

GENTLEMEN of the Lower House of ASSEMBLY,

AS an Answer to the former Part of your Saturday's Address, concerning Mr. Darnall, the late Naval Officer of Patuxent District, I take the Liberty to communicate to you (and I desire they may be entered on your Journal) an Address that was presented to me last Tuesday by the Gentlemen of the Upper House (together with a Copy of the whole Report, of which you have been pleased to give me an Extract) a Letter that I thereupon wrote to his Lordship's Attorney-General, and his Answer, a Message which I sent to the Gentlemen of the Upper House the 30th of last Month, and another Address from them in Answer thereto; also Two Letters which I afterwards wrote to his Lordship's Attorney-General, and the Commissioners of the Loan-Office, with a second Answer from the Attorney-General; by which, I hope, you will be convinced, that before I received your Address I had taken every Step in my Power to prevent the Public's suffering Loss by Mr. Darnall's Misdemeanor.

If you recur, Gentlemen, to those Addresses of the Lower House to me, wherein Mr. Darnall was carp at some Years ago, you will perceive that he was only objected to on Account of his supposed Attachment to the Principles of the Church of Rome (notwithstanding he had, by a previous Compliance with every Test proposed by the Laws of Great-Britain and this Province, afforded a full Attestation of his Conformity to our present happy Establishment both in Church and State); but never did that House suggest to me, not the least Room did they give me to suspect, that he wanted the Requisites which you think ought, in all Promotions to Places of Profit and Trust, to be the principal Recommendations to Favour.

He had been in Office many Years before I arrived in the Province, and as far as I could learn, had executed it with Impartiality and Uprightness: I had not, as I observed to the Lower House at that Time, had long Experience of him, and tho' I did soon afterwards appoint another Gentleman Attorney-General in his Stead, yet I was not induced to take that Step by any Suspicion of Mr. Darnall's being such a Person as ought not to be Trusted; and, Gentlemen, if they by whom the Lower House of Assembly was at that Time, or hath been since composed, entertained such a Suspicion, I cannot help thinking they used their Constituents, as well as the Lord Proprietary and Myself, very ill, in not advising me of it; for, had they done so, we should not probably have suffered the Loss that is now likely to fall on us by Mr. Darnall's Failure. But indeed I cannot prevail on myself to believe that (however averse some People may have been to his continuing Attorney-General, from an Apprehension that he might be inclined to show Favour to Persons of the Romish Persuasion) either your Predecessors, or You, apprehended any Inconvenience would arise to the Public from Mr. Darnall's acting in the Capacity of Naval Officer, much less that he was likely to embezzle the Country's Money; otherwise I cannot account, Gentlemen, for your suffering so many Sessions to pass (as will I suppose cost the Province more than Twenty Thousand Pounds) since he was appointed Naval Officer, without once calling for his Accounts (which ought to have been lodged with your Clerk) and inspecting the Trustees Account, to see whether he had punctually performed his Duty, and in particular whether he had remitted to the said Trustees in London, the Money which you knew he must have collected by Virtue of the Laws of this Province. I say, Gentlemen, that if your Predecessors, or You, were apprehensive that his Conduct was not upright and just, I cannot account for yours, since I cannot suppose you connived so long at his Proceedings purely that you may have an Opportunity of saying at this Time, that he owes the Country a much larger Sum, over and above the Penalty of his Office Bond, than I fear will ever be paid.

As it would be, Gentlemen, very unjust to take Occasion, from the Misbehaviour of One, or of Two Officers, to insinuate any Thing to the Disadvantage of the Rest, I flatter myself you will, when you speak of Mr. Darnall's Conduct, avoid general Reflections, and distinguish the Innocent from the Guilty, being satisfied that none of you imagine any personal Favour or Attachment induced me to continue that Gentleman so long in Office: I should be sorry if what you have said should lead others to think so, or to suppose, that in bestowing Places of Trust or Profit, I have been influenced by such Motives rather than by a Regard for the Good of the Community, which you may be assured I shall always keep in View: And if at any Time hereafter, while I may reside among you, it should happen that an unworthy Person, (for I must often rely on the Recommendation of others) be appointed to an Office, you may be confident that a Discovery of his Demerit, shall be to me a sufficient Incitement to such a Measure as may prevent any Loss to the Public from his subsequent Misbehaviour.

May 5th, 1761.

HOR. SHARPE.

Mr. Murdock brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker, the following Report: