

0265

216-4



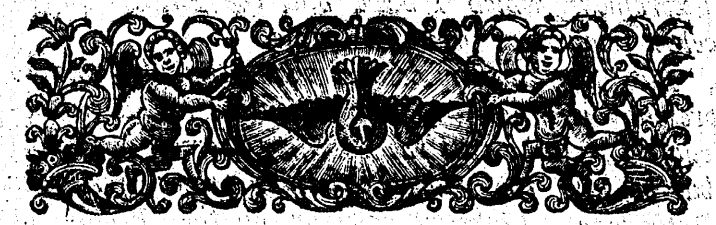
THE  
STANDARD  
OF  
EQUALITY,  
In SUBSIDIARY  
TAXES and PAYMENTS:  
Or, a Just and Strong Preserver of  
PUBLIC LIBERTY.



LONDON:  
Printed for J. DICKENSON in *Witch Street*.  
M.DCC.XXXIII.  
(Price Six-pence.)

GRADUATE  
TO  
QUALITY

STYLMYAR  
YTRM



To the Honourable, and most worthily  
accomplish'd,

Sir JOHN D'ANVERS.

SIR,

*I* Have read of a Lady, which made  
a sorrowful, but successful, Enquiry  
after her little Infant, which some  
having stolen from her, concealed  
(disguis'd in Rags) amongst a Com-  
pany of common Children. The Discovery was the  
more difficult, because a Babe's Flesh is too tender  
for solid Signs to be fastned on it, and the Favour  
thereof too changeable to bear settled Marks of Di-  
stinction from others. At last the Mother found  
her Son, only by the Direction of his Eye, the Spark-  
ling whereof did shine through the Cloud of bad  
Cloaths wherewith it was apparelled.

In like manner, this Model, though it be strangely  
altered and defaced by the Meanness of my Ex-  
pressions, you may perceive therein a vigorous Lustre  
(the Rays whereof triumph through my dull Lan-  
guage) whereby you may be pleased to own and ac-  
knowledge it, as relating to those Memorials and  
Expressions,

# THE EPISTLE.

*Expressions, which I have had the Favour to receive from your own Discourse.*

*But, Sir, another Motive that persuaded me to present this Treatise to your judicious View, is not because I presume that the handling thereof is worthy, but because the Subject itself is proper for your Patronage. Lighting casually on the Poems of Mr. GEORGE HERBERT, lately deceased (whose pious Life and Death have converted me to a full Belief that there is a St. GEORGE) and therein perusing the Description of a CONSTANT MAN, it directed my Thoughts unto your self, having heard that the Author in his Life-time had therein designed no other Title than your Character in that Description. And this Discourse, treating of Justice, which hath a marvelous Sympathy with Constancy (for nothing grounded on unjust Principles can long continue) may therefore most properly address itself to your Honourable Protection.*

*I will plead nothing in my own Excuse, knowing that the Noble Principle in your Breast will prevent what I would, and exceed what I can plead for my self. Thus hoping that my Intentions shall not be condemned for the Weakness of my Performance, but rather my Performance pardoned for the Goodness of my Intentions; so rests,*


Your Honour's,

In all Humble Service,

Philo-Dicæus,



# THE STANDARD OF EQUALITY.

I.  BEFORE we proceed to the Building, we must clear the Foundation, and vindicate the suspicious Title of this Book from all Exception. The rather because the offensive Sound of the Word EQUALITY, is subject to be falsely rendered by Mens jealous Apprehensions.

II. By EQUALITY, that Anabaptistical Parity is not intended, that all Men should have Power and State alike, so to lay a Level Line over all Mankind, sinking the Mountains and raising the Vallies, to make an even Champaign. A Conceit injurious to Mens private Property, destructive to the publick State, and no less then blasphemous to God himself, questioning of, and quarrelling at his Goodness and Wisdom, whose Providence hath  
B ordered

## ( 10 )

ordered such Distances in Nature. For that our Meditations may with the more easy Ascent climb up into the Knowledge of an infinite Deity. God hath appointed Vegetable, Sensible, and Rational Creatures, as the Staires whereby we may mount up into Contemplation of him. And amongst reasonable Creatures, some high, some low, some rich, some poor, according to the Dispensation of his own Providence, whence an excellent Harmony doth result; otherwise they would make strange Musick who would have all the Pipes of the Organ equal in Sound, Length, and Bigness.

III. But by EQUALITY in subsidiary Payments is designed a just and impartial dividing all Taxes, according to Mens several Estates. That which the Apostle driveth at in regulating the Contributions to the Poor in the *Church of Corinth*, 2 Cor. viii. 13. *For I mean not that other Men be eased, and you burthened, but by an Equality* is the Desire and Endeavour of this Treatise, that no Persons be pressed beyond Justice and Equity, *And that all should bear their due Proportions in politick Payments.* This EQUALITY hath so near a Sympathy with the *Liberty of the Subject*, that as they unanimously embrace one another; so neither can long subsist (at least not freely flourish) if divided.

