

good squire went instantly in quest of his daughter, whom he no sooner found than he poured forth the most extravagant raptures, bidding her chuse what clothes and jewels she pleased; and declaring that he had no other use for fortune but to make her happy. He then caressed her again and again with the utmost profusion of fondness, called her by the most endearing names, and protested she was his only joy on earth.

Sophia perceiving her father in this fit of affection, which she did not absolutely know the reason of (for fits of fondness were not unusual to him, though this was rather more violent than ordinary), thought she should never have a better opportunity of disclosing herself than at present, as far at least as regarded Mr. Blifil; and she too well foresaw the necessity which she should soon be under of coming to a full explanation. After having thanked the squire, therefore, for all his professions of kindness, she added, with a look full of inexpressible softness, "And is it possible my papa can be so good to place all his joy in his Sophy's happiness?" which Western having confirmed by a great oath, and a kiss; she then laid hold of his hand, and, falling on her knees, after many warm and passionate declarations of affection and duty, she begged him "not to make her the most miserable creature on earth by forcing her to marry a man whom she detested. This I entreat of you, dear sir," said she, "for your sake, as well as my own, since you are so very kind to tell me your happiness depends on mine."—"How! what!" says Western, staring wildly. "Oh! sir," continued she, "not only your poor Sophy's happiness; her very life, her being, depends upon your granting her request. I cannot live with Mr. Blifil. To force me into this marriage would be killing me."—"You can't live with Mr. Blifil?" says Western. "No, upon my soul I can't," answered Sophia. "Then die and be d—d," cries he, spurning her from him. "Oh! sir," cries Sophia, catching hold of the skirt of his coat, "take pity on me, I beseech you. Don't look and say such cruel—Can you be unmoved while you see your Sophy in this dreadful condition? Can the best of fathers break my heart? Will he kill me by the most painful, cruel, lingering death?"—"Pooh! pooh!" cries the squire; "all stuff and nonsense; all maidenish tricks. Kill you, indeed! Will marriage kill you?"—"Oh! sir," answered Sophia, "such a marriage is worse than death. He is not even indifferent; I hate and detest him."—"If you detest un never so much," cries Western, "you shall ha'un." This he bound by an oath too shocking to repeat; and after many violent asseverations, concluded in these words:

"I am resolved upon the match, and unless you consent to it I will not give you a groat, not a single farthing; no, though I saw you expiring with famine in the street, I would not relieve you with a morsel of bread. This is my fixed resolution, and so I leave you to consider on it." He then broke from her with such violence, that her face dashed against the floor; and he burst directly out of the room, leaving poor Sophia prostrate on the ground.

When Western came into the hall, he there found Jones; who seeing his friend looking wild, pale, and almost breathless, could not forbear enquiring the reason of all these melancholy appearances. Upon which the squire immediately acquainted him with the whole matter, concluding with bitter denunciations against Sophia, and very pathetic lamentations of the misery of all fathers who are so unfortunate to have daughters.

Jones, to whom all the resolutions which had been taken in favour of Blifil were yet a secret, was at first almost struck dead with this relation; but recovering his spirits a little, mere despair, as he afterwards said, inspired him to mention a matter to Mr. Western, which seemed to require more impudence than a human forehead was ever gifted with. He desired leave to go to Sophia, that he might endeavour to obtain her concurrence with her father's inclinations.

If the squire had been as quicksighted as he was remarkable for the contrary, passion might at present very well have blinded him. He thanked Jones for offering to undertake the office, and said, "Go, go, prithee, try what canst do;" and then swore many execrable oaths that he would turn her out of doors unless she consented to the match.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MEETING BETWEEN JONES AND SOPHIA

JONES departed instantly in quest of Sophia, whom he found just risen from the ground, where her father had left her, with the tears trickling from her eyes, and the blood running from her lips. He presently ran to her, and with a voice full at once of tenderness and terror, cried, "O my Sophia, what means this dreadful sight?" She looked softly at him for a moment before she spoke, and then said, "Mr. Jones, for Heaven's sake how came you here?—Leave me, I beseech you, this moment,"—

"Do not," says he, "impose so harsh a command upon me—my heart bleeds faster than those lips. O Sophia, how easily could I drain my veins to preserve one drop of that dear blood."—"I have too many obligations to you already," answered she, "for sure you meant them such." Here she looked at him tenderly almost a minute, and then bursting into an agony, cried, "Oh, Mr. Jones, why did you save my life? my death would have been happier for us both."—"Happier for us both!" cried he. "Could racks or wheels kill me so painfully as Sophia's—I cannot bear the dreadful sound. Do I live but for her?" Both his voice and looks were full of inexpressible tenderness when he spoke these words; and at the same time he laid gently hold on her hand, which she did not withdraw from him; to say the truth, she hardly knew what she did or suffered. A few moments now passed in silence between these lovers, while his eyes were eagerly fixed on Sophia, and hers declining towards the ground: at last she recovered strength enough to desire him again to leave her, for that her certain ruin would be the consequence of their being found together; adding, "Oh, Mr. Jones, you know not, you know not what hath passed this cruel afternoon."—"I know all, my Sophia," answered he; "your cruel father hath told me all, and he himself hath sent me hither to you."—"My father sent you to me!" replied she: "sure you dream."—"Would to Heaven," cries he, "it was but a dream! Oh, Sophia, your father hath sent me to you, to be an advocate for my odious rival, to solicit you in his favour. I took any means to get access to you. O speak to me, Sophia! comfort my bleeding heart. Sure no one ever loved, ever doated like me. Do not unkindly withhold this dear, this soft, this gentle hand—one moment, perhaps, tears you for ever from me—nothing less than this cruel occasion could, I believe, have ever conquered the respect and awe with which you have inspired me." She stood a moment silent, and covered with confusion; then lifting up her eyes gently towards him, she cried, "What would Mr. Jones have me say?"—"O do but promise," cries he, "that you never will give yourself to Blifil."—"Name not," answered she, "the detested sound. Be assured I never will give him what is in my power to withhold from him."—"Now then," cries he, "while you are so perfectly kind, go a little farther, and add that I may hope."—"Alas!" says she, "Mr. Jones, whither will you drive me? What hope have I to bestow? You know my father's intentions."—"But I know," answered he, "your compliance with them cannot be compelled."—"What," says she, "must

