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FOUR
LETTERS

PUBLISHED IN
OLD ENGLAND:

OR, THE
CONSTITUTIONAL JOURNAL,

(*Viz. of Feb. the 25th, Mar. the 3d, 10th, and 17th.*)

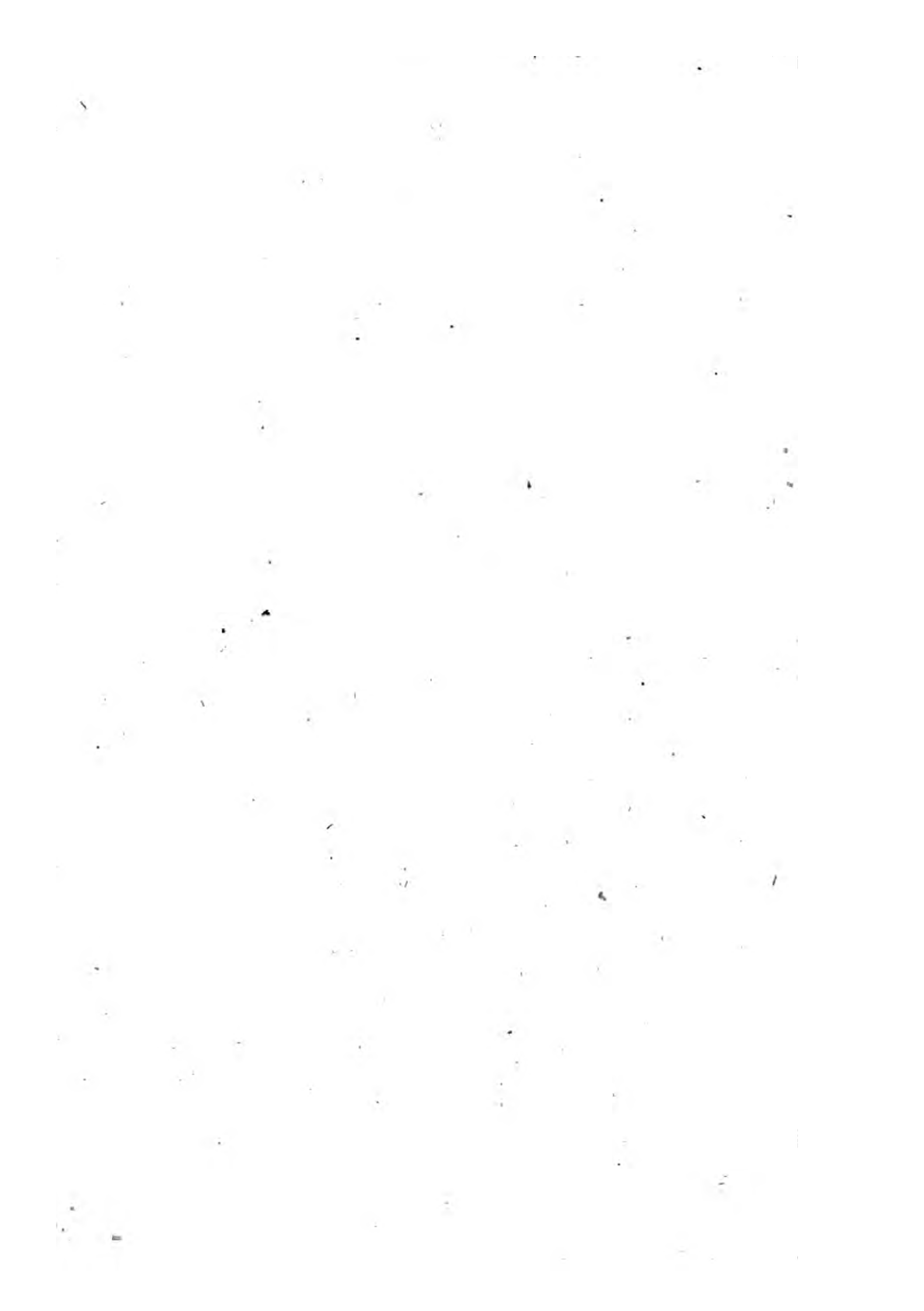


LONDON:

Printed for B. COWSE, at the *Globe* in *Pater-*
noster-Row, 1744.

[Price Six-pence.]

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OLD ENGLAND:
OR, THE
CONSTITUTIONAL JOURNAL.

By JEFFREY BROADBOTTOM, of Covent Garden, Esq;

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1744. [No. 56.]



T was the noble Advice of *Demosthenes* to the Citizens of *Athens*, together with the Cause of the *Republic* to assume the Magnanimity of the *Republic*.

In taking up the Pen for the People of *England*, let it then become me, to write with as much Spirit as our Forefathers fought: Let me be allowed to forget that I am an Individual, and endeavour to speak with the Voice of the Common-Wealth.

If there is any Spark of our antient Virtue remaining, I shall not only find Indulgence, but command Attention: I do not stand forth to urge any Interest of my own; in all I have to say, every *Englishman* is as much concerned as myself. The Crisis affects all alike, and if all were but awakened to the same Sense of it, what is now, with so much Reason, our Terror, might possibly be made the Means of our Preservation.

Salus Populi suprema Lex, is not only a trite and true Maxim, but the very Basis of all just Government : In a most particular Manner it is the Basis, nay the only Basis of our present happy Establishment. Whatever might be the *Fact*, we all know the *Pretence* of the *Revolution*, was to redress the Grievance of the *Delivered*, and not to gratify the Ambition of the *Deliverer* : And when the *Act of Settlement* took Place, the only Compliment thereby made to the House of *Hanover*, was, the National Belief, that under those Princes, *only*, our *Liberties could be safe*.

As, therefore, it was not for the Sake of *one Man*, or one *Family*, but the *whole* People, that this Transfer was made of the Crown of *England*, it is Demonstrably our Right, it is indispensibly our Duty, to see that the Conditions are fulfilled ; and to insist, that our own Act and Deed should operate to our own Use and Advantage ; as it is not to be questioned, but his present most gracious Majesty believes it does, and intends it should.

