It is lamented by those who labour the fields of British biography, that after being entangled in briars they are too often rewarded with the scanty products of barrenness. The lives of literary men are generally passed in the obscurities of the closet, which conceal even from friendly inquiries the artifices of study, whereby each may have risen to eminence. And during the same moment that the diligent biographer sets out to ask for information, with regard to the modes of life, or peculiarity of character belonging to writers who have amused, or instructed their country, the house-keeper, the daughter, or, grand-child, that knew family traditions, drop into the grave.

These reflections naturally arose from my inquiries into the life of the Author of *The History of the Union of Great Britain*. Whether he was born on the neighbouring continent, or in this island, in London, or the country, is equally uncertain. And whether his name was Foy, or De Foe, is somewhat doubtful. Like Swift, he had perhaps reasons for concealing what would have added little to his consequence. And, as of Butler, nothing more can be certainly told in this respect, than that, in whatever opulence he may have lived, he left little behind him.

If however we may credit the *Gazette*, Daniel Foe, or De Foe, as he is said by his enemies to have called himself, that he might not be thought an Englishman, was born in London, about the year 1663. His family were probably dissenters, among whom he received no unlettered education; at least it is plain, from his various writings, that he was a zealous defender of their principles, and a strenuous supporter of their politics, before the liberality of our rulers in church and state had freed this conduct from danger. He merits the praise due to sincerity in his manner of thinking, as well as to uniformity in his habits of acting, whatever obloquy may have been cast on his name, by attributing writings to him, which he was studious to disavow.

Wherever our Author was educated, he wrote, when he was not yet twenty, a pamphlet in 1683, against a very prevailing sentiment in favour of the Turks, but in opposition to the House of Austria: and before he was three-and-twenty he appeared in arms for the Duke of Monmouth. Of this exploit he boasts in his latter years, when it was no longer dangerous to avow his participation in this imprudent enterprise, with greater men of similar principles.

Having escaped from the dangers of battle, and from the fangs of Jefferies, he found security in the more gainful pursuits of peace. Yet, he was prompted by his zeal to mingle in the controversies of the reign of James II whom he boldly opposed, by warning the dissenters of the secret danger of the insidious toleration, which was offered by that monarch’s bigotry.

When our Author republished his writings, he did not think proper to preserve his tract against the Turks any more than his pamphlet against the King.

From 1685 to 1695, he acted as a hose factor in Freeman’s Yard, Cornhill: but the hosier and the poet are very irreconcilable characters. With the usual imprudence of superior genius, he was carried by his vivacity into companies, who were gratified by his wit. He spent those hours in the hilarity of the tavern, which he ought to have
employed in the calculations of the counting-house: and being obliged to abscond from his creditors, in 1694, he attributed those misfortunes to the war, which were doubtless owing to his own misconduct. He afterwards carried on the brick and pantile works near Tilbury Fort; though probably with no success. He was in after-times wittily reproached, that he did not, like the Egyptians, require bricks without straw, but, like the Jews, required bricks without paying his labourers. He was born for other enterprises, which, if they did not gain him wealth, have conferred a renown, that will descend the current of time with the language wherein his works are written.

While he was yet under thirty, and had mortified no great man by his satire, or offended any party by his pamphlets, he had acquired friends by his powers of pleasing, who did not, with the usual instability of friendships, desert him amidst his distresses. They offered to settle him as a factor at Cadiz, where he had had some previous correspondence. In this profession he might have procured business by his attention, and accumulated wealth without a risque: but, as he assures us in his old age, Providence, which had no other work for him to do, placed a secret aversion in his mind to quitting England. He had confidence enough in his own talents to think, that on this field he could gather laurels, or at least gain a livelihood.

In a projecting age, as our Author denominates the reign of King William, he was himself a projector. While he was yet young, De Foe was prompted by a vigorous mind to think of many schemes, and to offer what was most pleasing to the ruling powers, ways and means for carrying on the war. He wrote, as he says, many sheets about the coin; he proposed a register for seamen, long before the act of Parliament was thought of; he projected county banks and factories for goods; he mentioned a proposal for a commission of inquiries into bankrupts’ estates; he contrived a pension office for the relief of the poor. It is always curious to trace a thought, in order to see where it first originated, and how it was afterwards expanded. Projectors, says our Author, are to be generally taken with an allowance of one half at least. However his proposals were taken, certain it is, that when he ceased to be a hosier, he was, without solicitation, appointed accountant to the commissioners for managing the duties on glass.

It is an observation of experience, how impossible it is to propose a tax that has not been offered before. In the present moment, one of the ways and means of De Foe is surely remarkable: “Land and trade,” says he, “have been handled roughly enough. The retailers are the men who seem to call on us to be taxed; if not by their own extraordinary good circumstances, though that might not bear it, yet, by the contrary in all other degrees in the kingdom. Besides, the retailers are the men, who could pay it with least damage; because it is in their power to levy it again upon their customers in the prices of their goods; and is no more than paying a higher rent for their shops.” Thus, as a place-man, thought our Author. It was reserved for the iron age of finance to see his proposal adopted, after various attempts and rejections, by a necessity, which, when real, justifies the measure that cannot be avoided.

From projects of ways and means, De Foe’s ardour soon carried him into the thorny ways of satiric poetry; and his muse produced, in 1701, The True-born Englishman. Of the origin of this satire, which was the future cause of some good fortuen, but many disasters, he gives himself the following account: “During this time came out an abhorred pamphlet, in very ill verse, written by one Mr Tutchen, and
called *The Foreigners*: in which the Author, who he was I then knew not, fell personally upon the King, then upon the Dutch nation, and, having reproached his Majesty with crimes that his worst enemies could not think of without horror, he sums up all in the odious name of FOREIGNER. This filled me with a kind of rage against the book, and gave birth to a trifle, which I never could hope should have met with so general an acceptation.” The sale was prodigious, and probably unexampled; as Sacheverel’s Trial had not yet appeared. He who is curious to see a specimen of a satire, which then so much attracted the attention of the English world, may be gratified by the following passage, wherein he endeavours thus to account for

> “What makes this discontented land appear
> Less happy now in times of peace, than war;
> Why civil feuds disturb the nation more,
> Than all our bloody wards had done before:
> Fools out of favour grudge at knaves in place,
> And men are always honest in disgrace:
> The court preferments make men knaves in course,
> But they, who would be in them, would be worse.
> ’Tis not at foreigners that we repine,
> Would foreigners their perquisites resign:
> The grand contention's plainly to be seen,
> To get some men put out, and some put in.”

Our author's moral is, however, something better:

> “Then let us boast of ancestors no more,
> Or deeds of heroes done in days of yore:
> For fame of families is all a cheat,
> ’Tis personal virtue only makes us great.”

For this defence of King: William and the Dutch, De Foe was amply rewarded. “How this poem was the occasion,” says he, “of my being known to his Majesty; how I was afterwards received by him; how employed; and how, above my capacity of deserving, rewarded, is no part of the present case.” Of the particulars, which the Author thus declined to tell, nothing now can be told. It is only certain, that for the royal favours De Foe was always grateful.

When “the pen and ink war was raised against a standing army,” subsequent to the peace of Ryswick, our Author published *An Argument to prove that a standing army, with consent of Parliament, is not inconsistent with a free government*. “Liberty and property,” says he, “are the glorious attributes of the English nation; and the dearer they are to us, the less danger we are in of losing them: but I could never yet see it proved, that the danger of losing them by a small army was such, as we should expose ourselves to all the world for it. Some people talk so big of our strength, that they think England able to defend itself against all the world. How these gentlemen will do that with our militia, I should be glad to see proposed. It is not the King of England alone, but the sword of England in the hand of the King, that gives laws of peace and war now to Europe: and those who would thus wrest the sword out of his hand in time of peace, bid the fairest of all men in the world to renew the war.” Our Author brings the question to a narrow compass:
“First, I distinguish between a great army and a small army: secondly, I distinguish between an army kept on foot without the consent of Parliament, and an army with consent of Parliament.” He, who is desirous of reading this treatise on an interesting topic, will meet with great strength of argument, conveyed in very elegant language.

When the nation flamed with faction, and the men of Kent desired *The Commons* “to mind the public more, and their private heats less”, De Foe published, in 1701, *The Original Power of the collective Body of the People of England examined and asserted*. This timeful treatise he dedicated to King William, in a dignified strain of nervous eloquence. “It is not the least of the extraordinaries of your Majesty's character,” says he, “that, as you are King of your people, so you are the people's King. This title, as it is the most glorious, so is it the most indisputable in the world.” To the Lords and Commons he addresses himself in a similar tone: The vindication of the original right of all men to the government of themselves, he tells them, is so far from being a derogation from, that it is a confirmation of your legal authority. And he concludes by declaring his intention is neither for, nor against either person or party: “As there is but one interest in the nation,” says he, “I wish there were but one party, and that party would adhere to unbiased justice, and pursue the honour and interest of England.” Every lover of liberty, must be pleased with the perusal of a treatise, which vies with Mr Locke's famous tract in powers of reasoning, and is superior to it in suavity of style.

At a time when “union and charity, the one relating to our civil, and the other to our religious concerns, were strangers in the land,” De Foe published, in 1701, *The Freeholders Plea against Stockjobbing Elections of Parliament Men*. This is certainly a very persuasive performance, though, doubtless, many voters were then influenced by arguments still more persuasive. “It is very rational to suppose,” says our Author, “that they who will buy will sell; or, what seems more rational, they who have bought must sell. For this seems to be a plain consequence, That he who makes use of any clandestine method to get into the House of Commons, must have some clandestine designs to carry on when he is there.” After all, he concludes, that whoever foment the divisions of the nation, put their hands to the nation's ruin: and he therefore recommends it to every honest English man to study peace, and to pursue it by all proper methods, as nothing can make us formidable to our neighbours, and maintain the reputation of our nation, but union among ourselves.

How much soever King William may have been pleased with *The True-born Englishman*, he was most probably little gratified by our Author's *Reasons against a War with France*. This argument, *shewing that the French King's owning the Prince of Wales as King of England is no sufficient grounds of a war*, is one of the finest, because it is one of one of the most useful, tracts in the English language. After remarking the universal cry of the people for war, our Author declares he is not against war with France, provided it be on justifiable grounds; but, he hopes, England will never be so inconsiderable a nation, as to make use of dishonest pretences to bring to pass any of her designs: and he wishes, that he, who desires we should *end the war honourably*, ought to desire also, that we *begin it fairly*. “Natural antipathies,” continues he, “are no just grounds of a war between nations: nor popular opinions. Nor is every invasion of right a good reason for a war; at least till redress has been demanded in a peaceable way. If a war be necessary, it is just; and if so, why should we be afraid of it. If it be not so, we ought not to make constructive breaches, and
personal affronts, the pretence of it. The French are not so inconsiderable in power, that we should be fond of a war without reason; nor we so inconsiderable, as we need be afraid of an honourable war. A war, which must cost the blood of our countrymen, and the treasure of the inhabitants, is not a thing of so little consequence, as may be undertaken upon slight occasions; nor yet of so great consequence, that we should be afraid to enter upon it with just reasons. But if we must have a war,” our Author hoped, “it might be wholly on the defensive in Flanders, in order to carry on hostilities in remote places, where the damage may be greater, by wounding the Spaniard in some weaker and more sensible part; so as upon a peace he shall be glad to quit Flanders for an equivalent”. Who at present does not wish, that De Foe's able argument had been more studiously read, and more efficaciously admitted.

A scene of sorrow soon after opened, which probably embittered our Author's future life. The death of King William deprived him of a protector, who, as he flattered himself amidst his later distresses, would never have suffered him to be treated as he had been in the world. Of that monarch's memory, he says, that he never patiently heard it abused, nor ever could do so: and in this gratitude to a royal benefactor there is surely much to praise and nothing to blame.

In the midst of that furious contest of party, civil and religious, which ensued on the accession of Queen Anne, our Author was no unconcerned spectator. He republished his *Enquiry into the Occasional Conformity of Dissenters*, which had been published without effect three years before. He reprobes, with the unforbearance of the times, “this fast and loose game of religion” for which he had never met with any considerable excuse but this, “that this is no conformity in point of religion, but done as a civil action.” He soon after published another *Enquiry*, in order to shew, *that the dissenters are no ways concerned in occasional conformity*. This controversy which in those days occasioned such vehement contests between the two Houses of Parliament, is probably silenced for ever; but De Foe opens this tract with a sentiment which ought never to be forgotten: “He, that opposes his own judgment against the current of the times, ought to be backed with unanswerable truths; and he, that has that truth on his side, is a fool, as well as a coward, if he is afraid to own it, because of the multitude of other men's opinions. 'Tis hard for a man to say, all the world is mistaken but himself; but if it be so, who can help it?”

“During the first fury of high-flying,” says he, “I fell a sacrifice for writing against the madness of that high party and in the service of the dissenters.” He alludes here to The Shortest Way with the Dissenters; which, he published towards the end of the year 1702; and which is a piece of exquisite irony, though there are certainly passages in it, that might have shewn considerate men, how much the Author had been in jest. He complains how hard it was, that this should not have been perceived by all the town, and that not one man can see it, either church-man or dissenter. This is one of the strongest proofs, how much the minds of men were inflamed against each other, and how little the virtues of mutual forbearance and personal kindness existed amid the clarinour of contradiction, which then shook the kingdom, and gave rise to some of the most remarkable events in our annals.

