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T H E
OCCASIONAL WRITER.

N U M B. IV.

CONTAINING A
CONVERSATION

On the present CRISIS of
P U B L I C K A F F A I R S.

*Suscipienda quidem Bella, ob eam Causam,
ut sine Injuria in Pace vivatur.*

TULL. de Offic.

— *Non illi quisquam se impune tulisset
Obvius armato.*

VIRG.

L O N D O N :

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T O T H E

Y

C I T I Z E N S

O F

L O N D O N,

This P I E C E is dedicated,

B Y

Their most obedient Servant,

The O C C A S I O N A L W R I T E R.

MEMORIALS

OF

THE

WEST INDIES

IN

THE YEAR 1772

BY JOHN BRIDGES

THE
OCCASIONAL WRITER,

NUMB. IV.

CONTAINING

A CONVERSATION on the

Present CRISIS of

Publick Affairs.



OME Years are pass'd away since an Author under this Title appear'd in the World. He was prevented at that Time from pursuing his Animadversions on publick Measures, by much abler Pens. The present Crisis of publick Affairs has animated the Author of this Essay to renew that Manner of Writing. Some small Scribblers, when the *three* first *Occasional Writers* were publish'd, observing their Success, cribb'd their Title; this *petty Larceny* was easily forgiven them since they could take nothing else, and were obliged to

steal that they might eat. However, this induces us to advertise our Readers, that this is only the *fourth Occasional Writer*. It was indeed a little to be apprehended that without this necessary Notification, nothing but the Title would be read.

The following Pages were occasion'd by a Conversation which really happen'd not many Months ago in the *City*; they contain, as fully as my Memory will carry it, a Summary of what was then said. I have chosen to mark those who speak, under feign'd Characters, I mean no personal Affront to any Man, and therefore I may with Reason hope no Person will be so unjust to himself, or to me, to be offended.

I have been a Looker on, for some Years past, at the great publick, political Play-Table; I have observed the several Gamesters of *Europe*; I have seen the Cards shuffled and cut and play'd into one another's Hands; I have apprehended, from the Use I have seen made of some publick *Conventions*, that our Neighbours play'd all the Game, and that we seem'd sometimes to be enter'd into Engagements, as young Country Heirs are introduced into the Acquaintance and Friendship of Town Sharpers, and for much the same Purposes.

I have sometimes imagined too, (perhaps out of an Overweening for the Honour of my Country) that it has not on many Occasions been treated with a Regard due to the Empire of *Great Britain*. The Ballance of Power, which we formerly boasted, seems to have slipp'd from our own, into other Hands; nay, some People presume to say, we have it not in our Power to throw a single Grain into the Scale. But let the present most formidable and prodigious *Naval Armament*, fully convince the whole *Maritim* World at least, that We are yet worthy of some Consideration among Mankind; and most certainly, if our great Guns are suffer'd to speak, we may make those who have insulted us feel the Weight of our Arguments, and oblige 'em by Force to make us ample Restitution for the Injuries we have received, and to restore to us likewise the antient Weight and Dignity that we once held among the Nations.

I dropp'd, the other Day, (while these Reflections were rolling in my Head,) into a *Coffe-house* near the *Royal-Exchange*; where the Citizens venture sometimes to discover, with Freedom, their Sentiments on publick Affairs; this was formerly the Mode, but is now quite out of Fashion at the other

End of the Town. I seated myself, with great Pleasure, among a Groupe of Men, celebrated for two Things which do not frequently meet together, WEALTH and INTEGRITY. Their Understandings were likewise enrich'd, with that best Sort of Knowledge, the useful Knowledge of the World; they had, most of them, resided in the several Countries to which they traded, and brought home with them what both enrich'd and improved their own. Very unlike our young *Roman Itinerants*, who fly over Mountains, Seas and Lands to the great *Nicknackatory* to purchase Baubles, are the common Prey of common Sharpers, and bring nothing home again but themselves and such Trifles.

There were seated, at the Bottom of the Table, two or three Persons, whom I found the Merchants treated as *Lions*, with the lowest Contempt, and a Sort of grave Ridicule; for Ridicule is never stronger than when conceal'd in Gravity.—Nor were they in the least terrify'd, at the Sight of these Beasts, from communicating their Thoughts with Chearfulness and Freedom. As they were preparing to speak, *Furio* enter'd, or rather burst into the Room, with a most triumphal Air and much Emotion and Importance

tance in his Muscles.— Well Gentlemen, (says he) you have heard the News, I presume, glorious News indeed! There is no extraordinary Information come to us, said *Virginus*, but good News will always be agreeable; prythee cry'd *Saccharo*, interrupting him, let *Furio* discharge or he will burst.— Your News Sir? Your News? — *Peace and the Butt*, (reply'd *Furio*) *Peace and the Butt*. The Olive-Branch is arrived, We have a glorious and a lasting *Peace* concluded, the Treaty is just now sign'd, seal'd and ratify'd by the *Spaniard*. Truly, truly said *Bottomre*, with a dry Air, this is good News if it prove authentick, but I beg leave to imagine you cannot be well assured this is a lasting Peace, since you say it is but just now made.— Ah, cry'd *Furio*, *Antiministerial that!* quite *Malecontentish!* I know nothing will please you that portends Good to the Nation or the Government.— I believe you are a *Jacobite*. They all join'd to intreat him not to call Names, and promised him, on that Condition, they would hear his News and believe as much of it, as they could. When *Virginus*, smiling, with his usual plain and simple Candor and Perspicuity, said, In my Opinion, Sir, you have done a very bold
 Thing,

Thing, and have proclaim'd a Peace here before there has been any Declaration of War. There is, we know, a glorious Naval Armament sail'd to the *Mediterranean* and the *West Indies*, besides what remains at Home and is necessary to guard our Coasts. The Administration has hitherto, hath so far seconded the Resolutions of both Houses of Parliament; we seem at last to be roused from that supine and lethargic Indisposition for Action which has invaded us for many Years. I should, Sir, heartily rejoice with you if I could believe your News, tho' it should prove true was fit to be rejoiced at; that is, if I could promise to myself, or the Nation any Good from a Peace in this Manner huddled and struck up on a sudden without any Action. And yet I confess, I should by no Means be surprized to hear that our haughty Enemy, at the immediate and sudden Sense of the Danger he is in, had received a *Panick*, and frighted at the Sight of this terrible Armado, conceded to any Terms. No, not if he should sign a *Chart blanche* and give us a Power to fill up a Skin of Vellum with our own Articles, and to guarantee it in what Manner we pleased. For as such a Treaty must be apparently the Child of Fear only, it could not be long lived, it would

not

not be long held sacred. Men under Apprehensions are a Sort of Prisoners for the Time their Fears possess them, and the Securities they give like Bonds made by People in Du-rance are held not to be valid in Honour or Law. A Treaty therefore of this Kind should be so contrived to *execute it self*, as was said some Years ago on a like Occasion; besides when the Occasion that created and exacted this placid Treaty is removed, that is, when our Fleets are returned Home and laid up in our Harbours, would they not venture once more, since they came off with Impunity, (at the Price of a few Words only) to insult and rob us; the Affront will never be forgotten or forgiven by them, as they say among your Blades of nice Honour, shaking a Cane over a Man's Head is the same Affront as actually caning him; and calls for the same Resentment and Chastisement.