Let it be remembered, on our Side, that the said Act of Settlement was an Act of Grace, that the House of *Hanover* had neither Services to urge by way of Plea for such a magnificent Boon, nor Power to exact it : And not only so, but that we made, of our own Accord, several large Abatements in the original Terms on which they were to receive and enjoy it : Nay more ; that since the Accession, we have scarce denied any one Thing which hath been asked of us ; Laws, Men, Money, in whatever Proportion, or of whatever Kind : Had the two Princes of this House been *Lords* of the *Soil*, instead of *Stewards* for the People, they could not have levied larger Fines, or received a more unreserved Homage. On a Principle of Gratitude, therefore, as well as Justice, every Act of State, or Measure of Government, ought to be calculated, purely and simply, for the GOOD of the PEOPLE.

Unluckily, the venerable Maxim before quoted, is subject to a *Ministerial*, as well as a *Popular Interpretation*; and hath often been made the Pretence for squandering the Substance, and superseding all the Rights and Privileges of the Commonwealth. For our GOOD we have been loaded with *Taxes* and *Excises*; for our GOOD we have been hamstrung with *penal Laws*; for our GOOD we have been bridled with *Standing Armies*; for our GOOD the *Public Debts* are like to be made *perpetual*; for our GOOD we have been the *Bubbles* of every State in *Europe*; for our GOOD both the *Purse* and *Sword* have been left at the *Discretion* of the Prince; and for our GOOD we have been deprived of the Benefit of the *Habeas-Corpus Act*, which is the *sole Fence* of the Subject against the Power of the Crown.

Thus our own Artillery hath been turned upon us, and the very Principle upon which we grounded our Preservation, hath been made the Means of our Undoing.

What a wretched Situation must that Country be in, which hath Reason to consider its own Ministers as Enemies, and which cannot guard against Dangers from abroad, without running the Risque of being enslaved at home? And yet so oddly have we been circumstanced, that in flying from imaginary Mischiefs, we have seldom or never failed to rush upon real ones.

We are, at this Instant, alarmed with the *old ministerial Cry*, of *France* and the *Pretender*; of *Armies* and *Transports, incog, at Dunkirk*; of *invincible Armadas* from *Brest*, of *disaffected Persons* among ourselves, &c. in consequence of which a Panic hath seized upon the C——t, the P——y-Beacons have been fired, double Care hath been taken of the *Tower*, and all our Land Forces, except Two or Three Regiments, have been most politicly ordered up into the Neighbourhood of this Capital, by way of providing, no doubt, for the Security of *our Coasts*.

Now

Now these dreadful Tidings are either true or false. If true ; how will our all-sufficient Statesman excuse himself for having treated *France* as a *contemptible Power*, from which so little was to be feared, that we had nothing to do, but to draw the Sword, and carve out its Dominions into what Shreds and Fritters we pleased ? Where was the *Intelligence* which ought to be the Fruit of all those mighty Sums which are said to be annally expended in *secret Services* ? How can he keep himself in Countenance for having embroiled us in his rash and ridiculous Measures abroad, and thereby drawn upon us this shocking Insult at home ? And what Hope can he entertain of conquering other Nations, when he betrays such Apprehensions for, and Jealousies of, our own ?

If false, what infinite Reason have we either to *despise* or *distrust* his Conduct, beyond Measure ? To *despise* it, if he has play'd the Bully, when conscious he was a Coward ; if he has taken Windmills for Ships, Flocks of Sheep for Armies, and scattered Terrors through the Kingdom, which have no better Foundation than his own Distempered Dreams ? And to *distrust* it, if he hath propagated an Account of Dangers which he *knows* have no Existence ; if he hath stigmatized the People with a Brand which he *knows* they do not deserve, and grasps at Powers, which he *knows* the Public Necessities do not call for.

But in dutiful Deference to the great Authority, which hath been *used* upon this Occasion, I will not here presume, but that every Tittle of the Advice, we have been favoured with, was *then* believed to be indisputable Matter of Fact.

That the *French* were able to put a formidable Squadron of Ships to Sea, is now self-evident ; that till the very Instant, almost, of their Sailing, we were ignorant alike of their Strength and their Preparations, seems to be highly probable ; that we came to the Knowledge, at last, by Accident, I believe nobody makes

makes any doubt: That we were in no Condition to receive them, in Case they had made any immediate Attempt upon us, will likewise admit of Demonstration: And consequently we were indeed expos'd to a Danger, which was the more surprizing, because so little suspected.

But how came we to be at once so unguarded and so secure? We knew we had *provok'd France*, though we had not been able to *hurt* her: And the Affair of *Dettingen* might have convinc'd us, that she would not stand upon *Ceremonies* when Revenge was in her Power.

If, therefore, we have Reason to be alarm'd, if there is a Necessity to strengthen the Hands of the Government, it is necessary also to enquire how we came to be so expos'd, and at whose Door the Fault ought to be lay'd. Nor is it of more Consequence to the present *happy* Establishment to provide against the Designs of its Enemies, than to detect the Blunders, Neglects, and, perhaps, Treacheries of its Servants.

But granting we had Reason to *expect* an Invasion, I can't see what Reason we had to *fear* it. I remember in the annual Debate on the *Standing Army*, the standing Topic of those in Power, to shew the Necessity of it, was the Possibility of a sudden Attempt of that Nature, and the Impossibility of repulsing an Enemy, without the Assistance of disciplin'd Troops: Seventeen thousand odd hundred Men, were then held sufficient for that Purpose; or otherwise it is plain, we were impos'd upon: And these Troops were kept up for *some other Purpose*, which would not bear an *Acknowledgment*.

But, instead of 17,000, we have still between 20 and 30,000 *at Home*, including *Marines*, on the *British* Establishment; we have a List of Men of War that seems to set the *Maritime* Force of all *Europe* at Defiance; his Majesty has all the Powers over the

MILITIA, which our Forefathers were fo extremely jealous of, and once actually wrested out of the Hands of the Crown; the two Houses are both fitting, and both most loyally dispos'd to make a Sacrifice of their *Lives* and *Fortunes* in his Service; the City of *London* makes a Declaration to the same Purpose; and, no doubt, the Example will be follow'd by all the Corporations, great and small, thro' the Nation.

