

**History of Tom Jones**  
**A Foundling**  
**VOL. XVIII**

**By**  
**Henry Fielding**

*Free*editorial 

# HISTORY OF TOM JONES A FOUNDLING

## Chapter I — A Farewel To The Reader

We are now, reader, arrived at the last stage of our long journey. As we have, therefore, travelled together through so many pages, let us behave to one another like fellow-travellers in a stage coach, who have passed several days in the company of each other; and who, notwithstanding any bickerings or little animosities which may have occurred on the road, generally make all up at last, and mount, for the last time, into their vehicle with chearfulness and good humour; since after this one stage, it may possibly happen to us, as it commonly happens to them, never to meet more.

As I have here taken up this simile, give me leave to carry it a little farther. I intend, then, in this last book, to imitate the good company I have mentioned in their last journey. Now, it is well known that all jokes and raillery are at this time laid aside; whatever characters any of the passengers have for the jest-sake personated on the road are now thrown off, and the conversation is usually plain and serious.

In the same manner, if I have now and then, in the course of this work, indulged any pleasantry for thy entertainment, I shall here lay it down. The variety of matter, indeed, which I shall be obliged to cram into this book, will afford no room for any of those ludicrous observations which I have elsewhere made, and which may sometimes, perhaps, have prevented thee from taking a nap when it was beginning to steal upon thee. In this last book thou wilt find nothing (or at most very little) of that nature. All will be plain narrative only; and, indeed, when thou hast perused the many great events which this book will produce, thou wilt think the number of pages contained in it scarce sufficient to tell the story.

And now, my friend, I take this opportunity (as I shall have no other) of heartily wishing thee well. If I have been an entertaining companion to thee, I promise thee it is what I have desired. If in anything I have offended, it was really without any intention. Some things, perhaps, here said, may have hit thee or thy friends; but I do most solemnly declare they were not pointed at thee or them. I question not but thou hast been told, among other stories of me, that thou wast to travel with a very scurrilous fellow; but whoever told thee so did me an injury. No man detests and despises scurrility more than myself; nor hath any man more reason; for none hath ever been treated with more; and what is a very severe fate, I have had some of the abusive writings of those very men

fathered upon me, who, in other of their works, have abused me themselves with the utmost virulence.

All these works, however, I am well convinced, will be dead long before this page shall offer itself to thy perusal; for however short the period may be of my own performances, they will most probably outlive their own infirm author, and the weakly productions of his abusive contemporaries.

## Chapter ii. — Containing a very tragical incident.

While Jones was employed in those unpleasant meditations, with which we left him tormenting himself, Partridge came stumbling into the room with his face paler than ashes, his eyes fixed in his head, his hair standing an end, and every limb trembling. In short, he looked as he would have done had he seen a spectre, or had he, indeed, been a spectre himself.

Jones, who was little subject to fear, could not avoid being somewhat shocked at this sudden appearance. He did, indeed, himself change colour, and his voice a little faltered while he asked him, What was the matter?

"I hope, sir," said Partridge, "you will not be angry with me. Indeed I did not listen, but I was obliged to stay in the outward room. I am sure I wish I had been a hundred miles off, rather than have heard what I have heard." "Why, what is the matter?" said Jones. "The matter, sir? O good Heaven!" answered Partridge, "was that woman who is just gone out the woman who was with you at Upton?" "She was, Partridge," cried Jones. "And did you really, sir, go to bed with that woman?" said he, trembling.—"I am afraid what past between us is no secret," said Jones.—"Nay, but pray, sir, for Heaven's sake, sir, answer me," cries Partridge. "You know I did," cries Jones. "Why then, the Lord have mercy upon your soul, and forgive you," cries Partridge; "but as sure as I stand here alive, you have been a-bed with your own mother."

