

The Enterprising FRIARS.

A

French NOVEL.

THE two Heroes, whose Adventures I am about to relate, were born at *Caen* in *Normandy*: A Conformity of Temper and Inclination united them in their Infancy with the strictest Ties of Friendship. They had hardly attained their eighth Year when they were sent to the College, and both of them were under the Tuition of one Master. I know not whether they made any very great Progress in their Studies; but this I am sure of, that the Occupation they afterwards

erwards followed did not require any Profundity of Learning. One of these Friends had an Uncle a Capuchin Friar, whom he often visited. The continual Elogiums which he made upon his holy Order, created in his Nephew a Desire to embrace it ; but before he acquainted his Parents with his Intent, he declared his Sentiments to his Friend ; his Friend approved of his Design, and told him, that having no great Inclination for the Pleasures of the World, he should himself be willing to enter into a religious State ; but added, he should chuse to be received into an Order less austere and rigid than that which his Friend spoke of. For, said he, you are very sensible that it is extremely difficult for Nature to comply with such a Kind of Life.

You are greatly in an Error, replied his Friend : For I suppose you imagine that the austere Appear-

ances of Sanctity which terrify you, are not accompanied with any Kind of Pleasure. You think that these holy Fathers talk of nothing but Fasting, Discipline, and Penance; but, believe me, they are no greater Enemies to Diversion than any other People: But for your farther Satisfaction, I would have you speak to my Uncle on this Subject. Come, let us make him a Visit together, and then you will agree with me that the Capuchin Fathers enjoy an happier Lot than any other Friars of the Church of God.

This Proposal was agreed to; the two Friends went together to see the holy Man who was to confirm them in their Vocation. His Eloquence was persuasive, and he added to his holy Order two zealous Profelytes. They earnestly requested to be clad in the Robe of St. *Francis*; but this was a Favour not to be obtained but by a fervent Perseverance in
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their Duty ; and it was almost two Years before they were received to the Noviciate : Here it was that they acquired the Art of Diffimulation. They perceived that to insinuate themselves into the good Graces of their Superiors, it was necessary to affect Piety and Modesty. They subjected themselves to this disagreeable Constraint during the Time of their Probation, imagining that after their Noviciate, they should both be admitted into the same Convent ; but they were greatly disappointed. The Superiors did not think proper to comply with their Requests. Brother *Cherubin*, and Brother *Seraphin* were obliged to take their Leave of each other. They promised however to alleviate the Woes of Absence by an epistolary Correspondence, and they were as good as their Word.

But let us pass in Silence the Years which passed till the Time of

their Re-union. Both of them having attained a sufficient Quantity of Beard to become venerable Fathers, they were sent to *Paris* to study Theology. But Pleasure engrossed a greater Part of their Time than Study.

It was an easy Matter for our two young Capuchins, who often obtained Permission to go out together, to carry on some entertaining Intrigues: But the Time at Length arrived when they were to make the most brilliant Conquests.

Their Father Guardian sent them to several Villages within three or four Leagues of *Paris*, to make a * Quest. Love, who directed their Paths, conducted them to the House of a rich Farmer, where they met with extraordinary good Fare; but they paid very dear for it at the End, for it cost them their loss of Liberty. But how could they defend

* To make a gathering for the monastery.

send themselves against those charming Objects which were presented to their View.

They were two beautiful Parisians, whom it was impossible to behold, and not enter into Captivity; gazing at them they forgot their Hunger and Thirst. The Farmer, in vain, entreated them to sit down to Table. Love kept them hovering round these two amiable Creatures, who on the other Hand rejoiced at the Triumph their Charms had gained over the Hearts of the two Capuchin Lovers. As they were not accustomed to make a Parade of rigid Virtue, they were not offended at the precipitate Declarations that were made to them: They even answered them in such tender Terms, as to make the young Capuchins think themselves almost sure of Success. They wanted nothing then but a *Tête à Tête*. For which Purpose they applied to

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the Farmer to grant them a Lodging, telling him that they were extremely fatigued ; that Night approached, and that they were afraid they should not be able to reach the next Village. The hospitable Farmer granted their Petition, and thought himself obliged to them for condescending to be under his Roof ; for he did not doubt but it was a Kind of Benediction to an House to entertain such holy Persons. We shall presently see what sanctified Creatures those were to whom they granted so favourable a Reception.