But let us reflect, Gentlemen, what have been the Fruits of our former pacifick Fleets, and gather from the Conduct of the *Spaniards* then, what we are to expect now.

At the Treaty of *Cambray*, which I think was in the Year 1724, *Great Britain* and *France* were Mediators between the Emperor and the King of *Spain*, when suddenly,

ly, and to the Surprize of every Body, the Treaty of *Vienna* came forth, and we were assured at that Time that the sending back the *Infanta* from *France* was the immediate Cause which threw the King of *Spain* into the Arms of the Emperor. Our Ministers were extremely terrify'd and fill'd with most dreadful Apprehensions; this Union between *Vienna* and *Madrid* was unforeseen and full of Horror, it was, it seems, impregnate with several secret and tremendous Articles; (which have proved since to be all imaginary,) these private Articles were said to be as follow; That the King of *Spain* should support the Emperor in the *Ostend Trade*; That the Emperor should help *Spain* to wrest *Gibraltar* out of our Hands, That they both jointly engaged to make an Attempt in favour of the *Pretender*, and that a Marriage should be concluded between the eldest *Caroline* Arch-Dutchess and *Don Carlos*. This was the Foundation of the Treaty of *Hanover*. The Treaty of *Vienna* occasion'd that counter Alliance, and gloriously threw us into the Arms of *France*. This likewise was the Occasion of our causing three large Squadrons to be forthwith equipp'd, one of which was sent under the Command of Admiral *Hofier* to the *West Indies*,

Indies, with extraordinary *persuasive* Orders to lie before *Portobella* and block up the *Gal- leons*; but the *Spaniards* not being to be brought out by *persuasive Force*, our Admiral continued on this unwholsome Station, till his Ships were destroy'd by the Worm, his Provisions were wasted, his Men perish'd by Thousands in the most miserable Manner, and he himself underwent the same Fate.

After this, Preliminaries for a general Pacification were sign'd in 1727, a Congress was held at *Soissons*, which, after they had consumed six Months in Compliments, Feasts and Balls, broke up without doing any Thing farther. However a provisional Treaty was now form'd, which after having been much bragg'd of, and applauded by its Parents, died without any Issue.

And now, fresh Disputes arising, it was resolv'd that military naval Preparations should be renew'd; accordingly soon after, there appear'd at *Spithead* a powerful united Fleet of *English* and *Dutch* Ships of War; some extraordinary Enterprize was supposed by every Body to be on the Tapis, but every one was disappointed, they remain'd the whole Summer in that Station in the most pacifick Disposition imaginable, they saluted,

and treated in the most gallant Manner all their Visitors, who were numerous; they had Caroufals for the good Fellows and Balls for the Ladies; and thus having lived in the most jovial Manner and fired away great Quantities of rejoicing and complimental Gunpowder, the *Hollander* sail'd home with flying Colours, and we unrigg'd and went quietly to Bed. But we may remember some (malicious People no Doubt) gave out, that the *Dutch* Squadron was not design'd at first to make a Shew with us at *Spithead*, but to deter the *Dane* from supporting his *Altena* Company, and that they were neither victual'd nor provided for a farther Expedition, had we shew'd ourselves in a fighting Humour.

There was after this; ——— Oh wonderful! a third *pacifick Armado*; pacifick is too low an Epithet; there was a third glorious, complimental, courtly Navy, and this was occasion'd by the Treaty of *Seville*; a famous Treaty which succeeded those of *Vienna* and *Hanover*. For you are to know, Gentlemen, we have lately run a Treaty-making round the Globe, some think in a strange wild Way; but this is owing to a most prodigious modern Genius, who is the greatest Manufacturer in this Kind, that has
arisen

arisen in our Days. This last Treaty was made, as we have been told, principally to secure to *Don Carlos* the Succession to his *Italian Dominions*, and to fix and secure a solid and lasting Tranquility in *Europe*; by this Treaty we engaged to convoy the *Spanish* Troops and the Prince himself into *Italy*. Did we not perform this courtly Compliment with all the Address, Expence and Gallantry that became a polite and well-bred People? How unfortunate we have been, after all our wise Endeavours, not to establish Peace, and how gratefully we have been rewarded by the *Spaniard*, the whole World is a Witness.

Thus, Gentlemen, you see, in the Space of a few Years, we have, to the Astonishment of the whole World, fitted out no less than three most prodigious, costly, *pacifick*, naval Armaments; the first an *Oratorial*, or *persuading* Fleet; the second, a *merry drinking, dancing Squadron*; the third a *complimental Armado*; all innocent and harmless as painted Thunder.

If this Force was from Time to Time design'd for farther Purposes, as I do not doubt but it was, and to let our Neighbours see that we have it in our Inclinations as well as in our Power to make a solid Peace in *Eu-*

hope when we please, and to resent our Wrongs and vindicate our Rights ; yet I am afraid the Consequence has proved that it has had, that it has at this Hour, quite contrary Effects.

The crafty, aged *Politician*, who sits at the Helm and directs the Affairs of our ever formidable Neighbour in Trade and Power, tho' now on the extream Verge of Life, looks coolly on, and fancies he beholds us in a low Condition ; he imagines perhaps that he sees us declining in our Commerce, increasing in our Debts, decreasing in our Credit, divided into Parties, merged in Corruption, dissolved in Luxury, loaded with Taxes, fetter'd by Treaties, the People not in Love with the Administration, nor over much inclined to trust or to assist it. Among these and other Disadvantages under which he may conceive we labour, he may be very well pleased to observe us, as he imagines, doing the Business he wishes to have done, and hastening to perish by our own proper Hands. And yet notwithstanding all this, I do believe he would be alarm'd to see the old *English Lion* actually roused, to hear our Thunder shaking the Battlements of our Enemies Towers, sinking their Ships, seizing their Treasures, and doing ourselves Justice by those Means which

which God and Nature have intrusted us with, not at all waiting for any partial *Mediation*, or standing in Awe of the Repentment of any crafty *Mediatrice*. Might not vigorous Measures, like these, shake the Steadiness of his *Eminency's* Tranquility, and perhaps oblige him to alter his Policy? He would surely be very loth, he would reluctantly be brought into a War with us. He saw the fatal Effects of the last grand Confederacy; he knows the Bravery and Power of the *English* Nation; he is quite sensible that it is the Interest of all the *European* Powers to prevent *France* from being their Sovereign; and that Alliances on all Sides would be form'd to oppose such an Attempt in its first Operations. He has, by a wise and wary Administration, raised his Country from that low and exhausted Condition it was reduced to, during the late Regency; and from the calamitous Consequences of War and Famine, into a once more great and flourishing Kingdom. Will he, if he can avoid it, hazard this glorious Work of his on the Accidents of War? No, no, the cool sagacious Statesman waits a better Time. If he imagines that the only Rival he has to fear is wasting in a Consumption, will he not attend till the Distemper has done the

good

good Work for him? Let us then convince him that we are not yet so much enfeebled; he sees we have Arms in our Hands, let us make him sensible that we dare use them. Let us by some glorious Action convince our Enemies that we are in earnest; and that this shall not be the fourth *pacifick* Armado that we have equipp'd *in Terrorem* only. Let us first make Reprisals, and then ballance the Account.

