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L E T T E R

T O

George Heathcote, Esq;

O N

His late Resignation, as Alderman
of the City of *L O N D O N*.



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A
L E T T E R
T O
George Heathcote, Esq;
O N
His late Resignation, as Alderman of
the City of L O N D O N.

S H E W I N G

The ill Consequences of despairing of the
Common-wealth, or retiring from public
Business, more especially in Times of *Vice*
and *Corruption*.

W I T H

Some cursory Observations on the late Manage-
ment of the NAVY.

To which is added,

A Copy of Mr. *Heathcote's* Letter to the Lord-
Mayor of *London*, and of the Resolutions of
that City in Consequence of his Resignation.

*Ut quò altius ad terrorem sæviat albescens mare, eò providen-
tior omnia apparat nauta, ne in vada transferatur peritu-
rus; sic et quo infelicissimo tempore adversis maximè respub-
lica procellis laceratur, eo præcipuè libertatis assertores
elaborent, ne omni auxilio destituta obruatur, et ne obruta
ipsorum arguat inertiam.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. WARD, at the *Black Lyon* in
Salisbury-Court, Fleet-street. MDCCLXIX.

747947.119CH

LETTER

George Herkness Esq

LETTER

Dear Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

in relation to the matter mentioned in the enclosed copy of the report of the

Commissioners of the Land Office, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the

proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

Wm. H. R. [Signature]

Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of the Land Office

Albany, N. Y., [Date]



A
L E T T E R
T O

George Heathcote, Esq; &c.

S I R,



OUR Letter to the Lord-Mayor of *London*, desiring his Lordship to acquaint your Fellow-Citizens with your Design of retiring from public Business, gave me both Pleasure and Pain. Never was more Truth and good Sense comprehended in fewer Words. The Sentiments are worthy of a Citizen of *Rome*, in the virtuous Days of the Common-wealth. So far it gave me Pleasure; but that Pleasure was succeeded by that kind of Pain which we feel at the Catastrophe, or unlucky Conclusion in some Action in a Tragedy, as soon as I found it

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must

must be the last time we are to hear from you as a Magistrate.

Give me Leave, Sir, to expostulate with you a little upon this Resolution of quitting us at a time that our City never stood so much in Need of Men of Courage and Integrity as at present. To despair of the Commonwealth, is the last thing that should enter into the Heart of a Man, who hath always aim'd at the Good of the Publick: To fly from the Field only to convince the World that we are neither aiding nor promoting the Mischiefs which bad Men are working against the Commonwealth, is not all that we should expect from Persons of your Character. We owe a higher Duty to our Country. We must oppose where we have little or no Hopes of a Victory: And it may be proved, by Examples from History, that where there have been a few Men constantly watching for the Public, Fortune hath often favoured them with Opportunities of doing Good, when their Hopes were at the lowest. Sometimes the Rancour and Divisions of bad Men, contending for the Spoil and Plunder of the Public, have produced Events which have put it in the Power of the Well-intentioned to prevent Oppressions, and even to promote salutary Measures.

You must, Sir, know how disposed we are to imitate those whom we love or esteem.

The

The best Men fall into this Weakness, if it may be called one, when a Person of an established good Character (which, without fearing the Imputation of Flattery, I may apply to Mr. *Heathcote*) consults his own Ease and Quiet, by abandoning the Service of the Public; may not many others think it a Point of Prudence to do the same?

If all those who are well-intentioned should think themselves justified by this Example, and retire from the Scene of Business, what must become of us? Shall we not be left to see that rapacious Spirit, which hath taken Possession of those concerned in the Management of public Affairs, exercise itself without check or controul, which, in my Opinion, would be worse than a State of Anarchy?

I will not deny but that the Philosophy which teaches us to retreat from the World, at a time that Vice and *Corruption* carry all before them, may proceed from an honest Mind. A Man may keep himself pure by lamenting in private what he thinks he cannot prevent in publick, and be simply innocent; but surely that Philosophy which inspires us with a Resolution to oppose bad Men, and struggle for the Common-wealth, proceeds from a nobler Motive? It proceeds from a generous Sense of that Duty which we owe to the Community in which we were born, which obliges to sacrifice our own Quiet and Safety for its Defence.