be the dreadful consequence of my disobedience? My own ruin is my least concern. I cannot bear the thoughts of being the cause of my father's misery."—"He is himself the cause," cries Jones, "by exacting a power over you which Nature hath not given him. Think on the misery which I am to suffer if I am to lose you, and see on which side pity will turn the balance."—"Think of it!" replied she: "can you imagine I do not feel the ruin which I must bring on you, should I comply with your desire? It is that thought which gives me resolution to bid you fly from me for ever, and avoid your own destruction."—"I fear no destruction," cries he, "but the loss of Sophia. If you would save me from the most bitter agonies, recall that cruel sentence. Indeed, I can never part with you, indeed I cannot."

The lovers now stood both silent and trembling, Sophia being unable to withdraw her hand from Jones, and he almost as unable to hold it; when the scene, which I believe some of my readers will think had lasted long enough, was interrupted by one of so different a nature, that we shall reserve the relation of it for a different chapter.

CHAPTER IX

BEING OF A MUCH MORE TEMPESTUOUS KIND THAN THE FORMER

BEFORE we proceed with what now happened to our lovers, it may be proper to recount what had past in the hall during their tender interview.

Soon after Jones had left Mr. Western in the manner above mentioned, his sister came to him, and was presently informed of all that had passed between her brother and Sophia relating to Blifil.

This behaviour in her niece the good lady construed to be an absolute breach of the condition on which she had engaged to keep her love for Mr. Jones a secret. She considered herself, therefore, at full liberty to reveal all she knew to the squire, which she immediately did in the most explicit terms, and without any ceremony or preface.

The idea of a marriage between Jones and his daughter, had never once entered into the squire's head, either in the warmest minutes of his affection towards that young man, or from suspicion, or on any other occasion. He did indeed consider a parity of fortune and circumstances to be physically as necessary an ingredient in marriage, as difference of sexes, or any other

essential; and had no more apprehension of his daughter's falling in love with a poor man, than with any animal of a different species.

He became, therefore, like one thunderstruck at his sister's relation. He was, at first, incapable of making any answer, having been almost deprived of his breath by the violence of the surprize. This, however, soon returned, and, as is usual in other cases after an intermission, with redoubled force and fury.

The first use he made of the power of speech, after his recovery from the sudden effects of his astonishment, was to discharge a round volley of oaths and imprecations. After which he proceeded hastily to the apartment where he expected to find the lovers, and murmured, or rather indeed roared forth, intentions of revenge every step he went.

As when two doves, or two wood-pigeons, or as when Strephon and Phyllis (for that comes nearest to the mark) are retired into some pleasant solitary grove, to enjoy the delightful conversation of Love, that bashful boy, who cannot speak in public, and is never a good companion to more than two at a time; here, while every object is serene, should hoarse thunder burst suddenly through the shattered clouds, and rumbling roll along the sky, the frightened maid starts from the mossy bank or verdant turf, the pale livery of death succeeds the red regimentals in which Love had before drest her cheeks, fear shakes her whole frame, and her lover scarce supports her trembling tottering limbs.

Or as when two gentlemen, strangers to the wondrous wit of the place, are cracking a bottle together at some inn or tavern at Salisbury, if the great Dowdy, who acts the part of a madman as well as some of his setters-on do that of a fool, should rattle his chains, and dreadfully hum forth the grumbling catch along the gallery; the frightened strangers stand aghast; scared at the horrid sound, they seek some place of shelter from the approaching danger; and if the well-barred windows did admit their exit, would venture their necks to escape the threatening fury now coming upon them.

So trembled poor Sophia, so turned she pale at the noise of her father, who, in a voice most dreadful to hear, came on swearing, cursing, and vowing the destruction of Jones. To say the truth, I believe the youth himself would, from some prudent considerations, have preferred another place of abode at this time, had his terror on Sophia's account given him liberty to reflect a moment on what any other ways concerned himself, than as his love made him partake whatever affected her.

And now the squire, having burst open the door, beheld an object which instantly suspended all his fury against Jones; this was the ghastly appearance of Sophia, who had fainted away in her lover's arms. This tragical sight Mr. Western no sooner beheld, than all his rage forsook him; he roared for help with his utmost violence; ran first to his daughter, then back to the door calling for water, and then back again to Sophia, never considering in whose arms she then was, nor perhaps once recollecting that there was such a person in the world as Jones; for indeed I believe the present circumstances of his daughter were now the sole consideration which employed his thoughts.

Mrs. Western and a great number of servants soon came to the assistance of Sophia with water, cordials, and everything necessary on those occasions. These were applied with such success, that Sophia in a very few minutes began to recover, and all the symptoms of life to return. Upon which she was presently led off by her own maid and Mrs. Western: nor did that good lady depart without leaving some wholesome admonitions with her brother, on the dreadful effects of his passion, or, as she pleased to call it, madness.

The squire, perhaps, did not understand this good advice, as it was delivered in obscure hints, shrugs, and notes of admiration: at least, if he did understand it, he profited very little by it; for no sooner was he cured of his immediate fears for his daughter, than he relapsed into his former frenzy, which must have produced an immediate battle with Jones, had not parson Supple, who was a very strong man, been present, and by mere force restrained the squire from acts of hostility.

The moment Sophia was departed, Jones advanced in a very suppliant manner to Mr. Western, whom the parson held in his arms, and begged him to be pacified; for that, while he continued in such a passion, it would be impossible to give him any satisfaction.

