
After giving a stale Description of Courses and Storms, Manner of Landing, &c. I now proceed to tell you something of the Government, Religion, and Customs of this famous Island, as they are at present, and to give you some Idea of their Rise and Progress.

Soon after Robinson’s last Visit to this Island, the People, he left, established a good Understanding with the Savages on the Continent, and got Wives from thence; by which Means, and on Account of many of their new Relations by these Marriages, coming over, and settling with them, it quickly became so populous, that every Foot of Land was occupied, and claimed by some or other; and by leaving it to their eldest Sons as in England, (for the Europeans taught them their Customs) the better Half of the rising Generation could get no vacant Spot to live on, which occasioned great Uneasiness in the Minds of those unfortunate Youngsters. The Disturbances from this Cause, became at Length so serious, as to make it necessary to settle some Authority and Government to keep the Peace, and to determine what People might call their own. Accordingly for that Purpose, the whole of the People assembled; when some of the old Europeans, being yet alive, spoke to this Effect.

“The Customs hitherto followed, with Regard to holding Possessions, are not of our Invention, but are copied from our native Country, Europe; and as far as we know, are used in all the World beside. But as the Business we are upon, is the settling of a Form of Government for our common Good, Security, and Satisfaction, it is fit, that every Man offer that Scheme, which to him appears most eligible; that from the many proposed, the best, or that which shall appear the best, drawn from them all, be chosen. And as we have not experienced, nor indeed know of any other than what we have already introduced from Europe, we beg leave, once more, to lay before you the Outlines as there practised, viz.

1. The Land, in Europe, was at first possessed, and handed down to Posterity, as hath been done among us; which Method you are nevertheless dissatisfied with.

2. The Possessors, there, may let out, or not let, sell, or make over their landed Property, to whom, and upon what Conditions, they will.

3. None but Land-owners are admitted into Senates or Parliaments, and other Offices of State or Trust, or allowed to vote for a Representative; and their Estates must always be in Proportion to their Trust; as they believe Men of great Estates to be farthest above Temptations to Dishonesty.

This Plan, is the Foundation, upon which some of the freest, and most renowned Governments of the World are built; which, if we reject, we likely will adopt a worse; but if any can propose better, he is welcome.”
“That may soon be done,” cried the Malcontents, “for sure it is not possible worse can be proposed for our Interest. For we would thereby not only be reduced to Tenants, but Tenants at Will; and we could not be certain but some Time or other we might be denied a Habitation on the Island, even for Rent, and so be obliged to seek Abode among the Savages, on the Continent, whenever the Interests or Fancies of the Landlords should prompt them thereto. Besides, as the Legislature and all other Authority would be wholly in the Landed Interest, we, and others hereafter in our Condition, would be rendered mute, insignificant Slaves, living on the Earth only by Permission; having our Lives, Liberty, and Subsistence, lying wholly at their Mercy. No, you must first get us to believe we are of some other Species, for at present we think we are Men as well as our Fathers, or elder Brothers, or any Land-owners whatever, and shall act accordingly. We have the same right to Liberty, Subsistence (and consequently to Land) and to be of the Legislature, and other Offices, as they; and our Posterity, through all Generations, will be born with the same Privileges. So, to do Justice to ourselves and Posterity we intend to have no Landlords but the Parishes, and to make every Parish a Corporation, and every Man a Parishioner, or Member of that Parish, and that only, he last dwelt a full Year in, notwithstanding from what other Parish, Country, or Nation, he might come prior to such Settlement. A small Rent or Rate, shall, according to the Determination of the Parishioners, be paid by every Person, suitable to the Valuation of the Housen and Land he possesses, to the Parish Treasury, to be put to such Uses as the Majority please; and each Parish shall have all the uncontrollable Power that can possibly be made good Use of by a Corporation, and be connected only by a Parliament for the common Strength and Welfare of the Whole.”

This Scheme so favourable to the Malcontents, was immediately adopted by them, nor could all the Precedents, their Opponents, deduced from other Nations, avail any Thing; for as in all Disputes the Right commonly goes with the Might, so, here, the Landlords being the weaker Party, were obliged to submit, and the Parish System took Place.