IV. By *this Liberty* we plead not for that *Licentiousness* which many Men in all Ages have set up as a *Master of Mis-rule*, to justify their Extravagancies, and when such their Looseness is retrenched, presently complain that their Liberty is infringed. No, we need not

lend

## ( 11 )

our Quill, to imp the Wings of this *wild Liberty any longer*, which oft flies too high of its own accord. But by Liberty we mean that Patrimonial Privilege which the poorest Subject in *England* is born to, the undoubted Inheritance for which the youngest is of full Age at the first Instant of his Nativity, beholding it with the Light, and sucking it in with the Air, Freedom being the Breath of the Soul, without which it is soon stifled. Our State is no Galley, wherein any Slaves are bound to row at the Oars, but it is a Ship, wherein all the Passengers are free Merchant-Adventurers; though, according to their different Proportions. So that every *Englishman* may say, with *St. Paul*, that he is *free-born*. No other Fine, or Fees, being paid for this his Privilege, save only the Pains of his Mother when she first brought him forth unto the World.

V. These Things premised, may I humbly presume to sigh forth the general Groans and common Complaint of Thousand Families in this Land. That all Rates and Taxes fall intolerably heavy on the middle sort of People, contrary to their Birth-right, Liberty, and the Rules of all Equality and Justice. For whereas our Ancestors resolved on the way of Subsidies as the fittest and freest Means to supply the Wants of the Publick, Continuance of Time and Personal Corruptions have so frustrated and defeated their good Intents, that Subsidies at this Day, through the Inequality of selling them, are almost shrunk to be inconsiderable. And whilst some great ones shift their Shoulders from under the Publick Bur-

( 12 )

den, the Weight thereof falls heavy upon their Fellow-Subjects, especially on the Yeomanry of the Land; as if the Common-wealth in all publick Assessments had play'd with false Dice, which ran nothing but *Treys* and *Caters*. An Injustice which, if not seasonably prevented, will prove the Hectick-Fever of our *English* Liberties, consuming, by Degrees, the radical Moisture thereof.

VI. Whereas indeed if any Condition of People may pretend to more Favour due unto them, the middle Rank of Men seem best to deserve it, because, I may say, they lie in continual Service, and their Labour, so beneficial to the Common-wealth, ought to be countenanced, and, instead of these unreasonable Weights, Wings of Encouragement should be given to their Industry; whereas now it fareth with them as with the *Body-Horse* in their Teams, which, though drawing most, is most lashed, exposed thereunto by the Unhappiness of his Posture, being always next to the Whip.

VII. To remedy and redress this Grievance, no juster and fairer way doth offer it self then by subjecting all Commodities in this Kingdom by way of Assessment, or Excise, to be made contributive to the Publick Treasury, and that all Persons whatsoever, partaking of Protection in the State, should share likewise equally in their Payments thereunto, according to their several Proportions, a Rule of such undeniable Justice, that Nature itself might seem to have dictated it to the Capacities of some Brute Creatures.

VIII. It is observed of the Beavers in *Virginia*, that when disposed to carry a Beam to the Building

( 13 )

Building of their Kennel, or Burrough (wherein they are curious Architects) they set such who are most faint and feeble of their Company to the lesser and lighter End of the Beam, and order such as are the strongest amongst them for the Portage of the heaviest Part thereof. Mens Hats may not only be made of Beaver's Hair, but their Heads and Hearts may be taught Equity from the Example of so small a Creature, instructing us, that all Burdens of *Publick Concernment* ought to be impartially born by all Persons which reap Benefit in the Common-wealth. For as all Men ought to be exempted from the Shackles and Fetters of Servility, so it is just and equal, that they be all tied alike, in the same Girdles and Garters, which are both for the adorning and strengthening of the Common-wealth; wherefore the Effect of our ensuing Discourse is, to propound the evenest way of settling of Rates in the Land, according to Justice, and the least Grievance of the Subject.

IX. No Self-end or Desire to court the Notice of the World hath put me on this Design; but only Love of Justice, and the Good of my Country, which every true Patriot ought effectually to advance; hoping, that when Divine Goodness shall restore our Land to her former Peace and Tranquillity, and when the King shall be re-married to the State (to which there is a probable and promising Forwardness, if our Sins in this Land forbid not the Banes) all Things will be settled and modelled in an excellent Method and politick Uniformity; according to the wise Pattern and Platform established by our Ancestors



## ( 14 )

cestors (in that best comprehending and comprehended Government by Kings, Lords and Commons) bettered and improved by Experience of our Age, which in few Years as it had the Misery to see many Changes, so it hath had Advantage to learn and gather much Knowledge thereby. Amongst many others, I humbly tender this Spark of Discovery, prostituting it at the Feet of the Judicious in Authority, who, if disliking it, may tread it out, and quence it, or blow it up in a Flame, if it be found useful for the GENERAL GOOD.