During the previous twenty years of his life, De Foe had busied himself unconsciously in charging a mine, which now blew himself and family into air. He had fought for Monmouth; he had opposed King James; he had vindicated the
Revolution; he had panegyrized King William; he had defended the rights of the collective body of the people; he had displeased the Treasurer and the General, by objecting to the Flanders war; he had bantered Sir Edward Seymour and Sir Christopher Musgrave, the Tory leaders of the Commons; he had just ridiculed all the high-fliers in the kingdom: and he was obliged to seek for shelter from the indignation of persons and parties, thus overpowering and resistless.

A proclamation was issued, in January, 1702-3, offering a reward of fifty pounds for discovering his retreat. He was described by the *Gazette* as a middle-sized spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion and dark-brown hair, though he wears a wig, having a hook nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes and a large mole near his mouth.

He soon published *An Explanation*; though he “wonders to find there should be any occasion for it.” “But since ignorance,” says he, “has led most men to a censure of the book, and some people are like to come under the displeasure of the Government for it; in justice to those who are in danger to suffer by it; in submission to the Parliament and Council who may be offended at it; and courtesy to all mistaken people, who, it seems, have not penetrated into the real design; the Author presents the world with the genuine meaning of the paper, which he hopes may allay the anger of Government, or at least satisfy the minds of such as imagine a design to inflame and divide us;” and protesting the honesty of his purpose, he resolved, if the people now in trouble might be excused, to throw himself upon the favour of Government, rather than others should be ruined for his mistakes. Neither his submissiveness to the ruling powers, nor his generosity with regard to his printers, was a sufficient shield from the resentment of his enemies. He was found guilty of a libel, sentenced to the pillory, and adjudged to be fined and imprisoned.

When by these means, immured in Newgate, our Author consoled himself with the animating reflection, that having meant well he unjustly suffered. He had a mind too active to be idle in the solitude of a prison, which is seldom invaded by visitors. And he wrote a hymn to the pillory, that

“Hieroglyphick state machin,
Contrived to punish fancy in.”

In this ode the reader will find satire, pointed by his sufferings, generous sentiments, arising from his situation, and an unexpected flow of easy verse. For example:

“The first intent of laws
Was to correct the effect, and check the cause;
And all the ends of punishment
Were only future mischiefs to prevent:
But justice is inverted, when
Those engines of the law,
Instead of pinching vicious men,
Keep honest ones in awe;
Thy business is, as all men know,
To punish villains, not to make men so.”
He employed this involuntary leisure in correcting for the press a collection of his writings, which, with several things he had no hand in, had been already printed by a piratical printer. He thought it a most unaccountable boldness in him to print the particular book called *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, while he lay under the public resentment for the same fact. “And though,” continued he, “the Government indeed may punish one criminal, and let another go free; yet, it seems a little hard, that I should suffer for printing a book, and another print it in the face of the Government to get money by it.” In this collection of 1703 there are one and twenty treatises in poetry and prose, beginning with *The True-born Englishman*, and ending with *The Shortest Way to Peace and Union*.

While thus confined and thus occupied, our Author “made no reflection on the treatment he met with from the people he suffered for, or how he was abandoned, even in his sufferings, at the same time that they acknowledged the service it had been to their cause.” With all his acuteness of understanding and knowledge of life, De Foe did not advert, that a party never protects the person, who does not go all lengths with party. Addison and Steele knew how to use this secret better.

While, as our Author tells, he lay friendless and distressed in the prison of Newgate, his family ruined, and himself without hopes of deliverance, a message was brought him from a person of honour, whom till that time he had not the least knowledge of. This was no less a person than Sir Robert Harley, the Speaker of the House of Commons, who was soon made Secretary of State, and who afterwards became Lord Treasurer and Earl of Oxford. Harley approved probably of the principles and conduct of De Foe, and doubtless foresaw, that, during a factious age, such a genius could be converted to many uses. And he sent a verbal message to the prisoner, desiring to know what he could do for him. Our Author readily wrote the story of the blind man in the Gospel, concluding: *Lord, that I may receive my sight.*

When the high-flyers were driven from the eminence which enabled them to do mischief rather than good, Harley became Secretary of State, in 1704. He had now frequent opportunities of representing the unmerited sufferings of De Foe, to the Queen and to the Treasurer. Yet, our Author continued four months longer in gaol. The Queen, however, inquired into his circumstances, and Lord Godolphin sent, as he thankfully acknowledges, a considerable sum to his wife and family, and to him money to pay his fine and the expence of his discharge. Here is the foundation, says he, on which he built his first sense of duty to the Queen, and the indelible bond of gratitude to his first benefactor. Gratitude and fidelity are inseparable from an honest man. “Let any one say then,” he asks, “what I could have done less, or more, than I have done for such a Queen and such a benefactor?” All this he manfully avowed to the world, when Queen Anne lay lifeless and cold as King William, his first patron, and when Oxford, in the vicissitude of party, had been persecuted by faction, and overpowered, though not conquered, by violence.

To be relieved from gaol, must have been a circumstance sufficiently pleasing: but, to be employed by such ministers, to be approved of, and rewarded, and employed again, while his old enemies the high-flyers were in disgrace, must have been extremely flattering to a mind at once ardent and grateful. That he was engaged in several honourable, though secret services, by the interposition of his first
benefactor; that he was sent abroad, and ran personal risques equal to those of a
grenadier on the counterscarp, he himself assures us: but of the business, which our
Author did not think fit to explain, no knowledge can now be gained from the silence
of the grave.

He found leisure, however, to publish, in 1705, *A Second Volume of the
Writings of the Author of the True-born Englishman*. The same reasons which
formerly introduced him to *collect some loose pieces*, held good, says he, for
proceeding to a second volume, “that if I do not, somebody else will do it for me.” He
laments the scandalous liberty of the press; whereby piratic printers deprive an author
of the native product of his own thought, and the purity of his own style. It was in
vain, he declared, to exclaim at the villainy of these practices, while no law is left to
punish them. The press, said he, is in a strait between two mischiefs: first, the
tyrrany of a licenser, which his been in all ages a method, so ill, so arbitrary, and so
subjected to bribery and parties, that is amounts to shutting up the press to one side,
and opening it to the other; secondly, the unbridled liberty of invading each other’s
property; which is the evil the press now cries for help in. As a remedy for all these,
our author proposed, first, that every author set his name to what he writes, or that
every printer or publisher be deemed the author; secondly, that no man shall print
another man’s copy; or, *in English*, that no printer or bookseller *shall rob another
man’s house*.

It is said, though perhaps without sufficient authority, that the vigorous
remonstrances of De Foe procured *The Act for the encouragement of learning, by
vesting the copies of printed books in the authors or their assigns*. The vanity of an
Administration, which affected to patronize the learned, concurring with the mutual
interest of authors and booksellers, produced at length this salutary law, that our
Author alone had called for without success.

De Foe’s writings, thus collected into volumes, were soon a third time printed,
with the addition of a *key*. The satire being now pointed by the specification of
characters, and obscurities being illuminated by the annexation of circumstances, a
numerous

class of readers were induced, by their zeal of party, or desire of scandal, to look for
gratification from our Author’s tracts. He is studious to complain, *that his writings
had been most neglected of them, who at the same time have owned them useful*. The
second volume of 1705 begins with *A new of Discovery of an old Intrigue*, and ends
with *Royal Religion*.