I say, again, therefore, what Reason was there to *fear* an *Invasion*? Is not this whole Kingdom able to defend itself against such a *Handful* of *Invad-ers*, as a Dozen or Two of wretched Transports can waft over? Can we not be preserv'd without the Help of *six Thousand Foreigners*? If not, why do we undertake the Protection of *Hungary* and *Sardinia*? And if more Forces are still wanting, why do we not *recall* OUR OWN? Self-preservation is the first Law of Nature as well as Policy, and none but a Lunatic would part with the Sword, which was necessary for his own Defence.

But *Disaffection*———For shame! Where is it to be found? We see the Executive and Legislative Power so closely united, that one Spirit seems to animate both: And for the Body of the People, let their own Addresses answer for them.

Therefore, if *Disaffection* lurks any where, it is in the Company of those who made the Cry; and they ought to be oblig'd to produce their Vouchers, for casting this foul Aspersions upon their Fellow-Subjects.

Had they, indeed, made use of the Word *Dissatisfaction*, they had been guilty of no Impropriety: *Dissatisfy'd* we have long been, and I have my Eye on *certain noble Persons*, who, but very lately, thought we had sufficient Reasons to justify us, not only for being so, but for avowing it: And if we are to be *proscrib'd* and *subdu'd* because we are *dissatisfied*, I
will

will not answer that, in the End, we shall not become *dissaffected* too.

But *Diffatisfaction*, or the *expressing Diffatisfaction*, is so far from being a Crime, that it is one of the fundamental Privileges of the free People of *England*. Every Body knows, that, antiently, the Redress of Grievances was the principal Business of Parliament; and if Grievances are not declar'd, surely they cannot be redress'd.

Now, it is notorious, that we have complained of Grievances, without Intermission, for many a long Year past; nay, that the said *noble Persons* once made it their Glory to be the Mouth of the People; and can any one of them pretend to say that any of those Grievances have been remov'd? On the contrary, have not they themselves added Weight to all they found? And is there any Reason that we should carry *double* now, when we have their *own* Evidence, that our Backs were almost broken before?

Distresses are to Governments, what Grievances are to the People: And nothing is so delicate as the Feeling of Courts at those Times, tho' it is so numb'd and dead at all other: When, therefore, the first made their Demands, the *last* should prefer their Petitions; and both Grievances and Distresses should be removed together.

And this is not only the Dictate of Justice but Policy; for, wherever there is *Fear*, there is *Weakness*; and where there is *no Oppression*, there is no Room for *Fear*. There is more Security in the Hearts and Affections of the People, than the united Influence of the Sword and Purse: Nor can a Government wear an Aspect more alarming to the Subject, than when it chuses to depend *solely* on the *one*, and apparently disdains and despises the *other*: When instead of seeking out Means to remove Discontents, it aims only at the Power of making them perpetual;

and affects to number among its *Enemies* all those who resolve not to be *Slaves*.

In such a State, the Rumour of an *Invasion* would excite neither *Terror* nor *Abhorrence*; for the People would be in the Condition of the Ass in the Fable, who, being urg'd by his *Master* to mend his Pace, because the *Enemy was at hand*, reply'd, *Am not I ready to sink under my Burden? What can I suffer more?*

Let us thank *God* that this Ass is not as yet, the Type of *Old England?*



SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1744. [No. 57.]



THE Inhabitants of this Capital, for some Days past, have almost answered the Description which is given of the *Athenians*, in the Acts of the *Apostles*, who are there said, *to have spent their Time in nothing else, but either the telling or hearing some strange Things*. News, News, News, hath been our perpetual Enquiry: And all Conversation hath been engrossed by Curiosity on one Side, and Rumour on the other.

The Crisis, I must own, is an alarming one: No Courtier can entertain a worse Opinion of a *French Revolution* than I; nor would the most forward and zealour of our Addressors be more sincerely pleased with the glad Tidings, that the Impromptu-Squadron under Sir *John Norris* had rescued us from our *Fears* as well as from our *Dangers*.

But, I must own likewise, that I am not more afraid of Mischiefs from abroad, than of a Surrender at home: The governing without Parliaments, the carrying all Things with a high Hand, is not the only Way, by which a Nation may be ruined. There is a Complaisance which, though made current with the Stamp of Loyalty, is not Sterling. There is a *Can-*
dour,

dour, which may prove as fatal to us, as *Cæsar's* Virtues did to *Rome*. Our first Obligations are to our Country, for whose Sake our very Kings are made; and if we should ever * complement away our Liberties, what will be left us worth preserving?

The many Checks upon the Royal Power which are inwove in our Constitution, are the main Ingredients of its Happiness: And, consequently, if we should ever remove, or even suspend those Checks, we suspend or remove its Happiness likewise.

Every Body knows with what extreme Facility, we have been induced to make Concessions to the Crown; and the Experiences of both past and present Times, sufficiently evidence how hard and difficult it is, either to make a Resumption, or extort the smallest Grace from the Crown to the People.

A Nation is never so much in Danger from a foreign Enemy, as when its own Grandees lead it to the Altar, and the only Dispute is, who shall have the Fees of the Sacrifice.

But when such should be demonstrably the Fact, with what Face could any Man contend, for extinguishing that rational and laudable Jealousy which is the Basis of Liberty; or for placing *any where* an unreserved Confidence; or for swallowing Informations, delivered in a Tone of Voice how big soever, if unsupported with clear and conclusive Evidence.

B 2

In

* *Mr. Trenchard, in the Close of his Argument against a Standing Army, published first in the Reign of King William, has the following Passage.*

‘ But if there are any Gentlemen amongst them, who think we can
 ‘ no otherwise express our Gratitude, but by signing and sealing our
 ‘ own Ruin, I hope we shall disappoint their Expectations, and not give
 ‘ the World Occasion to tell so foolish a Story of us, as that we turned to
 ‘ GRASS one of the most powerful Monarchs in the World, for breaking
 ‘ our *Laws*: That we maintained an eight Years War, at the Ex-
 ‘ pence of forty Millions of Money, and the Blood of three hundred
 ‘ thousand Men, to justify the glorious Action we have done; that by
 ‘ it we preserved all Europe besides, and LOST OUR OWN LIBER-
 ‘ TIES.’