X. Now whereas we lay it for a Ground-work, that all subsidiary Payments may most equally be assessed by way of Excise on Lands, Goods, &c. we will first endeavour to vindicate the Word EXCISE from that Odiousness, it hath generally, but unjustly, incur'd. Two Causes there are make an *English* Stomach disgust the EXCISE; both because it is novel, and also hath been abused in the Execution thereof. But whilst passionate Men rend out all the Letters which concur to the spelling of the very Word, may the judicious Reader be requested but to hold his Fingers till the matter be truly stated, and then proceed to Censure.

XI. That the EXCISE, rightly ordered, is the ready way to raise a Mass of Money, with the least sensible Pressure of the People, appears by the Practice of our Neighbours in the Low-Countries; a Nation so zealous of Liberty, that this Article alone, hath made all other Creeds in their Country to agree in a joint Defence against the Publick Inva-

der

## ( 15 )

der of their Freedom. Yet even these have pitched upon the EXCISE, as the surest, speediest, easiest Provision for the Publick, as in which what hath dropt out of private Purfes, by unperceived Degrees, flows in a full and fair Stream into the common Bank.

XII. Yea, come over into *England*, and we shall soon observe that the EXCISE, though new and strange in Sound, is old and familiar in the Practice thereof. For all Impositions, Taxes and Customs, formerly imposed upon Wares and Commodities, were in Effect, the same with the EXCISE, though under another Name and Notion; only that which made these Taxes so much distasteful by the Subject, was because many of them were imposed by *Arbitrary Power*, and exercised in the Nature of odious Monopolies, oft times by Men of narrow Hearts, and wide Hands, merely minding their own private Interest. For the Body of our State will, not only patiently, but cheerfully, undergo great pecuniary Burdens for the Publick Benefit, provided that her Back be kept whole and unhurt, I mean her Liberty not prejudiced and impaired by the Illegality of such Impositions. But if once her Freedom be infringed, not only to the breaking of her Skin, but bruising of her Flesh, the least and lowest Rate which can be demanded, lighting on such a sore, or galled place, becomes an intolerable Torture. No Wonder therefore if the State not only wincheth at it for the present, but for the future, waits the first Opportunity to kick it off and cast it down, not  
so

( 16 )

so much because pressed with the Weight, as pained with the Wrongfullness thereof.

XIII. Wherefore, amongst other Regulations of the EXCISE, these Particulars may profitably be propounded. *First*, That when God of his gracious Goodness shall be pleased to bless us with Peace, the EXCISE be ratified by Act of Parliament, which will instantly alter the Shape and Complexion thereof in the Eyes of the People; for presently they will look on it as their own voluntary Deed, proceeding from such as represent them: And Love to the Hand which laid it on (ultimately resolved to be their own) will lessen and lighten the Burden; summoning those their Spirits (hitherto lost and lavisht away in fruitless fuming and fretting against the EXCISE) hereafter to be better employed in the cheerful undergoing thereof.

XIV. *Secondly*, That a tender Care be had of the Fundamentals, as I may term them, of Man's Life; namely, Bread, Flesh, Salt, Small-beer, &c. that in all Matters of Taxes the State lay her Finger on things necessary for Man's Sustainance, and her Loins on such things as are merely superfluous; otherwise it would be lamentable, that the poor Labourer, who hath threshed all day for a Livelihood, should himself be threshed at Night with unconscionable Payment for things tending to the bare Support of Nature.

XV. *Thirdly*, That Favour be shewed to Manufactures, that Men be not made to pay EXCISE for the dropping of their own Sweat, and a special Regard be had to the Encouragement

( 17 )

ment of Industry in Cloathing; for, what is confidently reported of many Houses and Churches built in moist and spongy Places, that they are founded on Wooll-Packs, is certainly true of our *English* State, whose greatest Profit is grounded on that same Commodity, whereby numberless People are fed and maintained: Care therefore must be taken that Artificers be tenderly used in the EXCISE, otherwise it will cause a *Cramp*, or *Hand-Gout*, in all Manufactures: *Yea, Industry will be left in a worse Condition than Idleness, for tho' both alike be sent supperless to Bed, yet Idleness shall only be hungry, but Industry hungry and weary too, taking Pains without Profit, which is swallowed up in the PUBLICK EXCISE.*

XVI. *Lastly*, If the Number and Fees of Officers therein employ'd be thriftily reduced, not left at large, to share for themselves, as if the Kernel were made for the Shell, and the EXCISE only and chiefly intended to enrich the Receivers and Collectors thereof. And indeed in all Ages it hath been observed, that Publicans (though they carry much of the Publick in their Names) are, of all People in their Practice, most addicted to their private Commodity. Here it would be considered of, what competent Term of Time they should hold their Places, and at what Season such who have lain long in Service at the *Receipt of Custom*, should have others to relieve them, not so much for their Ease, as the Ease of the Commonwealth. For, as those who are much employ'd in *telling of Silver*, have commonly their *Fingers coloured and blacked therewith*, so even upright Souls, long continuing in such Money-  
C. Offices,