During the Time of the Repast, it was with Difficulty that they could conceal the Violence of their Passion ; and when it was ended, a Walk was proposed. They imagined that as the Farmer had been fatigued with the Labours of the Day, he would not desire to accompany them ; and this was indeed

deed the Reason he alledged to excuse himself from taking a Walk with his new Visitors; but the young Girls, who had not such Excuse to make, very readily consented to join in the Company of those Reverend Fathers.

The Capuchins, and the young Females were equally impatient for for this *Tête à Tête*. And it may easily be conjectured there was no Time lost on either Side. Faith, Ladies, said Brother *Cherubin*, my Friend and I are happier than we could possibly expect; for we did not think we should have the good Fortune to find too such beautiful Angels, of whom *Venus* herself might borrow Graces. Hold, Reverend Father, replied one of the young Damsels, named *Catbaut*, do not attack our Modesty thus: I and my Companion are very sensible that our slender Perfections do not merit these high Encomiums. Indeed,

deed, resumed the same Capuchin. you are the two most charming Objects that ever presented themselves to the Eyes of Mortals ; and I doubt not but you have a thousand young Gentlemen enamoured with your Beauty. Permit us then to add to the Number of these happy Captives. Suffer us to become your humble Servants. But, Father, replied Miss *Javotte*, for that was the Name of the other young Girl, what do you mean by the Services you offer us ? To love you, with all our Hearts, replied the passionate Brother *Seraphin*, which, if you doubt it, I will give you the most convincing Proofs of. You need not do that, replied *Javotte*, we will rely upon your Word. But, resumed Brother *Seraphin*, To-morrow perhaps we shall be obliged to take our Leaves ; tell me, may we hope to have the Pleasure of your Company at *Paris*. But, replied, Miss *Catbaut*, will not the World censure us when they perceive

perceive we are visited by two Capuchins. If that is your only Objection, replied Brother *Cherubin*, it is easily removed. We will content ourselves with making you some private nocturnal Visits, which we will begin, if you please, as soon as we return to *Paris*.

This Proposition could not fail of meeting with a favourable Ear from the two young Parisians; they said they were extremely willing to accept of their tender Visits, but not without conditional Articles. It is not to be supposed that these young Females were willing to accept of Visits from which no Advantage could be reaped, and therefore wanted to be further satisfied in that Particular. It was concluded that the two Brother Capuchins should send them in Part of their Quest-Money. This Agreement being made, their next Business was to travel to collect more Cash, to
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enrich their new Mistresses, who were the next Day to return to *Paris*. And they had the Cruelty to part from our holy Brothers without granting them any Favours, as they were then incapable of advancing the Price of them. They were therefore obliged to content themselves with the pleasing Expectations of an approaching Felicity; in Consideration of which, they exerted their utmost Efforts to reap a glorious Harvest.

Fifteen Days were spent in collecting about the Country, in which Time they procured a large Sum of Money. One Part of their Quest (which we may suppose not to be the largest) was intended for the Convent, and left at a Farm House; and the other Part which they reserved for their own private Pleasures, was sent to their young Mistresses, who were informed by their Presents of the Approach of their Lovers,

Lovers, and to dispose themselves to gain them a favourable Reception.

