

Mr. Jones, and partly out of regard to your sister, would never have it mentioned, and did intend to conceal it from the world; and therefore, sir, if you had not mentioned it to me first, I am certain I should never have thought it belonged to me to say anything of the matter, either to your worship or any other person."

We have remarked somewhere already, that it is possible for a man to convey a lie in the words of truth; this was the case at present; for Blifil had, in fact, told Dowling what he now related, but had not imposed upon him, nor indeed had imagined he was able so to do. In reality, the promises which Blifil had made to Dowling, were the motives which had induced him to secrecy; and, as he now very plainly saw Blifil would not be able to keep them, he thought proper now to make this confession, which the promises of forgiveness, joined to the threats, the voice, the looks of Allworthy, and the discoveries he had made before, extorted from him, who was besides taken unawares, and had no time to consider of evasions.

Allworthy appeared well satisfied with this relation, and, having enjoined on Dowling strict silence as to what had past, conducted that gentleman himself to the door, lest he should see Blifil, who was returned to his chamber, where he exulted in the thoughts of his last deceit on his uncle, and little suspected what had since passed below-stairs.

As Allworthy was returning to his room, he met Mrs. Miller in the entry, who, with a face all pale and full of terror, said to him, "O! sir, I find this wicked woman hath been with you, and you know all; yet do not on this account abandon the poor young man. Consider, sir, he was ignorant it was his own mother; and the discovery itself will most probably break his heart, without your unkindness."

"Madam," says Allworthy, "I am under such an astonishment at what I have heard, that I am really unable to satisfy you; but come with me into my room. Indeed, Mrs. Miller, I have made surprising discoveries, and you shall soon know them."

The poor woman followed him trembling; and now Allworthy, going up to Mrs. Waters, took her by the hand, and then, turning to Mrs. Miller, said, "What reward shall I bestow upon this gentlewoman, for the services she hath done me?—O! Mrs. Miller, you have a thousand times heard me call the young man to whom you are so faithful a friend, my son. Little did I then think he was indeed related to me at all.—Your

friend, madam, is my nephew; he is the brother of that wicked viper which I have so long nourished in my bosom.—She will herself tell you the whole story, and how the youth came to pass for her son. Indeed, Mrs. Miller, I am convinced that he hath been wronged, and that I have been abused; abused by one whom you too justly suspected of being a villain. He is, in truth, the worst of villains."

The joy which Mrs. Miller now felt, bereft her of the power of speech, and might perhaps have deprived her of her senses, if not of life, had not a friendly shower of tears come seasonably to her relief. At length, recovering so far from her transport as to be able to speak, she cried, "And is my dear Mr. Jones then your nephew, sir, and not the son of this lady? And are your eyes opened to him at last? And shall I live to see him as happy as he deserves?" "He certainly is my nephew," says Allworthy, "and I hope all the rest."—"And is this the dear good woman, the person," cries she, "to whom all this discovery is owing?"—"She is indeed," says Allworthy.—"Why, then," cried Mrs. Miller, upon her knees, "may Heaven shower down its choicest blessings upon her head, and for this one good action forgive her all her sins, be they never so many!"

Mrs. Waters then informed them that she believed Jones would very shortly be released; for that the surgeon was gone, in company with a nobleman, to the justice who committed him, in order to certify that Mr. Fitzpatrick was out of all manner of danger, and to procure his prisoner his liberty.

Allworthy said he should be glad to find his nephew there at his return home; but that he was then obliged to go on some business of consequence. He then called to a servant to fetch him a chair, and presently left the two ladies together.

Mr. Blifil, hearing the chair ordered, came downstairs to attend upon his uncle; for he never was deficient in such acts of duty. He asked his uncle if he was going out, which is a civil way of asking a man whither he is going: to which the other making no answer, he again desired to know when he would be pleased to return?—Allworthy made no answer to this neither, till he was just going into his chair, and then, turning about, he said—"Harkee, sir, do you find out, before my return, the letter which your mother sent me on her death-bed." Allworthy then departed, and left Blifil in a situation to be envied only by a man who is just going to be hanged.

CHAPTER IX

A FURTHER CONTINUATION

ALLWORTHY took an opportunity, whilst he was in the chair, of reading the letter from Jones to Sophia, which Western delivered him; and there were some expressions in it concerning himself which drew tears from his eyes. At length he arrived at Mr. Western's, and was introduced to Sophia.

When the first ceremonies were past, and the gentleman and lady had taken their chairs, a silence of some minutes ensued; during which the latter, who had been prepared for the visit by her father, sat playing with her fan, and had every mark of confusion both in her countenance and behaviour. At length Allworthy, who was himself a little disconcerted, began thus: "I am afraid, Miss Western, my family hath been the occasion of giving you some uneasiness; to which, I fear, I have innocently become more instrumental than I intended. Be assured, madam, had I at first known how disagreeable the proposals had been, I should not have suffered you to have been so long persecuted. I hope, therefore, you will not think the design of this visit is to trouble you with any further solicitations of that kind, but entirely to relieve you from them."

"Sir," said Sophia, with a little modest hesitation, "this behaviour is most kind and generous, and such as I could expect only from Mr. Allworthy; but as you have been so kind to mention this matter, you will pardon me for saying, it hath, indeed, given me great uneasiness, and hath been the occasion of my suffering much cruel treatment from a father, who was, till that unhappy affair, the tenderest and fondest of all parents. I am convinced, sir, you are too good and generous to resent my refusal of your nephew. Our inclinations are not in our own power; and whatever may be his merit, I cannot force them in his favour." "I assure you, most amiable young lady," said Allworthy, "I am capable of no such resentment, had the person been my own son, and had I entertained the highest esteem for him. For you say truly, madam, we cannot force our inclinations, much less can they be directed by another." "Oh! sir," answered Sophia, "every word you speak proves you deserve that good, that great, that benevolent character the whole world allows you. I assure you, sir, nothing less than the certain prospect of future misery could have made me resist the commands

of my father." "I sincerely believe you, madam," replied Allworthy, "and I heartily congratulate you on your prudent foresight, since by so justifiable a resistance you have avoided misery indeed!" "You speak now, Mr. Allworthy," cries she, "with a delicacy which few men are capable of feeling! but surely, in my opinion, to lead our lives with one to whom we are indifferent must be a state of wretchedness.—Perhaps that wretchedness would be even increased by a sense of the merits of an object to whom we cannot give our affections. If I had married Mr. Blifil—" "Pardon my interrupting you, madam," answered Allworthy, "but I cannot bear the supposition.—Believe me, Miss Western, I rejoice from my heart, I rejoice in your escape.—I have discovered the wretch for whom you have suffered all this cruel violence from your father to be a villain." "How, sir!" cries Sophia—"you must believe this surprizes me."—"It hath surprized me, madam," answered Allworthy, "and so it will the world.—But I have acquainted you with the real truth." "Nothing but truth," says Sophia, "can, I am convinced, come from the lips of Mr. Allworthy.—Yet, sir, such sudden, such unexpected news—Discovered, you say—may villany be ever so!"—"You will soon enough hear the story," cries Allworthy;—"at present let us not mention so detested a name.—I have another matter of a very serious nature to propose.—O! Miss Western, I know your vast worth, nor can I so easily part with the ambition of being allied to it.—I have a near relation, madam, a young man whose character is, I am convinced, the very opposite to that of this wretch, and whose fortune I will make equal to what his was to have been. Could I, madam, hope you would admit a visit from him?" Sophia, after a minute's silence, answered, "I will deal with the utmost sincerity with Mr. Allworthy. His character, and the obligation I have just received from him, demand it. I have determined at present to listen to no such proposals from any person. My only desire is to be restored to the affection of my father, and to be again the mistress of his family. This, sir, I hope to owe to your good offices. Let me beseech you, let me conjure you, by all the goodness which I, and all who know you, have experienced, do not, the very moment when you have released me from one persecution, do not engage me in another as miserable and as fruitless." "Indeed, Miss Western," replied Allworthy, "I am capable of no such conduct; and if this be your resolution, he must submit to the disappointment, whatever torments he may suffer under it." "I must smile now, Mr. All-