( 18 )

Offices, gather and contract, by degrees, a *Soily Tincture*, growing daily less diligent for the *Publick Good*, and more cunning for their *Private Advantage*. Yea, it were to be wished, that Officers in the EXCISE were made of more Credit, and less Profit, more Lustre and Esteem being cast upon them; so that the Reputation thereof might pass in Part of Payment and Compensation of their Pains employed herein, which would invite Men of Quality and known Estates to entertain the Place; rather than to be entertained by it, only with moderate Allowance to discharge and defray the same from being burthensome unto them; whereas now such Offices are commonly hunted after, by *Hungry Persons* (whom we may call *Men of Fortune*, in the same Sense as others are termed *Soldiers of Fortune*) not such as *have*, but seek a settled Estate, coming with Intent to prey on the Common-wealth, under Pretence to preserve it.

XVII. These Limitations observed (with Reservation of Room for such Additional as better Judgments may contribute) whereas now the EXCISE-HOUSE is beheld of Men as the *Bridewel* of the Estates, wherein they are stript and whipt without Measure or Mercy, they will hereafter be justly reconciled to a more favourable Opinion thereof; and those very Butchers, now ready with their Axes and Knives to knock down and cut the Throat of the EXCISE, will be converted into a more charitable Persuasion thereof, when made sensible that it is the most effectual and least offensive means to supply the emergent Necessities of the Common-wealth.

XVIII. To

( 19 )

XVIII. To proceed now to some Particulars. All things which are beneficial to the Possessors in this Kingdom, and by consequence ought to be contributive to the Publick, fall under the four Heads of Lands, Houses, Goods, and Money at Interest. To begin with the first, Lands are easily rated, if Six-pence in the Pound, more or less (as the Wisdom of the State shall adjudge expedient) to be laid on their *Annual Worth* through the Kingdom. And in case the Owner doth not himself reside on his Lands, the Occupant, or Tenant, for the Time being, shall make that Sum good to the State, with Power (according to the Nature and Condition of his Lease, or Bargain) to deduct the same out of his Rent, when accounting with his Landlord.

XIX. Houses cannot be reduced to so constant a Valuation, because subject to more Casualties, of Fire, Vacancy by Infection, or otherwise. The best Ground we can give thereby, to take the steadiest Aim at so uncertain a Mark, is by rating each House with two Chimnies, or Fire-places, according to the Proportion of two Acres of Land. Herein we abate a Moiety of what the Rigor of the Law requireth, allotting four Acres to every House to be erected. And according as two Acres of Land in those respective Places are valued, so to estimate a House with two Chimnies, and to increase proportionably as the House shall be found to be greater. If the Town, Borough, or City, wherein this House shall stand, shall have no Land thereto belonging, whereby to make this Valuation, then let Respect be had to the Worth of two Acres of Land in the nearest



( 20 )

nearest Place adjacent thereunto, and let the House be rated accordingly.

XX. It will be objected, that many of those Houses will fall out to be but bare retiring Places of Pleasure, returning no Profit to their Owners. But know that such Persons, having plentiful Estates, if their Cup run over for their *Private Delight*, some Drops thereof must fall beside to the *Common Good*.

XXI. Goods follow in the third place to be assessed by way of *Excise*, of which, thus much in general: That lesser Taxes (as low and little as the Necessity of the Estate will permit) will bring in the greatest Gain: For where Impositions fall extreme heavy, many will be disabled, and others disheartned in trading, whereas reasonable Rates do quicken Traffick with greater Profit to the Publick. Those Landlords which let their Copy-holds, and other Leases, cheapest, make most Money, whose Tenants (like tame Doves, which breed eleven times in the Year) are always bringing in Profit to their Masters; whereas the Fines of enhauncing Landlords (like the Births of Elephants, many Years in perfecting) come seldom, and prove not so beneficial. For it is not always that Sheep which beareth the deepest Fleece, but which cometh ofttest to be shorn, which returneth most Gain to the Owner.

XXII. Money at Interest comes in the last place to be taxed. Hereon (namely on the Increase, or Consideration Money) a Poundage may be levied of Shillings in the Pound. So that

On

( 21 )

*On every Bargain, or Contract, betwixt Creditor and Debtor,*

An Hundred Pounds let at Use for	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 4 \\ 5 \\ 6 \\ 7 \\ 8 \end{array} \right\}$	Pounds,	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{shall pay} \\ \text{yearly to} \\ \text{the State} \end{array} \right\}$	Shillings
----------------------------------	---	---------	--	-----------

And surely, as Parents presume with uncontrollable Confidence more sharply and severely to correct their own Children (than the Sons of Strangers) as having a peculiar Reference to, and proper Dominion over them, so the Common-wealth may be bold to lay a round Tax on Use Money, a Son, a Creature of their own, owing its Birth and Being to the Courtesy and sole Subsistence, to the Connivance and Toleration of the State.