Upon these words Jones became in a moment a greater picture of horror than Partridge himself. He was, indeed, for some time struck dumb with amazement, and both stood staring wildly at each other. At last his words found way, and in an interrupted voice he said, "How! how! what's this you tell me?" "Nay, sir," cries Partridge, "I have not breath enough left to tell you now, but what I have said is most certainly true.—That woman who now went out is your own mother. How unlucky was it for you, sir, that I did not happen to see her at that time, to have prevented it! Sure the devil himself must have contrived to bring about this wickedness."

"Sure," cries Jones, "Fortune will never have done with me till she hath driven me to distraction. But why do I blame Fortune? I am myself the cause of all my misery. All the dreadful mischiefs which have befallen me are the consequences only of my own folly and vice. What thou hast told me, Partridge, hath almost deprived me of my senses! And was Mrs Waters, then—but why do I ask? for thou must certainly know her—If thou hast any affection for me, nay, if thou hast any pity, let me beseech thee to fetch this miserable woman back again to me. O good Heavens! incest—with a mother! To what am I reserved!" He then fell into the most violent and frantic agonies of grief and

despair, in which Partridge declared he would not leave him; but at last, having vented the first torrent of passion, he came a little to himself; and then, having acquainted Partridge that he would find this wretched woman in the same house where the wounded gentleman was lodged, he despatched him in quest of her.

If the reader will please to refresh his memory, by turning to the scene at Upton, in the ninth book, he will be apt to admire the many strange accidents which unfortunately prevented any interview between Partridge and Mrs Waters, when she spent a whole day there with Mr Jones. Instances of this kind we may frequently observe in life, where the greatest events are produced by a nice train of little circumstances; and more than one example of this may be discovered by the accurate eye, in this our history.

After a fruitless search of two or three hours, Partridge returned back to his master, without having seen Mrs Waters. Jones, who was in a state of desperation at his delay, was almost raving mad when he brought him his account. He was not long, however, in this condition before he received the following letter:

"SIR,

"Since I left you I have seen a gentleman, from whom I have learned something concerning you which greatly surprizes and affects me; but as I have not at present leisure to communicate a matter of such high importance, you must suspend your curiosity till our next meeting, which shall be the first moment I am able to see you. O, Mr Jones, little did I think, when I past that happy day at Upton, the reflection upon which is like to embitter all my future life, who it was to whom I owed such perfect happiness. Believe me to be ever sincerely your unfortunate

"J. WATERS."

"P.S. I would have you comfort yourself as much as possible, for Mr Fitzpatrick is in no manner of danger; so that whatever other grievous crimes you may have to repent of, the guilt of blood is not among the number."

Jones having read the letter, let it drop (for he was unable to hold it, and indeed had scarce the use of any one of his faculties). Partridge took it up, and having received consent by silence, read it likewise; nor had it upon him a less sensible effect. The pencil, and not the pen, should describe the horrors which appeared in both their countenances. While they both remained speechless the turnkey entered the room, and, without taking any notice of what sufficiently discovered itself in the faces of them both, acquainted Jones that a man without desired to speak with him. This person was presently introduced, and was no other than Black George.

As sights of horror were not so usual to George as they were to the turnkey, he instantly saw the great disorder which appeared in the face of Jones. This he imputed to the accident that had happened, which was reported in the very worst light in Mr Western's family; he concluded, therefore, that the gentleman was dead, and that Mr Jones was in a fair way of coming to a shameful end. A thought which gave him much uneasiness; for George was of a compassionate disposition, and notwithstanding a small breach of friendship which he had been over-tempted to commit, was, in the main, not insensible of the obligations he had formerly received from Mr Jones.

The poor fellow, therefore, scarce refrained from a tear at the present sight. He told Jones he was heartily sorry for his misfortunes, and begged him to consider if he could be of any manner of service. "Perhaps, sir," said he, "you may want a little matter of money upon this occasion; if you do, sir, what little I have is heartily at your service."