"I wull have satisfaction o' thee," answered the squire: "so doff thy clothes. *At unt* half a man, and I'll lick thee as well as wast ever licked in thy life." He then bespattered the youth with abundance of that language which passes between country gentlemen who embrace opposite sides of the question; with frequent applications to him to salute that part which is generally introduced into all controversies that arise among the lower orders of the English gentry at horse-races, cock-matches, and other public places. Allusions to this part are likewise often made for the sake of the jest. And here, I believe, the wit is generally

misunderstood. In reality, it lies in desiring another to kiss your a—for having just before threatened to kick his; for I have observed very accurately, that no one ever desires you to kick that which belongs to himself, nor offers to kiss this part in another.

It may likewise seem surprizing that in the many thousand kind invitations of this sort, which every one who hath conversed with country gentlemen must have heard, no one, I believe, hath ever seen a single instance where the desire hath been complied with;—a great instance of their want of politeness; for in town nothing can be more common than for the finest gentlemen to perform this ceremony every day to their superiors, without having that favour once requested of them.

To all such wit, Jones very calmly answered, “Sir, this usage may perhaps cancel every other obligation you have conferred on me; but there is one you can never cancel; nor will I be provoked by your abuse to lift my hand against the father of Sophia.”

At these words the squire grew still more outrageous than before; so that the parson begged Jones to retire; saying, “You behold, sir, how he waxeth wrath at your abode here; therefore let me pray you not to tarry any longer. His anger is too much kindled for you to commune with him at present. You had better, therefore, conclude your visit, and refer what matters you have to urge in your behalf to some other opportunity.”

Jones accepted this advice with thanks, and immediately departed. The squire now regained the liberty of his hands, and so much temper as to express some satisfaction in the restraint which had been laid upon him; declaring that he should certainly have beat his brains out; and adding, “It would have vexed one confoundedly to have been hanged for such a rascal.”

The parson now began to triumph in the success of his peace-making endeavours, and proceeded to read a lecture against anger, which might perhaps rather have tended to raise than to quiet that passion in some hasty minds. This lecture he enriched with many valuable quotations from the antients, particularly from Seneca; who hath indeed so well handled this passion, that none but a very angry man can read him without great pleasure and profit. The doctor concluded this harangue with the famous story of Alexander and Clitus; but as I find that entered in my common-place under title Drunkenness, I shall not insert it here.

The squire took no notice of this story, nor perhaps of anything he said; for he interrupted him before he had finished, by calling

for a tankard of beer; observing (which is perhaps as true as any observation on this fever of the mind) that anger makes a man dry.

No sooner had the squire swallowed a large draught than he renewed the discourse on Jones, and declared a resolution of going the next morning early to acquaint Mr. Allworthy. His friend would have dissuaded him from this, from the mere motive of good-nature; but his dissuasion had no other effect than to produce a large volley of oaths and curses, which greatly shocked the pious ears of Supple; but he did not dare to remonstrate against a privilege which the squire claimed as a freeborn Englishman. To say truth, the parson submitted to please his palate at the squire's table, at the expense of suffering now and then this violence to his ears. He contented himself with thinking he did not promote this evil practice, and that the squire would not swear an oath the less, if he never entered within his gates. However, though he was not guilty of ill manners by rebuking a gentleman in his own house, he paid him off obliquely in the pulpit: which had not, indeed, the good effect of working a reformation in the squire himself; yet it so far operated on his conscience, that he put the laws very severely in execution against others, and the magistrate was the only person in the parish who could swear with impunity.

CHAPTER X

IN WHICH MR. WESTERN VISITS MR. ALLWORTHY

MR. ALLWORTHY was now retired from breakfast with his nephew, well satisfied with the report of the young gentleman's successful visit to Sophia (for he greatly desired the match, more on account of the young lady's character than of her riches), when Mr. Western broke abruptly in upon them, and without any ceremony began as follows:—

“There, you have done a fine piece of work truly! You have brought up your bastard to a fine purpose; not that I believe you have had any hand in it neither, that is, as a man may say, designedly: but there is a fine kettle-of-fish made on't up at our house.” “What can be the matter, Mr. Western?” said Allworthy. “O, matter enow of all conscience: my daughter hath fallen in love with your bastard, that's all; but I won't ge her a hapeny, not the twentieth part of a brass varden. I

always thought what would come o' breeding up a bastard like a gentleman, and letting un come about to vok's houses. It's well vor un I could not get at un: I'd a lick'd un; I'd a spoil'd his caterwauling; I'd a taught the son of a whore to meddle with meat for his master. He shan't ever have a morsel of meat of mine, or a varden to buy it: if she will ha un, one smock shall be her portion. I'd sooner ge my esteate to the zinking fund, that it may be sent to Hanover to corrupt our nation with."

"I am heartily sorry," cries Allworthy. "Pox o' your sorrow," says Western; "it will do me abundance of good when I have lost my only child, my poor Sophy, that was the joy of my heart, and all the hope and comfort of my age; but I am resolved I will turn her out o' doors; she shall beg, and starve, and rot in the streets. Not one hapeny, not a hapeny shall she ever hae o' mine. The son of a bitch was always good at finding a hare sitting, an be rotted to'n: I little thought what puss he was looking after; but it shall be the worst he ever vound in his life. She shall be no better than carrion: the skin o'er is all he shall ha, and zu you may tell un." "I am in amazement," cries Allworthy, "at what you tell me, after what passed between my nephew and the young lady no longer ago than yesterday." "Yes, sir," answered Western, "it was after what passed between your nephew and she that the whole matter came out. Mr. Blifil there was no sooner gone than the son of a whore came lurching about the house. Little did I think when I used to love him for a sportsman that he was all the while a poaching after my daughter." "Why truly," says Allworthy, "I could wish you had not given him so many opportunities with her; and you will do me the justice to acknowledge that I have always been averse to his staying so much at your house, though I own I had no suspicion of this kind." "Why, zounds," cries Western, "who could have thought it? What the devil had she to do wi'n? He did not come there a courting to her; he came there a hunting with me." "But was it possible," says Allworthy, "that you should never discern any symptoms of love between them, when you have seen them so often together?" "Never in my life, as I hope to be saved," cries Western: "I never so much as zeed him kiss her in all my life; and so far from courting her, he used rather to be more silent when she was in company than at any other time; and as for the girl, she was always less civil to'n than to any young man that came to the house. As to that matter, I am not more easy to be deceived than another; I would not have you think I am, neighbour." All-

