

his angel. To all of whom he endeavoured to say something smart, in order to engage an answer, by which he might discover that voice which he thought it impossible he should mistake. Some of these answered by a question, in a squeaking voice, Do you know me? Much the greater number said, I don't know you, sir, and nothing more. Some called him an impertinent fellow; some made him no answer at all; some said, Indeed I don't know your voice, and I shall have nothing to say to you; and many gave him as kind answers as he could wish, but not in the voice he desired to hear.

Whilst he was talking with one of these last (who was in the habit of a shepherdess) a lady in a domino came up to him, and slapping him on the shoulder, whispered him, at the same time, in the ear, "If you talk any longer with that trollop, I will acquaint Miss Western."

Jones no sooner heard that name, than, immediately quitting his former companion, he applied to the domino, begging and entreating her to show him the lady she had mentioned, if she was then in the room.

The mask walked hastily to the upper end of the innermost apartment before she spoke; and then, instead of answering him, sat down, and declared she was tired. Jones sat down by her, and still persisted in his entreaties: at last the lady coldly answered, "I imagined Mr. Jones had been a more discerning lover, than to suffer any disguise to conceal his mistress from him." "Is she here, then, madam?" replied Jones, with some vehemence. Upon which the lady cries—"Hush, sir, you will be observed. I promise you, upon my honour, Miss Western is not here."

Jones, now taking the mask by the hand, fell to entreating her in the most earnest manner, to acquaint him where he might find Sophia: and when he could obtain no direct answer, he began to upbraid her gently for having disappointed him the day before; and concluded, saying, "Indeed, my good fairy queen, I know your majesty very well, notwithstanding the affected disguise of your voice. Indeed, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, it is a little cruel to divert yourself at the expense of my torments."

The mask answered, "Though you have so ingeniously discovered me, I must still speak in the same voice, lest I should be known by others. And do you think, good sir, that I have no greater regard for my cousin, than to assist in carrying on an affair between you two, which must end in her ruin, as well as your own? Besides, I promise you, my cousin is not mad enough to

consent to her own destruction, if you are so much her enemy as to tempt her to it."

"Alas, madam!" said Jones, "you little know my heart, when you call me an enemy of Sophia."

"And yet to ruin any one," cries the other, "you will allow, is the act of an enemy; and when by the same act you must knowingly and certainly bring ruin on yourself, is it not folly or madness, as well as guilt? Now, sir, my cousin hath very little more than her father will please to give her; very little for one of her fashion—you know him, and you know your own situation."

Jones vowed he had no such design on Sophia, "That he would rather suffer the most violent of deaths than sacrifice her interest to his desires." He said, "he knew how unworthy he was of her, every way, that he had long ago resolved to quit all such aspiring thoughts, but that some strange accidents had made him desirous to see her once more, when he promised he would take leave of her for ever. No, madam," concluded he, "my love is not of that base kind which seeks its own satisfaction at the expense of what is most dear to its object. I would sacrifice everything to the possession of my Sophia, but Sophia herself."

Though the reader may have already conceived no very sublime idea of the virtue of the lady in the mask; and though possibly she may hereafter appear not to deserve one of the first characters of her sex; yet, it is certain, these generous sentiments made a strong impression upon her, and greatly added to the affection she had before conceived for our young hero.

The lady now, after a silence of a few moments, said, "She did not see his pretensions to Sophia so much in the light of presumption, as of imprudence. Young fellows," says she, "can never have too aspiring thoughts. I love ambition in a young man, and I would have you cultivate it as much as possible. Perhaps you may succeed with those who are infinitely superior in fortune; nay, I am convinced there are women—but don't you think me a strange creature, Mr. Jones, to be thus giving advice to a man with whom I am so little acquainted, and one with whose behaviour to me I have so little reason to be pleased?"

Here Jones began to apologize, and to hope he had not offended in anything he had said of her cousin.—To which the mask answered, "And are you so little versed in the sex, to imagine you can well affront a lady more than by entertaining her with your passion for another woman? If the fairy queen

had conceived no better opinion of your gallantry, she would scarce have appointed you to meet her at the masquerade."

Jones had never less inclination to an amour than at present; but gallantry to the ladies was among his principles of honour; and he held it as much incumbent on him to accept a challenge to love, as if it had been a challenge to fight. Nay, his very love to Sophia made it necessary for him to keep well with the lady, as he made no doubt but she was capable of bringing him into the presence of the other.

He began therefore to make a very warm answer to her last speech, when a mask, in the character of an old woman, joined them. This mask was one of those ladies who go to a masquerade only to vent ill-nature, by telling people rude truths, and by endeavouring, as the phrase is, to spoil as much sport as they are able. This good lady, therefore, having observed Jones, and his friend, whom she well knew, in close consultation together in a corner of the room, concluded she could nowhere satisfy her spleen better than by interrupting them. She attacked them, therefore, and soon drove them from their retirement; nor was she contented with this, but pursued them to every place which they shifted to avoid her; till Mr. Nightingale, seeing the distress of his friend, at last relieved him, and engaged the old woman in another pursuit.

