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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. VI.

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C H A P. VI.

A trip to Windsor, not quite in the sentimental style.—Fine speeches upon the road—a flying dinner, an elegant supper;—but the devil of a bonne bouche. A desert beautifully served up—but by some accident most dreadfully spoilt—and yet the confectioner was not much to blame—his conserves were delicate, but his pasteries were tainted with jaundiced eye jealousy.

THE business being finished in Bond-street, greatly to her Ladyship's approbation, they pursued their intended route with joy and alacrity to Windsor. The Captain had dispatched an agent to provide the best apartments at the best inn at Windsor, and to order the best supper that could be procured.

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These

These dispositions being made, like a prudent commander, all his ideas were now by anticipation ingrossed in rapture. The Captain had read poetry and plays, and had got some passages and speeches by heart, such as

A cordial drop Heaven in our cup
has thrown

To make the bitter draught of life
go down.

And,

Limbs, do your office, and support
me well,

Bear me to her, then fail me if you
can.

Again,

There act my joys though thunders
shake the room.

With these and a few more similar flights they reached Windsor—her Ladyship in high spirits; the Captain looking

looking upon every hour, every minute, every moment, as his declared foe till bed time.

Whilst the lovers were thus engaged, his Lordship was employed in a very different manner. Lady Love-sport's vis-a-vis had been watched to Ruby's, in Bond Street, and from thence to Piccadilly, where it was dismissed under pretence of her Ladyship and the Captain walking in the Green-park, which they effectually did, by entering at the private door, and traversing the Wilderness; they retired to the great gate opposite Hyde-Park, where a post chaise and four was waiting for them. A messenger was instantly dispatched to a coffee-house in St. James's Street. From hence he immediately departed, but it was some time before he could



get his chaise ready to begin the pursuit.

Her Ladyship and the Captain took a flying repast upon the road, and arrived at Windsor just as supper was upon the point of being served up. The air had created a keen appetite in her Ladyship; and though the Captain's appetite was full as keen, but of another kind, he drank three or four glasses of Champaign extraordinary to exhilarate his spirits. He now became very pressing for her Ladyship to retire to rest; and, after much importunity she withdrew to undress.

Whilst she was at the glass disposing of her night-cap, she had a severe conflict in her mind, with regard to the part she was going to act, and how she should perform it with as much decency and decorum. At one instant

a qualm of conscience seized her, and she had some disagreeable forebodings, that had nearly induced her to sham illness, and send a message to the Captain, requesting his indulgence to lie alone that night; but the Captain's impatience, which could only be equalled by the fervor of his passion, could now be dallied with no longer: half an hour had elapsed since her Ladyship had withdrawn to her bed-chamber—his watch lay upon the table, and every moment appeared to him an age. The house-clock struck ten, which was a kind of alarm to him; he flew to the bed-chamber, and finding the door unlocked, entered without any interruption; but her Ladyship complained greatly at being thus taken by surprise, contrary to the laws of politeness and decorum.

He

He found it requisite to apologise for his conduct, by declaring that the violence of his passion had got the better of his prudence and his reason.

He now, in a phrenzy that can better be described at the sight of all her revealed charms, caught her in his arms and conducted her to the bed. As her delicate sensations, and fine feelings were ere this surmounted, she yielded to her fate. The Captain's clothes were thrown off—with the rapidity of lightning, and he was undressed and in bed in less than a minute.

Here we should drop the curtain, and leave the lovers to indulge, and to their genius freely give in a profusion of extatic bliss, that each of them had before anticipated. But, alas! their cruel stars prevailed: Lord Lovesport had
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had been in the house some minutes, and had visited every apartment in it, except that where her Ladyship and the Captain were now upon the very *brink* of paying their devotions with the greatest fervency at the shrine of Venus.

At this critical moment the door was burst open, and the bed curtains being withdrawn, his Lordship and the two servants appeared with candle and pistols.

What an alarming situation to the Captain! what a distressful predicament for her Ladyship. The lover did not wait to expostulate, but jumping out of bed flung up the sash, and flew out of the window with greater swiftness and agility than ever Lun or Woodward had even done in the most pressing pursuit in pantomime.

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It is true he had no other clothes to incumber him than his shirt. He fortunately fell upon some straw that lay in the yard, which broke his fall, and he was but little hurt. Luckily he met with his own postillion, who procured him a great coat to cover himself, and concealed him in the hay-loft till morning.

The scene that ensued between Lord and Lady Lovesport, was of a very different nature from any one exhibited in a pantomime. She fell prostrate at his feet, and with a flood of tears, entreated his Lordship's forgiveness; at the same time declaring in the most solemn manner, that her honour had not yet been violated! His Lordship not listening to such declarations, was upon the point of wreaking his vengeance on her that instant, and
snapt

snapt a pistol at her, which missed fire, and his attendants prevented any farther danger that might have ensued.

His Lordship having retired in the greatest rage, left her Ladyship to her own melancholy and distracting reflections. However, after shedding an involuntary flood of tears, she rang the bell and inquired after the Captain; could gain no tidings of him. She then called for some refreshment, and after drinking a glass of wine and water, she began to doze, and solace herself with thinking she had gained possession of the jewels, which were paid for; that she had a thousand pounds in her pocket; and his Lordship could not dispossess her of the marriage settlement. Having revolved these things in her mind, she got some rest; and in the morning rose perfectly chearful; and was not a little pleased that the
 Captain

Captain had not yet accomplished the full extent of his wishes. She returned to town, but did not go to her own house, as she was justly apprehensive of a very disagreeable reception.

C H A P. VII.

Introduction of the Nankeen, or Nanking Pair of Breeches—Is first introduced to the Irish Smock by Captain Cropt-Ear at Windsor—Afterwards renews his acquaintance, through the interposition of La Fleur, the Captain's valet, who enters into the service of Mademoiselle Minionette, whose encouragement he received.*

WHETHER I originated in Asia or Europe, at Nanking or in London, I will not pretend to aver, at

* We have adopted the former orthography, as it is more customary, and, of course, familiar.