

biased Judgment is a Friend to the Liberty of the Press and an enemy to any Restraint upon it. Surely all the independent Whigs, to a Man, are of this Opinion. By an Independent Whig, I mean one whose Principles lead him to be firmly attached to the present happy Establishment, both in Church and State, and whose Fidelity to the royal Family is so staunch and riveted as not to be called in Question, tho' his Mind is not overswayed, or rather necessitated, by the extraordinary weight of lucrative Posts or Pensions. The dread of Infamy hath certainly been of great use to the Cause of Virtue, and is a stronger Curb upon the Passions and Appetites of some Men than any other Consideration moral or religious. Whenever, therefore, the Talent of Satire is made use of to restrain Men by the fear of Shame from immoral Actions, which either do or do not fall under the Cognizance of the Law, it is properly, and justly, and commendably applied: On the contrary, to condemn all Satire is in effect the same thing as countenancing Vice by screening it from Reproach and the just Indignation of Mankind. The use of Satire was of great Service to the Patriot Whigs in the Reign of King Charles and King James the second, as well as in that of Queen Anne. They asserted the Freedom of Writing against Wicked Ministers; and tho' they knew it would signify nothing to accuse them publicly whilst they were in the Zenith of their Power, they made use of Satire to prepare the Way and alarm the People against their Designs. If men in Power were always Men of Integrity, we might venture to trust them with the Direction of the Press, and there would be no Occasion to plead against the Restraint of it; but as they have Vices like their Fellows, so it very often happens that the best intended and the most valuable Writings are the Objects of their Resentment, because opposite to their own Tempers or Designs. In short, I think, every Man of common Sense will judge that he is an Enemy to his King and Country who pleads for any Restraint upon the Press; but by the Press, when Nonsense, inconsistencies, or personal Reflections are writ, if despised, they die of

course; if Truth, solid Arguments, and elegant, just Sentiments are published, they should meet with Applause rather than Censure; if Sense and Nonsense are blended, then, by the free use of the Press, which is open to all, the Inconsistencies of the Writer may be made apparent; but to grant a Liberty only for Praise, Flattery, and Panegyric, with a Restraint on everything which happens to be offensive and disagreeable to those who are at any Time in Power, is absurd, servile, and ridiculous; upon which, I beg leave to quote one Observation of the ingenious Mr. Gordon, in his excellent Discourses upon *Tacitus*. "In truth," says he, where no Liberty is allowed to speak of Governors besides that of praising them, their Praises will be little believed; their Tendernefs and Aversion to have their Conduct examined will be apt to prompt People to think their Conduct guilty or weak, to suspect their Management and Designs to be worse perhaps than they are, and to become turbulent and seditious, rather than be forced to be silent.

I shall conclude with a Citation from *Tacitus*, pat to the Purpose:

Socordiam eorum invidere libet, qui praesenti potentia credunt extingui posse etiam sequentia aevi memoriam: Nam contra punitis ingeniis gliscit auctoritas, neque aliud externi reges, aut qui eadem saevitia usi sunt, nisi dedecus sibi, atque illis gloriam peperere.

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