Jones shook him very heartily by the hand, and gave him many thanks for the kind offer he had made; but answered, "He had not the least want of that kind." Upon which George began to press his services more eagerly than before. Jones again thanked him, with assurances that he wanted nothing which was in the power of any man living to give. "Come, come, my good master," answered George, "do not take the matter so much to heart. Things may end better than you imagine; to be sure you an't the first gentleman who hath killed a man, and yet come off." "You are wide of the matter, George," said Partridge, "the gentleman is not dead, nor like to die. Don't disturb my master, at present, for he is troubled about a matter in which it is not in your power to do him any good." "You don't know what I may be able to do, Mr Partridge," answered George; "if his concern is about my young lady, I have some news to tell my master." "What do you say, Mr George?" cried Jones. "Hath anything lately happened in which my Sophia is

concerned? My Sophia! how dares such a wretch as I mention her so profanely." "I hope she will be yours yet," answered George. "Why yes, sir, I have something to tell you about her. Madam Western hath just brought Madam Sophia home, and there hath been a terrible to do. I could not possibly learn the very right of it; but my master he hath been in a vast big passion, and so was Madam Western, and I heard her say, as she went out of doors into her chair, that she would never set her foot in master's house again. I don't know what's the matter, not I, but everything was very quiet when I came out; but Robin, who waited at supper, said he had never seen the squire for a long while in such good humour with young madam; that he kissed her several times, and swore she should be her own mistress, and he never would think of confining her any more. I thought this news would please you, and so I slipped out, though it was so late, to inform you of it." Mr Jones assured George that it did greatly please him; for though he should never more presume to lift his eyes toward that incomparable creature, nothing could so much relieve his misery as the satisfaction he should always have in hearing of her welfare.

The rest of the conversation which passed at the visit is not important enough to be here related. The reader will, therefore, forgive us this abrupt breaking off, and be pleased to hear how this great good-will of the squire towards his daughter was brought about.

Mrs Western, on her first arrival at her brother's lodging, began to set forth the great honours and advantages which would accrue to the family by the match with Lord Fellamar, which her niece had absolutely refused; in which refusal, when the squire took the part of his daughter, she fell immediately into the most violent passion, and so irritated and provoked the squire, that neither his patience nor his prudence could bear it any longer; upon which there ensued between them both so warm a bout at altercation, that perhaps the regions of Billingsgate never equalled it. In the heat of this scolding Mrs Western departed, and had consequently no leisure to acquaint her brother with the letter which Sophia received, which might have possibly produced ill effects; but, to say truth, I believe it never once occurred to her memory at this time.

When Mrs Western was gone, Sophia, who had been hitherto silent, as well indeed from necessity as inclination, began to return the compliment which her father had made her, in taking her part against her aunt, by taking his likewise against the lady. This was the first time of her so doing, and it was in the highest degree acceptable to the squire. Again, he remembered that Mr Allworthy had insisted on an entire relinquishment of all violent means; and, indeed, as he made no doubt but that Jones would be hanged, he did not in the least question succeeding with his daughter by fair means; he now, therefore, once more gave a loose to his natural fondness for her, which had such an effect on the dutiful, grateful, tender, and affectionate heart of Sophia, that had her honour, given to Jones, and something else, perhaps, in which he was concerned, been removed, I much doubt whether she would not have sacrificed herself to a man she did

not like, to have obliged her father. She promised him she would make it the whole business of her life to oblige him, and would never marry any man against his consent; which brought the old man so near to his highest happiness, that he was resolved to take the other step, and went to bed completely drunk.



### **Chapter iii. — Allworthy visits old Nightingale; with a strange discovery that he made on that occasion.**

The morning after these things had happened, Mr Allworthy went, according to his promise, to visit old Nightingale, with whom his authority was so great, that, after having sat with him three hours, he at last prevailed with him to consent to see his son.

