the import of foreign books were prohibited, printers and booksellers would soon become quite rich. And, to say freely what I think of it, this prohibition would only be for the good and salvation, both of those who govern and of those who are governed.

Foreign doctrine poisons our minds and corrupts our morals. A way has been found to degenerate many of our men, to delude them from legitimate obedience. Bad seeds have been sown in the tenderest hearts, the seed of Sodom and Gomorrah has been planted there; in short, monsters have been born in France that had never produced them before. There is no bookseller in the world, however opulent, who has a book of every kind; no wealth could suffice; no bond could contain so many. Also, the multitude of books is not good, even for use; those who misuse many usually make many guests and few friends; they seek to heal and bring their wounds to a scar through the diversity of devices; they deprive their minds too much and do not give them time to take root in a good foundation. But this discourse belongs elsewhere; let us return from where we left.

Good books are usually well received; and yet it would seem reasonable that, in the future, no privilege should be granted on first copies for longer than four or six years, so that, once the term has expired, the printing being free, everyone may share in the profit that can accrue from it. For, if the book is good, the one who first made it has certainly gained; if it is bad, it is not to be presumed that anyone would want to put it back on the press. And yet, should it no longer be necessary for your Majesties to grant extensions of privilege, at the whim and request of no one, especially since for a slight profit of eight hundred or a thousand crowns, which some can make from it, it costs more than a hundred thousand for all of France. If your Majesties still forbade the transport of paper outside the kingdom, if it were not printed, there is no doubt that the wealth of this art would increase greatly in a few years. For by this means the foreigner would be forced to carry our impressions and send here the copies that he would like to bring to light, which would give, besides the convenience of the country,

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the knowledge of a large number of bad books, which are made to the detriment of your Majesties and the peace of France, with our paper itself, and the characters of our letters, which foreigners buy.

Thus, booksellers and printers, found seized with corrupt books, could claim no excuse; and the evidence would be brought to light immediately, especially since, firstly, the forms would be known, secondly, the paper and the year of its manufacture, especially since, at the inspection that the card-keepers make of them every year, something is added or diminished to the mark that the stationers take from their sworn guards. Moreover, all abuses of schedules and books are thus recognized, as are all assumptions of notebooks, by which several franchises are made, both in land and salt taxes and elsewhere.

What I have said about the card-keepers made me remember them. Before the English began to transport paper from France, they lived comfortably and supported a large number of men in their work. But, for some years now, they have had just as much to complain about as the other artisans of the kingdom. The English have reached such a point that we must now work through their hands, especially since they own paper mills in various places, which they have bought or had made, and to use them they bring in damask from their country, which they send there suddenly without any inspection, although, by the ordinances of our Kings, it is forbidden to use it unless it has first been in the countryside for six months, to avoid the contagions of plague and bloodshed, which usually come to us from Flanders and England. Poor Frenchmen, what more will there be to do, since we receive among us people who are so thrifty that they do not leave us even the profit of our pure and clean rags?

The fear I have that the English and Flemings will complain about our complaints, saying that they are only directed against them, obliges me to speak a little about the Italians. These men are truly subtle, full of invention; and from them we have learned many things. The same subject that attracts other foreigners to France has also brought them there and made them stay there. For some years now, they have practiced the art of glassmaking with good fortune and profit. It is not that it was not practiced in France before. From time immemorial, Languedoc, Dauphiné, Armagnac, the county of Foix, have enjoyed the kindness of this noble manufacture. I call it noble, in view of the hands that fashion it and the perfect essence of the material from which it is

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fashioned, namely glass, which I can say, to put it in few words, is the miracle of artifice, as gold is the miracle of nature.

Our Kings also endowed them with fine privileges, and wanted only gentlemen to be able to exercise them in France; which is not the same in Italy. In several places in this kingdom, the people were for a long time content with fern glasses, and had the opinion that they could not receive from Venice without breaking; now that the industry and labor of the Italians have more commonly introduced the use of those made of Barille and called crystal, more polished in truth and more agreeable to the eye, but always as fragile, our French, lovers above all people of propriety in drinking and eating and of the nicety of their furniture, use them at this time ordinarily and with more pleasure. The desire that the late King, father and husband of your Majesties, had that the French alone should have both the practice and the profit of this beautiful art, has been declared several times by his own mouth, yet, as I thought, it was not known that more than two thousand five hundred gentlemen in his kingdom can derive comfort from it for their life and a maintenance worthy of their condition, without taking into account this other large number of men who are employed under them in this work. This is so considerable and affects so many people who bear this rank, that Your Majesties must embrace the affection of restoring them to their first and ancient rights that one wants to encroach upon them by some new privileges taken to their detriment, and without their having been called upon, since they have never been deprived of them by forfeiture or any felony, having their fathers, in the past, and themselves, in these last wars, without sparing their property or their own blood, courageously followed their prince and faithfully served this crown in all the places where the honour and duty of their rank have called them.

This is what I had to say generally about the arts and about some of the principal ones in particular, in which I did not wish to imitate the bouquets who visually select the most beautiful and fragrant flowers and weave and compose a work that is very pleasant to smell, but otherwise bears no fruit and lasts only a day; but I did like the bees who, flying over the roses, land on very strong and harsh thyme and rest there, preparing the wherewithal to make honey and wax. Moreover, I cease to pursue them and dissect them all in detail, remembering that I am speaking before Your Majesties, whose times should be hindered as little as possible. I would even fear being accused of having been too long in

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this speech, if I were not well assured that you would measure it with its usefulness, which is almost infinite.

## **PART SIX**

**(ON EMPLOYMENT)**

Then, on the other hand, God has ordained you for his lieutenants on earth to hear the poor, the widow and the orphan, as well as the greatest and the richest in the world; so that you always keep your eyes open and your ears alert to see and hear everything that can bring good and relief to the people. Also the greatest, most liberal and most magnificent princes have always prided themselves on inventing means, have always tried to imagine and draw up regulations, by which they can accommodate and enrich their subjects, knowing well that such wealth was the true and inexhaustible source of their expenditure and liberality.

After the care of having them administer justice, this one has taken the second place in their soul, as being itself a notable dependency, a principal accessory of its principal, which is to give back to each one what belongs to him. In any other subject, it has not had as much license as in this one to lower its hand and hold the reins loose. For the charity of the country restricts to its advantage and sometimes expands, according to the times and seasons, the limits of equity, and this is excusable by the consideration of the common good, to which the wise master of policy, who through good administration wishes to properly inform the matters of the Republic, accommodates himself in everything and in all things, especially since this is the general end to which both the laws of those who govern and the actions of those who obey must tend.

Human happiness, to speak of it in our style, consists mainly in wealth, and wealth in work. No more or less than all animals that have blood have heart, all countries that have wealth have industry. Industry, holding such a place there, must therefore be their first living and their last dying. And as the best disposition of the animal is that it be in all its dispositions according to the course of nature, so the best state of the State is that it be placed and remain in a certain and assured place, according to its usefulness, by its order, ruling among several and deriving from the one who commands those who obey. For without doubt it is a good fortune, when all the subjects have sufficient means for their needs or not having them can acquire them. It is the surest bridle to restrain this Typhoeus with several arms and several heads, which, when it gets angry and bored at not gaining anything, remiles and, by moving, sometimes excites

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earthquakes. By this oil, the waves of this stormy sea, subject to all winds, which roars and roars below, are calmed, the first to be moved, and which is difficult to calm down, once the fury boiling in its waves has once overturned it from top to bottom.

As it is the greatest art of princes to know how to benefit the people, nothing brings them more obedience, more reverence, more blessing. We love primarily those who do us good; we believe that they maintain a natural bond between God and us, and judge, moreover, that the principal good comes to us from the gain we can make under their authority. Do we want an example of this without looking far? We have seen it in our own time in the Queen of England, on this occasion loved, cherished, and almost adored by her people. It must be confessed that her care and diligence mainly made her acquire knowledge of the arts of which she was ignorant, sparing with the best treatment she could the French who were thrown into her Kingdom in our troubles. She herself saw the fruit of it, and her country feels it every day.

I have said before, and I must repeat it again, that the employment of men and the knowledge of making them useful to the public and to oneself is a great trait of the wise politician; that to achieve this he must nourish, maintain and increase industry by teaching, by example and by exercise; striving above all to banish idleness among them, a fatal plague in rich and flourishing States, but on the contrary to attract them to work by the lures of honour and by the bait of profit. The English and the Flemish, our neighbors, teach us this. How one must regulate the arts to maintain and keep them in one's own hands, their example instructs us; as by their means no one who is capable of working can remain idle, their practice shows us this. I beg Your Majesties to consider, as the cities of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland have gone from small towns to large and admirable cities. It is because there is no way to be ignorant and lazy at the same time, and that men are sent early to Vescholl, ants and honeybees to teach them the cure for these vices, which are the greatest that man can have. If they do not want to practice the natural remedy, the magistrate will provide it, and himself will give them the medicine. Order that the same be done for your subjects, and your subjects will have the benefit, you the honour, and the public the benefit.

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The practices of the aforementioned countries are diverse, both for the learning and maintenance of the arts and for the employment and nourishment of men, but always tending towards the same end, namely, private profit and the common good. No one can claim any excuse for their poverty; for they find several means of freeing themselves from it, good and legitimate means, which your Majesties, moved by the public interest, must open and practice in this Kingdom, as is similarly done in all the principal cities of Switzerland and Germany, and indeed there is hardly a town in which the Lord of the place does not maintain some college to instruct his poor subjects, both in the liberal arts and in mechanical crafts.

We are all like bricks made from the same clay, but not all from a mold, not from an earth equally kneaded, worked, and, as it were, refined. As bodies are born more robust than each other, there likewise come here minds that are beautiful and rare par excellence. Your Majesties know well that the Lords of Turkey, Agas, Basass, grand viziers are not born, but are made and, as they say, of all sorts. If the laws and customs of your State, much better in truth and even more natural, especially since it is to be presupposed that eagles are born from eagles and doves from doves, do not allow you to do the same, at the very least they consent in this point with nature that the men who are born there are addressed to their end, namely to desire an ornament and utility to their country; not to be a burden like crippled and maimed limbs.

What I say of one sex, I say equally of the other; for both are born into society and destined for action. Also they share together the care and labor of the household, especially in France. If there are poor children there—but there are only too many of them because of the bad order, which has reigned among us for so long—one can, following the example of the Dutch, remedy this in two ways. The first is to gather them together and confine them to public houses, the boys apart and the girls apart, and make both work there in all kinds of manufactures, drapery, filling, linen, lingerie, etc. For there is no doubt that many of your subjects, who can provide for their upkeep or raise some company for this purpose, will very willingly undertake this course, when by prohibiting the importation of foreign works they will be assured of being relieved of those they can have manufactured.

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These houses of which I have just spoken are called by the Dutch "schools" and "good law" since one learns how to live there; those who are placed there are employed in various ways, well fed and well maintained. To distinguish them from the others, they are dressed in two colors, so that, if they go out through debauchery or otherwise, they are recognized and brought back. They are not taken from there except to marry them. When they learn a skill, they are taken to see girls who are born and governed in the same way to have them choose a wife. Then, giving them some money and some accommodation, they are allowed to go free, or to remain in the house where they were fed, raised, and educated, to continue their trade with good wages and salaries, which they receive from the society that supports them.

Here is another order that the same Dutch people maintain for the assistance of the poor who, eager to learn a skill, seek the means to do so. After finding a master in the city, they go and swear an oath before the magistrate to serve him well and faithfully for a certain number of years, giving them two sous, or six blancs per day, as agreed, without him being required to provide them with lodging or food. He gives them a free interval, from twelve o'clock until one, to ask and receive their meals, which they find and receive without leaving the district, especially since they have certain houses assigned, which feed them with leftovers and then cover them with clothing. This is to be understood only for the natives of the country; for it is not their custom to receive any foreigners, especially French, except in exchange.

Both these methods are excellent for employing those who are not poor, without being a burden to the State; and I am surprised that Your Majesties were not persuaded to do so when it was proposed to them to order that the beggars of this kingdom be confined by the cities and fed by public charity. Constantine was the first to issue ordinances for the subsidy of the poor, and in his time hospitals were established for poor children, for the elderly, and for the sick, at the request and insistence of the bishops, who complained, and with good reason, that crippled quaymen were passing by the temples, mingling their prayers and sighs with the chants of the Church.

Thus, it is true that the poor must be fed, not killed. Now, says Saint Ambrose, to refuse them food is to kill them. I would say more, it is sometimes to kill oneself: for the mistreatment of the poor often causes popular diseases in the

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cities, and then they spread to the countryside through the contagion that is communicated far and wide. There is no better way to remedy all these evils together than to employ men, as I have said elsewhere, and as other peoples do, in various ways. For few, who look closely at it, will find themselves incapable of it. For those whose limbs are so mutilated by some great and sinister accident that they are even useless to themselves, or for those whom nature has produced only to serve as a burden to the earth, enough! The public will not be too burdened; there are not many of them.

As for those whose poverty causes weakness or infirmity, we have good provisions to restore them, thank God, and medicine can also provide a remedy. We take great care to cure them, and for this reason we often spend several months in the stable at the greater expense of work animals or carriages. Besides, do we want, for lack of exercise, to create new illnesses in them? Do we want them to contract bad habits through idleness with bad humours? I think that one cannot say as an excuse, except that there are some who are so unfortunate that they would rather let themselves die of hunger than put their hands to work. Lazy bellies, useless burdens of the earth, men born only in the world to consume without fruit! It is against you that the authority of the magistrate must be deployed! it is against you that he must arm his just severity, for you are the foils and the quills. It is from you that the cut-purses, the false witnesses and the thieves come! To such people one can bring just violence; one must make them work by task, as the Flemings do in the city of Amsterdam, the debauched men, rebels against their parents and lazy, to saw and cut brazil and other wood for dyeing, in a certain house, which they call Fechtus, where labour does some new miracle.

What I said above about the workshops which, in a well-ordered state, must hold the second link after families, since they must be nurtured and preserved, having engendered men who can and must be employed there, and about the manufactures which can and must be carried out, once well established, will soon become known by true experience as one of the greatest, most necessary, and most useful points of order that can fall within human understanding; and there is no doubt that your people, by the command and under the authority of your Majesties, will embrace its execution with a thousand kinds of blessings, because by this means you will have them celebrate, not once every year, but every day and at all hours, this solemn festival that the Persians called the death

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to vices, in which they killed all kinds of snakes and wild beasts. Moreover, this public work will not spoil the individual: for it will only make up for his deficiency and will be assumed in place of that of the foreigner, which can only be admitted to the great detriment of the whole country.

Moreover, if the rule practiced in Holland could be introduced in this kingdom, without doubt it would be a beautiful thing and very favorable to industry and diligence. When some artisan has done a lot of work and cannot be relieved of it as quickly as his need requires, he takes it to the nearest merchant who deals wholesale, who takes it by weight or by measure, without asking for any reduction in the price for the workmanship. It must be said that this is a more equitable way of proceeding than we do. Each one, as we say among ourselves, seeks his own bargain. So charity demands that we not take too much advantage of another's disadvantage; that we do to him as we would like to be done to ourselves. It takes little to ruin a poor man; his sweat well deserves some rent: seeing himself deprived of a just and legitimate gain, he will undoubtedly tend to work illegitimately, which he cannot do without harming the public and very often himself.

Good and famous craftsmen are of great use to a country, I would even dare to say necessary, honourable, and yet the magistrate must take great care to make them and maintain them as such. It is of all trades that one can say what the great Hippocrates once said of medicine: "the art is long, life is short and the experience difficult." Anyone who is curious to observe its diverse and variable practices recognizes this. Science dwells among sweat, and the habit of good work is born of laborious exercise. One can acquire a house, an inheritance, a suit of clothes with money and appropriate them, but an art, only with time.

This is why I am quite astonished at the error that the letters of the Bull could have given rise to in this kingdom, by means of which it is permitted, by providing a certain sum, to profess any craft one wishes. Only three or four are exceptions, without having made it the masterpiece, not very often the apprenticeship. Your Majesties must forever suppress this abuse, by which ignorance, laziness, and the lack of interest in learning are all introduced together. If money makes all, what use is acquired arrogance? Who would not prefer to purchase an art at a low price than through so much vigilance and labor? Add to this that the artisans forged on this anvil are so many, who decry

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and discredit not only the bond, but the province, but the kingdom. Fabrics and manufactures are often named after the place where they are made and where they come from. The public of the country itself has a great interest in this: for it is important for its good to be loyally served. There would be less loss and danger if deception could be recognized by the eye and touched by the hand; but ordinarily it is only discovered by use, and one is always disgusted by the appearance of the form and the figure.

But there is still another equally great evil; it is that the description of this deception gives day and opens the way to foreign manufactures, whose authors always strive at the beginning to do the best they can, except to relax into nonchalance, having acquired credit, which is the true and original cause of the abolition of arts in a country and the ruin of those who practice them. This is how foreigners have prevailed over us. This is how, over time, they have prevented our freedom of judgment, to our own detriment. This is how they have changed and diverted! From the springs from which we draw all our profit, and if our public fountain-keepers do not monitor them more closely, we will soon run out of water. What remains is in the troughs and gradually diminishes. When it dries up, let us make a point of drinking at the mercy of others. Thus, we will often be forced to quench our thirst with infected and muddy waters. Are we wise?

Having such lively fountains at home, if we are willing to clean them, who forces us to seek out stinking and stagnant cisterns, which even the owners do not allow us to use except insofar as they can do without them? Still, they must be paid tribute. But it costs me so little to be supplied; what business do I have to work? Is this excuse more cowardice or laziness? But furthermore, how prejudicial this is to the public can be proven by reason, and by example: for, to leave behind that very true saying that "one never has cheap bad merchandise," and such is for the most part, all foreign, - besides the fact that it is in the interest of the Republic that all be occupied with legitimate work and thereby turned away from vice, - we make as much loss as the foreigner makes gain. From what is bought and traded among our men, it is not so; one hand emptying itself fills the other, and it is like a transfusion from a full vessel into a void.

Besides, whoever wants to put the arts in good shape and maintain their reputation, must never diminish their profit by an excess of oil. The light goes

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out in lamps when too much oil is poured into them. The excess of humour from a large ravine of water suffocates the sap of the tree instead of nourishing, maintaining and increasing it. It is a maxim among artisans that there is no worse charter than dead-gain; and this is mainly where it comes from. Besides, nothing disposes people more to emotion than the necessity that comes to them by such an excess, which is very often more formidable than too much ease, another ordinary occasion for uprising. The wise politician must prudently invent ways to ensure a just and temperate balance between too much and too little, so that no inconvenience arises, either from deficiency or from excess. He must imitate nature, which never lacks anything necessary, to which nothing superfluous is ever redundant. For lack of work to do, the craftsman languishes and dies of hunger; too much work done prevents him from earning, and this leads to grief and very often despair.

## PART SEVEN

(CONCLUSION)

All things considered, there is only one good and legitimate way to remedy this inconvenience: that the country provides for the country. The body has members to perform bodily functions; states have men to serve them, and they must also be employed for this. The practice of all the others sufficiently instructs us how great observers they are of this great point of policy. Let us leave Germany and Switzerland aside, and take as an example England, which is closer to us, indeed all the more willingly, as it is almost indebted to us for all its industry in matters of fireworks. Since, by the establishment of various trades, it has been able to do without all foreign manufacture, it has so controlled what is not brought into its country that everything that can be discovered there is confiscated, and those who are found seized are condemned to heavy fines. I knew one of our men from Rouen, living in London, who, thinking he could make something from the haberdashery he was sneaking into (for that from France is highly esteemed there), in the space of two years found himself thrown into prison more than twenty times, so much so that in the end he was forced to leave this business and the country itself; for this is never done with the English; one always drags one's bond there. They have certain officers whom they call promoters, to whom the search and knowledge of this is entrusted, whose vigilance is so great that it is very difficult, or rather impossible, to avoid him.

I will not speak here of our Flemings; they are so diligent that they leave nothing to do for the natives of the country where they are introduced; what housekeeping, then, could one do in their own house? It is right, it is natural equity, everyone must cultivate their own land; each country must feed and maintain its people. Its fruits should not be like those of fig trees, planted on mountain precipices, of which only passing birds eat. Since they can be picked by hand, they also belong to their owners. The title of heredity sufficiently forbids them. Our great apostle truly recommends us to do good to all, but especially to the servants of the faith, from which we learn that there are degrees in charity itself, which, being a reflection of God on all creatures, must consequently be universal, but that our affection must nevertheless first embrace the usefulness of our citizens, who are, as it were, allied to us by a right of consanguinity.

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Whoever would question the savages themselves on this subject, they would reply that nature, having given each land its men, has properly and particularly attributed to them the use of the elements and goods that it produces. This is why I am now beginning to relent from the vexation that I once felt within myself, seeing our men so neglected in England and Holland that they were unwilling to employ them for their own expenses alone, however good artisans they might be, when they wished to spend some time there to learn the language; and this all the more so since I recognize that these people do not do this as a reproach for any natural cowardice and laziness, which is the case with the men of our nation, more industrious on the contrary and more hardworking than any others, but as by a public edict and political concert, no less useful to the country than acceptable in any good government.

In all the cities of this kingdom, I recognize only Lyon where the similar practice is practiced more or less. For it is not permitted to those who keep a shop, workers or those who do work, to employ any man from outside, to the detriment of the one from the city who asks for work. I have even learned that foreigners are forced by the native companions of the place to leave every three months, that they make their visitation to let others who present themselves enter their places. It seems very reasonable that each city has something particular and as if in reserve, for its own children, so that it can do well for them. That, I say, has the privilege of employing and maintaining them first and before any others; since it itself is responsible for their care and expenses, in case of poverty, natural or accidental indisposition.

To add that it is at once contentment and glory to enjoy and to be delighted with the fine minds that she has produced and as if nourished by her breast, to derive pleasure, service, and profit, from the industrious hands that she has seen to produce and fashion the manufacture of various works. Who doubts that John of Montreal, in the time of our fathers, did not honour the city of Nuremberg with his eagle and with his fly? As formerly Architas Tarentum with his dove? And Archimedes, Syracuse, with his admirable mechanical engines?

So it is, to tell the truth, a great pleasure to see oneself useful to one's country, honourable to one's friends, agreeable to one's prince, for some great and rare quality, more active than contemplative. The beautiful mind takes pleasure, is

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pleased, glorifies itself in communicating, like another sun, the rays of its light and in making several participants in it. Moreover, those are undoubtedly the true men, who surpass others in the knowledge of the beautiful and useful arts, since the arts are the principal marks which make men differ from the brute animals. There are beautiful, great and strong minds in this kingdom more than elsewhere. One must only uncover the grapes hidden beneath the vine. As bodies facing the sun, beating and reflecting the light that illuminates them, increase and clarify it further, men of merit and industry, by receiving the favors and benefits of their prince, give more brilliance to his generosity, more light to his virtue, more splendor and reputation.

Your Majesties must be careful not to give any other reward to good actions than a good conscience; the reward is great indeed, full of contentment and satisfaction to oneself; but men are men, and it tires them in the end to do well, when they receive no other reward than good doing. It is therefore necessary to employ gallant men, and with reward, which they will manage of their own accord, by themselves, in your kingdom, when you give them the right to exploit it.

Otherwise they are rough diamonds, which do not shine, or, to put it better, they are as if they did not exist. Their light is hidden under a bushel; their talent remains buried in the earth by constraint. Beautiful souls have, in truth, several ways of opening and producing themselves outside. These stars shine in darkness; but the best and most palpable is action; and for action one must have the opportunity: this is what awakens them.

The Prince himself must offer and give it to them; this is what encourages them. Without the siege of Syracuse, would anyone have known how far this Briareus went with a hundred arms and a hundred hands, I mean Archimedes? I can no longer contain this truth, it escapes me; allow me to say it under your good grace: formerly it was seen that the spirit was worth something, but now it is considered less than nothing. The most divine thing in the world is not, and a thousandth part, so highly esteemed as the vilest excrement on earth. This is the vice of the century; repair it by your virtue, and if you want to see wonders performed in your age for the benefit of your subjects and to your honour, which is the best part of it, give free rein to these spirits of whom I speak, and let foreigners make room for them.

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The capacity of the same vessel cannot admit and contain two bodies together; one must yield to the other. When the liquid enters, the air escapes. You can: it is in your home; the command brings with it the necessity of obeying. When you have them alone and free, you will not be a little annoyed. You will soon recognize this and judge that the light of the sun is more beautiful, sweeter, more pleasant and, to say it all, more profitable than that of the moon; that the latter only refreshes, but that the other produces, engenders, gives being, nourishment and life. Then, quite at ease, you will be able to introduce, for greater utility, among your own kind, this emulation and desire to do well, without which action always remains cowardly and weak, no less than a ship reeling at sea when the wind fails it. The legislators have understood this well, mixing in the establishment of their police forces the jealousies of citizens. For not only in poetry, he who, as the divine Plato divinely says, is enamored and ravished by the inspiration of the muses, will make any other worker, however laborious, exquisite and diligent he may be, appear worthy of contempt; but also in the arts, this affectionate ardor to conquer and surpass is invincible and inimitable, adding like a sharp and poignant spur to the desire to win the prize.

The Dutch, who, as I remember having already touched upon elsewhere, have proven in several ways, mainly over the last twenty-five or thirty years, that necessity gives a great deal of wit and invention, know how to take advantage of both points that I have just discussed; and, because in matters of great actions it is necessary that the public hand helps the private one, as soon as someone of interest, recognized as a man of labor and judgment, wants to demonstrate and establish a useful industry, asking for this purpose from the States some convenient position, he obtains it when and when, without the length causing him to fall into languor; when and when he has the reasonable privileges to assure himself of the fruit of his invention, and is never defrauded under the pledge of public faith. Thus we should not be surprised if industry makes greater efforts there than among us; because the most kind minds, the most well-to-do men of wealth and fortune, take pride in seeking and profiting from finding some ingenious and useful artifice, by means of which the arts more commonly and more necessarily in use can come to an easier practice, to a more prompt expedition; from this they reap great fruit, especially since by means of engines and tools of mechanical invention they infinitely relieve the labor of men and consequently reduce the costs of the work, which allows them, rather

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than great abundance or the diligence of artisans, to give us goods at such a low price.

It should be added that now that they are in possession of supplying us, they do not aim so much to do well as to do a lot, and that their industry is employed and deployed more to make up the works, to sell them better, than to make them good. Not only customs, but the laws of peoples change, according to morals and the times. This is why Solon, after the publication of his own, would not bind the Athenians by oath, except to keep them for only one hundred years; which gives instruction in two things: that one must not make eternal laws, nor also change them suddenly, for the nature of human things, like that of the body, is marvelously slippery and continually going in precipice, from good to bad and from bad to worse, and vices flow little by little, as bad humours accumulate insensibly in the human body until (if one does not evacuate them by often repeated purgation) it becomes sick.

Also the reason of the State is not always one, any more than that of medicine. To new ills, new remedies. The pilot does not always steer the sail in the same way to reach the same port. Government considerations change, and so do the councils: one way today, another tomorrow, as necessity requires. Formerly, our France, without working so hard to amass foreign wealth, lived happily and contentedly, but then. Now, since morals have changed, every artifice must be deployed to bring in money. The rule of all this is the preservation of the State and its citizens; the safety of the people is the supreme law. When a dictator was created in Rome, he was told everything in a single word: that he should ensure that the Republic suffered no harm.

It was also held as a maxim that it was more profitable to keep one citizen than to kill a hundred enemies. There was no reward so great or so honourable as for this: a seat in the Senate, a place in the theater, honour everywhere, exemption from all taxes and contributions, not only for the person, but, for love of her, for her father and for her paternal grandfather. This is the reason: whoever helps the Republic by advice or by deed is worthy of being honoured and rewarded by the Republic. The arts nourish men well; but honour nourishes the arts.

Now that the State can have nothing more advantageous than their diverse industry, nothing more useful than their diligent and different practice, nothing

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more agreeable than their ingenious variety, nothing more honourable than their alarming multiplicity, I believe that no one will wish to doubt it; for it would be easy to convince him by proofs so evident that they would speak for themselves. It is found in writing that Cato, having undertaken to ruin Carthage, against the opinion of Apius Claudius who judged and maintained that work was more useful to Rome than rest, coming to the Senate, expressly brought in the reply of his robe some African figs, which he threw, shaking them in the place; and, as the senators were weary of seeing them so beautiful, so large and so fresh: "The land," he said, "which bears them, is only three days sailing from Rome."

But, if it were necessary to persuade your Majesties of the preservation of the arts which are our principal need, I would like, practicing quite the opposite, to come and display before your eyes the beautiful, the rich and useful productions which they make in all the seasons of the year, winter and summer, and to tell you: Here are the fruits of your garden; see that they are flowering and keep well; judge if the trees that bear them deserve to be well maintained; they are not like those, which some years give a lot of fruit, and some others not at all; it is always a similar fecundity, a similar fertility; several things oblige you to take care of them; firstly, they are plants born in your soil, not grown, nor introduced from elsewhere; and their offspring, having taken root so well and fructified in strange soils, what will they do in their own and under their same sky? Distill only on them the sweetness of your graces and make them like the sky, which spreads the gracious humidity of its rains as well on the thin of the gardens and on the twisted vines as on the tallest fir trees. Even if you took no other pleasure than to see them flower and bear fruit, that would still be human; but the need that all places, all men, all times, all ages have for them must lead us to love them, cherish them and preserve them carefully; for reason shows you this, necessity teaches you this and nature itself prescribes it to you; for it would ultimately be necessary for the dissolution of your State to follow, if the forces by which it is supported were diminished, wasted and abolished.

There are things that appear small, which, being neglected as minor, do not attract a small consequence, but are the cause of many inconveniences in a country, and sometimes weaken and impoverish it completely. One can make such a state of them as one wishes: but the arts are undoubtedly the lime and the cement which join and bind to the building of the Republic the parts which are dissimilar in nature, which without this means could not have a lasting

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consistency; justice is spread and dispersed in all them in pieces, just as blood, in which the spirits of life are contained, flows in streams in all the veins and arteries; one could not offend a single one without violating it. They all belong to humanity and are all held together by a common chain, composed of several links intertwined one in the other, and the chain can be in the hand of the sovereign master of police, this golden chain, which Jupiter boasted of being able, when he wanted, to draw the sky, the earth and the sea to himself. It is with these links which have soul, and are capable of mutual functions that the peoples are joined.

Also, as the political philosophers hold that public vacation is nothing other than an action by virtue, to which all private vacations tend and relate, no less than all the spokes of the wheel to the hub, the sources to the rivers, the rivers to the sea, also mechanical vacations are industrial operations, which compete with the public, in which they are arrested and confined, and all under the direction of the magistrate, who brings them to its end; no less than in the construction of a building, the architect, having regard and authority over the laborers, employs them variously according to his project.

I think I have, through the preceding speeches, made Your Majesties aware of how necessary it is, for all sorts of reasons, to employ the men of this kingdom, how useful it is to entrust them with the exercise of the arts, and how important, to achieve this end, to prohibit the importation and use of foreign works. Let no one persuade Your Majesties that your tributes, taxes, and duties will diminish by prohibiting foreign manufactured goods that come into this kingdom. There are a thousand ways to disinterest yourself, without trampling on your people, either on the merchandise or on the work. Besides, the wealth of your subjects is yours, not that of foreigners. Consider this carefully and you will approve of all the means of reaching the point desired of you.

I firmly believe that Your Majesties are sufficiently inclined of their own accord to undertake all things beautiful, great, and glorious. If I would now, for the service of my country, be capable of inventing everything that can entice and awaken generous souls and, by a lively and effective persuasion, compel them to consent to the achievement of some great work, I certainly do not spare it in this matter. All I can do is to represent to you that the principal reason why the position Homer calls Agamemnon shepherd of the people is all the more so

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because, just as the good shepherd must take care of the maintenance and feeding of his flock, which includes rams, ewes, and lambs, so too must the honourable prince take care of the safety and comfort of his subjects, great and small.

It is to beg you to imitate in this place the Divinity, which gives being and preservation, as much to small things as to great, which works as curiously to compose and preserve a small bee as a large eagle, to form an ant as an elephant, to make, however small it may be, all its organs more ingeniously constructed, more artfully elaborated, more clearly hollowed out, more miraculously arranged than those of the most vast and prodigious animals of the earth. It is to conjure you by all the wishes of our most humble servitude to deploy your authority and your royal force to the accomplishment of a thing where virtue, honour and utility are together united.

Even if you should encounter difficulty, - which I do not see, - this should not prevent you from courageously putting your hand to the work, since it is so significantly a matter of the glory, the grandeur and the comfort of this Empire, both for the present and for the future. All the great figures, whose examples we have and follow, could be content to live for themselves, without working for others; but a certain augury of future centuries, being attached to their soul, made them take resolution to embrace with difficulty and fatigue the care of the public. Otherwise, if they thought they would see their reputation terminated by the same limits of their life, would they have wanted to suffer so much? Great souls strive principally for immortality. These celestial flames reach there; these rays of light want to be reinvigorated and their sun, these sewers of life want to return to their source, these atoms of divinity desire to rejoin their unity.

What we foresee, moreover, and conceive in mind, that posterity belongs to us in something, makes us attempt what is as much for its good as for our own honour. Thus our mind, standing somehow on tiptoe, looks to the future, albeit from afar, and, foreseeing the benefits and satisfactions that its prudence will produce there, savors them and feeds on them in anticipation, judging that this life that moves our body and is contained in our arteries is not our best life, but the one that glory must maintain in immortal vigor throughout all the centuries. There are no better natures in the world than those who believe they are born, given, and destined to serve, maintain, and defend others; also the honour which

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is born of is not a shadow, but is something solid, express and really subsisting, which produces among men a uniform law and full of divine pleasures, which spreads and resounds from mouth to mouth, like a voice extended and multiplied by the echo of reputation, bearing witness to virtue.

Even the pagans, who have some sentiment of true good and some knowledge of true honour, have thought that there was a certain place of reserve in heaven, to receive after death those who, during their life, have helped, adorned and increased their country. According to this judgment, the truth of which is, for indubitable certainty, confirmed to us by our own belief, we are all bound to use all our power to deserve well both those with whom we live and those who will survive us. Now, for your sake, you cannot achieve better and rather your happiness than by doing something whose usefulness can be shared by many, both inside and outside this kingdom, imitating this beautiful star of the sun, which does not illuminate only the hemisphere which sees it, but also a large part of that which does not see it.