worthy could scarce refrain laughter at this; but he resolved to do a violence to himself; for he perfectly well knew mankind, and had too much good-breeding and good-nature to offend the squire in his present circumstances. He then asked Western what he would have him do upon this occasion. To which the other answered, "That he would have him keep the rascal away from his house, and that he would go and lock up the wench; for he was resolved to make her marry Mr. Blifil in spite of her teeth." He then shook Blifil by the hand, and swore he would have no other son-in-law. Presently after which he took his leave; saying his house was in such disorder that it was necessary for him to make haste home, to take care his daughter did not give him the slip; and as for Jones, he swore if he caught him at his house, he would qualify him to run for the geldings' plate.

When Allworthy and Blifil were again left together, a long silence ensued between them; all which interval the young gentleman filled up with sighs, which proceeded partly from disappointment, but more from hatred; for the success of Jones was much more grievous to him than the loss of Sophia.

At length his uncle asked him what he was determined to do, and he answered in the following words:—"Alas! sir, can it be a question what step a lover will take, when reason and passion point different ways? I am afraid it is too certain he will, in that dilemma, always follow the latter. Reason dictates to me, to quit all thoughts of a woman who places her affections on another; my passion bids me hope she may in time change her inclinations in my favour. Here, however, I conceive an objection may be raised, which, if it could not fully be answered, would totally deter me from any further pursuit. I mean the injustice of endeavouring to supplant another in a heart of which he seems already in possession; but the determined resolution of Mr. Western shows that, in this case, I shall, by so doing, promote the happiness of every party; not only that of the parent, who will thus be preserved from the highest degree of misery, but of both the others, who must be undone by this match. The lady, I am sure, will be undone in every sense; for, besides the loss of most part of her own fortune, she will be not only married to a beggar, but the little fortune which her father cannot withhold from her will be squandered on that wench with whom I know he yet converses. Nay, that is a trifle; for I know him to be one of the worst men in the world; for had my dear uncle known what I have hitherto

endeavoured to conceal, he must have long since abandoned so profligate a wretch." "How!" said Allworthy; "hath he done anything worse than I already know? Tell me, I beseech you?" "No," replied Blifil; "it is now past, and perhaps he may have repented of it." "I command you, on your duty," said Allworthy, "to tell me what you mean." "You know, sir," says Blifil, "I never disobeyed you; but I am sorry I mentioned it, since it may now look like revenge, whereas, I thank Heaven, no such motive ever entered my heart; and if you oblige me to discover it, I must be his petitioner to you for your forgiveness." "I will have no conditions," answered Allworthy; "I think I have shown tenderness enough towards him, and more perhaps than you ought to thank me for." "More, indeed, I fear, than he deserved," cries Blifil; "for in the very day of your utmost danger, when myself and all the family were in tears, he filled the house with riot and debauchery. He drank, and sung, and roared; and when I gave him a gentle hint of the indecency of his actions, he fell into a violent passion, swore many oaths, called me rascal, and struck me." "How!" cries Allworthy; "did he dare to strike you?" "I am sure," cries Blifil, "I have forgiven him that long ago. I wish I could so easily forget his ingratitude to the best of benefactors; and yet even that I hope you will forgive him, since he must have certainly been possessed with the devil: for that very evening, as Mr. Thwackum and myself were taking the air in the fields, and exulting in the good symptoms which then first began to discover themselves, we unluckily saw him engaged with a wench in a manner not fit to be mentioned. Mr. Thwackum, with more boldness than prudence, advanced to rebuke him, when (I am sorry to say it) he fell upon the worthy man, and beat him so outrageously that I wish he may have yet recovered the bruises. Nor was I without my share of the effects of his malice, while I endeavoured to protect my tutor; but that I have long forgiven; nay, I prevailed with Mr. Thwackum to forgive him too, and not to inform you of a secret which I feared might be fatal to him. And now, sir, since I have unadvisedly dropped a hint of this matter, and your commands have obliged me to discover the whole, let me intercede with you for him." "O child!" said Allworthy, "I know not whether I should blame or applaud your goodness, in concealing such villany a moment: but where is Mr. Thwackum? Not that I want any confirmation of what you say; but I will examine all the evidence of this matter, to justify to the world the example I am resolved to make of such a monster."

Thwackum was now sent for, and presently appeared. He corroborated every circumstance which the other had deposed; nay, he produced the record upon his breast, where the handwriting of Mr. Jones remained very legible in black and blue. He concluded with declaring to Mr. Allworthy, that he should have long since informed him of this matter, had not Mr. Blifil, by the most earnest interpositions, prevented him. "He is," says he, "an excellent youth: though such forgiveness of enemies is carrying the matter too far."

In reality, Blifil had taken some pains to prevail with the parson, and to prevent the discovery at that time; for which he had many reasons. He knew that the minds of men are apt to be softened and relaxed from their usual severity by sickness. Besides, he imagined that if the story was told when the fact was so recent, and the physician about the house, who might have unravelled the real truth, he should never be able to give it the malicious turn which he intended. Again, he resolved to hoard up this business, till the indiscretion of Jones should afford some additional complaints; for he thought the joint weight of many facts falling upon him together, would be the most likely to crush him; and he watched, therefore, some such opportunity as that with which fortune had now kindly presented him. Lastly, by prevailing with Thwackum to conceal the matter for a time, he knew he should confirm an opinion of his friendship to Jones, which he had greatly laboured to establish in Mr. Allworthy.

