

From Aboard

The Van-Herring,

Being a full Relation of the present State
and sad Condition of that Ship.

In a New Letter from Legorn, to a Merchant in London.

S I R,

Since what I have formerly imparted to you was so well accepted, I have thought good to continue my correspondence with you, by relating several things that have fallen out on Board us since my last: I told you then, that the great Council of Officers was called, whereby the Saylers hoped to have had the Ship put into such a condition, as not to have fear'd the attempts either of the *Mahometans* or the *Algerines*, but might have rendred the hopes of the one, and the expectations of the other frustrated; our hopes hereof were very much heightned, when at the opening of the Council, the noble Captain gave them large assurance of his ready compliance with all the means they should think convenient, to this end the Council upon serious debate, and mature deliberation, came to this Resolve, That the only way to secure the Ship, and the Christian Religion, against the attempts of the *Mahometans*, was by an order of the Captain and his Council of Officers, to disable the Lieutenant from succeeding to the Captains place after the Captains death, all other ways being insufficient and dangerous, like the false healing of a Wound, or Building on a rotten Foundation: The Captain not liking their proceeding, sent them word by an Officer, that a small Pinnace belonging to the Ship, was in danger to be taken by some set on and incouraged as it's thought by the *Mahometans* and *Algerines*, especially the latter, from whom it is thought they have been furnished with Powder, Shot, and Guns, wherewith to batter this Pinnace, and therefore he would have them let the Lieutenant alone; and bend all their thoughts to the defence of this Pinnace, since it was of so great consequence to the *Van-Herring*, that if once lost, we can never Trade into the Straits with safety: the Council after a serious debate on this Message, resolv'd to draw up an Address to the Captain, wherein they assured him they would withal readiness comply with the motion of relieving the Pinnace, if there might be a satisfving assurance given them, that it would be in order to the securing the Old Ship, which they were humbly bold to tell him, they had found by woful experience hitherto, to be altogether manned

with, and managed by the *Mahometans*; and they appeal'd to the Captain himself, that he knew it was not long since one of the Arch-Traytors, now in the Hold, for endeavouring to Murther the Captain, and seize the Ship for the Lieutenant, savled in, and commanded this Pinnace; therefore since the whole Ship was in danger to be lost, they could not hazard the whole Ship by endeavouring to relieve this Pinnace, which had been a Nest of our implacable Enemies the *Mahometans*: they also with all humility shewed him, that all, or most of the supplies they had formerly given to maintain the Captains Honour, and the Ships safety, were abused by ill Officers, the design wholly inverted to serve the *Mahometans* interest. They told him also, that since the best defence this Ship had, was to endeavour the advancing the Christian Religion abroad, they admired to find his Officers endeavouring to procure *Mahometan Chappels* in other Christian Ships: they desired also, that those which endeavoured to render the endeavours of this Council, as dangerous to the Captains Interest, might be looked on by him as Enemies to him and his Government: The Council have also punished some persons, that by obstructing Petitions for the meeting of this Council, have betrayed the Liberty of the Saylers, which we hope will have this good effect, that in the Vacansy of Council, there will be no more Abhorrors found amongst us. They have also made several Addresses to the Captain, to remove from his Presence several pernicious Officers, who by their fawning words, and flattering Councils, would draw his affection from the Loyal Saylers, one of them was chief Clark to the great Cabbine, him they have got removed, but the rest remain as they were, only one advanced by the influence of the Lieutenant to the dignity of chief Boat-Swain, was by the Council of the lower Bench charged with Treason against the Captain, and betraying the Liberty of the Saylers, requiring to have him secured, but could not prevail; the Council of the lower Bench after many debates and consultations, drew up an order to disable the Lieutenant to succeed to the Captains place after the Captains death. Now Sir, I cannot tell you the different