This great instinct of nature, which first inclines us to your own good, then to the affection of ours and of those who depend on us, must solicit you to this action; but, above all, this profound discourse of your divine reason, which, referring to all directions, could not invent any better means, to make you embrace all offices and duties of piety at once, to make you practice in a single stroke all kinds of virtues, to make you love and admire during your days and after your days. Let therefore no other spirit beat in your veins; let no other fire penetrate your souls than the movement and the ardor of this affection alone, if it would be for nothing other than the love of divine love and of Christian charity!

If the contentment that produces a mortal and common glory so often puts off the delights of work, will you defer employing time and trouble to acquire an immortal and incomparable honour? Courage then, most Christian Majesties, perfect this distinguished work in your days, signalize by it your reign. This point must be a great occasion for you to undertake; that the field where you work is yours, and all the fruits that will be born there consequently; and that in this kingdom so great, so beautiful, so populated, you can make your wills powers and your thoughts actions.



BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

# **BOOK TWO COMMERCE**

BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

**PART ONE**  
**(THE PURPOSES OF COMMERCE)**

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

Having discussed manufacturing in the previous discourse, I wish, before moving on to the next, in which I shall speak of trade, to respond briefly to a few objections that might be raised against the regulations governing both: for as their rationales are intertwined, the opposing arguments will not differ greatly. One will therefore first ask: if France provides for itself in all that is necessary, what will become of trade between nations? What will become of foreign trade and correspondence? But to put it more strongly, will alliances be abolished? Will there be no fear of offending neighbours whom we cannot do without? Of provoking, through their hatred, a quarrel detrimental to the State? Some satisfaction must be given on these matters.

Firstly, I would submit to Your Majesties that trade between nations arises from the need that one has for the other, since the necessities of human life are distributed across different regions. Thus, scarcity is the source of trade, and necessity, the rule. And I recall having already said that this great kingdom, composed of lands differing in climate and geography, yet all well suited to one another, is not only provided with everything it needs for its existence, but also for its well-being, and I have just demonstrated through the practice of peoples how useful and profitable it is for a state to manage the natural and artificial things that arise or are produced within it. But, to sum up what is required in a word: the trade in unprocessed goods should be permitted for the sake of greater abundance and convenience, and in this regard, accommodation between peoples should be allowed.

For example: if England has lead and we lack it, are not our wines, of which she is so fond, a worthy exchange? I shall not dwell here, however significant it may be, on the vices of countries that trade in goods and spread through frequent contact, as we learn from the testimony of Julius Caesar, who prefers the Belgians to the Celts in terms of worth, for being further removed from Provence, where the delights of Italy reigned. I dwell even less on disputing whether the Chinese do well or not to deny foreigners entry to their ports. I merely conclude, with the Stoics, that virtue is blissful, inasmuch as it has no business with anyone; and, with equal certainty, that there are enough men capable of governing the state, that a kingdom which can provide for its own needs is always richer, stronger, and more formidable.

For, moreover, as regards what might be said about manners—the refinement of which seems to be influenced to some extent by the practice and knowledge of foreign customs and traditions—that is a subject for another discussion.

However, if a few words must be said on the matter in passing, I maintain, along with our most virtuous people, that we do not ordinarily improve ourselves on our travels and that, whilst we may change our surroundings, we do not change our nature. To conclude, it is for the Scythians to seek out the Greeks. Honour, courtesy, industry and ingenuity have made their home with us; they are content here and will remain here forever, unless we ourselves drive them away. Other peoples will count themselves fortunate enough if, once we have adopted a course of action worthy of French greatness, strength and reputation, we allow them to come and light their candles from our torch.

As for the second point, which concerns foreign trade and correspondence, I would first say that it is a clear sign that a man is naturally endowed with wealth and intelligence when he makes the most of his own talents and works for his own benefit. Add to this that, by taking nothing for ourselves, we gradually lose our true nature towards our own people, coming to love and favour those who make us profit. So much power does this vile and mechanical profit hold over our souls that it extinguishes within us the seeds of love and respect we owe to our king, our country, our parents, and ourselves. As for foreigners, who are nothing but spies among us, has no one noticed, in Philippe de Comines, the manner in which our Louis XI treated an English merchant?

Everyone may believe what they will; but I, for my part, maintain that there is no better way to ascertain the strength or weakness of a country, its good or evil, its good or bad laws, its praiseworthy or blameworthy customs, or its useful or harmful practices, than through a skilled merchant who has spent a long time there; that through the agency of no other can one better sow whatever seed one wishes; that by no safer or swifter means can one be better informed of all that takes place there, or better acquainted with whatever one wishes to know.

I say, finally, that just as one who possesses a vast and fertile estate would be deemed unworthy if he let the season for cultivating it pass, or if he abandoned it entirely to lie fallow, in order to earn a few coins by tilling another's land; so too would any man of action and ingenuity deserve to waste his time and effort if, being able to devote them to his own sole and singular benefit, he squanders

them for the sake of a stranger—often unknown—in pursuit of a paltry and mercenary wage.

As for the third point: that alliances would thus be lost—without dwelling on whether they are useful or useless, advantageous or disadvantageous—I say that, in matters of state, they are not to be regarded in the same way as friendship, where all things must be shared: They must not cause one country to merge into another, or, as by that magic once practised among the Romans, transport the harvests from one's neighbour's field to one's own. Each must retain its rights, preserve its prerogatives and keep its advantages, whether natural or acquired. Moreover, if they are good and just, they endure; if bad and unreasonable, they are immediately broken.

I find three reasons for entering into them: (i) utility, (ii) honour and (iii) duty; add to these, if you will, the proximity of neighbourhood. But I have placed utility first, for wise men seek it above all else in this matter. Now, as to why trade takes the best and greatest share, I need no other proof than the care each state takes to maintain, through regular ambassadors, the friendship and correspondence of the prince and the country with which it trades. Otherwise, it takes little trouble over this, save in times of need.

Moreover, just as a good steward is permitted to manage his household as he sees fit, without anyone being able to criticise or reproach him for it, so the sovereign master of a police force, being entirely dependent on himself and on no one else, may, according to the circumstances and the benefits he seeks, alter, renew or confirm its orders; without being obliged to account for it to anyone; his interest and the convenience of his people live in their own homes? When shall we treat them as they treat us?

I am balancing things to please and honour them, however much you are the most Christian King, who alone wears the crown of liberty and glory, the greatest prince upon whom the sun shines as it circles the heavens. However much your people—the bravest and most warlike of all, the only ones truly French in name and deed—owe nothing to any other people on earth, and acknowledge nothing but their sword, after God and you. On what pretext, then, is this hatred? Because we wish to be wise and more mindful of ourselves than we have been hitherto? If they must hate us, let them have no other cause for it.

But far from it; they will henceforth esteem us all the more for having deprived them of the grounds to speak and write of us: that we do not desire as much as we are able, and that we are worthy of desiring more; that our rank does not match our valour, nor our labour or industry.

As for the final point of this last objection, which seeks to instil in us the fear of a quarrel, this scarecrow may well be effective in keeping birds away from the grain; but as for preventing the French from pursuing their interests under the authority of their prince and by his absolute will, I do not believe it will succeed. It is also where our neighbours least expect it that they conjure up a phantom to fight it, and rack their brains over a vain fantasy. The people's welfare must be his sole aim. If he were to act otherwise, why have a king? Why magistrates under him? Everyone is master in their own house, as the coal merchant said to our King Francis. Do we want an example of this which everyone says is reasonable? When the kings of England could produce enough cloth to clothe themselves, their court and their people, they thought they could reasonably dispense with the treaty that obliged them to take their wool to Bruges. And, if the Spaniards could produce enough grain to feed themselves, would we have just cause to complain that they no longer wished to buy ours?

I have found myself drawn, almost without realising it, to the arguments that might satisfy the fourth point: that of offending one's neighbours and the fear of their hatred. Among equals, it is a true maxim that behaviour must be reciprocal. He who demands more than he is willing to give demands more than he ought. When we act fairly in selling, we expect the same when buying. What we do for ourselves, we consent to others doing for themselves; otherwise, we are unjust. In what, then, can our neighbours find cause for offence, when we live in our own country as they do? On the contrary, if some of them have as much affection for France as France has shown charity towards them, they ought at the very least to desire the growth, strength and greatness of its State, from which they have drawn such notable aid in their most urgent times of need.

BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

**PART TWO**  
**(NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE)**

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

Having briefly addressed the obstacles that might hinder the regulation of manufacturing and trade in this kingdom, it is time for me to proceed with the subject I have set out to discuss hereafter. As philosophers say that the end is the cause of causes, trade is in a sense the principal aim of the various arts, most of which serve only others through it; from which it follows that it possesses something more exquisite, in terms of honour and profit, than the arts themselves, both because they are employed for its sake and because that same end is not merely the final point of the matter, but the best.

Any society, to speak generally, seems to consist of government and commerce. The former is absolutely necessary, and the latter secondary. From this we may conclude that merchants are more than useful to the State, and that their 'pursuit of profit', which is exercised through labour and industry, constitutes and contributes to a large part of the public good. That, for this reason, they should also be allowed to love and seek profit, I believe everyone will agree, considering that, without the lust for possessions and the desire to gain, which drives them to take all risks, they would lose the resolve to expose themselves to so many hardships on land and so many shipwrecks at sea.

Those who judge the happiness of a state by virtue alone, and think that this life, so preoccupied with the pursuit of gain, is entirely at odds with it. We no longer live in the days when people fed on acorns fallen from shaken oak trees, when the fruits the earth produced and pure water were great delights. Far more things are now required to sustain life. True, there is great abundance; but one must possess them to be able to enjoy them. That is why all these fine contemplations of most philosophers exist only in theory, and for a republic where there would be no need to till the soil or to act. The whole cannot exist without its parts; there are those who command and move, and others who are commanded and moved. The hands that work and the feet that carry are as necessary to the service of the soul as the eyes that see and the ears that hear. Aristotle himself, who, in seeking to establish a happy and perfect republic in every respect, seems to have come to the conclusion that it could do without merchants, could not, in the end, deny that they are as necessary there as labourers, soldiers and judges. And all the arguments of the philosophers, contrary to this resolution, established and grounded in necessity itself, are nothing but castles in the air.

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

In times past, the trade in goods was held in high esteem amongst the more civilised nations, both because it served to bring together and unite in friendship many peoples separated by vast expanses of land or long sea journeys, and because it deprived the barbarians of many great and notable benefits. Things take on the character of those who handle them, acquiring from them, like the chameleon from opposing colours, a commendable or blameworthy hue. Even today in Venice, Genoa, Florence and all the finest cities of Italy, merchants hold the highest ranks of credit, honour and reputation. They are also held in high esteem among the English, and constitute the largest and most prominent part of the Dutch Estates. In former times in this kingdom, where virtue carried more weight than wealth, they held their rightful place. In Rome, as Livy testifies, they had their College and their exchange in every province of the Empire.

Thus, since trade is a matter of international law, and since it can yield both honest and dishonest gains, it is the manner in which it is conducted that makes the merchant worthy of esteem or contempt. Moreover, trade is counted among the arts which may be practised well or ill; whence it follows that, if it is practised well and properly, it must have its just and reasonable reward; if ill, it is for the magistrate to provide for it in the interest of the public and the individual. Moreover, although it is very difficult for some sin not to arise between the seller and the buyer, it is not impossible for both to remain blameless, if one observes this commandment of our great Apostle: 'Take care, when trading, not to deceive one another.' As for the accusations and perjuries arising from and concerning the price of goods, these are human vices, not flaws in the art itself, which may be practised purely and properly without them. Moreover, wishing to derive an honest profit from it, a means of living comfortably, has never been condemned; for nothing prevents it from being intended for some purpose, whether necessary or honourable, such as, for example, if, in trade, one seeks to profit moderately, aiming to maintain one's household and provide for the poor, or if one works for the common good, so that the necessities of one's country are not lacking, desiring only to derive a legitimate profit, as a reward and wage for one's labour.

I do not wish to deny here that merchants are generally more attached to their own greed than to the public good; that the gilded splendour of gold sometimes dazzles them and leads them somewhat astray from fairness; but, to speak

politically, they must not on this occasion be cast out of the Republic and from the ranks of citizens, as if they were a sort of helots. A good antidote can be drawn from and compounded with this viper. This cantharid has good legs and good wings. And, were one to take it so literally, there would be no good labourers, no good craftsmen, no good lawyers; for in these trades, the best are those who can earn the most; and this very fact is a feature of their craft.

It is the duty of the state authorities to ensure that goods for sale are sold at the fairest price, to curb the common frauds and monopolies of trade, to prevent the adulteration and corruption of goods and to purge them if such practices are introduced, and to preserve the rights of the kingdom and, in particular, of each city. Thus, both the sovereign ruler of the State and those employed under him, having regard chiefly to things, persons and actions, shall measure all by necessity, utility and honesty, remaining always within the bounds of distributive justice and never exceeding the limits of power granted to them by the laws.

It can now be said that we live not so much by the exchange of goods as by gold and silver; these are two great and faithful friends. They provide for the needs of all men. They are held in high esteem by all peoples. He who first said that money is the sinew of war spoke not out of turn, for, though it is not the only factor—good soldiers being absolutely essential alongside it—the experience of many centuries teaches us that it is always the principal one. Gold has often proved itself more powerful than iron. That is why in every great state capable of attacking or being attacked, it has always been approved and sought after, as far as one has the means to amass it. It is impossible to wage war without men, to maintain men without pay, to provide for their pay without taxes, or to levy taxes without trade.

Moreover, the practice of trade, which forms a large part of political activity, has always been pursued by all peoples who have flourished in glory and power, and is now pursued more diligently than ever by those who seek strength and expansion. It is also the quickest way to amass wealth and, through that wealth, to rise to the pinnacle of honour and authority. We have Holland before our very eyes as proof and example of this, just as our forefathers had the Republics of Genoa and Venice. Undoubtedly, this country is a miracle of industry. Never has a state achieved so much in such a short time; never have such weak and

obscure rulers made such lofty, brilliant and sudden progress. Rome remained for three hundred years almost without venturing beyond its borders; and, for the past twenty-five, it has made its name and its arms known as far as China.

Heaven covers no people so barbarous that it does not communicate with them. There is no corner of the world so remote that it does not recognise, no place so secret that it does not reveal. All lands lie open to it by sea. This marvel lays bare our sloth; I do not mean cowardice: the French nation is too brave. This wealth, so vast and so swiftly amassed that it even seems to those who possess it as though it had come to them in a dream, accuses us of indolence; I would be wrong to say of a lack of industry; for no nation in the world is our equal in this respect, whether by sea or by land. What, then, shall I conclude, having gathered my wits, which have been carried away by admiration? That, having come at the end of the ages, it has drawn upon all the experience of the past, seeking to confound the hopes of the future in all others; that it has mingled English frivolity with French industry; that, having found no Rome to hinder its growth or delay its course, it has remained Carthage. I have said this as an admirer of virtue, a lover of discipline in all states and of diligence in all people.

Likewise, whatever I say hereafter, I shall say it without being moved by any passion against anyone, whether citizen or foreigner, save that which loosened the tongue of the son of Croesus. I believe that neither will find it reprehensible; for it is natural, worthy of a legitimate child, and such as everyone desires to make themselves known to their country. I shall likewise entreat Your Majesties to regard my freedom as agreeable, for I do not wish it to be taken as presumption, any more than my boldness as recklessness. Moreover, it is solely the zeal for your glory and the sole benefit of my country that have prompted me to undertake this work. I set forth nothing but the public good, and not by pretence, but entirely in the open. The reasons are clear, and the practices straightforward. All, great and small alike, are bound to take this into account; to conceal it is to betray. It is the greatest mark of your just rule that everyone is permitted to speak freely and modestly at the same time, saying what they think. Such frankness of speech is not suspect to you, nor is it turned into a crime against us.

Why, then, should it be otherwise, particularly in this matter, where what is advantageous to us redoubles your honour, and what is profitable to us serves

your interests? The very essence of the wealth amassed through the trade, labour and industry of your subjects is, when needed, to meet the expenses of your State and the necessities of your Crown. It is chiefly in your interest that it should be secure, extensive, universal and useful. Now, to ensure this, Your Majesty must understand it, and, to help you understand it, I shall present a brief analysis of it.

All trade is either domestic or foreign; that is to say, it takes place within the country amongst its native citizens and sometimes with foreigners who come to bring or take away goods, or else with other nations in their own lands. The former is safer, more common, more constant and universally more useful. The latter is greater, more renowned, more hazardous, and subject to both loss and profit. Both are good, when they are regulated and conducted as they ought to be. The former usually takes place between individuals; the latter, more appropriately, and more strongly, within society and for the sake of society.

One is good for maintaining the state as it is, the other better for expanding it. One fosters diligence, the other increases boldness. One binds citizens together and reconciles them, the other unites diverse nations. One makes the Prince beloved by his own people, the other makes him feared and dreaded by foreigners. One keeps him ever ready to defend himself, the other better suited to attack. In short, both are necessary and so closely intertwined that they strengthen one another, adapt to one another's means, fulfil one another's aims, and secure one another's undertakings. This requires no proof, being sufficiently evident from examples.

To discuss each of them separately, I shall begin with the first; first in order and consequently more natural and more at hand. I shall say first of all that it may be so great in this kingdom and of such great utility that, were it to remain whole, pure and unblemished for your people, and were we, moreover, to supply neighbouring peoples solely with that which we have in abundance—things we can do without but which they necessarily need, however well they may put on a brave face—I do not think that any country in the world could equal yours in happiness, wealth, glory and comfort. There would be a tree in your orchard that would bear fruit in every season, so good, so beautiful and so varied that the greatest greed in the world would have something to satisfy it.

The reason is that your towns are cities; your cities, provinces; your provinces, kingdoms; that everything which can be brought from all parts of the world, pertaining to the necessities of life (I exclude only spices, and we have salt which is better), is found in each of them in sufficient quantity, and in all of them, through the easy communication between one and another, in great abundance. In a word, France is a world which, when viewed as a whole, has everything there is to see: seas, rivers, lakes, mountains, forests, countryside. There is nothing to speak of there save the deserts. For even the Landes can be turned into fertile land. Quite rightly, our King Francis I, once mocking the vanity of the titles of Emperor Charles V, his rival, wished to style himself King of France and of Gonesse, a place where very good bread is made. The title of King of France encompasses an empire of peoples, diverse in truth, yet all united by common qualities, like the elements. A state scattered here and there, however great it may be, however great its reputation, can never possess such consistency. The parts, so well united and proportionately joined, ensure the duration of your state, give it its strength, and maintain its vigour. Internal corruption alone is to be feared and guarded against; otherwise, there is nothing to doubt or fear from without.

The human body is susceptible to contagion in various ways. The plague enters it through several routes, chiefly via the excretory organs and the more vulnerable parts. Even if the poison manifests itself in a single limb, the others are nonetheless affected by it and feel its effects. A good physician discerns its nature, knows its strength, assesses the affected part, and applies the remedy as required, using emollients, poultices, potions, or other means. In truth, it is indeed for Your Majesties to give this some thought: for there is great disorder throughout the body of this State. There is scarcely a sound part from head to foot. I believe that so many sores and old ulcers will be revealed to you that you will be filled with horror and pity, and will sympathise with its miseries. The object stirs the power and rouses it to display its strength. It has pleased you that this great body should be brought, all wounded and gangrenous as it is, before the public assembly of your three Estates, laid bare and shown naked, so that everyone may give their opinion on the causes of its ailments and their advice on the means to cure them, that you may then entrust the cure to them and leave them to carry it out with a competence equal to your goodness. Many remedies will be suggested to you, of that I have no doubt. May God inspire you to choose and practise the best!

That is why your people today rely on you so much, harbour so many hopes and offer so many prayers. So set to work without delay, and prevent them from falling into a state of languor. Lameness is difficult to cure; it is hard to restore vitality to gangrenous limbs, and impossible in cases of gangrene. Do not be deceived by the rest, by its movements still so hot and so strong: it is the violence of the fever that agitates it. That high, red colour which you see in it comes from the heat boiling in its veins and devouring its marrow, in danger of ending in the pallor of death. Have compassion, as the head does, on your limbs; feel their pains; but do more, since God has entrusted their care to you: heal them and show that, just as you have the power to restore this body not only to health but to full vigour, you also have the will to do so.

Forgive me, Your Majesty; an extraordinary surge of emotion has carried me away from my subject. A fever has seized me, as I spoke of the fever afflicting my homeland, and I have caught it myself, just as those with vivid imaginations feel within themselves the painful passion whose causes they hear or see vividly described and whose effects are naively portrayed. I return to myself and to my discourse. Many chief magistrates of policy, in many states—and when I say ‘all’, in every state, I do not believe I am lying—have diligently devised and carefully provided for means to accommodate their own trade, whether natural or artificial, to the detriment of foreigners. The cities themselves have sought advantage through their special privileges, or through some order specially established by their magistrates, of which no outsider may generally enjoy except by a letter of naturalisation granted by the Prince, or by the right of participation in the same burgh conferred by the citizens themselves.

This is the common and widespread practice among peoples and cities. But if any nation has restricted it for its own benefit and, as it were, confined it within narrow bounds, it is undoubtedly the English nation, and chiefly in the city of London, the capital of the kingdom, where the country’s greatest trade takes place. Hence it follows that whatever the majority of these men do not gain, it seems to them that they lose. All their laws are geared towards private profit, both for the citizen and for the Republic. This is the meaning of that oath never to do any favour to any foreigner, whether ally or not; and I approve of it, if it is, as some of them interpret it, to the detriment and against the interests of their State. Otherwise, it is more than barbaric. In this city, all merchants are grouped

into twenty-four guilds, each of which has an alderman. All those who wish to conduct commercial affairs must acquire the rights and privileges of one of these guilds, under a 'frid-man'—that is to say, a 'free man'—by serving a seven-year term, the laws governing which are extremely strict and rigorous. Each trade has its own market halls and each commodity is specifically allocated. It also has a leader known as the 'wardens'. Even kings and queens enter it, and may, at their discretion, become members of one of these bodies, from which they also derive the status of freemen; the local lords follow their example in doing so. From among these aldermen of whom I have spoken, the Mayor of London is elected every year, a great and venerable magistrate, and, it is said, the second most important figure in the kingdom; a position to which, as it is created specifically from the body of merchants, many people of humble birth aspire and attain by means of the wealth acquired through trade.

This policy regulation concerning trade is very precise, in contrast to ours, which is full of licence and freedom. For we have the right, from birth, to conduct it as we please. On closer consideration, however, it is beneficial to the country and designed to endure for a long time. Credit is the lifeblood of all commerce; it must be maintained in good standing if it is to be useful and profitable. And yet, when everyone meddles in it indiscriminately, this is not always for the best: this, however, seems to depend largely on the spirit of the place. France is a free land, and trade there is likewise free. But this must be the preservation of its own people, properly and specifically. Or else, if everyone can do everything there, it is a servant, it is a slave to everyone. It will therefore sow, but another will reap. It will plant the vineyard and labouriously tend it in many ways, but the firstcomer will harvest the grapes and rejoice in its wine. No, those great Princes, those valiant Kings, those invincible Monarchs, who have acquired and preserved for it, over so many centuries, the glory of liberty, who have so firmly established it in such fine laws, in such wise ordinances, which serve as its supports and buttresses on all sides against the ravages of time, have left us neither the example nor the commandment to practise it in this way.

They are known for the difficulties they have always encountered in granting foreigners the right of naturalisation, and for the caution they have exercised in this matter; for the special privileges they have granted or permitted to every town in this kingdom; for the prohibitions on exporting fabrics and goods of

which their subjects needed or could benefit; by the inspections established or ordered in the ports and at the borders; in short, to put it bluntly, by their very Christian charity, which prompted them to be overly concerned with watching over and working for the preservation and welfare of their people. For, if a father who fails to provide for his own family is deemed worse than an infidel, what would one say of the King who would seek to deprive his people—that is to say, all his children—of their comfort, profit and convenience, in order to bestow largesse upon strangers and foreigners?

Having established this principle—that a foreigner must not enjoy the same rights within the State as a citizen, a point which could be demonstrated by irrefutable arguments and a thousand examples drawn from all peoples, both ancient and modern—if this principle were denied, it would be easy to build the public good upon a foundation of sand and lime. Conversely, if this principle is overturned, the public good must necessarily fall into ruin, and all disorder and inconvenience will take its place. We have experienced this and felt the harm it causes, particularly in recent years, since we are no longer distinguished from foreigners in our halls, fairs and markets by the freedom to buy or sell, but only by language and dress. Moreover, they are beginning to become so much like us, due to their long association with us and their current residence amongst us, that in future there will be - any difference at all, save for the natural arrogance and pride they take in fattening themselves on our meagre sustenance and in seeing us, for lack of profit, so sad, so haggard, so broken and so worn out that, like Harpies, they snatch us from our hands. Why should I conceal it?

It is already plain to see, and is common knowledge. I may well tell Your Majesties what they dare to do at the stock exchanges and on the quays, so that you may put a stop to it in good time, before the more irate elements of the populace, inflamed by sudden anger, give vent to their discontent. For whilst complaints were once less frequent in this kingdom than they are now, or, to put it more accurately, whilst there were none at all, we have reasons to make them which our forefathers did not have. For, first of all, foreigners had access to our lands only by force of arms, and by force of arms too were they driven out. If they stayed amongst us, it was not to trade in our goods and commodities, but to plunder them from us.

If they had been admitted by treaty, we would have negotiated together, as they say, with pikes in hand. We had never reached such familiarity. Thus France enjoyed herself, content in her own company. And those who, to receive some favour, came to court her, did not dare to kiss her freely; they feared the husband and the children of the house too much. Let us say, then, that in those days she was like a beautiful and chaste lady, who, through the modesty of her adornments, bears witness to her virtue and self-restraint, repels the desires of suitors, and drives away all illicit affections; possessing beauty only to please her husband and care only to provide comfortably for her family. But now that she has abandoned that former simplicity, she displays gold in her clothes, diamonds in her hair, pearls around her neck, and diamonds on her fingers; everyone, drawn from afar by this pompous and magnificent display, comes to court her and, whilst caressing her, seeks to take something from her.

Before the Portuguese and the Spanish set out on their voyages to the Indies, to the East and the West, and before they had plundered both of their treasures, their poverty was extreme; yet they were scarcely sought after by us and received little aid for their want. But ever since they found the golden bough that leads us to their lands, ever since they came into possession of that rich fleece which beckons our Argonauts to visit them so often, we have been more willing and helpful towards them. We have sated that hunger for bread to which they are subject, in order to obtain from them the remedy for this hunger for gold and silver which torments us all too much. In short, we have filled their deficiencies with our abundance. To extract from them superfluous things, we have very often deprived ourselves of necessities. Now, is it for the sake of those first things, which laugh in our hands at every turn and boast of their frivolous and vain fickleness, that we now see so many strangers gathering among us and jostling to snatch them from us?

In truth, if Spain were to be won over by their flattery, if, whilst giving with one hand, it were unwilling to receive with the other; or if these importunate men had something with which to earn its favour, something with which to offer gifts capable of attracting greater ones, we would be somewhat relieved of this burden. But they always prefer, since they are allowed to do so, to enjoy in complete freedom this fair, white and magnificent goddess, France, and content themselves amongst themselves; the merchants are always the first to suffer. Their ships are detained in the ports, their goods held up in the provinces, and

their persons very often detained. That is why the wisest, like herons that sense a storm, take to the heights early, perceiving the coming of trouble and sensing the noise that usually precedes strife. But, though they are ready to withdraw, they cannot, without considerable time, settle their debts. Finally, during the reigns of Philip I and Henry II, the alliances between France and Spain having given new life to trade, and the Indies beginning to be discovered more fully, and as it were to pour forth their riches, trade became more frequent than ever and, continuing uninterrupted, a regular trade route was established, as it were, circulating in a loop from the Indies to Spain and from Spain to France, from France to Spain and from Spain to the Indies.

Since then, divisions have arisen in that kingdom, leading to its widespread, universal and prolonged desolation; yet those responsible have gained so little from it that they have nothing to boast of. Throughout the preceding period, England was constantly at war with Spain and had scarcely any opportunity to visit us or make reconnaissance. Moreover, the religious troubles in this kingdom, where she had sought to stir up strife, made her highly suspect to the greater part of our people, and her own people likewise always walked amongst us there, on a tight leash and with a cautious step. Until finally, under our Henry the Great, father and husband of Your Majesties, she went, as it were in secret, to bestow a few kisses upon this rich, superb and glorious beauty.

The other reason why we were able to enjoy our trade freely and unhindered for many years, without it being disrupted or usurped by our neighbours, is that for a long time we alone held the trade with Spain and, better than anyone else, possessed the knowledge and experience of seafaring. For the English, though islanders, have never surpassed us in this regard, neither in boldness nor in experience. As for the Dutch, who now seem to wish to claim the first glory for themselves, they had not yet ventured far from their shores; indeed, they needed local pilots merely to reach the coasts of England or France. Truly, credit is due to the Spaniards for having discovered the New World, and to the Portuguese for having connected the East with the West; both venturing boldly to the very ends of that vast and deep ocean. But we have done the same as well as they, if not with equal success, at least with equal example! For it is well established that, when they arrived in Brazil, they found ships from Dieppe there. It is further said that, whilst transporting to Spain the treasures conquered from Montezuma, King of Mexico, they were seized by force of arms by one of our

own, whom the waves swallowed up on his return, as if the sea had wished to deprive the land of such riches!

The French, thus guarding the outer approaches and controlling the seas far and wide, enjoyed the fruits of their own land in all abundance and freedom, or transported them elsewhere themselves, making do with the gold and spices they received from the Spaniards and Portuguese in their own harbours. This extensive trade and correspondence began under Louis XII, Ferdinand of Aragon, husband of the generous Isabella of Castile, and the last kings of Portugal, and then expanded further during the minority of Emperor Charles V, who was guarded and protected throughout that period by our aforementioned king. Since then, as this prince's ambition grew with his age, and his greed was not satisfied with the new worlds that came to fall into his arms, nor with the great cities and powerful provinces that fortune cast into his net, it seems that the greatness of France touched his heart more deeply and stirred his desire even further; just as the valour and reputation of our great François, which already soared high and strong through the mouths of men, on the golden wings of glory, as Pindar says, struck him in the eyes. Hence arose that great jealousy and immortal rivalry for honour, which endured ever since between them, and was the cause of so many wars within and without this kingdom, through which, as always happens in such cases, trade between their subjects was interrupted many times, and many times resumed at intervals.

I do not wish, lest I prolong my discourse, to dwell further on how during that tumultuous period, whilst we suffered and others acted, and all likely with equal distress, the trade negotiations between France and Spain were largely suspended, to the detriment of both kingdoms: everyone has seen it, everyone knows it; and as God willed in the end to open the eyes of our kings to consider the good of their realms and their hearts to receive therein a mutual friendship, the mother and nurturer of this peace, which has since endured firm, constant, and inviolable to this day. Thus the open and free passage for coming and going began once more to see our ships. Thus France came once more to fill Spain with wheat, linen, cloth, hardware, etc.; and Spain supplied France with gold, silver and pearls; so that our great Henry was right to say often that there were more Spanish pistoles in France than in Spain itself. He said so, and it was true at the time; but since then foreigners have certainly found ways to snatch them from under our noses.

Your Majesties, if you please, will hear how. This great prince, the wonder of his age and the admiration of ages to come, considered that having conquered Gaul, like another Caesar, through the strength and valour of his arms, and having made peace with all his enemies, both within and without, through incomparable prudence and moderation of mind, was not enough for the glory of a most Christian king unless he settled all the disputes of his neighbours. To achieve this, he set about reconciling Philip II, King of Spain, and James VI, the most serene King of Great Britain, who had recently ascended the English throne, a task which he accomplished.

Since then, the English have had more trade with the Spanish than ever before. Subsequently, a few years later, he sought to act as author and mediator through his agents in the general truces which still hold today between the King of Spain and the Dutch, your allies, thereby rightfully acquiring the glorious title of arbiter of Christendom, which goes hand in hand with that of ‘the Invincible’ which he has always possessed. Thus, as the peace of nations entails concerns other than those of war and leads them to other pursuits, these nations, previously occupied with defending themselves on land and sea against that rich and powerful enemy, whom they regarded as their common foe and against whom they stood their ground with united arms, have had more leisure to apply their minds inclined by nature and habit towards the love of gain to the search for all means by which they might enjoy it. Hence, to conclude, this exquisite and unparalleled diligence in scouring every corner of this kingdom to find what they seek; hence this frequent presence in our ports, this familiarity so unfamiliar with our merchants, this universal trade in everything, in all things, and everywhere, which they now practise amongst us.

It is said that one man’s loss is another man’s gain. This is true, and is more evident in trade than in any other matter. I would say, however, that in trade between citizens there is no loss to the public. It is, from his point of view, as if one were holding two vessels in one’s hands and pouring the liquid from one into the other. This is not the case with foreign merchants and traders. Just as many of them among us are like pumps that draw and expel from the kingdom not the bilge or the ship’s bilge water—if one wishes to call wealth by that name—but the very substance of your people. They are bloodsuckers that attach themselves to this great body, draw its finest blood and gorge themselves on it,

then leave the skin and detach themselves. They are ravenous lice that suck the sap and feed on it until they burst; yet they would leave it if it were dead. They amass, to speak plainly and without euphemism, all the gold and silver of France, in order to carry it off—some to Seville, some to Lisbon, some to London, some to Amsterdam, some to Middelburg. They even use us amongst ourselves for this very purpose, and make us like those fountain channels which derive no benefit from the water they carry and convey. What more? Since everything must be said, we pay for their feasting and gluttony. It is at our expense that they live so lavishly and treat themselves so deliciously. We ourselves put the bait in their hands to claim us and gain the upper hand.