worthy," answered Sophia, "when you mention the torments of a man whom I do not know, and who can consequently have so little acquaintance with me." "Pardon me, dear young lady," cries Allworthy, "I begin now to be afraid he hath had too much acquaintance for the repose of his future days; since, if ever man was capable of a sincere, violent, and noble passion, such, I am convinced, is my unhappy nephew's for Miss Western." "A nephew of your's, Mr. Allworthy!" answered Sophia. "It is surely strange. I never heard of him before." "Indeed, madam," cries Allworthy, "it is only the circumstance of his being my nephew to which you are a stranger, and which, till this day, was a secret to me.—Mr. Jones, who has long loved you, he! he is my nephew!" "Mr. Jones your nephew, sir!" cries Sophia, "can it be possible?"—"He is, indeed, madam," answered Allworthy; "he is my own sister's son—as such I shall always own him; nor am I ashamed of owning him. I am much more ashamed of my past behaviour to him; but I was as ignorant of his merit as of his birth. Indeed, Miss Western, I have used him cruelly—Indeed I have."—Here the good man wiped his eyes, and after a short pause proceeded—"I never shall be able to reward him for his sufferings without your assistance.—Believe me, most amiable young lady, I must have a great esteem of that offering which I make to your worth. I know he hath been guilty of faults; but there is great goodness of heart at the bottom. Believe me, madam, there is." Here he stopped, seeming to expect an answer, which he presently received from Sophia, after she had a little recovered herself from the hurry of spirits into which so strange and sudden information had thrown her: "I sincerely wish you joy, sir, of a discovery in which you seem to have such satisfaction. I doubt not but you will have all the comfort you can promise yourself from it. The young gentleman hath certainly a thousand good qualities, which makes it impossible he should not behave well to such an uncle."—"I hope, madam," said Allworthy, "he hath those good qualities which must make him a good husband.—He must, I am sure, be of all men the most abandoned, if a lady of your merit should condescend—" "You must pardon me, Mr. Allworthy," answered Sophia; "I cannot listen to a proposal of this kind. Mr. Jones, I am convinced, hath much merit; but I shall never receive Mr. Jones as one who is to be my husband—Upon my honour I never will."—"Pardon me, madam," cries Allworthy, "if I am a little surprized, after what I have heard from Mr. Western—I hope the unhappy young man hath done nothing

to forfeit your good opinion, if he had ever the honour to enjoy it.—Perhaps, he may have been misrepresented to you, as he was to me. The same villany may have injured him everywhere.—He is no murderer, I assure you; as he hath been called." "Mr. Allworthy," answered Sophia, "I have told you my resolution. I wonder not at what my father hath told you; but, whatever his apprehensions or fears have been, if I know my heart, I have given no occasion for them; since it hath always been a fixed principle with me, never to have married without his consent. This is, I think, the duty of a child to a parent; and this, I hope, nothing could ever have prevailed with me to swerve from. I do not indeed conceive that the authority of any parent can oblige us to marry in direct opposition to our inclinations. To avoid a force of this kind, which I had reason to suspect, I left my father's house, and sought protection elsewhere. This is the truth of my story; and if the world, or my father, carry my intentions any farther, my own conscience will acquit me." "I hear you, Miss Western," cries Allworthy, "with admiration. I admire the justness of your sentiments; but surely there is more in this. I am cautious of offending you, young lady; but am I to look on all which I have hitherto heard or seen as a dream only? And have you suffered so much cruelty from your father on the account of a man to whom you have been always absolutely indifferent?" "I beg, Mr. Allworthy," answered Sophia, "you will not insist on my reasons;—yes, I have suffered indeed; I will not, Mr. Allworthy, conceal—I will be very sincere with you—I own I had a great opinion of Mr. Jones—I believe—I know I have suffered for my opinion—I have been treated cruelly by my aunt, as well as by my father; but that is now past—I beg I may not be farther pressed; for, whatever hath been, my resolution is now fixed. Your nephew, sir, hath many virtues—he hath great virtues, Mr. Allworthy. I question not but he will do you honour in the world, and make you happy."—"I wish I could make him so, madam," replied Allworthy; "but that I am convinced is only in your power. It is that conviction which hath made me so earnest a solicitor in his favour." "You are deceived; indeed, sir, you are deceived," said Sophia. "I hope not by him. It is sufficient to have deceived me. Mr. Allworthy, I must insist on being pressed no farther on this subject. I should be sorry—nay, I will not injure him in your favour. I wish Mr. Jones very well. I sincerely wish him well; and I repeat it again to you, whatever demerit he may have to me, I am certain he hath many good qualities. I do not disown my former

thoughts; but nothing can ever recal them. At present there is not a man upon earth whom I would more resolutely reject than Mr. Jones; nor would the addresses of Mr. Blifil himself be less agreeable to me."

Western had been long impatient for the event of this conference, and was just now arrived at the door to listen; when, having heard the last sentiments of his daughter's heart, he lost all temper, and, bursting open the door in a rage, cried out—"It is a lie! It is a d—n'd lie! It is all owing to that d—n'd rascal Jones; and if she could get at un, she'd ha un any hour of the day." Here Allworthy interposed, and addressing himself to the squire with some anger in his look, he said, "Mr. Western, you have not kept your word with me. You promised to abstain from all violence."—"Why, so I did," cries Western, "as long as it was possible; but to hear a wench telling such confounded lies—Zounds! doth she think, if she can make vools of other volk, she can make one of me?—No, no, I know her better than thee dost." "I am sorry to tell you, sir," answered Allworthy, "it doth not appear, by your behaviour to this young lady, that you know her at all. I ask pardon for what I say: but I think our intimacy, your own desires, and the occasion justify me. She is your daughter, Mr. Western, and I think she doth honour to your name. If I was capable of envy, I should sooner envy you on this account than any other man whatever."—"Odrabbit it!" cries the squire, "I wish she was thine, with all my heart—wouldst soon be glad to be rid of the trouble o' her." "Indeed, my good friend," answered Allworthy, "you yourself are the cause of all the trouble you complain of. Place that confidence in the young lady which she so well deserves, and I am certain you will be the happiest father on earth."—"I confidence in her?" cries the squire. "'Sblood! what confidence can I place in her, when she won't do as I would ha' her? Let her gi' but her consent to marry as I would ha' her, and I'll place as much confidence in her as wouldst ha' me."—"You have no right, neighbour," answered Allworthy, "to insist on any such consent. A negative voice your daughter allows you, and God and nature have thought proper to allow you no more."—"A negative voice!" cries the squire. "Ay! ay! I'll show you what a negative voice I ha.—Go along, go into your chamber, go, you stubborn—." "Indeed, Mr. Western," said Allworthy, "indeed you use her cruelly—I cannot bear to see this—you shall, you must behave to her in a kinder manner. She deserves the best of treatment." "Yes, yes," said the squire, "I know what

she deserves: now she's gone, I'll shew you what she deserves. See here, sir, here is a letter from my cousin, my Lady Bellaston, in which she is so kind to gi' me to understand that the fellow is got out of prison again; and here she advises me to take all the care I can o' the wench. Odzookers! neighbour Allworthy, you don't know what it is to govern a daughter."

The squire ended his speech with some compliments to his own sagacity; and then Allworthy, after a formal preface, acquainted him with the whole discovery which he had made concerning Jones, with his anger to Blifil, and with every particular which hath been disclosed to the reader in the preceding chapters.

Men over-violent in their dispositions are, for the most part, as changeable in them. No sooner then was Western informed of Mr. Allworthy's intention to make Jones his heir, than he joined heartily with the uncle in every commendation of the nephew, and became as eager for her marriage with Jones, as he had before been to couple her to Blifil.

Here Mr. Allworthy was again forced to interpose, and to relate what had passed between him and Sophia, at which he testified great surprize.

The squire was silent a moment, and looked wild with astonishment at this account.—At last he cried out, "Why, what can be the meaning of this, neighbour Allworthy? Vond o' un she was, that I'll be sworn to.—Odzookers! I have hit o't. As sure as a gun I have hit o' the very right o't. It's all along o' zister. The girl hath got a hankering after this son of a whore of a lord. I vound 'em together at my cousin, my Lady Bellaston's. He hath turned the head o' her, that's certain—but d—n me if he shall ha her—I'll ha no lords nor courtiers in my vamily."