While Jones and his mask were walking together about the room, to rid themselves of the teaser, he observed his lady speak to several masks, with the same freedom of acquaintance as if they had been barefaced. He could not help expressing his surprize at this; saying, "Sure, madam, you must have infinite discernment, to know people in all disguises." To which the lady answered, "You cannot conceive anything more insipid and childish than a masquerade to the people of fashion, who in general know one another as well here, as when they meet in an assembly or a drawing-room; nor will any woman of condition converse with a person with whom she is not acquainted. In short, the generality of persons whom you see here, may more properly be said to kill time in this place than in any other; and generally retire from hence more tired than from the longest sermon. To say the truth, I begin to be in that situation myself; and if I have any faculty at guessing, you are not much better pleased. I protest it would be almost charity in me to go home for your sake." "I know but one charity equal to it," cries Jones, "and that is to suffer me to wait on you home." "Sure," answered the lady, "you have a strange opinion of me, to

imagine, that upon such an acquaintance, I would let you into my doors at this time of night. I fancy you impute the friendship I have shown my cousin to some other motive. Confess honestly; don't you consider this contrived interview as little better than a downright assignation? Are you used, Mr. Jones, to make these sudden conquests?" "I am not used, madam," said Jones, "to submit to such sudden conquests; but as you have taken my heart by surprize, the rest of my body hath a right to follow; so you must pardon me if I resolve to attend you wherever you go." He accompanied these words with some proper actions; upon which the lady, after a gentle rebuke, and saying their familiarity would be observed, told him, "She was going to sup with an acquaintance, whither she hoped he would not follow her; for if you should," said she, "I shall be thought an unaccountable creature, though my friend indeed is not censorious: yet I hope you won't follow me; I protest I shall not know what to say if you do."

The lady presently after quitted the masquerade, and Jones, notwithstanding the severe prohibition he had received, presumed to attend her. He was now reduced to the same dilemma we have mentioned before, namely, the want of a shilling, and could not relieve it by borrowing as before. He therefore walked boldly on after the chair in which his lady rode, pursued by a grand huzza, from all the chairmen present, who wisely take the best care they can to discountenance all walking afoot by their betters. Luckily, however, the gentry who attend at the Opera-house were too busy to quit their stations, and as the lateness of the hour prevented him from meeting many of their brethren in the street, he proceeded without molestation, in a dress, which, at another season, would have certainly raised a mob at his heels.

The lady was set down in a street not far from Hanover-square, where the door being presently opened, she was carried in, and the gentleman, without any ceremony, walked in after her.

Jones and his companion were now together in a very well-furnished and well-warmed room; when the female, still speaking in her masquerade voice, said she was surprized at her friend, who must absolutely have forgot her appointment; at which, after venting much resentment, she suddenly exprest some apprehension from Jones, and asked him what the world would think of their having been alone together in a house at that time of night? But instead of a direct answer to so important a question, Jones began to be very importunate with the lady to

unmask; and at length having prevailed, there appeared, not Mrs. Fitzpatrick, but the Lady Bellaston herself.

It would be tedious to give the particular conversation, which consisted of very common and ordinary occurrences, and which lasted from two till six o'clock in the morning. It is sufficient to mention all of it that is anywise material to this history. And this was a promise that the lady would endeavour to find out Sophia, and in a few days bring him to an interview with her, on condition that he would then take his leave of her. When this was thoroughly settled, and a second meeting in the evening appointed at the same place, they separated; the lady returned to her house, and Jones to his lodgings.

CHAPTER VIII

CONTAINING A SCENE OF DISTRESS, WHICH WILL APPEAR VERY EXTRAORDINARY TO MOST OF OUR READERS

JONES having refreshed himself with a few hours' sleep, summoned Partridge to his presence; and delivering him a bank-note of fifty pounds, ordered him to go and change it. Partridge received this with sparkling eyes, though, when he came to reflect farther, it raised in him some suspicions not very advantageous to the honour of his master: to these the dreadful idea he had of the masquerade, the disguise in which his master had gone out and returned, and his having been abroad all night, contributed. In plain language, the only way he could possibly find to account for the possession of this note, was by robbery: and, to confess the truth, the reader, unless he should suspect it was owing to the generosity of Lady Bellaston, can hardly imagine any other.

To clear, therefore, the honour of Mr. Jones, and to do justice to the liberality of the lady, he had really received this present from her, who, though she did not give much into the hackney charities of the age, such as building hospitals, &c., was not, however, entirely void of that Christian virtue; and conceived (very rightly I think) that a young fellow of merit, without a shilling in the world, was no improper object of this virtue.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Nightingale had been invited to dine this day with Mrs. Miller. At the appointed hour, therefore, the two young gentlemen, with the two girls, attended in the parlour, where they waited from three till almost five before the good

woman appeared. She had been out of town to visit a relation, of whom, at her return, she gave the following account.

"I hope, gentlemen, you will pardon my making you wait; I am sure if you knew the occasion—I have been to see a cousin of mine, about six miles off, who now lies in.—It should be a warning to all persons (says she, looking at her daughters) how they marry indiscreetly. There is no happiness in this world without a competency. O Nancy! how shall I describe the wretched condition in which I found your poor cousin? she hath scarce lain in a week, and there was she, this dreadful weather, in a cold room, without any curtains to her bed, and not a bushel of coals in her house to supply her with fire: her second son, that sweet little fellow, lies ill of a quinzy in the same bed with his mother; for there is no other bed in the house. Poor little Tommy! I believe, Nancy, you will never see your favourite any more; for he is really very ill. The rest of the children are in pretty good health: but Molly, I am afraid, will do herself an injury: she is but thirteen years old, Mr. Nightingale, and yet, in my life, I never saw a better nurse: she tends both her mother and her brother; and, what is wonderful in a creature so young, she shows all the cheerfulness in the world to her mother; and yet I saw her—I saw the poor child, Mr. Nightingale, turn about, and privately wipe the tears from her eyes." Here Mrs. Miller was prevented, by her own tears, from going on, and there was not, I believe, a person present who did not accompany her in them; at length she a little recovered herself, and proceeded thus: "In all this distress the mother supports her spirits in a surprizing manner. The danger of her son sits heaviest upon her, and yet she endeavours as much as possible to conceal even this concern, on her husband's account. Her grief, however, sometimes gets the better of all her endeavours; for she was always extravagantly fond of this boy, and a most sensible, sweet-tempered creature it is. I protest I was never more affected in my life, than when I heard the little wretch, who is hardly yet seven years old, while his mother was wetting him with her tears, beg her to be comforted. 'Indeed, mamma,' cried the child, 'I shan't die; God Almighty, I'm sure, won't take Tommy away; let heaven be ever so fine a place, I had rather stay here and starve with you and my papa, than go to it.' Pardon me, gentlemen, I can't help it" (says she, wiping her eyes), "such sensibility and affection in a child.—And yet, perhaps, he is least the object of pity; for a day or two will, most probably, place him beyond the reach of all human evils.

The father is, indeed, most worthy of compassion. Poor man, his countenance is the very picture of horror, and he looks like one rather dead than alive. Oh heavens! what a scene did I behold at my first coming into the room! The good creature was lying behind the bolster, supporting at once both his child and his wife. He had nothing on but a thin waistcoat; for his coat was spread over the bed, to supply the want of blankets.—When he rose up at my entrance, I scarce knew him. As comely a man, Mr. Jones, within this fortnight, as you ever beheld; Mr. Nightingale hath seen him. His eyes sunk, his face pale, with a long beard. His body shivering with cold, and worn with hunger too; for my cousin says she can hardly prevail upon him to eat.—He told me himself in a whisper—he told me—I can't repeat it—he said he could not bear to eat the bread his children wanted. And yet, can you believe it, gentlemen? in all this misery his wife has as good caudle as if she lay in the midst of the greatest affluence; I tasted it, and I scarce ever tasted better.—The means of procuring her this, he said, he believed was sent by an angel from heaven. I know not what he meant; for I had not spirits enough to ask a single question.

“This was a love-match, as they call it, on both sides; that is, a match between two beggars. I must, indeed, say, I never saw a fonder couple; but what is their fondness good for, but to torment each other?” “Indeed, mamma,” cries Nancy, “I have always looked on my cousin Anderson” (for that was her name) “as one of the happiest of women.” “I am sure,” says Mrs. Miller, “the case at present is much otherwise; for any one might have discerned that the tender consideration of each other's sufferings makes the most intolerable part of their calamity, both to the husband and wife. Compared to which, hunger and cold, as they affect their own persons only, are scarce evils. Nay, the very children, the youngest, which is not two years old, excepted, feel in the same manner; for they are a most loving family; and, if they had but a bare competency, would be the happiest people in the world.” “I never saw the least sign of misery at her house,” replied Nancy; “I am sure my heart bleeds for what you now tell me.”—“O child,” answered the mother, “she hath always endeavoured to make the best of everything. They have always been in great distress; but, indeed, this absolute ruin hath been brought upon them by others. The poor man was bail for the villain his brother; and about a week ago, the very day before her lying-in, their goods were all carried away, and sold by an execution. He sent a letter

to me of it by one of the bailiffs, which the villain never delivered.—What must he think of my suffering a week to pass before he heard of me?”

It was not with dry eyes that Jones heard this narrative; when it was ended he took Mrs. Miller apart with him into another room, and, delivering her his purse, in which was the sum of £50, desired her to send as much of it as she thought proper to these poor people. The look which Mrs. Miller gave Jones, on this occasion, is not easy to be described. She burst into a kind of agony of transport, and cried out—“Good heavens! is there such a man in the world?”—But recollecting herself, she said, “Indeed I know one such; but can there be another?” “I hope, madam,” cries Jones, “there are many who have common humanity; for to relieve such distress in our fellow-creatures, can hardly be called more.” Mrs. Miller then took ten guineas, which were the utmost he could prevail with her to accept, and said, “She would find some means of conveying them early the next morning;” adding, “that she had herself done some little matter for the poor people, and had not left them in quite so much misery as she found them.”

They then returned to the parlour, where Nightingale expressed much concern at the dreadful situation of these wretches, whom indeed he knew; for he had seen them more than once at Mrs. Miller's. He inveighed against the folly of making oneself liable for the debts of others; vented many bitter execrations against the brother; and concluded with wishing something could be done for the unfortunate family. “Suppose, madam,” said he, “you should recommend them to Mr. Allworthy? Or what think you of a collection? I will give them a guinea with all my heart.”

Mrs. Miller made no answer; and Nancy, to whom her mother had whispered the generosity of Jones, turned pale upon the occasion; though, if either of them was angry with Nightingale, it was surely without reason. For the liberality of Jones, if he had known it, was not an example which he had any obligation to follow, and there are thousands who would not have contributed a single halfpenny, as indeed he did not in effect, for he made no tender of anything; and therefore, as the others thought proper to make no demand, he kept his money in his pocket.

I have, in truth, observed, and shall never have a better opportunity than at present to communicate my observation, that the world are in general divided into two opinions concerning

charity, which are the very reverse of each other. One party seems to hold, that all acts of this kind are to be esteemed as voluntary gifts, and, however little you give (if indeed no more than your good wishes), you acquire a great degree of merit in so doing. Others, on the contrary, appear to be as firmly persuaded that beneficence is a positive duty, and that whenever the rich fall greatly short of their ability in relieving the distresses of the poor, their pitiful largesses are so far from being meritorious, that they have only performed their duty by halves, and are in some sense more contemptible than those who have entirely neglected it.

To reconcile these different opinions is not in my power. I shall only add, that the givers are generally of the former sentiment, and the receivers are almost universally inclined to the latter.

CHAPTER IX

WHICH TREATS OF MATTERS OF A VERY DIFFERENT KIND FROM THOSE IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER

IN the evening Jones met his lady again, and a long conversation ensued between them: but as it consisted only of the same ordinary occurrences as before, we shall avoid mentioning particulars, which we despair of rendering agreeable to the reader; unless he is one whose devotion to the fair sex, like that of the papists to their saints, wants to be raised by the help of pictures. But I am so far from desiring to exhibit such pictures to the public, that I would wish to draw a curtain over those that have been lately set forth in certain French novels; very bungling copies of which have been presented us here under the name of translations.

Jones grew still more and more impatient to see Sophia; and finding, after repeated interviews with Lady Bellaston, no likelihood of obtaining this by her means (for, on the contrary, the lady began to treat even the mention of the name of Sophia with resentment), he resolved to try some other method. He made no doubt but that Lady Bellaston knew where his angel was, so he thought it most likely that some of her servants should be acquainted with the same secret. Partridge therefore was employed to get acquainted with those servants, in order to fish this secret out of them.

Few situations can be imagined more uneasy than that to

which his poor master was at present reduced; for besides the difficulties he met with in discovering Sophia, besides the fears he had of having disoblged her, and the assurances he had received from Lady Bellaston of the resolution which Sophia had taken against him, and of her having purposely concealed herself from him, which he had sufficient reason to believe might be true; he had still a difficulty to combat, which it was not in the power of his mistress to remove, however kind her inclination might have been. This was the exposing of her to be disinherited of all her father's estate, the almost inevitable consequence of their coming together without a consent, which he had no hopes of ever obtaining.

Add to all these the many obligations which Lady Bellaston, whose violent fondness we can no longer conceal, had heaped upon him; so that by her means he was now become one of the best-dressed men about town; and was not only relieved from those ridiculous distresses we have before mentioned, but was actually raised to a state of affluence beyond what he had ever known.

Now, though there are many gentlemen who very well reconcile it to their consciences to possess themselves of the whole fortune of a woman, without making her any kind of return; yet to a mind, the proprietor of which doth not deserved to be hanged, nothing is, I believe, more irksome than to support love with gratitude only; especially where inclination pulls the heart a contrary way. Such was the unhappy case of Jones; for though the virtuous love he bore to Sophia, and which left very little affection for any other woman, had been entirely out of the question, he could never have been able to have made any adequate return to the generous passion of this lady, who had indeed been once an object of desire, but was now entered at least into the autumn of life, though she wore all the gaiety of youth, both in her dress and manner; nay, she contrived still to maintain the roses in her cheeks; but these, like flowers forced out of season by art, had none of that lively blooming freshness with which Nature, at the proper time, bedecks her own productions. She had, besides, a certain imperfection, which renders some flowers, though very beautiful to the eye, very improper to be placed in a wilderness of sweets, and what above all others is most disagreeable to the breath of love.

Though Jones saw all these discouragements on the one side, he felt his obligations full as strongly on the other; nor did he less plainly discern the ardent passion whence those obligations

proceeded, the extreme violence of which if he failed to equal, he well knew the lady would think him ungrateful; and, what is worse, he would have thought himself so. He knew the tacit consideration upon which all her favours were conferred; and as his necessity obliged him to accept them, so his honour, he concluded, forced him to pay the price. This therefore he resolved to do, whatever misery it cost him, and to devote himself to her, from that great principle of justice, by which the laws of some countries oblige a debtor, who is no otherwise capable of discharging his debt, to become the slave of his creditor.

While he was meditating on these matters, he received the following note from the lady:—

“A very foolish, but a very perverse accident hath happened since our last meeting, which makes it improper I should see you any more at the usual place. I will, if possible, contrive some other place by to-morrow. In the meantime, adieu.”

This disappointment, perhaps, the reader may conclude was not very great; but if it was, he was quickly relieved; for in less than an hour afterwards another note was brought him from the same hand, which contained as follows:—

“I have altered my mind since I wrote; a change which, if you are no stranger to the tenderest of all passions, you will not wonder at. I am now resolved to see you this evening at my own house, whatever may be the consequence. Come to me exactly at seven; I dine abroad, but will be at home by that time. A day, I find, to those that sincerely love, seems longer than I imagined.

“If you should accidentally be a few moments before me, bid them show you into the drawing-room.”

To confess the truth, Jones was less pleased with this last epistle than he had been with the former, as he was prevented by it from complying with the earnest entreaties of Mr. Nightingale, with whom he had now contracted much intimacy and friendship. These entreaties were to go with that young gentleman and his company to a new play, which was to be acted that evening, and which a very large party had agreed to damn, from some dislike they had taken to the author, who was a friend to one of Mr. Nightingale's acquaintance. And this sort

of fun, our hero, we are ashamed to confess, would willingly have preferred to the above kind appointment; but his honour got the better of his inclination.

Before we attend him to this intended interview with the lady, we think proper to account for both the preceding notes, as the reader may possibly be not a little surprized at the imprudence of Lady Bellaston, in bringing her lover to the very house where her rival was lodged.

First, then, the mistress of the house where these lovers had hitherto met, and who had been for some years a pensioner to that lady, was now become a methodist, and had that very morning waited upon her ladyship, and after rebuking her very severely for her past life, had positively declared that she would, on no account, be instrumental in carrying on any of her affairs for the future.

The hurry of spirits into which this accident threw the lady, made her despair of possibly finding any other convenience to meet Jones that evening; but as she began a little to recover from her uneasiness at the disappointment, she set her thoughts to work, when luckily it came into her head to propose to Sophia to go to the play, which was immediately consented to, and a proper lady provided for her companion. Mrs. Honour was likewise despatched with Mrs. Etoff on the same errand of pleasure; and thus her own house was left free for the safe reception of Mr. Jones, with whom she promised herself two or three hours of uninterrupted conversation, after her return from the place where she dined, which was at a friend's house in a pretty distant part of the town, near her old place of assignation, where she had engaged herself before she was well apprized of the revolution that had happened in the mind and morals of her late confidante.