The above Relation, which I had on my first Enquiries soon after Landing, though confirmed by all I spoke with, could not gain my entire Credit, on Account of the numberless Objections my Mind raised against this Scheme and Impossibilities I thought attended it, till my own Senses found the Truth of the Story in every one of their Customs; nay, my Prepossessions were so strong, that I was clear a Society could not subsist upon a Plan so repugnant to any Thing I had either heard or thought of: So to ease my disturbed Mind, I set to work to examine every thing I saw, with the greatest Strictness; and the first Subject, that fell under my Consideration, was the Town I reside in, which is the Capital of the Island, and all its Colonies.

This Town is built on each Side of a commodious Harbour, a considerable River, falls into it, and at the upper End of the Harbour, there is a most elegant Bridge. The Town extends about a Mile on each Side along the Shore, and about half a Mile outward towards the Country, and contains about fifty thousand Inhabitants. Four Parishes meet and have their Churches in it, two on each Side, whose Steeples are very magnificent, and a great Ornament to the Town. It is full of superb and well furnished Shops, and has every Appearance of Grandeur, Opulence, and Convenience, one can conceive to be in a large Place, flourishing with Trade and Manufactures.
This view quite astonished me, for instead of Anarchy, Idleness, Poverty, and Meanness, the natural Consequences, as I narrowly thought of a ridiculous Levelling Scheme, nothing but Order, Industry, Wealth, and the most pleasing Magnificence! So being anxious to know the utmost of this new fashioned Commonwealth, I took Occasion to fall into the following Dialogue, with one of my Informers, whose Name is Mann.

Captain: And so none, notwithstanding the splendid Appearance they make, and the extensive Manner they carry on Trade, have Estates, nor call purchase any?

Mr Mann: No, nor is it likely ever will, nor does the Happiness of Human Life, or Business require it to be.

Captain: Would it not tend to make People more industrious if they could lay out their Riches in Possessions?

Mann: I am surprised to hear you ask that Question. Look either to us or to the Jews, and see if there be any Want of Industry in acquiring Wealth as far as Law allows, though we can buy no Land; but on the contrary you will find a general Industry, not one idle; for Riches unsupported by an Estate, would soon take Wings and fly away, without some other Supply, which Consideration sets every one on doing something, though they may have Plenty. But in your Country, what great Incitement, pray, can it be to Industry, to be obliged to give the Cream of one’s Endeavours, unthanked, to the Landlord? for what Landlord was ever yet thankful for his Rents? They think the Tenants rather owe Thanks to them for Permission to live on their Earth forsooth! I can never think of them but with Detestation. I can compare them and their Castles to nothing but the Giants, and their Castles in Romances, who were said to be a Terror and Destruction to all the People around; and must certainly have been invented for a Satire upon Landlords. For what is there that the Giants did, which the Landlords do not? Did the Giants eat the People and their Children? The Landlords eat their Meat, and wear their Cloaths. Did the Giants confine them in horrid Dungeons? How many have the merciless Landlords destroyed in Gaols? How many executed; and how many more, of their poor Vassals, have they led to the Wars like Bull-dogs, by Virtue of their feudal Tenures? And in Countries where those Gigantic Powers, are curtailed a little, do they not still make the Laws? Harass and imprison the miserable Tenants for their exorbitant Rents? Impress them to defend and conquer Countries wherein, as a Reward for their Labour, they would be severely punished for pulling a Nut, or eating Grass if they could? And which of them dare meddle with a Hare, or a Partridge? Wherefore I must be allowed to pronounce Landlords proper and real Giants, the Heirs and Successors of the greatest and vilest Monsters ever walked the Face of the Earth. Giant-killer, must then be, as it hath ever been esteemed, a highly honoured Name; and here you have the Satisfaction of beholding a whole Nation of Giant-killers, and a Land where no such Monsters as Landlords can breed.

