

Nova-Scotia Magazine,

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MEMOIRS OF Mrs. INCHBALD:

(Concluded from Page 392.)

EXPOSED to those insults which females usually encounter when, unprotected, they ramble the streets at midnight, our heroine wandered where chance directed her, till the clock struck two, when she found herself at Holborn bridge, and saw a stage coach setting off for York, hearing at the same time, the coachman tell a person who asked for a place, that there was not one to spare. This immediately occurred to her to ask the same question, and on receiving the same answer, to solicit for lodging at the inn, as a disappointed passenger, and thus escape the frightful hazards to which she was liable in the streets. Happily this scheme succeeded; but not without evident suspicions of her character, on the part of her host and hostess. These suspicions, however, afforded the consolation of an assurance, that she had nothing to apprehend, in this house, where her youth and beauty seemed the only bar to kind reception; the landlady, taking the precaution even to lock the door of the wretched place in which Miss Simpson was permitted to sleep, and, like a careful duenna, wisely putting the key in her pocket.

Our adventurer arose at her usual hour; but having no bell, or any means, from the height she was lodged, to let the family know she was up, and they sagaciously concluding, that ladies who go to bed at two in the morning, are in no haste to rise, she was left to ruminate on her situation till noon. She could not but deplore her fate; yet she was more inclined to pursue it than to return home, and suffer the reproach of indiscretion, with the still further mortification of not having gratified

that curiosity which had led her into a situation at once so extraordinary and disagreeable. 'Mine hostess' at length released her fair prisoner and informed her, that the York coach would set out again that evening. This information was delivered with an air of severity, and as if she suspected that her lodger had no intention of becoming a passenger. Our poor adventurer had no courage to justify that suspicion, but laid down her whole stock of money, to the last half crown, for the purpose of securing a place in the machine for a journey which she never intended to take. This, however, satisfied the landlady, who desired Miss Simpson to walk down to breakfast; but she excused herself, under the pretence that she was in haste to call on a relation in another part of the town, in order to inform her of the disappointment she had experienced in not leaving London the preceding evening. By this apology she saved the expence of a breakfast which she was by no means inclined to taste, and thought that she could thus secure another night's lodging at an unsuspected house. On her return to the inn, therefore, she said her relation had requested her to remain in town a few days longer; and by this artifice secured her wretched apartment; and while our unfortunate heroine daily took a walk merely to purchase what her slender finances could afford, the people of the inn supposed Miss Simpson to be feasting with her relations. She was now in the utmost distress. It is a fact, that two half-penny rolls, with water from the bottle in her chamber, were all that she subsisted on during the last ten days she was at the inn.