Pomponius Atticus lived in the most corrupt and troublesome Age of the Commonwealth of *Rome*. His great Wealth, his Reputation and fine Parts, might have made him useful to the Cause of *Liberty*, had he been active in it. But he chose a perfect Neutrality; he cultivated Friendship with some of all Parties, but opposed none. His Conduct hath been defended and condemned in Schools and Colleges, for eight hundred Years, more for a Thesis to exercise the Wit of Students, than to inform the World. Some Writers, indeed, of Reputation have also entered into a Dispute concerning this great Man; and he hath been condemned even in an * arbitrary Government. He hath likewise met with Advocates there; but it is no wonder if a † Man bred up in a Doctrine, that submitting to the arbitrary Will of one Man constitutes the Character of a good Subject, should give to the Conduct of *Atticus* Applauses it ill deserves. He lived at first in the Days of *Sylla* and *Marius*, and retired to *Athens*, as a Port of Safety in tempestuous times, where he passed many Years in Study. It appears, that in some Part of this time he lived not only in a Correspondence but an Intimacy with *Sylla*; and, at the same time, assisted young *Marius* with Money. He afterwards kept upon

* Abbe St. Real, in the Reign of *Lewis XIV.*

† Mr. *Reinsart*.

the same good Terms both with *Cæsar* and *Pompey*; I say at the same time: And, lastly, had the Address to be with both *Mark Anthony* and *Cicero*.

One of his Apologists says for him, (and it is the best thing that can be said) that *Atticus* shewed the Integrity of his Heart, by shunning public Employments at a time that they could not be obtained but by indirect Practices. I will add something more in favour of this *Roman*, that if we should suppose that a Man of his great Reputation, with a Number of his Friends, might have obtained an Office without those indiscreet Methods practiced by others, he would, in all probability, have been join'd to some Colleague or Colleagues of contrary Views and Designs; and, in that Case, would not have been able to have exercised his Office with Honour and Justice.

This is the best Plea that can be made for the Neutrality of *Atticus*: Yet it will not stand the Test, upon that Principle, THAT OUR COUNTRY HATH A RIGHT TO THE ASSISTANCE OF ALL GOOD MEN WHENEVER ITS CONSTITUTION IS ATTACKED. *Atticus*, it is true, did not profit by the Corruption of the Times himself; but that was not enough. It was his Duty to have ranged himself on the other Side, and have employed his Talents, his Credit and Authority

city to have defeated the bad Designs of others.

I will do the Character of this *Roman* all the Justice which is really due to it; and I will agree with Monsieur *Bayle*, when in speaking of *Pomponius Atticus*, he says, that one cannot conceive a mean Idea of the Merit and Conduct of a Man who knew how to keep Peace betwixt the two famous Orators of Antiquity, *Hortensius* and *Cicero*, who, by good Offices, maintained a good Understanding with each other, in spite of those Jealousies which an Emulation in point of Oratory is apt to create among Men, Rivals in the same Profession. I will add, that to be well at the same time with *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, with *Mark Anthony* and *Cicero*, Persons devoted to each others Destruction, was sufficient to prove that a Man must have some very agreeable Qualities, joined to an uncommon degree of Prudence. But give me Leave to observe, that this Prudence had no Object but its own Safety and Quiet, not the least Attachment to the Publick. Let him enjoy the Praise therefore of being in a private Life a generous Friend, and a Man of Taste and Learning: But to sum up his Character in one short Sentence, he was a very fine Gentleman, and a very bad Citizen.

There is no making an exact Comparison betwixt the present State of our own Country,
and

and that of *Rome*, in the Days of *Atticus*, our Constitution differing in many Circumstances from that of antient *Rome*.

In *Rome* those appointed to Offices and Employments were elected by the People; with us they are named by the Crown, that is to say, by the Minister, or Ministers for the time being.

In *Rome* (till they became quite corrupted) only those that were known, and distinguished by high Characters, could carry an Office; with us, Persons not known at all, or only known for their Infamy, may be preferred.

With regard to those Elections, which, with us, still remain in the People, I also find some Difference: In the worst Days of *Rome*, when they were almost as corrupt as we are now, Offices were often carried by Bribery; but their rich Men bribed with their own Money; whereas, with us, that Work of Iniquity may be carried on with the Revenues of the Public, and the Debts and Taxes may be owing to that Cause. Ambition was the Vice of the leading Men of that Republick; Avarice predominates amongst ours: Ambition teaches Men to acquire Power and Authority by the Fame of great Actions: Avarice prompts them to defraud, to pillage, to jobb, and to acquire Power to defend themselves from Punishment. Ambition is sometimes attended with noble Qualities: Avarice with nothing but what

what is mean and fordid. A Poet of our own Nation speaking of *Julius Caesar* says, *Curse on his Virtues, they've undone his Country.*

Examine the List of those who have made great Fortunes out of the Publick, and you will not find the least Spark of Ambition in any Action of their Lives. He can have no Regard for Truth that should accuse these Men of ruining their Country by their Virtues.