For, seeing them doing so well, and even our own, as we have said, we seek them out, we lend to them, tempted by the prospect of some small, apparent gain, and, often thinking we are doing something with them, we lose everything. The most cunning are caught in it. They may have a good and subtle nose, but they cannot uncover the fuse until the fire has taken hold at the bait, until the mine has been set. Bankruptcy is often achieved before they have even considered disengaging. At first, they only complain about it in private and among their closest confidants; but with time, one also learns of the alliances they form with some who hold the highest ranks and who are nevertheless all the more to be feared, and possibly secret pensions to take care of their affairs and to further oblige them to support them. This is how we ourselves help to deceive ourselves in various ways. But what remedy is there, someone might ask? Can we uncover such hidden things? It is easy for those who have eyes. Marriages are public. Can we make wise those who are not?

Preventing anyone who wants to lose from doing so? I want it to be due to their own imprudence; good laws, however, do not fail to punish frauds committed under the guise of good faith. They do not allow the most cunning to outwit the simplest, nor do they intend that having deceived them should be a boastful act of impunity, a legitimate glory. The magistrate must provide for this. Has anyone ever heard of a Frenchman going bankrupt in Spain, England, or Flanders? He would not dare undertake it, even if he could. Let us add that he would not find there our ease, nor the credit that we extend to others for power. I cannot go on further without marveling at our customs and ways of doing things. Scarcely will one of our own, known for his abilities, find even a small sum to borrow, without collateral. So many delays and considerations will be

involved before lending him anything that he will often lose the opportunity for his plan, or it will worsen. And if some stranger comes among us, provided he puts on a good face, we will give him our purse to safeguard, under the sole pledge of foreign faith. Are we still men, or have we become beasts?

Have we lost all wit and all ingenuity, to be able to manage and profit from our own money? No, but they take away the means. And who? I've said it many times, foreigners. They block all avenues of profit for us; they make us lose all sense of the path to gain; and then they say it's not our place to meddle in business, that without them we would starve, that we are born with a racket in one hand and two dice in the other. We are not born that way, but we are made that way. Our complexion is good and strong, but we are accustomed to an atmosphere that is too soft and pleasant. We have hands, but we don't know what to use them for; we have feet, but we don't know where to go. There is no longer any room for us, not in our own country; we are strangers there, reduced to doing nothing, and the strangers there are citizens, induced by our forced cessation, to work and do our own work.

Your Majesties have eyes and ears everywhere; and, if they are faithfully served, they hear and see everything. Your public squares resound with barbarous accents, teem with unfamiliar faces, and swarm with newcomers. But, it will be said, this is the profit of inns, which are properly intended for this purpose. It is not so. These men do not want to have inns unless they are of their nation. Otherwise, they settle themselves in the best cities, occupy the finest, largest, and most comfortable houses, bring in rich furniture from their own country (for they are too afraid to pay us in any way for it), and even procure for themselves all kinds of provisions: butter, candles, beer, cheeses, etc. For they do not want us to gain anything from them. They don't come to us for that, but to take our money. The swallows find our air so mild that they spend several winters in France; it would be too much trouble for them to return every spring. They know well what this proverb means: that a stone often moved does not produce moss. Therefore, they are so attached to their own profit that they no longer give us the time, the space, or the leisure to make our own.

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

All merchandise is sold wholesale or retail: they do both. But where? In your ports, in your main towns, that is to say, where everything is amassed, from where everything is distributed. They have already occupied the warehouses and are exploiting them to the detriment of our merchants, and, to abolish all the business of those who sell retail, they also want to control the shops. There is nothing more to say about it, except that they do not have them on the street; for they sell up to ten ells of fustian, up to ten pounds of sugar and pepper, up to a dozen knives. Your Frenchmen themselves, passing through their hands today and taking merchandise from them, do not sell at all or sell at a loss, because of the good price they make, possibly expressly, to disgust them with commerce and leave them all alone. So when someone comes from outside to shop, he no longer gets his supplies from our merchants; he finds them at less than four, and sometimes six percent, from abroad.

This is how our credibility is lost, and so is our means of negotiation. If you ask more precisely the cause of this low price: Your Majesties will take, if you please; that the greater part of the English and Dutch, and when I say: all, I believe I would not be lying, are merely agents or commission agents, doing nothing for themselves, but only for the merchants of England and Holland, who maintain and employ them; who, according to their needs, give them the task of selling and releasing the goods; so that very often, having leased some merchandise on credit to one of our merchants and sometimes having as much or more remaining, they expose it and abandon it at a lower price, or even very often at a loss.

And yet our man, who can only sell under the same conditions and always bears the burden, or who is forced to retain merchandise longer than its term, and nevertheless finds himself pressed for payment, finally, if he has neglected some task or paid little attention to his paperwork, finds himself ready to break. Hence, several bankruptcies among our merchants, rare before. Hence, our faith is suspect, so highly esteemed in the time of our fathers. And then, why should the citizen not allow himself without fear what the foreigner does every day in his eyes without punishment, and which even the laws do not permit elsewhere? Moreover, the example removes the shame. One becomes accustomed to not worrying about failing when one often sees it. Besides the loss of our merchants, which, through the aforementioned means, stems more from foreigners than from their own poor management. This fact is a great source of

discouragement for our youth. For what can those who wish to apply themselves to the negotiation of traffic conceive of anything other than fear and flight?

Thus we see all our young people reduced to pounding the pavement or indulging in love, which Diogenes calls the business of those who have nothing better to do, or, if they do think of anything, it is to secure some position of justice, to which they set their sights. Thus, most of our most skillful people, our best minds, our soundest judgments are in the palaces, either to eat or to be eaten, seemingly having only one aim: to fleece everyone and adorn themselves with the skin; and foreigners are on our docks unloading and loading all kinds of merchandise, in our exchanges conducting business, in our public docks and ordinary markets gathering wool, linen, cloth, etc. Our young men are at a tennis court, sweating it out for pleasure, and always losing their money one way or the other, or at an academy (that fine name has remained in the place where this activity takes place, where those who play knucklebones, arbiters of their fortunes, gather) squandering the wealth their fathers acquired through so much effort, while foreign men work in their counter on their type paper, writing dispatches, giving advice, compiling accounts, etc.

Having spoken of foreigners, who, with sound judgment and deliberate intent, come into our own homes to inspect our households, to identify the furniture we lack, in order to provide it to us out of charity, of course, we must also say something about those others who tirelessly run from town to town, from market to market, from house to house, to snatch every kind of profit and take advantage of it to the detriment of your subjects. I will not specify to Your Majesties the goods they seek; they are the finest in the kingdom: for these Cantarians only pounce on the most beautiful flowers. Wheat, wine, linen, wool, and fruit please them above all else. Our roads are full of the livestock they take out of the Kingdom, under the very direction of your subjects; And do not think that they pay for their trouble with money—this spirit, so lightly flitting from our hands, does not escape theirs so easily—it is usually in knives, which they pay for on their return by selling them at inns to anyone who happens to be there, which greatly harms the artisans and haberdashers of the country. There is yet another kind of vagabond under the names of Savoyards, Lombards, and Bisouards, whom one can more truthfully call informers; these discover all the needs of every country in your Kingdom, carry their information to foreigners, often to the detriment of the State, but always to the loss of the merchants. It is

against these vagrants specifically that the ordinances of our Kings are addressed, and the magistrates should repress them more carefully, or rather exterminate them completely!

For they are but hornets seeking the harvest, but spies rushing for profit, like vultures swooping down on carrion. What more can I say? That foreigners, being accustomed to everything, have an opinion on everything. That they are no longer strangers at our fairs; but know them better than we do ourselves, and, through their customary diligence, take advantage of the opportunities. It is known that the best deals in trade are made when one arrives in time to relieve the needs of the country, which, moreover, can only be known or understood through correspondence. And what correspondence can those who no longer have any business have? Who will warn them of what is good to do? Who will give them the boldness to undertake? Where? And when? To whom? And through whom? Thus, we see that, through this deficiency, we cannot see further than our noses at present; We are blind in our own house.

Foreigners, therefore, are enriching themselves even more than our own, and without going any further than our own country. They do everything, and we do nothing; they are putting us on the path, if God does not help us through Your Majesties, to being henceforth completely deprived of activity and trade. This evil has already spread so far in your principal cities, where foreigners, people of high prices and great expense, mainly reside, that one can scarcely find two people willing to serve in our houses, moreover, their price has become so exorbitant, compared to that which foreigners pay, that henceforth it will be better to do the work oneself than to be served so poorly and so dearly. I cannot pass over in this matter without adding immediately that the inconveniences and annoyances that befall masters through their servants throughout this entire kingdom are such that they truly merit the establishment of good order, which will be all the more worthy of esteem, cherish, and praise because it will undoubtedly prove difficult to achieve. But what can a king not do over morals, of which he himself is the very form and the act?

## PART THREE

BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

**(ON MONEY)**

This would never be accomplished if I were to specifically present to Your Majesties all that is significant on this subject. The sheer number of things overwhelms my imagination and memory. I cannot unravel so much confusion,

nor speak in any order about these disorders. It is therefore better for me to collect myself and follow my thread to escape this labyrinth, for the further I advance, the more perplexed and confused I will find myself. I believe that from the preceding discourse Your Majesties will have understood how many and various things foreigners meddle among us. But if there is anything that is detrimental to this kingdom, it is the coinage they practice here: for by this means, they extract all our money to send it to Flanders; and whoever says that this is their principal trade would not be far from the truth. They are right; for money is something one will do anything; and, being able to join so soon and so easily at the end, there is little appearance that they would want to languish so long around the means which we use to acquire it.

Their method is much easier. They keep money changers and money changers among us expressly to relieve us of the French and Spanish currency, at a profit, of course. For they charge us sixteen and a half sols for a quarter of an écu, and so on. How foolish we are! Do we not see with what artifice this is done? They give us counterfeit money as good: I call it counterfeit money because it is debased by at least one-sixth. This cannot be doubted. The dealers, who receive the former and send back the latter, know each other; it is seen, it is known; but otherwise, there is no need to press the matter, we would lose the reputation of our goodness. That's not all, bales full of it have been discovered in Champagne, breakers in Nevers; large sums have been seized in Caudebec. There was a Fleming in Rouen, named Fernande Ferraton, not to mention the others, who was convicted by his county papers, arrested and seized, of having brought valiant dalders to the country for twenty-eight sols, which he displayed and had displayed here for thirty.

He confessed in court to having received, for the exchange of forty-six Spanish sols, money used in the minting of the aforementioned coins, which are worth only twenty-three sols of our alloy; so that, having dealings with moneyers here and there, free exchange, and frank negotiation, he made more than twenty-five percent in less than a month, while we are quite content to lend for a year, and at all costs, at less than sixteen to eighteen percent. Is it any wonder that these people are richer than we are, since they know such a good way to increase our own money? This transfer of our currency, as can be judged from the above, is done only to bring it back to us debased. For some years now, the Dutch have

shown us how skilled they are in this trade; and several of our own have even lent a hand in it. He is great, even in things that appear small.

In Spain there is a copper coin called the Oxave, which is an eight-pound piece; barrels full of it have sometimes been seized in Rouen while being transported there. In Culemberg, during the reign of the late Queen of England, a certain master of the mint, named Craye Vangre, that is to say, a catcher of crows, was forging many coins bearing the Rose, which he debased by only ten or twelve sols, and which became widely circulated in England. The Queen, having been informed of this, complained to the States, who, to appease her, imprisoned him; but it is said that this was all. To deceive the Chinese under the Spanish coin, if they wish and are able, they are permitted. But Your Majesties have a considerable interest in ensuring that your subjects no longer exchange silver for copper.

Whoever wishes to calculate the value of this practice will soon know to what extent it is profitable: and if, as they say, profit consists only in telling good stories, foreigners, who nevertheless know nothing but addition, the first rule of arithmetic, show us that we understand nothing at all. It is not a recent phenomenon that the blood of France is drained from France in various ways; it is not always by order of the physician that she is bled. Her spirits are lost invisibly, imperceptibly, and are secretly locked away in the secrets of ships, from which one knows well how to draw Pluto from the darkness into the light, when one is beyond. Enough of our men have served in this mystery, I thought I would say ministry. Enough has helped to smuggle gold and silver into the port and onto the ships. And then let them be astonished by our weakness; let them marvel at what has become of all the white currency of France. It is primarily Your Majesties' responsibility to prevent these purges, which are being carried out out of season and against your orders; you would all be astonished that the State would fall into collapse at your hands, and at that hour, vomiting would follow from starvation; now, it is fatal.

The current exchange rate of various types of foreign currency in France invites our neighbors, accustomed to striking such blows, to cause many bad payments. It is possible that many will seize this opportunity to do wrong. Your Majesties can easily remedy this through strict enforcement alone, so that in the future the course of all the misfortunes that are foreseen to occur may be stopped. The

devaluation of currency is a great disturbance, and its uncertainty even more so; it is an extreme affliction, a source of despair for the people. This has often provoked dangerous uprisings; but perhaps, whoever would inquire into it, would find that it has never produced more tragic events than in the last few days.

The necessity of commerce, which at first was carried out only by simple exchange, found its use in money, in the determined valuation of a divided commodity, to which the public form is added. Aristotle calls it the measure of all things, because by addition and subtraction one can equalize the just value of the goods one sells or buys. It is therefore essential that reason and law be constant and immutable; otherwise, no one can truly account for what they have worth; contracts cannot be secured; the income from rents is doubtful; and uncertain, that which is limited by rights and customs; in short, the state of public and private finances remains perpetually in limbo. The thing does not merely speak, it cries out; And the people, with a thousand sighs, humbly beseech Your Majesties every day to put a final, judicious hand to this disorder, which afflicts everyone, to remedy it, not with a band-aid that covers the evil, with a palliative cure, but with a remedy that abolishes it completely and forever. It is from bad morals that good customs usually arise. Through corruption, nature proceeds to generation.

He who alone is the architect of the law can alone give the law to coinage. The Greeks, the Latins, and the French express by the common term they use to signify the rule, which we otherwise call the foot, that its authority is restricted to one single and sovereign hand, just as the appellation is expressed in a single word. There is no doubt that in a State, which remains within the bounds of good governance, this rule must be held and preserved inviolable. As for the substance of metals, it must be left as pure as possible; for any alteration signifies the corruption of a country's integrity. No prince who has sought to make use of it has ever found himself well in the end. Our king Philip the Fair, who first debased the silver coinage in this kingdom by half a gram, was criticized for it by Dante, the Italian poet; but moreover, he gave occasion of great trouble to his subjects and a pernicious example to foreign princes.

He acknowledged this in his later years and for this reason enjoined his son, Louis Hutin, in his will, to take great care not to debase the coins. Now, their

debasement depends on the alloy or weight, which must be precisely regulated so that neither neighboring princes nor the king's own subjects can counterfeit them. The entire vice of counterfeiters consists primarily in the mixing of metals. Therefore, to prevent this, coins must be made of pure and simple metals as much as possible. As for the price, this is variable and depends on the times and sometimes on the affairs of state. This is evident in antiquity from the varying valuations the Romans made of copper at different times, which they used extensively in their coinage, even though of all metals it is almost the least suitable, because it rusts too easily. Our centuries, likewise, have produced several examples of this among all peoples, both barbarians and Christians. Some princes even used this artifice to fill their coffers, but in doing so, attracted great popular hatred.

The price, therefore, can and sometimes must change, but not the tithe, the carat, or the foot. Moreover, that weight should determine the value of coins is known even by the barbarians themselves, who have always practiced it thus. The Holy Scriptures testify to us that, from the time of Abraham, it was so, and always since among the Hebrews. Our ancestors used it in the same way, as can be seen in countless old marriage contracts, where the sum is not specified, but the quantity of marks of silver, silver rather than gold, for it was then much more common among us. For two thousand years and more, peoples have always maintained and still maintain this principle of exchange, and not without good reason. It is up to Your Majesties to ensure that it is properly established and observed. But they need not seek advice from anywhere but their own people to achieve this. Everything related to currency is extremely sovereign. As for the number of coins, too many only cause confusion. If there were only écus for gold, only quarter-écus, half-quarters, four-pieces, and two-pieces for white coinage, and if the payments made with them were regulated and valued solely by weight, it would seem to be a great convenience. Little by little, and without disturbing or vexing your subjects, you could reduce everything to this point.

For to try to do it all at once, and not denigrate species by species, would cause too much loss and inconvenience. Small change is also necessary. The Queen of England, having decreed that in her kingdom there should be only two kinds of coinage, namely gold and silver, cut off several small branches of charity. God was pleased with the penny that the poor woman threw into the collection box.

He who gives something of his little does more than he who gives much of his abundance. It is a sign of the prince's greatness that in the coinage circulating in his lands and lordships, one sees no other symbol than that of his image or his coat of arms. This itself is in many ways considerable for the good of his state.

If foreign currency had no legal tender status in France, it is possible that one would not so freely open one's hand there. Merchants have the greatest interest there with regard to exchange rates; but this inconvenience that would come to them should not outweigh the many advantages that would benefit the public, nor the honor and security that would accrue to Your Majesties. The great lord of the Turks, who, as you know, wishes to be recognized in all things and by all peoples as absolute, knows well how to retain and preserve in all his countries this sovereign mark of sovereign empire. Of all the places under his rule, there is no city where foreign currency circulates more freely than in Cairo. This stems from the great trade that takes place there among all kinds of foreigners. Moreover, in order to continually attract Spanish gold and silver to this kingdom, it is reasonable to value it somewhat more highly, for coins are not like water, which flows downwards; on the contrary, they always seek to rise, and accumulate where they fetch the highest price. But in this, as in all other matters of state, the middle path is the safest.

The current turmoil surrounding the currency situation has prompted this digression, all the more readily as I have judged the ease, stability, and security of trade to depend principally upon it. To return to my subject, having previously emphasized the individual interests of each party, I would be rightly criticized for passing over in silence that of Your Majesties, which, as a public interest, must always be given priority. Who is unaware that, as it is now, it accounts for at least one-sixth of the trade in your customs? Who does not foresee that it will decrease daily, in proportion to the decline of our trade and the increase of foreign trade, unless Your Majesties restrict it through the renewal and stricter enforcement of the ordinances of this kingdom? The frauds committed there daily to your detriment are public knowledge. People are caught at all hours smuggling prohibited goods. If they can do nothing else, they conceal them under their clothes. Through their connections in the country and along the rivers, they can evade the notice of your officers, and consequently your rights, of all the finest goods they bring into this kingdom, on which you levy the heaviest taxes: satins, velvets, taffetas, trimmings, silk and tinsel

stockings, in short, all manufactured goods made of spun silk, gold and silver, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, cochineal, etc.

For it is easy for them to have houses at their disposal, where they can unload and conceal the spoils of the aforementioned goods, and then bring them into the cities, secretly and at convenient locations. To remedy this disorder, which is too detrimental to you first and foremost, and then to so many of your subjects, consider stopping it at its source; and, to this end, ensure that all foreign ships come to anchor in harbors, ports, and roadsteads, where they must be inspected; and, if, to avoid peril and inconvenience or to avoid losing the tide, they are forced to enter rivers, establish for them places as close to the sea as possible, where the inspection takes place: for from their very declaration, it will be possible to discover the usual frauds. It is perhaps for this reason that they have so vehemently petitioned to abolish the visitation of Quillebœuf, even though it should take place in Le Havre itself. Is this not the reason why, upon entering your kingdom, they should be treated as we are, coming to their cities?

We are not so soon discovered at sea that they jump aboard in longboats and skiffs to inspect and search us as thoroughly as possible. We must show them the charter party and the waybills so that they can know everything precisely and ensure that all the country's duties are rigorously paid. You can order that the same authority and diligence be exercised in their dealings, for this matters to you more than one might think. It is best to entrust these positions to honest people who do not abuse them and who do nothing but fulfill their duty. If this is done properly, your customs duties will soon return to their previous level, and possibly even rise. Those who lease them will not be ruined, as they most often are; because by this means will be prevented several frauds and subtractions, to which these people are subject, whoever does not guard against them; we see proof of this every day in your ports.

That's not all; another great benefit will come of it, namely that this great license, which they usurp day by day, will at least begin to be restricted, and their audacity in seeing themselves almost alone on our quays will diminish. For who doesn't know that for every sixty or eighty Flemish ships, there are usually only ten or twelve French ones? This makes them so arrogant that they believe the harbors belong to them alone, and to us only on borrowed terms. Then the foreigners, having become more modest and more restrained, will no longer

unload their vessels, trampling your regulations underfoot and transgressing all obligations, without leave, without prior inspection; it is said that they have already come this far.

Therefore, nothing would remain except that they pay no tax on any merchandise, and it is said that Your Majesties, caught in this act, have granted it to some individuals among them; this being the case, the benefit will soon be common to all. They never remain on such a good path. It is up to you to look into it closely; it is your property. Allow me only to tell you that royal rights are lost more easily than they are regained; that one cannot remove the smallest stone of authority without shaking many others; that what makes it strong is that everything in it is held together and bound as one, like in a work of masonry built in a vault, that all its strands are so well interwoven, one within the other, that they do not fail, no matter how hard they try, even if they are not content with carrying our bales to Spain. They boast of having the sea and, even more so, believe the rivers belong to them. By both routes, they have undertaken the largest transport we possess, namely, the salt trade. And yet our neglected men remain there, without anyone providing them with the means to live by working, or to work while living.

Your Majesties, whose care must be provided for all, can remedy this by ordering the parties to use only French ships and sailors, so that the Dutch no longer have to pay sixty thousand écus in freight every year for the voyage from Brouage to Normandy, Picardy, and via the Nantes River. As for the pretext of lower cost, it is null or of little consequence, for since foreigners are excluded from this transport, your men will soon make it just as convenient and at the same price. The public benefit outweighs any other advantage that could be alleged. Furthermore, since salt does not come from foreign countries, but is a scum from our sea, collected in France, and consumed in France, it does not seem legitimate for others to be employed in transporting it here, as we ourselves are more than capable and numerous enough to do so.

This affects a great multitude of the common people, whose debauchery must be prevented for the sake of public peace and the common good, which abandonment is not only against reason but against nature. Now, this is both easy and reasonable, for since they ask for nothing more than work, can it be refused them? Is it not just that they be employed, to the detriment of foreigners,

in the very places where they received life and first saw the light? Discussing the affairs of commerce conducted in this kingdom, what hinders and diverts it from our grasp, and placing the blame on foreigners as the most certain and visible causes of the problem, given the presence of the objects involved, I have begun to consider whether we ourselves are free from blame and incorruptible of any crime. But I did not remain long on this meditation without being drawn away by the memory I had of our commissioners, not ours in truth, although they were among us, but Spaniards, Portuguese, English, Flemings, and whom else, I shall not say, since for money, in France, one no longer considers whom one serves?

This somewhat lessened my indignation at others conducting their business so well in our country, when I remembered that we ourselves were doing the same for others. For what reason, I said to myself, should we desire that foreigners be more charitable towards us than we are ourselves? Are they not right to seek their own profit and to do so, since they are permitted to use us in this, given that we believe we owe them a great deal for making us their agents? But where have we come to? In the time of our fathers, it was not so. Their hearts were too well-tolerated to want to serve as servants to others. They were too honest to be mercenaries. They had too good an appetite to let themselves be taken advantage of like that. They were charitable, a hundred times more so than we are, towards those whom piety compelled them to care for; but they did not let strangers eat their bread without paying properly. They did not steal it from their children, as we do.

What else can I call these commissions, by which one of our hands takes from another what we have best, to starve this whole body, but public thefts, but monopolies against the good of the State, but voluntary servitudes that are a shame to liberty, glory, and the reputation of our country, but underground holes through which flows all the water from which the people drink; but false doors through which all the munitions are taken from our fortresses, to the deceive of the captains, not to sell them, but to hand them over to the enemy for a piece of bread. Since this wicked practice, harmful to all, great and small, men and women; but rather ruinous to all in general, and of little profit to a few individuals, has crept in among us, through the industry of our neighbors, favored by the negligence of our magistrates, the debasement of our police forces, the nonchalance of our privileges, trade has fallen into our hands before

our very eyes, and now it is nothing more to our eyes than a court of intrigue; yet this infamous and mechanical exercise escapes our grasp.

So what need is there for more merchants in a town where three or four commission agents, hired servants of foreigners, go everywhere snooping—I'm wrong to use that word—going to the open markets, using his money and gathering as much merchandise as he desires, paying only the cost of their services? What more is there for us to do? When the cream and the flower of the milk have been extracted, is it possible to make butter from them? When the wax and honey have been taken from the hive, what remains inside but stings for whoever wants to lay their hands on it? Are we not unfortunate? For to say imprudent would be an understatement. We not only call nations to our harvest of gold, but we ourselves gather it for them and deliver it ready-made into their hands at little cost. And everyone is content to glean after these hired harvesters, who, as if they had renounced their inheritance rights, work only by the day and are paid the same. But where, good heavens, do we gather these small handfuls, instead of gathering those large sheaves that filled our fathers' barns and comfortably fed their large and prosperous families?

It is on our own land, on our own property. What we sow in tears, sweat, and toil, the foreigner will come to reap, with contentment and pleasure, even without deigning to bend down and lay a hand on it! But what am I saying: will come? It is enough to send a note when he sees that the fields are turning yellow and calling for the sickles to harvest; he will be served in due time; he pays us for it; for it he gives us wages; infamous wages, mingled with loss and shame, which corrupt the loyalty we owe to our country and cowardly commits our labor to the service of others.

## **PART FOUR**

**(COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS)**

I wish to clearly demonstrate to Your Majesties how impossible it is for us, given the license and indefinite freedom that foreigners currently enjoy in France, to gain anything from them, neither here nor there. Consider the goods

that the Spanish bring from India: hides, cochineal, ginger, wood for dyeing, etc. They send a large quantity of these to France, where their agents and correspondents are located. These agents can sell them more cheaply than our merchants, who purchased them in Spain. Moreover, since they send them directly for their own account, as they come directly from India, they do not pay the Alcavale tax, which is ten percent on the sale and the same on the resale, a tax that the French, operating in the country, are burdened with and consequently obliged to increase the prices accordingly in France. That is all for this matter.

When, subsequently, the agents acting on behalf of the Spanish in India have sold the goods brought in, they can use the proceeds from these goods as other merchandise from this kingdom, as they see fit, often even in raw linen purchased in our markets and halls, to the detriment of the bourgeois and native inhabitants of the country. Then, having them bleached, they send them to Spain, into the hands of the said Spanish traders in India, who declare that they brought them for their own account and thereby avoid paying the aforementioned Alcuavale duty, to which we, as sellers in Spain, are obligated. Furthermore, they pay only five percent export duty to India, where the ordinary duty is ten percent; so that the Spanish earn on a bale from France to Spain and from Spain to India 25 or at least 23 percent more than we do.

It doesn't take much to understand that a single commission agent, conducting business worth a hundred thousand crowns, is worth at least ten good merchants in the Republic, and what's worse, without any profit for the country: for the fruit of his trade remains entirely abroad, and his gain is so small that it is not at all considerable in this respect. Of all the work undertaken for our good neighbors, all that remains for us is the toil of serving them, the dirt and sweat we accumulate while amassing wealth for them. We watch and we work, while they sleep and rest in the shade. We pant, while they refresh themselves. We fast, while they dine. And yet our Republic, abandoned by everyone's care, languishes, weakens, wastes away, corrupts itself and, what shall I say, further strips itself to clothe others, removes its own ornament and glory, to transport it elsewhere with its wealth.

Foreigners freely enter the hall where we practice fencing every day, learn and recognize our techniques, and often spar with us and even against us. In short,

they know all our fencing techniques, but we do not know theirs, or if we do, we lack the skill and the means to execute them. It is therefore up to Your Majesty to order the creation and practice of a new game, one entirely our own; or, if that is not possible, to bring back the old one, and I believe that would be best. There are some very good, unstoppable attacks in the old Gallic style; all that is needed is courage and resolve to attempt them. But the French never lack these qualities; they need only your command and good conduct.

From our agents, I must turn to certain men who have slipped into France in recent years and conduct business there for their compatriots or for themselves. I don't quite know what to say about them, but very bad rumors are circulating. The smoke suggests there's trouble brewing. The magistrate must investigate and take action if necessary. Several things compel him to do so, but above all, honor and piety. Let us remember that we are baptized. The Sundays they don't observe, the bacon they don't eat, the figures their wives don't have woven into tapestries, the paintings they dislike, and many other such things that are publicly observed, not to mention their secret meetings, which already scandalize many respectable people, truly smack of corruption. It is said that these people put on a grand show in public, but are quite filthy and petty in their private lives. They only use their wealth as a lure to gain credit, which doesn't seem to be working out badly for them.

Many of our people know what to expect; they could tell you a lot about it. Furthermore, one must not allow those who wish to ruin themselves to do so. Even if a feverish person feels like drinking, the doctor forbids it and orders that they not be allowed to. That is the right approach. One must observe those who come to a state, understand the reasons for their arrival and their stay, what abilities they rely on, what they involve themselves in, what they aspire to, in what ways they are useful, and in what ways they are not. This is to live properly; this is to govern with knowledge and judgment.

The best hold one can have on men is to know their inclinations, their movements, their passions, and their habits; by grasping them through these means, one can lead them wherever one wishes. But there is never any certainty, as an old French proverb says, in tying around one's finger grass that one does not know. What do we know? It is possible that we receive in our bowels the bad humors that others expel by order of a doctor. We must be careful not to

make France—so beautiful, so pure, and so pristine that she wishes to bear witness to it in her coat of arms—a cesspool, a sewer, a cesspool of other countries. She must not suffer, any more than the sea, that which is corrupt. Indeed, humanity towards strangers has always been praised, even among pagans, and considered one of the principal virtues worthy of being valued among men; and when the ancients wished to condemn a barbarous villainy and some brutal and savage manner, they usually used the word "inhospitality." But even the most charitable to such people have never left examples comparable to what we practice.

There is a great difference in the kindness one is bound to show to a foreigner and to a subject; one is general, the other very particular. The foreigner has his own gods, even the pagans used to say; the citizen shares them. The foreigner has no bond of friendship that affects us; the citizen and the subject are like blood brothers to us. The foreigner has heaven and earth separate from us; the subject shares them with us; the same air refreshes him, the same sky covers him, the same earth sustains him. But, so that Your Majesties may be fully informed of everything concerning this subject, I believe I will accomplish the main point if I present to you a parallel between the treatment that foreigners receive in France and that which your French citizens receive from foreigners. Opposites become clearer, and white does not appear so white as when it is brought close to black.

Let us begin with the English, our closest neighbors, and let us show with our own eyes and touch with our own hands how our merchants do not enjoy the same freedom and equality of trade with them; how, because of the ill-treatment they receive there, they are forced to abstain and instead allow them to do everything on this side of the border, to the great detriment of our manufacturing, our trade, our shipping, and the general good of the entire Kingdom; for in this suffering, all of this is at stake. Note first of all that the principal goods transported out of England are wool, cloth, lead, tin, tin stockings, etc. As for wool, the French are not allowed to remove any, so that they can more conveniently and more abundantly supply the manufacturing they bring us, to the detriment of our cloth industry, as I have predicted. They, however, can transport them out, but only through a company, which is established by the authority of the King.

We are forbidden to bring any drapery into England, under penalty of confiscation. On the contrary, the English, in complete freedom, bring into France any drapery they please, even granting to Lord Montgomery, a young English nobleman and gentleman of his chamber, thirty-five sols to be taken from each piece transported by a foreigner, that is to say, by a Frenchman, although Article 3 of the last treaty, made in 1606, directly contravenes this. After all this, foreigners, that is to say, we, are forbidden to remove any wool or any fresh sheepskins, under penalty of having their arm cut off. What treatment for one's neighbors, allies and confederates! In contrast, the English have in this kingdom all the same rights as we do, and are often treated more favorably. As for tin, we were similarly charged double for export duties, as can be seen from the tariffs. Now we are no longer permitted to transport it, except to the English only, or even to a single company.

Thus, tin, passing through their hands to ours, has in a short time risen in price from eight sols a pound to fifteen. For tin stockings, we used to pay only a quarter more than the English; now they take double, against the aforementioned treaty; likewise, for all goods that are brought to England or from there, they always demand from us a quarter more for the duty they call foreign customs. Besides this, the King of England, since his accession to the crown, has put several new taxes on several goods entering or leaving his kingdom, which previously were levied equally on all, both subjects and foreigners: but since then, he has granted to Lord Crommeveld, lord of the country, to raise these charges by a fourth part on the merchandise belonging to the French, and, having again reduced them all to half, they still continue on us and we are still made to pay double everything.

But here is something far worse, and quite openly designed to ruin our trade. In London, where we have said that almost all of England's trade is conducted, a certain company of merchants has been established by royal authority to deal exclusively in France with everyone else, so that, since everything that passes through the hands of this small group of associates, they sell us their goods here at whatever price they please, and only buy ours at their own discretion: for those who have goods to sell are forced to deal with them alone. Moreover, this company levies, for its own sole and singular profit, a certain tax on all the merchandise brought into France, from which they draw funds to maintain their privileges, to exploit us here, and to oppose our complaints here; so that none of

us has either the boldness or the means to undertake them, fearing to be immediately overwhelmed by their expenses and favors, which they have already made us know and feel several times in ourselves.

We also see their business growing so rapidly that in the principal cities of this kingdom, which are near the sea, there will now be more resident English commission agents than French merchant traders. Therefore, the only remaining requirement to attribute all trade to them is the establishment of their consuls on this side of the border, which they now claim and demand; for those they wish to give us on the other side, as if in exchange, what is the purpose and what people will they give us, since our business is conducted there? Furthermore, it will not be useless or superfluous to point out to Your Majesties here that the English readily adapt to company; But as for admitting a single Frenchman, however good a friend and comrade he may be to them, they will never do so, especially since the prohibition is too express between them and the oath on this matter, so often reiterated, that they would not dare to contravene it, under penalty of confiscation of property, deprivation of privileges and corporal punishment; where, on the contrary, in this kingdom the English associate indifferently with whomever they please and never forget to get the best end of their side.

Moreover, they have a form of tax, which they call *lent sçavadge*, on merchandise entering or leaving by sea, which they only levy on us. They impose a similar tax to another, called *caïage*, as well as to that of the *furvoyeur*, from which the English are entirely exempt. In short, they prohibit all merchandise, as they please, and when they please; whereas, on the contrary, everything is free for them in France, except contraband, everything is permitted to them at all times. They forbid the import of all our manufactured goods to England, which they can do without, and maintain such strict control over all haberdasheries in general that it is not permissible to carry a hat, a sword blade, a purse, or a belt there, which causes a great loss in that kingdom, which, not long ago, supplied them with almost all handcrafted goods; But now they are only in need of five or six of our ways, whose use and demand they still suffer; where, on the contrary, they do what they can, bring what they want, everything is received in France. There is more.

The King of England grants, day by day, to several partisans, to the exclusion of all others, special licenses for the transport or delivery of various goods; and their trade is not restricted here, nor in coming or going. The French are prevented from selling privately, which, on the contrary, they do daily in France. The French are not permitted to sell to outsiders, nor to buy from them, but from the "fridman," that is to say, from the free bourgeois; and in France, they buy and sell as they wish, from whomever they wish, and to whomever they wish. When the French bring merchandise to England, they are forced to provide security, to reinvest the money in other merchandise, to carry out, so that when it often happens that a merchant loses half of his property there, by bankruptcy, by lawsuit or otherwise, he finds it more profitable to exchange it, which prevents him from being able to discharge his security, where the Englishman, in a similar situation, has only his will as law in France.

The French in England are forced to use the packers and porters appointed by the customs officers and farmers; so that their affairs, which should only be known to the farmer for the purpose of receiving due payments, end up being divulged to their detriment and to the advantage of others, who can profit from this arrangement, in addition to the great burden it places on them to use people who often scold them and even demand excessive wages; whereas in France, on the contrary, they employ those who come to them willingly and conduct their business as secretly as they wish. The most frequent commodity, and the one that deserves the most just administration, is peas. If in England the Frenchman buys, he must buy the merchandise at the seller's domestic pea market; if, on the other hand, he sells, he is obliged to deliver at the King's pea market; In this, on the one hand, there is great inequality, and on the other, great frauds can be committed by those who would abuse it. In France, in all the commercial cities, there is the King's pea, which is common to both foreigners and citizens.

If any Englishman brings merchandise into England, and does not sell it within a year, he is permitted to take it back with a certificate, without paying any duties. But the French do not have this privilege there, although in France the English are allowed to take back, whenever and however many, all kinds of drugs and spices, for which the King has already received the right of entry, even if it was through another, and this without paying any export duties. They enjoy in this kingdom the privileges of fairs, just as French citizens and townspeople can; and it is primarily to those that are free that they entrust

their purchases, in order to avoid paying any duties. On the contrary, we have no exemption between them, far from it; their strictness is so great that they make us pay double the cost of the export receipt, which they call a "coquet."

There is also a very unjust practice in England against the French who bring wine there; for they are not allowed to sell to tavern owners, but only to those who belong to the company that trades in this merchandise, who, by this means, pass our men on at their rate, whether they like it or not. Many Bordelais and many Rochelois can attest to this at their own expense. Here is something even worse: the King's supplier usually makes his selection from our merchants' cellars and marks the top of the wine at the price he claims it is worth; thus, in addition to the loss of such a purchase, he devalues the merchandise so much that the rest, considered rubbish, is forcibly sold at a very low price: evident ruin for a poor man, if by chance, through prayers, gifts, or friends, he does not avoid this misfortune! It is not necessary to ask, moreover, whether this supplier knows how to properly enforce his commission. Nothing of the sort is practiced in France towards the English, and the French should likewise be exempt from it in England, except for the King's right to claim this right from his subjects, who, naturally, are obligated to provide for him. It is only right that each should bear his own burden.

The English are so strict with French ships loading in England that if an English ship appears wishing to load for the same place, the French ship, even if only half-loaded, will be unloaded and reloaded onto the English one. Since the treaty, in which the reform of this article was agreed upon, the English, having established in London this new company I mentioned above, do not allow anyone belonging to their company, therefore English, to load onto any French ship, provided there is an Englishman in their company, into which they have also reduced some vessels, in order to more easily place all trade negotiations in their hands, and deprive us of it. Do we not see how, even in France, English shipmasters, lacking the means to transport all the goods they acquire at the fairs of Rouen and elsewhere, usually charter Dutch ships, leaving the French behind? Let us now speak of personal treatment.

Every Frenchman, upon entering England, is made to pay a tribute of five sols, and upon leaving, thirty, even with such severity that, for lack of payment, one often sees many of your poor subjects forced to give up their cloaks; an

inhumane, barbaric thing, unheard of anywhere in the world. On the contrary, in France, they enter and leave without it costing them anything. The French are obliged to remain in England, failing which the authorities grant their property free of charge to the heirs of Englishmen who die in that Kingdom. The French residing in England, although not naturalized, are nevertheless registered in the King's tax records, which contain a universal tax form and are taxed at a certain sum to be included therein. Even instead of being relieved, as foreigners, when some tax is levied, as is done daily for the affairs of the King and the towns, they are always overburdened and always pay double, whereas the English, on the contrary, are exempt in this kingdom from all the taxes and subsidies that Your Majesties levy on their natural subjects. One of our people, on this occasion asking an Englishman why we were treated so cruelly in England, replied, "All the more so because you are a foreigner."

And when he replied that they were not treated the same way in this Kingdom, he responded: "If you are not wise, are we obliged to be foolish? I have already spoken of a kind of officer they call Promoters, who, although they exercise their functions against the English, are ruthless against the French. These are the investigators of foreign manufactures brought into the Kingdom, for which, even though they have already been seized, acquitted, and fined at the King's office, they nevertheless continue, without any legal formality or procedure, to inhumanely drag the French prisoners from time to time, demanding such excessive sums, such as two hundred thousand livres, that they cannot provide security. Thus, they are forced to remain captives until the trial and these vain and frivolous demands are resolved." These are artifices, sought to drive us completely out of their country.

In France, nothing of the sort is done to them; they are not sued over trifles; their possessions are not investigated, and they are free to sell them. In conclusion, they have and practice a law called "Arrest-you": it is a form of haro', usually brought by worthless people for false claims or undue sums, through which the French are forced to go prisoner or provide sufficient surety, which, as foreigners, they cannot easily furnish, without the one who arrests them being obliged to do the same. From this unjust procedure, your subjects often suffer great hardships and bloody affronts. This should not happen to us, since we do not practice anything similar against them without a sentence rendered, prior proof, witnesses present, or a binding obligation.

I have briefly outlined to Your Majesties the treatment your subjects receive in England, both in their property and in their persons. You may judge whether it is worthy of the glory, grandeur, and power of this monarchy, and may be thereby induced to desire at least that equality reign, as is required between allied and neighboring peoples; otherwise, and in case of refusal, you may also justify it by ordering that the same taxes, charges, and obligations be levied and applied on the goods, grain, wine, paper, prunes, etc., that the English transport from here to their kingdom, so that ultimately, in all respects, they may be treated in France in the same way that your subjects are in England, and this according to the common law of nations. This being the case, it will bring honour to Your Majesties more than eight hundred thousand pounds each year.

And, since, to infringe upon your rights, some abuses might be committed, using the name of the French, Your Majesties, in order to prevent this, may require the officers of the offices to take an oath from those who issue receipts for goods brought in or taken away, under penalty for those convicted of perjury of being deprived forever of the right of citizenship, and forbidden to trade, the goods moreover confiscated, the fine and corporal punishment inflicted in the same way as in similar cases is practiced in England. We have nothing similar to propose on this subject against the Dutch, our allies and good friends, since it pleases Your Majesties to receive them in this capacity, continuing the good affection that the late king, your father and husband, always bore them. They are indebted to us too recently and too closely to imagine anything of the sort against us. Moreover, the laws they observe are not such, nor do they have this purpose, to fear something similar in the future. Furthermore, it would not be of great advantage to them; for they are coming and staying longer with us than we are staying with them.

If any reason brings us there, it is to bring them something to cheer them up, something to fill their coffers: that good French wine, from which they collect more tax on their people than the principal of the purchase. Besides, given the convenience and low cost of their transport, I don't think we have much to worry about anymore. The goods we bring back, but mostly for them, are Dutch linen, Leyden serge, Isle of Man ham, liquid soap, butter, and cheese. As for the steel and hardware of all kinds, which they bring us in such great quantity that nothing else matters, it is all German work, from Nuremberg and elsewhere.

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

These people are clever, for they arrange things very conveniently to their advantage, and artifice is much more favorable to them than nature. This is the main way in which they should be recognized as men: they neither spin, nor sow, nor plant, yet they are fed and clothed more magnificently than any others. They have nothing, and yet they have everything, through their various voyages.

We have no need to fear their mistreatment in the future; for if we go to them, it must be as students, to learn how to live and earn a living, if the opportunity arises: this will be the greatest benefit we can derive from it. For everything else, the roles are already filled. If we wish to attend the theater, it must be by grace, as newcomers. For we cannot mount the scaffold to play a part; all the roles are already assigned to people who will know perfectly well how to perform them. Let us now consider the treatment we receive from the Spanish and that which the Spanish receive from us, both in terms of property and persons. I have previously shown Your Majesties how everything is free for them here through their agents, and how they themselves enjoy our rights and immunities.

For although most of them are employed in the Indies, contenting themselves with dealing and negotiating here through their agents and agents, there are still quite a few in your kingdom, some of whom, more than ten of our best merchants, send here and there your subjects themselves to amass a great deal of merchandise for them, as freely as the natives of the country could do. And if they wished to come further, the door is open; they would be no less well received than their compatriots, the Portuguese, who reside not only in one part of your lordships, but everywhere they can profit from some kind of trade. On the contrary, your subjects are permitted neither entry nor frequentation except in Spain itself, or, as I shall show hereafter, they go only to enrich the King. For who does not know, moreover, how the trade in the Indies is forbidden to them? And who hasn't heard of the inhumanities they suffer, when they are only caught on this road? It can truly be said that the Spaniard is to this country like the jealous man is to his wife.

Approaches are an obstacle to him; glances, darts; touches, barbs; kisses, despair. This drives him to extreme rages, which he usually unleashes upon your Frenchmen: burn them, flay them alive, impale them, drown them, sew them into sacks. And I ask you, what natural equity is this, to do to us what he would

not want us to do to him? These people can travel freely through this beautiful kingdom and derive from it so many conveniences that are necessary to them, and without which they could not even keep their Indies, nor develop them. And we, on the contrary, wanting to trade in wastelands, on deserted coasts, we are killed and massacred: for, to be made slaves, we should not promise ourselves such cheap prices.

The large trade that foreign nations conduct in Spain, solely and principally due to that with the Indies, which, for the most part, consists of fruits and manufactured goods that originate and come from your countries, provides the King of Spain with a very large increase in revenue because of the excessive tax he levies on all sales and resales of all merchandise and foodstuffs in general, except for grain. This tax of ten percent, which sometimes rises to over one hundred percent, is the "alquavalle" tax, instituted under Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile to finance the war against the Moors of Granada, and has continued ever since. Furthermore, what he takes from the goods that foreigners are forced to bring back from Spain, in proportion to the value of those they brought there, is no less profitable for him. For there is fifteen percent on the least, and on wine, oil, cochineal, grapes and figs up to twenty-two and a half, according to the estimate which is made in the offices, as close as possible to the fair value; including the right which they call d'almouzarifasgo', from an Arabic word, which is five percent and two percent of other small rights.

Moreover, we in France could easily do without all these goods, but we are forced to take them in order to recoup the proceeds from those we have taken to Spain, which, on the contrary, Spain cannot do without either for itself or for its trade with the Indies. At Lisbon, there is a 22.5 percent import duty, but only a 2.5 percent export duty, for the purpose of unloading spices; for all other goods, there is a 25 percent export duty, just as on the coast of the County of Algarve. Furthermore, to look at it carefully, we are no less burdened in the spice trade, because the King of Spain has already levied a large import duty on it, which we alone bear, the merchant who sells always accounting for his share. This being well considered by some of our people, who know exactly these charges and recharges, and make a fair calculation of them, they conclude that the King of Spain takes more than forty percent from our merchants, before they can gain anything at all, and that, consequently, they work for him more than for themselves.

Let us now compare these excessive taxes with the duties that Your Majesties levy on goods entering and leaving your kingdom for Spain, and you will find that it is nothing compared to the price. An example will serve as law and proof of everything. All kinds of fine linen and other goods pay you only about four pounds eighteen sols per cent. The King of Spain takes it by price, and you by weight; there is much to say; a single bale is sometimes worth more than eight hundred écus; as for the linens from Brittany and those that leave via Guyenne, they are hardly worth mentioning, for they pay you only about two sols six deniers per bale. To speak of it generally and truthfully, your import and export duties are only two and a half percent (except for spices), equally for foreign goods and for domestic ones. And from this you can understand the unequal treatment that Spaniards receive in France compared to that which your French receive in Spain, with regard to duties and taxes on goods. Thus, I will repeat it once more (for Your Majesties cannot bear to hear it enough): we buy at great expense what we absolutely cannot do without, and give cheaply to others what they absolutely need.

From taxes on things, let us turn to the treatment of people. In France, we show such great respect to foreigners, but especially to Spaniards, that they find among us not only freedom and secure access, but also free and peaceful residence, and even, what's more, voluntary service; so that they are most often spared the trouble and expense of coming to trade here. On the contrary, to what are your subjects not subjected when they go to or remain in Spain? What exactions do they not endure in their property? What indignity do they not suffer in their persons? What tortures often befall their bodies? When I consider that Frenchmen, that is to say, men born free and raised free, thus prostitute themselves to servitude, thus throw themselves into the hazards of affronts, thus expose themselves to torments, I recognize that the covetousness of riches is truly execrable.

Your Majesties have heard enough about the Inquisition; but understand from this the love shown in Spain for your French, that they are far more concerned for their well-being than for that of the English and the Dutch. It is well known that these are desperate people, from hearing them sing their psalms every day on their ships, even before the castle where the Inquisition is held, that it would be a lost cause to think of bringing them back to the true Catholic faith. This is

why the inquisitors are not employed in curing these incurables and purging these cacophonous individuals, but only in your subjects, where they still find some hope of profit, and yet they apply the usual remedies to them, and for a long period of time, in order to fully kill the apostemus, to extract all the material from it. I realize, however, that these heretics, through a precaution explicitly stated in their treaties, have agreed that they will not be sought out in any way. I would therefore say that, notwithstanding such particular benevolence, there would be more reason to send your subjects back to you, in order to punish them if they deserve it, or at the very least for you to be the judge of their fate, rather than to keep them captive in this way, contravening that natural privilege of liberty which they have and should have, among all the nations of the world.

You truly deserve this recognition or courtesy, which they show to the King of England, from whom they cannot detain or put to death any subject without first showing and approving the just causes for the charges and information sent to him. We are therefore primarily subject to the Inquisition of Spain, in Spain, and in all the lands of that lordship where we are permitted to reside. Many of our men are arrested there from time to time, and often under fabricated pretexts. This is evident from their release after they have been kept in prison for a long time, to the detriment of their health and the ruin of their property, and this without any compensation or redress whatsoever; fortunate as they are to have escaped from a shipwreck.

This servitude is followed by another, namely, the complete and free disposal, at all times, of our ships and our men, which other foreigners, the English in particular, have also managed to secure through their treaties. It has been agreed with them that their ships cannot be stopped anywhere in Spain, for use on any occasion whatsoever, not even by paying. But as for the ships of your subjects, the Spanish use them as they please, and when they please. Here is their usual method. They seize them in the King's name, force the captains to agree on a price, or have their suppliers and naval agents tax what they are to earn from freight each month. Then they equip and man them with a greater number of Spaniards, who do nothing but command with a baton and employ our men in maneuvering throughout the entire voyage. Upon their return, they customarily pay, instead of compensation, for the cost of repairs done to the ships, or often they change something, supposedly for the convenience of the cannon, such as

ropes or ammunition, but in reality, it is expressly to deprive your subjects of their wages. Thus, they are usually left with nothing but their wasted effort and time spent miserably at the mercy of others, their worn-out ship, and often lost without compensation.

The damages your subjects suffer are innumerable; the advantages and services the Spanish derive from it are likewise. So that I may speak not without example, and a very recent one, just two months ago, they seized several of our ships against their will and by force in the ports of Saint Lucca and Cali, to transport soldiers and munitions to Mamore in Barbary, from where they drove out the pirates. Many were lost; but it would be pointless to pursue restitution; this is not in accordance with the laws and customs of the country, especially with regard to the French. In the past, reprisals were carried out, and this should be no less common today. Your Majesties must never allow the property of your subjects to be thus seized, nor even disposed of in this way.

I will not dwell on the many other harassing and unjust vexations inflicted upon them by the ill will of this people and their customary cruelties towards those under their power, sometimes with fabricated pretexts, sometimes with accusations deliberately forged, because of which most of those who travel or reside there are forced to leave the better part of their wealth. I will pass over in silence the shameful treatment they inflict upon your subjects for the plundering of gold and silver, even going so far as to routinely impose imprisonment on mere accusation, to seize all their books and papers on mere suspicion, thus revealing to them the violent desire for your ruin, Your Majesties, for the crime of treason. I will not lead your imagination to other objects far more inhumane than those I present to Your Majesties, which, I assure you, would fill you with both horror and pity. Let us leave the past behind, without reviving its odious memory.

I only bring forward the above to encourage Your Majesties to preserve throughout the world this liberty, in which your people were born, nurtured, and raised, and for which so many brave monarchs have toiled and toiled so hard; for it is of paramount importance to the honor of this Crown that its allies treat as slaves the children whose fathers have been celebrated throughout the world and named as the authors of the liberty of peoples, not only of Germany, their common homeland, and of Gaul, which received them like a second mother, but

of almost all others who were forced to bear the yoke of the Roman Empire. For this reason, the name Franks, that is to say, free, has remained with them.

In conclusion, I say that Your Majesties, for the glory of the State and for the good of your subjects, can rightly equate the rights of your kingdom with the rights of Spain, with regard to the Spanish; for why should the King of Spain levy more on us in his lands than you on his in yours? Commerce, being a matter of international law, must be equal between equals and under similar conditions between like. On both sides, it must be made entirely free from subjugation and infamy, reciprocally free and without restriction of territory; since all the provinces of France are open and free to Spain, why should the largest and best part of the provinces of Spain be closed and forbidden to France? What can be argued against this natural equity?

Taking things as they are, we have no greater or more common trade than that of Spain; but Your Majesties can, in many ways, make it more advantageous to your subjects than it is, or indeed than it ever has been. If the States of Holland have done what they have done and are doing what they are doing and are preparing to do even more, what is not possible for you? What is not permissible for you, as well as for others? It will be the increase, the well-being, and the stability of your State, the maintenance and exercise of your most courageous subjects, who desire nothing better than to be assigned to these hard and long labors.

There is no doubt that, if Your Majesties were to authorize and strengthen the trade of your subjects, it would in a short time bring very great profit to this kingdom. It is this sole apprehension that makes the King of Spain expressly command and order that wherever the French may be captured, whether on this side or beyond the lines, they be hanged and drowned; that above all, communication between the inhabitants of the country and them be prevented, so that they may no longer acquire particular knowledge of the harbors, entrances, and exits; so that if a ship of your subjects is captured, intending only to go fishing at Cape Blanc, or to trade on the coast of Africa, it is made to believe that it is going to Brazil or Peru; it is seized; The men are put on galleys, without anyone daring to interfere, even to avoid any pursuit that might be made of their release. There is an express ordinance from the King, by which it is forbidden to bring to Spain any Frenchman captured on the route to the Indies;

on the contrary, it is ordered that they be exterminated without any distinction of Huguenots or Catholics; but giving first to the latter confession.

This is how Your Majesties' subjects of both religions are treated in the middle of the sea, a common and naturally free element for everyone, and which you can make so for the French, restoring them to their natural, ancient, and legitimate right, whenever you see fit to do so. To the preceding treaty on Spanish trade, I believe it is quite appropriate to add something concerning the Levant trade, which is indeed large and of great importance to France, but primarily due to its inconvenience; for it is reported that through the city of Marseille alone, more than seven million silver écus are transported out, of which almost a third is French currency and the other two-thirds is Spanish currency, originating from the sale of grain and cloth brought there from that kingdom. Moreover, it is quite well known to everyone that because of this transport which takes place there, the escu of France is most often worth up to sixty-nine sols and is exposed in Constantinople and in some other cities of the Turkish empire, up to the value of a sequin, which exhausts today France of white coin of your quintet, in place of which we are supposed to have foreign of lesser alloy.

This Levantine trade, which can now only be conducted with money, no longer by the exchange of merchandise, nor by scarlet cloth, as in the beginning, which was permitted by King Francis I, is the cause of great damage to the kingdom, not only because of the money that is transported there in such large quantities, but also because of the silks that are brought from it; for it is primarily through them that the entire substance of the noble houses and the best of the Third Estate is drained; it is through them, as through an alembic, that gold passes into Turkey and Italy, leaving entire families without means, burdened by annuities and usury; it is finally through them that luxury is primarily maintained, a public plague and the fatal ruin of monarchies. In all well-ordered republics, great care has always been taken to prevent foreigners from enriching themselves at the expense of the native population, and certainly with good reason. For they should only be allowed to leave the country in cases of extreme necessity.

There are two kinds who profit from this trade to our detriment. The first are those who reside among us, in whose country it takes place, and who almost all

participate in it. The others are the Turks, to whose benefit it primarily succeeds. Those who have traveled and practiced, both in Constantinople and in other parts of their Empire, have sufficiently recognized that, when the trade with France, particularly for the silk trade, ceases, strife, sedition, and civil wars will soon arise there, especially since, by thereby diminishing labor and profit in several provinces of Asia, and proportionally the taxes (as has happened on the Egyptian side since the discovery of the Portuguese Indies, on which the greater part of the militia of those countries is paid), it will be difficult, even impossible, to keep everything in order; something that on certain occasions some Bassas have been forced to admit.

However ruinous this trade may be for the French and advantageous for the enemies of the Christian faith, who themselves find ways to reach agreements among themselves (for the greater part of the silks, which come from Persia, often provides occasion for truces and suspensions of arms between them), one could still derive some benefit from it if the manufacturing remained in France; but who does not know how, on the contrary, they are partly dispersed to Genoa, Lucca, Milan, and other cities of Italy? Partly distributed in Flanders and England? Who does not know how, after being manufactured, they are brought back to us laden with various kinds of taxes? First, ten percent for the Emperor of Turkey, two percent for the ambassador of Constantinople, and another two percent for the consulates of Syria; of the salt tax at the exit of the cities of Italy, where they are implemented, and of the toll that the Duke of Savoy takes on it, at the pass of Susa? Thus it is proper on your subjects that foreign princes make their levies, and there is not one wearing silk clothes, who does not owe them for each garment more than 12 pounds of dace.

Your Majesties can remedy all this by establishing silk factories in this kingdom and by increasing the production of woolen cloth, as I have discussed above. Moreover, there is no need to fear that, once good order is established, fabrics will never be lacking. As for wool, if necessary, Spain will undoubtedly always supply it, since it has few workers. Regarding silk, that of Sicily and Messina can initially compensate for the shortage; for I have no doubt that, if the necessary care is taken, France will be able to provide itself abundantly, just as the Kingdom of Naples and the Duchy of Milan have sufficient supplies, and the Province of Granada and the Kingdom of Valencia supply the greater part of Spain. The same reason applies to the pearls and precious stones brought to us,

as well as to the silks from the Levant. Useless and ostentatious superfluities cost France a great deal of money, which, if employed elsewhere, could yield much better results. If they were to lose their credit there once, we would soon become richer; for the Spanish would often be forced to pay for the grain, linen, and other goods they buy from us in cash.

Thus, treasures would come to this kingdom, which, by prohibiting the aforementioned trade, could be preserved: your people, moreover, growing richer through manufacturing and becoming more and more capable of bearing the burdens of the State. The only objection that can be raised to circumvent the effects of what we propose is the interest of Your Majesties, which, in truth, should not be altered in any way, as it is of paramount importance. For, just as the needs of each individual compel them to accumulate money for their personal needs, the public good obliges you to contribute your savings to support the affairs both within and outside the kingdom. And there must be no doubt that, just as among private individuals money acquired, preserved and judiciously spent at times brings them great and notable advantages, so too in the State, the funds collected by the care of the prince and reserved by his good management are, at times, of great and useful importance, just as several fine and important affairs sometimes follow, quite unfortunately, from a lack of sufficient funds.

To return to the point, it is reasonable that your rights should never be diminished, but rather increased, if possible; and it will be found that this is possible, if Your Majesties so desire, more readily by this means than by any other: for your people will not be able to oppose your will with the demon of necessity, which cannot be forced and recognizes no law. Several means will be available, when you see fit to consider them, all for the general and particular good of your subjects, without you suffering any loss or reduction in your taxes, tolls, and duties; On the contrary, you will gain from it what Your Majesties desire above all else: the persuasion of that human clemency which they manifest in their actions and words, a renewed affection for your greatness and service, just as it is singularly for the blessings we receive from God that we are singularly drawn to His love, just as, through the enjoyment of a sweet, easy, and tranquil life, which we obtain through the benevolence of those who govern us, we are voluntarily obligated to their service and veneration. The King who

has the friendship of his people has the wealth of finances and the treasury of treasuries.

And, since the French naturally love their Monarch, perhaps more than any other nation under the sun, they have, primarily for this reason, the reputation of being the greatest in the world, and, possessing as they do the hearts of their subjects, they have no enemy to fear, however powerful and formidable. It is thus: truth agrees with reputation. You have no better or more secure savings than the wealth that remains in the hands of your lords and gentlemen, your merchants and farmers; make it great, make them find the means to enrich themselves, whether through acquisition or preservation, and you yourselves are rich, and the money springing daily from their labors, like inexhaustible sources, will ceaselessly supply your public and private expenses, no more and no less than the flow of water gives rivers perpetual duration.

## **PART FIVE**

### **(COMMERCIAL PROHIBITIONS)**

## BOOK TWO: COMMERCE

Having discussed in particular the trade that we have with our neighbors, or with whom we are allied, let us now turn to certain other trades that some of them have with us or that we have in common with them. I leave aside the Spanish, since they are mainly engaged in trade in India, and the Turks as well, since they do not come to our harbors, to focus on the English and Dutch. Forty

years ago, the former had no trade at all, neither in Turkey nor in Barbary; but only in Hamburg and Stockholm, where their Jean Durant, a young man from Marseille, was located. He gave them the first opportunities in London, and moreover guided and piloted their first ships there.

Only the merchants of Marseille brought them all the spices and other goods from the strait; but now things are quite different, for they have gained such influence there that their ambassadors, though of rather low quality, dare to oppose ours in Constantinople. Wishing to undertake this trade, they joined forces with seven or eight merchants and obtained a privilege from the Queen of England, prohibiting all others from doing so. Then, to maintain it, they resolved among themselves to send an ambassador at their own expense to the gate of the Emperor of the Turks, who, once elected and presented, was knighted, although he had previously been an apprentice servant in the household of one of the said merchants. Their privilege, moreover, was granted for only seven years; but since then it has been extended for much longer. The same procedure was observed for the trade of Barbary, and, having made himself Lord Lester, one of the lords of the country, head of this company, all the goods that were brought there had their customs duties revealed and opened to them, they used them in the same way and allocated them almost exclusively to their nation.

The Dutch, a long time later, set out on the same broken shores, likewise led and encouraged by ours; for before, when we spoke to them of merely entering the strait, they asked if we wanted to put them in the hands of the Moors. Now, in a short time, they have become much more adventurous, and every day they dispossess us of the places to which we have led them. It is a common saying among our merchants, but quite true, that they plunder everything wherever they go; which agrees well with this other saying that they themselves usually say: that where the Dutchman pisses, he believes nothing. For, to attract trade, they always sell merchandise at double the price, which they do all the more readily since they are content with little profit, their main goal being to employ themselves and their ships, which they have in such quantity as everyone knows; and secondly because, through the precise use of their men, they abound in all kinds of manufacturing. It is by this means that they deprive us of the trade of the Senega River, and of the entire Guinea coast, where they have

gained such a foothold that there is nothing left for us to do there, and are gradually taking away from us that of Barbary.

It seemed that Canada was ours by right, that, by the right of discovery and by the name of New France, it clearly and unequivocally belonged to your subjects; but they dared to attack it, even under the leadership of one of our own, annoyed, it seems, at not being employed, so that they accomplished more there in two voyages than your subjects have in several trades since. Thus, they remain in this state of affairs, and they are now seizing the opportunity to return to their former ways, through an association they have formed with one of our merchants, into whose hands the entire trade has been entrusted, and there is no doubt that in a short time they will appropriate for themselves, to the detriment of the French, all the trade of this land, for the discovery of which many, for several years, have risked their possessions and their lives.

Your Majesties must not allow such partnerships to exist; for far from the Flemish wanting to share the profits between themselves and your subjects, on the contrary, those who are accustomed to living among us never want to employ any Frenchman, but rather bring masters and pilots from Holland to France, openly and notoriously, to guide their ships; something about which the sailors complain loudly and clearly every day on the quays of your cities. Besides the aforementioned trades that we have lost or are in the process of losing, there remain two others that we take from abroad, very advantageous in that they are independent of anyone, more common and of greater value in this kingdom, and consequently more useful and profitable; namely, the fishing of groundbait and herring. But before discussing that, I must preface something about the management of your coasts, from which all your peoples derive so much convenience for their food.

The same is true of the sea as of the land; both can be depleted of fish and animals. Political laws have provided for this, and it is necessary to ensure that these resources are maintained in abundance. Since their benefit is public, they deserve public care. This is why Your Majesties must order that more regard be shown in the future than in the past to fishermen, who ruin the entire fishery, taking, through an excessive greed for profit, good and bad fish, in season and out of season, with a kind of trammel net, which, when thrown into the sea,

scrapes it all up with the mud in which it rests, like a sick person in their bed, thus ruining the health and fertility of the coast, just as the fine mesh of the nets does, which should be carefully calibrated so that small fish can pass through without being caught. Moreover, it would be necessary to defend in this kingdom, as in England, the use of parks, both because the common people come there and die when the water has receded, and because there are sometimes such a large quantity of fish there that it has often been necessary to fertilize the land, having spoiled and corrupted it.

Similar events gave rise to great contagions and pestilences, notably the one that began near Calais and Boulogne, which was the greatest ever seen in France. Returning to the trade in cod and herring, the former remains almost entirely in our hands and deserves to be carefully preserved, for several very significant reasons, not the least of which is that it is solely on and by this fish that more than six hundred ships and a corresponding number of sailors are still maintained on the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, so that we can assure Your Majesties that more than fifteen or twenty thousand people are fed in this kingdom by this single trade; not to mention all your people, who, two days a week, make their principal dependence on this fish. Moreover, this trade brings a great profit to the farmers and merchants who get involved in it; to the former through the sale of their lard, weights, beans, hemp, ropes; to the latter, through an almost ordinary gain of thirty, forty, and sometimes fifty percent, which they get from the money they have advanced to do this fishing.

For some time now, she has been greatly disturbed and inconvenienced by pirates. The damage your subjects have suffered this year has been extensive; I have no doubt that complaints have reached you. The matter certainly merits Your Majesties' involvement, both for yourselves and for your subjects, who are employed in it in such great numbers, and so usefully for the rest of the kingdom, and who, for the most part, are either learning or practicing the art of seamanship. For, after having made two or three voyages to the New World, they undoubtedly venture forth with greater skill and experience on other long-distance voyages. There are already several fine and good regulations on this subject, but these can still be amended, or at the very least, enforced much more strictly than they are, especially the one that forbids departure except during the proper season; for, on the one hand, it prevents the

loss of men, restraining their excessive lust, and on the other hand, the ruin of the fishing ground, which, like manna liberally given by God for the nourishment of so many living souls, Your Majesties must preserve very carefully.

As for the herring fishery, we have not yet been able to safeguard it so well; for lack of proper guidance and regulation, it has been taken from us. For forty years, it has been gradually and almost imperceptibly wrested from our grasp. Because of its absence, a great many men are now reduced to idleness, and our shipping has diminished by almost half. The Dutch, who have taken it from us, have become very wealthy and continue to do so every day, with our knowledge, our consent, and our full awareness. The order they maintain in establishing and conducting this trade greatly secures their position. If Your Majesties do not use their authority to restore it to us, according to our long-standing rights, we will hardly be able to regain it. They are strong in both manpower and resources; But through your means we will have no less. The partnerships they form together ensure that their affairs are better maintained. It is easy to use the same system and to ensure that many profit from a certain legitimate number of others. This will bring Your Majesties this great and significant advantage, besides the just employment of a large number of your subjects, that your coasts on the Ocean will be extremely fortified by the same number of men and ships, to which you are primarily called by reason and driven by the state of affairs.

There are two ways to achieve this: either to absolutely prohibit foreigners from bringing it, which is the quickest way; for there is no need to doubt its absence in France, where there are so many men more than sufficient to supply it; or to impose, for your own particular benefit, a hefty tax on that which foreigners bring us in very large numbers, instead of the small city taxes they pay, and that the French, on the contrary, who engage in this trade be exempt from it, and for this reason remain in the state they are now and have always been in.

This fishery, commonly called the drug trade, is a business of great importance to both the general and private sectors of the State, which cannot accommodate it, indeed a trade of inestimable profit. The Dutch make more than five million gold dollars annually from it, employing more than two thousand ships. They usually conduct it between Calais, Dover, and Ostend, just as they do the fishing

for cod, which they call cableaux, and other fish which they bring live to Flesinke, Mildeburg, Ermur, and other places in Holland, in vessels with water-filled wells, to salt them under large market halls erected expressly on the quayside.

This fishery, for our benefit, and I would even say for the benefit of the Dutch, if they could be compelled to do so, would be carried out most conveniently in Calais, as was their custom, than anywhere else in the world. If the fish were to be salted there in their manner, the salt could be refined there, just as they do in Seriksay, Braumène, and Trégous, with Your Majesties' permission and for that purpose only. Moreover, it would be highly advisable to establish this fishery, and in partnership, following their example, both in this place and in Dieppe, Fescamp, Saint-Valery, Tréport, and several other convenient locations.