XXIII. This, in Process of Time, will prove very beneficial to Trading, and so by Consequence to the Common-wealth. For we may observe an innate Desire in all Men (some few vain-glorious Persons excepted) with Silence and Secrecy to steal into an Estate, to grow rich without making Noise, which otherwise would give an Alarm to Envy, and expose them to more Expence, expected from them. Now close Hoarders up of Money, being loath to let their Coin lie dead in their Coffers without returning them Profit, and unwilling on the other Side, in open Contracts to confess and discover their Wealth, will embrace a middle way to reconcile their Hope of Gain with their Humour of Secrecy. This they will do by finding out some Tradesmen, of whose Ability, Industry,

## ( 22 )

Industry, and Honesty, they are well assured, and privily joining Stocks with them, on Confidence of a proportionable Consideration from the Improvement of their Money by them employ'd; relying rather on the private Promise of such honest Persons, than willing to reveal their Estates for the Benefit of Use Money; a thing always doubtful in Conscience, and made dear in the State, when certain Poundage is imposed upon it.

XXIV. Here a Necessity is imply'd, that it should be penal for any Person to admit or suffer any Under-rating, or Fail of Payment and Discovery of whatever shall be intended and prescribed contributive to the Publick, by Act of Parliament. For strange it is to observe, with what Confidence Men presume to cheat and deceive the Publick, spending freely upon the States, as on another Man's Purse, whether it be in hope of not being discovered, seeing few Grains cannot be missed out of so great a Heap, or, if discovered, in Confidence of easy accounting, presuming, perchance, on the Favour of such as should censure them, as possibly guilty in the same Nature themselves. Besides, they are bold with the State (the *Shot-payer* General) as with their Publick Parent, with whose Goods their Children may freely partake. Yea, they cheer their Consciences with this weak Comfort, that they are injurious to no particular Man, seeing a round Sum taken from the Publick is not considerable to the Interest of any private Person. These Fallacies so far persuade them, as without Fear to defraud the common Stock which afterwards inclines and enables them to deceive their Neigh-

## ( 23 )

Neighbours, seeing his Conscience, who hath swallowed the doing of a Wrong to the Publick, will never be choak'd with cheating single Persons. The best way therefore to fright Men out of this Falshood, is by a sharp Penalty on such as either shall actually cozen the State, or suffer it to be deceived, by having themselves undervalued out of all reasonable Distance, as to a Fifth of their Estates. Provided that none be constrained by Oath to accuse themselves; *the foulest Rape that can be offered on the chaste Liberty of an English Subject.*

XXV. Great and many Benefits would accrue to all sorts of People if this Justice were generally observed in all Taxes: For first it would cure the Disease of fore Eyes, grown epidemical amongst the common sort. These do with bad Looks behold the Height and Greatness of others, almost conceiving themselves injured by the Honour, and wronged by the Wealth of the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom; either unwilling to consider, or unable to conceive, that Divine Providence, and Princes well grounded Bounty, have lifted such Men higher, and spread them broader then others. But now mean People will leave off envying and repining at their Betters, when such shall pay equal to the meanest in Proportion to their Estates: None will have Cause to be-grudge the Beauty or Height of Corner Stones, when beholding them to bear a double Degree of Weight in the Building. Yea, hereafter the common sort will behold Noblemen, and Gentlemen, with a regardful Delight, not only because their great Means are responsible with the smallest

in

( 24 )

in all publick Accounts, but also sensible of the great Benefit which vulgar People reap and receive by the natural Parts and acquired Accomplishments of such as are of noble Extraction. For whilst such honourable Persons are employed in publick Offices of State, their Abilities are serviceable to the Behoof of the meanest, who freely possess what the other hath dearly purchased. Their far foreign Travels are brought home to their Doors, and all the Results of their Discoveries and Observations, which cost Expence, Pain, Danger, and long Experience, are freely tendered to be useful and serviceable to their lowest Fellow-Subject in the Kingdom.

XXVI. *Secondly*, This EQUALITY in bearing, or sharing, the Burden, or Benefit, in all Rates and Taxes for Subsidy of Lands, or Goods, by way of Assessment, or EXCISE, will prevent the imposing of needless Payments on the People; when Parliament-men (who are, or should be, Persons of prime Wealth and Estate) shall perceive that what they lay on others falls most heavy on themselves, and all pecuniary Burdens light first on the Rasters before they come to the Laths. This, I say, will make them cautious how they cast needless Burdens on the Commonwealth, and will make them lay and levy no more Taxes than the absolute Exigency of the State doth extort. For it may be well presumed, that he who is to strike another through himself, will give him but as easy and gentle a Blow as possible he may. And when the greatest part of the Stream must flow out from Parliament-mens Purses, they will be sure to lavish no more Water than what will turn the Mill.