To return to *Atticus*, I think, (begging Pardon for differing with so judicious a Writer as Monsieur *Bayle*) considering the Friendship and Esteem the Leaders in that Republick had for this great Man, he might have carried an Office, without those indirect Practices made use of by others, and might have exercised it not only with Justice, but to the Benefit of the Common-wealth.

With regard to ourselves, notwithstanding the Progress that CORRUPTION hath made, many Gentlemen have carried Elections without the least indirect Practice, of which, among others, you are yourself a worthy Instance and have discharged the Trust with Integrity.

Many Men of unactive Tempers, though otherwise honest, willing to indulge that indolent Disposition, have thought themselves justified by the Example of *Atticus*. Thus the Mistakes and false Steps of Men who
make

make a Figure in History, are brought into precedent, and will have weight with the World, and, if encouraged, must greatly tend to destroy the small Remains of publick Spirit subsisting amongst us.

I am aware it will be urged, that *Rome* would have lost its Liberties, although *Atticus* had made use of all his Credit, and exerted all his Abilities in their Defence. I think this Objection is far from being clear; when we speak of *Atticus*, we must join with him all that took the same Party at the same time. The Virtue of the antient Republick still subsisted in the Minds of many illustrious *Romans*, who being out of Humour with the Wickedness of the Times, retired to cultivate their Fields: Had all these stood their Ground, and had acted with Courage and Unanimity, I say, it is not clear, but that they might have saved the Common-wealth.

I am sensible it is a Struggle that would have been attended with infinite Labour and Difficulty; they must have contended with Men who had worked themselves into high Favour with the People, by their eminent Services in the Common-wealth. Nothing captivates the Hearts of the common People so much as military Bravery. The lowest Artisan can flatter himself into a Belief that he is Sharer in the Glory derived to his Country, by signal Victories over foreign

Enemies : The People of *Rome*, at this time, were so dazzled with the Lustre of the great Actions of *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, and so captivated with their engaging Manners, and generous Behaviour, that they were blind to their Ambition, and therefore it would have required the utmost political Skill to have traversed their Designs : Yet notwithstanding all these Difficulties, Fortune sometimes works such Events in favour of the weakest Side, I think, had they persevered, it is not impossible but they might have preserved the Liberties of *Rome*.

But, Sir, those that shall range themselves on the Side of Liberty in our Days, will have none of these Difficulties to encounter ; they are not to struggle against the Merit of great and eminent Services done to the Common-wealth ; they are not to oppose the Fame of illustrious Actions, nor need they make use of any Arts to remove those Impressions of good Will, which an engaging Behaviour, and Elegance of Manners are apt to make upon the Minds of Men. Had they such shining Characters to contend with, it might, with some Reason, discourage Men from meddling.

Those that have undermined or overturned the Liberty of free States, have generally been Persons distinguished above the common Level of Mankind for some superior Accomplishments : Such was *Alcibiades*,
such

such were *Pompey* and *Cæſar*, of whom, it is ſaid, that they ſcarce ever converſed with any Man but they made him a Friend. Unhappy is the Nation where the Ambitious are endowed with all thoſe engaging Qualities which form Men for Popularity : For when honeſt Men are obliged to oppoſe conſpicuous Merit, it is no Wonder if many, who look no farther than the Outſide of Things, ſhould impute all to Envy.

But, Sir, can it properly fall within the Conſtruction of Envy, to oppoſe thoſe pernicious Meaſures which bring Shame and Loſs to the Country ? Is it natural to envy thoſe Actions which ſhew the Mind to be unadorned with Virtue and Wiſdom ? Or do we envy that Contempt or Hatred which *Corruption* of Manners, or a mean and ſelfiſh Conduct ſometimes draws upon Men ? No, Sir, if theſe are not the proper Objects of Envy, thoſe who ſhall eſpouſe the Cauſe of Liberty in our Days, will not be cenſured of that ignoble Vice.

Perhaps, indeed, their Partifans may ſay, that although you do not envy their Characters, you may envy their Power, and the Emoluments which attend it, that is the Liberty of running their Hands into the publick Purſe ; for many arguing from the *Corruption* of their own Hearts, have perſuaded themſelves, and would perſuade

others, that private Interest is the only Motive of all Actions.

