

THE RAPE OF THE WIG.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1782.

IT is necessary to prefix this short account to the following *jeu d'esprit* of Mr. B. then about eighteen. Some of the students used to say, that if Newbourn would wear a better wig his lectures would make a deeper impression on them, and talked of burning the vile caxon. One day the young gentleman since known at Bath by the name of Count E——, an early friend of Mr. B's at Eton school, visiting an English gentleman who boarded at Mr. Cook's, snatched it off the peg in the *trance*, i. e. the hall, where it hung; when he got into the street, he told his friend that he had got it, and was taking it home to burn it. Mr. B. who ever from a youth hated *mischievous* mischief, much as he *ever* loved innocent mischief, replied, "Oh! no; do not burn it."—"What can I do then?" "Why let your servant, or mine, who will, do it.—Better dress it nicely, fill it with powder and pomatum, and give it a new ribband." It was a tail wig. This was agreed on. Some of the gentlemen suggested, that in the box in which it was returned, an apology for the *theft* ought to be made; and Mr. B. being ever a ready pen-man, was told he must write the card. He took up his pen with his usual alertness, and wrote the following lines. It was some weeks before the Author was known in the University.

IMMORTAL Pope the ravish'd lock has sung;

But, since his classic lyre is now unstrung,

Be mine the task the ravish'd Wig to sing,

While thus my untry'd lyre I string :

Accept, O Newbourn *, nor this Wig disdain ;

Pray who this Wig from dressing could refrain.

'Twas friendship only did the theft inspire,

To make this Wig what students *must* admire.

Now Art with Nature gladly will combine

To make thy spouse esteem thee *quite* divine †.

* This very worthy Gentleman's estate is called Newbourn. The young gentlemen among themselves used to call him Laird of Newbourn. He was sincerely beloved and respected by Mr. B. and all the English students. Most of those of large fortune and of fashion boarded at his house; and a most pleasant abode they found it.

† Professor Cook was a very excellent husband: Mrs. Cook, most sincerely attached to him, used to wish him to pay a little more attention to his dress, of which he was remarkably negligent. He was most conscientiously attentive to his pupils. This worthy gentleman would never dine at General —'s, because his public day was the Lord's-day. May he be imitated by many in both kingdoms, who certainly shew the Almighty's wisdom in

This Wig may now a constellation blaze,
 Whilst wond'ring Herschel shall enraptur'd gaze.
 When these you read, chace anger from your breast,
 And pray be happy that your Wig is dress'd.

prefixing the word REMEMBER to the Fourth Commandment. The excellent Lady Warwick, the beloved sister of that divine writer the Honourable Robert Boyle, says, in her sweet Meditations, "The keeping HOLY the LORD's day is the hedge of Religion." What would she have said had she lived in these days, to see stage-coaches, waggons, cricket-playing? &c. &c. —The late Penyston Powney, Esq. M. P. for Berks, father of Colonel P. during his life never suffered *any* waggons to pass through the town of Maidenhead. He once set a man in the stocks who defied his authority.