

PLAIN DEALING: Or,

A Dialogue between HUMPHREY and ROGER,

About Chusing the Next Parliament.

Humph. WELL met, Neighbour *Hodge*: How do'st do? We have strange News, man; Do'st hear it? What do'st think, but the Parliament's Dissolv'd again?

Roger. Ay! Is it so! By my Brown Cow then, *Numps*, I think our Statesmen now-a-days take *Parliaments* for *Nine-Pins*, which they *Set up*, like the Boys, onely to *Knock down* again, for sport.

Humph. Hold you there, Neighbour: for whether the Boys learn of our Statesmen, or our Statesmen of the Boys, is too hard a Question for us to Resolve: This I'm sure of, they could never indure the breath of a *Parliament*, since they discover'd the *Popish Plot*; which makes me think those *Statesmen* had a finger in't, and are mad to see such a *hopeful Project* in danger of miscarrying. But prethee tell me, which be these *Statesmen*? Are they those of the *K's Private Council*?

Roger. No, you Fool; they are call'd the *Private Council*, because every thing of moment is kept *private* from them. You may see by the Proclamation for this Dissolution, that they did not know of it, till it was Resolv'd. But the *Statesmen* are call'd by a Name which I have almost forgot, somewhat like *Cupboard-Councilmen*, and in truth are a sort of *Whisperers*, that Advise such things in *Private*, that they dare not *own*, and cannot *justify* with reason, in *Publick*.

Humph. But what kind of men are these? For I never saw any of them.

Roger. Troth nor I, since they were so; but whilst they were honest Countrey Lords or Gentlemen, as all *Statesmen* must be, before they can be made free of that Trade, I have seen some; but they say they alter after, like a Countrey Gentlemans Daughter, that sets up for a *Town-Miss*, who presently grows *much Finer, much Falsér, and less Sound*. Yet to know something more of them, I read all the matter of fact that is publish'd, never minding the interpretation they give it, which generally is a cheat, but by their Actions it seems to me that they are a sort of *English Frenchmen*, and *Protestant Papists*, for all they Pretend is for the *Protestant Religion*, and the lessening of *France*, and all they Do is for the growth of *Popery*, and the *French power*.

Humph. Oh plague, now I see the reason why they advis'd the dissolving of this *Parliament* who resolv'd to discover their tricks to the whole Nation.

Roger. I'd have these Fellows go like the Serjeants men, dress'd *party-per-pale*, the right side after the *French Mode*, the left after the *English*; with a Book in their hands, the one leaf of the *Mafs*, the other of the *Common-*

Prayer: and then my Lord Chief Justice should order *Kerch* to hang up the right sides of them, as high as *Haman*; and let their left sides get down as well as they could, and this is my sentence of an *English Monsieur*:

Humph. Since they preserve the Protestant Religion, by bringing in *Popery*, maintain our Liberties by making us Slaves; Secure *England* by Betraying it to *France*; to be even with them in their own Coyn, I would use them as the *Spiritual-Courts* do those that offend them, deliver them to the *Devil* for the Salvation of their Souls.

Roger. Peace, peace, man, they fear no *Devil* but an *Executioner*; nor no day of Judgment but the meeting of a *Parliament*.

Humph. Why there is to be a new *Parliament* to sit presently at *Oxford*, but who shall we Chuse now Neighbour? You for the City, and I for the Countrey.

Roger. Why, who should we Chuse man, but such as have in these last *Parliaments*, approved themselves to be strongly and heartily against those curst twins, which our Statesmens Brains are in labour to bring forth, *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*? and those we will Chuse whether they themselves will or no; for we chuse them more for our own good, then to Complement them: and since they are not born for themselves but their Countrey, they must be content to take the necessary trouble; & we must be careful to put them to none that is unnecessary; that is, let us Chuse them without the expence of a peny, or the trouble of a Journey, and if they will not then be at the pains and charge of Attending in *Parliament*, let *Topham* take them, as they, the Abhorrrers and all other Betrayers of our Liberties will justly deserve?

Humph. But shall we Chuse them before they come to desire it.

Roger. Desire it, you Simpleton! Prethee tell me, If a pack of Rogues and Papists had seized on thee, brought thee to the Gallows, tied the Rope, and were just ready to turn thee off the Ladder, and some honest Gentleman coming in sight should fright the Rogues a little off: If thou shouldst then in a Sheepish tone tell those Gentlemen, If they wou'd desire you to slip your neck out of the Noose, and come down you wou'd do it, dost not think they wou'd have reason to Answer, They were for the Liberty of the Subject, and wou'd press nothing of that nature, but leave it to thy own pleasure, either to go along with them, or to stay and let the Rogues make an end of their work when they were gone?

Humph. By the *Mafs* *Hodge* thou say'st well, I have a woundy mind to do as thou say'st. but,

Roger.



Roger. But what, *Tony*? Is this a time to be at *Ifs*, and *Ands*, and *Buts*?

Humph. But Mr. *H.* you know is a pretty civil Gentleman, a fine bred man, aske our Country Ladies else, treats us nobly both at Table and Tavern, has a good estate, and needs no Pension, and may vote on our side, unless now and then he give the Courtiers a vote in a Civil way out of gratitude for the new fashions and good breeding they teach him; or help to save a Statesmans Neck, that hugs him and feasts him all the *Parliament* time: though he does not know him as soon as 'tis up. And he swears *dam him* he is as much against *Popery* as our Bishops themselves, and wou'd have all men hang'd that are not as high for increasing the power of the Clergy as Bishop *Laud* was. Now this Courteous Gentleman has desired me of all Loves to vote for him but this once, and says its unreasonable to make the former Members bear the burden or enjoy the honour of it still, and I vow methinks I can hardly find in my heart to deny him.