You take Notice that there have been many *detestable Instances of Apostacy from every Principle of Honour, Integrity, and publick Spirit*, amongst our Countrymen, both of your own, and superior Rank, which is a Truth not to be disputed: But I cannot be intirely of your Opinion, that the Endeavours of the few determined to live, and die honest Men, must, for that Reason, be fruitless. Consider, Sir, for what a Number of Years this System of *Corruption* hath been carried on; and take this with you at the same time, that during the Continuance of this wicked Practice, there hath not been one Man of the least Consequence who hath opposed this *Corruption*, but hath been solicited and tempted to desert the Cause. But if you will look back, and take the Pains to count Numbers, you will find that the Number of those seduced, is but small in Comparison of those that have resisted all Temptation: Let it be observed likewise, for the Honour of good Sense, that the Deserters have been either the most insignificant in point of Interest, or the most contemptible for their Understandings of their whole Party.

If there be one Man of Interest in his Country, large enough to enable a good Man to do it effectual Service; of Estate sufficient

ent

ent to satisfy Ambition, with Titles and Honours already in his Family, yet with so strong a Propensity to Falshood, that he submitted to become a Spy upon his Party, and a Betrayer of the most sacred private Friendships, and at last an open Deserter: I say, if there be such a Wretch in the World, it would be right to examine in what degree of Favour he stands with his Countrymen; and if you find that his Apostacy was no sooner known, than all that Love, Esteem, and Popularity which descended to him from his Ancestors, was turned into Contempt and Detestation, it is Proof that the whole People are not corrupted: And it is an Observation of *Machiavel*, that there is a Possibility at all Times for a State to recover its Liberties, unless the whole Mass of People is *corrupted*.

Nor ought the Apostacy of one Man (although under no Temptation from the Circumstances of his Fortune to become a Traytor) to destroy that Faith and Confidence, which it is necessary for the Assertors of Liberty to place in each other, in order to do Good. I know upon the first Surprise of such an Event, People are apt to pronounce that there is no Faith in Man; but, upon cooler Thoughts, they should consider better; they should know that there are no great Assemblies without some rotten Members: Nature is not uniform in all her Works;

Works; she sometimes makes Monsters, Monsters in Mind, more than in Body. There are wise Men and Fools, there are some that are virtuous, and others false by Constitution, in all great Bodies; nor ought wise Men, in a Fit of Peevishness, to retire from the World upon the Discovery of a few false Brothers.

Parties and Factions are a kind of Touchstone to try the good and bad Qualities of Men; and *Machiavel* says, that Fortune sometimes works up Dangers and Difficulties in a State, that the Virtuous may triumph in their Constancy, and the Vicious be disgraced by the Discovery of their *Falseness* and *Corruption*: In spite of the indefatigable Endeavours of many Years, to dispossess the Minds of Men of every Sentiment of Virtue, there still remains a chosen Band free from Infection; nor need we quite despair, unless this fatal Humour for Quiet and Safety should prevail farther, and throw the Nation into a Lethargy.

You know, Sir, that *Solon*, the wisest of Lawgivers, inflicted a Punishment upon those who stood Neuter in Times of Faction: It appeared to him, as if such Men regarded the Safety of their own Estates and Persons more than the publick Good; and that they waited to see which Side prevailed, that they might join with the strongest. I am satisfied, Sir, that the Man who knows Mr. *Heathcote*,

Heathcote, will not suspect him of acting such a Part; I myself would answer for him, that whatever Place he chuses for the Retreat of his Person, his Wishes, his Heart will be with us: But that is not enough, we want his Help; and the Retreat of good Men, at this time, may prove as fatal to the Publick as their Neutrality.

Melancholy Men never consider Things but on the melancholy Side; and Persons of this Complexion, perhaps, can see nothing in our Affairs to flatter them with any Hopes of Success: They will tell you that *Corruption* hath gained too much Strength to be resisted; that betwixt contending Parties in a State, Things are not decided as betwixt Armies in the Field. *The Battle is not always to the Strong*: The most able Generals, and most valiant Troops, generally carry it against Numbers, but in civil Assemblies where you are only to count Voices, an Owl is equal to an Eagle, and you may be ruined by the most contemptible in Society.

In answer to this I shall quote a few Lines from an Author, that understood our Government and Constitution as well as any Man that ever was born under it; and lived at the time that the *Corruption*, which is now grown to such Strength, was beginning to spread: These are his Words.

“ What has a private Man to do at such
 “ Times as the Majority is corrupted?
 “ (which

“ (which sometimes hath happened to be
 “ the Cause) Are the few who remain un-
 “ tainted, to absent, to quit the Stage of
 “ Business, and to fly from what they can-
 “ not hinder? Are they to be silent, or to
 “ assent slightly, or to withdraw? *Thrasæa*
 “ *Pætus* hath been blamed for leaving the
 “ Senate at such a Season, because by pro-
 “ voking the present Power, he brought
 “ Danger upon himself, without doing any
 “ thing effectual to promote the Cause of
 “ Liberty.