Allworthy now made a long speech, in which he repeated his resolution to avoid all violent measures, and very earnestly recommended gentle methods to Mr. Western, as those by which he might be assured of succeeding best with his daughter. He then took his leave, and returned back to Mrs. Miller, but was forced to comply with the earnest entreaties of the squire, in promising to bring Mr. Jones to visit him that afternoon, that he might, as he said, "make all matters up with the young gentleman." At Mr. Allworthy's departure, Western promised to follow his advice in his behaviour to Sophia, saying, "I don't know how 'tis, but d—n me, Allworthy, if you don't make me always do just as you please; and yet I have as good an estate as you, and am in the commission of the peace as well as yourself."

CHAPTER X

WHEREIN THE HISTORY BEGINS TO DRAW TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

WHEN Allworthy returned to his lodgings, he heard Mr. Jones was just arrived before him. He hurried therefore instantly into an empty chamber, whither he ordered Mr. Jones to be brought to him alone.

It is impossible to conceive a more tender or moving scene than the meeting between the uncle and nephew (for Mrs. Waters, as the reader may well suppose, had at her last visit discovered to him the secret of his birth). The first agonies of joy which were felt on both sides are, indeed, beyond my power to describe: I shall not therefore attempt it. After Allworthy had raised Jones from his feet, where he had prostrated himself, and received him into his arms, "O my child!" he cried, "how have I been to blame! how have I injured you! What amends can I ever make you for those unkind, those unjust suspicions which I have entertained, and for all the sufferings they have occasioned to you?" "Am I not now made amends?" cries Jones. "Would not my sufferings, if they had been ten times greater, have been now richly repaid? O my dear uncle, this goodness, this tenderness, overpowers, unmans, destroys me. I cannot bear the transports which flow so fast upon me. To be again restored to your presence, to your favour; to be once more thus kindly received by my great, my noble, my generous benefactor."—"Indeed, child," cries Allworthy, "I have used you cruelly."—He then explained to him all the treachery of Blifil, and again repeated expressions of the utmost concern, for having been induced by that treachery to use him so ill. "O, talk not so!" answered Jones; "indeed, sir, you have used me nobly. The wisest man might be deceived as you were; and, under such a deception, the best must have acted just as you did. Your goodness displayed itself in the midst of your anger, just as it then seemed. I owe everything to that goodness, of which I have been most unworthy. Do not put me on self-accusation, by carrying your generous sentiments too far. Alas! sir, I have not been punished more than I have deserved; and it shall be the whole business of my future life to deserve that happiness you now bestow on me; for, believe me, my dear uncle, my punishment hath not been thrown away upon me: though I have been a great, I am not a hardened sinner; I thank Heaven, I have had time to reflect on

my past life, where, though I cannot charge myself with any gross villany, yet I can discern follies and vices more than enough to repent and to be ashamed of; follies which have been attended with dreadful consequences to myself, and have brought me to the brink of destruction." "I am rejoiced, my dear child," answered Allworthy, "to hear you talk thus sensibly; for as I am convinced hypocrisy (good Heaven! how have I been imposed on by it in others!) was never among your faults, so I can readily believe all you say. You now see, Tom, to what dangers imprudence alone may subject virtue (for virtue, I am now convinced, you love in a great degree). Prudence is indeed the duty which we owe to ourselves; and if we will be so much our own enemies as to neglect it, we are not to wonder if the world is deficient in discharging their duty to us; for when a man lays the foundation of his own ruin, others will, I am afraid, be too apt to build upon it. You say, however, you have seen your errors, and will reform them. I firmly believe you, my dear child; and therefore, from this moment, you shall never be reminded of them by me. Remember them only yourself so far as for the future to teach you the better to avoid them; but still remember, for your comfort, that there is this great difference between those faults which candor may construe into imprudence, and those which can be deduced from villany only. The former, perhaps, are even more apt to subject a man to ruin; but if he reform, his character will, at length, be totally retrieved; the world, though not immediately, will in time be reconciled to him; and he may reflect, not without some mixture of pleasure, on the dangers he hath escaped; but villany, my boy, when once discovered, is irretrievable; the stains which this leaves behind, no time will wash away. The censures of mankind will pursue the wretch, their scorn will abash him in publick; and if shame drives him into retirement, he will go to it with all those terrors with which a weary child, who is afraid of hobgoblins, retreats from company to go to bed alone. Here his murdered conscience will haunt him.—Repose, like a false friend, will fly from him. Wherever he turns his eyes, horror presents itself; if he looks backward, unavailable repentance treads on his heels; if forward, incurable despair stares him in the face, till, like a condemned prisoner confined in a dungeon, he detests his present condition, and yet dreads the consequence of that hour which is to relieve him from it. Comfort yourself, I say, my child, that this is not your case; and rejoice with thankfulness to him who hath suffered you to see your errors, before they have brought on

you that destruction to which a persistence in even those errors must have led you. You have deserted them; and the prospect now before you is such, that happiness seems in your own power." At these words Jones fetched a deep sigh; upon which, when Allworthy remonstrated, he said, "Sir, I will conceal nothing from you: I fear there is one consequence of my vices I shall never be able to retrieve. O, my dear uncle! I have lost a treasure." "You need say no more," answered Allworthy; "I will be explicit with you; I know what you lament; I have seen the young lady, and have discoursed with her concerning you. This I must insist on, as an earnest of your sincerity in all you have said, and of the stedfastness of your resolution, that you obey me in one instance. To abide intirely by the determination of the young lady, whether it shall be in your favour or no. She hath already suffered enough from solicitations which I hate to think of; she shall owe no further constraint to my family: I know her father will be as ready to torment her now on your account as he hath formerly been on another's; but I am determined she shall suffer no more confinement, no more violence, no more uneasy hours." "O, my dear uncle!" answered Jones, "lay, I beseech you, some command on me, in which I shall have some merit in obedience. Believe me, sir, the only instance in which I could disobey you would be to give an uneasy moment to my Sophia. No, sir, if I am so miserable to have incurred her displeasure beyond all hope of forgiveness, that alone, with the dreadful reflection of causing her misery, will be sufficient to overpower me. To call Sophia mine is the greatest, and now the only additional blessing which heaven can bestow; but it is a blessing which I must owe to her alone." "I will not flatter you, child," cries Allworthy; "I fear your case is desperate: I never saw stronger marks of an unalterable resolution in any person than appeared in her vehement declarations against receiving your addresses; for which, perhaps, you can account better than myself." "Oh, sir! I can account too well," answered Jones; "I have sinned against her beyond all hope of pardon; and guilty as I am, my guilt unfortunately appears to her in ten times blacker than the real colours. O, my dear uncle! I find my follies are irretrievable; and all your goodness cannot save me from perdition."

A servant now acquainted them that Mr. Western was below-stairs; for his eagerness to see Jones could not wait till the afternoon. Upon which Jones, whose eyes were full of tears, begged his uncle to entertain Western a few minutes, till he a

little recovered himself; to which the good man consented, and, having ordered Mr. Western to be shewn into a parlour, went down to him.

Mrs. Miller no sooner heard that Jones was alone (for she had not yet seen him since his release from prison) than she came eagerly into the room, and, advancing towards Jones, wished him heartily joy of his new-found uncle and his happy reconciliation; adding, "I wish I could give you joy on another account, my dear child; but anything so inexorable I never saw."

Jones, with some appearance of surprize, asked her what she meant. "Why then," says she, "I have been with the young lady, and have explained all matters to her, as they were told to me by my son Nightingale. She can have no longer any doubt about the letter; of that I am certain; for I told her my son Nightingale was ready to take his oath, if she pleased, that it was all his own invention, and the letter of his inditing. I told her the very reason of sending the letter ought to recommend you to her the more, as it was all upon her account, and a plain proof that you was resolved to quit all your profligacy for the future; that you had never been guilty of a single instance of infidelity to her since your seeing her in town: I am afraid I went too far there; but Heaven forgive me! I hope your future behaviour will be my justification. I am sure I have said all I can; but all to no purpose. She remains inflexible. She says, she had forgiven many faults on account of youth; but expressed such detestation of the character of a libertine, that she absolutely silenced me. I often attempted to excuse you; but the justness of her accusation flew in my face. Upon my honour, she is a lovely woman, and one of the sweetest and most sensible creatures I ever saw. I could have almost kissed her for one expression she made use of. It was a sentiment worthy of Seneca, or of a bishop. 'I once fancied, madam,' said she, 'I had discovered great goodness of heart in Mr. Jones; and for that I own I had a sincere esteem; but an entire profligacy of manners will corrupt the best heart in the world; and all which a good-natured libertine can expect is, that we should mix some grains of pity with our contempt and abhorrence.' She is an angelic creature, that is the truth on't." "O, Mrs. Miller!" answered Jones, "can I bear to think I have lost such an angel?" "Lost! no," cries Mrs. Miller; "I hope you have not lost her yet. Resolve to leave such vicious courses, and you may yet have hopes; nay, if she should remain inexorable, there is another young lady, a sweet

pretty young lady, and a swinging fortune, who is absolutely dying for love of you. I heard of it this very morning, and I told it to Miss Western; nay, I went a little beyond the truth again; for I told her you had refused her; but indeed I knew you would refuse her. And here I must give you a little comfort; when I mentioned the young lady's name, who is no other than the pretty widow Hunt, I thought she turned pale; but when I said you had refused her, I will be sworn her face was all over scarlet in an instant; and these were her very words: 'I will not deny but that I believe he has some affection for me.'

Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Western, who could no longer be kept out of the room even by the authority of Allworthy himself; though this, as we have often seen, had a wonderful power over him.

Western immediately went up to Jones, crying out, "My old friend Tom, I am glad to see thee with all my heart! all past must be forgotten; I could not intend any affront to thee, because, as Allworthy here knows, nay, dost know it thyself, I took thee for another person; and where a body means no harm, what signifies a hasty word or two? One Christian must forget and forgive another." "I hope, sir," said Jones, "I shall never forget the many obligations I have had to you; but as for any offence towards me, I declare I am an utter stranger." "A't," says Western, "then give me thy fist; a't as hearty an honest cock as any in the kingdom. Come along with me; I'll carry thee to thy mistress this moment." Here Allworthy interposed; and the squire being unable to prevail either with the uncle or nephew, was, after some litigation, obliged to consent to delay introducing Jones to Sophia till the afternoon; at which time Allworthy, as well in compassion to Jones as in compliance with the eager desires of Western, was prevailed upon to promise to attend at the tea-table.

The conversation which now ensued was pleasant enough; and with which, had it happened earlier in our history, we would have entertained our reader; but as we have now leisure only to attend to what is very material, it shall suffice to say, that matters being entirely adjusted as to the afternoon visit, Mr. Western again returned home.

CHAPTER XI

THE HISTORY DRAWS NEARER TO A CONCLUSION

WHEN Mr. Western was departed, Jones began to inform Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Miller that his liberty had been procured by two noble lords, who, together with two surgeons and a friend of Mr. Nightingale's, had attended the magistrate by whom he had been committed, and by whom, on the surgeons' oaths, that the wounded person was out of all manner of danger from his wound, he was discharged.

One only of these lords, he said, he had ever seen before, and that no more than once; but the other had greatly surprized him, by asking his pardon for an offence he had been guilty of towards him, occasioned, he said, entirely by his ignorance who he was.

Now the reality of the case, with which Jones was not acquainted till afterwards, was this:—The lieutenant whom Lord Fellamar had employed, according to the advice of Lady Bellaston, to press Jones as a vagabond into the sea-service, when he came to report to his lordship the event which we have before seen, spoke very favourably of the behaviour of Mr. Jones on all accounts, and strongly assured that lord that he must have mistaken the person, for that Jones was certainly a gentleman; insomuch that his lordship, who was strictly a man of honour, and would by no means have been guilty of an action which the world in general would have condemned, began to be much concerned for the advice which he had taken.

Within a day or two after this, Lord Fellamar happened to dine with the Irish peer, who, in a conversation upon the duel, acquainted his company with the character of Fitzpatrick; to which, indeed, he did not do strict justice, especially in what related to his lady. He said she was the most innocent, the most injured woman alive, and that from compassion alone he had undertaken her cause. He then declared an intention of going the next morning to Fitzpatrick's lodgings, in order to prevail with him, if possible, to consent to a separation from his wife, who, the peer said, was in apprehensions for her life, if she should ever return to be under the power of her husband. Lord Fellamar agreed to go with him, that he might satisfy himself more concerning Jones and the circumstances of the duel; for he was by no means easy concerning the part he had acted. The moment

his lordship gave a hint of his readiness to assist in the delivery of the lady, it was eagerly embraced by the other nobleman, who depended much on the authority of Lord Fellamar, as he thought it would greatly contribute to awe Fitzpatrick into a compliance; and perhaps he was in the right; for the poor Irishman no sooner saw these noble peers had undertaken the cause of his wife, than he submitted, and articles of separation were soon drawn up and signed between the parties.

Fitzpatrick, who had been so well satisfied by Mrs. Waters concerning the innocence of his wife with Jones at Upton, or, perhaps, from some other reasons, was now become so indifferent to that matter, that he spoke highly in favour of Jones to Lord Fellamar, took all the blame upon himself, and said the other had behaved very much like a gentleman and a man of honour; and upon that lord's further inquiry concerning Mr. Jones, Fitzpatrick told him he was nephew to a gentleman of very great fashion and fortune, which was the account he had just received from Mrs. Waters after her interview with Dowling.

Lord Fellamar now thought it behoved him to do everything in his power to make satisfaction to a gentleman whom he had so grossly injured, and without any consideration of rivalry (for he had now given over all thoughts of Sophia), determined to procure Mr. Jones's liberty, being satisfied, as well from Fitzpatrick as his surgeon, that the wound was not mortal. He therefore prevailed with the Irish peer to accompany him to the place where Jones was confined, to whom he behaved as we have already related.

When Allworthy returned to his lodgings, he immediately carried Jones into his room, and then acquainted him with the whole matter, as well what he had heard from Mrs. Waters as what he had discovered from Mr. Dowling.

Jones expressed great astonishment and no less concern at this account, but without making any comment or observation upon it. And now a message was brought from Mr. Blifil, desiring to know if his uncle was at leisure, that he might wait upon him. Allworthy started and turned pale, and then in a more passionate tone than I believe he had ever used before, bid the servant tell Blifil he knew him not. "Consider, dear sir," cries Jones, in a trembling voice. "I have considered," answered Allworthy, "and you yourself shall carry my message to the villain. No one can carry him the sentence of his own ruin so properly, as the man whose ruin he hath so villanously contrived." "Pardon me, dear sir," said Jones; "a moment's

reflection will, I am sure, convince you of the contrary. What might perhaps be but justice from another tongue, would from mine be insult; and to whom?—my own brother and your nephew. Nor did he use me so barbarously—indeed, that would have been more inexcusable than anything he hath done. Fortune may tempt men of no very bad dispositions to injustice; but insults proceed only from black and rancorous minds, and have no temptations to excuse them. Let me beseech you, sir, to do nothing by him in the present height of your anger. Consider, my dear uncle, I was not myself condemned unheard." Allworthy stood silent a moment, and then, embracing Jones, he said, with tears gushing from his eyes, "O my child! to what goodness have I been so long blind!"

Mrs. Miller entering the room at that moment, after a gentle rap which was not perceived, and seeing Jones in the arms of his uncle, the poor woman in an agony of joy fell upon her knees, and burst forth into the most ecstatic thanksgivings to heaven for what had happened; then, running to Jones, she embraced him eagerly, crying, "My dearest friend, I wish you joy a thousand and a thousand times of this blest day." And next Mr. Allworthy himself received the same congratulations. To which he answered, "Indeed, indeed, Mrs. Miller, I am beyond expression happy." Some few more raptures having passed on all sides, Mrs. Miller desired them both to walk down to dinner in the parlour, where she said there were a very happy set of people assembled—being indeed no other than Mr. Nightingale and his bride, and his cousin Harriet with her bridegroom.