This writer’s fruitfulness produced, in 1706, *Jure Divino*, which had been,
during some time, delayed, *for fear*, as he declares, *of parliamentary censure*. Of this
poem it cannot be said, as of Thomson’s *Liberty*, that *it was written to prove what no
man ever denied*. This satire, says the preface, had never been published, though some
of it has been a long time in being, had not the world seemed to be going mad a
second time with the error of *passive obedience*, and *non-resistance*. He believes
himself *in no danger of being thought a Jacobite*, whatever he was afterwards. He is
rather apprehensive, that his *low-flying* should appear as if it carried him too near the
quagmire of republicanism. And because some men require, says he, more explicit
answers, I declare my belief, that a monarchy, according to the present constitution,
limited by Parliament, and *dependent upon law*, is not only the best government in the
world, but also the best for this nation in particular, most suitable to the genius of the people, and the circumstances of the whole body: A commonwealth can never suit a nation where there is so illustrious a nobility and so numerous a gentry; whose emulations, factions, and parties, are apt to be too turbulent for such a government.

Dryden had given an example, a few years before, of argumentative poetry in his Hind and Panther; by which he endeavoured to defend the tenets of the Church of Rome. Our Author now reasoned in rhyme, through twelve books, in defence of every man’s birth-right by nature, when all sorts of liberty were run down and opposed. His purpose is doubtless honester than Dryden’s; and his argument, being in support of the better cause, is perhaps superior in strength: but in the Jure Divino we look in vain for

“The varying verse, the full- resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.”

As an example, read what he says of the foundation of authority:

“At society to regulation tends,
As naturally as means pursue their ends.
The wit of man could never yet invent
A way of life without a government:
Subordination is the soul of law,
And rules of life to rules of living will draw.
What need had power to prescribe the man,
Let him go on without it if he can.”

In the publication of this poem, he was obliged to consider circumstances, as there are some truths which do not suit all times. He suppressed a second volume on the same subject, of which he declares, in the language of the Apostle in another case, I have many things to say; but you cannot bear them now. He who reads the Jure Divino will probably think that the world sustained no very considerable loss by this previous suppression. In the tranquil freedom of the present day, when compared with the factious turbulence of the reign of Anne, we are only astonished, that an author should have been fearful of popular odium, and even of parliamentary censure, when writing of every man’s birth-right.

Our author was soon after engaged in more important, because much more useful, business. Lord Godolphin sent him to Scotland, on an errand which, as he says, was from being unfit for a sovereign to direct, or an honest man to perform. His knowledge of commerce and revenue, his powers of insinuation, and, above all, his readiness of pen, were deemed of no small utility, in promoting The Union. And we shall find him no inconsiderable actor in the performance of that greatest of all good works. He attended the committees of Parliament, for whose use he made several of the calculations on the subject of trade and taxes. He complains, however, that when afterwards some clamour was raised upon the inequality of the proportions, and the contrivers began to be blamed, and a little threatened a-la-mob, then it was D.F. made it all, and he was to be stoned for it. He endeavoured to confute all that was published by the popular writers in Scotland against the Union: and he had his share
of danger, and, as he says, he was watched by the mob, in order to know where to find him; had his chamber windows insulted; but, by the prudence of his friends, and God’s providence, he escaped. In the midst of this great scene of business and tumult, he collected the documents, which he afterwards published for the instruction of posterity, with regard to one of the most difficult, and, at the same time, the most fortunate transactions in our annals.

How he was rewarded for all these services, and all this risque, he does not tell; and cannot now be easily known. He already enjoyed an appointment which had been formerly made in consideration of a special service of no small danger: yet is there reason to think, that he had a pension rather than an office, since his name is not the red-book of the Queen; and he solemnly avers, in his Appeal, that he had not interest enough with Lord Oxford to procure him the arrears due to him in the time of the former Ministry. This appointment, whatever it was, he is studious to tell, he originally owed to Harley: he, however, thankfully acknowledges, that Lord Godolphin continued his favour to him after the unhappy breach that separated his first benefactor from the Minister, who for three years continued in power.

The nation, which was thus filled with combustible matter, burst into flame, the moment of that memorable separation, in 1707. In the midst of this conflagration our Author was not inactive. He waited on Harley, after he had been driven from power, who generously advised him to continue his services to the Queen, which he supposed would have no relation to personal differences among statesmen. Godolphin received him with equal kindness, by saying, I always think a man honest till I find to the contrary. And if we may credit De Foe’s asseverations, in the presence of those who could have convicted him of falsehood, he for three years held no correspondence with his principal benefactor, which the great man never took ill of him.

When Godolphin was in his turn expelled, our Author in the same manner waited on the ex-minister; who obligingly said to him, That he had the same good will, but not the same power, to assist him: and Godolphin told him, what was of more real use, to wait till he saw things settled, and then to receive the Queen's commands from her confidential servants. It naturally occurred to De Foe, that it was his duty to go along with every Ministry, while, as he says, they did not break in on the constitution. And who can blame a very subordinate officer (if indeed he held an office), who had a wife and six children to maintain with very scanty means? He was thus, says he, cast back providentially on his first benefactor, who laid his case before her Majesty, whereby he preserved his interest, without any engagement.

De Foe now lived at Newington, in comfortable circumstances, preparing some works for the press, and publishing The Reviews: in this situation he gave and received many wounds, during the pen and ink war of that contentious period. And even before the memorable change of the Ministry in 1710, he entered into a truce of honour with Mr J Dyer, who was engaged in similar occupations, that, however they might clash in party, they may write without personal reflections, and thus differ still, and yet preserve the Christian and the gentleman. But between professed controvertists such a treaty could only be persevered in with Punic faith.
Our Author found leisure at length to republish, in 1712, A History of the
Union, which, as he says, lay longer in the press than he expected; and which is now
published a third time, when a similar Union has become the topic of public debate
and private conversation. It seems to have been little noticed when it first appeared:
for as the preface states, it had many difficulties in the way; many factions to
encounter, and parties to please. The subject of this work is the completion of a
measure, which was carried into effect, notwithstanding obstructions apparently
insurmountable, and tumults approaching to rebellion; and which has produced the
ends designed, beyond expectation, whether we consider its influence on the
Government, or on the happiness of the governed. The language of this narrative, if it
wants the dignity of the great historians of the present day, has greater sweetness; if it
is not sometimes grammatical, it is always precise; and if it is thought defective in
strength, it must be allowed to possess in a high degree an easy flow of entertaining
periods. Considering the factiousness of the age, the Author’s candour is admirable.
He is at once learned and intelligent. And the minuteness with which he describes
what he saw and heard on the turbulent stage, where he acted a conspicuous part, is
extremely interesting to us, who wish to know what actually passed, however this
circumstantiality may have disgusted contemporaneous readers. History is chiefly
valuable, as it transmits a faithful copy of the manners and sentiments of every age.
This narrative of De Foe is a drama, in which he introduces the highest peers and the
lowest peasants, speaking and acting, according as they were each actuated by their
characteristic passions; and while the man of taste is amused by his manner, the man
of business may draw instruction from the documents, which are appended to the end,
and interspersed in every page.