And now, as I hope it is very far from my natural Disposition, I beg what I have said may not be misconstrued, as if I were inclined to warm and sanguinary Measures rather than peaceable ones; I give my Opinion to the best of my Judgment, and my Judgment tells one, from the known, from the past and present Practice of the *Spaniard*, that nothing else will bind or make any lasting Impression on him; that we have no other Way left to secure our Trade and restore our Credit.

For Example Sake, let us suppose a Peace now actually concluded, or a new Treaty made; and, as this Gentleman has proclaim'd it, on the most advantageous Terms. In Consequence of this, our Fleets return home in Triumph, our Scamen are disbanded, our Ships are laid up, and so are the

Ap-

Apprehensions of the *Spaniards*; they find all is safe, (let me repeat somewhat of what I said just now) it must be some Time, says the Enemy, before we can receive another Visit of this Sort; well, they venture once more to renew their Insults, their Depredations, their Injuries of every Kind; our Merchants likewise renew their Complaints; they again petition, remonstrate, and apply to the Government successfully, as before; a new Fleet is fitted out, at a new and a prodigious Expence; the *Spaniard's* Ague Fits return, (and not wholly depending on a Cure from the *Jesuits* Bark) they renew their Treaty, and graciously give you, if you insist upon it, greater Promises and stronger Assurances than before. May not this be done, *singulis Annis*, till we have neither Money, nor Men, nor Credit left in the World that can be of any Use to us; when we shall be sunk in our Courage as well as our Wealth; and this glorious Kingdom (which once held the Ballance of *Europe*, and unambitious herself of extending her Dominion or Power, supported, not only her own but the Liberty of Mankind) become a Scorn and a By-word among the Nations? What have our worst, our most implacable Enemies to wish more than this? But, Gentlemen,

lemen, if we make the *Spaniard* feel, if we give him Cause to remember the Effects of our Power, we shall keep him humble, and make him just for his own Sake; we shall then give him Arguments that must convince him, that no Alliance can screen him, and no Power support him. This, in my poor Opinion, is to be done now; this is the *Crisis*, the very *Crisis*; if this Opportunity of making *Reprisals* shall be neglected, of making *Reprisals* with our own Hands, and restoring to our Merchants whatever they have been robb'd of, we shall probably never have another, and the peaceable Fleets we shall fit out for the future will be so many Goblins, shadows only, a Sort of warlike Appearances; and when they disappear, will be scouted and ridiculed as idle Dreams.

Here *Virginus* was silent; *Furio*, red hot with what he had heard, would have reply'd, but his Choler, to the Benefit of himself and the Company, prevented his Articulation; when *Curio*, who sat next to him, carry'd on the Conversation in the following Manner.

I have attended, said *Curio* to this Gentleman, with great Earnestness, and with some Moderation; I was very well pleas'd to hear, in the Beginning of his very long
 Declaration,

Declamation, that he had the Justice to confess a good Opinion of the Ministry. I do not in the least doubt but in a little Time every honest *Briton* will join with him in that Opinion. Yet I think, from what we have now heard in this publick Place, that those Ministers who manage the Affairs of this Nation, let them be who they will, now or hereafter will hardly please some People; no, tho' they were divinely inspired. Every one here judges, criticises, rails, derides, condemns; their Losses, their Vices, their Passions, their Crimes, their Misfortunes are all imputed to the Minister; he is the Scape Goat, he it is who is to answer for the Sins of the People.

There is a Story of a Peasant in *France*, during the Administration of *Cardinal Mazarine*, who, as he rode along, mounted on a tired, a restiff, and a stumbling Mule, imputed all the Sins of his Beast to the Administration; at every false Step the *Animal* made, he cry'd out, *Damn the Cardinal*; when the Jade would not stir—*Rot the Cardinal*;—when he tumbled on his Head—*Curse the Cardinal*. A Gentleman's Curiosity excited him to ask the Meaning of these unusual Execrations on his *Eminence*, when his founder'd Mule seem'd to him to

be only to blame. The Fellow very ingeniously explain'd himself, and deduced the Question thus. Sir, said he, the *Cardinal* taxes us, his *Taxes* make Provender dear, the Dearness of Provender has obliged me to reduce the Commons of my Beast; this has made the Creature weak, and her Weakness makes her stumble. Who should I curse, Sir, but the *Cardinal*? This is the Case, the very Case of almost all who govern; all that happens amiss, even from the most remote Cause, is imputed to them. When the Wheel of Government goes glibly round, 'tis very easy, they cry, to turn the Helm in quiet Waters; they do but their Duty; it is very well; they are paid for it.

But surely you must own, that altho' this Way of Judging may be customary among the Vulgar, it is not quite so decent in Persons of Education, who are expected to think, and talk, and act in another Manner. Those who confess themselves to be intirely ignorant of the several Wheels of Government, of the secret Springs that move this great political Machine, are unpardonable to judge in this rash inconsiderate Manner. If an ignorant Mariner should by Noise and Mutiny, drive a skilful Pilot from his Helm, while he is guarding against a Storm, and
by

by this Violence occasion the sinking of the Ship, what Punishment would not such a Wretch deserve? But, as I hinted above, here every Man is a Cenfor over his Superiors, and we may, not improperly, apply what *Horace* says of Versifiers to this Sort of *Coffee Politicians*.

Scribimus indocti, doctique Politica Passim.

But this Gentleman affirms that we could by no Means be safe, tho' the *Spaniards* should give us our own Terms; now I affirm the contrary; one of us therefore is wrong; and yet I must tell you, Gentlemen, if insolent and unbecoming Reflections and dogmatical Assertions are to be received and suffer'd to shut out Truth, every Word that *Virginus* has utter'd may be implicitly assented to.

'Till this can be assented to, you will give me Leave to differ from him—Tho' we reduce the Enemies, says he, to our own Terms, (and what our Terms are, or what they may be, he is intirely ignorant,) we are not safe; they will be of no Use to us, unless some previous Action makes 'em fear us; that is, we are immediately to fall on, like furious *Drawcansirs*, and cut, hew, sink,

burn and destroy all the *Spaniards* that should be so very unfortunate to fall in our Way. This is very strange, and more inhuman than the Practice of the *Spanish* Inquisitors; who burn poor Creatures convicted of *Judaism*; tho' they renounce their Errors; the *Amende honorable* will not do, they must die—Aye, but a certain old Fox somewhere lies perdue, and sees us going off in a Consumption; he would be very well pleased to find us wasting our Wealth and our Power, by fitting out such useles Armado's every Year. This Gentleman is the common Eccho of a Faction; the Malecontents, the Enemies of our Government, and the present glorious Administration, murmur continually in these very Terms. Alas! alas! their Zeal is without Knowledge; they are sounding the Depth of Politicks without Plummet or Line. The *Spaniards*; we will suppose, do every Thing we desire, repair the Losses of our Merchants, they make full Satisfaction for Violence and Barbarity, acknowledge our Right to navigate their Seas, renounce all Claim to our Colonies, and in a Word, do all we can pretend to, desire and demand, and yet, it seems, this is not enough. Is not this ridiculous, and a little on the *Brogue*? What, shall we not be satisfy'd, tho' we

have

have Satisfaction? Do we ingeniously insist on more than we desire? Are we to enrol ourselves in the List of Madmen or Fools? We must be in the Number of the one or the other, if we follow this Gentleman's Scheme.

