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RICARDUS CORINENSIS :

A LITERARY MASKING OF THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY.

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Mr. Richard Gough, in his introduction to the "Archæologia," which was destined to be the enduring repertory of English Antiquities, labours to establish a becoming age for the Society of Antiquaries itself. According to him, that brotherhood of antiquarian devotees had its origin in the great era of religious and intellectual revolution to which Queen Elizabeth's name is fitly applied, when men of the highest intellect, possessed by the new ideas of the age, were struggling for the world's emancipation from the thralldom of antiquity. In the year 1572, a few eminent English scholars, under the auspices of Archbishop Parker and Sir Robert Cotton, assembled at the house of the latter, and formed themselves into a society for the preservation of the ancient monuments of their country. The British Museum Library is the enduring memorial of the labours of one of those conservators of national antiquities, in an age of revolution. But it is to a far different age, and to a very diverse reign, we must turn, for the actual foundation of the Society of Antiquaries. Not in the earnest, progressive era of Queen Elizabeth, but in that most unearnest of centuries with which Queen Anne's name is fitly associated : a body of gentlemen, not less zealous, though of far inferior note to their precursors of the sixteenth century, began their meetings, in 1708, in the Young Devil Tavern, Fleet Street, London ; and established a society for the study of antiquities, which has since rendered valuable service to letters and national history. It was not, however, till 1718, that they were thoroughly organised, with a staff of office-bearers, and a regular record of their proceedings. But from this we learn that their first President was Peter Le Neve, Esq., Norroy King-at-Arms, and their first Secre-

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