CHAPTER X

A CHAPTER WHICH, THOUGH SHORT, MAY DRAW TEARS FROM SOME EYES

MR. JONES was just dressed to wait on Lady Bellaston, when Mrs. Miller rapped at his door; and, being admitted, very earnestly desired his company below-stairs, to drink tea in the parlour.

Upon his entrance into the room, she presently introduced a

person to him, saying, "This, sir, is my cousin, who hath been so greatly beholden to your goodness, for which he begs to return you his sincerest thanks."

The man had scarce entered upon that speech, which Mrs. Miller had so kindly prefaced, when both Jones and he, looking stedfastly at each other, showed at once the utmost tokens of surprize. The voice of the latter began instantly to falter; and, instead of finishing his speech, he sunk down into a chair, crying, "It is so, I am convinced it is so!"

"Bless me! what's the meaning of this?" cries Mrs. Miller; "you are not ill, I hope, cousin? Some water, a dram this instant."

"Be not frightened, madam," cries Jones, "I have almost as much need of a dram as your cousin. We are equally surprized at this unexpected meeting. Your cousin is an acquaintance of mine, Mrs. Miller."

"An acquaintance!" cries the man.—"Oh, heaven!"

"Ay, an acquaintance," repeated Jones, "and an honoured acquaintance too. When I do not love and honour the man who dares venture everything to preserve his wife and children from instant destruction, may I have a friend capable of disowning me in adversity!"

"Oh, you are an excellent young man," cries Mrs. Miller:—"Yes, indeed, poor creature! he hath ventured everything.—If he had not had one of the best of constitutions, it must have killed him."

"Cousin," cries the man, who had now pretty well recovered himself, "this is the angel from heaven whom I meant. This is he to whom, before I saw you, I owed the preservation of my Peggy. He it was to whose generosity every comfort, every support which I have procured for her, was owing. He is, indeed, the worthiest, bravest, noblest, of all human beings. O cousin, I have obligations to this gentleman of such a nature!"

"Mention nothing of obligations," cries Jones eagerly; "not a word, I insist upon it, not a word" (meaning, I suppose, that he would not have him betray the affair of the robbery to any person). "If, by the trifle you have received from me, I have preserved a whole family, sure pleasure was never bought so cheap."

"Oh, sir!" cries the man, "I wish you could this instant see my house. If any person had ever a right to the pleasure you mention, I am convinced it is yourself. My cousin tells me she acquainted you with the distress in which she found us. That,

sir, is all greatly removed, and chiefly by your goodness.—My children have now a bed to lie on—and they have—they have—eternal blessings reward you for it!—they have bread to eat. My little boy is recovered; my wife is out of danger, and I am happy. All, all owing to you, sir, and to my cousin here, one of the best of women. Indeed, sir, I must see you at my house.—Indeed my wife must see you, and thank you.—My children too must express their gratitude.—Indeed, sir, they are not without a sense of their obligation; but what is my feeling, when I reflect to whom I owe that they are now capable of expressing their gratitude.—Oh, sir, the little hearts which you have warmed had now been cold as ice without your assistance."

Here Jones attempted to prevent the poor man from proceeding; but indeed the overflowing of his own heart would of itself have stopped his words. And now Mrs. Miller likewise began to pour forth thanksgivings, as well in her own name, as in that of her cousin, and concluded with saying, "She doubted not but such goodness would meet a glorious reward."

Jones answered, "He had been sufficiently rewarded already. Your cousin's account, madam," said he, "hath given me a sensation more pleasing than I have ever known. He must be a wretch who is unmoved at hearing such a story; how transporting then must be the thought of having happily acted a part in this scene! If there are men who cannot feel the delight of giving happiness to others, I sincerely pity them, as they are incapable of tasting what is, in my opinion, a greater honour, a higher interest, and a sweeter pleasure, than the ambitious, the avaricious, or the voluptuous man can ever obtain."

The hour of appointment being now come, Jones was forced to take a hasty leave, but not before he had heartily shaken his friend by the hand, and desired to see him again as soon as possible; promising that he would himself take the first opportunity of visiting him at his own house. He then stepped into his chair, and proceeded to Lady Bellaston's, greatly exulting in the happiness which he had procured to this poor family; nor could he forbear reflecting, without horror, on the dreadful consequences which must have attended them, had he listened rather to the voice of strict justice, than to that of mercy, when he was attacked on the high road.

Mrs. Miller sung forth the praise of Jones during the whole evening, in which Mr. Anderson, while he stayed, so passionately accompanied her, that he was often on the very point of mention-

ing the circumstance of the robbery. However, he luckily recollected himself, and avoided an indiscretion which would have been so much the greater, as he knew Mrs. Miller to be extremely strict and nice in her principles. He was likewise well apprized of the loquacity of this lady; and yet such was his gratitude, that it had almost got the better both of discretion and shame, and made him publish that which would have defamed his own character, rather than omit any circumstances which might do the fullest honour to his benefactor.

CHAPTER XI

IN WHICH THE READER WILL BE SURPRIZED

MR. JONES was rather earlier than the time appointed, and earlier than the lady; whose arrival was hindered, not only by the distance of the place where she dined, but by some other cross accidents very vexatious to one in her situation of mind. He was accordingly shown into the drawing-room, where he had not been many minutes before the door opened, and in came—no other than Sophia herself, who had left the play before the end of the first act; for this, as we have already said, being a new play, at which two large parties met, the one to damn, and the other to applaud, a violent uproar, and an engagement between the two parties, had so terrified our heroine, that she was glad to put herself under the protection of a young gentleman, who safely conveyed her to her chair.

