

[*two rules*]

An Imitator

Is a counterfeit Stone, and the larger and fairer he appears the more apt he is to be discovered, whilst small ones, that pretend to no great Value, pass unsuspected. He is made like a Man in Arras-Hangings, after some great Master's Design, though far short of the Original. He is like a Spectrum or walking Spirit that assumes the Shape of some particular Person, and appears in the Likeness of something that he is not, because he has no Shape of his own to put on. He has a Kind of Monkey and Baboon Wit, that takes after some Man's Way, whom he endeavors to imitate, but does it worse than those Things that are naturally his own; for he does not learn but take his Pattern out, as a Girl does her Sampler. His whole Life is nothing but a Kind of Education, and he is always learning to be

something that he is not, nor ever will be: For Nature is free, and will not be forced out of her Way, nor compelled to do any Thing against her own Will and Inclination. He is but a Retainer to Wit, and a Follower of his Master, whose Badge he wears every where, and therefore his Way is called *fervile Imitation*. His Fancy is like the innocent Lady's; who by looking on the Picture of a *Moor* that hung in her Chamber conceived a Child of the same Complexion; for all his Conceptions are produced by the Pictures of other Men's Imaginations, and by their Features betray whose Bastards they are. His Muse is not inspired but infected with another Man's Fancy; and

he catches his Wit, like the Itch, of somebody else that had it before, and when he writes he does but scratch himself. His Head is, like his Hat, fashioned upon a Block, and wrought in a Shape of another Man's Invention. He melts down his Wit, and casts it in a Mold: and as metals melted and cast are not so firm and solid, as those that are wrought with the Hammer; so those Compositions, that are founded and run in other Men's Molds, are always more brittle and loose than those, that are forged in a Man's own Brain. He binds

himself Prentice to a Trade, which he has no Stock to set up with, if he should serve out his Time, and live to be made free. He runs a whoring after another Man's Inventions (for he has none of his own to tempt him to an incontinent Thought) and begets a Kind of Mungrel Breed, that never comes to good.
