

PROLOGUE
TO
BONDS WITHOUT JUDGEMENT,
OR
THE LOVES OF BENGAL.
SPOKEN BY MR. HOLMAN.

WITH shaft satyric shot from Phoebus' bow
'Gainst Wisdom's foes to aim th' unerring blow,
To check the rising follies of the age,
May well be deem'd the province of the Stage.
Here, whilst their gentle breasts indignant burn,
Here Fashion's offspring may some moral learn.
This night on India's shore our scene we lay,
Though not for want of game so far we stray.
When here in vain on Beaux our Beauties smile,
Enrag'd they vow to quit the tasteless Isle,

And, though 'gainst venal love they loudly rail,
 Yet, blushing, for the Land of Husbands * fail,
 Whilst Neptune's self indignant bears the weight,
 And with reluctance wafts th' unworthy freight.
 When India's guilty shore these damsels reach,
 Unnumber'd Nabobs throng the golden beach,
 Who, whilst their feeble frames scarce stand the gale,
 Explore the beauties of each living bale.
 To you, ye Fair, belongs th' important cause,
 'Tis you must vindicate blest Hymen's laws;
 For, if from th' East this fashion we import,
 And Arcot's customs lead the British court,

* Mr. B. received a smart trimming from his Mother for being prevailed on by ——— to write this Prologue;—she constantly asserting, that the unportioned industrious daughters of gentlemen, who go to India to obtain a comfortable settlement in life, only resemble the *idle* lasses who go every night to Ranelagh. Both mean to get *good* husbands: the Ranelagh misses generally fail; the sea-nymphs seldom; for men of sense and worth rarely choose a wife that cannot spend an evening at home, who, according to Dr. Young,

“Deem one moment unamused a misery,” &c. &c.

No man esteemed women of sense and merit more than Mr. B.

To Plutus soon your ancient sway must yield,
And vanquish'd Love shall quit fair Albion's field.
Were this the case, should some rich Heirefs start,
Whose countless thousands charm each throbbing heart,
The fond enraptur'd youth who wish'd to win her
Must e'en go flirt with Christie or with Skinner.
The Peer, by adverse dice compell'd to wed,
From ways and means to Hymen's altar led,
May ask his friend, "Pray where bought you your rib?"
Whilst he replies, "Why, faith, I dealt with Squib;
And, as your courtship I am somewhat slow in,
I got her at the hammer—"Just a going."
On you, ye Fair, who haply scorn the plan,
To seek so far that faithless creature, man,
Who, spurning Plutus and his sordid art,
For Love alone exchange the generous heart,
On your support our anxious Bard relies,
And hopes to take his plaudits from your eyes;
For, if your critic frowns do not confound him,
He smiles at all the Nabobs that surround him.