In *England*, when extraordinary Aids, or extraordinary Powers, became necessary for the Safety of the Commonwealth, it used to be the Custom, together with the Demand, to give in the Facts and Reasons on which it was founded.

Even so low down in our Annals, as the Reign of Queen *Anne*, when Preparations were known to be making at *Dunkirk* for an Invasion of this Kingdom, in Behalf of the *Pretender*, the PROOFS of the FACT were communicated, TOGETHER with the MESSAGE, by which it was made public by Authority.

It is true, we have not always been treated with the same Ceremony since: For in the Year 1726, his late Majesty was pleased to declare, That he had received Informations from *different Parts*, on which he could *entirely depend*, that the placing the *Pretender* upon the Throne of this Kingdom, was one of the secret Articles of the *secret Engagements*, (then supposed to be made) &c.

But though this Information was given by the King himself, *Vouchers* were called for by those who were *then* proud of being thought the Friends of the People; and, for want of them, the whole Story was not only treated as Romantic, but the very Project of an Invasion represented as impracticable, without the Help of Captain GULLIVER'S FLOATING ISLAND: And the *State-Undertaker of those Times*, who rarely wanted either Cunning or Confidence, had no other Recourse, than to parry the Thrust, by a bold Assertion, That the Authorities in Question, were in the K---'s own Hands.

The Difficulty was thus shifted from the Servant to the Master, who, 'tis certain, thought himself us'd so unworthily upon this Occasion, that, he designed, upon his Return from Abroad, to put his Affairs into other Hands: But Death prevented his righteous Purpose: And so these *different Informations*, which were *so entirely depended on*, remain a Secret to this Day.

Thus

Thus it is pretty clear, that in all these critical Cafes, we have a Right to the clearest Informations, (nay this is acknowledged even by the Author of the famous *Enquiry*, published in 1727.) because we are liable to be deceived, and, consequently to be Sufferers for our Credulity.

But, most fatally for us, there are Times, when the *Rights* of the People seem to weigh no more than the Dust of the Ballance, when put in the Scale against the *Convenience* of a Court, or an Administration: And when the Rights of the People are manifestly treated with Contempt, would it not to be downright Phrenzy in some, and, ***** in others, to sacrifice all Things to the Distresses of a Government, without the least Stipulation in Favour of the Govern'd?

Past Experience, I remember, when the settling the present *Civil List* was under Deliberation, was introduced as an infallible Arbiter in Behalf of the Establishment: And in Defiance of Common Sense, shall it stand but for a *Cypher*, when call'd upon to bear Evidence for the Commonwealth?

But let us enter more circumstantially into the grand Question, at present, before us, which I will do with all the Decency and Moderation in my Power; for, though I am most tenderly and warmly concern'd for the Interest, Honour, and Liberty of Old *England*, I would not be understood to shew the least Countenance to those, (if any such there be) who lie in wait to throw us into Confusion.

The Story of a great Minister's being frighten'd out of his Wits, upon the Receipt of a *Penny-post Letter*, very justly excited the Ridicule and Laughter of the Public: And, in my humble Opinion, a State of the *Aspen Kind*, which trembles with every *Whisper*, presents an Image to the full as ridiculous and contemptible.

A Government should be suppos'd incapable of Fear, and guarded against every Danger ; and when it calls out for Help, the Alarm, both according to Reason and Precedent, should be accompany'd with a Demonstration, that such Help was necessary ; and likewise with such *Acts of Grace and Goodness* as might heal all Divisions, by rooting out every Cause of Discontent.

But we have liv'd to see quite other Maxims follow'd : Terrors from Abroad, have been coupled with the Reproach of Disaffection at Home ; upon the Strength of which, Demands have been made and comply'd with implicitly, even without any one Paper-Evidence to keep them in Countenance.

And even in our present Case, is it not a little remarkable, that such Vouchers as have been communicated, relate to Facts and Circumstances which happen'd *after* the first Intelligence was given, and the first Demand was made ?

But of what Kind are these Vouchers ? And what Light do they reflect on the present Political Chaos ?

Why these Vouchers, it seems, are the Affidavit of a certain Master of a Packet, lately arriv'd from *Calais*, and the Copies of two Dispatches from our Resident at *Paris*.

And first of the *Affidavit*, which consists of what the said Master *heard* and *saw*.

What he heard was to this Effect, That an Army of 15,000 Foot and Dragoons was embark'd, and embarking at *Dunkirk*, in order to be landed, as some said, in *Kent*, and, as others, in *Scotland*. That the Dragoons were equipp'd with their Bridles and Saddles only. That between twenty and thirty Transports, together with seven or eight little Men of War, lay ready to receive this Army ; and that Count *Saxe* was gone from *Calais* to take upon him the Command. This is what he HEARD.

What

What he *saw*, was, *Imprimis*, One young Man of about twenty-four Years of Age, who was *said* to be the *Pretender's Son*, and was publickly call'd the CHEVALIER.

Item, Another young Man, who was *said* to be *Brother* to the First.

Note, He could not get a *distinct* View of the Face of this same doughty *Chevalier*, which makes it the more extraordinary, that he was so well able to guess at his Age. And note farther, that a late circumstantial *Gazette* expressly declares, his Brother was *left behind*.

The Dispatches of our *Minister* consist of a Representation made by him to the Court of *France*, according to Order, in Relation to what his Majesty had *heard* of the *Pretender's Son* being arriv'd in that Kingdom; as also, that his Majesty did not doubt, but, upon this said Minister's Representations, this Person would not only be oblig'd to retire out of *France*, if he was actually in it, but that his most *Christian* Majesty would also fulfill his Engagements, &c. And the *French* Answer, or rather no Answer thereto; which signified, That, when the King of *England* shall have caus'd Satisfaction to be given upon the repeated Complaints that have been made to him, of the Infractions of those very Treaties, of which he now demands the Performance, his most *Christian* Majesty will then explain himself upon the Demand, then made by the said *Minister*.