different humors that filled the Saylers; all men were big with expectation what would become of this order, when presented to the Council of the upper Bench, all perswading themselves it would be according to their own desires; the Council of the lower Bench handed it to the Officers of the upper Bench, where the Captain sat, where after some debate, it was rejected, to the great grief of the Christian Saylers, and the Joy of the *Mahometan* Faction; the Officers of the Red Robe were indifferently divided, but those of the White Robe, although they pretend to be the Pillars of the Christian Religion, and have long been thought by some of the Saylers to be so; Yet now to convince the World, their own pretences were untrue, and the Saylers good opinion of them false; they most of them came in as a dead weight, and speedily carried the Scale on the Lieutenants side, which is a thing so strange, that it makes some of the Saylers think, that as they were the Relicks of the *Mahometan* suppression, which remains unpurged, when the rest of their Innovations were expelled this Ship; so they have secret inclinations to return again to the Obedience of the *Misfy*. Yet something has been done to the discouraging the *Mahometans*, and encouraging the Christian Saylers; for one of the Arch Traytors was at last brought to his Tryal before the Council, and condemned to loose his Head upon the Capstern, which was done accordingly; the Counsel notwithstanding the rejecting the Order, consulted of some other way, to disable the Lieutenant, which to prevent, the Captain minded them again of the danger of the Pinnis, whereupon they resolved to draw up another Address to the Captain, wherein they gave him great thanks for the care he had taken to prevent the *Mahometan* design, and his gracious promise of complying with all means they should think convenient for securing the Ship; yet they much grieved to find his promise so limited, as to render it wholly useles, by refusing to grant that wherein alone our safety doth consist, there being no safety to him or the Ship, until the Lieutenant be Excluded; all the Answer the Captain returned, was, that the Council of the upper Bench, by rejecting the Order, had confirmed him in an Opinion, that it is not his Interest to desert the Lieutenant; the Counsel hereat amazed, after some Debate, entred into the Journal of their Proceedings, That it is their Opinion, that there can be no security to the Captain, the Ship, or the Christian Religion, without preventing the Lieutenant from being Captain; and that notwithstanding the Captains promises of complying with all other ways of securing us, that unless this Order be passed, they can give him no supplies, without Betraying the Captains person, the Christian Religion, and the

trust reposed in them by the Saylers; and whosoever should advise the Captain to put off this Council to any other purpose then to the making this, are betrayers of the Captain, the Christian Religion, and Promoters of and Pensioners to *Argere*, and that the thanks of this Bench be given to the Saylers in the great Cabbine, for their Loyalty to, and endeavors for the preservation of the Captain, and the Christian Religion; immediately they were put off for a few days, which the *Mahometans* have the impudence to say, it was done in favour to them, but the Loyal Saylers hope the contrary, and that it is only to give the Council an occasion to bring in the Order again; yet the Saylers of the great Cabbine, fearing the *Mahometans*, might take this opportunity to attempt something against the Cabbine, requested the Master of this Cabbine to take all imaginable care for its preservation. I had almost forgotten one thing that hath occasioned much discourse amongst us; a Loyal Officer made an ingenious Speech, containing a short and true Account of our Affairs: It was condemned by some, although others think it will prove somewhat like a late Treatise, called, *The Growth of Mahometanism*, which when first Published, was generally condemned as a design fallly to asperse the Captains Favourites, but in short time we found the thing too true. I should have told you also, that while the Council of Officers were inquiring into this Plot, some came on Board us from on Board the *Harp*, and acquainted our Council, that Ship also was in danger to be Betrayed to the *Algerines*: We are informed, that the *Algerines*, by the help of the *Misfy* and his Agents, have got a Stout Ship that Rides near us, called, *The Eagle*, to be so Betrayed by the Captains Officers, that it must shortly fall into their hands. As for our Lieutenant, he at present Sayles in the *Lyon*, but is expected on Board us; I suppose his absence will be more welcome to them, then his presence to us: just as I was finishing this Letter, I saw the Sayles flocking about the Main-Mast, whereupon I went to enquire the reason, and found them with great amazement and admiration reading an Order of the Captains for discharging this Council of Officers, and calling a New one, which are not to meet in the Old Cabbin, which they have done time out of mind, but in the Academy, a small Cabbin in a more remote part of the Ship; this unexpected and prodigious News filled the Loyal Saylers with sad hearts and dejected countenances, yea, the Heavens have put on Mourning, appearing Dark and Gloomy, and the Sun not seen for three or four days together. Thus I have given you a short but impartial account of all or most of the material things that have fallen out since my last.