

appear to be *more* unjust, and *more* partial than the Tax he supposes, and upon which he bestows, very properly, the Epithets of *unjust* and *partial*.

—*Diluit Helleborum, certò compefcere Punctò*
Nescius Examen.

But it has been objected, that if the Inhabitants of *America*, because represented in their respective Assemblies, are *therefore* exempted from a *Parliamentary Tax*, then the Citizens of *London*, who are represented in their Common Council, may plead the *same Immunity*. If it were not for the Authority upon which this Objection is urged, it might be safely passed over without a particular Answer; but since it hath been introduced with an Appearance of Reliance, and the Opinion which it retails, is said to have been delivered with great Gravity, and pronounced with decisive Confidence, I would not be so wanting in Respect to an eminent Character, as to neglect the Ceremony of a direct Refutation.

But I must observe that, when the Opinion of a Lawyer is taken in a Matter of private Concern, in which he is under no Bias to deceive, a concise Declaration of it may generally suffice; he who applies for it being generally obliged to depend upon his Council's Character of Integrity and Knowledge, not only because the Expence of a methodical and minute Discussion would be too Burthensome, but because the Force of legal Reasoning is not generally understood. But in a Question of Public Concernment, the Opinion of no *Court Lawyer*, however respectable for his Candour and Abilities, ought to weigh more than the Reasons adduced in Support of it. They ought to be explained, they may be examined. Considering his Temptations, Credit ought to be cautiously and diffidently given, to his Assertion of what is his Opinion.—Considering the Consequence of a Decision, not to one Man only, but to Millions that exist and Myriads that may exist, and the exceeding Fallibility of legal Knowledge, nothing short of clear Conviction, after the fullest Explication of the Reasons of the Opinion, and the most accurate and intense Consideration of their Validity, can justify an Acquiescence under it.

On the present Occasion, so immensely important, *Nullius additus juron in Verba Magistris*; I shall pin my Faith upon the *Dictum* of no Lawyer in the Universe, and when his *ipse dixit* is authoritatively urged, I shall be at no Pains to repress my Suspicions that his Reasons are concealed, because, if fairly produced and held up to the Light, many Flaws in them would be discovered by a careful Examiner. I have lived long enough to remember many Opinions of *Court Lawyers* upon *American Affairs*; they have been all strongly