The only objection one can make is that the Dutch hare is better than ours, and the proof is clear, in that it sells for two to three crowns more per lot. To which I reply, firstly, that we both fish in the same places, equally free, and which, when you consider, are, as I just said, even more accessible to us; that this comes from the drawing and packing, which we can just as easily do as they do, when we have the same profit. What makes their hare more beautiful and more marketable is that they salt it with refined salt; but we can do the same, if necessary, because the merchandise is no better for it, and, from the way it is transported, we find that ours withstands the stresses of the cart much better.

Here, Your Majesties will note, if they please, that all this trade, both for France and for foreign countries, depends solely on the salt of this kingdom. Conclude from this, for everything else, that if foreigners paid only a quarter of the duty you levy, equivalent to what your subjects pay—which is more than reasonable—you would reap an incredible profit and a possible means of relieving your people of an even greater burden. Truly, Your Majesties could find nothing from which they could derive such a great revenue as salt; there is nothing so necessary and so public, nothing that can be better equaled, and as if by itself, by all subjects, and, from the perspective of foreigners, nothing from which more legitimate taxes can be levied.

Besides the provinces of this kingdom, which are subject to taking it, one quite often sees the great ships of England and the buses of Holland coming laden

with sand to the border posts to take it back. The lands of the Duke of Savoy, the leagues of Grisons, the cantons of Switzerland, the lordship of Geneva, the country of Valès, the principality of Orange, the county of Venice, namely Mallossène, Capderousse, Vaureas, Carpentras, Avignon, etc., use both our white sand and that of the saltworks of Pecaix and Broüage, as do likewise the lands of the Empire and all the others that fall under this Crown. I do not take into account how much is needed to cure livestock of all kinds, how much to salt so many pigs and oxen, so many cassava and cheeses, which are made inside and outside the kingdom; How much for various kinds of fish, such as tuna, porpoise, groundbait, herring, etc., although from this, better than from elsewhere, one can know how far the use of salt extends. Anyone who wanted to make an exact calculation of all the people who use it would have to, figuratively speaking, take all the sand in the sea as a shovel.

But since I am on the subject, I will venture to say that if Your Majesties were to allow salt to be extracted freely, like any other commodity, without being subject to taxation, thus enabling whoever wished to sell it at a better price to do so, and if certain offices convenient to the merchants were established locally to handle payments, they would obtain no less than ten million pounds and thereby find legitimate means of disengaging themselves and of burdening foreigners with part of this load borne by their subjects, or even of going further, by imposing something more upon them, in accordance with their own laws and customs. Moreover, your subjects would thus be relieved of the ill-treatment they receive for this reason; because it has been recognized for a long time that, through too many lamentable experiences, partisans, farmers, archers, toll collectors, carters, controllers, granaries, resellers, and even the smallest retailers, find new ways every day, through various inventions, to profit from the ruin of all your people.

I am well aware that several difficulties could be raised regarding all the above; I could even imagine more. But is it reasonable to emphasize the drawbacks without considering the benefits, which will undoubtedly always outweigh them if weighed in the balance? In worldly affairs, it is impossible for evil to be separated from good; there is always a mixture of the two. In all these matters, one must primarily consider the well-being of all your subjects and take such care of the general that, while maintaining one part, you do not neglect the

other. The balance of the qualities of the human body preserves and sustains its health, which is nothing other than their proportionate temperature.

This is the only way you have to bring your government into harmony with the universal order of the world. Thus, in the administration of the Republic, composed of people of high, middle, and low standing, it is essential to strive above all to unite, through sound means, the different social conditions and to integrate the diverse mix of citizens, in order to achieve concord, which is like a strong cable, anchoring the State to the harbor of stability, holding it and protecting it against all storms and tempests. This is what Your Majesties must primarily strive for. It is for this reason, in particular, that you must stimulate your imagination, refresh your memory, and consult with one another frequently. Only those are capable of soundly judging the matters dealt with above, of giving good and sincere advice, who, all devoid of strange affection and untouched by particular passion, will bring in opening their advice only a pure and clear devotion to your service, a whole and naive zeal for the good of their country.

As many good people as you consult about the true state of your finances will assure you that you have in this kingdom five inexhaustible sources of natural wealth, not to mention the others that depend more on artificial practices, which, by mingling, merging, and incorporating with the former, will create a great river of prosperity, abundantly watering all its provinces. These sources, or rather true mines, are wheat, wine, salt, wool, and linen. Whereas foreign mines bring a few medicinal or aromatic drugs, which we could do without, and perhaps even healthily. What is foreign corrupts us.

It is not the abundance of gold and silver, the quantity of pearls and diamonds, that makes states rich and opulent; it is the provision of things necessary for life and suitable for clothing; the more one has, the more wealth one has. Even if so many pistoles did not fill our coffers, what would it matter if, as with our fathers, these things cost little, having them always in equal abundance? Whoever wishes to examine this point fairly will find that the state of the finances of King Charles VI, which amounted to only four hundred thousand livres, including the domain, was, according to the true value of things, scarcely less than it can be now, since the patent of the old coat of arms of all the provinces of this kingdom has been so greatly increased. We see from the

history of our good King Saint Louis that, having been taken prisoner by the Egyptian soldier, he paid only 500,000 livres in ransom, which clearly shows that this was the sum to which the revenue of his kingdom could have amounted each year. And who doubts that France was, in his time, as rich and flourishing as ever? That he himself was not one of the most powerful and well-to-do princes in the world?

In truth, we have become more abundant in gold and silver than our fathers were; but not easier or richer. Nature, in these last centuries, has as it were opened all the treasures hidden in her depths, and although we read with wonder in the Roman histories that Nero amassed fifty-five million crowns in the fifteen years he possessed the Empire, and that in a single year Caligula possessed sixty-seven million, coming, as everyone knows, from the common plunder of the whole world, amassed in the city of Rome alone, we would now have far more just cause for excessive astonishment if we could take stock of the innumerable sums that have been drawn from all over this kingdom by the sheer abundance of its fertility and consumed by our disorder and civil wars. Those who, through meticulous research, have calculated the funds raised from the accession of King Henry II to the throne until the last of December 1580 of the reign of Henry III, have calculated a total sum of billions in more than perfect numbers.

If we add to this the robberies, the ransoms paid to soldiers, the taxes, the tolls, the comings and goings of the gendarmerie, so frequent in these times, the mind will be lost in the mere thought of so much wealth lost, squandered, and as if vanished. Know from this, Your Most Christian Majesties, what your estate is, since in so few years it has yielded such great returns; and, seeing what it still produces every day, though not at its true value, rightfully consider yourselves the richest, greatest, and most powerful in the world in this respect, but also the most fortunate, in consideration of the natural friendship that so many brave people bear you, of the pure and sincere devotion they have to your most humble service; for the affection of subjects for their prince makes him invincible against all. It is neither armies nor heaps of gold that preserve kingdoms, but faithful subjects whom one cannot force by coercion, nor divert from their duty by violence, whom one cannot win or corrupt with money, provided that the prince and his men strive to fulfill their duty, the one to command well, and the other to obey well, the State, through this concert of

good will, remains in peace and concord; and who does not know how concord makes small things grow, and how discord, on the contrary, annihilates the highest and most elevated?

There are many ways to achieve greatness, wealth, and glory. Virtue operates in various ways, depending on the individual and to varying degrees. There is always more than one path to what is praiseworthy, and what is good is not always good in the same way. Do we think that our predecessors only increased, enriched, and adorned their republics with arms? No, there are other things that made them great, things we do not possess. They were industrious in their private lives and occupied with good things. They freely expressed their opinions and diligently cared for the public good. The good of the state was their sole concern. They loved temperance, continence, and thrift; we, on the contrary, love debauchery, luxury, and vanity. We praise riches and do not want to work to acquire them. There is almost no difference among us between the good and the bad.

Avarice and ambition possess all the rewards of virtue. The state of the republic, which could never be more confused than we see it, is devoid of the support of the most powerful, abandoned by the assistance of the wisest, and forsaken by everyone's wishes. Each person looks after their own private gain, without regard for or concern for the public good, remaining at home enjoying themselves or, when called upon to hold office, striving to fill their purse even at the expense of others. Cannibals that we are! We pride ourselves on devouring one another; we don't shear the sheep, we skin them; although it is naturally the nature of beasts to harm one another, not of men. Princes, this might have some place for those who had agreed to it on this condition; but I believe there are none. Who would want to impose this subjection upon themselves, both for those inside and for those outside?

Even those who seem to have done so have never paid it any heed. In the Netherlands and England, were not French merchants forced in 1555 to pay one écu for each barrel of wine arriving at the ports, and subject to eight écus sols and eight gros for the tax, without regard to the trade agreements? And, in the following year, did not the Queen of England raise the foreign trade and impose a tax of two écus sols, three gros, and one denier on each piece of cloth? Does not the King of England, as we have said elsewhere, do the same every day?

Does not the King of Spain grant himself a similar authority, whenever and as long as he pleases? Also, to tell the truth, this is a matter of public law which the people have unreservedly transferred to the sacred person of the Kings, the true masters and dispensers of the common good, the absolute arbiters and lords of times and things: consequently, everything which comes to their liking in this matter must be held as inviolable law; and this all the more so since the subjects being spared, foreigners, wanting to profit from a country and accommodate themselves to its goods, are forced to pay the prince tribute, as a legitimate right of recognition, not only more ancient and used in every republic, but founded on natural equity, according to which the emperor himself of the Turks takes, as we have said elsewhere, ten percent on all the goods which come out of Alexandria of Egypt as well as from his other countries by the negotiation of foreigners, but only five percent from his subjects, where you will find that the opposite is practiced in your kingdom, and that the subjects pay a lot and the foreigners very little.

The English and Flemings prefer our wines to others, who are more robust, and obtain them sooner, more conveniently, and at a better price, both for the main purchase and for transport. Even if Your Majesties were to impose higher duties than they currently do, would they for that reason cease coming to load them and buy them at such high prices from your subjects? What danger is there in making them pay the ten percent foreign trade tax on grain, linen, and especially on salt, in which no one has an interest but you? In any case, what great harm would there be if all the grain and wine remained in this kingdom? The people would live at half the price. Is that not the mark of a good and prosperous reign? But money is needed, and, having none of our own, we must obtain it from foreigners. Be curious to do some research, and you'll find that more of it leaves your countries than is brought in.

It is because your subjects possess sufficient industry at their fingertips, enough experience in all kinds of manufacturing, to attract gold and silver from other lands to their own country, if good order reigns once in this State, without sending our provisions and supplies elsewhere except out of compassion, as they say, and out of charitable assistance to our neighbors. Let Your Majesties try this and not allow the importation of handcrafted goods, which proceed from the art of men, nor the removal of raw materials and foodstuffs from this

kingdom; they will soon have the satisfaction of seeing that their State has just as many natural and acquired resources as it needs to function and thrive. The maintenance of a State is like that of the body, which retains the necessary portion of food and rejects the superfluous. Good political order chooses what is useful, appropriates it, and incorporates it, allowing only what is superfluous and cannot be used to pass through its hands. We have seen above how foreigners, the English in particular, take advantage of this; they have provided us with several examples throughout history, and this one, which I mentioned above, is particularly relevant: for the past three months, they have completely forbidden foreigners, that is to say, us, from taking Irish wool and sheepskins with their wool, under penalty of having their arm cut off. We ourselves possess as much knowledge of this as they do, but not as much practical knowledge.

In the year 1552, our King Henry II expressly forbade all foreign merchants from transporting any raw wool outside the kingdom, at which the entire people greatly rejoiced because of the profit that could accrue to them. But, as the edicts of France are usually better than well observed, the joy was short-lived, especially since a few months later, a single foreigner, having obtained a passport in favor of a lord of the court, transported more at once than all the merchants had previously done in a year. It would be a notable failing in matters of state and public order to forbid foreigners in general, and then to grant permission to one of them in particular. For on the one hand, the King and the Republic suffer irreparable damage, and on the other, the merchants of the country are ruined. In conclusion, trade is indeed a matter of international law, but it is entirely within the prince's power to restrict it as he sees fit, to limit it as he pleases, to burden or relieve it of taxes, as he sees fit, especially with regard to foreigners; for otherwise, he must always spare his subjects and reserve them for his most desperate needs. A thousand examples of all this are given above.

Even if, by raising foreign taxes and prohibiting the trade in certain kinds of merchandise, as is practiced elsewhere, namely in England, foreigners were either discouraged or prevented from coming to our country, it can be asserted, both by reasoned argument and by the experience of examples, that this would be good for both the subjects and the State: for the State, insofar as its people would be all the better employed, all the better trained and molded for private actions and public services; for the subjects, insofar as many means would be opened to them to become much richer. What do we think the principal aim of

all these ill-treatments we receive in England is, if not to make us dislike the country, so that the English alone can conduct all the trade and consequently all the profit? Who doesn't know, moreover, that the car they so specifically appropriate is one of the greatest and most important points of profit? Whoever can attract it to themselves always becomes the strongest in terms of traffic, the most indispensable, and easily the richest.

Wealth, moreover, brings great respect, extreme favor, and I believe, for my part, that for this reason the ancients placed Mercury in the presence of the Graces. The example of the Dutch speaks clearly on this subject, whose sole wealth, their principal strength, consists in the quantity of ships and seamen who can be employed in transporting goods here and there, at much less expense than we do, despite this deficiency, but always with some gain for the general population of their men and extreme profit for their large merchants. The only objection that can be raised against us regarding all of the above is that we will be measured by the same standard in foreign countries. And I reply: that no one can do worse to us than we suffer; that others will never do without us as easily as we can do without them. On the one hand, I have often been astonished that in such a large and flourishing state as this one, so many people are allowed to lack the necessities of life for so long; and, on the other hand, that no effort is made to undertake and regulate trade with the East, which is well known to have greatly enriched all the peoples who have sought it in all ages.

What gives me even more cause for astonishment is the abundance we have always had in this kingdom of men endowed with courage and singular experience to carry out both undertaking and governance as well as anyone else. And certainly, were it not for the apple of discord that our neighbors, interested in this matter, deliberately threw between us, the debates of which diverted us from thinking about the best opportunities, I would conclude that we have been like those of whom the prophet Isaiah said that, seeing they do not see and hearing they do not hear, because their hearts are fattened. How could it have been that we did not want to participate in so many easy conquests, which were more legitimately due to us, in so many openings of trade, which were as convenient and more useful to us than to any others?

Themistocles said that Miltiades' trophies let him rest neither day nor night, and did not the glorious successes of our neighbors' enterprises, the notable profits

of their voyages, stir in any of our leading men that most restless part of the soul, which rises to every wind of glory and noble ambition? But they have made these great advances by sea, and we are neither suited nor trained for this war. What kind of battles should brave men flee? Should they be terrified by the waves and storms that so many base souls brave and subdue every day?

Your men, now so accustomed to the trade they need, wherever they may be, if you do not wish to see them completely reduced to idleness, you could not offer them anything finer, greater, or more useful than that of the spice trade, with which the State has never been satisfied except with great and notable profit. Certainly, much profit and utility soon come from this trade, no less extensive than common; no, we have been like those of whom the prophet says that, seeing, they do not see, and hearing, they do not understand, because their hearts are fattened. How could it have been that we would not have wanted to participate in so many easy conquests, which were more legitimately due to us, in so many new markets, which were as convenient and more useful to us than to any others? Themistocles said that Miltiades' trophies left him neither day nor night in peace, and have not the glorious successes of our neighbors' enterprises, the remarkable profits of their voyages, stirred in any of our leading men that most restless part of the soul, which rises to every wind of glory and noble ambition? But they made these great advances by sea, and we are neither suited nor trained for this kind of warfare. What sort of battles should brave men flee from? Should they be terrified by the waves and storms that so many base souls brave and subdue every day?

Your men, now so accustomed to the trade they need, wherever they may be, if you do not wish to see them completely reduced to idleness, you could not offer them anything finer, greater, or more useful than that of the spice trade, with which the State has never been able to engage except with great and notable profit. Certainly, much profit and utility soon come from this trade, no less large than it is common; no less rich than it is sought after; but there is no better method for getting used to it quickly than to do it in partnership, as the Dutch do in the trade in question; For no individual, however wealthy, could long sustain this alone, besides the fact that things are done more wisely and safely when planned and conducted by the advice of several people, sharing the same interest and the same goal, than by the actions of one person, who is often blinded by his own authority and refuses to be contradicted in any way. Here is

the order of their company, which they call the East Indies Company, which I propose to the French as an example for imitation.

It was first formed and composed by the inhabitants of five towns: Amsterdam, Incuze, Roterodam, Delft, and Mildeburg. In each town, a college of eight, ten, twelve, or fifteen men, all merchants residing there, was established. These men were responsible for outfitting ships and buying or selling goods sent and received. Those outfitted in each town for voyages to the Indies returned there; and although each ship returned to its port of departure, all the proceeds accrued to the general account of the partners, who shared in the capital, profit or loss, no more and no less than if they had left their town of residence.

And, so that no college undertakes anything at its own will or to the detriment of the associates, they deputize every three months two people, who are sometimes in one city, sometimes in another, and resolve everything that needs to be done, both for the ships and for the merchandise, for the soldiers and sailors, and for the election of the generals and clerks. This done, they order the colleges what they must do for the outfitting of the ships, and when the time comes, they likewise assemble, two from each, to draw up the commissions, answer the letters received from the East Indies, in short, to give orders to all those they employ. All ships departing from Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Mildeburg, where three different rivers meet, converge at Margat in England, then sail together to India, where they report to the admiral and superintendent of all the inhabitants there for the benefit of the society. As for the accounts, they are only reviewed, generally, every ten years; and, for individual accounts, all the colleges exchange them with each other with full instructions. If there is more money in the bank than is needed for the crew and provisions of the ships, it is distributed to each of the partners in proportion to their investment, who may sell their share of the proceeds to another; but no one may withdraw their principal, nor leave the General Society, until after ten years.

This is the order by which this great Company has maintained itself until now, into which the merchants of the London Stock Exchange now wish to enter, and, it is said, the King of Great Britain himself, by relieving the Dutch of the expenses and costs incurred to date. It is also understood that all parties are working together, in thought and preparation, to form one for the West Indies, and every day several of your subjects are being solicited to join. They are

already counting forty million pounds. In any case, their fleet this year is stronger and more magnificent for the East Indies than it has ever been. It consists of nine well-armed ships, on which the States have provided good and brave soldiers. Captain Spelberguen is in command of the fleet, a man of order, and one who is considered capable of a great undertaking. Moreover, the States, which feel the fruit of this Society, have rewarded it as a pure gift with two beautiful large ships fully equipped, which are estimated at two hundred thousand pounds, for recognition and for encouragement.

If the procedure I have just described could take root in the minds of the French and be faithfully practiced among themselves according to its true rules, your kingdom would undoubtedly soon become greater, stronger, and more flourishing. If Your Majesties would encourage them in this endeavor through generosity, privileges, and immunities, all would be well. If, to set them on the right path and pave the way for them, they would undertake something on their own initiative, choosing experienced and loyal men, it would be neither without honor nor profit, nor without precedent. Who could blame a prince if he sought relief for his state through some major negotiation? If, through his own care and labor, he endeavored to find some legitimate means to enrich himself? The end justifies the action.

The sole necessity of the State should excuse this kind of acquisition of money in a prince, especially since all the contagion of vice that might be present is consumed in the public good. He can even make himself praiseworthy if, by this means, he finds a way to reduce the taxes he levies on his people. But, all things considered, it is better for the prince to keep his hands clean and pure, to avoid in any way turning to trade for monopolies, as some Kings of Naples did, reducing their subjects almost to extreme poverty, and to ensure that, in order to be a good merchant, he does not forget to be King. Besides, the monarchs of France only have hands for wielding scepters. All that can be desired of you in this matter is that you arrange your cities for it through exhortation and command, through the maintenance of good order and the approval of the required regulations; for there is no doubt that if one of the principal cities begins this work at the right time, all the others, through praiseworthy emulation, will want to join in.

The goat, with erin or thistle with a hundred heads in its mouth, leads the whole flock wherever it pleases, and the sheep scatter in a crowd as it passes after the first one. Such is the nature of the people, for good as for evil. Moreover, one could not disapprove if, in order to supply your kingdom with the goods brought from abroad, you were to give some of your money to some company of industrious and faithful merchants, so as to increase your private benefit along with the public one, as has been done between the Venetians, Portuguese, Genoese, and some others; for from this came to the kingdoms of Portugal and Spain the knowledge and acquisition of new lands, and to the republics of Venice and Genoa, the source of a large revenue.

Your Majesties have a marked interest in regulating all the minor transactions carried out in this kingdom, so that your subjects may enjoy this ease of life, and this is another part, not only of the convenience, but also of the wealth of the State. Here someone will likely stop me from the outset and object that it is impossible now for goods to be sold as cheaply as they were in the past, because of the large quantity of gold and silver currently found in Europe, thanks to the mines of America, which has raised the price of all kinds of commodities. I reply summarily: that the essential value of goods is immutable, not the incidental price, which depends on many things, for better or for worse; that nothing is expensive that was not once cheap, nothing cheap that cannot become expensive; Moreover, we do not always see them follow the measure and proportion of money, given that we can point to years when, having risen by half in price, they were still almost half as cheap as they are now.

In conclusion, it is only through the police force, such as Your Majesties can establish, maintain, and enforce in this kingdom, that food and merchandise can be restored to their original state. Half the work is already done in this regard. For you will find therein some of the finest laws, some of the most sacred ordinances in the world, which foreigners hear with as much admiration as astonishment at seeing them so little or so poorly practiced.

It is Your Majesties' prerogative to order its execution with the utmost care and the severity that the case deserves against all offenders, whoever they may be, firstly ordering that a host of granary managers who collect all the grain of a country, without intending to provide for the people, as is their due, be henceforth prevented from doing so, and furthermore, that those who prefer to

let it rot and be eaten by flies rather than sell it in the markets at a reasonable price be brought before them and punished with hefty fines, as they seek, insofar as it is in them, to destroy the graces, kindnesses, and mercies of God, who gives us rain, dew, heat and cold, and all other things well-tempered and in their proper and appropriate seasons, so that the earth may produce an abundance of fruits every year, to be distributed to all people, to whom it is fitting to allocate life, according to the regulations of a just society.

Let those be punished, those who harass here and there, exhausting their province, in order to transport it to foreign lands, often starving their compatriots, driven by the desire for greater gain, which the sea so often steals from them. Let these little bag-haulers, market runners, buyers of fledgling wheat, tithe-mongers, peasant spies, peddlers of bribes, and monopolizers of goods be suffocated like a swarm of caterpillars, who bring high prices wherever they trade and who can be called the true beetles, devouring all the substance and sustenance of the people. That is the view of the wheat.

As for wines, how many merchants are there who hoard all the wines of a region, in order to force the public to take advantage of them, something that shouldn't be allowed until Saint Martin's Day and around the beginning of November, when the best sales are made? How many who wait for frost before opening their cellars, to sell them at whatever price they see fit? How many who spoil them constantly, adulterate them, tamper with them, and change them from evening to morning? How many more unscrupulous ones, who much prefer to let them spoil, sour, and waste in their cellars, rather than sell them by the glass? But when a merchant comes along and buys them up wholesale and in bulk, he's their man. What shall I say of those to whom Your Majesties entrust the principal offices of the provinces, who, by this honor, are obliged to provide for the needs of your people, and yet, participating in the brokering and negotiations of merchants, permit the trade in grain, wine, and other prohibited goods to whomever they please, thereby inconveniencing and impoverishing the entire population of your State? What? Magistrates, who have their informers and paid overseers to discover and buy as much grain and wine as they find in the cellars and granaries of their jurisdiction?

I leave aside the drapers, haberdashers, wholesalers, and other merchants who sell to farmers and winegrowers on credit. For everyone can well imagine how

they are paid for their patience. I won't dwell on those starving, oat-picking vagrants who make their annual rounds of the countryside, buying from some and saying to others so sweetly: "My friend, if you can't find enough of your merchandise in such and such a time, bring it to me; you know well who you'll be dealing with; I'll take it at such and such a price." I'll pass over those old-timers who have certain villages designated for them, certain winegrowers' and farmers' houses specifically reserved for them, and to whom, from father to son, they remain bound by some old contracts, from which the poor people can never benefit, but for which they pay no other interest than to offer them cheap and good food.

I must mention another kind of man, even more dangerous, whose mounts are so accustomed to going through all the villages that even while their masters sleep, they never go astray; for they are busy everywhere. I am not referring to those roadside lookouts who, every market day, are waiting to unload goods from the good people, and sometimes go off to resell them immediately, nor to those others who are constantly on the move, three, four, and five leagues around, to divert all the little streams which, gathering in the towns as in a fishpond, would cause the abundance and cheapness of everything.

But the most dangerous and harmful of all are those large landowners of the principal estates—duchies, counties, baronies, castellanies, full knight's fees, bishoprics, abbeys, priories—who hold all the finest granaries in the kingdom and amass such a large quantity of grain and wine that most of the villagers, subject to and liable for rent from the lordships they lease, fall under their control as they please. These people, moreover, almost all have the word of the watch with the foreign merchants who transport our goods from one country to another, so that nothing is too hot or too cold for them, so that an entire province, through the trade of a small number, sometimes remains starving and consequently impoverished. It is primarily at this point that we see, along with the mismanagement of temporal goods and the prophaning of the clergy, the complicity, or at least the negligence, of the magistrates, who tolerate these monopolies. What shall I say of this other deception and disloyalty that some of the richest practice on the poor farmers, who no sooner have reaped their harvest and gathered their grain than they are destitute, often left with nothing but the straw, which others still pull from under their wings?

Thereupon, finding themselves deprived of the hope of their food and all the provisions for their meager family, they resort to those who have had their grain sifted, who very often cause them to lose three or four days before delivering the siftings, usually mixed with a little wheat, beans, rye, and barley, which the good man is forced to take at any price, content as long as he has time until the next harvest and allows, as his obligation dictates, that the grain is good, fair, and marketable. Whereupon it is noted that a load of good wheat would benefit him as much as three of these siftings, which diminish threefold: at the mill, at the oven, and in the stomach; And, what is worse, the substance is so heavy that it is digested without proper food, so that one of these men, working night and day, eats as much as three fed on good bread. But here is the worst consequence: the most needy borrow grain as is to sow, and, the land being unable to make it any better than given, they find themselves at the end of the year frustrated by their labor and their expectations, just as the public is frustrated by the convenience it derives from the successful labor of individuals.

To add that he who sows sparingly reaps also sparingly. I would speak here of millers, if everyone did not know how broad their consciences are and discover daily the various thefts they commit in their mills and only laugh about it, under the pretext, they say, that they only take what is brought to them. Yet it is very wrong of them to exchange one grain for another, to buy the bran only to put it back with the good flour, so that the weight of what they remove from the sacks is recovered. As for those coarse people who mix gravel and stones into it, this is evident to the touch and to the teeth; they deserve exemplary punishment. These things, which seem of minor importance, are nevertheless among the primary causes of rising food prices, especially since pure, clean wheat, well-ground without fraud or deceit, is worth a quarter more than wheat that is churned and mixed. But the main point is that people who eat good bread are always healthier, stronger, and more cheerful; those, on the contrary, who eat poorly made bread are weak, sad, and sickly. The remedy for this problem would be to make all millers sworn masters, to forbid them from stealing under penalty of corporal punishment, to prevent them from keeping any arks, chests, or sacks in their mills, to have them inspected often and unexpectedly to see if there are any hiding places, and finally, to no longer allow them to buy bran or to feed any pigs.

I do not wish to dwell here on the abuses of secondhand clothes shops, which can aptly be called the little forests and cutthroats of the public, where, under the mask of cheapness, one buys nothing but rags painted, disguised, rubbed, shorn, trimmed, re-trimmed, which, without such artifice, one would scarcely be able to lift from the ground; on the frauds of drapers who sell one cloth for another at the same price, although it is not the same; on the similar or greater deceptions of silk merchants, which everyone recognizes, but too late, through the use of the goods they have sold at such high prices; on the impostures of goldsmiths, concealed within their soldering and understood within their techniques; on the sophistry of the coarse and druggists in matters of precious liqueurs and aromatic scents of musk, ambergris, civet, etc., of all kinds of simples, which they adulterate with their antivolomenes or *qui pro quo*; on the mixtures of spices, where there is so much sorting and disguise, that nothing remains pure and whole; on spices, beaten for retail sale, where so much *grana paradisi*, clove dust, ginger scraps and pepper are put that it is nothing but a corruption of health, a poison of the humors.

I will not dwell on these old, stale drugs of dried, perforated, and brittle rhubarb, moldy cassia, foul senna, corrupted agaric, and seven- or eight-year-old seeds, from which such expensive poisons are made for us, rather than medicines; nor on the sugars sold today as fine, which are not equal to those of Madeira, which were sold thirty or thirty-five years ago; just as, in the same proportion, those of Madeira are not worth the brown sugar of yesteryear, nor the brown sugar of today the white honey of Provence. All that is said above, however, is not of little importance to the public, if one has particular regard for health, the most precious thing in the world after piety. Anyone who wanted to scrutinize all the negotiations of men, in matters of artifice, would find an infinite number of great defects and deceptions from the greatest to the smallest, and now more than ever, the visits being made by the wardens of the trades only by acquiescence, by favor, or by corruption.

I refer to the ribbon makers, passementerie makers, velvet weavers, silk millers, dyers, drapers, spinners, and weavers, if they work honestly. Who doesn't know how some of them place their silk in smelly, damp places to give it more weight? How they make their fabrics burnt, thin, and flimsy for the sake of a little profit? How they conserve the vitriol, scab, and alum used in dyeing? How, when putting the cloth on the loom, they change one thread for another?

And yet, although these goods are altered by their simple method, they are still sold to us at as high a price as if they were the best made and most honest in the world. This is the reason why all kinds of manufactured goods no longer last so long, and why one must be at the merchant's shop at all hours to buy new ones, where an infinite amount of money goes, and this is precisely what high prices are: for one never gets cheap bad merchandise.

Why should I speak here of ironworkers, armorers, cutlers, knifemakers, locksmiths, blacksmiths, metalworkers, and others who work with iron or alloy it with steel? Common experience reveals the true value of their work, which is usually flawed in both the material and the workmanship. Thus, deception reigns supreme in this subject, as in all others. Poor iron, made of harsh and easily brittle ores, is sold as soft and pliable iron. The craftsman, who can no longer understand steel, can consequently not be sure of his work and works haphazardly. This is often as much money and time wasted as that of someone who engages in such poor work. Blacksmiths hardly make any worthwhile iron or nails anymore. The carts and iron-rimmed wagons that pass through their hands are immediately broken and smashed. The cutlers usually ruin good blades through ignorance, and the armorers do even worse with weapons. The locksmiths make all sorts of trifles but don't make keys or locks that are actually usable, or if they are, they only last a short time and have to be repaired every day.

The tinsmiths, metalworkers, founders, and others fare no better. Some sell poor-quality tin mixed with lead as fine tin, and often as that from Cornwall. If they are given old tin to replace, they know perfectly well how to trade it for today's poor-quality tin; thus, it can truly be said that the tin plate of yesteryear was worth three times as much and lasted four times longer. As for the metalworkers, they not only put the piece near the opening, as they say, but the material they use, whether iron, copper, or brass, is so poorly dressed, so poorly shaped, so poorly put to work that it is a pity to buy it for use in a household.

Finally, the founders became so cunning that they artificially combine metals with things of little value, which they pass off as being of value instead of expensive ones, so that now few mortars, andirons, fire dogs, and candlesticks are made honestly and properly. All these defects, and others that I pass over in silence—for it would never be done if I wanted to list them one by one—stem

firstly from the fact that men no longer have, as they should, the fear of God before their eyes, are no longer restrained by the severity of good laws, no longer recognize themselves for what they are, namely, members of the same body united under the same head and, to sum it all up, baptized in the same spirit; that among us the best ordinances serve only as useless words, for lack of people to enforce them; that charity is completely colded there and can no longer, consequently, inspire us to love and serve one another, as would be required, since the eye cannot say to the hand: I have no use for you; nor the head to the feet: I have no need of you, but rather that the members which seem weakest in us are the most necessary, that we give more honor to those whom we think to be the least honorable, more honesty to those who are the most dishonest, so that there may be no partiality in the whole system, but that all its members may have the same concern for one another.

Indeed, it is far more royal to build and increase than to diminish and demolish; for the same reason, far more worthy of the monarch to increase the wealth of his subjects than to decrease it. Where is a good shepherd better known than by the fat and fine wool of his flock? The prince's goal is the preservation of his people! He is a good king who not only governs himself well, but who is a cause of happiness to those he governs. And, I ask you, is this happiness more an effect of courage and valor than of prudence and justice? The establishment of a good government deserves more glory, in the judgment of great kings and illustrious captains themselves, than the most distinguished victories. If everyone governed themselves by reason, said Agesilaus, what use would magnanimity be?

The city of Athens produced two figures of exceptional stature, Solon and Themistocles; one renowned for his good and wise laws, the other famous for his prowess; one immortalized by the establishment of his Republic, the other by the victory at Salamis. One, through his arms, guaranteed his city from Persian subjugation during his lifetime, the other benefited it not only during his days through his counsel, but also long after his death. Themistocles could not claim to have aided Solon; and Solon, on the contrary, can boast of having aided Themistocles through the wise Senate of the Areopages, which he established, and according to whose advice this war, which brought him so much renown, was undertaken and conducted. It is said that it is no less glorious to know how to preserve well than to acquire. It is true; many have known how to conquer

who did not know how to make good use of victory; many have more readily given up than taken hold, lost than won. Thus, one is influenced by fortune, and the other owes everything to prudence. One has honor only by borrowing, and the other by his own merit. One demonstrates the strength of the arm, and the other the vigor of the mind.

Finally, one plants and establishes the states, and the other secures them as if with great and deep roots, so that neither the tempests of foreign wars nor the storms of civil sedition can overthrow them. This is why historians maintain that the longevity of Rome should be attributed to King Numa, just as its foundation should be attributed to Romulus, because through his piety and good sense, he established it in religion and shaped it according to good customs and praiseworthy morals, giving it orders and regulations of order that have allowed it to endure for several centuries, victorious and triumphant over all nations.

