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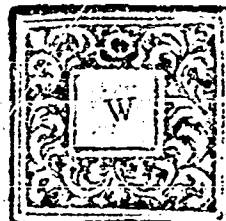


To Mr. James Harrison

From Tuesday April 29, to Tuesday May 6, 1729.

(Numb. LXXXVI.)

Mr. Parks,



WHEN a just Resentment of the Sufferings of my Country, occasion'd, in a great Measure, by the Conduct of some Men, who were under the strongest Ties and Obligations to act for its Welfare, induc'd me first to think of representing that Conduct in a true Light, (when I should be furnish'd with the Means,) for the Information of my Fellow Subjects, I was sensible that such an Undertaking would be attended with Difficulties, Trouble and Discouragements: That some, even very good Men, who have the Welfare of their Country (in which their own Welfare is involved) sincerely at Heart, would not only be slow of Belief, but even jealous of any Man that should inform them of what it is their Interest to know; and without the Knowledge of which, it would not be easy, if possible, for them to take right Measures; and that crafty designing People would not fail to persuade others (whose Esteem every honest Man ought to value and covet) that such a Man would be actuated by his own private Views or Resentments, and not by any Consideration of the publick Welfare. But when I consider'd, that Time (the best Discoverer of Mens Intentions) generally shews the Sincerity or Insincerity of most Designs, dispels the Suspicions that are rais'd by Malice and Detraction, and rewards honest Men with publick Applause; and that a faithful Discharge of that Duty which a Man owes to the Society whereof he is a Member, ought to be preferr'd to all other Considerations, I resolv'd (tho' conscious of my own Inability) to undertake a Task, which I was, and still am confident, is of mighty Consequence to the Country; and which therefore, I am determin'd (maugre all Oppositions) to go thro' with, as far as I can; and I hope for, and expect all the Countenance and Assistance that can be given me by every true Lover of his Country.

I was not ignorant that I should be malign'd and aspersed by the Enemies of my Country, (and such I take every Man to be, who would establish his own or any other Persons Interest on its Ruins;) but That rather animated than deterr'd me, for I count the Enmity of such Men an Honour, and their Invectives, as real Encomiums.

The Treatment I have met with from a Person, who goes under (I suppose) the fictitious Name of James Morgan, in his Letter to you, led me into a Mention of these Things. Whose Minister he is, his Behaviour sufficiently indicates. As to his Letter, I shall now proceed to make a few Remarks on it.

He tells you, that 'tis reasonable to think, that if the Merchants knew that Mr. Hyde had acted any thing wilfully to the Damage of the Tobacco Trade, that they would have accus'd him in their general Letter; but as they had laid no such Thing to his Charge, but on the contrary, attribute the low Price of Tobacco to several other weighty and substantial Causes; and infers, that 'tis very hard that he should suffer for any thing that one or two prejudic'd Merchants may write against him to their Friends in private, when they have contradicted what they have so written in their Letter in publick. I have given you Mr. Morgan's own Words, to avoid the Imputation of weakening his Argument: And I cannot but pity Mr. Hyde, for having his Cause, if it

be a good one, under the Management of so weak and silly an Advocate. For the whole of his Argument is no more than what he imagines, to be a Probability, that Mr. Hyde is innocent of prejudicing the Tobacco Trade, because the Merchants in a Body do not accuse him of it; which Probability, such as it is, is oppos'd by the Testimony of the greatest Number of the Merchants in their Letters to their Friends, of several eminent Tobacco Buyers, and of several People from hence, whose Probity and Integrity has not been question'd by any body hitherto, except Mr. Morgan, and his Brethren. If Mr. Morgan is right, he has discover'd a new Way entirely unknown to Mankind before, of baffling Evidence: for, according to him, when a great Number of Witnesses of unquestionable Reputation testify a Fact to be true, and agree in their Testimony (which is a strong Indication of Truth) their Evidence signifies nothing, unless the same Fact, be also proved by others who are not called upon, nor give any Evidence concerning it. This is not all neither; for, if Mr. Morgan's Way of Reasoning was just in general; it would not serve his Turn on this Occasion; for it appears by Mr. Darnall's printed Relation, p. 23. that the Committee of the Trade thought it essential to their Constitution; if they hoped to reap the Fruits intended by their associating themselves, that whoever of their Number would not come into the Agreement, or afterwards act contrary to what he should agree to, or had been agreed upon by the Majority, that such Person should not be esteem'd of their Body; and that the Majority, who should wish to keep together, notwithstanding one or a few might take their own Course, may, if they should think proper, acquaint their Principals in Virginia and Maryland, in a PUBLICK MANNER, of such Person or Persons acting contrary to what was adjudg'd by the Majority to be for the common Interest of the Trade and of their Principals: Yet, when it came to be debated in a general Meeting, Whether that should be a Rule of the Society's Conduct, it was determin'd That it should not; and I am misinform'd, if that Determination was not, in a great Measure, owing to Mr. Hyde; but whether his extraordinary Opposition to it, proceeded from an Apprehension that it might be prejudicial to him, is best known to himself. However, since it was propos'd by the Committee, and reject'd by the whole Body; it would have been a manifest Breach of the Agreement afterwards to have done what the Society resolv'd should not be done; which, no doubt, Mr. Hyde, and Mr. Morgan would not fail to upbraid them with. Well, but the Merchants attribute the low Price of Tobacco to several other weighty and substantial Causes; he means, I suppose, other Causes besides, or exclusive of the Treachery of any that was employ'd to sell it; which is nothing to the Purpose; for if there were Fifty Causes, and all of them Substantial and Weighty, and that a Person entrusted, in Violation of his Duty, and of the Rules of common Honesty, adds Treachery to them, is he excusable? Mr. Morgan is mistaken in the Number of Merchants that have wrote against Mr. Hyde, for instead of one or two, they are the Generality; and the Contradiction he mentions to be contain'd in the publick Letter, is not there, nor any thing that implies it. The Merchants 'tis true, say, that the great Importation was another and a grand Cause of the Lowness of the Price. They express a Concern, that by one Means or other, their Agreement became abortive and ineffectual; they don't expressly