

Poor Richard 1735

Ben Franklin

Courteous Reader,

This is the third Time of my appearing in print, hitherto very much to my own Satisfaction, and, I have reason to hope, to the Satisfaction of the Publick also; for the Publick is generous, and has been very charitable and good to me. I should be ungrateful then, if I did not take every Opportunity of expressing my Gratitude; for *ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris*: I therefore return the Publick my most humble and hearty Thanks.

Whatever may be the Musick of the Spheres, how great soever the Harmony of the Stars, 'tis certain there is no Harmony among the Stargazers; but they are perpetually growling and snarling at one another like strange Curs, or like some Men at their Wives: I had resolved to keep the Peace on my own part, and affront none of them; and I shall persist in that Resolution: But having receiv'd much Abuse from Titan Leeds deceas'd, (Titan Leeds when living would not have us'd me so!) I say, having receiv'd much Abuse from the Ghost of Titan Leeds, who pretends to be still living, and to write Almanacks in spite of me and my Predictions, I cannot help saying, that tho' I take it patiently, I take it very unkindly. And whatever he may pretend, 'tis undoubtedly true that he is really defunct and dead. First because the Stars are seldom disappointed, never but in the Case of wise Men, *Sapiens dominabitur astris*, and they foreshow'd his Death at the Time I predicted it. Secondly, 'Twas requisite and necessary he should die punctually at that Time, for the Honour of Astrology, the Art professed both by him and his Father before him. Thirdly, 'Tis plain to every one that reads his two last Almanacks (for 1734 and 35) that they are not written with that Life his Performances use to be written with; the Wit is low and flat, the little Hints dull and spiritless, nothing smart in them but Hudibras's Verses against Astrology at the Heads of the Months in the last, which no Astrologer but a dead one would have inserted, and no Man living would or could write such Stuff as the rest. But lastly, I shall convince him from his own Words, that he is dead, (*ex ore suo condemnatus est*) for in his Preface to his Almanack for 1734, he says, "Saunders adds another GROSS FALSHOOD in his Almanack, viz. that by my own Calculation I shall survive until the 26th of the said Month October 1733, which is as untrue as the former." Now if it be, as Leeds says, untrue and a gross Falshood that he surviv'd till the 26th of October 1733, then it is certainly true that he died before that Time: And if he died before that Time, he is dead now, to all Intents and Purposes, any thing he may say to the contrary notwithstanding. And at what Time before the 26th is it so likely he should die, as at the Time by me predicted, viz. the 17th of October aforesaid? But if some People will walk and be troublesome after Death, it may perhaps be born with a little, because it cannot well be avoided unless one would be at the Pains and Expence of laying them in the Red Sea; however, they should not presume too much upon the Liberty allow'd them; I know Confinement must needs be mighty irksome to the free Spirit of an Astronomer, and I am too compassionate to proceed suddenly to Extremities with it; nevertheless, tho' I resolve with Reluctance, I shall not long defer, if it does not speedily learn to treat its living Friends with better Manners. I am,

Courteous Reader,

Your obliged Friend and Servant,

Octob. 30. 1734.

R. SAUNDERS.

Look before, or you'll find yourself behind.

Bad Commentators spoil the best of books,

So God sends meat (they say) the devil Cooks.

Approve not of him who commends all you say.

By diligence and patience, the mouse bit in two the cable.

Full of courtesie, full of craft.

A little House well fill'd, a little Field well till'd, and a little Wife well will'd, are great Riches.

Old Maids lead Apes there, where the old Batchelors are turn'd to Apes.

Some are weatherwise, some are otherwise.

xxx

Dyrro lynn y ddoeth e fydd ddoethach.

The poor man must walk to get meat for his stomach, the rich man to get a stomach to his meat.

He that goes far to marry, will either deceive or be deceived.

Eyes and Priests

Bear no Jests.

The Family of Fools is ancient.

Necessity never made a good bargain.

If Pride leads the Van, Beggary brings up the Rear.

There's many witty men whose brains can't fill their bellies.

Weighty Questions ask for deliberate Answers.

When xxx and xxx in xxx lie,

Then, Maids, whate'er is ask'd of you, deny.

Be slow in chusing a Friend, slower in changing.

Old Hob was lately married in the Night,

What needed Day, his fair young Wife is light.

Pain wastes the Body, Pleasures the Understanding.

The cunning man steals a horse, the wise man lets him alone.

Nothing but Money,

Is sweeter than Honey.

Humility makes great men twice honourable.

A Ship under sail and a big-bellied Woman,

Are the handsomest two things that can be seen common.

Keep thy shop, & thy shop will keep thee.

The King's cheese is half wasted in parings: But no matter, 'tis made of the peoples milk.

What's given shines,

What's receiv'd is rusty.

Sloth and Silence are a Fool's Virtues.

Of learned Fools I have seen ten times ten,

Of unlearned wise men I have seen a hundred.

Three may keep a Secret, if two of them are dead.

Poverty wants some things, Luxury many things, Avarice all things.

A Lie stands on 1 leg, Truth on 2.

There's small Revenge in Words, but Words may be greatly revenged.

Great wits jump (says the Poet) and hit his Head against the Post.

A man is never so ridiculous by those Qualities that are his own as by those that he affects to have.

Deny Self for Self's sake.

Tim moderate fare and abstinence much prizes,

In publick, but in private gormandizes.

Ever since Follies have pleas'd, Fools have been able to divert.

It is better to take many Injuries than to give one.

Opportunity is the great Bawd.

Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy wealthy and wise.

To be humble to Superiors is Duty, to Equals Courtesy, to Inferiors Nobleness.

Here comes the Orator! with his Flood of Words, and his Drop of Reason.

An old young man, will be a young old man.

Sal laughs at every thing you say. Why? Because she has fine Teeth.

If what most men admire, they would despise,

'Twould look as if mankind were growing wise.

The Sun never repents of the good he does, nor does he ever demand a recompence.

Are you angry that others disappoint you? remember you cannot depend upon yourself.

One Mend-fault is worth two Findfaults, but one Findfault is better than two Makefaults.

Reader, I wish thee Health, Wealth, Happiness,

And may kind Heaven thy Year's Industry bless.