Here an accident happened of a very extraordinary kind; one indeed of those strange chances whence very good and grave men have concluded that Providence often interposes in the discovery of the most secret villany, in order to caution men from quitting the paths of honesty, however warily they tread in those of vice.

Mr Allworthy, at his entrance into Mr Nightingale's, saw Black George; he took no notice of him, nor did Black George imagine he had perceived him.

However, when their conversation on the principal point was over, Allworthy asked Nightingale, Whether he knew one George Seagrim, and upon what business he came to his house? "Yes," answered Nightingale, "I know him very well, and a most extraordinary fellow he is, who, in these days, hath been able to hoard up £500 from renting a very small estate of £30 a year." "And is this the story which he hath told you?" cries Allworthy. "Nay, it is true, I promise you," said Nightingale, "for I have the money now in my own hands, in five bank-bills, which I am to lay out either in a mortgage, or in some purchase in the north of England." The bank-bills were no sooner produced at Allworthy's desire than he blessed himself at the strangeness of the discovery. He presently told Nightingale that these bank-bills were formerly his, and then acquainted him with the whole affair. As there are no men who complain more of the frauds of business than highwaymen, gamesters, and other thieves of that kind, so there are none who so bitterly exclaim against the frauds of gamesters, &c., as usurers, brokers, and other thieves of this kind; whether it be that the one way of cheating is a discountenance or reflection upon the other, or that money, which is the common mistress of all cheats, makes them regard each other in the light of rivals; but Nightingale no sooner heard the story than he exclaimed against the fellow in terms much severer than the justice and honesty of Allworthy had bestowed on him.

Allworthy desired Nightingale to retain both the money and the secret till he should hear farther from him; and, if he should in the meantime see the fellow, that he would not take the least notice to him of the discovery which he had made. He then returned to his lodgings, where he found Mrs Miller in a very dejected condition, on account of the information she had received from her son-in-law. Mr Allworthy, with great

cheerfulness, told her that he had much good news to communicate; and, with little further preface, acquainted her that he had brought Mr Nightingale to consent to see his son, and did not in the least doubt to effect a perfect reconciliation between them; though he found the father more sowered by another accident of the same kind which had happened in his family. He then mentioned the running away of the uncle's daughter, which he had been told by the old gentleman, and which Mrs Miller and her son-in-law did not yet know.

The reader may suppose Mrs Miller received this account with great thankfulness, and no less pleasure; but so uncommon was her friendship to Jones, that I am not certain whether the uneasiness she suffered for his sake did not overbalance her satisfaction at hearing a piece of news tending so much to the happiness of her own family; nor whether even this very news, as it reminded her of the obligations she had to Jones, did not hurt as well as please her; when her grateful heart said to her, "While my own family is happy, how miserable is the poor creature to whose generosity we owe the beginning of all this happiness!"

Allworthy, having left her a little while to chew the cud (if I may use that expression) on these first tidings, told her he had still something more to impart, which he believed would give her pleasure. "I think," said he, "I have discovered a pretty considerable treasure belonging to the young gentleman, your friend; but perhaps, indeed, his present situation may be such that it will be of no service to him." The latter part of the speech gave Mrs Miller to understand who was meant, and she answered with a sigh, "I hope not, sir." "I hope so too," cries Allworthy, "with all my heart; but my nephew told me this morning he had heard a very bad account of the affair."—"Good Heaven! sir," said she—"Well, I must not speak, and yet it is certainly very hard to be obliged to hold one's tongue when one hears."—"Madam," said Allworthy, "you may say whatever you please, you know me too well to think I have a prejudice against any one; and as for that young man, I assure you I should be heartily pleased to find he could acquit himself of everything, and particularly of this sad affair. You can testify the affection I have formerly borne him. The world, I know, censured me for loving him so much. I did not withdraw that affection from him without thinking I had the justest cause. Believe me, Mrs Miller, I should be glad to find I have been mistaken." Mrs Miller was going eagerly to reply, when a servant acquainted her that a gentleman without desired to speak with her immediately. Allworthy then enquired for his nephew, and was told that he had been for some time in his room with the gentleman who used to come to him, and whom Mr Allworthy guessing rightly to be Mr Dowling, he desired presently to speak with him.