XXVII. *Thirdly*,

( 25 )

XXVII. *Thirdly*, It will by degrees, repress Riot, and abate Luxury in the Land. For such as steer the State, will labour as much as they may to ease themselves, by laying the less Weight on Lands, Houses, and Things necessary, and will throw the Bulk of the Burden of the Excise of the Kingdom, on such foreign Commodities as may best be spared. May we be sensible of, and thankful for the Goodness and Bounty of God to this Island, in affording it all absolute Necessaries for Man's Subsistence (especially if Industry were used) so that whatsoever is found defective in our Land, may be concluded *superfluous for our Life*. But besides these, it is strange to see what a Company of *Need-nots* are daily imported into the Kingdom, Things which may be wanted without Want; yea, the best that can be said of some of them is, *that they are superfluous, which may be challenged upon strong Suspicion to be hurtful and dangerous*. Nor is it less sad to behold, how the Teeth of the Commonwealth are rotten with feeding on such Sweetmeats as are pleasant to a wanton Palate, but unwholesome to the Stomach of the State. All this will be remedied when such Sweetmeats shall be sawced with such sour Payments as shall fright the Riotous into Thriftiness, or make the desperate Prodigal pay dear for his Pleasure.

XXVIII. It will be objected, that if Luxury be stinted, Thousands will be starved in this Kingdom. For, as Matters now stand, Riot is the greatest House-keeper in England. Charity maintains but some few in Colleges, Hospitals, and at some Great Mens Gates; but Excess keeps many menial Servants, with more Retainers at large, whose Trades and Professi-

D

ons

( 26 )

ons merely depend on the Luxury of this Kingdom. All these, with their Families, will be at a Loss for a Livelihood, if Luxury (the Master which hitherto hath set them a work, and paid them their Wages) should in this Land decay in his Estate: It may therefore, in some sort, seem thrift to connive at Prodigality and Policy to permit Luxury in this Kingdom.

XXIX. But to this it is answered, that such People whose Subsistence heretofore was only on Reference to Luxury, finding their Foundation to fail them, will begin on a better and surer Bottom, and seasonably betake themselves (forced by Necessity) to some more useful Professions, there being Latitude enough in this Land for several Employments. For Nature in this Island tenders us the rude Materials of many Commodities, and makes Signs, as I may say, to Art and Industry to perfect what she hath begun: Which Signs, though Men hitherto, out of Ignorance, or Idleness, could not, or would not, understand, yet hereafter they will be made to mark them: And being cashier'd by Luxury, they will lift themselves under Industry, as the surer Pay-master, and find out some more certain and profitabler Employment.

XXX. Lastly, Equality of Rates, being thus settled all over the Kingdom, it will inspirit all Trades with a vigorous Chearfulness to prosecute their Calling. The Husbandman, as well as his Land, will be in heart; the Spinster's Wheel would merrily turn round; an Edge would be set on the Cloath-worker's Sheers, and a fresh Colour on the Dyer's Cheeks: None will regret at the Payment of Taxes, when

equally

( 27 )

equally proportioned amongst all Persons, on all Commodities. For the Porters of this City are Politicians enough in this Point to teach us how easily a Burden is born when equally poised on the Shoulders. And this will constantly supply the State against all Emergencies with a plentiful Treasure of Money, which is the *Sinews of a Common-wealth*. For as all the Piety of the Patriarch Jacob could not preserve him from halting, when the Sinew in his Thigh was shrunk, so no Piety, or Wisdom, can keep that Common-wealth from being a Cripple, wherein the *Nerves of Money are wanting*, for the lawful Advance whereof, *all must contribute their utmost Endeavours*.

XXXI. Here it were to be wished, that Publick Encouragement might be given to such Undertakers, who are the Discoverers of *Profitable Projects*, not only to such as exactly hit the Mark, but even to those that probably miss it, because their Aberrations may be Directions to others. This would make active Brains to beat about for new Inventions, wherein former Ages and Nations have been very fruitful, and ours, might be presumed, would not be barren. And though many Tympanies, false Conceptions, and strange Births would be produced, and many Frustrations, Aberrations and Miscarriages brought forth, yet amidst these, some pregnant Wits would happily be delivered of rare Inventions, especially if the State were pleased to be their Midwife, favourably to encourage them.

