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A Sentimental Journey Through France And Italy

Yorick, ...

London, 1768

The Case of Conscience. Paris.

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THE CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

P A R I S.

I WAS immediately followed up by the master of the hotel, who came into my room to tell me I must provide lodgings else where.—How so, friend? said I.—He answer'd, I had had a young woman lock'd up with me two hours that evening in my bed-chamber, and 'twas against the rules of his house.—Very well, said I, we'll all part friends then—for the girl is no worse—and I am no worse—and you will be just as I found you.—It was enough, he said, to overthrow

been but in a morning.—And does the difference of the time of the day at Paris make a difference in the sin? —It made a difference, he said, in the scandal.—I like a good distinction in my heart; and cannot say I was intolerably out of temper with the man.—I own it is necessary, re-assumed the master of the hotel, that a stranger at Paris should have the opportunities presented to him of buying lace and silk stockings and ruffles, *et tout cela*—and 'tis nothing if a woman comes with a band box.—O' my conscience, said I, she had one; but I never look'd into it.—Then, *Monsieur*, said he, has bought nothing.—Not one earthly thing, replied I.—Because, said he, I could recom-

mend one to you who would use you
en conscience.—But I must see her this
night, said I.—He made me a low
bow and walk'd down.

Now shall I triumph over this
maitre d'hotel, cried I—and what
then?—Then I shall let him see I
know he is a dirty fellow.—And
what then?—What then!—I was
too near myself to say it was for
the sake of others.—I had no good
answer left—there was more of spleen
than principle in my project, and I
was sick of it before the execution.

In a few minutes the Grisset came
in with her box of lace—I'll buy
nothing.

nothing however, said I, within myself.

The Grisset would shew me every thing—I was hard to please: she would not seem to see it; she open'd her little magazine, laid all her laces one after another before me — unfolded and folded them up again one by one with the most patient sweetness — I might buy—or not — she would let me have every thing at my own price — the poor creature seem'd anxious to get a penny; and laid herself out to win me, and not so much in a manner which seem'd artful, as in one I felt simple and careffing.

If

If there is not a fund of honest
 cullibility in man, so much the worse
 —my heart relented, and I gave up
 my second resolution as quietly as the
 first—Why should I chastise one for
 the trespass of another? if thou
 art tributary to this tyrant of an
 host, thought I, looking up in her
 face, so much harder is thy bread.

If I had not had more than four
Louis d'ors in my purse, there was no
 such thing as rising up and shewing
 her the door, till I had first laid
 three of them out in a pair of ruffles.

—The master of the hotel will
 share the profit with her—no mat-

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ter—then I have only paid as many
a poor soul has *paid* before me for
an act he *could* not do, or think
of.

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