When Dowling attended, Allworthy put the case of the bank-notes to him, without mentioning any name, and asked in what manner such a person might be punished. To which Dowling answered, "He thought he might be indicted on the Black Act; but said, as it was a matter of some nicety, it would be proper to go to counsel. He said he was to

attend counsel presently upon an affair of Mr Western's, and if Mr Allworthy pleased he would lay the case before them." This was agreed to; and then Mrs Miller, opening the door, cried, "I ask pardon, I did not know you had company;" but Allworthy desired her to come in, saying he had finished his business. Upon which Mr Dowling withdrew, and Mrs Miller introduced Mr Nightingale the younger, to return thanks for the great kindness done him by Allworthy: but she had scarce patience to let the young gentleman finish his speech before she interrupted him, saying, "O sir! Mr Nightingale brings great news about poor Mr Jones: he hath been to see the wounded gentleman, who is out of all danger of death, and, what is more, declares he fell upon poor Mr Jones himself, and beat him. I am sure, sir, you would not have Mr Jones be a coward. If I was a man myself, I am sure, if any man was to strike me, I should draw my sword. Do pray, my dear, tell Mr Allworthy, tell him all yourself." Nightingale then confirmed what Mrs Miller had said; and concluded with many handsome things of Jones, who was, he said, one of the best-natured fellows in the world, and not in the least inclined to be quarrelsome. Here Nightingale was going to cease, when Mrs Miller again begged him to relate all the many dutiful expressions he had heard him make use of towards Mr Allworthy. "To say the utmost good of Mr Allworthy," cries Nightingale, "is doing no more than strict justice, and can have no merit in it: but indeed, I must say, no man can be more sensible of the obligations he hath to so good a man than is poor Jones. Indeed, sir, I am convinced the weight of your displeasure is the heaviest burthen he lies under. He hath often lamented it to me, and hath as often protested in the most solemn manner he hath never been intentionally guilty of any offence towards you; nay, he hath sworn he would rather die a thousand deaths than he would have his conscience upbraid him with one disrespectful, ungrateful, or undutiful thought towards you. But I ask pardon, sir, I am afraid I presume to intermeddle too far in so tender a point." "You have spoke no more than what a Christian ought," cries Mrs Miller. "Indeed, Mr Nightingale," answered Allworthy, "I applaud your generous friendship, and I wish he may merit it of you. I confess I am glad to hear the report you bring from this unfortunate gentleman; and, if that matter should turn out to be as you represent it (and, indeed, I doubt nothing of what you say), I may, perhaps, in time, be brought to think better than lately I have of this young man; for this good gentlewoman here, nay, all who know me, can witness that I loved him as dearly as if he had been my own son. Indeed, I have considered him as a child sent by fortune to my care. I still remember the innocent, the helpless situation in which I found him. I feel the tender pressure of his little hands at this moment. He was my darling, indeed he was." At which words he ceased, and the tears stood in his eyes.

As the answer which Mrs Miller made may lead us into fresh matters, we will here stop to account for the visible alteration in Mr Allworthy's mind, and the abatement of his anger to Jones. Revolutions of this kind, it is true, do frequently occur in histories and dramatic writers, for no other reason than because the history or play draws to a

conclusion, and are justified by authority of authors; yet, though we insist upon as much authority as any author whatever, we shall use this power very sparingly, and never but when we are driven to it by necessity, which we do not at present foresee will happen in this work.

This alteration then in the mind of Mr Allworthy was occasioned by a letter he had just received from Mr Square, and which we shall give the reader in the beginning of the next chapter.

