



The Plain Dealer. N^o 51.

————— *Fallacia*
Alia aliam trudit. T E R E N.

MONDAY, September 14. 1724.

CREDULITY is a Weakness, from which very few are exempted. It is the Ground-work of Craft and Imposture; and the Means by which they are propagated.

I HAVE often reflected, with Concern, upon the Condition of Humanity, in this Regard: And nothing can be more afflicting, than to behold one Part of the rational World making a *Trade* of misguiding the other! If all the Errors, into which People are drawn, had but the Marks of *Truth*, some Excuse, might be found for their *Credulity*; but the Shame is, in their receiving what is *new*, at the Expence, even of *Probability*,

N^o 51. *The PLAIN DEALER.* 427
probability. Vulgar Minds are most struck with what is most incredible; and the Way to *convince*, is, to *amaze* them. *Reason* makes few Profelytes: But *Mystery* rarely fails. And the less they know why, the fonder they grow of the Imposture.

BECAUSE I would not dip into Controversies, wherein *Religion*, and *Government*, are concern'd; I must descend into Low Life, and only touch the little Artifices which owe their Reputation to this Weakness.

THE World is wearied with Stories of *Witches* and *Fairies*, and begins to see thro' the Imposture. The Craft of *Astrologers*, *Conjurers*, and *Prophets*, begins also to be exploded, by the Vulgar, whose *Oracles* they have long been. But I am not a little amaz'd to find, that, instead of the Delusions, once practis'd on the Multitude, They, now, work strongest among the polite and fashionable People. What Staring, what Clapping, what Waste of Time and Money have *Harlequin* and *Faustus* occasion'd? The Madness, both of *Actors*, and *Spectators*, has so provok'd me almost to Tears, that I could even have *wept over the City!*

I WILL not be so partial, to our Worshipful Society of FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS, as to forbear reproving them, on this Occasion, for the unaccountable Pother and Noise they have lately made in the World. What Stories have been told to amuse, and engage the *Credulous*? What Reflections,