CHAPTER XI

A SHORT CHAPTER; BUT WHICH CONTAINS SUFFICIENT MATTER TO AFFECT THE GOOD-NATURED READER

It was Mr. Allworthy's custom never to punish any one, not even to turn away a servant, in a passion. He resolved therefore to delay passing sentence on Jones till the afternoon.

The poor young man attended at dinner, as usual; but his heart was too much loaded to suffer him to eat. His grief too was a good deal aggravated by the unkind looks of Mr. Allworthy; whence he concluded that Western had discovered the whole affair between him and Sophia; but as to Mr. Blifil's story, he had not the least apprehension; for of much the greater part he was entirely innocent; and for the residue, as he had forgiven and forgotten it himself, so he suspected no remembrance on the

other side. When dinner was over, and the servants departed, Mr. Allworthy began to harangue. He set forth, in a long speech, the many iniquities of which Jones had been guilty, particularly those which this day had brought to light; and concluded by telling him, "That unless he could clear himself of the charge, he was resolved to banish him his sight for ever."

Many disadvantages attended poor Jones in making his defence; nay, indeed, he hardly knew his accusation; for as Mr. Allworthy, in recounting the drunkenness, &c., while he lay ill, out of modesty sunk everything that related particularly to himself, which indeed principally constituted the crime; Jones could not deny the charge. His heart was, besides, almost broken already; and his spirits were so sunk, that he could say nothing for himself; but acknowledged the whole, and, like a criminal in despair, threw himself upon mercy; concluding, "That though he must own himself guilty of many follies and inadvertencies, he hoped he had done nothing to deserve what would be to him the greatest punishment in the world."

Allworthy answered, "That he had forgiven him too often already, in compassion to his youth, and in hopes of his amendment: that he now found he was an abandoned reprobate, and such as it would be criminal in any one to support and encourage. Nay," said Mr. Allworthy to him, "your audacious attempt to steal away the young lady, calls upon me to justify my own character in punishing you. The world who have already censured the regard I have shown for you may think, with some colour at least of justice, that I connive at so base and barbarous an action—an action of which you must have known my abhorrence: and which, had you had any concern for my ease and honour, as well as for my friendship, you would never have thought of undertaking. Fie upon it, young man! indeed there is scarce any punishment equal to your crimes, and I can scarce think myself justifiable in what I am now going to bestow on you. However, as I have educated you like a child of my own, I will not turn you naked into the world. When you open this paper, therefore, you will find something which may enable you, with industry, to get an honest livelihood; but if you employ it to worse purposes, I shall not think myself obliged to supply you farther, being resolved, from this day forward, to converse no more with you on any account. I cannot avoid saying, there is no part of your conduct which I resent more than your ill-treatment of that good young man (meaning Blifil) who hath behaved with so much tenderness and honour towards you."

These last words were a dose almost too bitter to be swallowed. A flood of tears now gushed from the eyes of Jones, and every faculty of speech and motion seemed to have deserted him. It was some time before he was able to obey Allworthy's peremptory commands of departing; which he at length did, having first kissed his hands with a passion difficult to be affected, and as difficult to be described.

The reader must be very weak, if, when he considers the light in which Jones then appeared to Mr. Allworthy, he should blame the rigour of his sentence. And yet all the neighbourhood, either from this weakness, or from some worse motive, condemned this justice and severity as the highest cruelty. Nay, the very persons who had before censured the good man for the kindness and tenderness shown to a bastard (his own, according to the general opinion), now cried out as loudly against turning his own child out of doors. The women especially were unanimous in taking the part of Jones, and raised more stories on the occasion than I have room, in this chapter, to set down.

One thing must not be omitted, that, in their censures on this occasion, none ever mentioned the sum contained in the paper which Allworthy gave Jones, which was no less than five hundred pounds; but all agreed that he was sent away penniless, and some said naked, from the house of his inhuman father.

CHAPTER XII

CONTAINING LOVE-LETTERS, ETC.

JONES was commanded to leave the house immediately, and told, that his clothes and everything else should be sent to him whithersoever he should order them.

He accordingly set out, and walked above a mile, not regarding, and indeed scarce knowing, whither he went. At length a little brook obstructing his passage, he threw himself down by the side of it; nor could he help muttering with some little indignation, "Sure my father will not deny me this place to rest in!"

Here he presently fell into the most violent agonies, tearing his hair from his head, and using most other actions which generally accompany fits of madness, rage, and despair.

When he had in this manner vented the first emotions of passion, he began to come a little to himself. His grief now took

another turn, and discharged itself in a gentler way, till he became at last cool enough to reason with his passion, and to consider what steps were proper to be taken in his deplorable condition.

And now the great doubt was, how to act with regard to Sophia. The thoughts of leaving her almost rent his heart asunder; but the consideration of reducing her to ruin and beggary still racked him, if possible, more; and if the violent desire of possessing her person could have induced him to listen one moment to this alternative, still he was by no means certain of her resolution to indulge his wishes at so high an expense. The resentment of Mr. Allworthy, and the injury he must do to his quiet, argued strongly against this latter; and lastly, the apparent impossibility of his success, even if he would sacrifice all these considerations to it, came to his assistance; and thus honour at last backed with despair, with gratitude to his benefactor, and with real love to his mistress, got the better of burning desire, and he resolved rather to quit Sophia, than pursue her to her ruin.