As Lady Bellaston had acquainted her that she should not be at home till late, Sophia, expecting to find no one in the room, came hastily in, and went directly to a glass which almost fronted her, without once looking towards the upper end of the room, where the statue of Jones now stood motionless.—In this glass it was, after contemplating her own lovely face, that she first discovered the said statue; when, instantly turning about, she perceived the reality of the vision: upon which she gave a violent scream, and scarce preserved herself from fainting, till Jones was able to move to her, and support her in his arms.

To paint the looks or thoughts of either of these lovers, is beyond my power. As their sensations, from their mutual silence, may be judged to have been too big for their own utterance, it cannot be supposed that I should be able to express them: and the misfortune is, that few of my readers have been enough in love to feel by their own hearts what past at this time in theirs.

After a short pause, Jones, with faltering accents, said—“I see, madam, you are surprized.”—“Surprized!” answered she; “Oh heavens! Indeed, I am surprized. I almost doubt whether you are the person you seem.”—“Indeed,” cries he, “my Sophia, pardon me, madam, for this once calling you so, I am that very wretched Jones, whom fortune, after so many disappointments, hath, at last, kindly conducted to you. Oh! my Sophia, did you know the thousand torments I have suffered in this long, fruitless pursuit.”—“Pursuit of whom?” said Sophia, a little recollecting herself, and assuming a reserved air.—“Can you be so cruel to ask that question?” cries Jones; “Need I say, of you?” “Of me!” answered Sophia: “Hath Mr. Jones, then, any such important business with me?”—“To some, madam,” cries Jones, “this might seem an important business” (giving her the pocket-book), “I hope, madam, you will find it of the same value as when it was lost.” Sophia took the pocket-book, and was going to speak, when he interrupted her thus:—“Let us not, I beseech you, lose one of these precious moments which fortune hath so kindly sent us. O, my Sophia! I have business of a much superior kind. Thus, on my knees, let me ask your pardon.”—“My pardon!” cries she; “Sure, sir, after what is past, you cannot expect, after what I have heard.”—“I scarce know what I say,” answered Jones. “By heavens! I scarce wish you should pardon me. O my Sophia! henceforth never cast away a thought on such a wretch as I am. If any remembrance of me should ever intrude to give a moment’s uneasiness to that tender bosom, think of my unworthiness; and let the remembrance of what passed at Upton blot me for ever from your mind.”

Sophia stood trembling all this while. Her face was whiter than snow, and her heart was throbbing through her stays. But at the mention of Upton, a blush arose in her cheeks, and her eyes, which before she had scarce lifted up, were turned upon Jones with a glance of disdain. He understood this silent reproach, and replied to it thus: “O my Sophia! my only love! you cannot hate or despise me more for what happened there, than I do myself; but yet do me the justice to think, that my heart was never unfaithful to you. That had no share in the folly I was guilty of; it was even then unalterably yours. Though I despaired of possessing you, nay, almost of ever seeing you more, I doated still on your charming idea, and could seriously love no other woman. But if my heart had not been engaged, she, into company I accidentally fell at that cursed place, was not an object

of serious love. Believe me, my angel, I never have seen her from that day to this; and never intend or desire to see her again." Sophia, in her heart, was very glad to hear this; but forcing into her face an air of more coldness than she had yet assumed, "Why," said she, "Mr. Jones, do you take the trouble to make a defence where you are not accused? If I thought it worth while to accuse you, I have a charge of an unpardonable nature indeed."—"What is it, for heaven's sake?" answered Jones, trembling and pale, expecting to hear of his amour with Lady Bellaston. "Oh," said she, "how is it possible! can everything noble, and everything base, be lodged together in the same bosom?" Lady Bellaston, and the ignominious circumstance of having been kept, rose again in his mind, and stopt his mouth from any reply. "Could I have expected," proceeded Sophia, "such treatment from you? Nay, from any gentleman, from any man of honour? To have my name traduced in public; in inns, among the meanest vulgar! to have any little favours, that my unguarded heart may have too lightly betrayed me to grant, boasted of there! nay, even to hear that you had been forced to fly from my love!"

Nothing could equal Jones's surprize at these words of Sophia; but yet, not being guilty, he was much less embarrassed how to defend himself, than if she had touched that tender string at which his conscience had been alarmed. By some examination he presently found, that her supposing him guilty of so shocking an outrage against his love, and her reputation, was entirely owing to Partridge's talk at the inns before landlords and servants; for Sophia confessed to him it was from them that she received her intelligence. He had no very great difficulty to make her believe that he was entirely innocent of an offence so foreign to his character; but she had a great deal to hinder him from going instantly home, and putting Partridge to death, which he more than once swore he would do. This point being cleared up, they soon found themselves so well pleased with each other, that Jones quite forgot he had begun the conversation with conjuring her to give up all thoughts of him; and she was in a temper to have given ear to a petition of a very different nature; for before they were aware they had both gone so far, that he let fall some words that sounded like a proposal of marriage. To which she replied, "That, did not her duty to her father forbid her to follow her own inclinations, ruin with him would be more welcome to her than the most affluent fortune with another man." At the mention of the word ruin, he started, let drop her hand, which he

had held for some time, and striking his breast with his own, cried out, "Oh, Sophia! can I then ruin thee? No; by heavens, no! I never will act so base a part. Dearest Sophia, whatever it costs me, I will renounce you; I will give you up; I will tear all such hopes from my heart as are inconsistent with your real good. My love I will ever retain, but it shall be in silence; it shall be at a distance from you; it shall be in some foreign land; from whence no voice, no sigh of my despair, shall ever reach and disturb your ears. And when I am dead"—He would have gone on, but was stopt by a flood of tears which Sophia let fall in his bosom, upon which she leaned, without being able to speak one word. He kissed them off, which, for some moments, she allowed him to do without any resistance; but then recollecting herself, gently withdrew out of his arms; and, to turn the discourse from a subject too tender, and which she found she could not support, bethought herself to ask him a question she never had time to put to him before, "How he came into that room?" He began to stammer, and would, in all probability, have raised her suspicions by the answer he was going to give, when, at once, the door opened, and in came Lady Bellaston.