- Believe me, we may sit here and prate and blow a whiff over our Coffee, and conceive ourselves to be most sagacious Counsellors and Politicians of the greatest Weight and Consequence, while we have only, like so many *Quixotes*, erected ourselves into these Characters by our own Conceit and Self-sufficiency. We may canvass as long and as freely as we please the Conduct of our Superiors, with all the modern and becoming Liberty of true *Britons*; but trust me, we are too short-sighted to look into the Depths and Intricacies of State Policies. You know not the Affairs of *Europe*, nor your own; you cannot at all discern in what Manner the several Interests of the States around us are interwoven; how they coincide, what Obligations bind, what do not, how the Balance of Trade depends. Are you not all fully sensible that we can by no Means prevent the running of our Wooll, that staple Commodity of the Nation? Hath not the *British* Parliament employ'd all their Care
and

and Wisdom to find a Remedy that might cure this Evil? Have they not been unsuccessful? Is this too to be imputed to the Pilot? Since then it is evident, that your Ignorance only is the Mother of your Indevotion to the present Administration, let me advise you to open your Eyes, that no partial Interpositions of imaginary Objects may misguide you through a false Medium. Take my Advice then; leave the Care and Regulation of the Springs and Wheels of this political Machine to our Superiors, whom it most concerns; and let us, like good Subjects, be contented to take our Fate as Passengers in the Ship, under the proper Government of those Officers who command it. All the rest is Faction, downright Faction, and Party Rage. I had almost forgot to take Notice of one material Argument in that Gentleman's Oration; he has appear'd extremely wise in the Knowledge of Treaties, and has given us a learned Deduction of several modern ones, and would represent our Treaties to have been usefess and ridiculous, as well as our pacifick Squadrons; as if he was in the secret Transactions of all our Conventions. Surely he must have heard that there are several Sorts of Treaties; there are *Ostensible* and *Non-Ostensible* Treaties; the

Non-

Non-Ostensible Conventions may, for aught *Virginius* knows, set every Thing to right, which appear to him to be wrong by the *Ostensible* ones. If this Gentleman was in the Cabinet, he would most certainly instruct us how and in what Manner the World was to be govern'd. Had he been a *Minister* ten Years ago, we might, by this Time, tho' we enjoy'd the Blessing of a successful War, have had the Blessing likewise of seeing the Nation running forty or fifty Millions more in Debt. I shall conclude with hoping that all sober and sensible Men will submit to the Wisdom of their Superiors, and not, in the Heat of Party Rage, because we have suffer'd a few Losses, think it adviseable to knock our own, or our Neighbours Heads against Stone Walls, lest we fall into that Censure which *Cicero* bestows on those who are unjustly and unreasonably angry; and that which we desire should be imputed to a true Sense of Honour and just Resentment of Indignities, should appear to be only Moroseness and mean Revenge. But let me finish what I have said, in *Tully's* own Words; let us temper our unseasonable Rage. *Ne, si irascamur aut intempestive accidentibus, aut impudenter rogantibus, in Morositatem inutilem, aut odiosam incidamus.*

Thus

Thus ended *Curio*.——There appear'd in the Company a Sort of grumbling Murmur, mingled with a contemptuous Smile, at some Expressions which *Curio* dropp'd; when *Virginus*, a little heated by what had been said, which gave a Glow to his Features and a Warmth to his Expressions, begg'd Leave to reply.

Tho' I own, said he, that I am much obliged to *Curio* for his Attention and Moderation; yet I must be so ingrateful to say, that if his Reflection through the Whole of his Speech had been equal to his Moderation at the Beginning of it, a great Part of his ingenious Oration might have been spared.

He is pleas'd to applaud me for the good Opinion I profess to have of the *Ministry*; and that he is sure in a little Time every one will be in the same Opinion. This is a bold Assertion; but it is hardly fair to bring that Gentleman into the Question we do not design to dispute with him; who, if he does not command, has an Interest in many *golden Legions*. He goes on and tells us, Nobody can please every Body; we are obliged to him for this admirable Discovery. He likewise informs us, that a Minister is the Scape Goat, and is to be sacrificed for the Sins of the People; yet, *non obstante*, this
 Assertion

Affertion of my Friend, I fancy if *Ministers* in general were to answer for their own particular Sins only, the People would be more content, and look upon it now and then as the most grateful *Peace-offering*.

As to his facecious old Story of the *Peasant* and *Cardinal Mazarine*, I cannot help thinking, if his Judgment had come up to a fourth Part of his Conceit, he would never have reported it, since it happens to be a Case in Point against him. He, by this ingenious Tale means, if any Thing is meant, to render ridiculous the common Complaints of the Vulgar against their Rulers; and to shew that their Murmurs were frequently without Ground or Foundation. Now this happens to be quite the reverse, and was really the Cause that occasion'd the poor Fellow's Mule to stumble. Oppression descends a great Way down, and is felt in the extremest and minutest Parts of the Constitution; when People are overladen with their Burden, they will stumble, they murmur, they look up to the Hand from whence their Oppression proceeds, and utter their Complaints aloud; yet we are to know that this same *Cardinal Mazarine* was a very wicked Minister, as wicked as any Age or Country that preceded him had ever

felt; however, he may have fallen short in Iniquity of some who have succeeded him.

*Ætas Parentum, nos, pejor Avis
Nequiores tulit, mox daturos
Progeniem Vitiosorem.* HOR.

But to go on with this Gentleman, whom I find it somewhat difficult to trace through the Mazes of loose, low, and irregular Notions. We ought to take Care, says he, how we drive a *wise* and *skilful* Pilot from the Helm. This, Sir, is begging the Question; begging it in the most low and shameful Manner. How would you have me answer? Would you draw me in to affirm that our Pilot is not wise nor skilful? Indeed you must excuse me; I would go a little Way to obey you; but this is too much.

Aye, Sir, but every Body in *England* is turn'd Politician; we seem to be a Nation of Statesmen; all People here take the Liberty to write and talk with Impunity, and think *ad libitum*. I am very well pleased to hear it, and should be more so, if his News were true; this would be a Mark of Liberty, perhaps as great a one as any we have left. It is not here as yet, thank Heaven, as it is on the other Side of the Strait of *Dover*, when

a *Lettre de Cachette* seizes on a poor heedless Fellow, who perhaps, in a giddy Hour, has utter'd the Sorrows of his Heart too freely, and now finds himself, when his Wine and his Courage are digested, inclosed within four Walls, without Benefit of *Habeas Corpus*, Judge, or Jury; and is released, if not altogether forgotten, when the Minister pleases.

Curio tells me, in a most candid and decent Manner, that I utter *unbecoming* and *dogmatical Assertions*. I take his Compliments very kindly, and affirm, *e contra*, that I do not.