“ In these Occurrences good Men are to
 “ take that Course which they think will
 “ be of the best Example, and make the
 “ strongest Impression, since they ought to
 “ be always ready to suffer any thing for
 “ that Common-wealth of which they are
 “ Members: But generally speaking, it seems
 “ more noble and more virtuous not to quit
 “ the Field, and to stand embattled, al-
 “ though but with thin Squadrons, boldly
 “ to combat those who would hurt or be-
 “ tray the Publick: Besides, the People
 “ think the Valiant both wise and honest,
 “ and are hardly brought to believe they
 “ will be unsuccessful; and Men must be
 “ very much depraved indeed, if they do
 “ not at last range on the Side of the smaller
 “ Numbers, when they see them strenuously
 “ contending for Truth and Liberty.”

And

And the same Author hath somewhere observ'd, that all Changes, and Reformation in Government, have been begun by what we call a Minority: For when a few Gentlemen, by contending for what is just, and standing their Ground against superior Numbers, have worked themselves into the good Opinion of the World, they have always gathered Strength: Men of Sense, and Probity, first mingle with them, and, altho' in Assemblies, where Corruption hath entered, these may not make a Majority, yet they have a magnetick Power of drawing others. And it is an encouraging Symptom, if their Endeavours are reverenced without Doors, at the same Time that they are un-
 tooled within; and if many, who herd on the other Side, are observed to speak kindly of their Persons, it is a Sign they have well-wishers on the opposite Side, who, perhaps, only wait for a favourable Conjunction to join them.

You are no Stranger, Sir, to what the last of *Romans* says to *Tully*, on the Subject of national *Dependency*. *Brutus* the Great, the Glorious, the Patriot *Brutus* writes to *Cicero*, who would make his Peace with young *Octavius*, “ Consider, my Friend,
 “ the mournful Effects of that dread *Dep-*
 “ *pendency* of yours in our public Struggles,
 “ in which, however, you have too many
 D “ to

“ to keep you in Countenance. The Com-
 “ monwealth has been lost, *because it has*
 “ *been given for lost.* Hence *Cæsar* was first
 “ inspir’d with the Lust of Ambition; and
 “ hence *Anthony*, and the green *Octavius*,
 “ hurries on to succeed him in his Tyranny,
 “ &c.” — Again,

“ Oh, who is it that makes *Liberty* his
 “ Care? *Liberty*, which ought to be the
 “ Care of all Men, as ’tis the Blessing and
 “ Benefit of all! For myself, rather than
 “ give it up, I will stand single in its De-
 “ fence.

“ As for your Part, in this Crisis, my
 “ dear *Cicero*, it is my strongest Advice and
 “ Request to you, not to desert yourself:
 “ Do not distrust your own Ability, and
 “ your Ability will not disappoint you;
 “ believe you can remedy our heavy *Evils*,
 “ and you will remedy them. — Rouze the
 “ *Roman* Genius with you.”

It hath been observed, that Men some-
 times weak in Judgment, and of superficial
 Parts, have acquired a Manner of publick
 speaking, which hath made them consider’d
 by their Party. Suppose that such a one
 should become an *Apostate* from every *Prin-*
ciple of Honour, Integrity, and publick Spi-
rit, should desert his Friends, and prostitute
 this Talent to carry on the Business of *Cor-*
ruption, should the Friends of Liberty be
 discouraged?

discouraged? Not at all. Let him glory in his unembarrassed Countenance, (the worst of Countenances, as it shews its Owner to have lost all Sense of Shame) let him borrow Tropes and Figures from *Cicero*. Let him tune his Periods to set off empty Matter, and practise affected Gestures before his Glass, and then charin'd with the imaginary Graces of his own Eloquence and Action, let him flatter himself, that persuasion shall attend all his Falshoods and Contradictions; he will find himself the Dupe of his own ridiculous Vanity; he will find himself sunk to the lowest Degree of Contempt; and that the Publick can taste no sweetness in those rhetorical Flowers that come from an infected Breath.

*Fine Speeches are the Instruments of Fools,
Or Knaves who use them when they want good
Sense,
But Honesty needs no Disguise nor Ornament.*
Orw.