From this publication, which had alone preserved his name had his Crusoe
entertained us less, our Author was soon drawn to other lucubrations. To establish a
peace after a glorious war, is one of the hardest tasks, which can be assigned to British
Ministers, because their opponents never fail to turn the current of popular
dissatisfaction on their measures, whatever they may be. The treaty of Utrecht
furnishes a memorable example of this. The furious debates which ensued within the
walls of Parliament and without, are sufficiently remembered. About this time, says
Boyer, in May, 1713, a paper, entitled Mercator, or Commerce Retrieved, was
published on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. This was first fathered on Arthur
Moore, assisted by Doctor D’Avenant; but the latter solemnly denied it: and it soon
after appeared to be the production of Daniel De Foe, an ambidextrous hireling, who
for this dirty work received a large weekly allowance from the Treasury. That he
wrote in the Mercator De Foe admits; but, he expressly denies, that “he either was the
Author of it, had the property of it, the printing of it, the profit of it, or had the power
to put anything into it, if he would.” And, by his Appeal, he affirms before God and
the world, “that he never had any payment, or reward, for writing any part of it.” Yet,
that he was ready to defend those papers of the Mercator which were really his, if
men would answer with arguments rather than abuse; though not those things, which
he had never written, but for which he had received such usage. He adds, with the
noble spirit of a true-born Englishman, “The press was open to me as well as to
others, and how, or when I lost my English liberty of speaking my mind, I know not:
neither how my speaking my opinions, without fee or reward, could authorize any one
to call me villain, rascal, traitor, and such opprobrious names.”
Of the imputed connexion with his first benefactor, Harley, during that memorable period, our Author speaks with equal firmness at a moment when much firmness was necessary. I solemnly protest, says he, by his Appeal, in the presence of Him who shall judge us all, that I have received no instructions, orders, or directions for writing any thing, or materials from Lord Oxford, since Lord Godolphin was Treasurer, or that I have ever shewn to Lord Oxford any thing I had written, or printed. He challenges the world to prove the contrary; and he affirms, that he always capitulated for liberty to speak, according to his own judgement of things. As to consideration, pension, or reward, he declares most solemnly, that he had none, except his old appointment made him long before by Lord Godolphin. What is extremely probable, we may easily credit, without such strong asseverations. However Lord Oxford may have been gratified by the voluntary writings of De Foe, he had doubtless other persons who shared his confidence, and wrote his Examiners.

But De Foe published that, which, by no means, promoted Lord Oxford’s views, and which therefore gained little of his favour. Our Author wrote against the peace of Utrecht, during the negotiation, because he approved of it as little as he had done the treaty at Gertruydenburgh, under very different influences, a few years before. The peace he was for, as he himself says, was such as should neither have given the Spanish monarchy to the House of Bourbon, nor to the House of Austria; but that this bone of contention should have been so broken to pieces, as that it should not have been dangerous to Europe, and that England and Holland should have so strengthened themselves, by sharing its commerce, as should have made them no more afraid of France, or the Emperor; and that all that we should conquer in the Spanish West-Indies should be our own. But, it is equally true, he affirms, that when the peace was established, “I thought our business was to make the best of it; and rather to inquire what improvements could be made of it, than to be continually exclaiming against those who procured it.”

Unhappily for his fame, De Foe’s connections with the pillory has transmitted his name with no good report to posterity. If we could divest ourselves of hereditary prejudices, and judge of him by what he said and did, we should see him rise superior, as a statesman, to the great men of both sides, who, having entangled themselves in names, bade defiance to common sense. Our Author, as we have seen, objected before hostilities began to an offensive war in Flanders; while he advised to attack the Spaniards on their weakest side, for the sake of equivalents. During the treaty he equally suggested, to break the bone of contention, by giving the contested prize to neither the one House nor the other; to strengthen ourselves by commercial advantages; and above all, to preserve for our own use whatever we might conquer in the Spanish West-Indies. He manfully avowed his opinion, in 1715, when it was both disgraceful and dangerous, that the 9th article of the Treaty of Commerce was calculated for the advantage of our trade: “Let who will make it, that,” says he, “is nothing to me. My reasons are, because it tied up the French to open the door to our manufactures, at a certain duty of importation there; and left the Parliament of Britain at liberty to shut theirs out, by as high duties as they pleased here; there being no limitation upon us, as to duties on French goods, but, that other nations should pay the same. While the French were thus bound, and the British free, I always thought we must be in a condition to trade to advantage, or it must be our own fault: this was my opinion, and is so still; and I would engage to maintain it against any man, on a publick stage, before a jury of fifty merchants, and venture my life upon the cause, if I
were assured of fair play in the dispute. But, that it was my opinion, we might carry on a trade with France to our great advantage, and that we ought for that reason to trade with them, \(^\text{16}\) appears in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth volumes of *The Reviews*, above nine years before *The Mercator* was thought of."

"While I spoke of things thus," says our Author, "I bore infinite reproaches, as the defender of the peace, by pamphlets, which I had no hand in." He appears to have been silenced by noise, obloquy, and indignation: and finding himself in this manner treated, he declined writing at all, as he assures us; and for great part of a year never set pen to paper, except in *The Reviews*. "After this," continues he, "I was a long time absent in the north of England," though, we may easily infer, for a very different reason than that of the famous retirement of Swift, upon the final breach between Oxford and Bolingbroke.

The place of his retreat is now known to have been Halifax, on the borders of Lancashire. \(^\text{17}\) And observing here, as he himself relates, the insolence of the Jacobite party, and how they insinuated the Pretender’s rights into the common people, "I set pen to paper again, by writing *A Seasonable Caution*: and to open the eyes of the poor ignorant country people, I gave away this all over the kingdom, as gain was not intended." With the same laudable purpose he wrote two other pamphlets; the first, *What if the Pretender should come*; the second, *Reasons against the Succession of the House of Hanover*. "Nothing could be more plain," says he, "than that the titles of these were amusements, \(^\text{18}\) in order to put the books into the hands of those people, who had been deluded by the Jacobites." These petty volumes were so much approved by the zealous friends of the Protestant succession, that they were diligent to disperse them through the most distant counties. And De Foe protests, that had the Elector of Hanover given him a thousand pounds, he could not have served him more effectually, than by writing these three treatises.