Captain: But I am afraid Landlords are as much the Produce of all Lands, as other Kinds of Monsters are of the Nile, and it will be difficult to part or keep them long asunder.
Mann: I agree with you, that where there are Men, there will be Landlords, so Heaven hath ordained; but then, we have so provided, that we are all Landlords, and yet no Giants; so that the least Change in our excellent System, would effect the Interest of every one, which makes every one a Guardian to the Commonweal.

Captain: Very true: But I have heard of Bribery doing mischievous Things to Societies, and even overturning some; for it will make Men vote, fight, or do any Thing against the Interests both of the present Generation, and all that are to come, which makes me tremble for your State.

Mann: And why not tremble for others if they be worth purchasing? Or would you have us throw away what is good that we may not lose it? You shall see we have done all we can to secure our Rights, but, if they will go, after all, then, let them go; when all is over, and at the worst, we can but have Landlords. But in all human Probability neither voting nor fighting can hurt us. For you must understand we never vote but by Ballot, or in a secret Manner, either in Parochial or Parliamentary Business. Now suppose you would bribe the whole of the Voters in any Affair, and I were one of them, I would reason thus with myself: If I vote as I am bribed, I wrong the Interest of the Publick, Posterity, and myself, and if there be but one Vote, against my Briber, he may say it is mine, and if I deny it, so may he that really voted, and has as good a Chance to be believed, there being no Witness; whereby I will have the Mortification to think I have wronged my Country and Conscience without being able to clear myself of your Suspicions. So in Consequence of this Reasoning I would vote against you, and so would all the others from the same Consideration. Let us see how the Case will stand then? Why you would chide me privately (For you durst not do it publicly) for not voting for you, though hired. I would say, how do you prove that? Because say you I have not one Vote, and therefore not yours (for if you had but one Vote I would lay Claim to it). Well then I would answer, I have the Comfort to think I am no worse than others. Besides if I had voted for you, others would have had as good a Claim to the Merit of the Action in your Sight, while I would have had the whole of the Guilt, and an equal share of the Blame. You will be ready to say, I did not act like a Man of Honor to you, after taking the Wages, not to do the Work. True, I broke Faith, with a bad Man, that wanted to bring some Evil on my Country, and Posterity; but, at the same Time, I pleased God and my Conscience, and did a signal Service to my Country. For, we will suppose you so powerful, that it would be dangerous to refuse you to your Face, and so could have no other Way of saving ourselves, which I hope will do so effectually, even from such Temptations; so there is an End to your hurting us by Voting.

Captain: I must own so long as you vote by Ballot or secretly there is no hurting you in that Quarter. But is it not beneath Freemen to vote in such a clandestine Manner as if you had not the Courage to act honestly in the Face of the World? Moreover, you lose all the Praise of your good Deeds, which is a General Incitement to worthy Actions.

Mann: In your Country they vote in the open Manner you commend. What is the Consequence? Why, the Minister tells you, it is necessary to have a Majority at any Rate for the Dispatch of Business, which is the same Thing as to plead for no Parliament at all. So a Majority he gets, who vote for him, through thick and thin, in Spite of the Sun, and all the Eyes of their Country. The Minority, indeed, harangue
and fume, as if something were the Matter, to get the Majority to understand what they know as well as themselves; but they are too fast asleep, in the Lap of Corruption, to regard either them, or the Praises of their Country. So you see the weak Influence of Fame, even among Senators; what Effect can it then have among the poor Freeholders, and Burgesses after such an Example! This general Corruption, and Jarring, sets all your Newswriters, and Pamphleteers, on Work to shew their coblin Genius in their Schemes for mending the Constitution, and redressing Grievances, by their Place and Triennial Bills, &c. whereas the Shoes were so ill made at first, are so worn, rotten, and patched already, that they are not worth further Trouble or Expence, but ought to be thrown to the Dunghill, and a new Pair made, neat and handsome, yet, easy, as for the Foot of one that loves freedom and Ease. Then would your Controversies about this and the other Method of Cobbling be done away, and you walk along the rugged and dirty Path of Life, easy and dry-shod.

And now you shall witness with your own Eyes, that Force is as unlikely to succeed against us as your secret Corruption. Therefore you must go with me to-morrow to a neighbouring Parish about two Miles off, it being their General Review Day, when all the Men thereof are to go through their military Exercise. Every Parish has a General Field day once in a Quarter of a Year appointed by act of Parliament, when they are reviewed by an able General chosen by the same Authority, who goes constantly from Parish to Parish through his District, which consists of thirty-nine contiguous Parishes, so that he has three to review in a Week, or one every other working Day throughout the Year, except when the appointed Day happens to be improper on Account of Weather, when it is deferred to the next; but if that also will not suit, then that Parish will not be reviewed that Quarter, and he goes to the next Parish in Rotation. These Field-days are kept very punctually and are noted in the Almanacs as the Fairs, and serve the young People instead of Wakes."

Accordingly when next Morning came, which was exceedingly fine, we went to the military ground of the aforesaid Parish, which was very neat and convenient, and tolerably large, surrounded with several Rows of Trees, with Seats underneath for the spectators, and kept entirely for that and such like public Uses. The Parish Bells rung merrily, Numbers of Spectators from the neighbouring Parishes, with all the old Men, Women, and Children that could get from the same Parish were solacing themselves in the Morning Sun around the Place. Presently the Men of the Parish appeared, those who had good Horses on Horseback, those of a Colour together, others trailing Field-pieces of Brass, and others with Muskets. The Boys too were classed, according to their Sizes, with small Muskets and Cannon, suitable to their Strength, and the whole with proper Officers, Colours, Music, and an uniform Dress, which last was peculiar to the Parish, as every Parish has its Uniform, which they generally chuse to wear at all Times. They made a gallant Appearance, and all in their most happy Countenances, as if going to some agreeable Sport. Each emulated another in Obedience to Command, and Dexterity of Action. What contributes greatly to this, is, that nothing but conspicuous Merit can advance any to be Officers and they must go gradually through every Station to the highest, if their Merit can carry them so far. They went through their several Manoeuvres like Veterans, but the Boys in particular were a pleasing Sight. No Play whatever gives them such Delight as this military Exercise, which they apply to with such Eagerness, that before they leave School, or are fit for any other Employment, they have it as completely as the oldest among them. For this purpose all due Encouragement is given them, a particular
Instance of which appeared at this Time. They made a mock Fight with the Men and drove them off the Field, which closed the Scene.

We spent the Remainder of the Day in the same Parish, where there was nothing but Festivity and Joy; and among other Sports, were Shooting-matches, and Cudgel-playing, which are favourite Diversions, and frequently encouraged by Medals and Premiums from the Parish Treasuries.

I can never enough admire the Beauty of the Country; it has more the Air of a Garden, or rather a Paradise, than a general Country Scene; and indeed it is properly a Continuation of Gardens and Orchards. For besides the infinite Number of real Gardens, all the Fields, even for Meadow and Pasture, are strewed very thick with Fruit-Trees, and appear like as many Orchards; and the Corn is cultivated in Rows, and as carefully as Garden-herbs. The Houses and every Thing about them, are surprisingly neat, and resemble in every Respect the Habitations of Gentry, even so much that I could not imagine for some Time, where the labouring People resided. The Parish provides good, substantial, and elegant Houses, but obliges the Inhabitants to keep them clean. There is no such Thing through all the Country as a dirty or patched Window, a smoky House, or a broken Pavement. And as the People never dread their Leases being ended or the being turned out, so like other Freeholders they spare no Pains in making such Conveniencies as suit their different Callings and Inclinations, nor in ornamenting their Walls and Gardens with all the Pride of the vegetable World. These delightful Dwellings are scattered, very rank over the whole Country; and, in a Word, it seems to have been intended both by God and Man, for a Nursery and Habitation, suitable to the Chief of the Creation, and convinces one sufficiently, what the Deity, and rational Creatures can effect.

We growing pretty hearty, and partaking of the universal Joy around us, referred our political Observations till another Time, and so concluding the Day, marched homeward well satisfied with our Entertainment. But meeting again a Day or two after, we fell naturally into the following Dialogue.

Mann : Now our whole Country is trained and peopled as you have seen, I suppose you have now no Hopes of fighting us out of our Liberties; and if there were a Possibility of voting them away, we would not nevertheless part with them. Nay, we will not suffer any Act in making such Conveniencies as suit their different Callings and Inclinations, nor in ornamenting their Walls and Gardens with all the Pride of the vegetable World. These delightful Dwellings are scattered, very rank over the whole Country; and, in a Word, it seems to have been intended both by God and Man, for a Nursery and Habitation, suitable to the Chief of the Creation, and convinces one sufficiently, what the Deity, and rational Creatures can effect.

Captain : I agree with you that you have good Reason to think yourselves secure; yet, I have many Doubts, which you must be kind enough to resolve, and this is one: I am surprised how an uninhabited Island should, in scarce a Century, become so populous.

Mann : You know what Number of Men Robinson left on the Island; you have seen how they got Wives, with a fresh Addition of People, the Relations of their Wives coming along with them; and how the Parish System took Place. This last no sooner happened, than they made a Law to admit all Strangers to visit them, and to encourage them to settle among them; and to that End, to naturalize every one that should rest a Twelvemonth in any Parish; and at the Expiration of that Term, they
were to become free Parishioners, or Members of that Parish; with the same Privileges of voting, holding Offices, &c. as any Man. This Law was made to increase the Number of Men in the State, and you shall see how well it answered the Purpose. But you must understand, though they had just before fallen out about the Insufficiency of Land for them all, yet it was not because there was too little to maintain them; far from it, for it is impossible to determine how many, by good Culture, a Country is capable of maintaining; but those that were first, carved too largely; for instead of taking as much as just to serve themselves and Families, without wasting it, and leaving the Rest for others to do the like, as is done with the Fish of the Sea, and the Water of the Well, every one took as much as he could with any Face mark off; by which means many had more than would maintain a Thousand; and yet their younger Sons, by their fine European Customs, could not get an Inch, which was the Reason, as you have already seen, of the Parish System taking Place. So, to return, as they wanted Men for Strength, and had Plenty of Country and Traffic for their Support, they took all Opportunities of informing the Savages of their Resolutions. and of inviting them over to make Trial of living among them.

Many therefore came, and proud of acquiring equal Property and Privileges, in a Parish, or rather little Common-wealth, with every one else, on so short a Settlement, each presently pitched upon a Residence, got a Piece of Ground, and a House built on it by the Parish, and so fell to work; and which was no small Encouragement, what every one earned was his own, without Deduction of Toll or Tax, except the Parish Rate to the Treasury; which they could not murmur at paying, as it was no more to them than to the oldest Inhabitants, and as they would soon have a Vote in the laying it on, and its Management too. So, one few led the Way for another, and the more that came, the more were ready to come, till no Parish had an uninhabited Spot left.

In the mean Time the Country was filling with Husbandmen who required Room; so were the Villages with Merchants, and Robinson Crusoe’s, Jack-of-all-Trades’ Disciples, the Mechanics; with ingenious Persons accidentally, or on Purpose, from all the nearest civilized Countries, who only required Houses, Shops, &c. suitable to their respective Businesses. Some Villages, on Account of Accidents, and Conveniencies for Trade, encreased above others, and became Towns; and this Town, on Account of the excellent Harbour, encreased above them all, and became the Capital. And thus has this Island become what you see it.