Nor is it without Example, that when a few Men of respectful Characters have mingled in the Debates and Councils of a corrupt Majority, they have been a Check upon their Proceedings: You know the Story of *Cato*, that his Appearance at the Theatre struck a licentious Audience with Reverence and Awe, and as degenerate as we are grown,

I don't think it impossible, but that the calm Temper, the disinterested Conduct and good Example of a few Gentlemen, like yourself, may keep many in Awe, and hinder a Majority from some Mischiefs, which they would not stick at, if there were no Witness of their Proceedings, but Men as *corrupt* as themselves.

That great City, of which you were lately a Magistrate, must always have a considerable Influence on our Affairs. The Rest of the Nation generally give it the Lead; and, with Regard to Peace, War, Foreign Alliances, or Domestick Laws; they seldom declare themselves 'till the Sense of the City of *London* be known. The first Application to the Legislature for new Laws, or the Repeal of such old Ones, as in the Execution are found prejudicial to the Publick, should therefore naturally come from the City of *London*.

Nothing can enable the Government to make good its Engagements with its Creditors, but the Support of Trade, which depends on the right Management of the Navy. The City of *London* will, for that Reason, always have its Eyes on the Conduct of the Admiralty.

It hath been an establish'd Opinion, in this Nation, that a Sea-War never hurts *England*, not only because the Money expended in it, is mostly spent at Home; but because a
Sea

Sea-War (considering our superiour Strength) must probably bear its own Charges: Convinced of this Truth, the People of *England* always open'd their Purfes freely for supporting, or enlarging, our Naval-Power; but *We*, of this Age, scorning to imitate the Policy of our Ancestors, have found out a Way of making a Sea-War, not only extremely burthensome, but productive of other bad Consequences.

We carry on War at such an extravagant Expence, that the People of other Nations cannot have an Idea of, every Article is charg'd immensely higher to the Publick, than is practis'd in any other Country; this is not all, if they succeed, what is taken from the Enemy, or the greatest Part of it is applied in Aid of War; with us, it all goes into private Pockets, Success cannot relieve us; our Naval Force hath been so vastly superiour to that of the Enemy, that they could not look us in the Face. We have taken great Booty without any Danger to the Persons of the Captors, but how much the Publick hath gained by it, let the present Debt of the Navy declare.

Every trading Vessel of the Enemy, that falls into our Hands, becomes private Property; this is not all, if one of their Ships of War be taken, the Nation must pay for it; if an Enemy's Ship be run on Shore by a Squadron of ours, we must pay for that

too:

too: Nay, it may happen, that a Ship of War, of our own, may be taken by the Enemy, which may afterwards fall into our Hands again, in which Case we must pay for own Ship, and it is possible, that the Man, who lost it by his Cowardice, may have a Share of the Prize.

With all our Superiority in Point of Strength, the People of *England* may have Cause hereafter to dread the Sea-War, for our very Navy may become a Kind of Property; for so I should count it, if Squadrons could be fitted out upon Projects, to make Estates for Relations, the Creatures and Tools of Men in Power, which will have other ruinous Consequences: For then the necessary Convoys, for the Protection of Trade, may be the last Thing considered, because private Fortunes are not to be made that Way. Next, the Expences of the Navy may be greatly increased, because there may be such Contention, and Interest made for Job-Ships, that Men in Power, who are generally well disposed to encrease the Number of their Friends, at the publick Expence, may be for putting more Ships in Commission than may be necessary, so that while our Expence are encreasing on one Side, the Revenue may suffer on the other, in the Article of Customs, by Ships taken by the Enemy, for want of sufficient Convoy, besides the Ruin of the fair Merchant.

But,

But, we are told, it must be so, that if every Thing is not given to the Captors, our People will not fight: Good Gods! To what a profligate Degree of Baseness is this Nation sunk! Let us look back a little, towards that Height of Glory, from whence we are fallen: Those gallant Men who overcame a *Spanish Armada*, stiled the invincible, and so effectually destroyed the Naval Power of *Spain*, that it hath never risen since; those that by so many bloody Battles humbled the Pride of *Holland*, and made them strike to the *English* Flag; those, I say, that by so many amazing Acts of Valour, raised their Country to be the Envy of the World, and left a Lustre upon the *English* Name, did not fight for Booty and Plunder; they expected no Reward, but those Honours and Distinctions, which are due to the Honest and the Brave: But let us see what Alteration this mercenary Spirit hath produced.