Allworthy excused himself from dining with the company, saying he had ordered some little thing for him and his nephew in his own apartment, for that they had much private business to discourse of; but would not resist promising the good woman that both he and Jones would make part of her society at supper.

Mrs. Miller then asked what was to be done with Blifil? "for indeed," says she, "I cannot be easy while such a villain is in my house."—Allworthy answered, "He was as uneasy as herself on the same account." "Oh!" cries she, "if that be the case, leave the matter to me, I'll soon show him the outside out of my doors, I warrant you. Here are two or three lusty fellows below-stairs." "There will be no need of any violence," cries Allworthy; "if you will carry him a message from me, he will, I am convinced, depart of his own accord." "Will I?" said Mrs. Miller; "I never did anything in my life with a better will." Here Jones interfered, and said, "He had considered the matter

better, and would, if Mr. Allworthy pleased, be himself the messenger. I know," says he, "already enough of your pleasure, sir, and I beg leave to acquaint him with it by my own words. Let me beseech you, sir," added he, "to reflect on the dreadful consequences of driving him to violent and sudden despair. How unfit, alas! is this poor man to die in his present situation." This suggestion had not the least effect on Mrs. Miller. She left the room, crying, "You are too good, Mr. Jones, infinitely too good to live in this world." But it made a deeper impression on Allworthy. "My good child," said he, "I am equally astonished at the goodness of your heart, and the quickness of your understanding. Heaven indeed forbid that this wretch should be deprived of any means or time for repentance! That would be a shocking consideration indeed. Go to him, therefore, and use your own discretion; yet do not flatter him with any hopes of my forgiveness; for I shall never forgive villany farther than my religion obliges me, and that extends not either to our bounty or our conversation."

Jones went up to Blifil's room, whom he found in a situation which moved his pity, though it would have raised a less amiable passion in many beholders. He had cast himself on his bed, where he lay abandoning himself to despair, and drowned in tears; not in such tears as flow from contrition, and wash away guilt from minds which have been seduced or surprized into it unawares, against the bent of their natural dispositions, as will sometimes happen from human frailty, even to the good; no, these tears were such as the frightened thief sheds in his cart, and are indeed the effects of that concern which the most savage natures are seldom deficient in feeling for themselves.

It would be unpleasant and tedious to paint this scene in full length. Let it suffice to say, that the behaviour of Jones was kind to excess. He omitted nothing which his invention could supply, to raise and comfort the drooping spirits of Blifil, before he communicated to him the resolution of his uncle that he must quit the house that evening. He offered to furnish him with any money he wanted, assured him of his hearty forgiveness of all he had done against him, that he would endeavour to live with him hereafter as a brother, and would leave nothing unattempted to effectuate a reconciliation with his uncle.

Blifil was at first sullen and silent, balancing in his mind whether he should yet deny all; but, finding at last the evidence too strong against him, he betook himself at last to confession. He then asked pardon of his brother in the most vehement

manner, prostrated himself on the ground, and kissed his feet; in short, he was now as remarkably mean as he had been before remarkably wicked.

Jones could not so far check his disdain, but that it a little discovered itself in his countenance at this extreme servility. He raised his brother the moment he could from the ground, and advised him to bear his afflictions more like a man; repeating, at the same time, his promises, that he would do all in his power to lessen them; for which Blifil, making many professions of his unworthiness, poured forth a profusion of thanks; and then, he having declared he would immediately depart to another lodging, Jones returned to his uncle.

Among other matters, Allworthy now acquainted Jones with the discovery which he had made concerning the £500 bank-notes. "I have," said he, "already consulted a lawyer, who tells me, to my great astonishment, that there is no punishment for a fraud of this kind. Indeed, when I consider the black ingratitude of this fellow toward you, I think a highwayman, compared to him, is an innocent person."

"Good Heaven!" says Jones, "is it possible?—I am shocked beyond measure at this news. I thought there was not an honest fellow in the world.—The temptation of such a sum was too great for him to withstand; for smaller matters have come safe to me through his hand. Indeed, my dear uncle, you must suffer me to call it weakness rather than ingratitude; for I am convinced the poor fellow loves me, and hath done me some kindnesses, which I can never forget; nay, I believe he hath repented of this very act; for it is not above a day or two ago, when my affairs seemed in the most desperate situation, that he visited me in my confinement, and offered me any money I wanted. Consider, sir, what a temptation to a man who hath tasted such bitter distress, it must be, to have a sum in his possession which must put him and his family beyond any future possibility of suffering the like."

"Child," cries Allworthy, "you carry this forgiving temper too far. Such mistaken mercy is not only weakness, but borders on injustice, and is very pernicious to society, as it encourages vice. The dishonesty of this fellow I might, perhaps, have pardoned, but never his ingratitude. And give me leave to say, when we suffer any temptation to atone for dishonesty itself, we are as candid and merciful as we ought to be; and so far I confess I have gone; for I have often pitied the fate of a highwayman, when I have been on the grand jury; and have more

than once applied to the judge on the behalf of such as have had any mitigating circumstances in their case; but when dishonesty is attended with any blacker crime, such as cruelty, murder, ingratitude, or the like, compassion and forgiveness then become faults. I am convinced the fellow is a villain, and he shall be punished; at least as far as I can punish him."

This was spoken with so stern a voice, that Jones did not think proper to make any reply; besides, the hour appointed by Mr. Western now drew so near, that he had barely time left to dress himself. Here therefore ended the present dialogue, and Jones retired to another room, where Partridge attended, according to order, with his cloaths.

Partridge had scarce seen his master since the happy discovery. The poor fellow was unable to contain or express his transports. He behaved like one frantic, and made almost as many mistakes while he was dressing Jones as I have seen made by Harlequin in dressing himself on the stage.

His memory, however, was not in the least deficient. He recollected now many omens and presages of this happy event, some of which he had remarked at the time, but many more he now remembered; nor did he omit the dreams he had dreamt the evening before his meeting with Jones; and concluded with saying, "I always told your honour something boded in my mind that you would one time or other have it in your power to make my fortune." Jones assured him that this boding should as certainly be verified with regard to him as all the other omens had been to himself; which did not a little add to all the raptures which the poor fellow had already conceived on account of his master.

CHAPTER XII

APPROACHING STILL NEARER TO THE END

JONES, being now completely dressed, attended his uncle to Mr. Western's. He was, indeed, one of the finest figures ever beheld, and his person alone would have charmed the greater part of womankind; but we hope it hath already appeared in this history that Nature, when she formed him, did not totally rely, as she sometimes doth, on this merit only, to recommend her work.

Sophia, who, angry as she was, was likewise set forth to the

best advantage, for which I leave my female readers to account, appeared so extremely beautiful, that even Allworthy, when he saw her, could not forbear whispering Western, that he believed she was the finest creature in the world. To which Western answered, in a whisper, overheard by all present, "So much the better for Tom;—for d—n me if he shan't ha the tousing her." Sophia was all over scarlet at these words, while Tom's countenance was altogether as pale, and he was almost ready to sink from his chair.

The tea-table was scarce removed before Western lugged Allworthy out of the room, telling him he had business of consequence to impart, and must speak to him that instant in private, before he forgot it.

The lovers were now alone, and it will, I question not, appear strange to many readers, that those who had so much to say to one another when danger and difficulty attended their conversation, and who seemed so eager to rush into each other's arms when so many bars lay in their way, now that with safety they were at liberty to say or do whatever they pleased, should both remain for some time silent and motionless; insomuch that a stranger of moderate sagacity might have well concluded they were mutually indifferent; but so it was, however strange it may seem; both sat with their eyes cast downwards on the ground, and for some minutes continued in perfect silence.