Supper was hastily provided; and, Thanks to the generous Brother Questors, it was a most excellent Repast. As soon as it was dark, the Capuchins repaired with Speed where Love had summoned them. The Regale which waited for them was far less agreeable to them than the passionate Caresses they received from their fair Mistresses. They sat down to Table, and great was the Joy which animated the Repast. If what the Song says be true, that

*Des Charmes,
Sans Allarmes,
Soiant pour des Amans bouveurs:*

it was impossible to enjoy more Happiness than the pious Brothers did, and they drank like Fishes ;
but

but yet their Mistresses out-did them in the Rites of *Bacchus*. Intoxicated with Love and Wine, from the Table they were received into the Arms of their lovely Angels, not apprehending any dangerous Consequences. They enjoyed the Bliss which Love bestows, and then *Morpheus* compleated their Happiness. Three Days and three Nights were not sufficient to allay the amorous Transports ; but it was now high Time to think of returning to their Convent ; a longer Absence would have caused them to be suspected by their Superiors : Therefore, after promising their Mistresses a speedy Return, they tore themselves from their Arms and went to the Farm-House where they had left a Part of their Quest-Money.

They were very sensible that the small Collection they had made for the Convent would not procure them a very gracious Reception
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from the Father Guardian ; but satisfied with the Happiness they had enjoyed, they would every Day be willing to merit his Reproaches by the same Means. They detained some of the collected Money for their own Use. They were too well acquainted with the Disposition of their Ladies to expect any Favours gratis ; they knew they could not be had without a valuable Consideration ; and they were so passionately fond of their fair Nymphs, that they thought they could not purchase their Embraces at too dear a Rate. Their Stock of Cash was not inexhaustible, but while it lasted they set no Bounds to their Felicity. Under various Pretences they frequently obtained Permission to go out of the Convent ; sometimes they got out by Stealth ; and they never failed to devote all the Time they could to Love. But this Poverty was now about to become an Obstacle to their tender Wishes.

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They were told by their dear Charmers, that their Visits would for the future be deemed impertinent and troublesome, if they did not bring a Welcome in their Pockets.

This was a terrible Blow upon them ; and what Remedy to seek they could not tell. However, each Person retired to their respective Chamber to consider what Course to take.

At the Expiration of ten Days, Brother *Cherubin* went to his Friend's Chamber to acquaint him with a Design that Love had inspired him with, which he thought would ensure them the Success of their Desires. Ah! my dear Brother, said he, our Happiness is compleat, and nothing can ever be able to interrupt it.—These are flattering Hopes you give me, replied Brother *Seraphin*, but I fear.—No, no, resumed his Friend, interrupting him, fear nothing: hear

hear what I have to say to you, and you will be convinced that the Scheme which I have to propose to you, cannot fail of rendering us happy. Thou wouldest without doubt, added he, be glad to pass thy Days with the beautiful *Fanotte*, and I should be equally so to enjoy continually the Company of the charming *Cathaut*. Well, what must we do to obtain the Possession of them? Let us escape with them into *England*: Perhaps you imagine it will not be an easy Matter to persuade them to go along with us, but in that you are mistaken. You know that if we can but dazzle their Eyes with some Hundreds of Louis D'Ors, they will not be unwilling to accompany us. Well! I have invented an infallible Method to procure that Sum: It is thus: You know that I can forge all Manner of Writing. I will then counterfeit that of the Father Guardian. I will draw a Bill, payable
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to the Porter, which shall be directed to our Mother, the Depositary of the Money of the Convent. Tell me, do you think she would hesitate to pay such a Draft? For my Part, I do not think she would. But, resumed his Friend, consider our Monastic Harness, how shall we be able to preserve ourselves in our Flight. That Difficulty is easily answered, replied Brother *Cherubin*, is there no Cloaths to be had in *Paris*? We can set our Mistresses to Work with a few Louis D'Ors, and they will procure us some genteel Suits.

But let us not only talk but think of carrying this Project into Execution ; the Moments are dear to us, let us not trifle them away. Let us this very Day acquaint our young Females with our Design.

