

T H E
M A R Y L A N D G A Z E T T E

No. 205.

Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, March 29, 1749.

The DYING ADVICE of a GREAT MAN (the late Lord President of Scotland), who was well acquainted with the World, and knew it's whole Worth.

WILL conclude with that, which is the most important of all other Things, and which alone will carry every Thing else along with it; which is, to recommend in the most solemn and serious Manner, the Study and Practice of Religion to all Sorts of Men, as that which is both the *Light of the World* and the *Salt of the Earth*. Nothing does so open our Faculties, and compose and direct the whole Man, as an inward Sense of GOD, of his Authority over us, of the Laws he has set us, of his Eye ever upon us, of his hearing our Prayers, assisting our Endeavours, watching over our Concerns, and of his being to judge, and to reward or punish us in another State according to what we do in this: Nothing will give a Man such a Detestation of Sin, and such a Sense of the Goodness of God, and of our Obligations to Holiness, as a right Understanding and a firm Belief of the Christian Religion: Nothing can give a Man so calm a Peace within, and such a firm Security against all Fears and Dangers without, as the Belief of a kind and wise Providence, and of a Future State. An Integrity of Heart gives a Man a Courage, and a Confidence that cannot be shaken: A Man is sure, that by living according to the Rules of Religion, he becomes the wisest, the best, and happiest Creature he is capable of being. Honest Industry, the employing his Time well, and a constant Sobriety, an uncessed Purity and Chastity, with a quiet Serenity, are the best Preservers of Life and Health: So that take a Man as a single Individual, Religion is his Guard, his Perfection, his Beauty and his Glory: This will make him the *Light of the World*, shining brightly, and enlightening many round about him.

Then take a Man as a Piece of Mankind, as a Citizen of the World, or of any particular State, Religion is then indeed the *Salt of the Earth*: For it makes every Man to be, to all the rest of the World, whatsoever any one can with Reason wish or desire him to be. He is true, just, honest, and faithful, in the whole Commerce of Life; doing to all others that which he would have others do to him: He is a Lover of Mankind, and of his Country: He may and ought to love some more than others; but he has an Extent of Love to all, of Pity and Compassion, not only to the poorest, but to the worst; for the worse any are, the more they are to be pitied. He has a Complacency and Delight in all that are truly, tho' defectively, good; and a Respect and Veneration for all that are eminently so: He mourns for the Sins, and rejoices in the Virtues, of all that are round about him: In every Relation of Life, Religion makes him answer all his Obligations: It will make Princes just and good, faithful to their Promises, and Lovers of the People: It will inspire Subjects with Respect, Submission, Obedience, and Zeal for their Prince: It will sanctify Wedlock to be a State of Christian Friendship, and mutual Assistance: It will give Parents the truest Love to their Children, with a proper Care of their Education: It will command the Returns of Gratitude and Obedience from Children: It will teach Masters to be gentle and careful of their Servants; and Servants to be faithful, zealous, and diligent in their Master's Concerns: It will make Friends tender and true to one another; it will make them generous, faithful, and disinterested: It will make Men live in their Neighbourhood as Members of one common Body, promoting first the general Good of the whole, and then the Good of every Particular, as far as a Man's Sphere can go: It will make Judges and Magistrates just and patient, hating Covetousness, and maintaining Peace and Order: It will make People live

about them. This will make Pastors faithful to their Trust, tender to their People, and watchful over them; and it will bring in the People an Esteem for their Persons and Functions.

Thus Religion, if truly received and sincerely adhered to, would prove the greatest of all Blessings to a Nation. But by Religion, I understand somewhat more than the receiving some Doctrines, tho' ever so true, or the professing them, and engaging to support them, not without Zeal and Eagerness. What signify the best Doctrines, if Men do not live faithfully to them; if they have not a due Influence upon their Thoughts, their Principles, and their Lives? Men of bad Lives, without sound Opinions, are felt condemned, and lie under a highly aggravated Guilt; nor will the Heat of a Party, arising out of Interest, and managed with Fury and Violence, compensate for the ill Lives of such false Pretenders to Zeal; while they are a Disgrace to that which they profess, and seem so hot for. By Religion I do not mean an outward Compliance with Forms and Customs, in going to Church, to Prayers, to Sermons, and to Sacraments, with an external Shew of Devotion, or which is more, with some inward forced good Thoughts, in which many may fancy themselves; while this has no visible Effect on their Lives, nor any inward Force to subdue and rectify their Appetites, Passions, and secret Designs. Those customary Performances, how good and useful soever, when well understood and rightly directed, are of little Value when Men rest on them, and think, that because they do them, they have therefore acquitted themselves of their Duty, tho' they continue still proud, covetous, full of Deceit, Envy and Malice; Even secret Prayer, the most effectual of all other Means, is designed for a higher End; which is, to possess our Minds with such a constant and present Sense of divine Truths, as may make these live in us, and govern us; and to draw down such Assistances, as may exalt and sanctify our Natures.

So that by Religion I mean such a Sense of divine Truth, as enters into a Man, and becomes a Spring of a new Nature within him; reforming his Thoughts and Designs, purifying his Heart, and sanctifying him and governing his whole Department; his Words as well as his Actions; convincing him that it is not enough not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in his Conversation, but that he must be entirely, uniformly, and constantly pure and virtuous; animating him with Zeal to be still better and better, more eminently good and exemplary, using Prayers and all outward Devotions as solemn Acts, testifying what he is inwardly and at Heart, and as Methods instituted by God, to be still advancing in the Use of them further and further, into a more refined and spiritual Sense of divine Matters. This is true Religion, which is the Perfection of human Nature, and the Joy and Delight of every one, that feels it active and strong within him: It is true, this is not arrived at all at once; and it will have an unhappy Allay, hanging long, even about a good Man: But as those ill Mixtures are the perpetual Grief of his Soul, so it is his chief Care to watch over and mortify them; he will be in a continual Progress, still gaining Ground upon himself; and as he attains to a good Degree of Purity, he will find a noble Flame of Life and Joy growing upon him. Of this I write with the more Concern and Emotion, because I have felt this the only true, and indeed the only Joy, which runs through a Man's Heart and Life: It is that which has been for many Years my greatest Support; I rejoice daily in it; I feel from it the Earnest of that supreme Joy which I pant and long for: I am sure there is nothing else can afford any true or complete Happiness. I have, considering my Sphere, seen a great deal of all that is tempting and shining in this World: The Pleasures of sense I did soon nauseate; Intrigues of State, and the Conduct of Affairs, have something in them that is so tedious, that I was for many