If we were to read a Naval History of all the Actions of a certain War, fairly related, how often must the Blood raise to stain the Cheeks of an *Englishman*? In vain do we brag of our superior Strength, when even our Success hath been attended with many Instances of Shame: What does it avail to endeavour to conceal these Things at Home, when they are known to our Enemies Abroad; when foreign Gazettes, even those

those of our Allies, have publish'd our Disgraces? Will it amend Matters to hush them up at Home? No, Sir, it is better they should be known, and talk'd of, in hopes, that some Spirit may rise, that may produce a Reformation of Discipline; and I have just touch'd upon this Matter, as I think it a Point worthy of the Attention of the City of *London*.

A † Foreigner, who resided among us, hath told the World, that the *English*, of our Days, are no more like the *English* of the Common-Wealth in *Oliver's* Time, than the *Monsignori*, of *Italy*, are to the *Scipios*, and other Heroes of ancient *Rome*. I wish there were no Grounds for such a severe Reflection; but sure, whoever considers the reigning Spirit, that shews itself both in civil and military Affairs, might be tempted to think, that we are not the same People, that we were within less than a Century; other Customs, and Manners, have begot other Sentiments; and when *Avarice*, the most cowardly of all Vices, hath got Possession of the Military, as well as Civil. Farewel to every generous Sentiment, as well as to every brave Action.

Give me leave, Sir, to quote a short Piece of History, which just come into my Mind, whether it be to the Purpose or not. When

† Monsieur de *Voltaire*.

Paulus

Paulus Emilius, returned from the Conquest of *Macedonia*, the Honours of a Triumph were decreed him, when he brought so much Wealth (all taken from the Enemy) into the publick Treasury, that the People of *Rome* paid no Taxes for many Years after, though they were engaged in expensive Wars; for *Plutarch* says, that this great and good Man, who was liberal of his own Money, was extremely frugal of what belonged to the Publick, so that he did not advantage himself, or his Family, one *Drachma*, by all he had taken from the Enemy.

Suppose a naval Expedition should be set on foot with a military Air, though intending for a trading Voyage, or, to speak in a Cant now too well understood, where nothing is meant but a *private Jobb*: And suppose in an Action, which any old Woman might have perform'd in regard to the Danger, one Man should get more for himself, than all the Commanders put together, who had gain'd those Victories hinted at above, which made us Masters of the Ocean, and of the Trade of the World, and have left a Fame behind them that Time cannot wear out.

For a Man to take Wages from his Country for making his own private Fortune, and instead of bringing any thing into the publick Treasury, to take Advantage of the publick Necessities, (Necessities partly occasioned

by enriching himself) and like an Usurer to lend the Common-wealth what I may call its own Money, at such Premiums and Interest, as must contribute to double its Distresses, are such heroick Actions, as are not to be read in the Annals of any Nation in the World, and I hope will not in our own; but if they should, without pretending to prophesy, I may pronounce, that we may make War to get Estates for private Men, till the Nation may not be able to build another Ship.

I have heard it said, that such People ought to be preferred and employed, because they are lucky Men; lucky Men indeed they are, but their good Luck is owing to what you call your Misfortune to having lived in a corrupt Age. When People are long unused to see or hear of any brave or publick-spirited Actions, it is no wonder if they should lose the Faculty of judging betwixt Right and Wrong, otherwise no Man would advance such strange Absurdities.

We know that Kings may be impos'd upon in their Grants; and may not large Assemblies be also impos'd upon? Sure they may: For Laws have been made which it hath been found absolutely necessary to repeal soon after. It never could be the Intention of any Assembly of Men to make the Navy of *England*, (which ought to enable us to make War) to be instrumental in run-
ing

ing the Nation into Bankruptcy, which, considering the immense Debt under which we labour, and this new System of carrying on War, is a thing that ought to be apprehended.

I think it is a very serious Affair, and therefore I have dwelt the longer upon it. This easy way of making Fortunes at Sea, by one Cruise, often without standing a Shot, will tempt many to trust themselves into Commands in the Navy by Friends and Interest, although they have an Aversion to the Smell of Gunpowder; and when they misbehave, they will depend upon the same Friend and Interest, to support them and bring them off. Whether there have not been more Instances than one of this Nature already, let the World judge. So may the Courage of the *English* Nation be lost.

It is true our Enemies (and we ought to thank them for it) have quite neglected their Marine: It is now said they see their Error, and will apply themselves to mend it: They have Wealth and Power to nurse up a Navy; and when I consider in what a high Sense of military Honour their Officers are bred up, and that quite contrary Sentiments are in Fashion amongst us, I should be sorry they were able to meet us upon equal Terms at Sea.

