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A Sentimental Journey Through France And Italy

Yorick, ...

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The Fille de Chambre Paris.

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T H E
FILLE DE CHAMBRE
P A R I S.

39
WHAT the old French officer had deliver'd upon traveling, bringing Polonius's advice to his son upon the same subject into my head—and that bringing in Hamlet; and Hamlet, the rest of Shakespear's works, I stopp'd at the Quai de Conti in my return home, to purchase the whole set.

VOL. II.

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The bookfeller faid he had not a fet in the world—*Comment!* faid I; raking one up out of a fet which lay upon the counter betwixt us. — He faid, they were sent him only to be got bound, and were to be sent back to Verfailles in the morning to the Count de B****.

—And does the Count de B**** faid I, read Shakespear? *C'est un Esprit fort*; replied the bookfeller. — He loves English books; and what is more to his honour, Monsieur, he love the English too. You speak this fo civilly, faid I, that 'tis enough to oblige an Englishman to lay out a Louis d'or or two at your shop— the bookfeller made a bow, and was going

going to say something, when a young decent girl of about twenty, who by her air and dress, seemed to be *filie de chambre* to some devout woman of fashion, came into the shop and asked for *Les Egarements du Cœur & de l'Esprit*: the bookseller gave her the book directly; she pulled out a little green fatten purse run round with a ribband of the same colour, and putting her finger and thumb into it, she took out the money, and paid for it. As I had nothing more to stay me in the shop, we both walked out at the door together.

— And what have you to do, my dear, said I, with *The Wanderings of the Heart*, who scarce know yet you have one? nor till love has

first told you it, or some faithless shepherd has made it ache, can't thou ever be sure it is so. — *Le Dieu m'en garde!* said the girl. — With reason, said I — for it^{is} a good one, 'tis pity it should be stolen: 'tis a little treasure to thee, and gives a better air to your face, than if it was dress'd out with pearls.

The young girl listened with a submissive attention, holding her satten purse by its ribband in her hand all the time — 'Tis a very small one, said I, taking hold of the bottom of it — she held it towards me — and there is very little in it, my dear, said I; but be but as good as thou art handsome, and heaven will fill it: I had a
parcel

parcel of crowns in my hand to pay for Shakespear; and as she had let go the purse intirely, I put a single one in; and tying up the ribband in a bow-knot, returned it to her.

The young girl made me more a humble courtesy than a low one — 'twas one ~~one~~ of those quiet, thankful sinkings where the spirit bows itself down — the body does no more than tell it. I never gave a girl a crown in my life which gave me half the pleasure.

My advice, my dear, would not have been worth a pin to you, said I, if I had not given this along with it: but now, when you see the crown,

B 3

you'll



you'll remember it—so don't, my dear, lay it out in ribbands.

Upon my word, Sir, said the girl, earnestly, I am incapable—in saying which, as is usual in little bargains of honour, she gave me her hand—*En vérité, Monsieur, je mettrai cet argent apart*, said she.

When a virtuous convention is made betwixt man and woman, it sanctifies their most private walks: so notwithstanding it was dusky, yet as both our roads lay the same way, we made no scruple of walking along the Quai de Conti together.

She

She made me a second courtesy in setting off, and before we got twenty yards from the door, as if she had not done enough before, she made a sort of a little stop to tell me again, —she thank'd me.

It was a small tribute, I told her, which I could not avoid paying to virtue, and would not be mistaken in the person I had been rendering it to for the world—but I see innocence, my dear, in your face—and foul be-fal the man who ever lays a snare in its way!

The girl seem'd affected some way or other with what I said—she gave a low sigh—I found I was not im-

B 4 powered



powered to enquire at all after it—so
said nothing more till I got to the
corner of the Rue de Nevers, where we
were to part.

—But is this the way, my dear, said I,
to the hotel de Modene? she told me it
was—or, that I might go by the Rue
de Guineygaude, which was the next
turn.—Then I'll go, my dear, by the
Rue de Guineygaude, said I, for two
reasons; first I shall please myself, and
next I shall give you the protection of
my company as far on your way as I
can. The girl was sensible I was civil
—and said, she wish'd the hotel de
Modene was in the Rue de St. Pierre—
—You live there? said I.—She told
me she was *fille de chambre* to Madame

R*****

R****—Good God! said I, 'tis the very lady for whom I have brought a letter from Amiens—The girl told me that Madame R****, she believed expected a stranger with a letter, and was impatient to see him—so I desired the girl to present my compliments to Madame R****, and say I would certainly wait upon her in the morning.

We stood still at the corner of the Rue de Nevers whilst this pass'd—We then stopp'd a moment whilst she disposed of her *Egarments de Cœur*, &c. more commodiously than carrying them in her hand—they were two volumes; so I held the second for her whilst she put the first into her pocket; and then she

she held her pocket, and I put in the other after it.

'Tis sweet to feel by what fine-spun threads our affections are drawn together.

We set off a-fresh, and as she took her third step, the girl put her hand within my arm—I was just bidding her—but she did it of herself with that undeliberating simplicity, which shew'd it was out of her head that she had never seen me before. For my own part, I felt the conviction of consanguinity so strongly, that I could not help turning half round to look in her face, and see if I could trace out any

any thing in it of a family likeness—
Tut! said I, are we not all relations?

When we arrived at the turning up of the Rue de Guineygaude, I stopp'd to bid her adieu for good an all: the girl would thank me again for my company and kindness—She bid me adieu twice—I repeated it as often; and so cordial was the parting between us, that had it happen'd any where else, I'm not sure but I should have signed it with a kiss of charity, as warm and holy as an apostle.

But in Paris, as none kiss each other but the men—I did, what amounted to the same thing——

——I bid God blefs her.