It is difficult for any who have not felt it, to conceive the glowing warmth which filled his breast on the first contemplation of this victory over his passion. Pride flattered him so agreeably, that his mind perhaps enjoyed perfect happiness; but this was only momentary: Sophia soon returned to his imagination, and allayed the joy of his triumph with no less bitter pangs than a good-natured general must feel, when he surveys the bleeding heaps, at the price of whose blood he hath purchased his laurels; for thousands of tender ideas lay murdered before our conqueror.

Being resolved, however, to pursue the paths of this giant honour, as the gigantic poet Lee calls it, he determined to write a farewell letter to Sophia; and accordingly proceeded to a house not far off, where, being furnished with proper materials, he wrote as follows:—

“MADAM,

“When you reflect on the situation in which I write, I am sure your good-nature will pardon any inconsistency or absurdity which my letter contains; for everything here flows from a heart so full, that no language can express its dictates.

“I have resolved, madam, to obey your commands, in flying for ever from your dear, your lovely sight. Cruel indeed those commands are; but it is a cruelty which proceeds from fortune, not from my Sophia. Fortune hath made it necessary, necessary

to your preservation, to forget there ever was such a wretch as I am.

“Believe me, I would not hint all my sufferings to you, if I imagined they could possibly escape your ears. I know the goodness and tenderness of your heart, and would avoid giving you any of those pains which you always feel for the miserable. O let nothing, which you shall hear of my hard fortune, cause a moment's concern; for, after the loss of you, everything is to me a trifle.

“O Sophia! it is hard to leave you; it is harder still to desire you to forget me; yet the sincerest love obliges me to both. Pardon my conceiving that any remembrance of me can give you disquiet; but if I am so gloriously wretched, sacrifice me every way to your relief. Think I never loved you; or think truly how little I deserve you; and learn to scorn me for a presumption which can never be too severely punished.—I am unable to say more.—May guardian angels protect you for ever!”

He was now searching his pockets for his wax, but found none, nor indeed anything else, therein; for in truth he had, in his frantic disposition, tossed everything from him, and amongst the rest, his pocket-book, which he had received from Mr. Allworthy, which he had never opened, and which now first occurred to his memory.

The house supplied him with a wafer for his present purpose, with which, having sealed his letter, he returned hastily towards the brook side, in order to search for the things which he had there lost. In his way he met his old friend Black George, who heartily condoled with him on his misfortune; for this had already reached his ears, and indeed those of all the neighbourhood.

Jones acquainted the gamekeeper with his loss, and he as readily went back with him to the brook, where they searched every tuft of grass in the meadow, as well where Jones had not been as where he had been; but all to no purpose, for they found nothing; for, indeed, though the things were then in the meadow, they omitted to search the only place where they were deposited; to wit, in the pockets of the said George; for he had just before found them, and being luckily apprized of their value, had very carefully put them up for his own use.

The gamekeeper having exerted as much diligence in quest of the lost goods, as if he had hoped to find them, desired Mr. Jones to recollect if he had been in no other place: “For sure,”

said he, "if you had lost them here so lately, the things must have been here still; for this is a very unlikely place for any one to pass by." And indeed it was by great accident that he himself had passed through that field, in order to lay wires for hares, with which he was to supply a poulterer at Bath the next morning.

Jones now gave over all hopes of recovering his loss, and almost all thoughts concerning it, and turning to Black George, asked him earnestly if he would do him the greatest favour in the world?

George answered with some hesitation, "Sir, you know you may command me whatever is in my power, and I heartily wish it was in my power to do you any service." In fact, the question staggered him; for he had, by selling game, amassed a pretty good sum of money in Mr. Western's service, and was afraid that Jones wanted to borrow some small matter of him; but he was presently relieved from his anxiety, by being desired to convey a letter to Sophia, which with great pleasure he promised to do. And indeed I believe there are few favours which he would not have gladly conferred on Mr. Jones; for he bore as much gratitude towards him as he could, and was as honest as men who love money better than any other thing in the universe, generally are.

Mrs. Honour was agreed by both to be the proper means by which this letter should pass to Sophia. They then separated; the gamekeeper returned home to Mr. Western's, and Jones walked to an alehouse at half a mile's distance, to wait for his messenger's return.

George no sooner came home to his master's house than he met with Mrs. Honour; to whom, having first sounded her with a few previous questions, he delivered the letter for her mistress, and received at the same time another from her, for Mr. Jones; which Honour told him she had carried all that day in her bosom, and began to despair of finding any means of delivering it.

The gamekeeper returned hastily and joyfully to Jones, who, having received Sophia's letter from him, instantly withdrew, and eagerly breaking it open, read as follows:—

"SIR,

"It is impossible to express what I have felt since I saw you. Your submitting, on my account, to such cruel insults from my father, lays me under an obligation I shall ever own. As you know his temper, I beg you will, for my sake, avoid him.

I wish I had any comfort to send you; but believe this, that nothing but the last violence shall ever give my hand or heart where you would be sorry to see them bestowed."

Jones read this letter a hundred times over, and kissed it a hundred times as often. His passion now brought all tender desires back into his mind. He repented that he had writ to Sophia in the manner we have seen above; but he repented more that he had made use of the interval of his messenger's absence to write and dispatch a letter to Mr. Allworthy, in which he had faithfully promised and bound himself to quit all thoughts of his love. However, when his cool reflections returned, he plainly perceived that his case was neither mended nor altered by Sophia's billet, unless to give him some little glimpse of hope, from her constancy, of some favourable accident hereafter. He therefore resumed his resolution, and taking leave of Black George, set forward to a town about five miles distant, whither he had desired Mr. Allworthy, unless he pleased to revoke his sentence, to send his things after him.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BEHAVIOUR OF SOPHIA ON THE PRESENT OCCASION; WHICH NONE OF HER SEX WILL BLAME, WHO ARE CAPABLE OF BEHAVING IN THE SAME MANNER. AND THE DISCUSSION OF A KNOTTY POINT IN THE COURT OF CONSCIENCE

SOPHIA had passed the last twenty-four hours in no very desirable manner. During a large part of them she had been entertained by her aunt with lectures of prudence, recommending to her the example of the polite world, where love (so the good lady said) is at present entirely laughed at, and where women consider matrimony, as men do offices of public trust, only as the means of making their fortunes, and of advancing themselves in the world. In commenting on which text Mrs. Western had displayed her eloquence during several hours.

