

**THE LIFE AND OPINIONS
OF TRISTRAM SHANDY,
GENTLEMAN, VOL. II**

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The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, Vol. II by Laurence Sterne

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LAURENCE STERNE

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L I F E
AND
O P I N I O N S
OF
TRISTRAM SHANDY,
GENTLEMAN.

Ταρασσει τὴς Ἀνθρώπου ἢ τὰ Πράγματα,
ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν Πραγμάτων, Δαίμαλα.


V O L. II.

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THE
LIFE and OPINIONS
OF
TRISTRAM SHANDY, Gent.

CHAP. I.

I Have begun a new book, on purpose that I might have room enough to explain the nature of the perplexities in which my uncle *Toby* was involved; from the many discourses and interrogations about the siege of *Namur*, where he received his wound.

I must remind the reader, in case he has read the history of King *William's*
A 2 wars,

wars,—but if he has not,—I then inform him, that one of the most memorable attacks in that siege, was that which was made by the *English* and *Dutch* upon the point of the advanced counter-scarp, before the gate of *St. Nicolas*, which inclosed the great sluice or water-stop, where the *English* were terribly exposed to the shot of the counter-guard and demi-bastion of *St. Roch*: The issue of which hot dispute, in three words, was this; That the *Dutch* lodged themselves upon the counter-guard,—and that the *English* made themselves masters of the covered way before *St. Nicolas's* gate, notwithstanding the gallantry of the *French* officers, who exposed themselves upon the glacis sword in hand.

As this was the principal attack of which my uncle *Toby* was an eye-witness
at

at *Natur*,—the army of the besiegers being cut off, by the confluence of the *Maes* and *Sambre*, from seeing much of each other's operations,—my uncle *Toby* was generally more eloquent and particular in his account of it; and the many perplexities he was in, arose out of the almost insurmountable difficulties he found in telling his story intelligibly, and giving such clear ideas of the differences and distinctions between the scarp and counterscarp,—the glacis and covered way,—the half-moon and ravelin,—as to make his company fully comprehend where and what he was about.

Writers themselves are too apt to confound these terms;—so that you will the less wonder, if in his endeavours to explain them, and in opposition to ma-

ny misconceptions, that my uncle *Toby* did oft times puzzle his visiters, and sometimes himself too.

To speak the truth, unless the company my father led up stairs were tolerably clear-headed, or my uncle *Toby* was in one of his best explanatory moods, 'twas a difficult thing, do what he could, to keep the discourse free from obscurity.

What rendered the account of this affair the more intricate to my uncle *Toby*, was this,—that in the attack of the counterscarp before the gate of *St. Nicolas*, extending itself from the bank of the *Maes*, quite up to the great water-stop;—the ground was cut and cross-cut with such a multitude of dykes, drains, rivulets, and sluices, on all sides,—and he would get so sadly bewilder'd and set
fast

fast amongst them, that frequently he could neither get backwards or forwards to save his life; and was oft times obliged to give up the attack upon that very account only.

These perplexing rebuffs gave my uncle *Toby Shandy* more perturbations than you would imagine; and as my father's kindness to him was continually dragging up fresh friends and fresh inquirers,—he had but a very uneasy task of it.

No doubt my uncle *Toby* had great command of himself,—and could guard appearances, I believe, as well as most men;—yet any one may imagine, that when he could not retreat out of the ravelin without getting into the half-moon, or get out of the covered way without

falling down the counterescarp, nor cross the dyke without danger of slipping into the ditch, but that he must have fretted and fumed inwardly :—He did so ;—and these little and hourly vexations, which may seem trifling and of no account to the man who has not read *Hippocrates*, yet, whoever has read *Hippocrates*, or Dr. *James Mackenzie*, and has considered well the effects which the passions and affections of the mind have upon the digestion,—(Why not of a wound as well as of a dinner ?)—may easily conceive what sharp paroxysms and exacerbations of his wound my uncle *Toby* must have undergone upon that score only.

—My uncle *Toby* could not philosophize upon it ;—’twas enough he felt it was so,—and having sustained the pain and sorrows of it for three months together,