The Sum Total amounts to this, That his Majesty has heard the *Pretender's Son* is in *France*: That it is *said* he is at *Calais*: And that it is the *Talk* of that Place, that *Kent* or *Scotland* is to be invaded by 15,000 Men, in two Dozen of Transports from *Dunkirk*.

And is this to be held *undoubted Intelligence*? Is this a sufficient Warrant for propagating so dreadful

ful an Alarm, even before this *undoubted Intelligence* was receiv'd? Doth this afford a rational Pre-
tence for Augmentation upon Augmentation, for Ex-
pence upon Expence, and for calling in a Band of
foreign Auxiliaries, without a previous Application to
Parliament into the Bargain; whom we must pay for
defending us, even while we support an Army for
defending them? The Voice of Authority assures us
it doth; and implicit Faith must pave the Way for
implicit Obedience.

This, however, it ought to be again observed,
was but our second Intelligence; our first, on
which the Alarm was originally founded, has ne-
ver been communicated at all: Which is so much
the more to be wonder'd at, because our State-
MASTERS *then* assur'd us, in the strongest Terms,
that the whole *French Fleet* was actually at *Dun-*
kirk; and some People are so hardy to assert,
in Contradiction, that there was, at that Time,
but one Frigate in that Port, with about seven,
or, according to others, twelve or fourteen Mer-
chant Ships.

Besides, there seems to be a material Defect in the
Papers we have already been favour'd with——
For whatever Proof they afford of a projected Inva-
sion, they are totally silent upon the Head of *Dis-*
affection. And since the Time when that hideous Word
was brought into Play, it is well known, that a
certain Person, who *passes for a great Minister*, hath
declar'd in the most open and public Manner, That
Jacobitism was at its last Gasp; that it was worn
almost to a Shadow; and that it was on the very
Point of Annihilation.

It may be urg'd, perhaps, that if Evidence of this
Sort has not already occur'd, it very speedily may.
—— That the Cry is rais'd: That the Game is put
up: That the Toils are set, &c.

I answer : It is fit the Guilty should suffer. But upon these Occasions, I cannot help trembling for the Innocent.

Upon the whole, though no Body is more sincerely attached to the present happy Establishment than myself, I cannot suffer the Raptures of my Loyalty to run away with my Understanding ; and, therefore I take the Liberty to declare a second Time, against *Criminal Complaisance*, against *destructive Candour*.

It is now Self-evident, our *Ministers* have not the least Grounds to complain of the People ; who have purg'd themselves in the most effectual Manner, from all the Slanders, which the scribbling Prostitutes of the Age have thrown upon them : What we have to expect then, is for our Ministers so to behave, as that the People may no longer have any Cause to complain of them : As we have remov'd their Distresses, let them remove our Grievances ; and then mutual Confidence will take place of mutual Jealousies. But if it appears, we are still to have no Returns ; if we are both to perform all and endure all, our Apprehensions of Danger from Abroad, will soon vanish, and we shall attend only to the Means of obtaining Redress at Home.

I shall conclude in the Words of that great Champion for *Liberty* and the *Revolution*, the Lord *Delamere*.

' That if through the Administration of those who
' are trusted with the executive Power, or by any
' other Means, my *Liberty* shall become PRECA-
' RIOUS, I will then be for any other Form of Go-
' vernment, under which my *Liberty and Property*
' may be more SECURE, and TILL THEN, I don't
' desire to CHANGE.'



SATURDAY, MARCH, 1744.

[No.58]



T was but Yesterday, as it were, that Ad-
dresses were solicited all over the Kingdom,
in Honour of the Wonders of *Dettingen*,
and the happy Termination of a Com-
paign which had prov'd so glorious to the Allies, by
the driving the *French* out of *Germany*, and the brav-
ing them on their own Frontier: And to Day, ac-
cording to *Butler's* humorous Expression,

‘ He that, e'er while, was great as *Cæsar*,

‘ Is now reduc'd to *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Our Laurels are already wither'd, our Hearts die
within us, and *Lives* and *Fortunes* are the only Cor-
dial that can keep us from giving up the Ghost.

Thus, as upon a Demise of the Crown, our *Ad-
ressors* pay their Court with Grief in one Hand,
and Joy in the other; they now reverse that Prac-
tice, and complement with Joy in one Hand, and
Grief in the other.

How melancholy, how mortifying a Change? And
how plainly does it indicate, that either our present
Panic, or late Triumph, had but a very slender Foun-
dation?

Let us pursue this Reflection a little farther.

It is not much above a Year, since we were told
by our Politicians of the first Rank, that *France* was
so exhausted and empoverish'd by her late Exploits,
that we might, not only with Safety, undertake to
draw her Teeth and pare her Nails, but with Cer-
tainty of Success in the Operation.

Upon this Principle, which was urg'd with that
dictatoreal Air, which will not admit of Disputation,
which cannot bear Contradiction, we neglected the

Peo-

People's War, which these very Politicians, had once patroniz'd with as much Zeal, as if the very Being of the Nation depended on it, and madly embroil'd ourselves in a Land-war on the Continent; not only without the Concurrence of the *Dutch*, but against their express Inclination; and in Contempt of the Gospel Queries, Whether with Ten Thousand, we could conquer Twenty Thousand? Or whether, when we had form'd our political Plan, our Cash would hold out to finish the Edifice?

It is true, the then Undertaker, in St. S——'s C——I, was pleas'd to declare, That, unless the *States* co-operated, we ought to withdraw our Forces, and intrench ourselves within our Island: But his Credit faded with his Power, and as little Trace remain'd of his Engagement as of his Virtue.

Our Ideas became soon more elevated, our Projects more extensive, and our Expectations more sanguine: From Schemes of barely humbling *France*, we flatter'd ourselves with a Notion of conquering *France*. The Splendours of *Agincourt*, *Cressy*, and *Poitiers*, to say nothing of *Malplaquet*, *Ramellies*, and *Blenheim*, were in Imagination already eclips'd, and Fancy presented a second *French Monarch* in Chains at our Feet.