#### **Chapter iv. — Containing two letters in very different stiles.**

"MY WORTHY FRIEND,—I informed you in my last that I was forbidden the use of the waters, as they were found by experience rather to increase than lessen the symptoms of my distemper. I must now acquaint you with a piece of news, which, I believe, will afflict my friends more than it hath afflicted me. Dr Harrington and Dr Brewster have informed me that there is no hopes of my recovery.

"I have somewhere read, that the great use of philosophy is to learn to die. I will not therefore so far disgrace mine as to shew any surprize at receiving a lesson which I must be thought to have so long studied. Yet, to say the truth, one page of the Gospel teaches this lesson better than all the volumes of antient or modern philosophers. The assurance it gives us of another life is a much stronger support to a good mind than all the consolations that are drawn from the necessity of nature, the emptiness or satiety of our enjoyments here, or any other topic of those declamations which are sometimes capable of arming our minds with a stubborn patience in bearing the thoughts of death, but never of raising them to a real contempt of it, and much less of making us think it is a real good. I would not here be understood to throw the horrid censure of atheism, or even the absolute denial of immortality, on all who are

called philosophers. Many of that sect, as well antient as modern, have, from the light of reason, discovered some hopes of a future state; but in reality, that light was so faint and glimmering, and the hopes were so incertain and precarious, that it may be justly doubted on which side their belief turned. Plato himself concludes his *Phaedon* with declaring that his best arguments amount only to raise a probability; and Cicero himself seems rather to profess an inclination to believe, than any actual belief in the doctrines of immortality. As to myself, to be very sincere with you, I never was much in earnest in this faith till I was in earnest a Christian.

"You will perhaps wonder at the latter expression; but I assure you it hath not been till very lately that I could, with truth, call myself so. The pride of philosophy had intoxicated my reason, and the sublimest of all wisdom appeared to me, as it did to the Greeks of old, to be foolishness. God hath, however, been so gracious to shew me my error in time, and to bring me into the way of truth, before I sunk into utter darkness forever.

"I find myself beginning to grow weak, I shall therefore hasten to the main purpose of this letter.

"When I reflect on the actions of my past life, I know of nothing

which sits heavier upon my conscience than the injustice I have been guilty of to that poor wretch your adopted son. I have, indeed, not only connived at the villany of others, but been myself active in injustice towards him. Believe me, my dear friend, when I tell you, on the word of a dying man, he hath been basely injured. As to the principal fact, upon the misrepresentation of which you discarded him, I solemnly assure you he is innocent. When you lay upon your supposed deathbed, he was the only person in the house who testified any real concern; and what happened afterwards arose from the wildness of his joy on your recovery; and, I am sorry to say it, from the baseness of another person (but it is my desire to justify the innocent, and to accuse none). Believe me, my friend, this young man hath the noblest generosity of heart, the most perfect capacity for friendship, the highest integrity, and indeed every virtue which can ennoble a man. He hath some faults, but among them is not to be numbered the least want of duty or gratitude towards you. On the contrary, I am satisfied, when you dismissed him from your house, his heart bled for you more than for himself.

"Worldly motives were the wicked and base reasons of my concealing this from you so long; to reveal it now I can have no inducement but the desire of serving the cause of truth, of doing right to the innocent, and of making all the amends in my power for a past

offence. I hope this declaration, therefore, will have the effect desired, and will restore this deserving young man to your favour; the hearing of which, while I am yet alive, will afford the utmost consolation to,

Sir,

Your most obliged,

obedient humble servant,

THOMAS SQUARE."

The reader will, after this, scarce wonder at the revolution so visibly appearing in Mr Allworthy, notwithstanding he received from Thwackum, by the same post, another letter of a very different kind, which we shall here add, as it may possibly be the last time we shall have occasion to mention the name of that gentleman.