XXXII. We see no Nation post with more Haste, or crowd in more Numbers to Lotteries, than our *English*. No People is more



( 28 )

contentedly cozened with Hope of Gain, in that kind, no whit disheartened by the Disproportion of Blanks to adventure for the Prize. This discovereth in our Countrymen a curious Humour to be tampering with Contingencies, and a longing Mind and liquorish Palate, after novel Projects, especially if made luscious with Probability of Profit. An active Humour, which, if vented the right way, and directed to the true End, might prove (as now destructive to themselves) well and beneficial to themselves and others, in putting them on hard, but honourable Projects, or difficult Designs, but sweetned with Likelihood of Success; O what *Indies* would they find in *England*! rescuing Treasure from the Jaws of the Sea, or Bowels of the Earth, enlarging the Dimensions of this Land, not to make it longer or broader, but deeper by their Industry.

XXXIII. Here we take the Boldness to point at a double Injustice. *First*, many Men when they have conquered an hard Invention, another is crowned with all the Credit thereof. As in the Fable of the Birds, striving to fly highest, when the Sovereign Eagle had soared above them all, the small Wren, which covertly had conveyed herself upon the Eagle's Back, mounted with her own Wings a little higher, and so got the Victory, so many Men improving themselves on the Discoveries made by the Brain and Pains of others, and only adding some complemental Enlargements of their own, have plundered the first Founders of all the Praise and Profit of their Invention. Thus any common Fellow may set

fire

( 29 )

fire to a Gun, and hit the Mark, whilst the Commendation belongs justly to him who first rightly mounted and level'd the Ordnance.

XXXIV. The *Second* is a greater Grievance; namely, when one on his own Purse and Pains, hath compleated a Project profitable for the Common-wealth, and then some great Person, stepping in by Force or Favour, ejects the true Owner out of the Possession of what his Industry had acquired. We read in the Second of *Samuel*, xxiii. 16. How those three were accounted amongst *David's* Worthies, who, breaking through the Army of the *Philistines*, fetched Water from the Well of *Bethlehem*, to satisfy the Longing of King *David*: Well then in like manner may that meritorious Knight be ranked amongst the Worthies of this Realm, who, to quench the Thirst of Thousands in the populous City of *London*, fetched Water more than four and twenty miles on his own Cost, encountring all the way with an Army of Oppositions, grappling with Hills, struggling with Rocks, fighting with Forests, and yet, with admirable Constancy, hewed out his Passage in Defiance of all Difficulties, and brought his Project to Perfection. When a potent Person, and idle Spectator strikes in, and by his Greatness possesseth himself of a Moiety of the Profit, which the unwearied Endeavours of the aforesaid Knight had purchased to himself. Such Injustice, for the future, may be prevented, that Men may quietly reap what their Industry hath sown, not disturbed by the Intrusion of others.

XXXV. But



( 30 )

XXXV. But to return to the Equality of Rates settled over the Land, when the Excise shall be excised according to the aforesaid Restrictions, and all Taxes established in their respective Proportions, over all Persons and Commodities, this will publish and clear the several Conditions and Values of Men, as they are stated and intrusted in Possessions, that so, if the Ability of their Minds and Civility of their Behaviour be answerable to their Means, they may be suited accordingly with Places of Power and Trust in the Commonwealth.

XXXVI. Here it would be considered of;

1. *What Sum of Payment to the State should enable a Man with a Voice, or Suffrage, to choose a Knight, or Burgefs, in Parliament.*
2. *How much shall qualify him to serve in petty, or grand Juries.*
3. *What Proportion may render him capable of the Commission of the Peace.*
4. *How much may make him eligible to be a Member of Parliament.*

It being to be presumed, that such who have best Bottoms of their own are least subject to Temptations of Injustice; and it being equal that such as pay most to the State should be honoured from the State with most Credit and Employment.

XXXVII. As for necessitous Persons, uninterested in the State, as obliged thereto by

no

( 31 )

no considerable Fortune (engaged rather to their Creditors than their Country) it hath ever been accounted dangerous to employ them in Places of high Trust. For whilst Men of Means are fixed to the Freehold of the Common-wealth, therein to run, or rather to stand, the Hazard thereof; indigent Persons, like light Moveables, may, on any Occasion of Danger, quickly convey themselves away, even at the Windows of the State, if the Door be not opened unto them.

XXXVIII. True it is, some rare Precedents may be found, of Men from mean Estates, promoted by convenient Degrees through several Trials, unto Places of Power in most important Councils, wherein they have acquitted their Integrity even to Admiration. But the Generality of Mens Corruption treads in the Footsteps of that Statesman, who from a low Fortune, commenced an honourable and great Officer, *per saltum*, and being minded of the Publick Good, he bound it with an Oath, *That in the first Place he must and would provide for his own Estate.* Thus, though Security may be given by their Friends, for the Truth of such intrusted in Money Matters; no Caution can be put in, no Pledge, or Pawn, devised to oblige Men of great Abilities, with keen, eager and active Parts, to be faithful to the Publick, otherwise than what Security ariseth from their own considerable Estates in the Common-wealth.