Now your people expect the same from you, Sire. This is what they call upon you with very humble prayers and ardent supplications, so that, in their days, they may see this State emerge from a chaos of confusion and rise to the highest period of honor destined for it, and that you may shine upon it in your apogee, like a star of immortal light, illuminating all men with the rays of piety, and justice, clemency, temperance, and generally all those virtues which make kings better than scepters and diadems.



BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

# **BOOK 3**

# **NAVIGATION**

**PART ONE**  
**(POETIC PREAMBLE)**

### BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

If the wishes of your good subjects, joining with the guardian angel of France, have thus far implored from Divine Majesty the continuation of the public tranquility in which the late King, your father and husband, prince of incomparable merit and immortal memory, left us, when by some unknown fate he was taken from among men, we must still hope in your favor for the same effect of His grace, obtain it by the same and similar means, and seek it from Him alone!

How many terrible shocks has this State suffered since its first foundations were laid? Not a single fall, however. It has been beaten, not felled, inclined, never overturned, like those great oaks shaken by winds and storms, which always remain firm on their roots, as deep in the earth as their branches are raised high in the sky.

It is a special grace of divine favor that gives us the boldness not only to desire, but to ask and even to demand from the goodness of Your Majesties a good use of this profound peace, for which all your peoples unanimously conspire, so that your Empire may be reduced, by good government, to a circle of state which is such that nothing may ever fall or decline from it; that this monarchy, which has come so great and so complete into your hands, may become in your days, and by your means, richer and more flourishing than it ever was.

Courage, Most Christian Majesties; besides its natural strength, grant it flying buttresses that will keep it standing throughout all ages. Deliver it from all hazards of change, by establishing a constant and immutable order, to which alone the management of lordships is due. Grant that Fortune, flying lightly over the rest of the world, and passing over this beautiful river of the Seine, may come to your Louvre to pay homage to your judgment, to lay her light wings at your feet, to leave her flying skates and her precarious ball, which turns here and there, to make with you, that is to say, in the company of virtue, her fixed and eternal abode.

Give orders that in the safe harbor of peace this great State, no more and no less than a carrack, having been battered for a long time by the storm and again re-equipped with blows and the great violence of hammers, remain at rest until its connections are strengthened, its nails fully fastened, and its joints well consolidated. Then, Sire, when you have become through age as perfect a man as by birth you are a great King, do not fear to haul it out, as on the open sea, whenever you please: for then, it will carry you victorious to the ends of the earth, without taking on water, resisting all storms and tempests.

Your father should be a great incentive to you in this, Prince of invincible courage and unparalleled boldness, raised by many great prosperities, glorious conquests, and celebrated victories to the very height of glory. Being descended from him, you can do no less than all that the human mind can imagine. He has left you in possession of his reputation, as well as of this great and flourishing kingdom, the most beautiful, the strongest, the oldest, and the noblest that the sun ever sees; and therefore it would be shameful to renounce his succession if you did not strive not only to preserve it, but also to increase it through your own virtue.

### BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

You have an advantage, Sire, that no prince in the world possesses like yours: that your France alone can drown and cover with men; but with what men? With invincible men and unsustainable arms, the whole world. If you can at once recognize your strength and feel your heart, as you should and as is hoped, the Crescent will pale with fear, even be erased, Palestine will not have enough palms, nor Greece enough laurels to crown your leader. You have a finer subject for doing good than any monarch in the world ever had. Asia awaits you and the Ocean opens its arms to you.

To properly prepare your subjects, who are the living tools and animated instruments that must be used for those great effects that we hope for and expect from your reign, you must bring them a renewal and reformation of morals; you must repaint with your own hand the image of true glory, replenish its old, faded colors with others brighter and more brilliant, which will make them recognize it and, through this recognition, lead them to worship it; you must rekindle their almost dead and extinguished vigor, awaken their slumbering hope, resurrect their desire for honorable things, languishing almost without pulse or movement.

For it has happened, through some misfortune of the age or some unknown fate, that as our knowledge has increased with the progress of time, our virtue has declined and diminished. Of many reasons, I think the best is that which resounds daily on the lips of our good people: that children can never equal their fathers in good morals; this is understood in terms of courage, resolute resolve, and, to put it all in a word, the legitimate use of life and a generous disregard for death.

Indeed, previous centuries have borne men who made their lives so illustrious that, many centuries later, they still dazzle us with their glorious brilliance. Enraptured, we are forced to admit that, just as their weapons, too heavy, and their clothing, disproportionate to our small bodies, are no longer of any use to us, their designs are too grand for us, and their discipline inaccessible to our practice. However, I do not wish to draw this conclusion as if I were trying to persuade people that virtue weakens day by day and, like other mortal things, is destroyed by time, while vice, on the contrary, gains so much ground that it becomes the absolute master of all men; for it is not so. I only wish to show that this virtue, once vigorous and, so to speak, in perfect strength from its earliest days, becomes weak and feverish with time if one is not careful; it no longer has such a steady pulse, such a natural color, such robust strength.

Furthermore, it becomes melancholic when it sees itself scorned, reduced to darkness, and confined to solitude. Light is its day; it shines in it, it delights in it; but it is forced to lower its gaze when pompous vice triumphs, adorns itself with its ornaments, and often even strips it of them, and would gladly boast of dragging it like a slave behind its chariot. This is what makes it lose courage. What holds her back, as if constricted within herself, not daring to aspire, for lack of credit and means, to the execution of the most beautiful and glorious things.

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To anyone who asks me why the exploits of those brave Greeks and magnanimous Romans are greater than ours, beyond comparison, it is clear that honor was greater in those times for virtue, virtue was better disciplined, discipline was more precisely regulated, those who commanded had more prudence, those who obeyed more respect, and thus, as if by a mutual conspiracy to do good, duty remained in equal balance on both sides. This meant that all undertakings proceeded at such a constant and measured pace that one could scarcely discern which contributed more, fortune or virtue. Thus, experience throughout history has shown that a good master and a good servant, a good captain and a good soldier, a good prince and a good subject are generally relative.

Let us therefore generally reject the blame for change and the diversity of men and times on the difference of customs, which transmit their vices from one to another, as if through two interconnected channels. Let us acknowledge that we have dug ourselves into stinking and filthy cisterns, that we have infected the sources of honor where our fathers drew, displaced the boundaries of duty that our elders had religiously established, changed the maxims of virtue into those of artifice, supposed, instead of true and legitimate glory, some phantom, formed of wind, visible only in the air of vanity and subsisting in mere appearance, sought the sultan, abandoned virtue, which smells of garlic and melts in sweat, to embrace a cowardly laziness, all perfumed and soft with aromatic ointments.

It is therefore up to you, Sire, to purge this stable of Augeas, to restore this beautiful object, at the mere sight of which Plato says one is inflamed with love before the eyes of your people, to draw them from the obscure darkness of infamy into the full light of glory, to break these charms of Circe, which transform them from men into beasts, to tear them away from the midst of these sweet monks, which have so long enticed them. Should it come to pass that, following the example of Ulysses, that wise king, you should take up the staff in hand and compel them to embark on your ships, so that you may carry your arms to the ends of the earth and make it recognized everywhere that France, with a better title than Homer's Ithaca, should be called the mother of valiant and prudent men, that she rightfully boasts of being the queen of Christian lands, the school of civility, the cradle of the arts, in short, the glory of the world, to which not only all lands but all seas owe obedience.

It is for this purpose, Sire, that navigation should be above all commendable to you, and that, considering the honors that will come to you from it and the profits that may accrue to your people, you should diligently strive to bring it to its highest point in your kingdom. It is the most beautiful thing in the world, as well as the most adventurous. It has therefore been practiced by all nations that have sought to acquire a reputation early through arms, not only in our time, but also since all antiquity. The name of the ancient Gauls is taken from its Hebrew and Armenian etymology, where the word "Galim" means navigator.

BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

**PART TWO**  
**(NAVIGATIONAL HISTORY)**

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Speaking of nations that have devoted themselves to seafaring, it would be an injustice to the ancient French, so skilled and practical in this art, if we did not include them, having acquired such great glory and reputation through their voyages. Those who have researched their origins believe them to have been maritime peoples and trace their lineage back to that marshy region bordering the Ocean, between the Albis River and the Rhine, where ancient geographers place the Upper and Lower Chaussians, a people of great nobility, says Tacitus, between the Germanic tribes, bordering the Batavians. These are the Flemish, who justly maintained the grandeur of their name and the authority of their lordship. Anyone who looks closely will find it astonishing to see us now so far removed from maritime ventures and designs. Are we French? Here are our major employees, if not from their origin, at least from the more distant past of which historians make only vague mention. Are we Gauls?

Xenophon testifies in his *Equivocations* that the Gauls were the first to build, equip, and sail ships: which gave several witty people the opportunity to derive from their name the names of galleys, gallions, galiasses, and galiotes. It was undoubtedly they who first made themselves feared and known by sea to the other peoples of the earth, who first gained and possessed the empire of the waves, who, for a long time after, enticed by such voyages, namely under the leadership of that brave Candaules, so highly praised by Pausanias, traveled by this floating route, far and wide, high and low, amassing great riches from their spoils, who won a great naval battle against the Carthaginians, excellent men of the Sea, and dedicated a statue of Apollo to the temple of Delphi, joining that of the poet Homer.

Many other testimonies of their competence in navigation and their courage in naval battles could be found; but both will be strongly proven when we state, on the word of several celebrated historians, that they were the first authors of that solemn sacrifice, called by the Romans *Panionion*, of which Strabo speaks, reciting the vows made at the temple of Neptune, considered the god of the sea, who presides over storms and tempests, and, even more anciently, alleging that Janus, believed by the Romans to be the inventor of ships, was a Gaul, according to Athenaeus, and that this coin of which Sext. Aurelius speaks. Victor, called the *Ace of Memory* by the ancients, was likewise a Gallic work, where, as a symbol of safety, was imprinted the image of a ship on which Saturn landed safely in Italy.

It is quite evident from the above, without going into a longer enumeration of the other peoples who once took up navigation, that there were very few warlike nations that neglected this aspect, so necessary to the greatness, wealth, and glory of states. But one can say with certainty that, as the ancients surpassed us in all other things, they must yield to our age the perfect knowledge and practice of this one. We must likewise acknowledge that the Portuguese and the Spanish won the prize and the advantage over modern civilizations, more, however, for having better and more quickly recognized its benefits and advantages than for having particularly excelled in courage, skill, and dexterity, whether natural or acquired. A very long discourse would be required to describe what these two peoples accomplished in the Indies, where their conquests, considering the extent of the lands and the diverse peoples, are in no way inferior to those of the earliest monarchies.

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For our particular case, besides the fact that our troubles have greatly distracted us from what little we could have had we wanted, it seems that, wanting what we can, nothing can bring more hindrance and harm to our plans than what should serve them to the greater good, namely, an abundance of all necessary things and a more than sufficient number of men. At first glance, sea voyages astonish those unaccustomed to them. Moreover, it is very difficult to persuade those who are quite comfortable at home, especially if they have experienced some inconvenience on some short sea voyage, to venture into the undertaking of a long journey.

Several things can deter us, which I will leave aside to highlight only this one: the pleasantness of the places where we are born, the distance from the sea, the benefit of fresh and healthy air, the delicacy of food and drink; the ease and convenience of these things is the reason why our men have undertaken little by sea, or accomplished little, compared to others, or why, wanting to attempt something there, we have been forced to borrow the expertise of foreigners; this even happened to the Castilians. But in the end, they have been better able to manage risky decisions, truthful reports, and the courageous actions of others. We have not been without entrepreneurs and enterprises at all; but I do not know how our good beginnings have always been followed by poor results.

I find that in the year 1417, Urban de Braquamont, Admiral of France, sent Jean de Betencourt, a Norman, with a fleet assembled at his own expense, to discover and conquer in his name the seven Canary Islands, namely Gran Canaria, Theriffa, La Palme, Lançarotte, Forte Avatoria, La Gomera, and El Fer. He landed at Lançarotte and Forte Avatoria, whose inhabitants were called the Lançarottois and the Mahores. These gave way easily, but not those of Tenerife, called the Gouantches, the most warlike of all, also descended from great and powerful men, several of whose tombs can still be found today in the calms of the island, in caves, where, rested and dried, they are stretched out at their length, a pike at their side.

A race of Gouantches remained at Notre-Dame de la Chandeleur, a place of devotion, four or five leagues from the town of S. Christofle, otherwise known as Lagouna, and three or four leagues from Sainte-Croix, one of the ports of the island, skillful and courageous people, running as adventurously as admirably over precipices, pike in hand, with which they are marvelously adept, and, using it industriously, they descend very resolutely from a precipice in the ground and jump from the first floor of a house below. Batencourt, having accomplished his plan on these islands, set sail for France, leaving a relative of his to guard them; But, seeing that, contrary to his promise, he was very slow to return with aid and supplies, it is believed that he sold or at least resigned these islands, I do not know why, except so that he could no longer hold them, to Dom Henry, third son of the King of Portugal.

Some of his descendants, however, have remained there to this day, and it is held from father to son that they were its first owners and, as such, still bear the title of nobles. Dom Henry assembled a naval force to take possession of it; but he was repelled by the inhabitants, which led him to surrender it to the King of Castile in 1431. This is the first effort of our people that I know of in recent centuries on another continent. As for the English, they are, to tell the

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truth, very conveniently situated for maritime expeditions. Their stories tell that, long before the Danish raids, which repeatedly ravaged and finally subjugated their island, one of their princes, named Madoc, son of the King of Wales, yielding to his brother's every claim, went in search of other lands, which he found and settled, blaming those who remain charmed by the air of their birth, for not having tasted any sweeter or more temperate climate.

Be that as it may, these people have long been experienced in the art of navigation; but having almost always been content with their sea, they did not so quickly venture out to sea, either to the East or to the West, as the Portuguese and the Spanish did. In attempting this, they initially employed foreigners. King Henry VII granted a letters patent in 1495 to John Cabot and his sons, Louis, Sebastian, and Zanche, to discover and settle new lands, on the condition that they render to him, as a due, one-fifth of the profit, after deduction of expenses and costs. John Cabot and Sebastian set sail from Bristol the following year and, making their way towards the eastern parts of America, discovered Saint John Island on the twenty-first day of June. From there they sailed north to the 56th parallel; but unable to find the passage they sought to reach China, and a mutiny having broken out among their men, they turned back along the coast towards Florida to the 36th parallel, then returned to England where the father died.

The son, after his death, having retired to the court of the King of Castile, equipped ships at his own expense to explore Brazil. This voyage led to the discovery of the River Plate, so named because of the silver found there. Since that time, Spanish conquests have steadily increased in the West Indies, no country being discovered so soon that they did not claim it as their own. Certainly, great men—and they deserve this title, even though most were of humble origins and not particularly wealthy—worked for the glory of this nation, and now it enjoys in peace and with great profit the fruits of their labor.

The exploits and conquests of these noble men would be much better known, given the means they used, if most of them were not deliberately concealed from us. These people are, moreover, quite ambitious for honor, quite eager to amplify their glory, but they have a justifiable fear of spurring us on; they do not want to see us enter and pursue this path; if they try to stop us, the obstacles are confused, they only aim to confuse us and make us lose all understanding of their ways.

I truly believe that it is their principal desire to remain alone and without rivals, so as to have no other imitators than their successors and descendants. If they can achieve this, it is their own good and their honor; But, since they possess these beautiful lands only by the title of arms, they cannot consider them as a just inheritance. From their first discoveries in the Indies, a fine and praiseworthy emulation began to arise among them. Eager to outdo one another, they strove to do well. Giovanni Verrazzano was commissioned by our great King Francis I to explore the new lands.

This prince, undoubtedly the greatest of his age in all truly royal qualities, but otherwise always rather mistreated by fortune, recognizing the good successes that befell the Castilians

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in America more by luck than merit, and foreseeing the singular advantages he could derive from them in the future, felt his heart stir with a desire to have a share of the spoils. However, as his designs were less than generous, he wished to approach a place where no Christian prince could claim any claim. Thus Verazzano, whose expertise His Majesty was pleased to utilize, setting out from our shores, sailed straight for Florida, and sailed there, always heading north.

He visited several islands, recognized beautiful rivers and lands, and even, as a token of possession, erected stone columns there, upon which were engraved the coat of arms of France. Upon his return, he gave the King a very favorable report of all he had observed, and among other things assured him that the land stretching from Florida to Cape Breton was the best, the most beautiful, and the most fertile in the world. Our great Francis I, not wanting to lose the taste that Verazzano, a diligent, bold, and industrious pilot, had instilled in him for these lands, and moving on to other destinations as possible, sent him back with new commissions and instructions; but he died on this second voyage.

This was truly a great misfortune for France; for it seems likely that, had we been given opportunities abroad at that time, the troubles and schisms stirred up in this kingdom would have been stifled from their very inception, and all our misfortunes would have been averted. But our destinies did not permit it. What country, moreover, would not have been populated by twelve million men, at the very least, worn out during our wars?

Never return, prodigious time, when fathers neglect the care of their children, children strip their fathers of their piety, brothers treacherously betray their brothers, wives wickedly abandon their husbands, husbands cowardly prostitute their wives, cousins cruelly massacre their cousins, and friends unfaithfully lay ambushes for their friends to seize their possessions and their lives. Nothing corrupts men so much as civil wars! Even the most amenable temperaments are terrified by them, and the gentlest are embittered. They give rise to barbarity amidst civility, cause men to degenerate from humanity, and even corrupt the divine habits of virtue. Happy and wise are the princes who avoid and divert them, who remember the storm during calm periods and prepare for war far away during peace, not at home against foreigners and enemies, nor against their own citizens, subjects, and servants.

But let us return to our subject. The death of Verazzano led Francis I, in 1534, to seek out Jacques Cartier of Saint-Malo, an excellent seaman and pilot, to continue his explorations and, above all, to find a passage in the South Sea. Therefore, following his own inclinations, he made his first voyage to Newfoundland and Cape Breton. Then, for the second time, going back to sea with three ships and one hundred and twelve men, he discovered the lands of Canada, Saguenay, Hochelaga, and several others situated on the great St. Lawrence River. Having found no outlet to the other sea, which was his primary objective, after wintering there, he returned to France and reported to the King on what he had done and seen, and what he thought he could accomplish and discover. The following year, he was again equipped with three ships and a good number of men to spend the winter in Canada and explore all the coasts more thoroughly. But unfortunately, the season was long and harsh, and among the

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inhabitants of the country there arose some dangerous disease, unknown to ours, which consumed many, forcing him to bring the rest of his people back to France.

In 1545, ships were once again delivered to him at Saint-Malo, at the King's expense. It was at this time that he embarked men and women, with the firm intention of establishing a settlement. Sir Jean François de la Roche, Lord of Robert-Val, was appointed by His Majesty his viceroy in the lands of Canada, Saguenay, and Hochelaga, now called New France. Convinced not only by the Earth's structure, but also by the reports from the Indigenous peoples themselves of another sea beyond this continent, he commissioned Cartier to search for a Northwest Passage to reach Cathay and China. This lord was seething with an extreme desire to see these lands occupied by the French, and to that end he dispatched Cartier ahead to establish and fortify some good stronghold, while he himself would amass men and provisions in France to go there the following year with his well-equipped fleet.

But, his plan having been thwarted, according to our usual misfortune, he could not provide aid and supplies at the promised time. Thus he was accused, not so much because of the omission itself, but because of the error he committed in not having warned Cartier of what was stopping him. For, imagining some unrest in France, and fearing abandonment, he re-embarked to return in 1542. Arriving at La Rochelle, he found the lord of Robert-Val with men and ships already, who pressed him and those who followed him with great urging to return; but he could not obtain it, either because of fatigue or otherwise. On the contrary, Cartier set sail by night and withdrew to Saint-Malo. The lord of Robert-Val continued his voyage with three ships, manned by two hundred men. The embarkation took place at Chef-de-Bois.

He remained in Canada the following summer and winter; but the poor order, the quarrels among his men, the mistreatment of the natives, and some fatigue endured by a few courtiers who followed him, brought about the ruin of his entire plan, the remnants of which returned to France immediately afterward. During the time of Cartier's discoveries in these parts, the English also had some plans there; for, in the year 1536, a man named Hore, from the city of London, set out with two ships and six hundred men to explore the coasts from Cape Breton to Florida. But his provisions, due to his lack of foresight, began to run out, and his men were forced to eat each other, and all would undoubtedly have perished miserably from hunger, had they not surprised a French vessel, which by chance arrived where they were. Thus restored and somewhat provisioned, they resumed their journey to England. A pause of twenty years followed, during which neither French nor English, of whom at least one mentions, undertook any discovery or settlement in the regions of New France.

Admiral de Chastillon formed a firm understanding, based on the knowledge he had acquired of the discoveries and memoirs of Verazzano, which had fallen into his hands, of Cartier's voyages, and of the enterprises of several others, both French and foreign, that there was honor and profit to be gained by this route. And yet he had two ships outfitted at Le Havre de Grâce, entrusting their command to Jean Ribaut of Dieppe, who, accompanied by René, Sieur de Laudonnière, and several other gentlemen, departed from France with express orders to

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reconnoiter the coasts from Cape Florida to Cape Breton. He also commanded him to send some men ashore to find a suitable and convenient place for habitation; this was done, leaving Albert de la Pierre with thirty men on a small island where he fortified himself. However, having been killed by his own men in a mutiny, those who remained were forced to abandon the island for lack of reinforcements.

Two years later, namely in the year 1564, the aforementioned admiral, who was enjoying this undertaking more and more each day, sent the Sieur de Laudonniere back, under the King's authority, with three ships and a good number of men, commissioned to establish French arms and customs there. He arrived safely on board and had already been ashore for twenty months when Jean Ribaut, bringing from France a good number of ships, men, and provisions, came to take his place; for his detractors were accusing him to the Admiral that his behavior was harsh and tyrannical towards the native inhabitants of the country, that for this reason they were beginning to hate the French, and that, moreover, these peoples were irreconcilable.

As Ribaut had already put a good portion of his men ashore to work unloading the ships, Pedro Menendes, a Spaniard commanding a sizable and well-supplied fleet, entered the harbor. Suddenly, Ribaut ordered his men to re-embark, against Laudonniere's advice, taking as reinforcements all the healthy soldiers in the town and leaving barely fifty with him, all of them sick, for a widespread homesickness afflicted the French until they found a cure through the knowledge of a tree, which a native taught them.

Thus, Ribaut set out in pursuit of Menendes and chased some of his ships, when a strong wind arose and night fell, causing him to lose sight of and knowledge of their course. Menendes, seizing the opportunity, landed at a harbor some ten or twelve leagues from our fort, and immediately disembarked his men, setting them in motion with such diligence that he arrived there the following night. Now, he was almost completely defeated, because Laudonniere, despairing of any help, had rendered him defenseless, resolved to embark for France. A large number of ships, men, and provisions came to take his place; for his enemies accused him to the Admiral that his behavior was harsh and tyrannical towards the native inhabitants of the country, that for this reason they were beginning to hate the French, and that, moreover, these peoples were irreconcilable.

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News of what had transpired in Florida between the French and the Spaniards arrived from this side of the border. From then on, Captain Dominique de Gourgues, whether he had some relative or friend among those whom the Spaniards had treated so ignominiously, or whether he was deeply moved to see the honor of his nation thus trampled, conceived the idea of taking revenge. To this end, in 1567, he equipped three ships and put 230 men on board, then set sail from the Bordeaux River, without revealing his plan to anyone. Finding himself about halfway there, he made his will known to his men, encouraged and rallied them, then headed for the coast of Florida, landed there, and descended without question twenty leagues below the Spanish fort. As soon as the natives recognized him as French and understood his intention, they received him with open arms, gave him their bows and arrows as a sign of an inviolable alliance, promised to assist him, and assembled some ten thousand men in a secret place, under the command of their Paracoussis, where de Gourgues and his men were led by guides they had expressly left for him.

Joining forces, they attacked the Spaniards, who were separated into three forts, forced them, and put all to the sword, except for twenty reserved for the torture they had inflicted upon the French. I do not wish to pass over in silence what we owe to the commendation of these savage peoples, and among others to Olocatora, a young Paracoussi, who, encouraging the French captain with gestures and words and promising to perform admirably in this assault, armed himself with a pike that was presented to him. Then, when it came to blows, he displayed such valor and courage that, first of all, he rushed into the first fort and, at the first encounter, killed with a single blow of his pike the gunner ready to light the primer of a cannon aimed at the attackers. De Gourgues, having also successfully exterminated the Spanish in Florida, considered that leaving a small number of men there would be to abandon them to the slaughter, the enemy being so newly angered by such just revenge.

Yet he resolved to bring back to France his entire entourage to return with greater strength, and, what he most desired, under the authority of the King. But he found himself far from his hope upon arrival, for instead of being well received, he was forced by the intrigues and machinations then being practiced among us against ourselves to remain hidden in Rouen, where our King Charles IX was at that time, at the home of Monsieur President de Marigny, who, for his merit and gentle courage, held him in high esteem. Here is the end of French

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ventures in Florida, which were thwarted partly by the lack of industry and the poor conduct of the contractors, partly by the negligence of those who commissioned them, and partly by our civil strife. We have this habit of starting well enough, but always finishing badly.

This is because the end is never, as it should be, the first in our understanding, would to God that we could practice this fine precept of Sallust, the Roman historian: before putting one's hand to work, consult well and seriously, then work, taking just the right moment and the right time. We would accomplish wonders if this were so; for nothing can stand against our valor, and if through foresight we could secure what we can conquer through courage, the roundness of the earth would soon become the crown of France. My intention was not to recount these enterprises and voyages to Your Majesties simply to give them the pleasure of a narrative of events which, though of their time, are not possible if they are so well known, and whose curiosity can satisfy even the finest minds. They possess sufficiently keen and penetrating judgment to seek further insight.

If ever any century has offered great opportunities for undertaking noble enterprises, it is this one. If ever France can be in a position and disposition to serve her Prince well, it is undoubtedly now. The time has come; the one that follows will perhaps be less opportune. What can now be done easily and calmly may, by delaying it, lose the moment of opportunity and the means for its completion. Now that France is disabused of her illusions and, thank God, can no longer be led to temper the points of her arms in her own blood, and that the spell that so long bewitched and clouded her judgment seems to have run its course, we must consider giving her some good and honest exercise, setting aside all these domestic squabbles; for letting her languish in squalor would cause her as much harm as starvation ever did; this athletic health, which she would acquire, would perhaps plunge her into the most grievous and dangerous illness she has ever suffered.

In truth, peace is a great blessing, if we were assured of always being able to preserve it, both internally and externally, and if that which sustains it did not serve to destroy it. It is a great blessing to live out one's life gently and peacefully, if tranquility itself were not a great struggle for many of the bravest men. Serenades are pleasant and gentle, but the most beautiful storms foretell tempests. Great calms make sailors smile and encourage them to rejoice; but they often harbor shipwrecks and tempests. Ship's captains are truly wise and well-advised who, during their time at sea, instead of indulging in fine food and gambling like others, carefully inspect their cables and mooring lines, have their rigging re-strung, and re-rig their sails: check that their anchors are well and securely fastened, and yet still manage to make good progress and take good care of the weather.

If all men were just, said the wise man, we would have no need for magnanimity; its practice would be useless. This virtue would have a fine name but no effect, for lack of purpose. But since they cannot naturally be or remain so, and since it would be necessary to strike down and cut down all those who lie in wait for it, it is essential, for the safety of both the general and the individual, to maintain and nurture it in courageous spirits, even to wait until the day or hour is unknown when one might have to deal with it. We must prevent this natural

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generosity of your people, for which difficulties are like bait and perils like lures, from being extinguished in the languor of rest and idleness. The principal and most important matter is to give them an object that is both beautiful and useful, honorable and profitable, a subject worthy of your judgment and their worth.

It is up to you to choose it, to set it against them. No action can have in its progress a uniform and consistent consistency within itself, unless it stems from a certain reason, from a clear and unmuddled resolution, from a carefully considered and examined end. Before undertaking the work, one must carefully consider what one wants to do, in the work one must act courageously, and after the work one must govern oneself wisely and moderately, always adhering to what is good and useful in itself, not to what seems so to the opinion of the common people, which is as changeable as a wind and always agitated, like by winds, by many different errors. Whatever one may think, there is no surer or more expedient way to maintain a naturally courageous people in the exercise of virtue, in the practice of their duty, than the fear of a warlike enemy or the occupation of labor in some great and arduous undertaking.

Regarding the first point, Polibius, a judicious author, tells us that never were the Romans seen more virtuous, their subjects more obedient to the magistrates, nor the magistrates more obedient to the laws, except when Pyrrhus at one time and Hannibal at another were at the gates of Rome. As for the second point, nothing has so greatly hindered civil uprisings in Spain as the great diversion that the kings can create there through the Indies and other countries they possess in Europe, where they send those with more impetuous blood, always keeping the more temperate ones close to their hearts.

The fact is that in every state there are always thieves, scoundrels, and mutineers who spoil the simplicity of good subjects, and very often there is neither magistrate nor law that can overcome them, gallows being erected, as they say, only for the unfortunate, and spiderwebs spread only for flies. To purge the country of them as a phlegm, one could find no better solution than to drive them out. It was primarily on this occasion that our King Charles the Wise was moved to grant and send the requested aid to the bastard of Castile, under the command of Bertrand du Guesclin. Similarly, the same reason led King Louis XI to lend a hand to the Count of Richmond. Thus, both gained the honor, besides the timely remedy they bestowed upon their state by which they cleansed their country of those who had too much quicksilver in their heads, sharpness in their hearts, and ants in their hands, of having restored two kings to the kingdoms from which they had been driven. It is a great art for princes to know and be able to make good use of the lives and services of their subjects. This knowledge makes them loved, this power makes them feared. Some are quite pleased to be employed in the pursuit of gain, others in the quest for honor. Thus, since some can be useful to them and others honorable, they accommodate them as instruments suited to great and distinguished works.

BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

**PART THREE**  
**(NAVIGATION IN THE PRESENT)**

### BOOK THREE: NAVIGATION

I have spoken above to Your Majesties of several trades, and how an almost countless number of your subjects can be put to work in them. I now say that you have excellent means at your disposal to keep your people at peace, as well as in the exercise of war for the good and repose of the State. For several centuries, almost all nations of the world have sought the resolution of their differences by force of arms, in the field; if there have been some naval battles, they have not been as noteworthy as the battles and sieges of cities, especially in the eyes of the leaders and captains: for it is well known how courage, being more restrained and concentrated there, usually shows itself stronger in the distress of the place through the union of its strength. The practice of militia on land, the use of fortification, the art of advantageous lodging, the order of fighting, and other things required both for the conduct of armies and for the advantage of battles, have also reached such a point of perfection that it is now necessary to acquire an inch of land from one's neighbor, to shed a sea of blood; that a wretched rampart made of brushwood and turf defends the greatest and most powerful city better and longer than it once did.

It is therefore necessary to change methods and locations to acquire the glorious title of conqueror with good standards. And since our neighbors mark the way for us and make such fine advances, and since the very necessity of the times seems to demand it, to tell the truth, not to follow them, or rather, not to precede them, would be an eternal reproach to our courage. We must hasten, for they are considering it and working wisely. I will speak freely here about the matter. Nothing causes such audacity and insolence in foreigners, not only in their own lands but also in our own, not only at sea but on land, as their acknowledgment that we are inferior to them in crew and naval power.

In truth, a well-trained, well-led, and well-ordered land army—in short, such as Your Majesties ought and can always maintain, for the glory and security of this Kingdom—is capable of making all the surrounding nations tremble, especially those that can be approached with a firm footing. But it must also be admitted that a well-equipped, well-supplied, and well-commanded fleet, besides the security it provides within countries through external defense, is even more capable of rapidly spreading the arms and terror of a great and powerful monarch to both the East and the West. Each ship can be a bull to him, ready to seize Europe.

Your Majesties have two seas at the extremities of this Kingdom; I call them two broad gateways to jump out to the two ends of the world, two outlets through which your generous people, under the glorious auspices of your name, can carry the fleur-de-lis banner to all the provinces of the earth. Many are prepared for this and prepare themselves daily; but before anything great can be attempted, before anything worthy of your reign, worthy of this empire, Your Majesties themselves must take the trouble to recognize the means, open them liberally, and, by their own resolution, have their subjects embrace them courageously. All those who have wished to undertake great and generous enterprises have always begun by ordering and regulating those they wished to employ.

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We need this more than anything else; the rest cannot be lacking. Therefore, devote your royal thoughts to it, work on it with your own hands, for they are required. But where better and more appropriately can Your Majesties take the principle for these great works than from the care of navigation, of which Your Admiralty is like the heart that distributes the spirits of life and movement? To understand everything in a few words, I will say that there is nothing that can better sustain navigation in this Kingdom than if Your Majesties ensure that your officers maintain a firm hand in its faithful exercise for the good of merchants and that it is properly ordered for the conduct and encouragement of mariners, whom it is truly necessary to keep in line, but not to deprive of that little wealth and profit which they acquire with so much trouble and peril.

The more these men are inclined by custom and habit to excess and license, the more they must be restrained, as if between barriers of good laws; But a different method must be used than that practiced in many harbors, where, when ships return from Newfoundland, Spain, or elsewhere, if any minor dispute has arisen between the crew, often without any injury, they are informed and a decree is issued against them, and money is taken from them without any legal proceedings, in order to extract, every year on various returns, the lion's share of the profit from these poor wretches, almost always waiting to arrest them just as they are about to set sail on another voyage. And very often, the townspeople, who put the crews out of the water, must extricate them from these confrontations, thereby losing the convenience of time, which is of such importance as we know on our coasts.