The Gentleman goes on, and publishes a new Doctrine, whereby he informs us, that we ought to pay an implicit Obedience and Submission to the Measures of the Administration. I can only assure him, that this has not been the Practice for many Years in *England*; and I hope, with great Deference to his Doctrine, that it never will be. It is to this Freedom of Speech and the Liberty of the Press, that we owe our Deliverances from all our Oppressors, and the Enjoyment of all our religious and civil Rights. Prythee, *Curio*, do not talk us out of all the Blessings the Revolution gave us; give us Leave to speak a little; if you do not, you will con-

tradict the good old Proverb you know; *which gives Losers Leave*. But I must take the Liberty to represent to you (and when you cool, I hope you will thank me for my plain Dealing) that your Wit now and then; like a vicious Horse, takes the Bit in his Teeth, and runs away with your Reason, which should be his Rider. I did not express myself, when I was talking of entering into Action before we treated with the *Spaniards*; in your *Tiperary* Diction, *that we desired more than we demanded; and that we should not be satisfy'd, tho' we had Satisfaction*. No, Sir, I said it would be right, by some hostile Act, to make a lasting Impression on the Enemy; and oblige him to a more punctual Regard to his *Leagues* for the future, that we might not be every Year at this prodigious Expence.

Well, *Curio* goes on; and *Curio* now cries aloud in his most pathetick Declamation that all is *Faction*; and looks on us all as *factionous Malcontents*. *Faction* is a Word little understood, and much misapply'd and misconstrued. If by *Faction*, or the *Factionous*, we intend and generally mean, that Body of Men, or those particular Persons who frequently differ from, and oppose in a legal, just, and honourable Manner, the

Measures

Measures of the Administration, and yet remain, in every other Respect, dutiful to their Prince and obedient to the Laws, we confess ourselves to be factious, very factious People; and let me instruct thee, *Curio*, that *Faction*, this Sort of *Faction*, is the Wind that stirs the Waters of Liberty, and prevents Corruption; it is like the opposing Fluids in the Animal Oeconomy, the Origin of Fermentation, and what support and circulate the whole human System.

He has done me the Honour, before he concludes, to scout me in a particular Manner, for my Treaty Wisdom. I have no Knowledge, I pretend to no Knowledge; but what proceeds from common Sense, and the common Experience of Things; and from thence I will venture to publish what my Opinion of Treaties is, and what they are in general.

Treaties are a Sort of *Compacts*, or *Conventions*, Covenants and Agreements made among Princes, States and Nations, either to support the weaker against the stronger, to uphold their mutual Interests, Titles, Projects, Pretensions, or Claims, of any Sort whatsoever; or in general, to obviate and oppose all Incroachments on Dominion, Commerce, or Power; yet are not these Com-

pacts

pects any otherwise practicable, or any longer observed, or to be depended upon, than as they serve to maintain, uphold and secure the mutual Interests of the several contracting Powers. And this the Experience of all Ages has confirm'd; therefore it ought to be the particular Policy and Wisdom of every Statesman, so to form his Alliances and publick Engagements, that they may coincide with the Interests of all Persons concern'd; and that they may all find it for their mutual Service and Benefit to support the Contracts they have enter'd into.

This may be easily and fully proved, if we give ourselves the Trouble to look into the History of Treaties; but surely it is not a Work of much Labour to prove it by our own modern Treaties, by those very Stipulations, which, during this Conversation, I have already cited.

When *Gibraltar* was besieged, it was stipulated, by the Treaty of *Hanover* before-mention'd, that the contracting Powers should support each other, in Case any of their Dominions should be attack'd; therefore you see the Siege of *Gibraltar* ought to have been made, by our *French* Allies, a *Casus Fæderis*; yet nothing of this Kind, nothing in the least was ever done; the *French* pretended

pretended indeed, that they were ready to march an Army into *Rosillon*, and divert the Siege; but these were only Words, they observed an exact Neutrality, and were unconcern'd Spectators of the Danger and the Expence.

Nor did the *Emperor*, on the other Side, (as he was obliged to do) by the *Vienna* Treaty, give his *Catholick* Majesty any Assistance; nor again did his *Catholick* Majesty, as we have ever heard, support the *Emperor*, in his Project for carrying on the *Ostend* Trade, as he was bound to do by the very same Treaty. No, it appear'd not to have been the Interest of the contracting Powers, and so they took no Manner of Concern in what they did not design to execute.

I imagine, I have now demonstrated that in political, as well as private Life, nothing but Interest is regarded; and that those who are romantick, or weak enough in either, to give too much Credit, will most certainly be duped. As to this ingenious Gentleman's Learning, with Relation to *Ostensible* and *Non-Ostensible* Treaties, it would be too ridiculous to be noted; but as it is immediately stolen from the Mouths of his Masters, and is Part of the Cant of some great publick Orators;

tors ; but it would surely with more Decency become the Mouth of *Harlequin* in a Farce, than the serious Bamboosle of *political Mountebanks*.

Virginus was silent ; *Plumby*, an old mercantile sober Genius, regarded by his Friends in the City for his Judgment, Temper and Integrity, who had set quietly by during these Conferences, and attended with much Gravity, seem'd at last to have his Phlegm somewhat stirr'd, and laying down his Pipe, which he had been smoaking before with much Serenity, address'd himself particularly to *Curio* and *Virginus*, in Words like these.

Few People have Courage, or Discernment enough to follow Reason ; those Passions, which they mistake for Virtues, are frequently only an Assemblage of several Actions and Interests, which Fortune, or their own Vanity, have placed before them in a flattering Glass. Our real Virtues are lost in Interest, as Rivers are swallow'd up in the Sea. These are the Maxims of a wise and deep thinking *French* Moralist, and they recurr'd immediately to my Memery on hearing this passionate Debate ; I call it passionate, not from a little Heat now and then made Use of in the Expression ; but
from

from observing, that almost all the Ideas and Arguments, on both Sides, have been the immediate Issue of your Passions. You, *Virginus*, deliver your Sentiments like an angry Trader over-heated with your Losses, and seem to be a little inflamed, or out of Humour at least, with your Superiors, whom you conceive ought to do you immediate Justice, and in your own Way and Manner. You, *Curio*, with equal Heat, seem *jurare in Verba Magistrum*, and dogmatically affirm, that there is a Sort of implicit Submission due to the Measures of a Minister. You are not, *Virginus*, so much afflicted for your Country as you seem to be; nor are you, *Curio*, so much a *Slave* as you pretend; no, there is a Sort of Pride, mix'd with Interest, that renders you both partial Judges in Affairs of this Sort; there is something, I know not how to call it, whimsical, or silly, in the Conduct of most People, on both Sides; you are nick-named a *Patriot*, and you an *Anti-Patriot*, you a *Ministry*; you an *anti-ministry* Man; you are in the *Country*, you are in the *Court* Interest. These unhappy Distinctions, most evidently demonstrate the Misfortune of our present Divisions.

If there shall be any, in the Administration of the Affairs of the Publick, who may be found guilty of Malversation of any Kind, Treachery, Peculation, Bribery, Fraud, or any publick Crime ; nay, if they shall be found to be wanting in Capacity to execute the Trust reposed in them, let us not bring a railing Accusation against 'em, the Truth of which, perhaps, we are not assured of ; no, let us enquire a legal and proper Way, let us join to petition, impeach, implead them by the Laws of the Land, and all those honourable Methods which are practised in our Constitution.