Dunkirk was the least of our ideal Conquests, *Alsace* and *Lorraine* were held such trifling Spoils as to be scarce worth picking up: Even *Paris* itself was expected to yield to our victorious Arms; and Wagers were *advertis'd*, that before the Summer was out, our Triumphs at *Rheims*, would equal *Alexander's* at *Babylon*.

Nor were we content with all these rapid Successes on this Side of the *Alps*, our Influence was to be prov'd as great, and our Genius as invincible on the other: The Two *Sicilies*, at least, were to reward the Queen of *Hungary* for the generous Sacrifice which, at our Instance, she had made of *Silesia*: And

as no one *Frenchman* was to find his Way home from *Prague*, so no one *Spaniard* was to make his Escape out of *Italy*.

Well, agreeable to these lofty Conceptions, we embark'd our own Troops, I should say a Part of them, we hir'd Mercenaries; and then, as if Moderation was the true Heroism, we not only spar'd poor, helpless *France*, now suppos'd to be at our Mercy, but march'd into *Germany*; though with as much Politeness, as if a Gentleman-Usher had been our Commander in Chief: Instead of levying Contributions, we paid our Money for all we wanted; we gave the Emperor to understand, he had nothing to apprehend from us; and when the *French* made their Approaches (who, it was thought, we were in Quest of, with a pious Design to divert them from any longer wasting their Wealth, and throwing away their Lives, in the remotest Parts of the Empire) we most prudently retreated; that it might not be said, *That we were the Aggressors*.

Unfortunately, indeed, the *French* were to the full as Rude as we were Complaisant, and resolv'd to do in Earnest, what we had only dream'd of doing. In short, they hunted us into the Toils; we made a Shift to break through; and had the Address to turn an Escape into a Victory.

But here again a new Fit of Moderation got hold of us: We could not bear to shed the Blood even of an Enemy; nor would be prevail'd on to make the most of an Advantage, which, like *Honour to Falstaff*, came thus *unlook'd for*.

However, though we shew'd all this Compassion Abroad, we were not, as yet, in the Humour to shew any at home. Tho' we triumph'd over *France*, our Contributions, as it was foretold in this Paper, were to be rais'd *here*. Thus the Success, which was owing to Providence only and the Intrepidity of our Troops, our Ministers modestly arrogated to themselves.

elves. It was a Proof of the Rectitude of their Measures; of the Superiority of their Understanding: Of the Almightyness of *Great Britain*, and the Debility of *France*: And to put all this out of Doubt, they resolv'd to pursue their hopeful Projects without the Assistance, scarce the Countenance of our Allies; and, in a Manner, to place the whole Burden of the War upon ourselves: Nay, so highly did they presume on their own Abilities, and such a thorough Contempt did they manifest for the Power of *France*, that they took upon them to canton out *Italy*, after their own good Pleasure, as they had done the Dominions of *Prussia* formerly: And provided they continued to have the Wealth and Strength of *England*, at their Devotion, they seem'd to be under no Pain for any other Event.

But however tame and tractable they found their Fellow-Subjects, *France* rous'd herself, when it was least expected, and in a Manner they dreaded most: The immediate Consequence of which was, that their Dream vanish'd, their Bubble broke, and in the first Transports of their Terror and Distraction, the grand Secret escap'd, that *France* was *still* mighty enough to be *still* formidable; and that, instead of rescuing other Nations out of her dreadful Hand, they thought their utmost Efforts would scarce provide for the Security of their own.

Poor *England*, which was safe and fearless in the late War, with less than 10,000 disciplin'd Troops, when *Dunkirk* was in all its Pride and Glory, under their Administration, trembled with the bare Rumour of an intended Invasion, tho' at that very Instant guarded with above 25,000.

No, not these 25000, nor the new Levies they had it in their Power to raise, nor the additional Help which they might have had from the MILITIA, nor the near Neighbourhood of our victorious Army in *Flanders*, were now, it seems, held sufficient for our
Pre-

Preservation, without the Assistance of SIX THOUSAND DUTCH.

If any Persons are curious to know why we chose to rely on these *Dutch* Auxiliaries, rather than our own gallant Troops, who distinguished themselves so gloriously at *Dettingen*? Let them ask *that Man* who, a few Years ago, stifled the Enquiry into the State of *Dunkirk*, who would not suffer it to be call'd a PORT, in Contradiction to the Evidence of our own *Custom-house* Authorities, and to whose Account chiefly, the present exorbitant Power of *France* is to be plac'd; and he shall have the prodigious Assurance to tell them, That these gallant Troops of ours, were so stung with the Insults and Injuries they had received from the *H——ns*, and so exasperated with the Prospect of being *kept under* yet another Campaign, that they were not to be TRUSTED with the Defence of their own Country.

It happen'd, however, that the Situation of these very Troops was the most lucky imaginable to defeat the Invasion which was so grievously apprehended: For it is scarce possible to make such a Disposition of our Forces on Shore, if they were ever so numerous, as to hinder an Enemy from Landing, who has the free Use of the Sea: But an Embarkation from *Ostend* might have almost kept Pace with an Embarkation from *Dunkirk*; and might have held the same Course: So that the very same Port which had receiv'd the Invader, had likewise receiv'd the Deliverer. A Discovery, which our great Politicians seem, at last, to have made: For, it is now said, That Ten Battalions of those Forces are order'd to hold themselves in Readiness to embark; and that a certain Number of Transports have been dispatch'd to wait their Motions.

Now this very Circumstance alone is sufficient to shake the Credit of the Invasion. The Ministers of *France* are not very famous for rash Measures; and
 though

though it is *possible* they might have made one desperate Push by way of Surprize, it is not very probable. For it is notorious, they would have received no Countenance here: On the contrary, they would have had the whole Nation to combat with; and what a Figure 15,000 of the best Troops in *Europe* would have made in such an Attempt, let common Sense declare. Besides, are we not AS YET Masters of the Sea? Could not we have instantly cut off their Communication with the Continent? Could not we have poured in what Troops we pleased, and where we pleased, from abroad? And consequently, could ever any one of these bold *Inva-*
ders have returned, to give an Account of the Reception they had met with?

