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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

Chap. XII.

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C H A P. XII.

A trip to France—Remarks upon the road and in the capital, worthy the notice of English travellers—A whimsical and truly risible anecdote—A new species of cheats described—The marquis de Pillotte's motto upon the urn which inclosed the great Voltaire's heart.

THE honey moon could not be completed, according to the laws of the Ton, without a trip to the continent. Monsieur and Madame Cabriole, with Mademoiselle Convert, accordingly set off for France. This married Miss, was an useful companion, as an interpreters for the young lady, who had not yet made any great progress in the French language.

Many

Many things naturally strike an English traveller between Calais and Paris. *Depar le Roi* is seen inscribed at every post-house, or horse change shop upon the road. This inscription is difficult to translate into English, for it would literally run thus: "Of, by the King," though it certainly is intended to mean "By order of the King."

Upon their arrival in Paris, many more inscriptions appeared whimsical: "Bonne double Bierre d'Angleterre," at china-shops, carried with it an air of ridicule. But it was soon discovered that the *rage* of the Parisian demi-reps, was, under pretence of being treated with bottled English porter, and barrel oysters, to obtain a present of a set of china.

The

The next thing that struck our party in this line, was at a *Traiteur's* (or cook's shop) *L'On fait noces ici* "Nuptials are done here." This inscription might induce one to believe that the consummation of real or imaginary nuptials was permitted there, as at the Temple of Hymen in Pall Mall—but no such thing; it only meant, that wedding dinners were dressed there, and the connubial party might find entertainment for men, women, and children.

A whimsical adventure occurred whilst they were in Paris, which made much noise. The president of the Parliament had occasion to wait upon the king at Versailles, when his majesty, with his usual politeness, threw off his authoritative royalty, and desired him to be seated. A wicked page who stood behind the President could not refrain

refrain

refrain from amusing himself with his *perruque à trois Circonstances*, and pinned it to the back of the chair. When the president arose to take his leave he appeared *bald-headed*. "Sire," said he, "I did not expect to salute your majesty like a choir boy," and retired.

Immediate search was made after the delinquent, and though two or three pages had succeeded him, during the course of the conference, he was discovered. As soon as he appeared before the King, his majesty ordered him, "to repair immediately to the president's—acknowledge his crime, and intreat his pardon on his knees."

This mandate was delivered near midnight. The page, who possessed wit as well as whim, instantly set off for Paris in a post chaise and four, and reached the capital between three and four in the morning. He repaired to

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the *hotel* of the president, ordered his servant to ring and rap at the *Porte Cochere* till he gained admittance. The porter, through the wicket, enquired who was there at such an unseasonable hour? to which the page replied in an audible voice, “*Je viens de la part du Roi*—“ I came from the King”. This information being communicated to the president, he immediately arose, thinking some dispatches of great consequence were to be communicated.

The page being admitted into the presence of the president, disclosed his business, fell upon his knees, acknowledged his crime, and intreated his forgiveness.

The president could not refrain smiling, though he was still half asleep; but rebuked the page in saying, *his apology was a hundred times worse than his crime.*

These

These little historiettes fly about Paris with every breeze of air, and generally constitute the chief conversation of the day, at the *Ruelles* and card parties.

At this time too there was a set of cheats, or rather thieves, who went about, and, under various pretences, gained admission into private houses, when they found means to promote the use of peculiar cordials, in which were infused soporific powder, that almost instantly operated, and then they attained their booties. These swindlers, if the expression be allowable, were called *Endormeurs*.

Another occurrence at the same time made a subject of conversation in Paris. The Marquis de Villette had obtained the celebrated *Voltaire's* heart, which he had preserved in a golden

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vase.

vase, or urn, on which was inscribed

*Son cœur est en ces lieux—son esprit
est par tout.*

This encloses his heart—his wit and genius are diffused throughout the universe.

C H A P. XIII.

Portraits of French cleanliness, illustrated with an anecdote, which may serve as cautions to English Travelers, who visit Paris—A tour through Flanders—A just description of Brussels, compared with Paris, over which its superiority is clearly proved.

BEFORE we take our leave of Paris, we cannot help remarking some aukward and disagreeable customs, that prevail in this nominal *Emporium* of taste and politeness. Edinburgh,