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Hogarth moralized

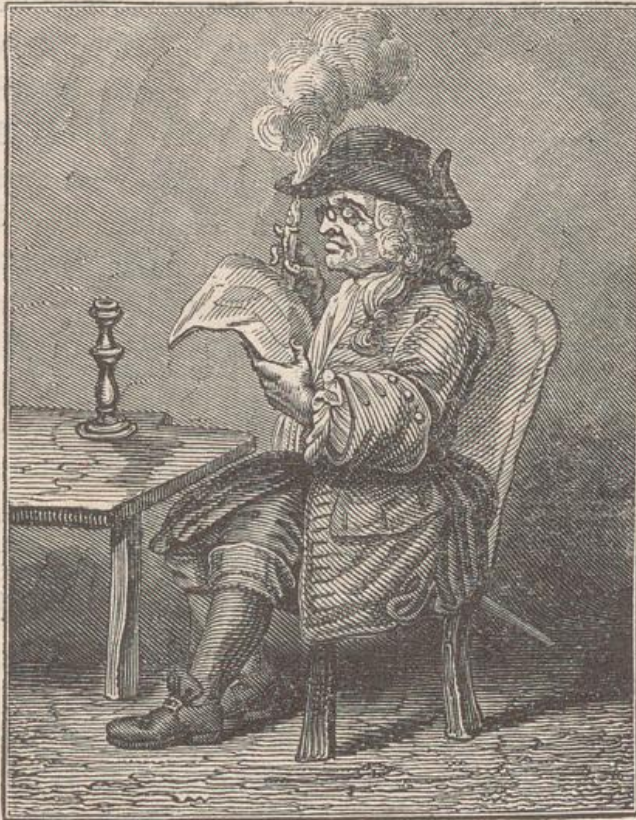
Hogarth, William

London, 1831

The Politician.

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THE POLITICIAN.



A politician should (as I have read)
Be furnish'd in the first place with a head!

ONE of our old writers gives it as his opinion, that there are "onlie two subjects which are worthie the studie of a wise man;" i. e. religion and politics. For the first, it does not come under inquiry in this print,—but certain it is, that too sedulously studying the second, has frequently involved its

votaries in many most tedious and unprofitable disputes, and been the source of much evil to many well-meaning and honest men. Under this class comes the Quidnunc here pourtrayed; it is said to be intended for a Mr. Tibson, lace-man, in the Strand, who paid more attention to the affairs of Europe than to those of his own shop. He is represented in a style somewhat similar to that in which Schalcken painted William the Third,—holding a candle in his right hand, and eagerly inspecting the Gazetteer of the day. Deeply interested in the intelligence it contains, concerning the flames that rage on the Continent, he is totally insensible of domestic danger, and regardless of a flame, which,—ascended to his hat,—

“Threatens destruction to his three-tail’d wig.”

From the tie-wig, stockings, high-quartered shoes, and sword, I should suppose it was painted about the year 1730, when street robberies were so frequent in the metropolis, that it was customary for men in trade to wear swords, not as now (1797), to preserve their religion and liberty from foreign invasion, but to defend their own pockets from domestic collectors.

The original sketch Hogarth presented to his friend Forrest; it was etched by Sherwin, and published 1775. J. I.