XXXIX. But here it will be objected, that this will dishearten ingenious Men from *accomplishing themselves to serve the Publick, when disabled from Preferment for want of Means.* It is the

( 32 )

the *Standard of Inequality* to measure Wit by Wealth, and the *highest Injustice* to debar able *Parts from Employment*. How many Men have shrunk their Portion into their Education, and contracted many Acres of Ground into their own Accomplishment. And we read, *Eccles. ix. 15. of a poor wise Man, who by his Wisdom delivered a City.* This Man had been excluded all Activity in the State, if Riches only rendered Men capable thereof.

XL. But in Answer hereunto, be it known, that such Order might, and ought to be taken, that flourishing Parts should not wither, for want of Maintenance, but be watered with the comfortable Dew from the Publick Treasury. For when the State shall discover one of extraordinary Education and Abilities (so that Divine Providence seems to design him for Publick Employments, by enabling him above his Equals) Earth ought so to concur with Heaven, as to chuse and weigh out his Merits, and to give him a suitable Fortune to engage and uphold his Integrity to the Common-wealth; that so having Breadth of Means answerable to his Height of Parts, he may appear in all Dimensions, a Person proportionable to manage a Publick Trust. This would turn Mens Lives into a Race of Vertue, wherein the Nimble and Able-parted, spurred on with Hope of Reward, would lovingly strive to out-strip each other in worthy Accomplishment.

XLI. I know that in this Age, wherein Men are deaf to any Motion which sounds not to their own Profit, it will be hard to persuade People freely to contribute to the Maintenance of others. But let such seriously consider that their Bounty in this Kind is the best Thrift, and

( 33 )

and what herein they give, they save to themselves. For suppose that such able Spirits with weak Estates, impatient to be imprisoned in a narrow Fortune, should by their own Undertaking and Projecting (studying and watching the Humours of Times and Princes) gain Trust to themselves, and intrude, or insinuate, their Diligence into Places of high Importance; hath not their Corruption a plausible Plea, or, at leastwise, a probable Temptation, *vis & modis*, in the first place to provide for themselves? We read of King Edward the First, that he made the Length of his own Arm the Standard of the Yard, to be used in measuring all over England; but such Men of high Honours and hungry Fortunes too often make the Grasp of their own Hands, the Measure of their Moderation, clutching as much as their long Fingers are able to contain, to the great Prejudice of the Publick. This hopefully might be prevented, if such Persons might sufficiently be armed against all Force and Fear of Want, out of the Publick Magazine, and proportionable Means to support them provided fitting their eminent Parts with Places of Trust, and furnishing their Places with Maintenance to support the Dignity thereof without endangering them to descend to unworthy Ways for their Subsistence.

XLII. And here a worthy Custom, long discontinued, deserves to be revived and put in Practice. Some Hundred Years since the eminent and promising Wits of either University were picked out, and sent over into foreign Parts, and there maintained many

E

Years

( 34 )

Years on the Publick Cost: Whence these Merchants, for Experience, returning home with their gainful Adventures, were preferred, according to the Improvement of their Time, to Offices in their own Country. Sir *Thomas Smith*, that learned Secretary to Queen *Elizabeth*, was the last of the Brood which was hatch'd in this manner. Well it would be if the like Nursery were now new planted, and the Stocks of young Students grafted with foreign Education, on the common Charge. In a Word, if where God gives Talents, Men would give Pounds, encouraging hopeful Abilities with helpful Maintenance, neither need the Necessitous be raised to Places of Trust, nor poor Men of great Parts be excluded the Line of Preferment.

XLIII. But this Subject is of that ample Latitude and grand Desert, that the Copiousness thereof cannot be confin'd to this small Treatise, nor can it in so little a Volume satisfy the Particulars of all Emergencies. I have read how one having bought a small Map of the World, was afterwards offended therewith, as false and defective, because the Map only taking Cognizance of great Cities, did not, by Name, express the private Place of his Habitation. I hope this Treatise shall light on more judicious and charitable Readers, who will not condemn our Discourse (wherein only general Heads are briefly fumm'd up, and represented, as I may say, in Lanskip) if therein they find not an exact Specification of all Particulars in *Assessments*, or *Excise*, which their Expectation promised unto themselves. Wherefore I must be forc'd to leave the full and exact Prosecution thereof

( 35 )

thereof to Men of greater Power and Parts, the Subject being of such Receipt as will entertain and employ their best Abilities.

XLIV. *Lastly*, When the vast Consequence, both Moral and Divine, arising from these and the like Notions of Equity and Justice, shall be happily infused into Governing Spirits, and dilated into Practice and Execution, by casting the greatest Weight of necessary Charges from Mens real Estates upon Superfluities, it will so invite the Blessing of Almighty God upon us, that it will promote and advance that Heaven upon Earth, and most happy Spectacle which here can be presented to the Divine Majesty, most delighted, when looking from his Throne, on Earth his Foot-stool, to behold the Symmetry of a well-govern'd Common-wealth.

F I N I S.



Printed in the Year 1647.