Roger. Find in your heart! Can you find in your heart to be made worse then a Gally Slave, have Red-Coats come rifle your Pockets, ravish your Daughters, and burn your Houses, & then let the Priests singe your Hides like Bacon in *Smithfield*, for this you know you must expect if your Members will be either brib'd, threatened, or complemented out of their votes: Will his good breeding help you to pay Taxes when they come as thick as in the Pensioners *Parliament*? Will his meat and drink stick with you as long as *Chimney-mony*, *Excise*, and those other fettering Laws that such civil Members have made us? as for his Estate experience shews that well bred-men can spend the greatest Estates, and quickly come to need a Pension; but I say if he vote as a Pensioner, though he be not so great a Knave, yet there's more danger to us from such fools; for these will give us up for fair words, which is a Coyn never wanting at Court, but those will sell us as dear as they can, and prolong the time to get the more by it, as we found by the Pensioners *Parliament*, who whilst they were thinking to make the best of the bargain, God put it in His Majesty's heart to dissolve them, and now we are freemen again, unless such easy believers as you will be so courteous as to enslave us again. For what he swears about *Popery*, are mens words or actions more to be credited? he may swear so, and those learned Gentlemen preach so long enough e'er they persuade me that they stickle for a *Popish* Successor for the preservation of the Protestant Religion, and strive to make the Prerogative arbitrary, for the Liberty of the People; flesh and blood, Neighbor, cannot endure such impudent lying.

Humph. Ay but my Landlord wou'd ha' me do't, and he's an honest Gentleman, you know.

Roger. I think he is, and I am sorry to see he has more Estate and Priviledge to lose, then Wit to know his own Interest. But prethee tell me, if he should invite thee to Dinner, take thee by the hand, and tell thee thou must needs do him

one curtesie, that is, Surrender thy Lease *gratis* to him, which thou payd'st his Father 500*l.* for, would'st thou not do it?

Humph. No by my Faith would I not.

Roger. Why then wilt thou give up thy Liberty, thy Religion, and all the rest of thy Estate to his dispose? Pay him his Rent well, and all Respect imaginable; send him a Present at a good time, if he use to invite thee; lend him thy Teams for his Carriages now and then, or any other common Civility; but in cases of Religion, Life, Liberty and Property, no Compliments, I beseech thee, *Numps.*

Humph. Well but our Parson says I am bound in Conscience to vote for those that are for Absolute Obedience to Prince and Prelate, cites Texts of Scripture for it, says all are Rebels that do otherwise; and that 'tis a damnable Sin to Vote for those that were against persecuting Dissenters, or that enquir'd into the Grievances of the Bishops Courts. And what canst thou say to that, *Hodge*?

Roger. Faith I shall say of him as I did e'en now of his Superiours, I shall trust my own Senses more then what they all say: Believe him in the Pulpit, when he preaches of Faith and a good Life, joyn with him in the Publick Prayers, pay him his Tythes, and receive the Sacrament of him like a good Christian; But when they undertake the *Politicks*, either in the Pulpit or out of it, to persuade me to part with my Birthright, 'cause 'tis profound Obedience; and to submit to *Popery*, because 'tis the Providence of God; and to suffer the Cheats and Oppressions of the Bishops Courts, because they have Gods Authority; I cannot much blame them, for all men are apt to follow their own Interest, and this is theirs: But I must desire to be excused, for as good Reasons as they press me to it: For if Arbitrary Power will Raise the Clergy, by consequence it will Depress the Layety; If *Popery* will add to their Benefices Absolution-Money, Indulgence-Money, Purgatory-Money, and a hundred other Perquisites, besides all the Abbey-Lands, and take nothing from them but their Wives; I am sure it must take just so much from our Pockets, and add so much more of their kind Blessings upon our Wives: And if our Spiritual Courts must be more burdensome, they may very well supply the place of a Purgatory, and torment us sufficiently without it. I do not speak this to reflect on our Clergy, which I think as good as any other, but to shew they are not so proper Judges in these Cases: If the Law were to be Regulated, would you refer it to Lawyers in general? If the Physicians Fees, would you consult the Colledge? If the Oppressions of the Spiritual Court, would you trust the Civilians? And for the same reason, will you rely on these men as to Arbitrary Power, who have neither Dignity nor Bishoprick, but from the Court? Or as to the danger of a new Religion, by which they are to have twice as much Power and Wealth as before? And to do them right, whilst the Pope gave the Preferments they were generally for the Liberty of the People, and keeping the Prerogative in its due Limits; but all's now in the Crown, the Reason is alter'd, and their Practise with it.

Humph. I vow, *Hodge*, I ne'er understood till now why they Talk'd so Much against *Popery*, and Acted so Little, why they hate *Fanaticism*, that would lessen their Power, more then *Popery*, that would enlarge it; and why they weaken *Protestantism*, not onely by *Disallowing* the Foreign Churches, but by *Disowning* the major part of those at Home, all that do not, like Fools, espouse the Power of the Clergy more then the Articles of their Creed. But what shall we do with those Old Members that voted as the *Statesmen* would have them?

Roger. Turn them off, and get others in their Places that we know to be of good Principles for the Freedom of an Englishman; but do not believe too easily: Remember one bad Choice may inflave you for ever; and one bad Vote turn the Scales, when the question is, *Whether we shall be Freemen or Bondmen.* But talk no more of it, all hands to work, and about your business, your All is at stake; inform those you find ignorant how their case stands; and I hope we may have as good a *Parliament* as the last, and then the *Statesmen* will despair of playing any more tricks, and we and our Children may be happy.

Humph. Well I vow thou speak'st so much reason, I'll do as thou bid'st me, and about it presently. Farewel.