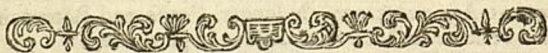


esteem, if instead of considering them as they are represented, they knew them as they are? Thus are Persons of the greatest Probity seduced into shameful Errors and Prejudices, and made bad Men even by that noblest of Principles, the Love of their Country. I cannot here forbear mentioning the famous *Spanish* Proverb, *If there were neither Fools nor Knaves in the World, all People would be of one Mind.*

FOR my own part, I could heartily wish that all Honest Men would enter into an Association, for the Support of one another against the Endeavours of those whom they ought to look upon as their Common Enemies, whatsoever Side they may belong to. Were there such an honest Body of Neutral Forces, we should never see the worst of Men in great Figures of Life, because they are useful to a Party; nor the best unregarded, because they are above practising those Methods which would be grateful to their Faction. We should then single every Criminal out of the Herd, and hunt him down, however formidable and overgrown he might appear: On the contrary, we should shelter distressed Innocence, and defend Virtue, however beset with Contempt or Ridicule, Envy or Defamation. In short we should not any longer regard our Fellow-Subjects as Whigs or Tories, but should make the Man of Merit our Friend, and the Villain our Enemy. C



N^o 126. *Wednesday, July 25.*

Tros Rutulusve fuat nullo discrimine habeo. Virg.

IN my Yesterday's Paper I proposed, that the honest Men of all Parties should enter into a kind of Association for the Defence of one another, and the Confusion of their common Enemies. As it is designed this neutral Body should act with a Regard to nothing but Truth and Equity, and divest themselves of the little Heats and Prepossessions that cleave to Parties of all Kinds, I have prepared

prepared for them the following Form of an Association, which may express their Intentions in the most plain and simple Manner.

WE whose Names are hereunto subscribed do solemnly declare, That we do in our Consciences believe two and two make four; and that we shall adjudge any Man whatsoever to be our Enemy who endeavours to persuade us to the contrary. We are likewise ready to maintain with the Hazard of all that is near and dear to us, That six is less than seven in all Times and all Places; and that ten will not be more three Years hence than it is at present. We do also firmly declare, That it is our Resolution as long as we live to call Black black, and White white. And we shall upon all Occasions oppose such Persons that upon any Day of the Year shall call Black white, or White black, with the utmost Peril of our Lives and Fortunes.

WERE there such a Combination of honest Men, who without any Regard to Places would endeavour to extirpate all such furious Zealots as would sacrifice one half of their Country to the Passion and Interest of the other; as also such infamous Hypocrites, that are for promoting their own Advantage, under Colour of the Publick Good; with all the profligate immoral Retainers to each Side, that have nothing to recommend them but an implicit Submission to their Leaders; we should soon see that furious Party-Spirit extinguished, which may in time expose us to the Derision and Contempt of all the Nations about us.

A Member of this Society, that would thus carefully employ himself in making room for Merit, by throwing down the worthless and depraved Part of Mankind from those conspicuous Stations of Life to which they have been sometimes advanced, and all this without any Regard to his private Interest, would be no small Benefactor to his Country.

I remember to have read in *Diodorus Siculus* an Account of a very active little Animal, which I think he calls the *Ichneumon*, that makes it the whole Business of his Life to break the Eggs of the Crocodile, which he is always in search after. This Instinct is the more remarkable, because
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the *Ichneumon* never feeds upon the Eggs he has broken, nor any other Way finds his Account in them. Were it not for the incessant Labours of this industrious Animal, *Egypt*, says the Historian, would be over-run with Crocodiles; for the *Egyptians* are so far from destroying those pernicious Creatures, that they worship them as Gods.

IF we look into the Behaviour of ordinary Partizans, we shall find them far from dissembling this disinterested Animal; and rather acting after the Example of the wild *Tartars*, who are ambitious of destroying a Man of the most extraordinary Parts and Accomplishments, as thinking that upon his Decease the same Talents, whatever Post they qualify'd him for, enter of Course into his Destroyer.

AS in the whole Train of my Speculations, I have endeavoured as much as I am able to extinguish that pernicious Spirit of Passion and Prejudice, which rages with the same Violence in all Parties, I am still the more desirous of doing some Good in this Particular, because I observe that the Spirit of Party reigns more in the Country than in the Town. It here contracts a kind of Brutality and rustick Fierceness, to which Men of a politer Conversation are wholly Strangers. It extends it self even to the Return of the Bow and the Hat; and at the same time that the Heads of Parties preserve towards one another an outward Show of Good-breeding, and keep up a perpetual Intercourse of Civilities, their Tools that are dispersed in these outlying Parts will not so much as mingle together at a Cock-match. This Humour fills the Country with several periodical Meetings of Whig Jockies and Tory Foxhunters; not to mention the innumerable Curses, Frowns, and Whispers it produces at a Quarter-Sessions.

I do not know whether I have observed in any of my former Papers, that my Friends Sir ROGER DE COVERLEY and Sir ANDREW FREEPORT are of different Principles, the first of them inclined to the *landed* and the other to the *monied* Interest. This Humour is so moderate in each of them, that it proceeds no farther than to an agreeable Rallery, which very often diverts the rest of the Club. I find however that the Knight is a much stronger Tory in the Country than in Town, which,

as he has told me in my Ear, is absolutely necessary for the keeping up his Interest. In all our Journey from *London* to his House we did not so much as bait at a Whig-Inn; or if by chance the Coachman stopped at a wrong Place, one of Sir ROGER's Servants would ride up to his Master full Speed, and whisper to him that the Master of the House was against such an one in the last Election. This often betray'd us into hard Beds and bad Cheer; for we were not so inquisitive about the Inn as the Inn-keeper; and provided our Landlord's Principles were sound, did not take any Notice of the Staleness of his Provisions. This I found still the more inconvenient, because the better the Host was, the worse generally were his Accommodations; the Fellow knowing very well that those who were his Friends would take up with coarse Diet and an hard Lodging. For these Reasons, all the while I was upon the Road I dreaded entering into an House of any one that Sir ROGER had applauded for an honest Man.

SINCE my Stay at Sir ROGER's in the Country, I daily find more Instances of this narrow Party-Humour. Being upon a Bowling-green at a Neighbouring Market-Town the other Day, (for that is the Place where the Gentlemen of one Side meet once a Week) I observed a Stranger among them of a better Presence and genteeler Behaviour than ordinary; but was much surpris'd, that notwithstanding he was a very fair *Bettor*, no Body would take him up. But upon Inquiry I found, that he was one who had given a disagreeable Vote in a former Parliament, for which Reason there was not a Man upon that Bowling-green who would have so much Correspondence with him as to win his Money of him.

AMONG other Instances of this Nature, I must not omit one which concerns my self. *Will. Wimble* was the other Day relating several strange Stories that he had picked up no Body knows where of a certain great Man; and upon my staring at him, as one that was surpris'd to hear such things in the Country, which had never been so much as whisper'd in the Town, *Will.* stopped short in the Thread of his Discourse, and after Dinner asked my Friend Sir ROGER in his Ear if he was sure that I was not a Fanatick.