On the other Side, let not those in Power, tho' they should be praise-worthy Servants of the Publick, faithful and able Ministers, in the Service of their Prince and their Country ; let them not send forth their *small Creatures*, to gall the Wounds of a complaining People, tho' they should unjustly complain ; but if they complain because they really feel, if they are wrong'd, and their Complaints are just, this would be an Insult human Nature would be hardly able to support ; and we cannot wonder, in this Case, to see *Nature* rebel against *Principle*.

But there is, (I am a plain Dealer) there seems to me, to be some Vanity ; a Sort of

arrogant Importance discovers itself in many of your Sentiments. You, *Virginus*, by a severe Reprehension of the Measures of the Court, enjoy the Applauses of your Fellow-Citizens. You, *Curio*, would increase your Favour with the Administration, and make this Opposition your Merit there ; you would keep your *Popularity* ; you your *Place*.

Thus those Actions which you would represent to the World, under the great and shining Appearances of *Loyalty* and *Patriotism*, are only the Off-spring of Humour, Interest and Passion.

Virginus desires, with Warmth and Impatience, (but with Reason too, and seconded by the Voice of the People) that our Commerce to the *West Indies* may be secured, and Restitution made to our injured Merchants ; but he will have it immediately, in his own Way, on his own Terms. *Curio* tells him, he has no Right to canvass this Matter at all, and assures him, that it is his Duty to have an implicit Faith in his Master.

May not this Affair be moderated between these two Gentlemen, who are in the same Interests, but in opposite Opinions? Can we not draw them somewhat nearer to one-another? Surely we might, if we could

prevail upon them to lay aside their Prejudices, and to listen to Reason.

I would venture to assure *Virginus*, that it would be quite as decent in his Character, to suppress a little those violent Suspicions which he entertains, that our Fleet will return without Action; I could wish he would conceal a little his dreadful Apprehensions, that we shall be bubbled in some new Treaty; and tho' he may be as free as he pleases with Ministers, for what they have done, it would be but prudent in him, not to censure them for *what they are to do*; since, if, after all, his Fears should prove groundless; if a firm and a solid Peace should be establish'd according to his own Desires, after some great and glorious Action. What would he say? How would he look? Might not the World take the Liberty to judge not very favourably of the Motives that produced his Fears?

I wish likewise that I could persuade *Curion* not to be so sanguine, or secure on the Success of his Master's Measures; because if it should so happen that there should be no Action, if no satisfactory Treaty should be made; if this expensive and well-man'd Fleet should return home without doing the Business which it is generally supposed it
was

was sent abroad to do, his Doctrine of implicit Obedience to the Measures of Ministers might immediately fall to the Ground, and peradventure with the most fatal Consequences. The Credit both of himself and his Friends would sink together; and what is yet worse, his *Place* and his *Master* (the *Minister*) too might both totter.

You will permit me, Gentlemen, before I conclude, to give you, what every one parts with very freely, a little more moral Advice. They tell us, Truth itself has not done so much Good in the World, as the Appearances of it have done Evil; a wise Man therefore should constantly endeavour to subdue and regulate his Interests and Passions, that thus having divested himself of all Prejudice and Prepossession, he may judge himself with the same Equality that he judges his Neighbours; he will then view his own and the Affairs of the World, relating to himself, in a simple; plain and quite different Light from that in which they appear'd before.

This Conversation, as we may imagine, has been maintain'd with Temper; it has not, I own, been carried on with that unnatural Heat which I have seen in some Party-Disputes; but our Passions have been
con-

consulted more than our Reason. Self-Love is the greatest Flatterer; the wisest Man, he who has search'd himself with the greatest Sincerity, and made the largest Discoveries on his own Weakness and Errors, will still leave a *Terra in cognita*; then surely, if every Man, during these Conferences, had heard, with a disinterested and impartial Ear; that is, if he had probed himself, and throwing off his Vanity, had only design'd to discover Truth, we should not have seen each Side so precipitate, zealous and full of Fire; so desirous of pleasing themselves by receiving the Applause of the Audience, without considering, that to appear to be very desirous to please ourselves, is the worst Way in the World to please, or to persuade others. To sum up the Weole, my Opinion is (for I will venture to give it you at last) that the Good of the Publick, that is, the Good of all of us, is most heartily wish'd and desired by all of us; and must be so, if we desire and wish for our Preservation and well-being; nor do I think there can or will be the least Obstruction to our Demand of immediate Justice from our Enemy the *Spaniard*; I will venture to call him so, tho' there has been no Declaration of War that I know of; I think as *Virginius* does, that

we

we ought not only to demand, but, on Refusal of Justice, to try, by vigorous Measures, to do ourselves Right; or we ought to renounce our Title to Sovereignty for ever, nor ever after be number'd among the Nations. Nor do I absolutely think that this Delay, which a good deal terrifies the Publick, does proceed (as I have heard) from the Apprehensions of any personal Misfortune, which may happen to any *Servant* of the *Publick*, if the War should break forth with Violence; tho', to speak out of *Romance*, he must be a poor Creature indeed, who would not venture a good deal, rather than ruin his Country. We have been already almost destroy'd by Delay; the War is necessary, just and universally call'd for; and in one Word, it is most certain, that at this Time, and on this Occasion, *Vox Populi, Vox est Dei*; and I verriy believe, that no Minister that ever breath'd in *England*, and had lost the good Opinion of his Fellow-Subjects, ever had such an Opportunity, I will not say to recover, but to gain Popularity.

But if there be any guilty Wretch, or *Anti-Curtius*, who has devoted his Country, instead of himself, to Perdition; a Caitiff, who trembles at losing a few Hours of an almost worn-out and abandon'd Life, rather than

than save a sinking Nation ; a *Creature* so courageous, yet so dastardly ; so pusillanimous, yet so rash, not to fear the accumulated Rage of a most injured People, may the Execrations of a most injured People light on his Head, and prevent his Measures. *Let his Enemy persecute his Soul and take it ; yea, let him tread his Life down upon the Earth, and lay his Honour in the Dust.*

And now before I conclude (I hope you will not think I act the Part of a *Moderator immoderately*) I ask your Patience for one Word farther ; since, as I have said, we all intend the general Welfare, and our Heads seem at this Crisis to be full of Schemes for promoting it, I should be glad to hear, supposing *Curio* and *Virginus* had both the Honour to be made *Plenipotentiaries*, how they would form their different Preliminaries for settling a general Pacification.

Curio, without the least Hesitation accepted this Proposal, and ventured to affirm he could draw up *preliminary Articles* himself, that would satisfy the whole World. All the Company join'd in begging him, if he could, to recollect some of them immediately ; when, after heming and rubbing his Temples a Minute or two, to make them forth coming, he began in this Manner.

I. That

1. That we should consent to the Recalling our Fleets from the *Mediterranean* and the *West Indies*; because Armaments of this Sort are very improper to forward Accommodations between the two Courts, and because 'tis most likely his *Catholick* Majesty will not enter into any Treaty, while a naval Armament remains on his Coast, lest what Concessions he should make might be interpreted to proceed rather from *Fear* than *Justice*.

2. That after our Fleets are return'd, Commissaries shall be appointed on both Sides, for discussing and examining the Grievances of both Nations.

3. To agree that the Limits of their respective Dominions in *America* shall remain in *Statu quo*, or *uti possidetis*.

4. That Conferences shall be held on the same Footing as those by the Treaty of *Seville* in the Year 1729; that the Pretensions of both Nations may be fairly examined, to distinguish what is lawful Prize, and what is not.