Mr. Jones during this interval attempted once or twice to speak, but was absolutely incapable, muttering only, or rather sighing out, some broken words; when Sophia at length, partly out of pity to him, and partly to turn the discourse from the subject which she knew well enough he was endeavouring to open, said—

"Sure, sir, you are the most fortunate man in the world in this discovery." "And can you really, madam, think me so fortunate," said Jones, sighing, "while I have incurred your displeasure?"—"Nay, sir," says she, "as to that, you best know whether you have deserved it." "Indeed, madam," answered he, "you yourself are as well apprized of all my demerits. Mrs. Miller hath acquainted you with the whole truth. O! my Sophia, am I never to hope for forgiveness?"—"I think, Mr. Jones," said she, "I may almost depend on your own justice, and leave it to yourself to pass sentence on your own conduct."—"Alas! madam," answered he, "it is mercy, and not justice, which I implore at your hands. Justice, I know, must condemn me.—Yet not for the letter I sent to Lady

Bellaston. Of that I most solemnly declare you have had a true account." He then insisted much on the security given him by Nightingale of a fair pretence for breaking off, if, contrary to their expectations, her ladyship should have accepted his offer; but confest that he had been guilty of a great indiscretion to put such a letter as that into her power, "which," said he, "I have dearly paid for, in the effect it has upon you." "I do not, I cannot," says she, "believe otherwise of that letter than you would have me. My conduct, I think, shews you clearly I do not believe there is much in that. And yet, Mr. Jones, have I not enough to resent? After what past at Upton, so soon to engage in a new amour with another woman, while I fancied, and you pretended, your heart was bleeding for me? Indeed, you have acted strangely. Can I believe the passion you have profest to me to be sincere? Or, if I can, what happiness can I assure myself of with a man capable of so much inconstancy?" "O! my Sophia," cries he, "do not doubt the sincerity of the purest passion that ever inflamed a human breast. Think, most adorable creature, of my unhappy situation, of my despair. Could I, my Sophia, have flattered myself with the most distant hopes of being ever permitted to throw myself at your feet in the manner I do now, it would not have been in the power of any other woman to have inspired a thought which the severest chastity could have condemned. Inconstancy to you! O Sophia! if you can have goodness enough to pardon what is past, do not let any cruel future apprehensions shut your mercy against me. No repentance was ever more sincere. O! let it reconcile me to my heaven in this dear bosom." "Sincere repentance, Mr. Jones," answered she, "will obtain the pardon of a sinner, but it is from one who is a perfect judge of that sincerity. A human mind may be imposed on; nor is there any infallible method to prevent it. You must expect, however, that if I can be prevailed on by your repentance to pardon you, I will at least insist on the strongest proof of its sincerity." "Name any proof in my power," answered Jones eagerly. "Time," replied she; "time alone, Mr. Jones, can convince me that you are a true penitent, and have resolved to abandon these vicious courses, which I should detest you for, if I imagined you capable of persevering in them." "Do not imagine it," cries Jones. "On my knees I intreat, I implore your confidence, a confidence which it shall be the business of my life to deserve." "Let it then," said she, "be the business of some part of your life to shew me you deserve it. I think I have been explicit enough in assuring

you, that, when I see you merit my confidence, you will obtain it. After what is past, sir, can you expect I should take you upon your word?"

He replied, "Don't believe me upon my word; I have a better security, a pledge for my constancy, which it is impossible to see and to doubt." "What is that?" said Sophia, a little surprized. "I will show you, my charming angel," cried Jones, seizing her hand and carrying her to the glass. "There, behold it there in that lovely figure, in that face, that shape, those eyes, that mind which shines through these eyes; can the man who shall be in possession of these be inconstant? Impossible! my Sophia; they would fix a Dorimant, a Lord Rochester. You could not doubt it, if you could see yourself with any eyes but your own." Sophia blushed and half smiled; but, forcing again her brow into a frown—"If I am to judge," said she, "of the future by the past, my image will no more remain in your heart when I am out of your sight, than it will in this glass when I am out of the room." "By heaven, by all that is sacred!" said Jones, "it never was out of my heart. The delicacy of your sex cannot conceive the grossness of ours, nor how little one sort of amour has to do with the heart." "I will never marry a man," replied Sophia, very gravely, "who shall not learn refinement enough to be as incapable as I am myself of making such a distinction." "I will learn it," said Jones. "I have learnt it already. The first moment of hope that my Sophia might be my wife, taught it me at once; and all the rest of her sex from that moment became as little the objects of desire to my sense as of passion to my heart." "Well," says Sophia, "the proof of this must be from time. Your situation, Mr. Jones, is now altered, and I assure you I have great satisfaction in the alteration. You will now want no opportunity of being near me, and convincing me that your mind is altered too." "O! my angel," cries Jones, "how shall I thank thy goodness! And are you so good to own that you have a satisfaction in my prosperity?—Believe me, believe me, madam, it is you alone have given a relish to that prosperity, since I owe to it the dear hope—O! my Sophia, let it not be a distant one.—I will be all obedience to your commands. I will not dare to press anything further than you permit me. Yet let me intreat you to appoint a short trial. O! tell me when I may expect you will be convinced of what is most solemnly true." "When I have gone voluntarily thus far, Mr. Jones," said she, "I expect not to be pressed. Nay, I will not."—"O! don't

look unkindly thus, my Sophia," cries he. "I do not, I dare not press you.—Yet permit me at least once more to beg you would fix the period. O! consider the impatience of love."—"A twelvemonth, perhaps," said she. "O! my Sophia," cries he, "you have named an eternity."—"Perhaps it may be something sooner," says she; "I will not be teased. If your passion for me be what I would have it, I think you may now be easy."—"Easy! Sophia, call not such an exulting happiness as mine by so cold a name.—O! transporting thought! am I not assured that the blessed day will come, when I shall call you mine; when fears shall be no more; when I shall have that dear, that vast, that exquisite, ecstatic delight of making my Sophia happy?"—"Indeed, sir," said she, "that day is in your own power."—"O! my dear, my divine angel," cried he, "these words have made me mad with joy.—But I must, I will thank those dear lips which have so sweetly pronounced my bliss." He then caught her in his arms, and kissed her with an ardour he had never ventured before.

At this instant Western, who had stood some time listening, burst into the room, and, with his hunting voice and phrase, cried out, "To her, boy, to her, go to her.—That's it, little honeys, O that's it! Well! what, is it all over? Hath she appointed the day, boy? What, shall it be to-morrow or next day? It shan't be put off a minute longer than next day, I am resolved." "Let me beseech you, sir," says Jones, "don't let me be the occasion"—"Beseech mine a—," cries Western. "I thought thou hadst been a lad of higher mettle than to give way to a parcel of maidenish tricks.—I tell thee 'tis all flim-flam. Zoodikers! she'd have the wedding to-night with all her heart. Would'st not, Sophy? Come, confess, and be an honest girl for once. What, art dumb? Why dost not speak?" "Why should I confess, sir," says Sophia, "since it seems you are so well acquainted with my thoughts?"—"That's a good girl," cries he, "and dost consent then?" "No, indeed, sir," says Sophia, "I have given no such consent."—"And wunt not ha un then to-morrow, nor next day?" says Western.—"Indeed, sir," says she, "I have no such intention." "But I can tell thee," replied he, "why hast nut; only because thou dost love to be disobedient, and to plague and vex thy father." "Pray, sir," said Jones, interfering—"I tell thee thou art a puppy," cries he. "When I forbid her, then it was all nothing but sighing and whining, and languishing and writing; now I am vor thee, she is against thee. All the spirit of contrary,

that's all. She is above being guided and governed by her father, that is the whole truth on't. It is only to disoblige and contradict me." "What would my papa have me do?" cries Sophia. "What would I ha thee do?" says he, "why, gi' un thy hand this moment."—"Well, sir," says Sophia, "I will obey you.—There is my hand, Mr. Jones." "Well, and will you consent to ha un to-morrow morning?" says Western.—"I will be obedient to you, sir," cries she.—"Why then to-morrow morning be the day," cries he. "Why then to-morrow morning shall be the day, papa, since you will have it so," says Sophia. Jones then fell upon his knees, and kissed her hand in an agony of joy, while Western began to caper and dance about the room, presently crying out—"Where the devil is Allworthy? He is without now, a talking with that d—d lawyer Dowling, when he should be minding other matters." He then sallied out in quest of him, and very opportunely left the lovers to enjoy a few tender minutes alone.