The reader will learn with surprise and indignation, that for writing these tracts De Foe was arrested, obliged to give *eight hundred* pounds bail, contrary to the Bill of Rights, and prosecuted by information, during Trinity term 1713. He attributes this prosecution to the malice of his enemies, who were numerous and powerful. No *inconsiderable people* were heard to say, that they knew the books were against the Pretender, but that De Foe had disobliged them in other things, and they resolved to take this advantage to punish him. This story is the more credible, as he had procured good evidence to prove the fact, had the trial come on. He was prompted by consciousness of innocence to *defend himself in print*, pending the prosecution; which offended the judges, who seemed to have been some what infected with the violent spirit of the times. But, it was happy for our Author, that his *first benefactor* was still in power, who procured him the Queen’s pardon, in December 1713. This act of liberal justice was produced by the party-writers\(^\text{19}\) of those *black and bitter* days, as an additional proof of Lord Oxford’s attachment to the abdicated family; while De Foe was said to be convicted of absolute Jacobitism, contrary to the tenor of his life, and the purpose of his writings. He himself said sarcastically, that they might as well have made him a *Mahometan*. On his tomb-stone it might have been engraved, That he was the first Englishman, who had been obliged to ask a royal pardon, for writing in favour of the Hanover succession.
“No sooner was the Queen dead,” says he, “and the King, as right required, proclaimed, but the rage of men encreased upon me to that degree, that the threats and insults were such as I am unable to express. Though I have written nothing since the Queen’s death; yet, a great many things are called by my name, and I bear the answerers insults. I have not seen or spoken with the Earl of Oxford,” continues he, “since the King’s landing, but once; yet, he bears the reproach of my writing for him, and I the rage of men for doing it.” He appears indeed to have been, at that noisy period, stunned by factious clamour, and overborne, though not subdued, by unmerited obloquy. He probably lost his original appointment, when his first benefactor was finally expelled. Instead of meeting with reward for his zealous services in support of the Protestant succession, he was on the accession of George I discountenanced by those who had derived a benefit from his pen. And of Addison, who was now exalted into office, and enjoyed literary patronage, our Author had said, in his Double Welcome to the Duke of Marlborough –

“Maecenas has his modern fancy strung,
And fixed his pension first, or he had never sung.”

While thus insulted by enemies, and discountenanced by power, our Author published his Appeal to Honour and Justice, in 1715; being a true Account of his Conduct in public Affairs. As a motive for this intrepid measure, he affectingly says, That “by the hints of mortality and the infirmities of a life of sorrow and fatigue, I have reason to think, that I am very near to the great ocean of eternity, and the time may not be long ere I embark on the last voyage: wherefore, I think I should even accounts with this world before I go, that no slanders may lye against my heirs, to disturb them in the peaceable possession of their father’s inheritance, his character.” It is a circumstance perhaps unexampled in the life of any other writer, that before he could finish his Appeal, he was struck with an apoplexy. After languishing more than six weeks, neither able to go on, nor likely to recover, his friends thought fit to delay the publication no longer. “It is the opinion of most who know him,” says Baker, the publisher, “that the treatment which he here complains of, and others of which he would have spoken, have been the cause of this disaster.” When the ardent mind of De Foe reflected on what he had done, and what he had suffered, how he had been rewarded and persecuted, his aged heart melted in despair. Whoever reads his Appeal will meet with passages of great vigour, and paragraphs of equal weakness. His spirit, like a candle struggling in the socket, blazed and sunk, and blazed and sunk, till it disappeared at length in darkness.

While his strength remained, he expostulated with his adversaries, in the following terms of great manliness, and instructive intelligence: “It has been the disaster of all parties in this nation, to be very hot in their turn, and as often as they have been so, I have differed with them all, and ever must, and shall do so. I’ll repeat some of the occasions on the Whig side, because from that quarter the accusation of my turning about comes.

“The first time I had the misfortune to differ with my friends, was about the year 1683, when the Turks were besieging Vienna, and the Whigs in England, generally speaking, were for the Turks taking it; which I, having read the history of the cruelty and perfidious dealings of the Turks in their wars, and how they had rooted out the name of the Christian religion in above threescore and ten kingdoms, could by no
means agree with; and though then but a young man, and a younger author, I opposed it, and wrote against it; which was taken very unkindly indeed.

The next time I differed with my friends, was when King James was wheedling the Dissenters to take off the penal laws and test, which I could by no means come into. And as in the first I used to say, I had rather the Popish House of Austria should ruin the Protestants in Hungaria, than the Infidel House of Ottoman should ruin both Protestant and Papist, by overrunning Germany; so in the other, I told the Dissenters, I had rather the Church of England should pull our clothes off, by fines and forfeitures, than the Papists should fall both upon the Church and the Dissenters, and pull our skins off, by fire and faggot.

The next difference I had with good men, was about the scandalous practice of occasional conformity, in which I had the misfortune to make many honest men angry, rather because I had the better of the argument, than because they disliked what I said.

And now I have lived to see the Dissenters themselves very quiet, if not very well pleased with an act of Parliament to prevent it. Their friends indeed laid it on; they would be friends indeed, if they would talk of taking it off again.

Again, I had a breach with honest men for their male-treating King William; of which I say nothing: because, I think, they are now opening their eyes, and making what amends they can to his memory.

The fifth difference I had with them, was about the treaty of partition, in which many honest men were mistaken, and in which I told them plainly then, that they would at last end the war upon worse terms; and so it is my opinion they would have done, though the treaty of Gertruydenburgh had taken place.

The sixth time I differed with them, was when the old Whigs fell out with the modern Whigs; and when the Duke of Marlborough and my Lord Godolphin were used by the Observator in a manner worse, I confess, for the time it lasted, than ever they were used since; nay, though it were by Abel and the Examiner: but the success failed. In this dispute my Lord Godolphin did me the honour to tell me, I had served him and his Grace also, both faithfully and successfully. But his Lordship is dead, and I have now no testimony of it, but what is to be found in the Observator, where I am plentifully abused for being an enemy to my country, by acting in the interest of my Lord Godolphin and the Duke of Marlborough. What weathercock can turn with such tempers as these!

I am now in the seventh breach with them, and my crime now is, that I will not believe and say the same things of the Queen, and the late Treasurer, which I could not believe before of my Lord Godolphin and the Duke of Marlborough, and which in truth I cannot believe, and therefore could not say it of either of them; and which, if I had believed, yet I ought not to have been the man that should have said it, for the reasons aforesaid.

In such turns of tempers and times a man must have been ten-fold a Vicar of Bray, or it is impossible but he must one time or other be out with every body. This is my present condition, and for this I am reviled with having abandoned my principles,
turned Jacobite, and what not: God judge between me and these men! Would they come to any particulars with me, what real guilt I may have, I would freely acknowledge; and if they would produce any evidence, of the bribes, the pensions, and the rewards I have taken, I would declare honestly, whether they were true or no. If they would give a list of the books which they charge me with, and the reasons why they lay them at my door, I would acknowledge any mistake; own what I have done; and let them know what I have not done. But these men neither shew mercy, nor leave room for repentance, in which they act not only unlike their Maker, but contrary to his express commands."

