

with reading Defamatory Libels, so far as to approve the Authors and Dispersers of them, are as guilty as if they had compos'd them; for if they do not write such Libels themselves, it is because they have not the Talent of Writing, or because they will run no hazard.

THE Author produces other Authorities to confirm his Judgment in this Particular. C



N^o 452. Friday, August 8.

Est natura Hominum Novitatis avida. Plin. apud Lillium.

THERE is no Humour in my Countrymen, which I am more inclined to wonder at, than their general Thirst after News. There are about half a Dozen Ingenious Men, who live very plentifully upon this Curiosity of their Fellow-Subjects. They all of them receive the same Advices from abroad, and very often in the same Words; but their Way of cooking it is so different, that there is no Citizen, who has an Eye to the publick Good, that can leave the Coffee-house with Peace of Mind before he has given every one of them a Reading. These several Dishes of News are so very agreeable to the Palate of my Countrymen, that they are not only pleased with them when they are served up hot, but when they are again set cold before them, by those penetrating Politicians, who oblige the Publick with their Reflexions and Observations upon every Piece of Intelligence that is sent us from abroad. The Text is given us by one set of Writers, and the Comment by another.

BUT notwithstanding we have the same Tale told us in so many different Papers, and if occasion requires in so many Articles of the same Paper; notwithstanding in a Scarcity of Foreign Posts we hear the same Story repeated, by different Advices from *Paris, Brussels, the Hague*, and from every great Town in *Europe*; notwithstanding the Multitude of Annotations, Explanations, Reflexions, and various Readings which it passes through, our Time lies

lies heavy on our Hands till the Arrival of a fresh Mail: We long to receive further Particulars, to hear what will be the next Step, or what will be the Consequences of that which has been already taken. A Westerly Wind keeps the whole Town in Suspence, and puts a Stop to Conversation.

THIS general Curiosity has been raised and inflamed by our late Wars, and if rightly directed might be of good Use to a Person who has such a Thirst awakened in him. Why should not a Man, who takes Delight in reading every thing that is new, apply himself to History, Travels, and other Writings of the same kind, where he will find perpetual Fuel for his Curiosity, and meet with much more Pleasure and Improvement than in these Papers of the Week? An honest Tradesman, who languishes a whole Summer in Expectation of a Battle, and perhaps is balked at last, may here meet with half a dozen in a Day. He may read the News of a whole Campaign, in less time than he now bestows upon the Productions of a single Post. Fights, Conquests and Revolutions lie thick together. The Reader's Curiosity is raised and satisfied every Moment, and his Passions disappointed or gratified, without being detained in a State of Uncertainty from Day to Day, or lying at the Mercy of Sea and Wind. In short, the Mind is not here kept in a perpetual Gape after Knowledge, nor punished with that eternal Thirst, which is the Portion of all our modern News-mongers and Coffee-house Politicians.

ALL Matters of Fact, which a Man did not know before, are News to him; and I do not see how any Haberdasher in *Cheapside* is more concerned in the present Quarrel of the Cantons, than he was in that of the League. At least, I believe every one will allow me, it is of more Importance to an *Englishman* to know the History of his Ancestors, than that of his Contemporaries who live upon the Banks of the *Danube* or the *Boristhenes*. As for those who are of another Mind, I shall recommend to them the following Letter, from a Projector, who is willing to turn a Penny by this remarkable Curiosity of his Countrymen.

Mr.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

YOU must have observed, that Men who frequent Coffee-houses, and delight in News, are pleased with every thing that is Matter of Fact, so it be what they have not heard before. A Victory, or a Defeat, are equally agreeable to them. The shutting of a Cardinal's Mouth pleases them one Post, and the opening of it another. They are glad to hear the *French* Court is removed to *Marli*, and are afterwards as much delighted with its Return to *Versailles*. They read the Advertisements with the same Curiosity as the Articles of publick News; and are as pleased to hear of a Pye-bald Horse that is stray'd out of a Field near *Islington*, as of a whole Troop that have been engaged in any Foreign Adventure. In short they have a Relish for every thing that is News, let the Matter of it be what it will; or, to speak more properly, they are Men of a Voracious Appetite, but no Taste. Now, Sir, since the great Fountain of News, I mean the War, is very near being dried up; and since these Gentlemen have contracted such an inextinguishable Thirst after it; I have taken their Case and my own into Consideration, and have thought of a Project which may turn to the Advantage of us both. I have Thoughts of publishing a daily Paper which shall comprehend in it all the most remarkable Occurrences in every little Town, Village and Hamlet that lie within ten Miles of *London*, or in other Words, within the Verge of the Penny-Post. I have pitched upon this Scene of Intelligence for two Reasons; first because the Carriage of Letters will be very cheap; and secondly, because I may receive them every Day. By this means my Readers will have their News fresh and fresh, and many worthy Citizens who cannot sleep with any Satisfaction at present, for want of being informed how the World goes, may go to Bed contentedly, it being my Design to put out my Paper every Night at Nine-o'-Clock precisely. I have already established Correspondences in these several Places, and received very good Intelligence.

BY my last Advices from *Knightsbridge* I hear that a Horse was clapped into the Pound on the third Instant,

stant, and that he was not released when the Letters came away.

WE are informed from *Pankridge*, that a dozen Weddings were lately celebrated in the Mother Church of that Place, but are referred to their next Letters for the Names of the Parties concerned.

LETTERS from *Brumpton* advise, That the Widow *Blight* had received several Visits from *John Millard*, which affords great matter of Speculation in those Parts.

BY a Fisherman which lately touched at *Hammer-smith*, there is Advice from *Putney*, that a certain Person well known in that Place, is like to lose his Election for Church-warden, but this being Boat-news, we cannot give intire Credit to it.

LETTERS from *Paddington* bring little more, than that *William Squeak*, the Sow-gelder, passed through that Place the fifth Instant.

THEY advise from *Fulham*, that things remained there in the same State they were. They had Intelligence, just as the Letters came away, of a Tub of excellent Ale just set abroach at *Parsons Green*; but this wanted Confirmation.

I have here, Sir, given you a Specimen of the News with which I intend to entertain the Town, and which, when drawn up regularly in the Form of a News Paper, will, I doubt not, be very acceptable to many of those Publick-spirited Readers, who take more delight in acquainting themselves with other Peoples Business than their own. I hope a Paper of this kind, which lets us know what is done near home, may be more useful to us, than those which are filled with Advices from *Zug* and *Bender*, and make some amends for that Dearth of Intelligence, which we may justly apprehend from times of Peace. If I find that you receive this Project favourably, I will shortly trouble you with one or two more; and in the mean time am, most worthy Sir, with all due Respect,

Your most Obedient,

and most Humble Servant.

Saturday,