There will be a great many such petty disputes in the ports, which Your Majesties must order to be abolished forever, punishing those who deserve it according to the offense and immediately; for to conclude this point in a few words, it is primarily within the jurisdiction of Your Admiralty that all disputes arising between merchants and mariners must be summarily resolved, and these disputes should be little or not at all deterred from their actions, according to the practice of the Priors-Consuls of several good towns in this Kingdom. I have no doubt that, Your Majesties having brought to the orders and regulations of this Justice what falls within their sovereign authority, this brave and generous Lord of Montmorency, into whose hands they have deigned to entrust its office and dignity, will ensure their careful maintenance and preservation. His age and virtue give the French high and lasting hopes. What would be said of him if he were to forfeit the legacy of so many wise Constables, courageous Marshals of France, prudent provincial governors, and such celebrated and generous lords from whom he descended from father to son? Being so fortunate by birth, he will doubtless be even more so by imitation.

After the care of jurisdiction comes that of the ports, so named according to the testimony of Varro and for the same reason: like the gates which are the entrances and exits of cities, in which, as there is ordinarily a place of refuge and safety for men, so too in harbors for ships. On this occasion, they must be cared for as public and useful places above all others; but this concerns principally the Prince, to whom, along with common law, the principal concern is transferred; as well as rivers, bridges, roads, causeways, etc. He must consider that they are the fortresses of his coasts, the stops of commerce, the main bulwarks of his State, and that

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the wealth and splendor of his maritime cities, the traffic and convenience of others in his kingdom, depend on them more than anything else.

The Athenians understood this very well when Themistocles proposed that they build a triple port at Piraeus, even enclose it with strong walls, as a result of which it soon equaled the city in stature and dignity, surpassing it in wealth and utility. But we have no need to resort to antiquity to support our claims, having at our gates, in our own time and before our very eyes, the Dutch, who experience and demonstrate better than anyone that the sea is the shortest route to fortify, enrich, and enlarge a state, the best means of resisting a powerful enemy and sustaining war against him for a long time.

Therefore, for the past twenty-five years, they have worked so diligently on improving ports in all their locations that they now possess a considerable number of them, better by design than by nature. Not only was all their art deployed there, but all their savings employed, and yet with greater cost-effectiveness. If Your Majesties wish to show themselves as curious about those on their side, it will undoubtedly be with success, and greater in proportion to the infinitely greater power. There are already some fine and convenient ones, but which can be... Happy is he who, to become wise, learns from the misfortune of others. Happy is he who, through the good of others, learns such a fine science. We will never profit from any example unless the one we have before our eyes every day touches us. Do we consider the effects? Do we love the causes; do we value the usefulness? Do we practice the means?

For three principal reasons, Your Majesties are obliged to embrace them. The first reason, for the employment of so many men, who are now playing dumb, is that it is a great pity to let them waste time that should be devoted to your service. The second reason, for the increase of the wealth of this State, is clearly evident and lacks nothing but the undertaking. The third reason, for its preservation against future misfortunes, could not be better addressed than by the first two. I have spoken of them above in their proper place.

As for the last point, I briefly explain to Your Majesties that, to fortify this kingdom, it is now necessary to follow the same reasoning observed in the fortification of fortresses, where everything possible is done to push back the enemy with good bastions and firm ramparts, holding them halfway once the counterscarp has been won. You have two seas; fill them with good ships to guard them, carefully maintain those already stationed there, and increase their number where necessary. The negligence with which your predecessors held the coasts of the Ocean at the extremities of their kingdom has more than once brought their state into great peril, given wide open spaces to the raids and ravages of the Normans, and finally provided them with the opportunity and the means to occupy Neustria.

Some time later, the English facilitated their landing there, and, it seems likely, this was primarily the reason they more readily indulged in all the pranks that seized them to come and disturb and ravage it; something they would not have so boldly undertaken had they been opposed by forces from the sea. As for the former, Emperor Charlemagne had not only foreseen this, but, in order to provide for it, had given several commissions to several of his

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principal officers to reconnoiter the mouths of the rivers where they entered the Ocean, and to have ships built to guard and secure the coasts against all incursions. But his successors, neglecting this order, soon found themselves forced to suffer and grant many things against their will. It is always much easier to close than to throw out.

It is principally in this matter that one should not trust in the assistance that neighbors are obliged to render to this Crown. These forces and these weapons will be solely and properly yours, which depend absolutely on you. What need is there to make yourselves dependent on others for something that you can provide as well and better than anyone else? Something that, for all sorts of reasons, you owe to yourself and your subjects? If someone needing firewood were to go and fetch it from their neighbors, and, finding it there, were to stop and warm themselves without bothering to light any in their own home, would that be the act of a wise and prudent man? It is necessary to do what is necessary; and he who uses others, being able to serve himself, is never well served. Let no one frighten Your Majesties with the idea of expense! because order, firstly, will only cost the effort of establishing it.

Secondly, if, to encourage your subjects and influence them by your own example, you see fit to have a few ships built and armed—not in such a large number, for twelve or fifteen may suffice, from which discipline flows and permeates all the others—it will not be three years before your naval forces are on par with those of all your neighbors combined, opening up, primarily through your authority, the opportunities and places to do good. If the maintenance of ships is brought to your attention, it is easy to find the means to fund it in the very purpose for which you will have them built.

It is in this context that the old saying, that war feeds on war, should be particularly relevant. Moreover, what the kings of England are doing, or something similar, seems to be good practice. So that the wealthiest of their subjects may be more willing and more freely inclined to build fine and large ships, if they exceed one hundred tons, the King grants them sixty-six sols and eight deniers per ton, and even a little more; but if they remain below this limit, they receive no reward. The rent encourages public service, just as heat makes incense release its sweet fragrance.

If Your Majesties take this matter to heart, given the convenience we have in all the things required and necessary for it, you will soon see great results: very soon, what to us seems to be nothing but odious piracy, odious to all other peoples and infamous to the nation, will become fair trade or legitimate war. All that is commonly opposed arises from fear or a lack of understanding. For what prevents us from being as powerful at sea as all the others combined?

It is because we neglect it; our bravest and most gallant men, instead of dedicating themselves to it, leave its practice to those of the most mechanical and lowly condition. This has never happened in other states, which thereby became strong and powerful. We have enough good pilots, enough good mariners to accomplish many great things. They languish among us and are forced to go and work for foreigners; but we cannot keep them. There is a

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need to do things well at the beginning, as with everything else. We have undertaken things without success, on the contrary, always with losses. We must now think about undertaking them better, directing our efforts more effectively, proceeding on a more solid footing, and not neglecting the most essential things, as has always been done. We are too late. Later than we should, in truth; but soon enough, if quite right.

Moreover, those whom we are meant to fear, even if they were much more powerful than they are, have their strength so diminished that it is much less to be feared. They will take care as long as they can not to disarm what they possess, for fear of losing it. They only win because they know how to cover their tracks well. They are only strong because of the preconceived notion of their power. How many bodies do we see, large and considered so robust, falling, when engaged in combat, beneath the smallest? This very one has, in recent years, given several examples. But our misfortune has thus far prevented us from profiting from it or gaining an advantage.

In conclusion: all that may be said and done against us cannot prevent us from accomplishing great feats, from reaping and preserving their fruits, just as surely as others, provided that the order, which must come from Your Majesties' initiative, is firmly established and well observed both internally and externally, and provided that, finally, the resolution to do good, which your subjects will undoubtedly embrace, is pursued with labor and patience, two qualities that lead to perfection and crown all great works with a happy ending. No, it was not through those timid counsels commonly called prudent, but by daring and acting, that these brave and generous Romans rose to the height of glory. Great and distinguished actions are not accomplished with gloved hands, the rich sumptuousness of clothing is of no use, nor is this grace entirely composed of gentleness. Iron and steel please virtue more than gold, silver, and silk; she makes her most delicious meals from the roughest and coarsest meats; she prefers to sleep on the hard ground than on a mattress; she knows that roses grow on thorns, that lilies spring from stinking grasses, and that the moly, which the poet Homer so highly praises, has a white flower but a black stem.

You have, Sire, two great paths open to the acquisition of glory: one that leads you directly against the Turks and infidels, whose strength weakens day by day as their orders become debased, and the other that opens wide to the peoples you see fit to send to this new world, where you can plant and establish new Frances. It is by navigation that you must transport everything you deem necessary to undertake in one direction or another. After you have properly established and regulated it within your borders, both in terms of personnel and ships and ports, you will surely work towards conquests and easily maintain them with fine populations. If your predecessors, the kings, had used it in the same way, if, instead of garrisons, they had used colonies, you would today hold in your hands the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, the Duchy of Milan, and many other Italian territories.

Since we have enjoyed peace, the population has multiplied immensely in this kingdom. People are stifling one another, and it would almost be necessary to follow the ancient

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example of several northern nations. How many men are there, burdened with large families, living in extreme poverty, and otherwise of innocent and praiseworthy character? It is from such people, not from idlers, scoundrels, and criminals, that a new world should be populated. From them would come both honor and profit, expansion of your state, an increase in your treasury, and strength both at sea and on land for your crown; France would abandon this cowardly and lazy inertia in which she seems to be buried; the influence of your people would grow both here and abroad; various discoveries of lands would be made daily; the borders of your empire would soon be established far beyond the seas.

It would be even better for the French to serve France than Spain. I am astonished to choose one side or the other. Once you have properly established and regulated it within your borders, both in terms of the presence of men and of ships and ports, you will surely work towards conquests and easily retain them with fine populations. If your predecessors had used colonies in the same way, if instead of garrisons they had employed them, you would today hold in your hands the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, the Duchy of Milan, and many other Italian territories.

I am astonished that for so long we have allowed countless numbers to pass through each year to build, plant, clear land belonging to others, and perform all necessary manual labor and services, which the Spaniard cannot and will not undertake, so lazy and reluctant are they to act. In fact, Spain is almost entirely populated by Frenchmen, as was clearly demonstrated when the Prior of Capua attempted to seize Valencia using our galleys. At that time, they wanted to expel them all, but ten thousand were found and were sponsored by the Spaniards.

In the year 1595, when Henry, our great Monarch, father and husband of Your Majesties, declared war on the King of Spain, a register was made of all foreigners, in order to bring in those who were on the borders or near the sea, sixteen leagues inland. Those who were found in the kingdoms of Seville, Portugal, Granada, and Murcia, which border the Ocean, being almost all merchants, some residing in Lisbon, some in Cadiz and San Lucia, some in Malgué, some in Cartagena, were at last, at their request, allowed to enter because of their small number; to add that they were mostly Bretons known to be very devoted to the League and to the King of Spain, until then, that those who were at Saint-Luc, a favorable place where they enjoyed the same privileges as the natives and where there were usually two to three hundred merchants, presented a petition signed by 18 or 20 of the principals to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, lord of the town, arguing that they should not be considered foreigners, especially since they were from the Duchy of Brittany belonging to the Infanta, descended from their Duchess Anna, whose line was extinct.

But in the kingdom of Valencia, situated along the Mediterranean Sea, there were more than 30,000 French people practicing various trades, working with silk, working iron, cultivating the land and gardens where olive trees, mulberry trees, and rice grew, mostly from Auvergne, Gascony, Béarn, and Limousin. And since this kingdom only extends 20 or 25 leagues inland, and the best territory, even the very city where the foreigners reside, is only half a league from the sea, and since, by expelling them, the country would have remained empty and

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uninhabited, the nobles and other wealthy inhabitants of Spanish origin, who derived great profit from their labors and manufactures, obtained permission from the King of Spain to remain. In the Kingdom of Aragon and in Catalonia, there were similarly large numbers of Frenchmen from the aforementioned provinces, notably from Provence, who remained there, both for the same reasons and, principally, for the ironwork, the most necessary of all.

Since the Moors were driven from all the provinces of Spain, a very large number of Gascons, Biarritz, Auvergnats, Limousins, Dauphinois, Languedocians, and Provençals have entered, and are employed in cultivating the lands that have remained fallow. But, as a greater number left Valencia and Murcia, a similar number entered them; and fewer entered Seville and Granada, as there were also fewer there, especially since they lived in mountains that were not so easy to cultivate. For this reason, foreigners only spread out in the plains and more fertile lands that the Spanish gentlemen have reunited to their fiefs by the expulsion of the Moriscos, to whom they belonged, now leasing them at very low prices, even supplying oxen, mules, and other livestock, convenience and advantage by which a very large number of your subjects are attracted.

It is believed that there are already more than 200,000 of them, most of whom are adapting all the more easily because their religion is no different from that of the natives, and their background is not as abhorrent as that of the Moriscos. It seems likely that they will intermarry and become a single people. If this happens, there is no doubt that the country will be better for it and that the nation will be strengthened, as if by a kind of grafting with sound techniques. Yet, 15 or 20 years will pass before this can truly take hold and solidify, for most still come and go, and the others retire after earning some money in the richest provinces of Spain, such as Seville, Toledo, Granada, Valencia, and even at the Court itself, where they perform various menial tasks, like selling water, transporting haberdashery and linen, peddling hardware, cutlery, etc. In the past, there have been great upheavals of peoples on various occasions and by various means; in the past, there have been brave displacements of entire populations.

The desire to rule, the lust for riches, the thirst for revenge, the ambition for glory, and sometimes necessity and coercion, have driven peoples from their strongholds; as also I know not what destiny or, to put it better, certain decree of divine providence which transports kingdoms as it pleases, and to whomever it pleases. The Gauls threw themselves into Germany, into Italy, into Spain, into Greece, the Germans and the Greeks into Gaul, the Carthaginians into Africa, the northern peoples at various times and at various times into various kingdoms, some driven by force from their razed cities, others by plague from their desolate cities, some discharging themselves as if in swarms, others leaving their climate, too harsh and too severe, to occupy one milder and more temperate, some leaving infertile lands to conquer more fertile ones, others yielding to the strongest and pushing back the weakest; In short, we cannot list all the reasons for so many pronouncements; but we can truly say that no century has ever produced more just ones than yours, nor opened up more beautiful and easier means of setting sail overseas.

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It is a true prophecy that the sound of God's word will spread throughout the earth. It is being fulfilled every day: no place, without a doubt, will be deprived of the light of this sun that came into the world to illuminate it. But blessed indeed are those who will be its bearers! God has made us not only men, but men above men, and, what is worth more than all that, Christians. Knowing the importance of this title, how far it goes, how far it carries us, and trampling underfoot all apprehension, let us not fear, in order to make ourselves worthy of it, to brave the waves and the storms to go and make known the name of God, our Creator, to so many barbaric peoples, devoid of all civility, who call to us, who extend their arms to us, who are ready to submit to us so that, through holy teachings and good examples, we may set them on the path of salvation. Servants of Jesus Christ, if, in our miserable days, some of you still remain destined for this holy work, I call to you by the voice of the master who sows you in his vineyard: Let not delay hinder or discourage you, for though you come late, you will have the reward of the whole day.

The harvest is plentiful, and there is no shortage of anything but harvesters. Neither toil nor thirst should deter you from taking up the sickle; the true fountain will follow you everywhere. Do not be terrified by the fear of death; the author of life will always be with you. Do not be troubled by the length and difficulty of the path, for the way that leads everywhere to heaven is with you. Do not shudder at the sight of this great abyss of waters, for He who walks on dry land upon the waves, as on a firm and solid floor, must Himself hold and guide you by the hand. If, to establish the service of God, you need weapons, remember that the children of Israel, rebuilding the temple, always had the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. This is what concerns the principal cause of such a holy and glorious work. Let us now speak of the subject around which it must be employed, which truly merits our assistance and compassion.

They are indeed barbarians and savages, but otherwise quite fortunate in terms of nature, and their customs are well suited to receiving the form of true virtue. Moreover, they have some sympathy for us; they love us by inclination as much as they abhor those cruel and harsh masters who have treated them not only as slaves, but as the worst and most contemptible animals in the world, sometimes calling them the scum of the sea, sometimes a race of devils, and so on. To give you a brief understanding of the nature, customs, and ways of most of these peoples, they are quite subtle in mind, but ignorant of our arts, whether of peace or war. They do not consider the land to belong to any individual, nor the sunlight, but rather to be common to all, and consequently they share nothing. They only plow and cultivate as much as is required for their sustenance. They give very freely of what they have and expect others to treat them with similar generosity. They are very equitable in their exchanges, and our trifles are their greatest wealth. They are completely accustomed to liberty, and yet not very industrious. They value valor above all else, and the bravest men among them have received all the prizes and marks of honor.

In many places they can take as many wives as they have demonstrated their virtue in war. In short, if it were possible to remove their bad traits and replace them with our good ones—that is to say, to give them our virtues without mixing them with our vices—they would be brave

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men. This is why we must hope to see piety, faith, justice, and all other kinds of virtues flourish among them one day, virtues to which they can be nourished and accustomed by doctrine and imitation, being lovers and admirers of our customs and ways of doing things. I have no doubt that, if those brave Romans, who attributed everything to their glory, had had such a field of exercise and virtue, they would have diligently cultivated it. Now, if it belongs to any nation in the world to take up this task, it is to the French, to whom the glory of letters and arms, of the arts and civility, and moreover, of true Christianity, whatever others may claim, has remained as their own.

What I have just said touches on conscience and honor; But, as God himself promises to those who seek his kingdom to add to it the very pinnacle of all good, there should be no doubt that, besides the blessing of God, who would come to this great and powerful State for such pious, just, and charitable undertakings, great and inexhaustible sources of wealth would open up both here and there. For, firstly, the subjects on both sides would have such ample sales and resales of all kinds of manufactured goods that they could make or carry, the abundance of which would come from the practice of the methods described in the two preceding treaties, that the use would be supplemented by the cooperation of as many men who are now there and who may henceforth be there, whether they devote themselves to crafts or to arms.

They would be relieved by themselves of their cloth, fabrics, leather, hats, shoes; of haberdashery, hardware, cutlery, iron and steel tools; of nails, furs, copperware, pottery, glassware, fishhooks, rosaries, and generally of all handicrafts in which the more people are involved, the more they profit. Given the existence of copper, gold, and silver mines (as there are undoubtedly some very good ones, and the natives themselves make this quite clear, particularly in the places of Chisca, Apalatchen, the Mangoas, Menan, Saguenay, etc.), what would prevent them from working there with the same resources as the Spaniards in the regions they possess? Moreover, through correspondence between this kingdom and the countries you would establish, how many men would be employed, both in the accumulation and the distribution of goods?

We would have from our own stock what we buy at such high prices from foreigners: silks, cottons, balms, liqueurs, gums, medicinal and aromatic woods, guaiac, sassafras, sassafras (called pavagne in Florida and vuinank in Virginia), sweet costus, bitter costus, white sandalwood, lemon sandalwood, yellow sandalwood, esquina wood, cassia fistula, cassia ligna, long pepper, and many spices; several trees such as the holm oak, good against poisons; the haneda, excellent against scurvy and painful swellings of the limbs; the mechouacam; and possibly rhubarb, for there are similar roots in it which have the same purgative effect; The terra sigillata, so carefully preserved at the time of its extraction; sommac, rock alum, feather alum, white rose cup, vitriol, saltnitre, musk, ambergris in quantity, civet, benzoin, mastic, frankincense; hides and furs; dyes and paints; minerals; stave wood, plank wood, cedar, cypress; terbenthine, raizine, tare, bray; flax and hemp; in short, all such commodities as the countries of Denmark, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Muscovy, Russia, and Poland have accustomed to supply us.

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Where can one more conveniently produce ashes for soap, in whatever quantity one desires? Who can prevent the harvesting, in a short time, of wines as fine as those that can come from Spain, the Canary Islands, Crete, and Madagascar? Where can one fish for cod more abundantly and easily, given that it can continue there from March until September? Where better is it possible to fish for whales, seals, and sea cows to produce oils necessary for the manufacture of cloth and soap, for tanning leather, and for various other crafts? Where more conveniently can one fish for sturgeon, salmon, and other fish suitable for salting, both locally and for transport to Spain, France, Italy, Greece, and other places where the market is better?

These things are noteworthy not only for those who would remain in the new countries, but also for those who would frequent them, because of the trade and commerce, which would be all the easier for both groups as they are full of beautiful and large rivers, originating far inland and being mostly navigable from sea to mountain. Moreover, a great number of ships would be built, both here and there, and a corresponding number of sailors, which would soon make us stronger at sea than all our neighbors where we are, who, on the contrary, have always remained weaker. Our merchants would be freed from the large Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Muscovy, Russian, and Polish countries that have accustomed us to supplying them.

Where can one more conveniently produce ashes for soap, in whatever quantity one desires? Who can prevent the harvesting, in a short time, of wines as good as those that can come from Spain, the Canary Islands, Candia, and Madagascar? Where can one fish for cod more abundantly and more easily, given that it can continue there from March until September? Where better is it possible to fish for whales, seals, and sea cows to make oils necessary for the manufacture of cloth and soap, for tanning leather, and for many other crafts? Where more conveniently can one fish for sturgeon, salmon, and other fish good for salting, both locally and for transport to Spain, France, Italy, Greece, and other places where the market is better?

These things are significant not only for those who would remain in the new lands, but also for those who would frequent them, because of the trade and commerce that would be made all the easier for both groups, as they are full of beautiful and large rivers, originating far inland and being mostly navigable from sea to inland. Furthermore, a great number of ships would be built, both here and there, and a corresponding number of sailors, which would soon make us stronger at sea than all our neighbors, who, on the contrary, have always remained weaker. Our merchants would be freed from the heavy duties and taxes imposed on them by foreign princes, the entire route of this navigation, both to and from, being through the ocean and consequently free from all stops and detours. Since the coasts are full of countless islands, we could fortify ourselves in places where good harbors are found, where ships, men, and merchandise would be in complete safety—an advantage we do not have in any part of the world where we trade.

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I would add that, on these voyages, we would not pass through the torrid zone where so many cruel diseases arise, primarily due to the spoilage of food and water caused by excessive heat and poisonous rains; that going to the East Indies, one is subject not only to these inconveniences, but also to watering in many places due to the length of the journey, and to making several changes of course; whereas, on the contrary, this route can be made in all seasons of the year and, customarily, in less than six weeks.

Finally, since these countries are situated under such climates that, by the course of nature, they must produce the things that we need most in this kingdom, we could sow and plant the appropriate trees and seeds there, at much less expense than the Spanish and Portuguese have done in the Canaries, Madeira, Saint Thomas in Brazil and Saint Dominic, and it would be the fault of those who inhabited them, if they did not imitate their diligence in order to collect the same fruits, to use and to distribute the product of their own free will, we could cultivate vines and plant olive trees there with great profit; both for the sale of wine and oil, which can be done in all regions of Europe, and for the income that would be derived from it over time, by transporting them to other parts of America, where the King of Spain does not want to allow their cultivation, in order to keep them always needy and more subjugated, as we have noted elsewhere; for there is no doubt that there are in these regions several terroirs suitable for these plants, and that the air temperature is in harmony and conspires with them, to make them healthy and fertile, being for the most part under the same degrees as Spain, Mallorca, Crete, etc., and wild vines being found there almost at every step. With similar industry and diligence, sugar cane could be cultivated there, just as sugar cane could be imported from Spain, Barbary, the Canary Islands, Trinidad, and the Antilles, with similar fruit and satisfaction soon after, provided the soil and the sky allow it. It seems likely that ginger would grow there as well as in Saint Tomás and Saint Dominica, where the Portuguese and the Spanish planted it with good success.

Woad could also be grown there, as well as saffron, Dansic flax, hemp, wheat, rye, barley, oats, peas, beans, lentils, and all other kinds of grain and vegetables; all kinds of roots that can serve as human food, such as chard, skirret, stingrays, breadfruit, turnips, and swedes; all kinds of herbs, such as purslane, lettuce, spinach, cauliflower, cabbage, and green cabbage. Fig trees, pomegranate trees, orange trees, lemon trees, almond trees, apple trees, pear trees, apricot trees, peach trees, etc., could also be planted there. Having a large quantity of mulberry trees there, and bearing worm seed, one could, at times, bring in a great deal of silk and thereby divert the flow of the excessive sums that the country of the Emperor of the Turks and Italy draws every year from France. One could also, for the same purpose, increase the cultivation of the Ovizang grass, which bears a silk similar to that which grows in Persia and China. There is also in Persia, and now in Peru, a grass from which anille is made, which could be sown there as seed or planted as a stem, since the climate is similar to that of the places where it grows.

There are many lands that would be very suitable for rice, because of the large number of rivers, which could irrigate it at any time. For the settlement of land and people, only livestock would remain, which could be conveniently gathered from many places without

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having to transport it so far. The Spanish, in populating America, had more difficulty with this than with anything else; now they have such an abundance of it that, without regard for the meat, they kill oxen and cows for their hides, something anyone can do, especially since most of them don't belong to anyone personally. Here is a brief list of the advantages that could be derived from the population of certain countries in America, naturally as beautiful, as rich, as fertile, as any others possessed by the Spanish and Portuguese; But to conclude, I will add an even more important point, one that should encourage us to undertake it more than anything else: it is the hope, based on reasons I dare say are infallible, of finding by this means a route to the other sea by which one sails to Cathay, China, Japan, the Moluccas, and other rich lands situated to the east. This passage has been sought by the English, Portuguese, French, Danes, and Dutch at various times and with great expense, to which all were driven by the profit that might result from its discovery. Here someone will say: why then now so much trouble, labor, and loss in the search for something that the experience of the best and most daring pilots has found impossible?

The reason that led them to this is still the same today, which should invite us to it. Nature and experience establishing this point, one can with great reason to conjecture that from the continent of New France and Florida, situated in the temperate zone, one can go, traveling or sailing in the same zone, to Cathay, China, Japan, the Moluccas, and other countries of the Orient, much more conveniently and in less time than by way of the Cape of Good Hope or the Strait of Magellan; for taking these routes, one must pass twice under the equinoctial and under the torrid zone on the way there and as many times, consequently, on the return journey; This causes countless diseases, such as scurvy, acute fevers, even the plague, and many others that arise from the intense heat, the sticky humidity, the poisonous rains and contagious exhalations, and are caused by spoiled salted meat, contaminated water, and lack of exercise. For these reasons, most men who venture on this journey face great perils and expose themselves to serious illnesses; moreover, they are forced to observe and adapt to the seasons, to note precisely the changing winds, which always blow from one direction for six months, and the same amount of time from the other; and to replenish their water supplies in various places, both to change the water and to give their men a fresh air.

Because of all these inclements and difficulties, few men are willing to risk such voyages. And yet, they must pay double wages, and besides, one is obliged to carry almost half the crew required for another voyage. Furthermore, one incurs double the expense of provisions and, consequently, double the costs in all things. These are great inconveniences which, however, do not prevent men from undertaking them with courage and patience, hoping for profit. To return to my subject, I have included in the preceding discourse some indications of what can be done on one side without offending any neighbor, ally, or friend; but that is not all, for if one so desires, on the same grounds and with the same considerations, one can do the same things and by the same means achieve the same goal.

When Your Majesties wish to follow in the footsteps of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and maintain the same course, you can, to the detriment of all others, appropriate in a few years the trade of the Orient, that is to say, of China, Cathay, and Japan, with less loss of men, less

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expense, and greater ease. To achieve this, it is only necessary to find the point that Archimedes desired to secure his engines in order to remove the earth. What he sought in imagination, to demonstrate the boldness of his mind and the strength of his art, you will find in reality, if you please make use of it, to reach with one arm to the East and with the other to the West. Now, who does not know that your hands are not only long, but large? Please extend them, and then close them again; they will enclose and hold back many things. God has given you nerves to do both; you will make them work whenever you please, it depends on your good will, for no one doubts your power.

It is quite true that it has never been so well known as you have the means to make it known today, both internally and externally. It is even better that few people distrust it. In a few hours, it can bring about significant changes.

Royalty, which makes man equal to God. All great transformations are sudden, for good as for bad. Unexpected transgressions occur. Let us see, as in the wheel, what touches the ground and seems to be held back by many obstacles, returns in a single turn to the top, especially when God wills to intervene? Help yourselves, as they say, and He will help you; He will assist Your Majesties in their good and just purposes. We hope for Him, we desire Him, we beseech Him with such assurance that He miraculously offers the true means to restore this great kingdom to a good state, without great resistance, if our sins do not hinder such a great good. I leave much to the imagination here. Not everything that can be said should be said. I am content to work with a map where a small dot marks a large province. Nor will I repeat, in order to draw consequences from the main point of this subject, what, speaking of commerce, I have discussed concerning the fishing of mollusks and hare, which Your Majesties can and should above all establish and manage as the nursery of their mariners, concerning the transport of salt for the same purpose, and that from Spain and other places if there are any, where we still have some trade.

It suffices to have once beseeched Your Majesties to observe and regulate these matters, without burdening you with repetition. I do not wish to dwell similarly on the orders of the navy. It will always be easier to begin everything, where all new things seem harsh and difficult. But one becomes accustomed in a short time, and whoever does not wish to amend their ways for the love of virtue is compelled to do so by the fear of punishment. Example is everything. Once one finds oneself on the right path, it costs no more to do good than to do bad. It therefore remains for Your Majesties to give the first impetus to this noble endeavor. If you do it once wisely, you will soon have satisfaction and contentment, seeing it take its regular course. Plato says that after God had created the world and seen it turn its first turn, he rejoiced. In truth, the operation itself is full of delight; but the height of pleasure lies in the perfection of the work, which is accomplished only through means. Now, as God has placed these means in your hands, great, powerful, and incomparable, may He put in your hearts the desire to use them religiously, courageously, and usefully, for His glory, your honor, and the good of all your subjects.



BOOK FOUR: THE PRINCE

# **BOOK FOUR**

# **THE PRINCE**

**(“From the Example and the Principal Care of the Prince”)**

## BOOK FOUR: THE PRINCE

SIRE, this beautiful word, known to you yourself, engraved in letters of gold at the Temple of Apollo Pithicus in Delphi, is like an epitome of all true and sound philosophy, encompassing within itself, beneath itself, and surrounding itself, all the wisdom that belongs to humankind, whatever its condition or rank. But if some must study it seriously, diligently meditate on all its circumstances and implications, it is undoubtedly Kings, and you among all others whom God has chosen to honor as His eldest of the princes of the earth, of the first crown of the world, obliging you to be the best as He has made you the greatest of all.

SIRE, as you have received much, you must give much. Your honor is very great, but the burden is no less. You must not consider the fortunes of this imminent state into which God establishes you, according to the image and name He bears, but measure them by their purpose. To command is a duty to be fulfilled sooner than a reign. For the good and peace of your people, you will henceforth be compelled to abandon your own, to watch and work night and day for the common good, to take into your mind the care not only of the provinces and cities, but of families and individuals, to take charge of all the good and bad destinies of this Empire, to forget yourself in some way in order to live for others, to issue as many decrees as you find disorder; to receive and send ambassadors from all quarters, in short, to exercise on earth the functions of God, who has established you there with the power to make the condition and fortune of each person as they ought to be.

You, being by the grace of God born King of France, that is to say, the eldest son of such a father as among men, we all hope that He willed to mold your soul as that of a perfect prince, possessing many incomparable virtues which, above all others, have distinguished him among your most distinguished predecessors: the piety of Saint Louis, the courage of Charlemagne, the good fortune of Philip Augustus, the wisdom and competence in matters of state of Charles V, the kindness of Louis XII, the magnanimity and clemency of Henry the Great, your brave father, so that everyone promises that, by divine fortune, the sovereign authority of royal power is found in you, along with the sole affection for what is good and honorable, expressly to make virtue mistress of vice, to restrain pleasure, which now disguises itself as much as possible in nature and reigns as if by hand. Armed, without you needing to use force or any threat whatsoever. For your subjects, having you before their eyes as a visible model in which virtue will be naturally imprinted, will become, in imitation of you, willingly good and wise, and will conform themselves in friendship, charity, and concord, with temperance and justice toward one another, to an irreproachable and truly happy life, which is the greatest good and the noblest help you could bring to humankind, imprinting by your virtue such a disposition in the morals of those who will live under your rule. Neither the fear of laws, nor the dread of punishments, will be so effective in repressing vices, in so many leaders now proliferating, as your example alone, belonging to all.

To command well is an art, SIRE, and the greatest as well as the most glorious in the world. To be king is to be everything; to know the craft well is to know everything. It is very difficult to write clearly a beautiful design on scrambled paper; the erasures that must be made always appear, are painful to the eye, and hinder the reading. Wool always retains the scent of its first dye, and when it is still white, it is capable of receiving whatever dye one

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wishes, good or bad. The pot retains until the end the scent with which it was first imbued. Praise be to God, SIRE, that your mind is like a blank slate on which all kinds of beautiful lines can be drawn without difficulty or confusion. That your soul, still pure and clear and without contagion of vice, is susceptible to the true color of virtue, which never fades, which never loses its luster, any more than a good cloth dyed scarlet.

Woe to those who would throw poison into the public fountain, where everyone should drink! Woe to those who would tarnish the pristine whiteness of our Lily, whose delicate fragrance so deliciously perfumes the garden of France! Woe to those who would try to corrupt the integrity of him upon whom depends the happiness or misery, the peace or suffering of all others, who alone represents the entire public good and governs it absolutely, as his will is a law, his word a decree, and his life an exemplary discipline of good or evil. The good Prince, believing himself born for his people, aims only at their well-being, peace, and contentment. The bad Prince, thinking that everyone is made for him, has no other goal than his own profit or pleasure. The good Prince fosters piety, upholds justice, and sustains the faith. The wicked man has neither fear nor love of God, no regard for justice, no religion of oaths, and no concern for the salvation of humankind. The good man conforms to good laws, establishes and preserves their force. The wicked man dispenses with them at all times, abandons their protection, and often works to undermine their authority.

The good man seeks all he can for the benefit of his state. The wicked man studies only monopolies and unfortunate inventions to inconvenience it. The good man seeks to enrich his subjects. The wicked man builds only upon their ruins. The good man avenges public insults and forgives his own. The wicked man is inexorable to any suspicion of offense and a deserter of his country's glory. The good man spares the honor of women. The wicked man glories in their shame. The good man takes pleasure in being warned with complete modesty and freedom. The wicked man is no more reluctant than the honest and virtuous man. The good man strives with all his power to maintain his people in harmony and unity. The wicked man allows partiality to be sown among them, leagues to be maintained, and factions to be stirred up. The good man values the love of his people above all else. The wicked man does not care to be hated, but to be feared. The good man fears only for his subjects. The wicked man fears only his subjects. The good man burdens them with taxes and subsidies as little as he can. The wicked man overwhelms them with taxes, drinks their blood, gnaws at their bones, sucks their marrow, and devours their entrails.