But this is not all. Our excellent Government, by refusing to take none of the human Race under its Protection, and allowing every Man to be equal in his own Neighbourhood, or Parish, with every other Privilege of his Birth-right, and, at the same Time, all the Blessings of Society, has not only peopled this Island with Multitudes of happy Beings, but a large Extent of the Continent opposite to us, on the same Plan; for by the continual Confluence of People, and the surprising Increase from Matrimony, (which every Body entered readily into, and does yet, and will do, while the Parish System lasts, from the Easiness of Living, and the few pernicious Distinctions, &c. we have to lie in the Way to break off Love Affairs, so that it is as rare here to be deprived of one’s first Love as it is in your barbarous Countries to enjoy them) it was at last feared, enough of Food could not be raised for the support of them all, notwithstanding the prudent Methods taken by the Parishes, to let no Individual possess more Land than he was likely to manage in the best Manner; and 


the giving of Medals and Premiums out of their Treasuries, for the greatest
Improvements in Husbandry and Gardening; and for raising the best Crops according
to the Extent of Ground, &c. so it was resolved in Parliament, to take a considerable
Piece of the Continent, on the Side next us, into Possession, and constitute a Few new
Parishes on the Shore; to settle their Bounderies, and build a Guildhall in the most
convenient Place for each; to make a Present to the Treasury of each new Parish, of a
sum of Money, from the national Treasury, as a Stock for them to begin upon; and
also a Gratuity to each Person that should first go and settle in them. Whereupon
Numbers of all Trades, especially Husbandmen, went over, and soon put them upon a
respectable Footing, and in a short Time they were able to send us as much Provisions
as we chused. But these too in a small Time, becoming sufficiently stocked, other
Parishes were marked out at the Back of them, and begun in the same Manner; and so
we Increase continually, laying Parish to Parish as Occasion requires. But nobody is
allowed to go beyond the Parishes to carve for himself, for nothing less than a whole
Parish is taken off the Waste at once, and that is by Parliamentary Authority, as before
described; which is taken care not to be done so quickly, as to occasion a Thinness of
Inhabitants, or an uncultivated Aspect in the old Parishes. People may hunt, or feed
Flocks, and Herds, beyond the Bounds of the Parishes, and pitch Tents; but not
appropriate or build.

Captain : Will you please now to let me know the Nature, Number, &c. of your
Parliament.

Mann : The Number of Members was settled at Three hundred at the first.,
when there were but few Parishes and has never been encreased since; for it is thought
to be a sufficient Number, to determine on any Affair; and they propose new Subjects,
Debate, and make their Laws much in the Manner of British Parliaments, excepting
that they vote by Ballot, or secretly. At first when the Number of Parishes were few,
four or five would have fallen to the Share of each Parish to elect; and when it
happened there were odd Members, besides giving each an equal Number, they cast
Lots to know which Parishes shoułd elect them. But there are now, by the vast
Encrease of Parishes on the Continent, which have the same Privileges as these on the
Island, more Parishes than Senators; wherefore every so many neighbouring ones, are
classed together to elect one among them, that is, the whole Number of Parishes
including new and old, wherever situated, are divided into three hundred Lots, or
Classes, as equal as possible, and each Class is to elect one Representative.

But these Elections being by Ballot, and every Man voting in his own Parish,
occaision neither Animosity nor Confusion; and Bribery as already shewn, being of no
Use, is without Existence. So, as all the Parishes in a Class vote always in the same
Day, it is presently and quickly decided, by adding the Votes in each Parish for each
Candidate together.

It makes no Odds to them whether the Person they chuse for the Senate, or any
other Office, be poor or rich, if he be but properly qualified; for all Parish Officers
have suitable Cloaths and Salaries, out of their Parish Treasury, and those whose
Offices extend beyond the Bounds of a Parish, or to the Service of the Nation in
general, as Senators, Officers of State, Ambassadors, Generals, Admirals, &c. have
suitable Cloaths and Salaries, out of the National Treasury : And so is every Thing
whatever for the public Service in general supported by this General Treasury.
Captain: Pray how is this national Treasury supplied?