These sagacious lectures, though little suited either to the taste or inclination of Sophia, were, however, less irksome to her than her own thoughts, that formed the entertainment of the night, during which she never once closed her eyes.

But though she could neither sleep nor rest in her bed, yet, having no avocation from it, she was found there by her father

at his return from Allworthy's, which was not till past ten o'clock in the morning. He went directly up to her apartment, opened the door, and seeing she was not up, cried, "Oh! you are safe then, and I am resolved to keep you so." He then locked the door, and delivered the key to Honour, having first given her the strictest charge, with great promises of rewards for her fidelity, and most dreadful menaces of punishment in case she should betray her trust.

Honour's orders were, not to suffer her mistress to come out of her room without the authority of the squire himself, and to admit none to her but him and her aunt; but she was herself to attend her with whatever Sophia pleased, except only pen, ink, and paper, of which she was forbidden the use.

The squire ordered his daughter to dress herself and attend him at dinner; which she obeyed; and having sat the usual time, was again conducted to her prison.

In the evening the gaoler Honour brought her the letter which she received from the gamekeeper. Sophia read it very attentively twice or thrice over, and then threw herself upon the bed, and burst into a flood of tears. Mrs. Honour expressed great astonishment at this behaviour in her mistress; nor could she forbear very eagerly begging to know the cause of this passion. Sophia made her no answer for some time, and then, starting suddenly up, caught her maid by the hand, and cried, "O Honour! I am undone." "Marry forbid," cries Honour: "I wish the letter had been burnt before I had brought it to your la'ship. I'm sure I thought it would have comforted your la'ship, or I would have seen it at the devil before I would have touched it." "Honour," says Sophia, "you are a good girl, and it is vain to attempt concealing longer my weakness from you; I have thrown away my heart on a man who hath forsaken me." "And is Mr. Jones," answered the maid, "such a perfidy man?" "He hath taken his leave of me," says Sophia, "for ever in that letter. Nay, he hath desired me to forget him. Could he have desired that if he had loved me? Could he have borne such a thought? Could he have written such a word?" "No, certainly, ma'am," cries Honour; "and to be sure, if the best man in England was to desire me to forget him, I'd take him at his word. Marry, come up! I am sure your la'ship hath done him too much honour ever to think on him;—a young lady who may take her choice of all the young men in the country. And to be sure, if I may be so presumptuous as to offer my poor opinion, there is young Mr. Blifil, who, besides that he is come

of honest parents, and will be one of the greatest squires all hereabouts, he is to be sure, in my poor opinion, a more handsomer and a more politer man by half; and besides, he is a young gentleman of a sober character, and who may defy any of the neighbours to say black is his eye; he follows no dirty trollops, nor can any bastards be laid at his door. Forget him, indeed! I thank Heaven I myself am not so much at my last prayers as to suffer any man to bid me forget him twice. If the best he that wears a head was for to go for to offer to say such an affronting word to me, I would never give him my company afterwards, if there was another young man in the kingdom. And as I was a saying, to be sure, there is young Mr. Blifil." "Name not his detested name," cries Sophia. "Nay, ma'am," says Honour, "if your la'ship doth not like him, there be more jolly handsome young men that would court your la'ship, if they had but the least encouragement. I don't believe there is arrow young gentleman in this county, or in the next to it, that if your la'ship was but to look as if you had a mind to him, would not come about to make his offers directly." "What a wretch dost thou imagine me," cries Sophia, "by affronting my ears with such stuff! I detest all mankind." "Nay, to be sure, ma'am," answered Honour, "your la'ship hath had enough to give you a surfeit of them. To be used ill by such a poor, beggarly, bastardly fellow."—"Hold your blasphemous tongue," cries Sophia: "how dare you mention his name with disrespect before me? He use me ill? No, his poor bleeding heart suffered more when he writ the cruel words than mine from reading them. O! he is all heroic virtue and angelic goodness. I am ashamed of the weakness of my own passion, for blaming what I ought to admire. O, Honour! it is my good only which he consults. To my interest he sacrifices both himself and me. The apprehension of ruining me hath driven him to despair." "I am very glad," says Honour, "to hear your la'ship takes that into your consideration; for to be sure, it must be nothing less than ruin to give your mind to one that is turned out of doors, and is not worth a farthing in the world." "Turned out of doors!" cries Sophia hastily: "how! what dost thou mean?" "Why, to be sure, ma'am, my master no sooner told Squire Allworthy about Mr. Jones having offered to make love to your la'ship than the squire stripped him stark naked, and turned him out of doors!" "Ha!" says Sophia, "I have been the cursed, wretched cause of his destruction! Turned naked out of doors! Here, Honour, take all the money

I have; take the rings from my fingers. Here, my watch: carry him all. Go find him immediately." "For Heaven's sake, ma'am," answered Mrs. Honour, "do but consider, if my master should miss any of these things, I should be made to answer for them. Therefore let me beg your la'ship not to part with your watch and jewels. Besides, the money, I think, is enough of all conscience; and as for that, my master can never know anything of the matter." "Here, then," cries Sophia, "take every farthing I am worth, find him out immediately, and give it him. Go, go, lose not a moment."

Mrs. Honour departed according to orders, and finding Black George below-stairs, delivered him the purse, which contained sixteen guineas, being, indeed, the whole stock of Sophia; for though her father was very liberal to her, she was much too generous to be rich.

