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

interspersed with whimsical anecdotes of a Nankeen pair of breeches

Containing among a great variety of curious connexions between the most celebrated Demi Reps and Beaux Garçons upon the ton, the secret memoirs of Madame D'Eon as related by herself ...

London, 1784

Chap. XVIII.

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C H A P. XVIII.

Minionette returns to England—Is robbed upon the road, and reduced to great distress—Advertises for a tutor-essè's place in a boarding-school, and is accordingly engaged—Her insidious arts of debauching the morals of the young ladies, by which several were enticed to follow such practices as nearly proved fatal to them—Is detected in her proceedings, turned away, and soon found in the greatest necessity—Her connexion with a jolly Jack Tar.

MINIONETTE judged it prudent to return to England, thinking she had made as good an harvest as had been in her power on the Continent. We accordingly a few days after the late discovery find her at Ostend, ready to embark for England.

She

She now solaced herself, that with the money she had raised in her different pursuits, she should be perfectly at ease, and enabled to pass the remainder of her days quite comfortably: but alas! how vain, how futile are all our mundane prospects. The future elysium she had just been depicting to herself, in a few moments changed into the regions of Pluto.

Her chaise had not got many miles on this side Canterbury, than she had a tale of woe to relate, very different from those tales which are usually ascribed to that vicinity. Attacked by two highwaymen, she was robbed of all her valuable effects, including the watch she had purloined from Count D'Artois's secretary. Had the robbers been acquainted with the means that had been
used

used to obtain in great part this itinerant treasure, they might with some degree of propriety have stiled it *Lex Talionis*; notwithstanding their ignorance in this respect, they thought their only crime was that of being stimulated by poverty, to make free with another's property richer than themselves.

Upon Minionette's arrival in London, she was involved in the greatest perplexity to know what course to pursue. On reading the Daily Advertiser, and observing that a governess was wanted for a genteel boarding-school near town, she resolved to offer herself; and giving some testimonials of her being just arrived from Paris, the mistress immediately engaged her at a handsome salary.

Thus situated, she might have
thought

thought herself very easy and comfortable, if ambition, true or false, had not invariably fired her breast. She found in this female seminary, several young ladies of family and fortune under her tuition, just at that **critical** time of life, when the passions begin to actuate the female breast: and Minionette resolved to turn this circumstance to her advantage.

Notwithstanding the highwaymen had robbed her of all the cash, notes, and jewels that were in her possession, they had left her several books and toys, which they judged were of no intrinsic value. Amongst these were several copies of a book well known in Paris, and not entirely unknown in London, called "*Bijoux indiscrets*," and as she was not a mere theoretical professor in the art which these books
treated

treated upon, she was in possession of several of the “very indiscreet toys” which they recommended.

The young ladies bought both the books and toys with avidity, and she was upon the point of writing abroad for a fresh cargo of each commodity, when an unlucky adventure frustrated her design, and destroyed all her future hopes in that immaculate seminary.

Miss R— and Miss P—, who were somewhat older than the rest of the scholars, had for some time laid their heads together, to realize those imaginary joys, which the *Bijoux indiscrets*, had only tickled their fancies with. They were in possession of the *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, and had often read them with delight upon retiring to rest; particularly that passage, where the nosegay boy is exhibited

bited in such lively, feeling, and glowing colours. It is true, that the indiscreet toys had ere now often supplied their place—but they sighed, panted; incessantly panted for the reality.

Having, as we said, laid their heads together, a thought suggested itself to Miss P—, that though they had no Nofegay-boy at hand, the gardener's lad, who was a fine comely youth, about nineteen, might very well supply his place; and there was some reason to think he was qualified to be the living representative of Priapus, the God of the Gardens.

It was accordingly resolved, that the greatest secrecy should prevail, and that whilst the rest of the young ladies were amusing themselves with Priapus's effigy, they would fold the Deity's proxy in their arms.

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The next day Miss R— took an opportunity of walking in the garden, whilst young Sylvanus was watering his plants: after some conversation, he presented her with a bouquet, and she returned the compliment with a guinea; at the same time slipping a billet into his hand, signifying that the chamber window would be open at twelve that night. Sylvanus was not so ignorant as to misconstrue the meaning of this assignation; and, at the hour appointed he mounted his ladder, and entered the seat of bliss.

He stript, and lay between the semi-vestals, turning alternately to each, when
 Bodies mingling, sexes blending,
 Who should most be lost contending.
 proved a very different gratification from what the virgins had hitherto received from Minionette's mere *passo tempos*.

VOL. I.

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The

The amorous business continued for several weeks, during which time Priapus so successfully, or unsuccessfully, as it eventually proved, he planted his seed, that both Miss R— and Miss P— proved pregnant.

There is a curiosity implanted in the female breast, that far surpasses any thing which stimulates ours. The appendages of the young ladies apparel were examined in the most scrupulous manner, and such interrogatories put to them as would make even an Irish Smock blush. In a word the feats of love were suspected, and an ample discovery ensued, with a *development* of the machinations and manœuvres of Minionette. The consequence was, she was turned a-drift, and poor Sylvanus sent for a soldier.

We

We are happy, however, to find that this complicated *faux pas*, was not attended with any disagreeable consequences to the young ladies: for that great and skilful Esculapius, the abortive Doctor D—y being called in, by his assistance and abilities, neither of their *bellies* rose in judgment against them; and we have the farther pleasure to add, from undoubted authority, that a treatise of marriage is on the *tapis* between Miss R— and a certain rich north country Baronet; and that Miss P— is pricked down to be appointed Maid of honour upon the first vacancy.

Remerciée in this manner, Minionette had a new plan to chalk out, and she soon found it necessary to patrol the streets: but as she took up this *vocation* during the long *vacation*, she found her wardrobe gradually diminish. In

fine, she was at length reduced to vend her Irish Smock, that had bore witness of her various vicissitudes of fortune for a considerable time.

It was with pungent sorrow and affliction, she parted with her trusty and well beloved servant, who had proved herself faithful and constantly attached upon every occasion. But dire necessity urged the deed: and she accordingly repaired to Rag Fair, to dispose of me, gentle Reader, your devoted slave to sink into obscurity—not without hopes, however, of emerging from my present cloud, and like *Sol* appear again with greater radiance.

Whilst the unfortunate Minionette was thus vending me, a jolly Jack Tar, just returned from a cruise, with his pocket lined with shiners, came to purchase a ruffled shirt—they retired

red together; but what became of them afterwards I cannot at present tell.

C H A P. XIX.

Curious anecdotes of the celebrated Mrs.

N——n; in which are displayed many whimsical situations, and unexpected gratifications,—Her man Thomas's good fortune interrupted by a certain son of Thespis.—Succeeds him in his principal character—Fatal effects of her coachman's good luck, &c. &c.

IT is time now to look after the Nankeen Breeches, which ere this had been transferred through the agency of a long bearded Levite, under the description of an old clothes man, to little Isaac, Mrs. N——n's foot-

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