Having advanced a few steps, and seeing Jones and Sophia together, she suddenly stopt; when, after a pause of a few moments, recollecting herself with admirable presence of mind, she said—though with sufficient indications of surprize both in voice and countenance—"I thought, Miss Western, you had been at the play?"

Though Sophia had no opportunity of learning of Jones by what means he had discovered her, yet, as she had not the least suspicion of the real truth, or that Jones and Lady Bellaston were acquainted, so she was very little confounded; and the less, as the lady had, in all their conversations on the subject, entirely taken her side against her father. With very little hesitation, therefore, she went through the whole story of what had happened at the play-house, and the cause of her hasty return.

The length of this narrative gave Lady Bellaston an opportunity of rallying her spirits, and of considering in what manner to act. And as the behaviour of Sophia gave her hopes that Jones had not betrayed her, she put on an air of good humour, and said, "I should not have broke in so abruptly upon you, Miss Western, if I had known you had company."

Lady Bellaston fixed her eyes on Sophia whilst she spoke these words. To which that poor young lady, having her face

overspread with blushes and confusion, answered, in a stammering voice, "I am sure, madam, I shall always think the honour of your ladyship's company—" "I hope, at least," cries Lady Bellaston, "I interrupt no business."—"No, madam," answered Sophia, "our business was at an end. Your ladyship may be pleased to remember I have often mentioned the loss of my pocket-book, which this gentleman, having very luckily found, was so kind to return it to me with the bill in it."

Jones, ever since the arrival of Lady Bellaston, had been ready to sink with fear. He sat kicking his heels, playing with his fingers, and looking more like a fool, if it be possible, than a young booby squire, when he is first introduced into a polite assembly. He began, however, now to recover himself; and taking a hint from the behaviour of Lady Bellaston, who he saw did not intend to claim any acquaintance with him, he resolved as entirely to affect the stranger on his part. He said, "Ever since he had the pocket-book in his possession, he had used great diligence in inquiring out the lady whose name was writ in it; but never till that day could be so fortunate to discover her."

Sophia had indeed mentioned the loss of her pocket-book to Lady Bellaston; but as Jones, for some reason or other, had never once hinted to her that it was in his possession, she believed not one syllable of what Sophia now said, and wonderfully admired the extreme quickness of the young lady in inventing such an excuse. The reason of Sophia's leaving the playhouse met with no better credit; and though she could not account for the meeting between these two lovers, she was firmly persuaded it was not accidental.

With an affected smile, therefore, she said, "Indeed, Miss Western, you have had very good luck in recovering your money. Not only as it fell into the hands of a gentleman of honour, but as he happened to discover to whom it belonged. I think you would not consent to have it advertised.—It was great good fortune, sir, that you found out to whom the note belonged."

"Oh, madam," cries Jones, "it was enclosed in a pocket-book, in which the young lady's name was written."

"That was very fortunate indeed," cries the lady:—"And it was no less so, that you heard Miss Western was at my house; for she is very little known."

Jones had at length perfectly recovered his spirits; and as he conceived he had now an opportunity of satisfying Sophia, as to the question she had asked him just before Lady Bellaston

came in, he proceeded thus: "Why, madam," answered he, "it was by the luckiest chance imaginable I made this discovery. I was mentioning what I had found, and the name of the owner, the other night to a lady at the masquerade, who told me she believed she knew where I might see Miss Western; and if I would come to her house the next morning she would inform me. I went according to her appointment, but she was not at home; nor could I ever meet with her till this morning, when she directed me to your ladyship's house. I came accordingly, and did myself the honour to ask for your ladyship; and upon my saying that I had very particular business, a servant showed me into this room; where I had not been long before the young lady returned from the play."

Upon his mentioning the masquerade, he looked very silyly at Lady Bellaston, without any fear of being remarked by Sophia; for she was visibly too much confounded to make any observations. This hint a little alarmed the lady, and she was silent; when Jones, who saw the agitation of Sophia's mind, resolved to take the only method of relieving her, which was by retiring; but, before he did this, he said, "I believe, madam, it is customary to give some reward on these occasions;—I must insist on a very high one for my honesty;—it is, madam, no less than the honour of being permitted to pay another visit here."

"Sir," replied the lady, "I make no doubt that you are a gentleman, and my doors are never shut to people of fashion."

Jones, then after proper ceremonies, departed, highly to his own satisfaction, and no less to that of Sophia; who was terribly alarmed lest Lady Bellaston should discover what she knew already but too well.

Upon the stairs Jones met his old acquaintance, Mrs. Honour, who, notwithstanding all she had said against him, was now so well bred to behave with great civility. This meeting proved indeed a lucky circumstance, as he communicated to her the house where he lodged, with which Sophia was unacquainted.

CHAPTER XII

IN WHICH THE THIRTEENTH BOOK IS CONCLUDED

THE elegant Lord Shaftesbury somewhere objects to telling too much truth: by which it may be fairly inferred, that, in some cases, to lie is not only excusable, but commendable.

And surely there are no persons who may so properly chal-

lenge a right to this commendable deviation from truth, as young women in the affair of love; for which they may plead precept, education, and above all, the sanction, nay, I may say the necessity of custom, by which they are restrained, not from submitting to the honest impulses of nature (for that would be a foolish prohibition), but from owning them.