But he soon returned with Allworthy, saying, "If you won't believe me, you may ask her yourself. Hast nut gin thy consent, Sophy, to be married to-morrow?" "Such are your commands, sir," cries Sophia, "and I dare not be guilty of disobedience." "I hope, madam," cries Allworthy, "my nephew will merit so much goodness, and will be always as sensible as myself of the great honour you have done my family. An alliance with so charming and so excellent a young lady would indeed be an honour to the greatest in England." "Yes," cries Western, "but if I had suffered her to stand shill I shall I, dilly dally, you might not have had that honour yet a while; I was forced to use a little fatherly authority to bring her to." "I hope not, sir," cries Allworthy, "I hope there is not the least constraint." "Why, there," cries Western, "you may bid her unsay all again if you will. Dost repent heartily of thy promise, dost not, Sophia?" "Indeed, papa," cries she, "I do not repent, nor do I believe I ever shall, of any promise in favour of Mr. Jones." "Then, nephew," cries Allworthy, "I felicitate you most heartily; for I think you are the happiest of men. And, madam, you will give me leave to congratulate you on this joyful occasion: indeed, I am convinced you have bestowed yourself on one who will be sensible of your great merit, and who will at least use his best endeavours to deserve it." "His best endeavours!" cries Western, "that he will, I warrant un.—Harkee, Allworthy, I'll bet thee five pounds to a crown we have a boy to-morrow nine months; but prithee tell me what wut

ha! Wut ha Burgundy, Champaigne, or what? for, please Jupiter, we'll make a night on't." "Indeed, sir," said Allworthy, "you must excuse me; both my nephew and I were engaged before I suspected this near approach of his happiness."—"Engaged!" quoth the squire, "never tell me.—I won't part with thee to-night upon any occasion. Shalt sup here, please the lord Harry." "You must pardon me, my dear neighbour!" answered Allworthy; "I have given a solemn promise, and that you know I never break." "Why, prithee, who art engaged to?" cries the squire.—Allworthy then informed him, as likewise of the company.—"Odzookers!" answered the squire, "I will go with thee, and so shall Sophy! for I won't part with thee to-night; and it would be barbarous to part Tom and the girl." This offer was presently embraced by Allworthy, and Sophia consented, having first obtained a private promise from her father that he would not mention a syllable concerning her marriage.

CHAPTER THE LAST

IN WHICH THE HISTORY IS CONCLUDED

YOUNG Nightingale had been that afternoon, by appointment, to wait on his father, who received him much more kindly than he expected. There likewise he met his uncle, who was returned to town in quest of his new-married daughter.

This marriage was the luckiest incident which could have happened to the young gentleman; for these brothers lived in a constant state of contention about the government of their children, both heartily despising the method which each other took. Each of them therefore now endeavoured, as much as he could, to palliate the offence which his own child had committed, and to aggravate the match of the other. This desire of triumphing over his brother, added to the many arguments which Allworthy had used, so strongly operated on the old gentleman, that he met his son with a smiling countenance, and actually agreed to sup with him that evening at Mrs. Miller's.

As for the other, who really loved his daughter with the most immoderate affection, there was little difficulty in inclining him to a reconciliation. He was no sooner informed by his nephew where his daughter and her husband were, than he declared he

would instantly go to her. And when he arrived there, he scarce suffered her to fall upon her knees before he took her up, and embraced her with a tenderness which affected all who saw him; and in less than a quarter of an hour was as well reconciled to both her and her husband as if he had himself joined their hands.

In this situation were affairs when Mr. Allworthy and his company arrived to complete the happiness of Mrs. Miller, who no sooner saw Sophia than she guessed everything that had happened; and so great was her friendship to Jones, that it added not a few transports to those she felt on the happiness of her own daughter.

There have not, I believe, been many instances of a number of people met together, where every one was so perfectly happy as in this company. Amongst whom the father of young Nightingale enjoyed the least perfect content; for, notwithstanding his affection for his son, notwithstanding the authority and the arguments of Allworthy, together with the other motive mentioned before, he could not so entirely be satisfied with his son's choice; and, perhaps, the presence of Sophia herself tended a little to aggravate and heighten his concern, as a thought now and then suggested itself, that his son might have had that lady, or some other such. Not that any of the charms which adorned either the person or mind of Sophia created the uneasiness; it was the contents of her father's coffers which set his heart a longing. These were the charms which he could not bear to think his son had sacrificed to the daughter of Mrs. Miller.

The brides were both very pretty women; but so totally were they eclipsed by the beauty of Sophia, that, had they not been two of the best-tempered girls in the world, it would have raised some envy in their breasts; for neither of their husbands could long keep his eyes from Sophia, who sat at the table like a queen receiving homage, or, rather, like a superior being receiving adoration from all around her. But it was an adoration which they gave, not which she exacted; for she was as much distinguished by her modesty and affability, as by all her other perfections.

The evening was spent in much true mirth. All were happy, but those the most who had been most unhappy before. Their former sufferings and fears gave such a relish to their felicity, as even love and fortune, in their fullest flow, could not have given without the advantage of such a comparison. Yet, as great joy, especially after a sudden change and revolution of circumstances, is apt to be silent, and dwells rather in the heart than on the

tongue, Jones and Sophia appeared the least merry of the whole company; which Western observed with great impatience, often crying out to them, "Why dost not talk, boy? Why dost look so grave? Hast lost thy tongue, girl? Drink another glass of wine; sha't drink another glass." And, the more to enliven her, he would sometimes sing a merry song, which bore some relation to matrimony and the loss of a maidenhead. Nay, he would have proceeded so far on that topic as to have driven her out of the room, if Mr. Allworthy had not checkt him, sometimes by looks, and once or twice by a "Fie! Mr. Western!" He began, indeed, once to debate the matter, and assert his right to talk to his own daughter as he thought fit; but, as nobody seconded him, he was soon reduced to order.

Notwithstanding this little restraint, he was so pleased with the cheerfulness and good-humour of the company, that he insisted on their meeting the next day at his lodgings. They all did so; and the lovely Sophia, who was now in private become a bride too, officiated as the mistress of the ceremonies, or, in the polite phrase, did the honours of the table. She had that morning given her hand to Jones, in the chapel at Doctors'-Commons, where Mr. Allworthy, Mr. Western, and Mrs. Miller, were the only persons present.

Sophia had earnestly desired her father that no others of the company, who were that day to dine with him, should be acquainted with her marriage. The same secrecy was enjoined to Mrs. Miller, and Jones undertook for Allworthy. This somewhat reconciled the delicacy of Sophia to the public entertainment which, in compliance with her father's will, she was obliged to go to, greatly against her own inclinations. In confidence of this secrecy, she went through the day pretty well, till the squire, who was now advanced into the second bottle, could contain his joy no longer, but, filling out a bumper, drank a health to the bride. The health was immediately pledged by all present, to the great confusion of our poor blushing Sophia, and the great concern of Jones upon her account. To say truth, there was not a person present made wiser by this discovery; for Mrs. Miller had whispered it to her daughter, her daughter to her husband, her husband to his sister, and she to all the rest.

Sophia now took the first opportunity of withdrawing with the ladies, and the squire sat in to his cups, in which he was, by degrees, deserted by all the company, except the uncle of young Nightingale, who loved his bottle as well as Western himself. These two, therefore, sat stoutly to it during the whole evening,

and long after that happy hour which had surrendered the charming Sophia to the eager arms of her enraptured Jones.

Thus, reader, we have at length brought our history to a conclusion, in which, to our great pleasure, though contrary, perhaps, to thy expectation, Mr. Jones appears to be the happiest of all humankind; for what happiness this world affords equal to the possession of such a woman as Sophia, I sincerely own I have never yet discovered.

As to the other persons who have made any considerable figure in this history, as some may desire to know a little more concerning them, we will proceed, in as few words as possible, to satisfy their curiosity.

Allworthy hath never yet been prevailed upon to see Blifil, but he hath yielded to the importunity of Jones, backed by Sophia, to settle £200 a-year upon him; to which Jones hath privately added a third. Upon this income he lives in one of the northern counties, about 200 miles distant from London, and lays up £200 a-year out of it, in order to purchase a seat in the next parliament from a neighbouring borough, which he has bargained for with an attorney there. He is also lately turned Methodist, in hopes of marrying a very rich widow of that sect, whose estate lies in that part of the kingdom.