Our two Friars accordingly made their young Ladies a Visit, related
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the Affair to them, and requested their Assistance. The young Damsels were extremely well pleased with their Resolution; and contrived a Method to procure proper Suits of Cloaths for their Disguise, without paying for them. We have some Friends, said Miss *Cathaut*, who will furnish you with all the Cloaths you want. We will tell them we intend to disguise ourselves merely out of a Frolic, and how can they think the contrary? Ah! my charming Creature, cried the passionate Brother *Seraphin*, thou art an excellent Contriver! Well, we will depend upon your obliging us so far. Adieu, be as good as your Word, and as soon as I get the Money I will take four Places in the *Rouen* Stage.

But Miss *Cathaut* unfortunately advised a very fatal Method. To save her Lover's Gold, she determined to commit a Robbery,
which

which was the Cause of their Destruction. The Cloaths which she had requested, under Pretence of disguising herself and the other young Lady, were sent them, and they were the next Day exchanged for Capuchin Robes.

Our two disguised Friars, accompanied with their young Mistresses, took an Hackney-Coach to carry them to the Inn where the *Rouen* Stage put up, with Intent to go to *Rouen*, from thence to *Dicpe*, and there to embark for *England*. But a fatal Accident, which they did not dream of, disappointed them in their Projects. The Persons whose Cloaths the holy Brothers had on, went the next Day after their Departure to demand them from those who had borrowed them. They were informed that the two young Ladies, which they came to enquire after, went off the Day before with two young Gentlemen. Not very
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well satisfied with this Answer, they broke open the Door of those fair Fugitives; and how great was their Surprise, when, instead of the two Suits of Cloaths they were in Search after, they found nothing but two Capuchin Robes? Exasperated at the Tricks that had been played upon them, they went up and down the City to enquire what Road these wretched Creatures had taken. After one Hour's Search and Enquiry, they were at last informed that they went from *Paris* in the *Rouen* Stage with two young Gentlemen, whose Dress they described: This confirmed them in their Suspicions that they were two Friars who had left their Robes in the Chamber they had been visiting. They did not then hesitate what Course to take, but immediately hired a Post-Chaise, and got to *Rouen* in less than twelve Hours. They enquired where the Coach put up, and presently got sufficient Information concerning

our young Travellers: They made them a Visit, which was doubtless a very disagreeable one: “ Well, my
 “ Reverend Fathers, said one of these
 “ Gentlemen, you have made a very
 “ agreeable Partie; and as to you,
 “ Ladies, added he, you were very
 “ welcome to bestow your own
 “ Favours upon those Reverend
 “ Gentlemen, but we do not approve of your presenting them
 “ with our Habits.” They were then commanded to strip; and as an Addition to their Misfortunes, they were insulted by their perfidious Mistresses.

Having no other Covering but their Shirts, they thought it most adviseable to go to Bed, which they requested they might be permitted to do. The Traitresses, jeering them, asked them if they had any Commands for *Paris*, where they were going to wait for them? and indeed they did go to *Paris*, and
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took with them the Purse of their unfortunate Lovers.

As soon as the Ladies were gone, they were thus addressed by one of the young Gentlemen who came in pursuit of them: “ Be not un-
 “ easy, Gentlemen, you are not to
 “ keep your Bed long. Happily
 “ there is a Convent here, and
 “ you shall presently be visited by
 “ the Father Guardian of it, who
 “ will provide for all your Wants.”
 They had not long to wait for the Visit they were threatened with. The Father Guardian of the Convent of *Rouen*, acquainted with their Adventures, did them the Honour to come and see them ; and, having given them new Robes, politely requested them to follow him. They forsook the Chastisements which were in Store for them ; but how could they help themselves? They were confined
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in a dark Dungeon, where we shall leave them, laden with Chains, and obliged to expiate, by austere Fasting, and excruciating Discipline, those Crimes of which Love had made them guilty.

F I N I S.