Mann: In a Manner, perhaps, very different from your Conceptions. The Landlords the Parishes, pay all the Taxes here. The Expences of the State, which the Parliament regulates, are divided among them according to their Abilities, and they send their Shares at the Time appointed, and so it is done; and thus our Nation has no Occasion to run in Debt. The Parish Treasuries are supplied as said before, by the Rate they lay on the Houses, Lands, Mines, &c. according to their Valuation, as well as by the Sale of Wood, &c. and there is neither Toll nor Tax beside. The Parishes build and repair the Houses, make proper Roads and Hedges, plant Trees, and in a word, do all the Business of a Landlord. And you have seen what Sort of Landlords they are, I suppose you do not meet with much amiss, or out of repair. And it is no wonder, for a Parish has many Heads to contrive what is proper to be done, and the Contriver has also the Happiness of being qualified both to propose and vote for the Performance of it. Instead of debating on this and the other Method of cobbling the State, as with you, for ours needs no cobbling, it is common to see all Degrees of People debating how any Thing in their own Neighbourhood might either be embellished or improved to the Public Good. As whether such an unprofitable Spot might be drained, this planted with Trees, or that made into a Close or Garden, &c. for every Man that wishes to rise to Preferment, must be shewing his Neighbours, who have Power to do it, some Specimens of his public Spirit; which keeps up a constant Emulation among them. And you may frequently hear the fond Mother caressing her Darling Boy, and crying he will be an Admiral, General, Senator, or any great Officer she pleases to mention, and yet none can contradict it; as he may, for ought any Body knows, be one or all that she prophesies, one after another, if his Merit be sufficient. This is great Encouragement for Parents to bring up their Children properly, and indeed makes our Youth, as was observed of Jephthah’s Children, each one resemble the Children of a King. And truly in Education they need not be inferior, for every Parish has a Free-School, with the best of Teachers, as also a public Library, containing Copies and Translations of all the best Books in the World, so that every one may read and inform himself as far as he pleases. There is also a national University, which every Parish is allowed to keep one at, where all human Learning is taught to Perfection; and this one, is chosen by Ballot out of the most promising Youths. But this Spirit of Emulation would make continual Strife, and Dissension, if the Manner of deciding every Affair were not by Ballot, or in a secret Manner, so that none can know who is for or against him, which makes every one sit down contented with his Fate. The being indecently eager for Preferment would be the surest Way to prevent it. I must not omit that even our Amusements are elegantly provided for out of this Parish Treasury, for every Parish has its Theatre and Assembly Rooms, to which all have Access gratis. Thus each Parish is a little polished Athens, as well as warlike Sparta.

Captain: This delights me much, but I must beg Leave to make another Objection: Does Nobody repine that the Place they occupy is not their own; that they have to pay to the Parish Rent for it; that they cannot sell or give it away; and, that they cannot put their Posterity in Possession thereof, and all the Improvements they may have made, at their Decease?
Mann: You could not in any Country possess a Place more properly, or have more Encouragement to make Improvements than here. For there is no Fear of Enemies to dispossess you, none would be so mad as to attempt it. As to what you are pleased to call Rent, have Possessions where you will, you must still pay towards Public Affairs, and that to some Purpose. Where are all your Land-taxes, your Cesses, Customs, Tolls, and Tithes which every Freeholder pays. What is paid here is only for the same Purposes that Landlords pay these Taxes, viz. for Public Affairs; so in that Point you are as properly a Landlord here as any where, and with Regard to the Permanency of Possessions: Indeed a Man with us would not be allowed to let his Land run wild, or destroy his Houses, for this would be to the Hurt of the Society of which he is a Member, and a misusing of their Talent; they would in Consequence of such Behaviour have a Right to resent it, and put their Talent into other Hands. For the Land is not made for this Man, or that Man, but for all Mankind in general. Even among Savages a Man cannot have an uncontrollable Liberty; he would not be allowed to make wanton Havock of the Animals and Fruits of the Country, so as to cause others to feel the Effects of it. In such a Case they would declare War upon him, and extirpate him as a Nuisance and Pest to the Earth. But if a Person here behave any Thing tolerably, he may remain in his Possession for a thousand Years, if he could live as long, and leave it to any of his Posterity that had not a Possession; but if he have no Posterity, or they be all settled, and unwilling to give up what they have to go to it, (for none can enjoy two Inheritances) then it falls to the Disposal of the Parish, who gives it to the first that applies for it that has not a Possession; but if more Candidates than one appear, then the Competition is determined by Ballot: Thus is every Indulgence granted that the Nature of real Society call permit, and he that would have more may go live by himself.