5. And whereas, by the Treaty of *Hanover*, a League offensive and defensive is concluded between his most *Christian* Majesty and the King of *Great Britain*; his most

Christian Majesty shall be humbly desired to act as Mediator between both Courts.

6. As a sixth Preliminary, that all Pretensions, or Claims to *Gibraltar*, or *Port-Mahon*, or any of our Colonies in *America* should be renounced for ever, and remain as by former Treaties.

7. That our Merchants Ships trading to and from our Colonies in the *West Indies*, shall not be obliged to sail in a direct or prescribed Road, because, altho' the King of *Spain* may lay Claim to the Sovereignty of those Seas in *America*, neither he nor the King of *Great Britain*, can command the Winds, or the Weather.

8. That our Commerce be restored, free and favour'd with the most favour'd Nations.

9. That his most *Christian* Majesty shall be apply'd to, to guaranty the Treaty.

Here are your Articles, cry'd *Curio*, in an exulting Air; every Thing taken Care of, all your Grievances redress'd, your Trade secured, your Honour, your Losses, restor'd and your Injuries redress'd, your Limits settled, your Colonies safe, and every Thing you ask.

When *Plumby* and the rest of the Company taking no other Notice of *Curio's Spanish* Articles,

Articles, than what proceeded from a contemptible Silence, desired *Virginus* to open his Scheme. *Virginus*, with some Uneasiness in his Features, which express'd his Reluctance under the Question, reply'd,

I am really weary of this fruitless Altercation; we are apt, I am sensible of it, to speak with too much Warmth; even he, who coolly censured us for it, in spite of Phlegm and Philosophy, was just now catch'd himself; yet will I not decline, since I am enter'd so far, tho' perhaps unadvisedly, into this Dispute. I will not decline publishing my Sentiments. I will venture to declare what, in my Opinion, ought to be the *Basis* of a general Pacification. I humbly hope neither my Fellow-Citizens, nor my Superiors, will think I do this out of any Self-sufficiency, or Conceit of my own Parts and Capacity; but I do it because I really believe all those who can think at all (all who have any Reflection, and can think and compare) would do no Harm, if they publish'd their Thoughts on these Occasions; perhaps, as in a *Multitude of Counsellors there is Safety*, something might be collected from the many Reflections of Mankind, that may be of Use to those whose immediate Business it is to take Care, *Ne quid*

Detrimenti Respublica capiat. If what I shall offer may be of the least Advantage, I shall not think my Labour lost.

As to the Articles, the *Spanish* Articles I may call 'em, offer'd by *Curio*, the best Answer to most of them is, in my Judgment, to form Articles directly contrary to them; and they will probably be for our Interest, as these are directly against it.

First then, with the greatest Deference, I propose. That

1. We shall by no Means consent to the recalling our Fleets from the Coasts of *Spain* and the *West-Indies*.

Because — Armaments of this Nature are the most proper to forward Accomodations between the two Courts; and because 'tis probable his *Catholick Majesty* may full as sincerely enter into a Treaty while our Fleet is on his Coasts; because he must see we have Weapons in our Hands, and are on the Point of doing ourselves Justice by the most vigorous Measures.

2. That while our Fleet remains on the *Spanish* Coasts, Commissaries shall be sent to *London*, with full Powers from his *Catholick Majesty*, who, with Commissioners to be appointed here, shall, as soon as possible, or within adjust, liqui-
date

date and settle an Account of all Damages, Losses and Injuries which our Merchants have sustain'd by the Vessels call'd the *Spanish Guarda de Costas*, or any other Ships of his *Catholick Majesty* in *America*, or elsewhere, from the Year to this present Year 1738; and likewise shall liquidate and settle all the Demands of his *Catholick Majesty* on *Great Britain*, in full and ample Manner; and that the *Ballance* of this Account shall forth with be *paid* here, on the *Royal-Exchange* at *London*. And that his *Catholick Majesty* shall not only make Restitution for all the Depredations his Subjects have committed, as aforesaid; but likewise give Satisfaction to his *Britannick Majesty* for all Insults, Barbarities, Oppressions; and Indignities committed, by his Subjects, on the Subjects of *Great Britain*. This Article to be guaranty'd by the Fleet of *Great Britain*.

Because—This is due to the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, to the Majesty of the People of Great Britain, and to common Justice.

3. The Limits of the respective *Dominions* of their *Catholick* and *Britannick Majesties* in *America* shall not only remain *Statu quo prius*; but his *Catholick Majesty* shall explicitly, fully and specifically renounce all Claim, Demand, Right, or Title whatsoever,

ever, to any of our *Colonies* in the *West-Indies*, as likewise to *Gibraltar* and the Bay of *Campechy*; and that his *Catholick Majesty* shall disclaim and renounce all Pretensions to the Restitution of Ships taken in the *Mediterranean* in the Year 1718. That the Fleet of *Great Britain* shall guarantee this Article.

Because—The same Disputes may continue, if we recur to Treaties; and we may be drawn in to play the same Game for some Years longer.

4. That all Pretensions, Claim, or Demands, of what Nature soever, shall be as soon as possible adjusted at *London*.

Because—This is likewise due to the Honour and Dignity of his *Majesty*; and because our Commissaries have already attended this very Affair in *Spain* for some Years, at no small Expence to the Nation, and without Success. And because our Merchants, for whose Relief this Commission is intended, can, here with less Trouble and Expence, produce authentick Proofs and Vouchers for their Losses *London*, and reply to any Objections that can be made.

5. That we shall have free Liberty to navigate the *American Seas*. That our Fleet shall guaranty this Article.

· Because — They can enforce Obedience to it.

6. That *France* shall not be desired to act as *Mediatrice* between the two Courts; and that her *Mediation*, if offer'd, shall be declined.

Because — It may be the Interest of *France* to act contrary to the Interest of *Great Britain*; because, if she should be now carrying on, by *pacifick Measures*, that Scheme for attaining universal Monarchy, which *Lewis* the *Fourteenth* attempted to bring about in vain by his *Arms*; this could not be effected without our Ruin in the first Place; and therefore we ought to be jealous of her *Mediation*.

An *Arbitrator* is never chosen, where it is apparently his *Interest* to be byass'd, and where his Character is such, to be known to have always more Regard to that, than to Justice.

No Person, in civil Actions, is allow'd to give Evidence, much less to be a Mediator, where his Interest is concern'd.

7. That we shall, for the future, be allow'd all Benefits of Commerce to and from his *Catholick Majesty's* Dominions in *Europe*, or elsewhere, in as full and ample Manner as we have ever enjoy'd them; or as have ever
been

been granted to, or are now enjoy'd by any the most favour'd Nation.

Because — *Trade* is the Support of *Liberty* and *Power*.

8. That *Great Britain* shall be fully and immediately reimburs'd, by his *Catholick Majesty*, all the extraordinary Charges of the present Fleets, equipp'd to oblige her to do Justice to the *British Nation*. And that, from Time to Time, on any future Infracti-
 on of the Treaty, his *Catholick Majesty* shall pay all extraordinary Expences of the like Nature.

Because — This Article may prevent all future Depredations, on Pretences of *illicit Trade*.