But we have been apparently directed by our Fears, instead of our Reason; and have madly run from one Extreme to another. From having our Heads filled with idle Notions of conquering *France*, we can now dream of nothing but of being conquered by *France*; and by shewing an apparent Distrust of the People, we betray a Consciousness of having given them very sensible Provocations.

There is, besides, as much Absurdity, as Timidity in our Behaviour: For having insulted and bully'd this mighty Neighbour of ours, and put the two Nations into a State of actual War, tho' still under the Cover of a nominal Peace, it seems never to have once enter'd into our Thoughts, that the *French* would make the most of their present Situation, and endeavour, by all possible Means, to distress both us and our Allies: Having once seen their Backs turn'd on *Germany*, we concluded all safe on this Side, and that their last Game would be the Preservation of *Italy* from the Treaty of *Worms*; which we suppos'd, at the same Time, was entirely out of their Power.

How strange a Conceit! To suppose that so wise a Court would endeavour to act where only it would be the most difficult for them to succeed? How reasonable,

sonable, on the contrary, to expect, that they would immediately change their Measures, and remove the Seat of War to a Country, at once more tender, and accessible; where Conquests may be made, and, I'm afraid, may be held; at least, till an Opportunity offers to restore them, in Exchange for such other Places as will serve to gratify their Allies?

We already see, that, weak and exhausted as *France* has been represented, she is not in a Humour to sit down tamely and quietly, while the House of *Bourbon* is driven out of *Italy*. Why, therefore, may we not conceive that all the *Brest* and *Dunkirk* Preparations, were but a Feint to draw our Attention one way, while they made a vigorous Push another? Hath not this Feint already operated in a very natural, and notable Manner? Hath it not effectually open'd our Eyes with Respect to the suppos'd deplorable Condition of that enterprizing Kingdom? Hath it not, and will it not affect our public Credit; at least with Respect to the Cheapness of raising Money? Hath it not frighten'd our Merchants, and thereby embarrass'd and perplex'd, if not put a Stop to our Trade? Doth it not leave the Sea open to Privateers of all Sorts, and the Communication free between *Spain* and the *Indies*? Doth it not give the *Spaniards* Opportunity to make a second Embarkation, and send it, like the First, under the Convoy of four Men of War only, to *Italy*? Doth it not hinder us from supplying Admiral *Matthews* with Victuals, Stores, &c. which he hath so long wanted, and with the first of which, it is said, he is provided but for this present month of *March* only? Supposing him, therefore, to be victorious, would not he be obliged to quit his Station notwithstanding, and leave *Italy* expos'd to the Pleasure of the Enemy? Doth it not harass and bewilder both our Troops and our Measures at home? Doth it not prevent us from sending over that vast Number of Recruits which are necessary to compleat our Corps abroad?

abroad? Doth it not shock and confound our Allies? Doth it not, in a Manner, deprive them of our Assistance, since it appears we now stand in need of our whole Strength, for our own Preservation? Doth it not, therefore, square in every Article with the Views of *France*, if directed against the BARRIER? Is there not good Reason to be afraid of some such Design? Have they not filled all the Garrison Towns, on that Side, with Troops? Have they not already provided vast Magazines of dry Forage? Have we, or our Allies made any Provisions of that Nature? Are not most of the Fortifications, upon the *Austrian* Side, in the most deplorable Condition? Are not they almost destitute of Ordnance, Gunners, &c. In short, if the *French* take the Field as early, as 'tis to be feared they may, what can hinder them from being Masters of the richest Towns in *Flanders*, before the Allies can give them any material Interruption?

Upon the whole, though I am infinitely concerned to find that all the Mischiefs, which every true *Englishman* foresaw and foretold, are now ready to burst upon us, I have not exposed the Nakedness of my Country only to deride it: As we are involved in a *French* War, it is incumbent on us to act as wisely and vigourously as we can for our own Preservation. I wish we were as able, as we are willing; I wish our Strength was equal to our Spirit: And that we had not wantonly and unnecessarily squandered away that mighty Mass of Wealth, which, if properly employed, had made us both the Envy and Terror of the World.

However, as we are like to smart for our Extravagance, and can no longer disguise the Mischiefs it hath brought upon us; I hope that Experience, which is even a Tutor to Fools, will prompt us to guard against the like profligate Measures for the Time to come.

Every body must be sensible, that certain popular Laws are as necessary for the Security of our happy

Constitution against the Encroachments of our *Ministers*, as Men and Money, for the Defence of the present *happy Establishment* against the Designs of the *French*.

Let us then unite in obtaining the *first*, as well as granting the *last*. Let us prove ourselves equally good Subjects and Lovers of our Country. And let us depend upon it, that, if we let slip this Opportunity, we shall never be favoured with such another.



SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1744. [No. 59]



INON, with false, with ridiculous Pretences, persuaded the *Trojans* to break down the Bulwarks of their Safety, in order to give Admittance to the Machine which was pregnant with their Destruction.

—*Fatalis ascendit machina Muros.*

Yet a *Laocoon* was found honest and bold enough to call out to his Countrymen, *Equo ne credite*; which, literally translated, is, *believe not the Horse*. *Laocoon* was devoured by *Serpents*, and a certain Writer may, one Time or other, be snapt up by *Greyhounds*; but he shall fall, at least, with the Honour of having stood by his Principles, while he could stand, and of putting his Countrymen upon their Guard against the *Horse*, before they feel the Destruction that is concealed in his Belly.

Could *Regulus*, when in *Carthaginian* Fetters, act the Part of a *Roman*; and shall a Constitutional Writer, though under M—l Hatches, decline that of an *Englishman*? If the *Carthaginians* found no Quarter from him; shall *** from me? No! *Laocoon* like, I will once more dart my Spear into the Belly of the *Horse*; who knows, feeble as it is, whether it may not wound

wound some *Greek*, who now lurks for the Destruction of our *Troy*?