Captain: Aye, and very fit he should.

Here, after proper Acknowledgements on my Part, for his Civility, we ended our political Dialogue, when I had been about a Month here, and now I have been over a great Part of the Country, both on the Island and Continent, and find every Thing not only agreeable to what I was told, but far exceeding all Description. So that I am determined never more to visit poor wrangling Britannia, once so clear to me, till I be certain this Paradisiacal System has taken Place in it; and then I would do my utmost to be with you to sing “Britons never will be Slaves.” But as it is, Crusons never will be Slaves, seems much the properest.

This puts me in Mind to tell you of the Names given to this famous Island, and these are Cruson or Crusonia, from Robinson Crusoe, the Founder of the Empire; and the Inhabitants Crusons or Crusonians. They likewise have him, poor Fellow, upon all their Standards. Ensigns, Flags, &c. Just as represented on the Frontispiece of his History, which I was mightily pleased to see, as I always respected him from my first Acquaintance. They name the Continent, which they have colonized, Fridinea, from his Man Friday, because it was his Country, but this is only a provincial Name, to distinguish the Continent, from the Island, for the General Name, of the whole Nation, both on the Island and Continent, is the United Parishes of Crusonia; intimating, that each Parish is as independent of each other, as distinct and separate States can be of so small a Size, that like other petty States must be united under one guardian Head, to hinder them from altering their own Constitutions, and for mutual Defence both against the Injustices of one another, and of greater Societies: And as an Emblem of
their united Strength, they have a Bundle of Rods on the Colours, lying on the Ground before Robinson Crusoe, with this Motto, “Who can hurt us while thus combined.”

The Independence of these little Communities, prevents going out of the Parish for Justice, and renders all Lawyers and Attornies unnecessary. For the Laws are few, explicit, and the same in every Parish, being made by their common Legislature; and there being no Estates to contend for, Litigations are seldom: And the Mayor, with the other Magistrates, together with a Jury, decide in Cases of Debt, Fraud, Assault, or any Thing else, in a final Manner. In these Courts every one pleads his own Cause, and is certain of having Justice speedily administrated, without a Fee!

As to Religion, which I had almost omitted, Toleration is allowed to all Opinions, so long as they do not appear prejudicial to Society: and whatever Religion the Majority of a Parish is of, is supported by the Parish Treasury, which nays the Clergymen’s Salaries without any Tithes; no Perquisites, Fees, or Collections whatever, being allowed but the aforesaid Parish-Rate for Publick Matters of any Kind. This Religion has also the use of the Parish Church, but the Minority if they set up any other Religion must bear the Expence of it themselves. So you will find Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anabaptism, Quakerism, and almost all Opinions, have their Parishes, yet all live in Love and Unity: for they are all too knowing, as remarked before, to differ about the Way of getting to Heaven; they are glad to see People going by any Road.

It would be endless expatiating on the Executive Power, Magistrates, Judicial Proceedings, Trial by Jury, Liberty of the Press, and of Speech, &c. which I assure you equal any Thing of the Kind in Your Country; for not only your Government, but all Governments, are as well known to Crusonians as to you; and they are more likely to adopt such Things as suit them, from their uncommon Facility of knowing, and the Impossibility of opposing Reason and Truth among them.

And now be not uneasy though your Curiosity with Regard to every Item should not be fully satisfied, but comfort yourself with this Reflection, that Things may be done properly though you should not be completely informed of the Manner; and indeed I have hopes you will excuse a more circumstantial Detail, as I have given you, in so particular a Manner, the Construction and Movement of the great Wheels of the Machine, that you cannot mistake the Motion of the Smaller. I shall now Conclude with the Crusonian Creed on Matters of Property, viz.

All Men, to Land, may lay an equal Claim;  
But Goods, and Gold, unequal Portions frame:  
The first, because, all Men on Land, must live;  
The Second’s the Reward Industry ought to give.