

## MARYLAND GAZETTE,

Containing the freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, August 28, 1751.

*As the Spaniards have taken many of our Merchantmen since the Conclusion of the Peace, it is apprehended the Public would be glad to be informed upon what Pretences such Captures are commonly made; wherefore we lay before our Readers the following Affidavit, as we find it in the Jamaica Courant of the 26th of January last, which will give them right Notions of Spanish Equity and Humanity, and shew what is to be expected from that Nation after all the Pains taken to make them our Friends.*

Jamaica, ff.

**P**ERSONALLY appeared William Finks, Master of the Sloop Experiment, built in the Island of Jamaica, the Property of William Dorrell, Esq; and made Oath on the Holy Evangelists, that he sailed from Jamaica in the Month of January, 1749, to the Island of Grand Caimanos, and there loaded a Parcel of Mahogany Plank, the Property of the said William Dorrell and this Deponent, and sailed from the said Island of Caimanos the 24th of February following, bound for the Island of Jamaica, without any other Cargo on board except Mahogany; that he did not touch, neither had he any Intention of touching at any Place until he arrived at Jamaica, but by Easterly Winds, and a strong Current setting to the N. W. he was forced over towards the Shore of the Island of Cuba, within Sight of Cape Cruz, but not nearer than seven or eight Leagues to the said Land; that then he saw a Quarter Galley and two large Canoes giving Chace to a small Schooner, which this Deponent afterwards found to be the Schooner Musquetta, Andrew Connell, Master, and the Property of William Pitt, Esq; on the Musquetta Shore, bound from the said Place to the Island of Jamaica; that they fired several Shot at the said Schooner, and afterwards forcibly took Possession of her, and then immediately after gave Chace to this Deponent, and came up with him, and fired a great many Shot at him; and notwithstanding he brought his Vessel to, they did not cease firing until he haul'd down his Colours: He was then forcibly taken Possession of by one of the large Canoes, which he then found to be a Spanish Guarda Costa, or rather a Pirate; that they immediately began to plunder his Vessel, and strip his People, and afterwards proceeded to make a very strict Search, as this Deponent imagined, for what the Spaniards call Contraband Goods. This Deponent then informed them that he belonged to Jamaica, and was bound there from the Island of Grand Caimanos, with his said Cargo of Mahogany. They then told him they had Orders from their Commodore to carry all Vessels they took to him, and then forcibly obliged this Deponent to go with them in Search of their said Commodore; whom, in about six or seven Days, they found lying at an Anchor among the Islands at South Keys. The said Commodore, whom this Deponent heard called by the Name of Don Francisco, and was Commander of a Spanish Quarter Galley, and Commodore of several other armed Vessels, then came on board this Deponent's Sloop, and made another very strict Search, but found nothing on board except the said Cargo of Mahogany. And this Deponent then demanded that he might have Liberty to proceed on his Voyage to Jamaica, which was refused him by the said Commodore, telling him, he (the Commodore) had Orders from the Governor of Trinidad to carry all Vessels he took into that Place; and then immediately he (the said Commodore) proceeded, in Company with this Deponent in his Sloop, to Trinidad; where, upon his Arrival, the Governor and Royal Officers of the said Port came on board his Sloop, and immediately gave Orders that this Depo-

nent and his People should be sent ashore and put in Custody, where this Deponent was stripped and robbed of his Cloaths and Apparel, and that his Cargo should be landed next Day, both which were accordingly executed, and the Vessel haul'd up into the River. This Deponent's People were then obliged to work in carrying Stones and Mortar for some public Buildings, and oftentimes severely beat and ill treated for not being able to undergo the unreasonable Labour imposed on them by their then Masters the Spaniards. Their Allowance was only one Ryal per Day, and this Deponent's two.

This Deponent was forcibly detained there ten Weeks, in which Time his Sloop was condemned in the Havanna, without this Deponent's having any Opportunity of making the least Defence; to which last Place he this Deponent was afterwards sent and put in Goal in the Castle, and there detained near three Weeks, without Allowance of any Kind for his Maintenance, and must there have perished, if it had not been for some Subsistence this Deponent found Means by his own Industry to supply himself with; until, after various Complaints and Petitions, he was allowed three Ryals per Day.

This Deponent further saith, that during the Time of his Confinement at Trinidad, his People were forcibly sent to the Havanna, and there obliged to enter into the King's Service, or be sent home to Spain as Prisoners, which last was executed upon his People: By which Means this Deponent was robbed of all Proof of the Property of his Vessel and Cargo, and the Intention of his Voyage, if it had been allowed him to assert his Right thereto: But this Deponent, after demanding the Cause of his Sloop's being taken from him, and a Copy of his Condemnation, if any such there was, was told by Mr. Britt, the Governor of the Havanna's Interpreter, that the Vessel was condemned, but he could not have a Copy of her Condemnation; that he should have the Condemnation read and interpreted to him, which was all he could be allowed, which was accordingly read and interpreted to him about four Hours before he sailed from the Havanna, and was the following Purport; That the Royal Company of the Havanna, as well as their Commodore afore-mentioned Don Francisco, and the Governor of Trinidad, complained that their Coasts were infested by English Vessels, and that it was sufficient to condemn this Vessel on Suspicion of her being a Contraband Dealer, without any other Reason whatsoever mentioned therein. This Deponent further saith, that there were on board his Vessel three Negro Freeman, named Benjamin Brooks, Robin, and Joseph, as also an Indian Boy, named Pompey, all Subjects of his Britannic Majesty, and a Negro Man Slave, named Isaac, the Property of William Dorrell, Esq; of the Island of Jamaica; that the said five People were detained in Trinidad, and this Deponent gave an Account to Don Martin de Aristigue, Governor of the Royal Havanna Company, who promised these People should be forth coming, if in his Power, when demanded from the Island of Jamaica, with a Proof of his Freedom, or on Restitution of the Vessel and Cargo, which said General Don Martin de Aristigue then gave this Deponent six Dollars for his Subsistence, and further this Deponent saith, not.

WILLIAM FINKS.

Kingston, Jamaica, ff.  
Sworn before me the 11th  
Day of December, 1750.

JOHN BARJEAN.