The present Behaviour of the People of *England* is so strong a Proof of their Loyalty, that, I dare say, there cannot be a Wretch Prostitute enough to affirm that our *presumptuous* Enemies (however they have flattered themselves) have received any Encouragement from our Dispositions. If we are threatened with Danger it can proceed from no Party, from no Faction, from no handful (for one or two misled, infatuated Men, if any such there be, don't deserve even that Appellation) of the People here. It must therefore proceed from foreign Enemies who, fatally I hope for themselves, have been mistaken in their Calculations, who have wrongfully thought that the political Thermometer of *England* had risen to Disaffection, when, in reality, it never exceeded the Bounds of respectful, dutiful, cautious, constitutional, nay loyal Dissatisfaction. As a Champion therefore in Behalf of the People of *England*, I throw down the Gage; I challenge the nicest, the strictest Inquisitor to produce ten Men in *England* whom we can suppose to be on the Side of a *Pretender*; who can have now no other Title but that of Conquest, and who, with that Title, would be the absolute Master of the Lives, the Fortunes, the Laws and Liberties of *England*.

But alas! the Measure of this Country's Misery never can be compleat till it is visited with the Plague of a PLOT. *Virtue* may be Proof against *Corruption*; *Courage* may quell *Violence*, *Abilities* may rectify *Blunders*; but a PLOT is an Evil against which there is no Remedy. While a Plot is in Agitation our *Safety* lies in being *disarmed*; our *Loyalty* consists in a *Suspension of our Liberty*; and the *future Security* of our *Government* can only be provided for by a *temporary Death* of the *Constitution*. This is an Evil not peculiar to this Country; the same Case happened

always in *Rome*; whenever she was cursed with a Minister who had a Genius for plotting, down went all the Bulwarks of public Liberty, and the Government: Perhaps one Man——perhaps the very Man who had cooked up the Plot——received an Order to take Care, that the Republic should receive no Detriment. *Caveret ne quid detrimenti Respublica cape-ret.* These few Words contained a Suspension of their *Habeas Corpus Act*; but like a strong Medicine they at last wore out the Constitution, because too often repeated by bold and ignorant Quacks.

Who can think of the gallant Lord *Ruffel*, who fell a Sacrifice to an imaginary Plot, without dropping a Tear.—That he who was fit to rouse the Lyon in his Den, should be worry'd to Death by Greyhounds in their Kennel? Can a Man read the History of such Times as those without asking within himself what became then of the Spirit of the Nation? This Question may be easily resolved; it was lost, it was absorbed in courtly Compliances: *Public Danger* was pretended, and however ridiculous the Pretence was, yet no Man thought himself safe to *expose*, far less to *oppose* it. The Man who had acted such a Part would have incurred Suspicion of being himself a Party; therefore Jealousy of his own Character made every Man at least *passive*, amidst all the illegal, the criminal Violences carry'd on; and even *Consciousness of Innocence* became but too often the *Motive of Compliance*. From this Tenderness, in Favour of Government, the Nation towards the latter End of King *Charles's* Reign, received surprizing Impressions of the Designs of the Country Party. All Opposition was branded with the Name of Faction; the People sunk in a Lethargy, till they were awak'd out of it by the Frenzy of King *James*; and at last the wise, the honest Part, after suffering long for the *Shadow*, took Refuge in the *Substance*.

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In almost all the former Periods of our History, even in Times the best affected to the reigning Princes, some, however few, were found either thro' Madness, Principle, or Ambition, ready to enter into actual Plots, Conspiracies, nay Rebellions. But what was the *Fort*, what was the *Criterion* of those who were in the late Opposition and are now in the M-----? What was the Characteristic they assumed?—Was it not, that there has not been for these dozen of Years ten *Jacobites* in the Kingdom? Can we forget with what Zeal they labour'd to prove, that the Strength of the late Ministry lay in those Countries where *Papists*, and formerly reputed *Jacobites* had the greatest Interest? That the Hopes of the *Pretender* were too effectually crushed for his Followers ever again to hold up their Heads? And that no People ever were known to be so unanimous in any one Point, as the People of *England* are in detesting, in exploding all *Jacobite* Principles and Affections? The present Juncture proves they reasoned rightly: So unreserved an Opinion has the People of his Majesty's Virtues, that they have made him a Tender of their Purfes, their Lives, nay their Liberties.—I say their Liberties, the last Thing a true *Englishman* ever will part with.—In short, the great, the mighty Debt which this Nation owed to his Majesty's personal Virtues is now paid;—The *Habeas Corpus* Act is suspended—suspended at a Time when the People of *England* seem to have but one Voice, and that to pronounce the strongest, the fullest, the most *substantial* Assurances of supporting the House of *Hanover*; when they seem to have but one Eye, and that directed to watch over their Prince's Safety;—when they seem to have but one Purse, and that open to his Wants (if it be possible for a King so beloved, so supported, so *supplied*, to want for any thing)—when they seem to have but one Affection, and that center'd in Zeal for the *Protestant Succession* in his Majesty's

Majesty's Person and Family——when they appear to have but one Fear, and that, lest one should appear more backward than another in Expressions, in *Demonstrations* of Loyalty——when they seem to have but one Hope, and that of defeating every vain, every presumptuous Attempt in Favour of an abjured Pretender; in short, while it may be said of his Majesty, were he to appear in Public, as is said of *Henry the IVth* in *Shakespear*,

*You would have thought the very Windows spake,
So many greedy Looks of Old and Young,
Thro' Casements darted their desiring Eyes
Upon his Visage; and that all the Walls
With painted Imag'ry, had said at once,
JESU preserve thee.*

I say, amidst all this Effusion, this *Flood* of public Affection in Favour of his Majesty's Person and Government.——The *Habeas Corpus Act* is suspended: The People have been willing to give his Majesty this convincing Proof of their Zeal, rather than to create the least Uneasiness in his Royal Breast, with regard to the Security which the Forms of our Constitution afford to possible Offenders. By this Readiness they have proved, to all the World, that it was not *they* who have encouraged the Enemies of our Government: And yet Encouragement they have had: Encouragement from the scandalous, the avowed, the protected Insolence of our own cowardly Mercenaries——Encouragement from the Disappointment of the People's just Hopes——But hold——I have forgot what I just now mentioned, The *Habeas Corpus Act* it suspended. However I will venture to put up one Petition, and that is, May Confusion cover those, who, by their Folly, their Violence, and Treachery, have given Encouragement to the Enemies of our Constitution thus to insult us!