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Frailties of fashion, or, the adventures of an Irish smock

interspersed with whimsical anecdotes of a Nankeen pair of breeches

Illustrated with some of the most striking and humorous descriptions in high and low life, that fancy can suggest ...

London, 1783

Chapter I.

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THE
ADVENTURES
OF AN
IRISH SMOCK, &c.

CHAPTER I.

A conversation between the Editor and his Bookseller—Mr. Elziver's agreeable intelligence, and still more agreeable communications, which induced the Editor to put this volume immediately to press.

MY Bookseller called upon me this morning, and greatly surprised me, whilst I was meditating upon the peace (for by the bye I was writing a pamphlet upon the prelimi-

VOL. II.

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nary

2 ADVENTURES OF

nary articles) and informed me half my Smock was demolished; as to my Nankeen Breeches, they wanted the two front buttons formerly belonging to the flap, and he believed there was a small fracture between the thighs, which he attributed to a certain itinerant actress's pulling them on hastily to perform her part, which was that of Macheath; but that he believed they might both come about again with some eclat, by a little of my assistance.

I own, thus taken by surprise, I did not understand Mr. Elziver, and desired an explanation; for as I hinted fore, being entirely enveloped in politics, doing all I could to demolish the fortifications of Dunkirk, and almost cast away in pursuing the fishery upon the banks of Newfoundland: I
felt

felt like another St. Stephen, lapidated with the ruins of the treaty of Utrecht, and swallowed like another Jonah, by a whale in the gulph of St. Lawrence.

However, having dismissed the ple-nipos and my consequent apprehensions, I begged Mr. Elziver to explain himself.

“ Why then, Sir, said he, your Adventures of an Irish Smock have had such a rapid sale, and the second volume is so eagerly sought for, that I would have you immediately put it to press, as I know you are in possession of the materials.”

This expostulation would not have had so powerful a weight, without my perceiving him pull out his pocket-book, and thrusting towards me two of the sweetest Britannias I had beheld

for some time past. I believe there is sure electrical power used in fabricating that kind of soft paper, which operates univerversally: It makes patriots and politicians; lawyers and highwaymen; doctors and duennas; preachers and pimps; authors and actors: In a word, it made me immediately dismiss my political pamphlet, and embark once more on board the Smock *Smack*, with no other insurance than Elziver's assurance that he was certain I should make a successful and profitable voyage.

“ Sir, continued Elziver, you cannot conceive with what avidity the first volume has been purchased; I have had peers and peereffes incog. in my shop; counsellors, and I may say privy counsellors (but that must remain a profound secret in our counsel chamber,

ber,

ber, agreeable to the oath) maids of honour, and maids of honour's maids; in a word, we have had men and women of every rank and description.

Elziver was going on in this rapid manner, when I thought proper to interrupt him, by saying that booksellers and publishers had nothing to do but gossip in their shops, but that authors wanted time to think, and digest their thoughts. He begged me a thousand pardons, took his hat and departed, after giving me a hearty squeeze by the hand, and begging me to *turn up the Irish Smock* again, and *let down* once more, at least, the *Nankeen Breeches*.

C H A P. II.

Lady W—y, Mrs. N—n, and Clackitt, repair to Mr. Cr—ie's sale:—His polite address to the ladies.—Begins his sale, and disposes of Perdita, the Bird of Paradise, Dally the Tall, and the Armst—d.

MR. Elziver having taken his leave, I now began to consider how to proceed upon the succeeding sheets; turning over the first volume, I found I left Jack Clackitt in company with Lady W—y and Mrs. N—n, previous to their attending Mr. C—ie's sale, when the Bird of Paradise, and the other impures upon the *haut ton*, were to be put up at auction. Referring accordingly to my notes, I found this business thus conducted:

Clackitt waited upon the ladies the next day, agreeable to appointment, at

Mrs.