



The M I M I C K.

By the Rev. Mr. PITT.

THE Mimick's ductile features claim my lays,
 Chang'd to a thousand shapes, a thousand ways :
 Who with variety of arts puts on
 All other persons, and throws off his own ;
 Whose looks well disciplin'd his will obey,
 Bloom at command, or at command decay :
 Nor blush, my Muse, those changes to impart,
 Which ask an Ovid's or Apollo's art.

But who, Apollo, all the arts can trace,
 All the deceits of that delusive face ?
 For lo! in fight the various artist comes ;
 Lo! how in beauty and in health he blooms :
 Its smoothest charms triumphant youth supplies,
 Laughs in his cheeks, and sparkles in his eyes.
 But sudden see, the scene is snatch'd away,
 See each inverted feature in decay ;
 His muscles all relax'd, his face o'ergrown,
 Rough and emboss'd with wrinkles not his own.

He trails his dangling legs : the wond'ring train
 Laugh at the solemn conduct of his cane ;

Rapt thro' the scenes of life, he drops his prime ;
 A cripple sixty years before his time ;
 Runs in a moment all his stages o'er,
 And steps from four-and-twenty to fourscore.

Now he a venerable judge appears,
 And the long garb of lazy purple wears ;
 Like drowfy P**'s looks his aged frame,
 His mien, his habit, and address the same :
 When to the sneering crowd he lisps a joke,
 Puns from the law, or quibbles out of Coke ;
 With settled air, and most judicious face,
 Nods o'er the cushion, counsel, and the case ;
 Slumbers, and hears by starts the noisy train ;
 Catches a period, and drops down again.
 And now his hearers in their turn to lull,
 Himself stands up most venerably dull ;
 Talks of old times ; commends their loyal zeal,
 Their wholesome statutes, discipline, and ale ;
 On different themes bestows one common praise,
 The Thames, the streets, the king, and king's highways.

You see him quit the bench, and strait appear
 An huge old gouty counsel at the bar ;
 Bawl for his client, wrest the tortur'd laws
 From their true sense, and mould them to the cause ;
 In solemn form harangue the list'ning crowd,
 And hem and cough emphatically loud ;
 Blest art indeed ! and glorious eloquence,
 Where empty noise supplies the want of sense.

For meaning, signs, and motions he affords,
And interjections for the want of words.

What shape to you, O S**'s, is unknown!

What face, but you adopt into your own!

At the least hint, fictitious crowds you raise,

And multiply yourself ten thousand ways:

This moment, to indulge the mirthful vein,

A fool's or doctor's person you sustain;

The next resume yourself and sense again.

Am I deceiv'd? or by some sudden flight,
A starch'd tub-preacher now he strikes the sight,
(Quick the transition, and unseen the art!)

Pale and entirely chang'd in ev'ry part,

His short'ned visage, and fantastick dress,

The mad fantastick to the life express;

That small silk cap; those puritanick hairs,

Crop'd to the quick, and circling round his ears;

That rounded face the Mimick here proclaim,

How very different, yet how still the same!

Now he, by just degrees, his silence breaks;

His frantick silence mutt'ring ere he speaks:

Protracted hums the solemn farce begin,

And groans and pauses interrupt the scene;

As each in just succession comes and goes,

Work'd to its pitch, the spirit stronger grows,

And squeezes out his eyes, and twangs his vocal nose.

Now quick and rapid, and in rage more loud,

A storm of nonsense bursts upon the crowd:

His

His hand and voice proclaim the gen'ral doom,
 While this the hour-glass shakes, and that the room.
 On nature's ruins all his doctrines dwell,
 And throw wide open every gate of hell.

A thousand other shapes he wears with grace ;
 A thousand more varieties of face :
 But who, in every shape, can count him o'er,
 Who multiplies his person every hour ?
 What Muse his flying features can pursue,
 Or keep his wand'ring countenance in view ?
 Had I a thousand mouths, a thousand tongues,
 A throat of brass, and adamantine lungs,
 I could not celebrate this Proteus' skill,
 Who shifts his person and his face at will ;
 'This Proteus, who out-numbers hosts alone ;
 A crowd himself ; a multitude in one.