With the same independence of spirit, but with greater modesty of manner, our Author openly disapproved of the intemperance, which was adopted by Government, in 1714, contrary to the original purpose of George I. "It is and ever was my opinion," says De Foe, in his *Appeal*, "that moderation is the only virtue by which the tranquillity of this nation can be preserved; and even the King himself (I believe his Majesty will allow me that freedom) can only be happy in the enjoyment of the crown, by a moderate administration: if he should be obliged, contrary to his known disposition, to join with intemperate councils, if it does not lessen his security, I am persuaded, it will lessen his satisfaction. To attain at the happy calm, which is the consideration that should move us all (and he would merit to be called the nation’s physician, who could prescribe the specific for it), I think I may be allowed to say: *a conquest of parties will never do it; a balance of parties may.*" Such was the political testament of De Foe; which, it had been happy for Britain, had it been as faithfully executed, as it was widely made.

The year 1715 may be regarded as the period of our Author's political life. Faction henceforth found other advocates, and parties procured other writers to disseminate their suggestions, or to propagate their falsehoods. De Foe now lived, discountenanced and distressed, at Newington, and comforted only by a wife, whom he loved, and by six children, whom he had taken great pains to educate. In this retirement he is supposed to have written the well-known *Life and surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*; the first part of which was published in 1719, and the second before the end of the year. The reception of it was popular, and the sale was great: for the story, says the preface, "was told with modesty and seriousness, and with religious application of events to the uses, to which wise men always apply them; the instruction of others, by, example, and the justification of Providence in all the different circumstances, during the sufferings of this world." The attention is fixed either by the simplicity of the narrative, or by the variety of the incidents; the heart is amended by a vindication of the ways of God to man, and the understanding is informed by various instances of the superiority of the useful over the ornamental arts: the young are instructed, while the old are amused.

Robinson Crusoe had scarcely drawn his canoe ashore, when he was attacked by his old enemies, *the savages*. He was assailed first by *The Life and strange Adventures of Mr D-- De F--*, of London, hoster; *who has lived above fifty years by himself, in the kingdoms of North and South Britain*. In a dull dialogue between him, Crusoe, and his man Friday, our Author’s life is here lampooned, and his misfortunes ridiculed. But he who had been struck by apoplexy, and who was now discountenanced by power, and enchained by penury, was no fit object of an Englishman's satire. Our Author declares when he was himself a writer of satiric
poetry, “that he never reproached any man for his private infirmities, for having his 
house burnt, his ships cast away, or his family ruined; nor had he ever lampooned any 
one, because he could not pay his debts, or differed in judgement from him.” Pope 
had been justly censured for pursuing a vein of satire extremely dissimilar. And Pope 
placed De Foe in the same distich with Tutchen, in The Dunciad, when our Author's 
age and infirmities were greater and his comforts less. He was assaulted, secondly, in 
1719, by An Epistle to D-- De F-e, the reputed Author of Robinson Crusoe. “Mr Foe,” 
says the letter-writer, “I have perused your pleasant story Robinson Crusoe; and if the 
faults of it had extended no further than the frequent solecisms, looseness, and 
incorrectness of style, improbabilities, and sometimes impossibilities, I had not given 
you the trouble of this Epistle.” This critic, who renewed his angry attack, when the 
second volume appeared, has all the dulness, without the acumen, of Dennis, and all 
his malignity, without his intentions of reformation. The Life of Crusoe has passed 
through seventeen editions, and has been translated into other languages, while the 
criticism dropped into oblivion.

How De Foe employed his latter years, it is now impossible to know. If he 
published The Family Instructor and The Plan of Commerce, with other smaller tracts, 
which are attributed to him, it may be truly affirmed, that his old age was usefully 
spent. He died, in April 1731, within the parish of St Giles’s, Cripplegate, London, at 
an age, if he was born in 1663, when it was time to prepare for his last voyage. He left 
a widow, Susannah, who did not long survive him; and fix sons and daughters, whom 
he boasts of having educated as well as his circumstances would admit. His son 
Daniel is said to have emigrated to Carolina: of Benjamin, his second son, no account 
can be given. His daughter Sophia’s beauty married her to Mr Henry Baker, the 
respectable author of some valuable treatises on natural history, whose collections 
were sold by Paterson, in March 1775. His daughter Maria married one Langley. But 
Hannah and Henrietta probably died unmarried, since they were heiresses only of a 
name, which did not recommend them. De Foe probably died insolvent; for, letters of 
administration on his goods and chattels were granted to Mary Brooke, widow, a 
creditrix, in September 1733, after summoning in official form the next of kin to 
appear. Of his petty habits it is now impossible to tell more than he has thus told 
himself;22 “God, I thank thee, I am not a drunkard, or a swearer, or a whore-
master, or a busie-body, or idle, or revengeful; and though this be true, and I challenge all the 
world to prove the contrary, yet, I must own I see small satisfaction in all the 
negatives of common virtues; for though I have not been guilty of any of these vices, 
nor of many more, I have nothing to infer from thence, but Te Deum laudamus.” He 
says himself –

“Confession will anticipate reproach, 
He that reviles us then, reviles too much: 
All satire ceases, when the men repent; 
’Tis cruelty to lash the penitent.”

It is no easy task to ascertain the value, or the titles of many of our Author's 
 writings, if we except those which he corrected himself and published in his lifetime. 
His poems, whether we regard propriety of sentiment, or sweetness of numbers, may 
without much loss of pleasure, or profit, be resigned to those, who, in imitation of 
Pope, poach in the fields of obsolete poetry for brilliant thoughts, felicities of phrase, 
or for happy rhymes. De Foe’s ecclesiastical pamphlets may be relinquished to the
perusal of those who delight in ecclesiastical polemics. But, his tracts, political and commercial, the lovers of that liberty, which he ably defended, and the friends of that trade, which he liberally explained, must wish to see rescued from oblivion, and republished without the contamination of matter, less engaging and instructive. Dryden and his contemporaries had brought Dedications into disgrace by the fulsomeness of their flattery and the servility of their style. The Dedications of the present day have absurdly run into the contrary extreme. But the writers, who are permitted to dedicate their works to royal patrons, ought to peruse De Foe’s dedicatory epistles to King William and Queen Anne; wherein they will find dignity of sentiment and delicacy of praise, conveyed in language, at once elegant and instructive: his Dedications to The History of the Union of England and Scotland would alone justify this remark.

FINIS.

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1 It is at length discovered, by searching The Chamberlain’s books, that our Author was the son of James Foe, of the parish of Cripplegate, London, Citizen and Butcher; who was himself the son of Daniel Foe, of Elton, in the county of Northampton, Yeoman. Daniel Foe, the son of James, who obtained his freedom by serving his apprenticeship with John Levit, Citizen and Butcher, was admitted to his Freedom by birth, on the 26th of January 1687-8.