We are not, therefore, ashamed to say, that our heroine now pursued the dictates of the above-mentioned right honourable philosopher. As she was perfectly satisfied then, that Lady Bellaston was ignorant of the person of Jones, so she determined to keep her in that ignorance, though at the expense of a little fibbing.

Jones had not been long gone, before Lady Bellaston cried, "Upon my word, a good pretty young fellow; I wonder who he is; for I don't remember ever to have seen his face before."

"Nor I neither, madam," cries Sophia. "I must say he behaved very handsomely in relation to my note."

"Yes; and he is a very handsome fellow," said the lady: "don't you think so?"

"I did not take much notice of him," answered Sophia, "but I thought he seemed rather awkward, and ungentle than otherwise."

"You are extremely right," cries Lady Bellaston: "you may see, by his manner, that he hath not kept good company. Nay, notwithstanding his returning your note, and refusing the reward, I almost question whether he is a gentleman.—I have always observed there is a something in persons well born, which others can never acquire.—I think I will give orders not to be at home to him."

"Nay, sure, madam," answered Sophia, "one can't suspect after what he hath done;—besides, if your ladyship observed him, there was an elegance in his discourse, a delicacy, a prettiness of expression that, that—"

"I confess," said Lady Bellaston, "the fellow hath words—And indeed, Sophia, you must forgive me, indeed you must."

"I forgive your ladyship!" said Sophia.

"Yes, indeed you must," answered she, laughing; "for I had a horrible suspicion when I first came into the room—I vow you must forgive it; but I suspected it was Mr. Jones himself."

"Did your ladyship, indeed?" cries Sophia, blushing, and affecting a laugh.

"Yes, I vow I did," answered she. "I can't imagine what

put it into my head: for, give the fellow his due, he was genteely drest; which, I think, dear Sophy, is not commonly the case with your friend."

"This raillery," cries Sophia, "is a little cruel, Lady Bellaston, after my promise to your ladyship."

"Not at all, child," said the lady;—"It would have been cruel before; but after you have promised me never to marry without your father's consent, in which you know is implied your giving up Jones, sure you can bear a little raillery on a passion which was pardonable enough in a young girl in the country, and of which you tell me you have so entirely got the better. What must I think, my dear Sophy, if you cannot bear a little ridicule even on his dress? I shall begin to fear you are very far gone indeed; and almost question whether you have dealt ingenuously with me."

"Indeed, madam," cries Sophia, "your ladyship mistakes me, if you imagine I had any concern on his account."

"On his account!" answered the lady: "You must have mistaken me; I went no farther than his dress;—for I would not injure your taste by any other comparison—I don't imagine, my dear Sophy, if your Mr. Jones had been such a fellow as this—"

"I thought," says Sophia, "your ladyship had allowed him to be handsome"—

"Whom, pray?" cried the lady hastily.

"Mr. Jones," answered Sophia;—and immediately recollecting herself, "Mr. Jones!—no, no; I ask your pardon;—I mean the gentleman who was just now here."

"O Sophy! Sophy!" cries the lady; "this Mr. Jones, I am afraid, still runs in your head."

"Then, upon my honour, madam," said Sophia, "Mr. Jones is as entirely indifferent to me, as the gentleman who just now left us."

"Upon my honour," said Lady Bellaston, "I believe it. Forgive me, therefore, a little innocent raillery; but I promise you I will never mention his name any more."

And now the two ladies separated, infinitely more to the delight of Sophia than of Lady Bellaston, who would willingly have tormented her rival a little longer, had not business of more importance called her away. As for Sophia, her mind was not perfectly easy under this first practice of deceit; upon which, when she retired to her chamber, she reflected with the highest uneasiness and conscious shame. Nor could the peculiar

hardship of her situation, and the necessity of the case, at all reconcile her mind to her conduct; for the frame of her mind was too delicate to bear the thought of having been guilty of a falsehood, however qualified by circumstances. Nor did this thought once suffer her to close her eyes during the whole succeeding night.

BOOK XIV

CHAPTER I

AN ESSAY TO PROVE THAT AN AUTHOR WILL WRITE THE BETTER FOR HAVING SOME KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT ON WHICH HE WRITES

As several gentlemen in these times, by the wonderful force of genius only, without the least assistance of learning, perhaps without being well able to read, have made a considerable figure in the republic of letters; the modern critics, I am told, have lately begun to assert, that all kind of learning is entirely useless to a writer; and, indeed, no other than a kind of fetters on the natural sprightliness and activity of the imagination, which is thus weighed down, and prevented from soaring to those high flights which otherwise it would be able to reach.

This doctrine, I am afraid, is at present carried much too far: far why should writing differ so much from all other arts? The nimbleness of a dancing-master is not at all prejudiced by being taught to move; nor doth any mechanic, I believe, exercise his tools the worse by having learnt to use them. For my own part, I cannot conceive that Homer or Virgil would have writ with more fire, if, instead of being masters of all the learning of their times, they had been as ignorant as most of the authors of the present age. Nor do I believe that all the imagination, fire, and judgment of Pitt, could have produced those orations that have made the senate of England, in these our times, a rival in eloquence to Greece and Rome, if he had not been so well read in the writings of Demosthenes and Cicero, as to have transferred their whole spirit into his speeches, and, with their spirit, their knowledge too.

I would not here be understood to insist on the same fund of learning in any of my brethren, as Cicero persuades us is necessary to the composition of an orator. On the contrary, very little reading is, I conceive, necessary to the poet, less to the critic, and the least of all to the politician. For the first, perhaps, Byshe's Art of Poetry, and a few of our modern poets, may suffice; for the second, a moderate heap of plays; and, for the last, an indifferent collection of political journals.

To say the truth, I require no more than that a man should have some little knowledge of the subject on which he treats,