

N^o 129. *Saturday, July 28.*

*Vertentem sese frustra sectabere cantum,
Cum rota posterior curras & in axe secundo.* Perf.

GREAT Masters in Painting never care for drawing People in the Fashion; as very well knowing that the Head-dress, or Periwig, that now prevails, and gives a Grace to their Portraitsures at present, will make a very odd Figure, and perhaps look monstrous in the Eyes of Posterity. For this Reason they often represent an illustrious Person in a *Roman Habit*, or in some other Dress that never varies. I could wish, for the sake of my Country Friends, that there was such a kind of *everlasting Drapery* to be made use of by all who live at a certain distance from the Town, and that they would agree upon such Fashions as should never be liable to Changes and Innovations. For want of this *standing Dress*, a Man who takes a Journey into the Country is as much surpris'd, as one who walks in a Gallery of old Family Pictures; and finds as great a Variety of Garbs and Habits in the Persons he converses with. Did they keep to one constant Dress they would sometimes be in the Fashion, which they never are as Matters are managed at present. If instead of running after the Mode, they would continue fixed in one certain Habit, the Mode would some time or other overtake them, as a Clock that stands still is sure to point right once in twelve Hours: In this Case therefore I would advise them, as a Gentleman did his Friend who was hunting about the whole Town after a rambling Fellow, If you follow him you will never find him, but if you plant your self at the Corner of any one Street, I'll engage it will not be long before you see him.

I have already touch'd upon this Subject, in a Speculation which shews how cruelly the Country are led astray in following the Town; and equipped in a ridiculous Habit, when they fancy themselves in the Height of the Mode. Since that Speculation I have received a Letter (which I

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there hinted at) from a Gentleman who is now in the Western Circuit.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

BEING a Lawyer of the *Middle-Temple*, a *Cornish-man* by Birth, I generally ride the Western Circuit for my Health, and as I am not interrupted with Clients, have leisure to make many Observations that escape the Notice of my Fellow-Travelers.

ONE of the most fashionable Women I met with in all the Circuit was my Landlady at *Stains*, where I chanced to be on a Holiday. Her Commode was not half a Foot high, and her Petticoat within some Yards of a modish Circumference. In the same Place I observed a young Fellow with a tolerable Periwig, had it not been covered with a Hat, that was shaped in the *Ramillie* Cock. As I proceeded in my Journey I observed the Petticoat grew scantier and scantier, and about three-score Miles from *London* was so very unfashionable, that a Woman might walk in it without any manner of Inconvenience.

NOT far from *Salisbury* I took notice of a Justice of Peace's Lady, who was at least ten Years behind-hand in her Dress, but at the same time as fine as Hands could make her. She was flounced and furbelowed from Head to Foot; every Ribbon was wrinkled, and every Part of her Garments in Curl, so that she looked like one of those Animals which in the Country we call a *Frieseland* Hen.

NOT many Miles beyond this Place I was informed that one of the last Year's little Muffs had by some means or other straggled into those Parts, and that all the Women of Fashion were cutting their old Muffs in two, or retrenching them, according to the little Model which was got among them. I cannot believe the Report they have there, that it was sent down frank'd by a Parliament-man in a little Packet; but probably by next Winter this Fashion will be at the Height in the Country, when it is quite out at *London*.

THE greatest Beau at our next County Sessions was dressed in a most monstrous Flaxen Periwig, that was made in King *William's* Reign. The Wearer of it goes,
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‘ it seems, in his own Hair, when he is at home, and lets
‘ his Wig lie in Buckle for a whole half Year, that he
‘ may put it on upon Occasion to meet the Judges in it.

‘ I must not here omit an Adventure which happened
‘ to us in a Country Church upon the Frontiers of *Corn-*
‘ *wall*. As we were in the midst of the Service, a Lady
‘ who is the chief Woman of the Place, and had passed the
‘ Winter at *London* with her Husband, entered the Con-
‘ gregation in a little Head-dress, and a hoop’d Petticoat.
‘ The People who were wonderfully startled at such a
‘ Sight, all of them rose up. Some stared at the prodigious
‘ Bottom, and some at the little Top of this strange Dress.
‘ In the mean time the Lady of the Manor filled the *Area*
‘ of the Church, and walked up to her Pew with an un-
‘ speakable Satisfaction, amidst the Whispers, Conjec-
‘ tures, and Astonishments of the whole Congregation.

‘ UPON our way from hence we saw a young Fel-
‘ low riding towards us full Gallop, with a bob Wig and
‘ a black filken Bag tied to it. He stopt short at the Coach,
‘ to ask us how far the Judges were behind us. His Stay
‘ was so very short, that we had only time to observe his
‘ new silk Wastecoat, which was unbuttoned in several
‘ Places to let us see that he had a clean Shirt on, which
‘ was ruffled down to his Middle.

‘ FROM this Place, during our Progress through the
‘ most Western Parts of the Kingdom, we fancied our
‘ selves in King *Charles* the Second’s Reign, the People ha-
‘ ving made very little Variations in their Dress since that
‘ time. The smartest of the Country Squires appear still
‘ in the *Monmouth* Cock, and when they go a wooing
‘ (whether they have any Post in the Militia or not) they
‘ generally put on a red Coat. We were, indeed, very much
‘ surpris’d, at the Place we lay at last Night, to meet with
‘ a Gentleman that had accoutered himself in a Night-cap
‘ Wig, a Coat with long Pockets and slit Sleeves, and a pair
‘ of Shoes with high Scollop Tops; but we soon found
‘ by his Conversation that he was a Person who laughed
‘ at the Ignorance and Rusticity of the Country People,
‘ and was resolv’d to live and die in the Mode.

‘ *SIR*, If you think this Account of my Travels may
‘ be of any Advantage to the Publick, I will next Year
‘ trouble you with such Occurrences as I shall meet with
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