9. And as Pretences of illicit Trade have frequently occasion'd the Captures of our Merchants Ships, let it be agreed, for the future, that no *British Vessel* shall be seized or taken on the Seas, under any Pretence whatsoever of illicit Trade; nor condemn'd as illicit Traders, tho' actually taken on the Coasts, or in the Harbours, &c. of his *Catholick Majesty*, before their Cause is heard, and the Condemnation agreed to, and confirm'd by a *British Consul*, or Consuls, to be appointed for that Purpose.

Because

Because — It is not proper that People should be Judges in their own Causes.

Virinius finish'd. The Company generally join'd in a little Hum of Applause; and after that, immediately began to criticise what had been said. Some thought this Article not full; another that it was not plain; some that it was too explicit; some that it was not explicit enough; some would add, others amend, and others take away. Thus the whole Company was suddenly subdivided into little Parties, and political Altercations on this Occasion and Subject. *Curio* and his Friend stole away in this Hurry, but little observed, and jogg'd off in a Hack, in a most *Lion-like* Disposition, to make an immediate Report at *Westminster*, of what they had heard in the City.

I now return'd to my Apartment, some what affected from the Sentiments I had heard on both Sides, which I could not conceive would in any Manner portend Good to the Publick; and tho' I could not think we were in so safe and flourishing a Condition, as we were represented to be in, by the Courtiers; I indulged myself in the Hope that our Circumstances were not so bad, or so desperate as the People without Doors generally apprehended them to be; yet in ge-

neral, I could not help being assured (which is the main Point) that no *Measures* could possibly extricate us out of the Difficulties we labour under but *vigorous* ones. The Honour, the Wealth, the Commerce of *Great Britain*, seem, in the Sentiments of many People; ready to expire; and that they cannot possibly revive, but by an Exertion, an immediate Exertion of our Arms. Let some People hold forth, and cant as much as they please about political and private Prudence, and Puslanimity, when political Prudence will not suffer us to demand Satisfaction for a manifest Invasion and Violation of our Civil Rights it is Puslanimity in the vilest, lowest Degree. Neither is it less silly, than it is impolitick, coolly to look the Enemy in the Face, compleatly arm'd, when he may have observed from more than one Experiment, that there is no Danger in our Threats.

When I revolve in my Mind the eternal Glory which our Ancestors atchieved abroad in Arms, the Laurels they brought home from every Quarter of the Globe, to see what a Height the Honour of our Country was carry'd; our Commerce protected and extended, the Wealth of both Worlds flowing daily into our Harbours, and that an *Englishman* was every where treated with
 uncommon

uncommon Regard by Foreigners of all Sorts; when we from Time to Time made War, or gave Peace to the Nations, even to this haughty, ancient Enemy of *Great Britain*, the *Spaniard*; and when I consider what we are now, I cannot help being warm'd as an *Englishman*, I do feel, on this Occasion, an indignant Glowing in my Breast, and fancy I hear *Great Britain* complaining with *Anthony* in *Shakespear*.

* *I, that with my good Sword quarter'd the Globe,
And o'er green Neptune's Back with Ships made Cities,
Condemn myself to lack the Courage of a Woman.*

The whole Point turns upon this, whether or no, at the present *Crisis*, we ought, by *vigorous Measures*, to right ourselves, or trust to the Word of the *Spaniard* to right us? Whether every Thing valuable does not depend upon it? Whether the present Occasion and Necessity, do not require and call for it loudly? As *Cicero* says, *Tempus Necessitas que postulat, decertandum Manu est, et Mors Servituti Turpitudinique anteponenda.*

The Merchants have been so successful in proving this Point, that whatever Reasons have as yet been offer'd to the Publick against

* *Shakespear's Anthony and Cleopatra.*

it, have proved the strongest Reasons for it. There may be some that are kept secret, involved in thick Darkness, and this the Creatures of the Great seriously assure us of; but what do they mean by the *Point de Raison*, in Politicks? Let them be implicitly yielded to by their servile Flatterers; I know not that we are obliged to believe in political Mysteries.

Let me close what has been said with an Observation made by an excellent Poet of our own. Were the Question, says he, to be put in general Terms, which were to be prefer'd, War or Peace, it would be only to ask which were better, Sickness or Health.

** Since War the Sicknes of the Kingdom is,
And Peace the Health; but here I do conceive
'Twill rather be; whether we had not better
Endure sharp Sicknes for a Time, to enjoy
A perfect Strength, than have it languish on us.*

I have endeavour'd to give the Sentiments of the Gentlemen concern'd in these Debates, as near their own Words and Manner as I was able; but I am very sensible I have not done them Justice. There appears to be sometimes a little more Heat than one could wish, which runs thro' their Discourse;

** Suckling's Brevevails.*

when the Heart is warm, the Words will be so too; and sometimes there is a Sort of Eloquence occasion'd by this Emotion, which gives a Grace to what we say, almost equal to the Choice of our Words; and if Action be the chief Part of an Orator, as we are told, it is absolutely necessary.

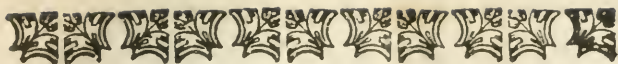
I had some Thoughts once of writing a Weekly Paper, intitled *The MEDIATOR*, wherein I propos'd to be serviceable to my Countrymen, by applying Lenitives to all their Party Prejudices, now and then intervening between their Passions and Errors; and where I met with chronical and obstinate Diseases of the Mind, there I determin'd to apply the Corrosive of my Ink, and expose them to the Censure of all reasonable and honest Men. But as I was digesting somewhat of this Kind, I found myself grow extremely warm, full of Prejudice, and obstinate to a ridiculous Degree, which, in my own cooler Thoughts, render'd me incapable of the Office. There was likewise, to deal ingeniously, another Motive, which wholly determin'd me not to go on. I consider'd, that one Party; whom I must in Justice be oblig'd to animadvert upon, as well as the other, had very sharp Teeth,
and

and long Claws; and had not sometimes Philosophy enough to keep his Temper.

And now I conclude, by giving publick Notice to all Gentlemen Writers whatsoever, and others, who may be preparing to print Papers, intituled, *Answers, Replies, Observations, Examinations, Reflections*, or under whatsoever other Denomination they design to appear; particularly to those candid and honorary Voters for Power, the *Daily Gazetteers*, that I am now preparing a full and clear Answer to this little Book myself, intituled, *A Conversation at Court*; and I hope they will not be offended that I take the Work out of their Hands; for I do undertake to shew them more Faults in this Piece, than they can possibly discover, tho' they labour to find 'em out with all the Forces of their Learning and Ingenuity.

F I N I S.





Lately Publish'd,

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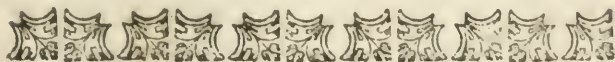
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

TO HIS

FRIEND in the Country.

UPON the Motion to address his Majesty to settle 100,000 l. *per Annum* on his Royal Highness the PRINCE of *WALE S*, &c. In which the antient and modern State of the *Civil List*, and the Allowance to the *Heir apparent*, or *presumptive*, of the Crown, are particularly consider'd.

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L E T T E R

FROM

A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

TO HIS

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