Square died soon after he writ the before-mentioned letter; and as to Thwackum, he continues at his vicarage. He hath made many fruitless attempts to regain the confidence of Allworthy, or to ingratiate himself with Jones, both of whom he flatters to their faces, and abuses behind their backs. But in his stead, Mr. Allworthy hath lately taken Mr. Abraham Adams into his house, of whom Sophia is grown immoderately fond, and declares he shall have the tuition of her children.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick is separated from her husband, and retains the little remains of her fortune. She lives in reputation at the polite end of the town, and is so good an economist, that she spends three times the income of her fortune, without running in debt. She maintains a perfect intimacy with the lady of the Irish peer; and in acts of friendship to her repays all the obligations she owes to her husband.

Mrs. Western was soon reconciled to her niece Sophia, and hath spent two months together with her in the country. Lady Bellaston made the latter a formal visit at her return to town, where she behaved to Jones as to a perfect stranger, and, with great civility, wished him joy on his marriage.

Mr. Nightingale hath purchased an estate for his son in the

neighbourhood of Jones, where the young gentleman, his lady, Mrs. Miller, and her little daughter reside, and the most agreeable intercourse subsists between the two families.

As to those of lower account, Mrs. Waters returned into the country, had a pension of £60 a-year settled upon her by Mr. Allworthy, and is married to Parson Supple, on whom, at the instance of Sophia, Western hath bestowed a considerable living.

Black George, hearing the discovery that had been made, ran away, and was never since heard of; and Jones bestowed the money on his family, but not in equal proportions, for Molly had much the greatest share.

As for Partridge, Jones hath settled £50 a-year on him; and he hath again set up a school, in which he meets with much better encouragement than formerly, and there is now a treaty of marriage on foot between him and Miss Molly Seagrim, which, through the mediation of Sophia, is likely to take effect.

We now return to take leave of Mr. Jones and Sophia, who, within two days after their marriage, attended Mr. Western and Mr. Allworthy into the country. Western hath resigned his family seat, and the greater part of his estate, to his son-in-law, and hath retired to a lesser house of his in another part of the country, which is better for hunting. Indeed, he is often as a visitant with Mr. Jones, who, as well as his daughter, hath an infinite delight in doing everything in their power to please him. And this desire of theirs is attended with such success, that the old gentleman declares he was never happy in his life till now. He hath here a parlour and ante-chamber to himself, where he gets drunk with whom he pleases: and his daughter is still as ready as formerly to play to him whenever he desires it; for Jones hath assured her that, as, next to pleasing her, one of his highest satisfactions is to contribute to the happiness of the old man; so, the great duty which she expresses and performs to her father, renders her almost equally dear to him with the love which she bestows on himself.

Sophia hath already produced him two fine children, a boy and a girl, of whom the old gentleman is so fond, that he spends much of his time in the nursery, where he declares the tattling of his little grand-daughter, who is above a year and a half old, is sweeter music than the finest cry of dogs in England.

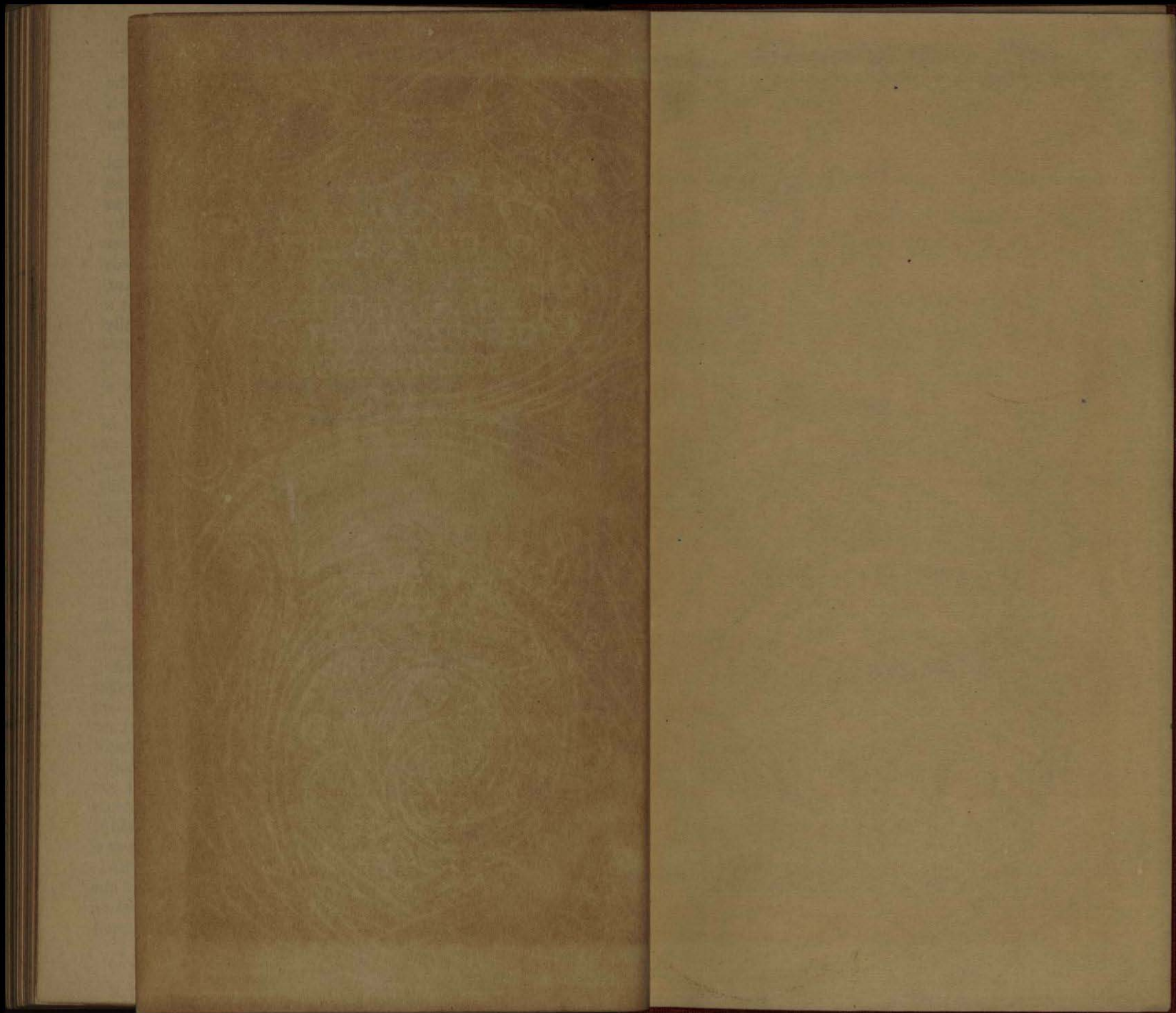
Allworthy was likewise greatly liberal to Jones on the marriage, and hath omitted no instance of shewing his affection to him and his lady, who love him as a father. Whatever in the nature of Jones had a tendency to vice, has been corrected by continual

conversation with this good man, and by his union with the lovely and virtuous Sophia. He hath also, by reflection on his past follies, acquired a discretion and prudence very uncommon in one of his lively parts.

To conclude, as there are not to be found a worthier man and woman, than this fond couple, so neither can any be imagined more happy. They preserve the purest and tenderest affection for each other, an affection daily increased and confirmed by mutual endearments and mutual esteem. Nor is their conduct towards their relations and friends less amiable than towards one another. And such is their condescension, their indulgence, and their beneficence to those below them, that there is not a neighbour, a tenant, or a servant, who doth not most gratefully bless the day when Mr. Jones was married to his Sophia.

THE END

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.



CAPILLA ALFONSINA

U. A. N. L.

Esta publicación deberá ser devuelta
antes de la última fecha abajo indi-
cada.

PR3454

H5

v.2

1908

128440

AUTOR

FIELDING, Henry

TITULO

The hi