Perhaps if the Enemy should look formidable at Sea, and we must expect some broken

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en Bones, such Commanders as are before described, having made their Fortunes, will quit, and then the brave Officer, who hath been kept under for want of M——l Interest, may be preferred, which may restore Discipline, and revive our national Courage. But this is not to be depended upon; for there may be some who have not yet done their own Business; and if there must be no Reformation till half our Fleet is lost, the Remedy will come too late.

A just Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, is the Life and Soul of all good Governments: Let the brave Officer be preferred and rewarded, although he has lost his Ship, when he has lost it with Honour; and if he falls in the Action, let his Family be provided for: No Man will grudge what is so bestowed. But let the Poltron be punished, when he hath met the Enemy with such superior Strength, that they were obliged to yield to Numbers, if he discovered that the Safety of his own Person was his chief Care. With so great Justice, a Sea-War will be no great Expence to the Nation, nor need we be in pain that our Neighbours should think of nursing up a naval Power.

I hope, Sir, you will not think this Matter a Digression from my Subject; it is a Point not below the Attention of this great City. I know there are many other Things
which

which also deserve their Notice; but I have made choice of this one preferable to any other, because I think no other Writer hath thought fit to touch upon it.

I flatter myself, that when you have deliberately consider'd the Step you have taken, you will so far change your Sentiments as to resolve to let us see you, and have your Assistance again: And though you may not think it proper to seek that Magistracy you have quitted, you will serve your Country in another Character. A few Gentlemen acting rightly, will always have followers: Among that great Body, which we call the *People*, there are not many who enter into Matters of Speculation, nor do they know whether a Measure be Right or Wrong, till the good and bad Side is presented to them by some who have more Penetration and more Leisure to examine Things than themselves; so that sometimes one discerning Man hath roused the watchful Spirit of the Nation, and by alarming his Country, checked the bad Designs of Men in Power. I shall conclude this long Letter by the Observation of a Writer whom I quoted before.

“ The Bad begin to imagine they are in
 “ the Right, when they meet with no Op-
 “ position, but their Guilt makes them
 “ tremble, break their Ranks, and scatter,
 “ when they are perpetually charged with

“ a small but fearless Band; nor is it easy
“ to instance a Nation totally reduced to
“ Bondage by a domestick Power, where
“ there have been a few always appearing
“ in Defence of their Freedoms with un-
“ daunted Courage.”

I am,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

CIVICUS.



A Copy of a LETTER from Alderman
 HEATHCOTE *at BATH.*

MY LORD MAYOR,

THE general Corruption of the Age I have the Misfortune to live in, and the frequent detestable Instances of Apostacy from every Principle of Honour, Integrity, and publick Spirit of many of my Countrymen, both of my own and a superior Rank, having fully convinced me, that the Endeavours of the Few, determin'd to live and die honest Men, are fruitless and vain, I have resolv'd to seek that small Share of Happiness, which is to be acquir'd in this venal Country, in Privacy and Retirement, where I am sure it is only to be found, and therefore I am determin'd to return no more to *London*, unless my own private Concerns call me thither. I cannot think it in any Respect right to hold an Office I shall never attend: This obliges me to apply to your Lordship and Court of Aldermen for Leave to resign my Gown, and beg the Court will accept of this my Resignation; and that your Lordship will be pleas'd to issue out a Precept for the Election of some other Person to serve instead of me for the Ward of *Walbrook*. I most sincerely wish Health and Felicity to my Brethren the Aldermen,

and

and the most flourishing Commerce, with the full Enjoyments of Liberty, to the Citizens of *London*, and to whom I am inexpressibly oblig'd for the many Honours and Trusts they have reposed in me ; all which I can, with a safe Conscience, say, I have faithfully discharg'd, without ever having once betray'd or deceiv'd.

At the Court of Lord-Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Council, held on *Thursday* the 26th of *January*, at *Guild-Hall*, after fixing the Recorder's Salary at 200*l. per Annum*, the following Resolution of Thanks was agreed to be sent to *George Heathcote, Esq;* at *Bath*, who resign'd his Alderman's Gown on *Tuesday* the 17th Instant.

Resolv'd, That the Thanks of this Court be given to *George Heathcote, Esq;* late Alderman of this City, for his *Uniform, Active,* and *Disinterested* Conduct, in every Station of *Publick* Trust.

For the many and great Services he has done this Metropolis, as *Magistrate* and *Representative* in Parliament.

For his *Zealous* and *Laudable* Endeavours to promote the Trade and Prosperity of his Fellow Citizens.

For his *exemplary public Spirit*, and *Independence*, in making the Preservation of the *Laws* and *Liberties* of his Country, the constant and invariable Rule of *all his Actions*.







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