The good man summons good people to his side, honors them, and employs them in his affairs. The wicked man seeks out the wicked, extends them credit, and often uses them like sponges. The good man desires to be bound by his own laws. The wicked man makes them serve his passions and unjust desires. The good man enjoys a secure and contented rest and rejoices in profound tranquility. The wicked man is always in turmoil, in anguish, in torment, always languishing in perpetual fear. The good man is adored by his subjects, loved by his servants, blessed by all. The wicked man is hated, abhorred, and cursed by all, and, more than any others, by those who know him more intimately. The good man awaits a blessed life. The wicked man cannot escape eternal damnation. The good man is honored during his days and

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mourned after his downfall. The wicked are defamed in their lifetime, and, as soon as they die, their honor is sown, their reputation torn apart. It is primarily the prerogative of kings to make God reign over souls, since God makes them reign over men. The establishment of His service in this world and its management concern them above all others.

Therefore, it will be a matter not only of your conscience and your honor, but also of the diminution of the authority that God has given you, if you allow, through complicity or otherwise, the formation of new schisms in your kingdom; if these schisms primarily concern the honor and sovereignty of this crown that God has placed upon your head, free from all jurisdiction, free from all recognition, save His own. The good enjoy a secure and contented rest and rejoice in profound tranquility. The wicked are always in a trance, in anguish, in torment, always languishing in perpetual fear. The good are adored by their subjects, loved by their servants, blessed by all. The wicked are hated, abhorred, and cursed by all, and, more than any others, by those who know them most intimately. The good await a blessed life. The wicked cannot escape eternal damnation. The good are honored during their days and mourned after their downfall. The wicked are defamed in their lifetime, and, as soon as they are dead, their honor is sown, their reputation torn to shreds.

It is primarily the prerogative of Kings to make God reign over souls, since God makes them reign over men. The establishment of His service in this world and its management concern them above all others. It will therefore depend not only on your conscience and your honor, but also on the diminution of this authority that God has given you, if you allow, through complicity or otherwise, for new schisms to arise in your kingdom; if they primarily concern the honor and sovereignty of this crown that God has placed upon your head, free from all jurisdiction, free from all recognition, except His own. Always remember that the Church is in the State, not the State in the Church; that it derives its splendor and its riches from you, after God. that she can and should not maintain them except through you; that you are so much her eldest son that you are still her foster father; that it is therefore primarily your responsibility to ensure the proper and legitimate use of these properties that you and your family have conferred upon her, and to prevent any abuses that may be committed in their acquisition, retention, or excess.

Inquire, SIRE, most particularly into the rights of your Gallican Church. Maintain them in their entirety, as your good and wise predecessors did, Charlemagne, Saint Louis, Philip the Fair, Charles VIII, and many others. Remain ever steadfast in this resolution, firm in this belief: that the Church has nothing to do with, nothing to know about, the temporal affairs of your Kingdom, and that Jesus Christ, the Master and Lord of all, has settled the matter with his commandment: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. In conclusion, act as King, since you are King; command, since it is your prerogative, and command all, for all are your subjects.

I have established Piety and Charity as the foundation of all good order. I now call upon Censorship to assist them, the only proper and sufficient means to maintain and preserve it, provided it is well and duly administered, and by men capable of guiding your subjects

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toward the true purpose of honor and duty. Never was anything more excellent introduced into any Republic, whether to foster honest shame, the faithful guardian of virtue, or to cultivate a just understanding of shame, or to reform abuses and repress vices, without resorting to the severity of punishments. Thus, to it alone, more than anything else, did the grandeur of the Roman Empire endure, and if at times it neglected it, as it was sometimes forced to do, principally by wars, its Republic having become ailing. All things being equal, it resorted to this remedy. And certainly, although the form of your government does not permit its revival with such authority that it gained, by turns, in Rome, you should not reject it entirely, since if its necessity is evident, its usefulness will be even greater.

The corruption of our morals provides you with the material; give it the form you deem appropriate, the name you think suitable, the limit of authority you consider reasonable. Who will refuse to submit to it? Your predecessors, the Kings, have always been sovereign in all things and by all things, and they themselves have been willing to submit to the rules of duty and honor. You will know this from the 38th article of the institution of the Order of St. Michael, where it is stated that the sovereign head of the Order, the King, will also be examined and censured, as will others, to undergo correction at the advice of the brothers of the Order, if the case warrants it, and if he has committed anything against the honor and duty of Chivalry. A King who allows himself to be instructed by his subjects and inferiors, a King who gives the law to others, consenting to receive it from others to maintain the order of his order, a King, in short, the most absolute who ever lived and the most attached to his opinions, having recognized the fruit of Censorship, having wished to leave its practice both to his successors and to the principal men of the State, the only ones capable of rising to the honor of the collar, who would now dare to maintain that its use is not in some way good?

To anyone who would argue that it suffices to punish crimes with the penalties and according to the forms prescribed by the Laws and Ordinances of the Kingdom, I will not only reply that honor and virtue should not be measured by such standards, given that piety, humanity, liberality, faith, and equity demand of us many things not contained therein, but that it is necessary to find some extraordinary remedy for so many vices that never appear in court before the magistrate. For example: are perfidy, bad faith, perjury, and deception punished as they should be by the laws? And who does not know that these are the very essence and duty of chivalry?

A King who allows him to be instructed by his subjects and inferiors, a King, who gives the law to others, consenting to receive it from others to maintain the order of his order, a King, in short, the most absolute who ever was and the most attached to his opinions, having recognized the fruit of Censorship, having wanted to leave the practice both to his successors and to the principal men of the State, the only ones capable of rising to the honor of the collar, who would now dare to maintain that the use of it is not good in some way?

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liberality, faith, and equity demand many things of us that are not contained therein, but that it is necessary to find some extraordinary remedy for so many vices that never appear in court before the magistrate. For example: are perfidy, bad faith, perjury, and deception punished by the laws as they should be? And who does not know that these are the very sources of resentment, quarrels, insults, lawsuits, and very often murders and assassinations? Do swearing, gambling, youthful debauchery, lewdness and lust, adultery, and all other excesses of unbridled license among us fear the stern face and punishing hand of justice? And who would deny that they do not deserve exemplary punishments? Finally, seeing the Republic teeming with vagrants and idlers, swarming with pimps and ruffians, who would not be glad to see it given some good purging, to rid it of such bad humors? Who would not be pleased to see luxury and superfluity in clothing, banquets, buildings, and especially gold and silver furniture repressed, to see usury, sordid gains, dishonest practices, and blatant corruption halted?

A special reason sufficiently proves that censure is more necessary now than ever before. Formerly, in every family, there was high, low, and middle justice; the father had the power of life and death over his children, the lord over his slaves, and the husband over his wife in certain cases. Now that all this ceases, in what court do fathers find justice for the impiety of their children? Husbands for the bad governance of their wives? Wives for the abuse of their husbands? Masters for the contempt and disobedience of their servants? Servants for the harsh treatment of their masters? Lords for the irreverence of their vassals? Vassals for the violence of their lords? I am not speaking here of conscience towards God, although in any well-ordered Republic it deserves the first and foremost attention, inasmuch as it is entrusted and reserved to those who govern souls. Here God is pleading with you, SIRE, and advising you in your heart to take up his cause, to defend him as his second, as he whom, to shine visibly among men in a living and tangible image, he establishes in such a high and sublime dignity. This is the first and best use of Censorship, although it was not the primary cause between the Greeks and the Latins, who observed its practice from time immemorial. For, in proper terms, it was nothing to them other than the assessment of each person's income. There is no need to fill this paper with examples to confirm that there has scarcely been a Republic, instituted with good laws, that has not made use of Censorship.

But that it is otherwise useful even to Monarchies and compatible with sovereign authority could be proven by very common reasons that readily come to mind, the manifest evidence of which carries within itself the force and efficacy of their persuasion. I therefore reduce it without dwelling further on the description of property and the enumeration of people. Now that in all Republics there are a thousand kinds of taxes, unknown, it seems much more necessary that everyone declare their property and make known what their income is; as was done in Provence in the year 1411, as was subsequently ordered by Edict of King Francis in the year 1534, and again by another of Henry II, as for the same reason in the year 1516, it was made the enumeration and declaration of all the benefices of this Kingdom. But the changes that have occurred require new ones; for one beneficiary pays more than half the tithes he owes, and another does not pay even a thirtieth of what he owes.

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You have, SIRE, no better means of addressing the just grievances of the poor against the rich, who, like the stronger parts of the body, always shift their burdens onto the weaker ones, making those who are already succumbing elsewhere bear their own burdens. By this means you can put an end to all rumors, appease all murmurs, quell all unrest, and eliminate all occasions for tumult, for even weather never causes any pain, but unequal weather, the greater its unequalness; You can thereby cut off the root of the greater part of the lawsuits in your Courts of Aids, abolish the extortions of several officers, the privileges and favors of the elected officials, assessors, collectors, and others who distribute and equalize taxes, subsidies, and levies, because all such disputes would be easily settled on the land registers.

You can thereby identify the spendthrifts, assignors, bankrupts, smugglers, and usurers, the rich and the poor, and, as to some, illness comes from abundance, to others from starvation; You can thus discover the game by which some acquire so much wealth and others depend so heavily on it, so that it will be as easy for you to remedy all this as it is useful to understand it well, since from the extreme poverty of some and the excessive wealth of others commonly arise unrest, sedition, and civil wars. Ultimately, you can thus regulate pecuniary penalties and fines according to the true distribution of justice, eliminate the deceptions perpetrated in marriages, the trickery in markets, the fraud in private negotiations, and banish countless disputes concerning inheritances, divisions of property, and mortgages, most of which are closed and hidden. Since these disputes are proven without further inquiry by the public registers, the immense costs of lengthy legal proceedings, the invention of falsehoods, and the fabrication of false testimony would be avoided.

The only argument that can be put forward to prevent Your Majesty from taking this decisive step is that it is too difficult to publicize the poverty of some, and that the wealth of others would be too easily enviable. On the contrary, envy will cease against those believed to be rich but who are not, and mockery against those considered poor but who are rich. But to put it simply, wise princes and prudent legislators have never incorporated these two things into their good and sacred laws. The best laws, the most praiseworthy customs, all have their drawbacks. That is why I do not dwell on the idea that it is wrong to expose the dealings and negotiations of merchants, to divulge the secrets of households, to reveal the inner workings of affairs, for this may be the case for those who seek to abuse and deceive others, to gain by concealing their true intentions, not for those who do not wish to steal their lives, but rather to reveal themselves as such, as was the Tribune Drusus, who wanted to have his house opened up on all sides so as to be exposed, even in his private life, to the view of everyone. Truly, doing good requires only approval, virtue only enlightenment.

If we are good people, if we love the State, as we ought, if we desire the relief of the poor, as we are obliged to do, why should we refuse to help the public when needed? To participate in common expenses? Is it any honor for us to be members deprived of all function, incapable of any service? But besides, would it be reasonable to ask tavern owners for their opinion on whether to abolish the cabarets from which spring murders, quarrels, falsehoods, and false testimony? To ask dissolute women for their opinion on whether to defend brothels, because

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of which it is to be feared that Heaven might be angered against the earth and make it yet another Sodom? To ask usurers for their opinion on whether to punish usury, those malignant cankers that gnaw at so many families and cause so many men to die while they live?

I do not wish to omit another great fruit of censure: that by means of it one can discern and recognize the truly poor, who are members of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to whom, by giving, one gives to Himself, from those importunate beggars who, under the guise of this benevolence, which bears the face of a fine virtue, are nurtured in idleness and cowardice. For, as the Lacedaemonian said to one of these scoundrels: surely he was the author of this unhappy life of yours, who first gave to you, and, having given to you, made you lazy. It is necessary, if ever, that charity make its rounds in every corner of your kingdom to be recognized by your subjects who, for the most part, have completely forgotten it; that she order, under the authority of your commands, that those who have less than duly seized and appropriated hospitals and their revenues, having annexed them to their domain by right of fief or patronage, be dispossessed, and that through negligence they be henceforth restored to their proper use and dispensed as required; that the money raised at the poor relief offices be legitimately used to feed and clothe them; that, if there is not enough to provide for all their needs or if they are not housed, accommodated, and furnished as is proper, recourse to taxation be made; she can never be more reasonable than on this subject.

If this fund of piety is still insufficient for charitable works, order that collection boxes be placed at all city and temple gates, at the entrances and exits of towns and passageways, to remind all those coming and going to remember the poor; order that all merchants residing in shops and stores, or traders both within and outside the country, when they make a sale exceeding fifty or sixty pounds, also do them some good; that all those who hold tolls, farms, and leases, both from Your Majesty and from your princes and lords, distribute to them a small portion of their profit, share with them the fruits of their labor; that all artisans, drapers, shoemakers, hatters, haberdashers, grocers, etc., extend to them some generosity, even the goods they sell and distribute.

Let all ladies, young women, and commoners make and give them some linen; let all those who make a will not forget them; let all gentlemen cut back on their luxurious clothes and their extravagant spending, to clothe and nourish our Lord Jesus Christ within them; for, because of this, God will bless your people in all their work and in everything He helps. He Himself says so, He promises it, to invite us to be merciful like He who is our Father. These are sufficient means to provide for the infirmities and needs of those who find themselves truly poor, especially since, if you once order the practice of the things discussed in the preceding books, there will be few who need charity. As for the census of persons, we find that the Emperor Augustus carried it out three times during his reign.

In the Republic, the tax was collected every five years, in lustrums, unless it was diverted due to wars. But of all the descriptions of the people, the most ancient are those made by Moses. Now, in each of these descriptions, made according to God's command, each person contributed their tribute by head, in the same way that the accounts varied. As for the rest, the

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benefits of such censuses, made for a good purpose and for just subjects, are almost infinite. For, firstly, they reveal the number of men, their age and social standing, how many can be drawn from them to go to war or to remain and guard the country, how many to send to colonies, and how many to use for forced labor in the repair and fortification of fortresses.

Secondly, one can understand how many ordinary provisions are needed each year in a large state, how much it produces, how much can be taken out without inconveniencing it, and finally, how much food is necessary for the inhabitants of a city in case a siege has to be withstood. But even if there were no other benefit than being able to ascertain the age of each person with certainty, it would still not be insignificant, for by this means a million lawsuits brought for restitution and for acts concerning the minority or majority of persons would be eliminated; which was the consideration for which Chancellor Poyet, among his other commendable ordinances, charged the parish priests with keeping registers of all children born; Several distinctions were made regarding nobility, the disguise of names, relatives, country, status, and rank, where, for lack of official documents, nothing is usually visible.

But another great and principal fruit that can result from this is that, by the same token, one can also know what state each person is involved in and what trade they practice, thus proving false the proverb that now circulates among us: that half the world does not know how the other half lives. Consequently, one can drive out of the hive the wasps and hornets that eat the honey of the bees, banish the vagrants, idlers, thieves, swindlers, street brawlers, ruffians, pimps, and other such disgraceful people, who are among good people like wolves among sheep. Instead of idleness, the greatest plague of cities, the nurse of vanities, pleasures, and evils of many kinds, one can introduce honest, useful, and legitimate occupations, so that on the one hand, wealth, combined with artifice, may complete fine and profitable operations, and that on the other hand... The other, what is valued increases and what is held in contempt decreases; in short, that all parts of this great body of state may be more easily grasped and bound together, there being nothing foreign between them, no more and no less than iron welded at the forge, for this is undoubtedly the clearest and most certain mark of a government restored to good order under the rule of justice and reason.

This, Sire, is what I had to present to you concerning censorship, to which I have all the more readily devoted myself, as I imagine it alone can best give you knowledge of what you can and should undertake and accomplish, through this rich and populous kingdom that God places in your hands as a perfect instrument of power and glory.

You have, Sire, given a fine start to your reign; You consecrated the first of these things by an action no less holy than great and illustrious, setting sail as from a high rock a vast sea, namely, by the assembly of your Estates General, which everyone hoped would bring perpetual peace to this kingdom, a legitimate order for filling offices, positions, and benefices, an equitable rule for properly allocating exemptions and immunities, rents and gifts—in short, for restoring the entire order to harmonious proportion, granting the superintendence of arms to the most experienced and warlike, the management of finances to the most faithful and loyal, the government of the provinces to the wisest and most prudent,

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and ecclesiastical dignities to the most learned, modest, charitable, and devout. Continue, Sire, with the same hand, and ensure that foreigners no longer say that this is a fatal flaw in the affairs of France.

You know, Sire, what parts your kingdom is composed of, and which of these parts is the noblest and most necessary for the preservation of the whole. It is this part, properly and particularly, that you call yourself the head of, although all the rest of your subjects are so many individual members of your body. You must therefore strive diligently to restore it to its former splendor, lest, remaining neglected any longer, it forget both itself and that dignity which has always accompanied it, and that noble function for which it is destined. It is not in our time that the discipline of the French, once so renowned, begins to lose its vigor; the length of its age, the disregard for its rules, the permitted license weaken and spoil it in the long run, so that it comes into your hands weak and languishing. but still full of life and capable of healing, if you deign to take care of it. Do, Sire, like the good physician who attends to the sick person even though he did not cause the illness; you are not the author of his depravity, but do not fail to purge him of it with good and salutary remedies, and all the more willingly since on this cure depends not only the luster, but the strength and grandeur of your crown.

The prince, who desires to live in peace and keep his people there, must always be prepared for war. Everything is preserved by two means: by valor against the enemy and by concord among subjects. Empires are not maintained by laziness; they require mental effort and courage. These great bodies have their sinews, and they must necessarily fall when they are cut.

Sire, everyone anticipates, from your natural generosity, that you will be the eagle of warriors, but to fly to the heavens you have no better wings than the arms of your nobility. Therefore, first, ensure that they no longer turn against themselves, that those who are capable of conquering everyone, under your auspices, employ their valor elsewhere than in killing one another. So many sad and disastrous incidents of quarrels and deaths, which occur daily in your court and in all the provinces of this kingdom, warn you to foresee and provide for them carefully.

Consider, Sire, that the private disputes of gentlemen give rise to leagues, leagues to civil wars, and civil wars to uprisings of state; join your commandments to the commandments of God to remedy this fatal disorder; abolish this wicked and damnable practice of arms, and employ them for their proper purpose, without allowing anyone to divert them from it under any pretext whatsoever. It is by this means that you must begin to restore military discipline among your subjects; all the rest will then be easy for you.

All the more so, Sire, since the maintenance of such a large number of soldiers, to which you are bound by both the glory and grandeur of the French empire and the employment of your brave nobility, which has never had nor wished to have any other occupation than that of arms, requires a substantial fund of finances. It is incumbent upon you to have the eye and the

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mind not only for the accumulation but also for its management; for in this lies one of the greatest and most important duties of your State: the upkeep of your household and its officers, the source of your generosity and the just rents, which Your Majesty must distribute to those who deserve them, the payment of your gendarmerie, armed for the safety and preservation of your subjects, not for their ruin. Remove all excuses, Sire, from those who would not want to lack cover for the robberies they commit, in order to restore military discipline and prevent all disorder. We must begin there; for, as long as the gendarmerie is not properly bribed, we cannot hope to obtain from it any honorable or profitable service, any perfect obedience; the commanders and officers will only have reproaches for the insolence and misdeeds of the soldier, already too licentious of himself. Pay well and punish well; failing that, prepare as many gallows as you wish to arm with men.

Considering, therefore, the necessity for you to be precise and diligent in this matter, in order to be able to fulfill the many responsibilities to which the Crown commits you. Take the trouble, Sire, to be thoroughly informed of the wealth and revenues of your State, both general and specific. Understand the nature of the funds that enter your coffers and for what purpose they were originally raised, so that you may apply them accordingly. Always remember, moreover, that this is the very lifeblood of your people, which deserves to be employed only in good, useful, and honorable endeavors. Have the statements of receipts from each generality, which the treasurers of France in each province draw up annually, presented to you. You will learn there everything that pertains to your domain and incidental matters such as the *taille*, *cruë* and increase of the gendarmerie, the pay of fifty thousand men, new subsidies on walled towns, wine imports, aids, equivalents, funds from free and charitable donations, equivalent to tithes, general and specific loans, and all other funds of such a nature that must be entirely recorded there. Also, have the specific state of tolls, royal residences, castellanies, foreign tolls, reserves, registries, seals, etc., presented to you so that you may know your former domain.

It is according to these statements that the intendants of your finances make the allocations year after year, and, to tell the truth, they could not be better prepared than they are; therefore, simply ensure that they are strictly observed, in all things and everywhere, according to the statutes and constitutions of your predecessor kings.

Furthermore, to liquidate your domain and other significant alienated assets, it is necessary to find ways to repay the creditors, for it is not worthy of a prince to violate public trust. You can, justly, incorporate and reunite everything to your crown, by paying them off. This is the best expedient you could choose to draw up a true statement of your kingdom's revenue, so that when the accountants report it, they will only need to draw up a single item, because there will no longer be any outstanding amounts: and by this means their accounts will be clear, not muddled, embellished, or subtly manipulated, and we will no longer see so many deferrals, endorsements, and bundles of receipts. But this regulation includes another essential part, of greater utility than that from which it originates: namely, that by liquidating your domain, you abolish and eliminate a swarm of harpies from your finances, a squadron of bloodsuckers from your people, who rise from mere shopkeepers to lords, and ascend, with

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no other qualification than the skill of thievery, to the highest degrees of honor, living off the very wealth of your subjects, and fattening themselves on their own. Sire, fifty or sixty virtuous and honorable men are capable of managing large finances. Their expertise should consist solely of rendering a good and honest account. Eliminate all the intrigues and secret mysteries surrounding them. Political science does not consist of schemes, and certainly not the legitimate management of public and sacred funds.

I have no doubt, Sire, that you will be carefully made to read the histories of your predecessors, for it is from them that you will most readily learn the royal science of good governance. Note, on this subject, that never were their enterprises and conquests more thwarted than by the artifices and schemes of financiers, who cared nothing for the well-being and prosperity of their masters' affairs, provided they made their profit. The journeys undertaken in Italy are capable of fully instructing you how carefully you must avoid the inconveniences that arise there. It is easier to do, if Your Majesty deems it good: — after everyone has settled their accounts, at a time you deem reasonable, and rendered unto Caesar what is Caesar's — a general amnesty for the past and for the future, faithful service or exemplary punishment.

Sire, let us usher in a new age of order and order! Return everything to its original source; the most ancient is the best. Choose people who serve you well, without fuss; and do not allow suffering to detract from the integrity of the accounts that will be rendered to you! Leave nothing behind, but let everyone empty their hands into your coffers as soon as they are full. Abolish all trickery and disguise, all cover-ups of exactions and plunder! Pay well and make others pay well! This is how you can amass great treasures and provide for great expenses. This is how people will take pleasure in serving you, and how, in the hope of reward, they will readily employ their wealth and their lives at the opportunity. There is nothing so royal as giving; and yet you must take great care that the source of your generosity never runs dry, so that you may always be able to give. But to give with judgment and to whomever deserves it, that is the particular skill of great and capable princes. In a great state, such as the one you have to govern, it would seem very useful and expedient that you keep a register of your gifts, in which would be included a report of the acts, as well as any previous ones, if any were found, and likewise their causes, so that the letters of the recipients addressed to your officials would only be released at the appropriate time, always taking care, since they are entrusted and appointed for this purpose, to avoid allowing your domain to be altered and your finances to be diminished.

"One should only ask of kings what is honorable and legitimate," said a great king. You will soon know, Sire, what you should give, and to whom. It is not always those who ask, but often those who do not. Virtuous men do not usually make great demands for rents. Vile souls covet them more freely. I am not speaking here of your liberality. To wish to curtail it is to deprive you of what is most royal in royalty. Your liberality must therefore be immense, in proportion to your power; but always guided by prudence, as by your eye, and by zeal for merit, as by your spur, principally in the rewards of military virtue. Keep a sharp eye, Sire, on the allocation of honorable offices in your State; above all those of the sword, and banish all

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venality from them. There is no currency suitable for paying for honor and earning it, except virtue itself.

It is a fine invention, and one accepted by most police forces in the world, to establish certain marks, having no intrinsic value, to honor and reward men of singular and excellent merit. The princes among us and our neighbors who instituted orders of chivalry have had this in mind. The Order of Saint Michael, which was long held in high esteem in your kingdom, had no greater advantage than that of being unrelated to any other advantage. This meant that there was no office or position to which your nobility aspired with such desire and affection, nor any rank that brought more respect and grandeur. Virtue embraces and aspires more readily to a reward that is purely its own, and more glorious than useful. Louis XI, who established it, knew this well, and moreover, that nothing diminishes the grandeur of the reward so much as sharing it with only a few. This is why he wished to whet the appetite of generous souls through scarcity, expressly forbidding in the last article of his instructions any increase in the number of knights, which was initially only fourteen named in his ordinance, provided that the sovereign prince and the entire chapter agreed with this decision. The fewer there are, the more they are desired. Such is the nature and allure of rare things.

This serves as an incentive for the nobility to pursue virtuous actions, to encourage them to perform their duties to the best of their ability. In the time of our great King Francis I, there were good and brave men in France, as everyone knows, and if that number was never replenished, it was undoubtedly with the prince's approval, for since these honors have no other value than this one, and since few people enjoy them, the only way to destroy them is to bestow them freely. The more men there are who deserve them, the less should be given, so as not to corrupt their value. We can see to what extent the opposite practice has led to this situation. For some time now, seeing the little regard shown for the Order and its collar, which was called a "collar for all horses," many have sought to have their lordships raised to the status of duchies, marquisates, and counties. Their number has grown to such an extent that their sheer number has also caused them to be held in contempt. This is further compounded by the provision of King Charles IX, by which it was ordained that henceforth duchies, marquisates, and counties would be reunited to the crown, unless they had previously been part of the royal domain, in the event that dukes, marquises, and counts should die without male heirs.

A good restraint on the ambition of those who, without deserving them, desire these great and magnificent titles of which Your Majesty should above all be jealous, especially since the more exquisite means you have to reward virtue, the more you will be served and assisted by virtuous men, who, like stars, will seek the light of their sun.

You are, Sire, the fountain of all dignity, so many virtuous deeds, to implore you to perform beautiful and good duties for one another. In the time of our great King Francis I, there were good and brave men in France, as everyone knows, and yet this number was never filled; doubtless with the judgment of the prince, for since these honors have no other value than this one, and since few people enjoy them, the only way to destroy them is to bestow them generously. The more men there are who deserve them, the fewer should be given, so as not

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to corrupt their esteem. We see to what extent this has been achieved through the contrary practice. The power to create magistrates is the most singular mark of Majesty; and therefore, there should be no doubt that it belongs to your care, not to the favor of the people.

Thus, all officers are properly yours, although there are enough in this kingdom who are not called royal, not because their jurisdiction derives its authority from anyone other than you, but because they are created only by way of intermediary, by reason of the fiefs belonging to your lords and gentlemen to whom the jurisdiction is attached. For just as all fiefs originate from your crown, so too do all their jurisdictions derive from your power, as do those of merchants and communities; no more and no less than in the human body, all the functions proper and separate from the limbs depend solely on the soul. It is therefore properly your responsibility to choose, or to ensure, that prudent magistrates are well and legitimately appointed, well versed in the knowledge of men and affairs, lovers of the public good and known as such by experience; that is to say, people who can, know, and wish to properly exercise their office, following this advice of Jethro given to Moses: choose wise people from among all the people, who fear God, who love truth, and who hate avarice. It is indeed true that it is a great blessing when the people approve of those who are already approved by the prince, for this consent creates a double obligation for them: to worthily discharge their duty in order to satisfy the judgment that both have made of their prudence and sufficiency.

Among all the things necessary for republics, kingdoms, and empires, whether in times of peace or war, the most important is justice, which can rightly be called the civil science of kings. From it, they draw the knowledge of what is good and reasonable, the treasure of law and equity that they distribute and communicate to their people, both through themselves and through their ministers. It is the virtue that produces all other virtues and that alone encompasses everything concerning the public and the private. We would not be permitted to live among ourselves, that is to say, in society, without it, and quite rightly, says Livy: that a multitude cannot be assembled into a body of people by any other means than by laws. Let us say further, with Plato, that just as the soul vivifies the body while it remains within it, and when it departs the body, on the contrary, dissolves and returns to its original state, so too does justice sustain and perpetuate the State. But if it is extinguished or oppressed, it is inevitable that the State will fall and be overthrown.

A city can certainly subsist without walls, but not without laws. Homer, who knew all things, said quite aptly of it: "It even destroys men of this world, It even founds great communities. It destroys them if it is abandoned, for it is primarily because of injustices that kingdoms are transferred from one people to another. It preserves them if it is preserved, and is to them what the image of Pallas was to the city of Troy, for it establishes the throne and increases its power." Because the Romans, among all peoples, were great observers of justice, their state thus increased and endured for so long. They also won over more nations through their equity than through their arms. Therefore, Sire, cherish it as the bond of your people and the cement of your empire, as inner and outer happiness; inner, because it is capable of fostering all kinds of virtues: innocence, friendship, concord, piety, religion, humanity; outer, because it pacifies land and sea, and establishes tranquility and security everywhere. Because of it, which allows

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each person to keep and retain what belongs to them, the years are better than because of an abundance of fruit. There are virtues that primarily reflect the spirit of a principality. Justice holds the foremost rank among them, and for this reason, the wise Homer aptly describes kings as being occupied and employed in the administration of law; an exercise that suits them so well that nothing adorns them more worthily. Indeed, they must uphold it well since it upholds them, and serve it well since it serves them so well. Their first institution had this purpose. They were never established for anything else.

This mutual obligation between you and your subjects, Sire, is the principal reason that should compel you to reconsider judgments in their entirety, to judge many matters yourself, especially great and extraordinary ones, if the case warrants it, if only to set an example. The prince who does not wish to wear a deaf and mute diadem, as they say, must be well versed in the knowledge of affairs of state and justice, to see with his own eyes, to hear with his own ears. This, Sire, is the principal occupation and purpose of kings in matters of justice.

Now, Sire, you can fulfill this duty yourself, as I have said, and through your officers, as I will say. But do not think you are entirely relieved of this burden, which is truly yours, by relieving those who owe you relief, for you are held accountable before God for the sins they commit if you knowingly sin in their election, since it depends on you. You will answer in your own name for the iniquities they commit in the exercise of their duties if you do not, insofar as it is within your power, ensure that it is just and legitimate. Think to yourself from time to time, since you have been so pleasing to God that he has chosen you for his lieutenant on earth, how obliged you are to do that his will be done, that is to say, that justice be sincerely distributed to your people by each magistrate.

It is your responsibility, Sire, and it is primarily yours to strengthen them. To this end, you must seek and devise all legitimate means to eliminate the venality of magistracies, if not the sole, then at least the primary cause of chance, the beginning and end of all injustice. The ambition of men means that those offices offered for sale find many buyers unworthy of possessing what they purchase. Even when offices are not venal, there are still enough people who strive to obtain them through gifts and corruption. Judicial offices are properly intended to reward rectitude and virtue, and if all is to proceed according to reason, all those who are confident in their competence and merit must be able to aspire to and attain them. Otherwise, who would desire to be among the good people and to lead their children down the same path, if valor and kindness have no prerogative or advantage whatsoever, but rather, what is worse, hinder the advancement of fortune that is so often called?

The historian Vopiscus, in his biography of the Emperor Aurelian, notes as a sign of the decline of the Empire that under him offices began to be venal and given to wealth, not to men. This concerns the appointment of your officials, to which you must pay all the more careful attention, as abuse is now rampant, bringing disorder to justice, the source of all wickedness, the beginning and end of all iniquity. The ambition of men means that those who are put up for sale find many buyers unworthy of possessing what they purchase. Even if

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offices are not venal, one encounters enough people who strive to attain them through gifts and bribery.

Judicial offices are properly intended to reward rectitude and virtue, and if all is to proceed according to reason, it is necessary that all those who are confident in their competence and merit be able to aspire to and attain them. Otherwise, who would desire to be among the good people and to lead their children down the same path, if valor and goodness have no prerogative or advantage whatsoever, but rather, what is worse, hinder the advancement of fortune that is so often called? The historian Vopiscus, in his life of the emperor Aurelian, notes as a sign of the decline of the Empire that under him offices began to be venal and given to wealth, not to men.

This concerns the appointment of your officers, to which you must pay the most careful attention, given the current level of abuse, but even more so to compel them to faithfully fulfill their duties. For, to put it simply, many malpractices occur in many places, as Livy noted in the perpetual assembly of judges in Cartagena: that whoever had one as an enemy had them all. Some have cited this as one of the causes of the subversion of this republic. Give orders, Sire, that this not be so, and command all your magistrates to remember constantly that in the city of Thebes there were images of judges without hands, and that the image of their president had his eyes blindfolded, to demonstrate that justice should be neither corrupt nor biased. They are sovereignly appointed to judge according to the laws and ordinances, without being able to deviate from them under any pretext whatsoever. The laws must govern the magistrates, not the magistrates the laws. It is a great comfort to be assured of having good justice.

We experience everywhere that Plato's saying is very true: that among those where there are many laws there are many lawsuits, and also malicious customs, for from this arise hatred, dissension, and quarrels, from which often one resorts to violence and murder. Oh! How good it would be for us if our own could be curtailed at the source! There is too much fuss about legal proceedings among us. Wine loses all its strength in such a large quantity of water. Charles IX, your predecessor, to put an end to this vile itch for petty squabbling, ordered that whoever wished to initiate a lawsuit would deposit and pay two écus to the King's treasury, which he would recover if it were judged that he had brought it with good and just cause; otherwise, they would remain there.

But besides the fact that this didn't last long, this remedy was inadequate against such a serious and ingrained illness. Here I would readily add this: to remove all emoluments from the sacred exercise of justice that you owe your subjects free of charge, both through yourself and your ministers. For, while there will be gains from prolonging affairs, and while so many people will be employed with salaries—some to instruct, others to solicit, others to judge lawsuits—they will always be instigated and sustained, as if by the heat of a thousand and one schemes. There is no vice more dangerous in those who handle public affairs than avarice, and to pursue them for profit is not only dishonest, but wicked. Obey this, Sire, if you wish to be well served, and make your subjects love virtue for its own sake.

