



N^o 138. *Wednesday, August 8.*

Utitur in re non Dubia testibus non necessariis. Tull.

ONE meets now and then with Persons who are extremely learned and knotty in expounding clear Cases. *Tully* tells us of an Author that spent some Pages to prove that Generals could not perform the great Enterprises which have made them so illustrious, if they had not had Men. He asserted also, it seems, that a Minister at home, no more than a Commander abroad, could do any thing without other Men were his Instruments and Assistants. On this Occasion he produces the Example of *Themistocles*, *Pericles*, *Cyrus*, and *Alexander* himself, whom he denies to have been capable of effecting what they did, except they had been followed by others. It is pleasant enough to see such Persons contend without Opponents, and triumph without Victory.

THE Author above-mentioned by the Orator is placed for ever in a very ridiculous Light, and we meet every Day in Conversation such as deserve the same kind of Renown, for troubling those with whom they converse with the like Certainties. The Persons that I have always thought to deserve the highest Admiration in this kind are your ordinary Story-tellers, who are most religiously careful of keeping to the Truth in every particular Circumstance of a Narration, whether it concern the main End, or not. A Gentleman whom I had the Honour to be in Company with the other Day, upon some Occasion that he was pleas'd to take, said, He remembered a very pretty Repartee made by a very witty Man in King *Charles's* time upon the like Occasion. I remember (said he, upon entering into the Tale) much about the time of *Oats's* Plot, that a Cousin-German of mine and I were at the *Bear* in *Holbourn*: No, I am out, it was at the *Cross-Keys*; but *Jack Thompson* was there, for

for he was very great with the Gentleman who made the Answer. But I am sure it was spoken somewhere thereabouts, for we drank a Bottle in that Neighbourhood every Evening: But no matter for all that, the thing is the same; but —

HE was going on to settle the Geography of the Jest when I left the Room, wondering at this odd turn of Head which can play away its Words, with uttering nothing to the Purpose, still observing its own Impertinences, and yet proceeding in them. I do not question but he informed the rest of his Audience, who had more Patience than I, of the Birth and Parentage, as well as the Collateral Alliances of his Family, who made the Repartee, and of him who provoked him to it.

IT is no small Misfortune to any who have a just Value for their Time, when this Quality of being so very circumstantial, and careful to be exact, happens to shew it self in a Man whose Quality obliges them to attend his Proofs, that it is now Day, and the like. But this is augmented when the same Genius gets into Authority, as it often does. Nay, I have known it more than once ascend the very Pulpit. One of this sort taking it in his Head to be a great Admirer of Dr. *Tillotson* and Dr. *Beveridge*, never failed of proving out of these great Authors Things which no Man living would have denied him upon his own single Authority. One Day, resolving to come to the Point in hand, he said, According to that excellent Divine, I will enter upon the Matter, or in his Words, in his fifteenth Sermon of the *Folio* Edition, Page 160.

I shall briefly explain the Words, and then consider the Matter contained in them.

THIS honest Gentleman needed not, one would think, strain his Modesty so far as to alter his Design of *Entering upon the Matter*, to that of *Briefly explaining*. But so it was, that he would not even be contented with that Authority, but added also the other Divine to strengthen his Method, and told us, With the Pious and Learned Dr. *Beveridge*, Page 4th of his 9th Volume, I *shall endeavour to make it as plain as I can from the Words which I have now read, wherein for that Purpose we shall consider—*

consider — This Wiseacre was reckoned by the Parish, who did not understand him, a most excellent Preacher; but that he read too much, and was so humble that he did not trust enough to his own Parts.

NEXT to these ingenious Gentlemen, who argue for what nobody can deny them, are to be ranked a sort of People who do not indeed attempt to prove insignificant Things, but are ever labouring to raise Arguments with you about Matters you will give up to them without the least Controversy. One of these People told a Gentleman who said he saw Mr. such a one go this Morning at nine o' Clock towards the *Gravel-Pits*, Sir, I must beg your Pardon for that, for tho' I am very loth to have any Dispute with you, yet I must take the Liberty to tell you it was nine when I saw him at St. James's. When Men of this Genius are pretty far gone in Learning they will put you to prove that Snow is white, and when you are upon that Topick can say that there is really no such thing as Colour in Nature; in a Word, they can turn what little Knowledge they have, into a ready Capacity of raising Doubts; into a Capacity of being always frivolous and always unanswerable. It was of two Disputants of this impertinent and laborious kind that the Cynick said, *One of these Fellows is Milking a Ram, and the other holds the Pail.*

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Exercise of the Snuff-Box, according to the most fashionable Airs and Motions, in opposition to the Exercise of the Fan, will be Taught with the best plain or perfumed Snuff, at Charles Lillie's Perfumer at the Corner of Beaufort-Buildings in the Strand, and Attendance given for the Benefit of the young Merchants about the Exchange for two Hours every Day at Noon, except Saturdays, at a Toy-shop near Garraway's Coffee-House. There will be likewise Taught The Ceremony of the Snuff-Box, or Rules for offering Snuff to a Stranger, a Friend, or a Mistress, according to the Degrees of Familiarity or Distance; with an Explanation of the Careless, the Scornful, the Politick, and the Surly Pinch, and the Gestures proper to each of them.

N. B.