Black George having received the purse, set forward towards the alehouse; but in the way a thought occurred to him, whether he should not detain this money likewise. His conscience, however, immediately started at this suggestion, and began to upbraid him with ingratitude to his benefactor. To this his avarice answered, That his conscience should have considered the matter before, when he deprived poor Jones of his £500. That having quietly acquiesced in what was of so much greater importance, it was absurd, if not downright hypocrisy, to affect any qualms at this trifle. In return to which, Conscience, like a good lawyer, attempted to distinguish between an absolute breach of trust, as here, where the goods were delivered, and a bare concealment of what was found, as in the former case. Avarice presently treated this with ridicule, called it a distinction without a difference, and absolutely insisted that when once all pretensions of honour and virtue were given up in any one instance, that there was no precedent for resorting to them upon a second occasion. In short, poor Conscience had certainly been defeated in the argument, had not Fear stepped in to her assistance, and very strenuously urged that the real distinction between the two actions, did not lie in the different degrees of honour but of safety: for that the secreting the £500 was a matter of very little hazard; whereas the detaining the sixteen guineas was liable to the utmost danger of discovery.

By this friendly aid of Fear, Conscience obtained a compleat victory in the mind of Black George, and, after making him a few compliments on his honesty, forced him to deliver the money to Jones.

CHAPTER XIV

A SHORT CHAPTER, CONTAINING A SHORT DIALOGUE BETWEEN SQUIRE WESTERN AND HIS SISTER

MRS. WESTERN had been engaged abroad all that day. The squire met her at her return home; and when she enquired after Sophia, he acquainted her that he had secured her safe enough. "She is locked up in chamber," cries he, "and Honour keeps the key." As his looks were full of prodigious wisdom and sagacity when he gave his sister this information, it is probable he expected much applause from her for what he had done; but how was he disappointed when, with a most disdainful aspect, she cried, "Sure, brother, you are the weakest of all men. Why will you not confide in me for the management of my niece? Why will you interpose? You have now undone all that I have been spending my breath in order to bring about. While I have been endeavouring to fill her mind with maxims of prudence, you have been provoking her to reject them. English women, brother, I thank heaven, are no slaves. We are not to be locked up like the Spanish and Italian wives. We have as good a right to liberty as yourselves. We are to be convinced by reason and persuasion only, and not governed by force. I have seen the world, brother, and know what arguments to make use of; and if your folly had not prevented me, should have prevailed with her to form her conduct by those rules of prudence and discretion which I formerly taught her." "To be sure," said the squire, "I am always in the wrong." "Brother," answered the lady, "you are not in the wrong, unless when you meddle with matters beyond your knowledge. You must agree that I have seen most of the world; and happy had it been for my niece if she had not been taken from under my care. It is by living at home with you that she hath learnt romantic notions of love and nonsense." "You don't imagine, I hope," cries the squire, "that I have taught her any such things." "Your ignorance, brother," returned she, "as the great Milton says, almost subdues my patience."¹ "D—n Milton!" answered the squire: "if he had the impudence to say so to my face, I'd lend him a douse, thof he was never so great a man. Patience! An you come to that, sister, I have more occasion of patience,

¹ The reader may, perhaps, subdue his own patience, if he searches for this in Milton.

to be used like an overgrown schoolboy, as I am by you. Do you think no one hath any understanding, unless he hath been about at court? Pox! the world is come to a fine pass indeed, if we are all fools, except a parcel of round-heads and Hanover rats. Pox! I hope the times are a coming when we shall make fools of them, and every man shall enjoy his own. That's all, sister; and every man shall enjoy his own. I hope to zee it, sister, before the Hanover rats have eat up all our corn, and left us nothing but turneps to feed upon."—"I protest, brother," cries she, "you are now got beyond my understanding. Your jargon of turneps and Hanover rats is to me perfectly unintelligible."—"I believe," cries he, "you don't care to hear o'em; but the country interest may succeed one day or other for all that."—"I wish," answered the lady, "you would think a little of your daughter's interest; for, believe me, she is in greater danger than the nation."—"Just now," said he, "you chid me for thinking on her, and would ha' her left to you."—"And if you will promise to interpose no more," answered she, "I will, out of my regard to my niece, undertake the charge."—"Well, do then," said the squire, "for you know I always agreed, that women are the properest to manage women."

Mrs. Western then departed, muttering something with an air of disdain, concerning women and management of the nation. She immediately repaired to Sophia's apartment, who was now, after a day's confinement, released again from her captivity,

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE STAGE

THE world hath been often compared to the theatre; and many grave writers, as well as the poets, have considered human life as a great drama, resembling, in almost every particular, those scenical representations which Thespis is first reported to have invented, and which have been since received with so much approbation and delight in all polite countries.

This thought hath been carried so far, and is become so general, that some words proper to the theatre, and which were at first metaphorically applied to the world, are now indiscriminately and literally spoken of both; thus stage and scene are by common use grown as familiar to us, when we speak of life in general, as when we confine ourselves to dramatic performances: and when transactions behind the curtain are mentioned, St. James's is more likely to occur to our thoughts than Drury-lane.

It may seem easy enough to account for all this, by reflecting that the theatrical stage is nothing more than a representation, or, as Aristotle calls it, an imitation of what really exists; and hence, perhaps, we might fairly pay a very high compliment to those who by their writings or actions have been so capable of imitating life, as to have their pictures in a manner confounded with, or mistaken for, the originals.

But, in reality, we are not so fond of paying compliments to these people, whom we use as children frequently do the instruments of their amusement; and have much more pleasure in hissing and buffeting them, than in admiring their excellence. There are many other reasons which have induced us to see this analogy between the world and the stage.

Some have considered the larger part of mankind in the light of actors, as personating characters no more their own, and to which in fact they have no better title, than the player hath to be in earnest thought the king or emperor whom he represents. Thus the hypocrite may be said to be a player; and indeed the Greeks called them both by one and the same name.