

# REASONS

HUMBLY OFFERED

By the *MERCHANTS* Trading in Wine,

For Encouraging and the better Carrying on the said TRADE.

I. **T**HAT by an Act of the 12th of King *Charles* the Second, it is Enacted, Wines Imported into *London*, of the Growth of *France*, *Germany* and *Portugal*, Pay 7 l. 10 s. Those of *Spain*, and elsewhere, 8 l. 10 s. Vinegar, 4 l. 10 s. per Ton; by which it appears, That the Difference in the Duties between Wine and Vinegar, was then but 3 l. per Ton.

II. Then it was also Enacted, That no Wines should have any Allowances or Deduction out of the Customs, but such only as were so Corrupt and Unmerchanted, that they were fit for nothing but to Distil, or make Vinegar.

III. That by sundry Acts of Parliament, the Duties on Wines are augmented to that Degree, that those of the Growth of *Portugal* are now charged with 29 l. 4 s. *Spain* 30 l. 4 s. *France* 58 l. 4 s. per Ton.

IV. Upon the Importation of Wines great Disputes have and do arise, in relation to Allowances; the Officers of the Customs alledging, That the Words of the Law Impower them to make Allowances on such Wines only as are so Corrupt and Unmerchanted that they are only fit to Distil or make Vinegar; and often upon such Wines the Officers do not allow in Proportion to their Damages.

V. That on other Goods it is Enacted, The Owners be allowed in Proportion to the Damage, to be ascertain'd by Two indifferent Merchants, experienc'd in the Value of the said Goods; which Merchants are to be Chosen by the Collector, or any one or more of the principal Officers; who, upon visiting the said Goods, are to Certify upon Oath, how much such Goods are lessen'd in their true Value; and the Officers are to make proportionable Allowance.

VI. That upon Importations of Wines, it frequently happens, that the said Wines are Damag'd and Defective, and lessen'd in their Value, and yet are not so Bad as to go either to the Still, or make Vinegar; and where this happens to be the Case (as too often it is) then the Officers alledge, That the Words of the Law, as it now stands, is not sufficient to Impower them to make Allowances on any Wines, except they are so Corrupt and Damag'd, and fit only for the Uses aforesaid.

VII. That there is now an Excise on all Wines when distilled or converted into Vinegar; so that if none are allowed but such as are fit only to Distil or make Vinegar, as the Law now directs, the Merchants cannot go on with their Trade, but to their Ruin: For a Ton of Wine that is fit for nothing else, is Worth little more than the Freight, and other incident Charges on it.

VIII. And as the Time now limited by Law, for Exportation of Wines, is but Twelve Months, should the same be lengthned to Eighteen Months, and have the Benefit of a Draw-back, as other Goods have, it would be a great Advantage to the Wine-Trade, by reason several Sorts of Wine are not fit to Bottle off until they lie upwards of Twelve Months after Importation; by which means we could not only supply our own Plantations, which have Wines often sent them from the Places of their Growth, in a Clandestine Manner, but we might also Supply several other Places in *Europe* and *Asia* with Wine, to the great Benefit of the *British* Trade, and enlarging our Navigation.

IX. Wherefore it is humbly hoped, That the Law may be extended, to make Allowances on Wines, in the same Manner as is done on other Goods: Otherwise, as the Wine-Trade now stands, it will be impossible for the fair Trader to carry on the same. And also, That the Time for Exportation of Wine, may be lengthned from Twelve to Eighteen Months; with a Draw-back of the Duties paid or secured at the Time of Importation, as other Goods have.

ALL which is Humbly Submitted.