2 In his Preface to “More Reformation,” De Foe complains, That some dissenters had reproached him, as if he had said, “that the gallows and the gallies ought to be the penalty of going to the conventicle; forgetting that I must design to have my father, my wife, six innocent children, and myself, put into the same condition.” To such dissenters, I can only regret, says he, “That when I had drawn the picture, I did not, like the Dutchman with his man and bear, write under them, “This is the man; and this is the bear.” De Foe expressly admits, that he was a dissenter, though no independent, fifth monarchy man, or leveller. [De Foe Works, 1703, pp. 326-448].

3 Essay on Projects, in 1702, which had been written several years before.

4 He who is desirous of reading the proclamation, may be gratified by the following copy:

St James's, January 10, 1702-3.

Whereas Daniel De Foe, alias De Foe, is charged with writing a scandalous and seditious pamphlet, entitled, “The shortest Way with the Dissenters:” he is a middle-sized spare man, about 40 years old, of a brown complexion, and dark-brown coloured hair, but wears a wig, a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth, was born in London, and for many years was a hose-factor, in Freeman’s yard, in Cornhill, and now is owner of the brick and pantile works near Tilbury Fort, in Essex; whoever shall discover the said Daniel De Foe, to one of her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, or any of her Majesty's Justices of Peace, so as he may be apprehended, shall have a reward of £50, which her Majesty has ordered immediately to be paid upon such discovery.

London Gazette, Number 3879.

5 We may presume, that when the picture of De Foe was drawn, from which the print annexed to this work was engraved, he had grown with years bulkier in his person, and fuller in the face.

6 By his Appeal, in 1715.

7 An, Ch.19.

8 see his History of the Union, p. 401.

Daniel Foe. He had two names through life; and even when letters of administration were granted on his personal estate, some time after death, De Foe is added with an otherwise. We might thence infer, that his father's name was Foe, if we had not now better evidence of the fact.

Ibid, p. 223.

Ibid, p. 239.

The following letter to Mr J Dyer, in Shoe-lane, who was then employed, by the leaders of the Tories, in circulating news and insinuations through the country, will shew the literary manners of those times, and convey some anecdotes, which are no where else preserved. The original letter is in the [British] Museum, Harleian MSS Number 7001.fol.269.

Mr Dyer,

I have your letter. I am rather glad to find you put it upon the tryal who was aggressor, than justify a thing which I am sure you cannot approve; and in this I assure you I am far from injuring you, and refer you to the time when long since you had wrote I was fled from justice: one Summon being taken up for printing as a libel, and I being then on a journey, nor the least charge against me for being concerned in it by any body but your letter: also many unkind personal reflections on me in your letter, when I was in Scotland, on the affair of the Union, and I assure you when my paper had not in the least mentioned you, and those I refer to time and date for the proof of.

I mention this only in defence of my last letter, in which I said no more of it than to let you see I did not merit such treatment, and could nevertheless be content to render any service to you, tho' I thought myself hardly used.

But to state the matter fairly between you and I, a writing for differing interests, and so possibly coming under an unavoidable necessity of jarring, in several cases: I am ready to make a fair truce of honour with you, (viz) that if what either party are doing, or saying, that may clash with the party we are for and urge us to speak, it shall be done without naming either's name, and without personal reflections; and thus we may differ still, and yet preserve both the Christian and the gentleman.

This I think is an offer may satisfy you. I have not been desirous of giving just offence to you, neither would I to any man, however I may differ from him; and I see no reason why I should affront a man's person, because I do not join with him in principle. I please myself with being the first proposer of so fair a treaty with you, because I believe, as you cannot deny its being very honourable, so it is not less so in coming first from me, who I believe could convince you of my having been the first and the most ill treated, for further proof of which I refer you to your letters, at the time I was threatened by the Envoy of the King of Sweden.

However, Mr Dyer, this is a method which may end what is past, and prevent what is future; and if refused, the future part I am sure cannot lye at my door.

As to your letter, your proposal is so agreeable to me, that truly without it I could not have taken the thing at all; for it would have been a trouble intollerable both to you as well as me, to take your letter every post, first from you, and then send it to the post house.

Your method of sending to the black box, is just what I designed to propose, and Mr Shaw will doubtless take it of you: if you think it needful for me to speak to him, it shall be done. What I want to know is only the charge, and that you will order it constantly to be sent, upon hinting whereof I shall send you the names. Wishing you success in all things (your opinions of Government excepted) I am,

Your humble servant,

De Foe

Newington, June 17, 1710

The first edition was published in 1709.
Such as, common cause - *allies* - House of Bourbon - Don Carlos - House of Austria – barrier in Flanders, and other jargon of a similar sound, in which Great Britain had not the least interest.

The 8th article of the Commercial Treaty, which our Author here alludes to, and which was then received with so much indignation, amounted to this, and no more: That British subjects shall enjoy in France all the commercial privileges, which the most favoured nations enjoy; and that French subjects shall enjoy the same in Britain. It would be affronting to the people of this country, considering their capitals, their skill, and their industry, to suppose that such a stipulation would not be extremely desirable with every State, because it would be the *most beneficial*. The desire of greater privileges than the most favoured nation, was always absurd, and has become at length exploded; because such a treaty creates *an interest* to prevent a steady fulfilment of it.

The late *History of Halifax* relates, That Daniel De Foe, being forced to abscond on account of his political writings, resided at Halifax in the Back-lane, at the sign of the Rose and Crown; being known to Dr Nettleton, the physician, and to the Reverend Mr *Priestly*, minister of a dissenting congregation there. Mr Watson is mistaken when he supposes that De Foe wrote his *Jure Divino* here, which had been published previously, in 1706, though he may have sketched, on this occasion, his *Robinson Crusoe*.

The pamphlets mentioned in the text, were filled with palpable banter. He recommends the Pretender, by saying, That *the Prince would confer on every one the privilege of wearing wooden shoes*, and at the same time *ease the nobility and gentry of the hazard and expence of winter journies to Parliament*.

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The pamphlets mentioned in the text, were filled with palpable banter. He recommends the Pretender, by saying, That *the Prince would confer on every one the privilege of wearing wooden shoes*, and at the same time *ease the nobility and gentry of the hazard and expence of winter journies to Parliament*.

*See* Boyer’s *Political State*, etc.

The most solemn asseverations, and the most unanswerable arguments of our Author, were not, after all, believed. When Mr Charles King republished, a few years afterwards, *The British Merchant*, he without a scruple attributed *The Mercator* to a hireling writer of a weekly paper called *The Review*. And Anderson, at a still later period, goes further in his *Chronology of Commerce*, and names De Foe, as *the hireling writer of The Mercator* and other papers in favour of the French treaty of trade. We can now judge with the impartiality of arbitrators: on the one hand, there are the death-bed declaration and living challenge of De Foe; on the other, the mere surmise and unauthorized assertion of King, Anderson, and others. It is surely time to free ourselves from prejudices of every kind, and to disregard the sound of names as much as the falsehoods of party.

The above-mentioned particulars were discovered by searching the books at Doctors Commons.

In the preface to his *Reformation*. 