

THE
MARYLAND GAZETTE,
 No. 268.

Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, June 13, 1750.

THE Publishing in this Gazette, the following excellent Letter, needs no Apology; nothing which we can say in its Praise, being adequate to its Deserts. The Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen of the City of London, return'd his Lordship the Bishop their unanimous Thanks for Writing of it: And, besides the great Number which were first Printed, Subscriptions were there made for Printing Forty Thousand more, and giving them away.

The Bishop of London's LETTER to the Clergy and People of his Diocese, on Occasion of the late Earthquakes.

To the Clergy and Inhabitants of the Cities of London and Westminster.

My Brethren and Friends,

THE Relation I stand in to you, is a daily Call upon me to consider the spiritual State of these great Cities; and though I doubt not but God has many faithful and chosen Servants among you, yet the general view of the Wickedness and Corruptness on that abound; and are spreading far and wide, gives me, and must give to every serious Christian very painful Reflections: It is hardly possible to think of the History of Providence, recorded in Holy Writ, and the many Examples of Divine Justice exercised, sometimes in punishing, sometimes in utterly destroying wicked Nations; or Cities, without being sensibly affected with Apprehensions for ourselves: But more especially have we Reason to fear, when we see the Beginning of Sorrows, and the Displeasure of the Almighty manifested in the Calamities we suffer under, and in the Signs and Tokens given us to expect a far more dreadful Judgment.

It is every Man's Duty, and it is mine to call upon you, to give Attention to all the Warnings which God in his Mercy affords to a sinful People: Such Warning we have had, by two great Shocks of an Earthquake; a Warning, which seems to have been immediately and especially directed to these great Cities, and the Neighbourhood of them; where the Violence of the Earthquake was so sensible, tho' in distant Parts hardly felt; that it will be Blindness wilful and inexcusable not to apply, to ourselves this strong Summons, from God, to Repentance.

Those who are hardened Sinners may be deaf to these Calls; and Little Philosophers, who see a little, and but very little into natural Causes, may think they see enough to account for what happens, without calling in the Aid and Assistance of a special Providence; not considering, that God who made all Things, never put any Thing out of his own Power, but has all Nature under Command to serve his Purposes in the Government of the World: But be their Imaginations to themselves, the Subject is too serious for trifling; and calls us off to other Views.

If we consider the general Government of the World by God, and upon what Reasons and Motives he acts, when he brings Calamities and Plagues upon any People: Or if we collect from History sacred and profane, what State and Condition with respect to Religion and Morality, the People were in, who have been Examples of Justice: And then compare our own Case with the general Reason by which Providence acts, and with the Circumstances of those by whose Example we ought to take Warning, we shall soon discover whether there be just Reason for our Apprehensions: If those who have been destroyed by Fire from Heaven, or swallowed up by the Earth were

nothing, nor be dismayed tho' the Foundations of the Earth be removed: But if our Consciences tell us, that we have sinned after their Example, what Consolation is there to be had against the just Expectation of suffering after their Example also?

The same Conclusion will arise from a Contemplation of God's general Providence; which tho' it is not daily exerted in punishing all Men, or all vices that deserve it; yet is always armed with Power to stop outrageous Wickedness; and he has told us in his holy Word, what we may expect from his Justice, when we are grown hardened and obdurate against his Mercy.

UPON these Principles let your own Case be examined: But who shall be your Accuser? Shall I? God forbid, *My Heart's Desire and Prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved.* Hear me then with Patience, not as your Accuser, but as your faithful Servant, and Minister in Christ Jesus, warning you to flee from the Wrath that is to come.

HAD this Part of the World had less Knowledge and less Light, they might have some Excuse, and some Hope that God would wink at the Fimes of their Ignorance: But they have had the Light, and have loved Darknes: The Gospel of Christ in which all the Goodness and Mercy of God are display'd through the Redemption purchased by the Blood of Christ; in which the Aid and Comfort of the Holy Spirit of God is offered to all who diligently seek it; in which the Hopes and Fears of Eternity are display'd to guard us against the Temptations of Sin; has been not only rejected, but treated with a malicious Scorn; and all our Hopes in Christ represented as Delusions and Impositions upon the Weakness of Men. How has the Press for many Years past swarm'd with Books, some to dispute, some to ridicule the great Truths of Religion, both natural and revealed. I shall mention no particular Cases, there is no need for it; the Thing is notorious. I wish the Guilt in this Instance was confined to the Authors only, and that Nobody else was answerable for it: But the Earnestness with which these Books were sought after, the Pleasure and Approbation with which they were received, are too strong Indications of the general Taste to be dissembled; and the Industry used to disseminate these Books at home and abroad, and especially to our Plantations in America; to which great Numbers, and at a great expence have been conveyed; are Proofs of such Malice against the Gospel and the Holy Author of it, as would not be born even in a Mahometan Country. In this Branch of Trade, this great City beats all the World: It is become even the Mart for Infidelity.

It required no great Sagacity to foresee what the Consequence would be of the Pains taken to unsettle all Principles of Religion. Infidelity and Immorality are too nearly allied, to be long separated; and though some have pretended to preserve a Sense of Virtue without the Aid of Religion, yet Experience has shewed that People who have neither Hopes nor Fears with Respect to another World, will soon abuse this by indulging the worst of their Passions, and will not regard Man, when once they have learn'd to disregard God.

WHAT if this be our Case, let every Man judge by what he hears and sees; by what, indeed, he must hear and see, if he lives amongst us, Blasphemy and horrid Imprecation to be heard in our Streets, and poor Wretches are every Hour miter'd and wickedly calling for Damnation on themselves and others, which may be (tis much to be feared) too near them already. Add to this the Lewdness and Debauchery that prevail amongst the lowest People, which keeps them idle, that prevail amongst the lowest People, which keeps them idle, poor, and miserable, and renders them incapable of getting an honest Livelihood for themselves and Families; the Number of lewd Houses, which trade in their Vices, and which must