

ten with what I have said in my Twenty first Speculation. L



N^o 109. *Thursday, July 5.*

Abnormis sapiens——— Hor.

I was this Morning walking in the Gallery, when Sir ROGER entered at the End opposite to me, and advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his Relations the DE COVERLEYS, and hoped I liked the Conversation of so much good Company, who were as silent as my self. I knew he alluded to the Pictures, and as he is a Gentleman who does not a little value himself upon his ancient Descent, I expected he would give me some Account of them. We were now arrived at the upper End of the Gallery, when the Knight faced towards one of the Pictures, and as we stood before it, he entered into the Matter, after his blunt way of saying Things, as they occur to his Imagination, without regular Introduction, or Care to preserve the Appearance of Chain of Thought.

‘ I T is, said he, worth while to consider the Force of Dress; and how the Persons of one Age differ from those of another, merely by that only. One may observe also, that the general Fashion of one Age has been followed by one particular Set of People in another, and by them preserved from one Generation to another. Thus the vast jetting Coat and small Bonnet, which was the Habit in *Harry the Seventh’s* Time, is kept on in the Yeomen of the Guard; not without a good and political View, because they look a Foot taller, and a Foot and an half broader: Besides that, the Cap leaves the Face expanded, and consequently more terrible, and fitter to stand at the Entrance of Palaces.

‘ T H I S Predecessor of ours, you see, is dressed after this manner, and his Cheeks would be no larger than mine, were he in a Hat as I am. He was the last Man that won a Prize in the Tilt-Yard (which is now a

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Common Street before *Whitehall*) You see the broken Lance that lies there by his right Foot; He shivered that Lance of his Adversary all to Pieces; and bearing himself, look you Sir, in this manner, at the same time he came within the Target of the Gentleman who rode against him, and taking him with incredible Force before him on the Pommel of his Saddle, he in that manner rid the Turnament over, with an Air that shewed he did it rather to perform the Rule of the Lifts, than expose his Enemy; however, it appeared he knew how to make use of a Victory, and with a gentle Trot he marched up to a Gallery where their Mistress sat (for they were Rivals) and let him down with laudable Courtesy and pardonable Insolence. I don't know but it might be exactly where the Coffee-house is now.

YOU are to know this my Ancestor was not only of a military Genius, but fit also for the Arts of Peace, for he played on the Bass-Viol as well as any Gentleman at Court; you see where his Viol hangs by his Basket-hilt Sword. The Action at the Tilt-yard you may be sure won the fair Lady, who was a Maid of Honour, and the greatest Beauty of her Time; here she stands the next Picture. You see, Sir, my Great Great Great Grand-mother has on the new-fashioned Petticoat, except that the Modern is gather'd at the Waste; my Grand-mother appears as if she stood in a large Drum, whereas the Ladies now walk as if they were in a Go-Cart. For all this Lady was bred at Court, she became an Excellent Country-Wife, she brought ten Children, and when I shew you the Library, you shall see in her own Hand (allowing for the Difference of the Language) the best Receipt now in *England* both for an Hasty-pudding and a White-pot.

If you please to fall back a little, because 'tis necessary to look at the three next Pictures at one View; these are three Sisters. She on the right Hand, who is so very beautiful, died a Maid; the next to her, still handsomer, had the same Fate, against her Will; this homely thing in the middle had both their Portions added to her own, and was stolen by a neighbouring Gentleman, a Man of Stratagem and Resolution, for he poisoned three Mastiffs to come at her, and knocked

down two Deer-stealers in carrying her off. Misfortunes happen in all Families: The Theft of this Romp and so much Money, was no great matter to our Estate. But the next Heir that possessed it was this soft Gentleman, whom you see there: Observe the small Buttons, the little Boots, the Laces, the Slashes about his Clothes, and above all the Posture he is drawn in, (which to be sure was his own choosing;) you see he sits with one Hand on a Desk writing and looking as it were another way, like an easy Writer, or a Sonneteer: He was one of those that had too much Wit to know how to live in the World; he was a Man of no Justice, but great good Manners; he ruined every Body that had any thing to do with him, but never said a rude thing in his Life; the most indolent Person in the World, he would sign a Deed that passed away half his Estate with his Gloves on, but would not put on his Hat before a Lady if it were to save his Country. He is said to be the first that made Love by squeezing the Hand. He left the Estate with ten thousand Pounds Debt upon it, but however by all Hands I have been informed that he was every way the finest Gentleman in the World. That Debt lay heavy on our House for one Generation, but it was retrieved by a Gift from that honest Man you see there, a Citizen of our Name, but nothing at all akin to us. I know Sir ANDREW FREEPORT has said behind my Back, that this Man was descended from one of the ten Children of the Maid of Honour I shewed you above; but it was never made out. We winked at the thing indeed, because Money was wanting at that time.

Here I saw my Friend a little embarrassed, and turned my Face to the next Portraiture.

SIR ROGER went on with his Account of the Gallery in the following manner. ' This Man (pointing to him I looked at) I take to be the Honour of our House. Sir HUMPHREY DE COVERLEY; he was in his Dealings as punctual as a Tradesman, and as generous as a Gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his Word, as if it were to be followed by Bankruptcy. He served his Country as Knight of this Shire to his dying Day. He found it no easy mat-
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