

MARYLAND GAZETTE,

Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, March 16, 1748.

Nam tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.

HOR.

Mr. GREEN,

Believe you never gave any Thing a Place in your Papers, that has afforded Matter of more Speculation than those two Letters of mine lately published: The favourable Reception they have met with, the Author has not the Vanity to attribute to the Merit of Performances, but altogether to the Subject they treat of; no Man of Sense will think the worse of a good Cause, because it happens to have a weak Advocate. It is indeed a no Subject, and putting the paltry Dispute betwixt *Marlborough* and *Bladenburg* out of the Question, such a one as concerns the Rights and Properties of every Man in the Province. The just Friends of Liberty, I understand, wish the Success, and that he may acquit himself manfully in what he has undertaken: He promises to do his best. Those are obliged to oppose him, in order to defend themselves, taken various Methods according to their different Excellencies. Some have *bluster'd* and *sworn* heartily at the Author: Others have mounted a Note higher, and *threaten'd*: The *Men of Learning* have found Fault with the Style: And the *bright Genae* tried to be witty on the Occasion. Before I resume the Thread of the Discourse, I beg Leave to be indulged in a few words to each Sort. The *Blusters* may pass *Scot free*; and generally, a very harmless sort of People, that deal only in words, and their's for the most part without Meaning. — *Messengers*, — a daring Race; who think themselves above all, and, to deter People from it, impotently brandish a little falcy Authority, only *threwing* what they can if they could; these Men are to know; that the *Free* is not to be fear'd; he despises their Threats, and gives Liberty to *the Printer*, when ever they please. He will think himself peculiarly honour'd, in being call'd upon to defend the LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, as well as those Liberties of his fellow Subjects, in Defence of which he wields his Pen. The Law, he hopes, will prove his Patron both, as neither he nor his Friends propose to seek for Rewards, than what is to be obtained, in a *fair, open, & honest* Way. This he looks upon to be the *Birth-right* of every *BRITISH* Subject, and is determined not to be out of it. Hard would be the Condition of the People *and* indeed, if an Author was liable to be ruin'd (as is *unreason'd*) for calling in question the Legality of an Act made by a County Court, or for supposing the Justices to be *weak Men*; whilst the Subjects of *Great-Britain* are at Liberty to examine and censure the Behaviour of their *greatest Ministers*; nay, frequently *Acts* of Parliament we see daily Instances of in the *Magazines*, and other Papers. How far the Power of Magistrates in *France* or in other absolute Governments, to *ruin*, may reach, I determine; but if ever any Attempt of that sort is made in the *British* Dominions, I hope those who make it will be convinced, to their Cost, that the Power of Magistrates is limited to the public Good, and does not extend to the private Injuries. As to the *Men of Learning*, it may suffice to give a Specimen of their Criticisms: There was mention in the first Letter, viz: *willfully or ignorantly mis-apply*; Now, says the *learned Commentator*, this is *consonant* because it is impossible for a Man to do a Thing *willfully AND ignorantly*; this subtle Remark was secondarily whole Party, and contended for very warmly. I will own the *Critic*, that he did not commit the Blunder *willfully* ignorantly; for a very little Skill in *Grammar* would have inform'd him, that the Particle *OR* is properly a *Disjunctive*, and is used as a *Copulative*, but when absolute Necessity requires that is, unless the Sentence would be Nonsense without it granted, a Man may make a very good *use* of *OR* or *SH* — *E*, without understanding *Grammar*; but it

really requires a little Knowledge of that sort to be a *Critic*. I would advise them therefore to give over criticising upon Language, for this seems to be the least of their *little Talents*; however, if (as it is said) they have applied to a certain *Domine* (an old Cock of the Game at *verbal Necessities*); to take up the Cudgels in their Defence, it is to be hoped their *Grammatical* Remarks, for the future, will be better founded. The Haste that the two former Letters were writ and transcribed in, may perhaps afford him a few Materials to nibble at; which we are not at all sorry for, as it may be an Encouragement to enter the Lists, but Care shall be taken for the Time to come; to make the *Adjective* agree with the *Substantive*, and the *Relative* with the *Antecedent*, &c. So that the reverend Preceptor may have the Satisfaction of examining it, as he would do a *Pupil's* Version or Theme. Pass we now to the Wits: — I beg the *Domine's* Pardon; not for using the Word *we*, it being allowable to use the *Plural* for the *Singular*; but because the *Rule* says expressly that the *Nominative* ought to be put before the *Verb*; and therefore that no Advantages may be taken, let it be said in proper Form, *We* pass now to the WITS. It is reported, that at a Consultation held (before they thought of his Reverence) to determine whether the *Freeholder* should be answer'd or not, one of the *galliest* of their Wits, with his usual *self-sufficient Air*, and *Stentorian* Voice, rose up and said, *Let him alone, give him Rope enough and he will hang himself*. I really believe these Gentlemen wish him hang'd with all their Hearts; but the Devil of it is, he is a cursed obstinate Fellow, and will not be drov from his Point: He swears if he must die, he is determined to die by the *Pay* of the *Lyon*, and not by the *Hook* of the *Ast*: But he thinks it will be Time enough to talk of that, when once they have slipp'd their own *Necks* out of the *Halter*; for he is the *Plaintiff* at present, and they are the *Defendants*. His great Comfort is, that the Cause must be tried by *fifty-four* good Men, not chosen by *Sheriffs*, but by *Freeholders*. This much was thought necessary to be said before the Subject was resum'd, and as the Arguments drawn from the *British Constitution* have been cavil'd at by some *Matterers* in Histories and Politics, it is judg'd proper to illustrate, enforce, and apply them in the following Manner.

What was said in the second Letter, concerning that Right inherent in the People by the *Constitution*, to judge (by their Representatives) of their own Taxes, may be carp'd at, but can never be overthrow'n: It is the great Hinge upon which Liberty hangs; and whenever that is weakened or thrown down, Liberty must be proportionably weakned or fall with it. By this alone it is, that the great Powers yielded to *Magistrates* of all sorts, from the *supream Magistrate* to the *County Justice*, suffer any Controul: For the most expensive and pernicious Schemes may be projected under a Maladministration, as the People have no Check on their Councils; but while they are Masters of their own Money, they may keep from them the Means of putting such Schemes as they do not approve into Execution. On the other hand, should ever this Power be lodged in any Set of Men besides those who are the immediate Trustees of the People, and appointed by them, it must be evident to every Man of common Sense, that all Liberty would soon be at an End. There would be no farther Occasion for Parliaments or Assemblies; at least, if they were kept up, it would only be for Form's Sake; they could be of no Service to the People: *Redress of Grievances*, it is well known, is a stale and unavailing Argument, when a Court wants no *Supplies*; it follows then, *a fortiori*, that it would be still less redress, if the Court had the *Power of Supplies* within themselves. I have such an Use might be made of an unlimited Power, residing in *County Courts*, to tax the People at pleasure, I think cannot be denied: That such an Use would be made of it, during the present Administration, I have already acknowledged there is not the least Grounds to apprehend. But is this a Reason why it should not be disputed? None but *Fools* will say so. The Dam-