"SIR,

"I am not at all surprized at hearing from your worthy nephew a fresh instance of the villany of Mr Square the atheist's young pupil. I shall not wonder at any murders he may commit; and I heartily pray that your own blood may not seal up his final commitment to the place of wailing and gnashing of teeth.

"Though you cannot want sufficient calls to repentance for the many unwarrantable weaknesses exemplified in your behaviour to this wretch, so much to the prejudice of your own lawful family, and of your character; I say, though these may sufficiently be supposed to



prick and goad your conscience at this season, I should yet be wanting to my duty, if I spared to give you some admonition in order to bring you to a due sense of your errors. I therefore pray you seriously to consider the judgment which is likely to overtake this wicked villain; and let it serve at least as a warning to you, that you may not for the future despise the advice of one who is so indefatigable in his prayers for your welfare.

"Had not my hand been withheld from due correction, I had scourged much of this diabolical spirit out of a boy, of whom from his infancy I discovered the devil had taken such entire possession. But reflections of this kind now come too late.

"I am sorry you have given away the living of Westerton so hastily. I should have applied on that occasion earlier, had I thought you would not have acquainted me previous to the disposition.—Your objection to pluralities is being righteous over-much. If there were any crime in the practice, so many godly men would not agree to it. If the vicar of Aldergrove should die (as we hear he is in a declining way), I hope you will think of me, since I am certain you must be convinced of my most sincere attachment to your highest welfare—a welfare to which all worldly considerations are as trifling as the small tithes mentioned in Scripture are, when

compared to the weighty matters of the law.

I am, sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

ROGER THWACKUM."

This was the first time Thwackum ever wrote in this authoritative stile to Allworthy, and of this he had afterwards sufficient reason to repent, as in the case of those who mistake the highest degree of goodness for the lowest degree of weakness. Allworthy had indeed never liked this man. He knew him to be proud and ill-natured; he also knew that his divinity itself was tinctured with his temper, and such as in many respects he himself did by no means approve; but he was at the same time an excellent scholar, and most indefatigable in teaching the two lads. Add to this, the strict severity of his life and manners, an unimpeached honesty, and a most devout attachment to religion. So that, upon the whole, though Allworthy did not esteem nor love the man, yet he could never bring himself to part with a tutor to the boys, who was, both by learning and industry, extremely well qualified for his office; and he hoped, that as they were bred up in his own house, and under his own eye, he should be able to correct whatever was wrong in Thwackum's instructions.

## Chapter v. — In which the history is continued.

Mr Allworthy, in his last speech, had recollected some tender ideas concerning Jones, which had brought tears into the good man's eyes. This Mrs Miller observing, said, "Yes, yes, sir, your goodness to this poor young man is known, notwithstanding all your care to conceal it; but there is not a single syllable of truth in what those villains said. Mr Nightingale hath now discovered the whole matter. It seems these fellows were employed by a lord, who is a rival of poor Mr Jones, to have pressed him on board a ship.—I assure them I don't know who they will press next. Mr Nightingale here hath seen the officer himself, who is a very pretty gentleman, and hath told him all, and is very sorry for what he undertook, which he would never have done, had he known Mr Jones to have been a gentleman; but he was told that he was a common strolling vagabond."

Allworthy stared at all this, and declared he was a stranger to every word she said. "Yes, sir," answered she, "I believe you are.—It is a very different story, I believe, from what those fellows told this lawyer."

"What lawyer, madam? what is it you mean?" said Allworthy. "Nay, nay," said she, "this is so like you to deny your own goodness: but Mr Nightingale here saw him." "Saw whom, madam?" answered he. "Why, your lawyer, sir," said she, "that you so kindly sent to enquire into the affair." "I am still in the dark, upon my honour," said Allworthy. "Why then do you tell him, my dear sir," cries she. "Indeed, sir," said Nightingale, "I did see that very lawyer who went from you when I came into the room, at an alehouse in Aldersgate, in company with two of the fellows who were employed by Lord Fellamar to press Mr Jones, and who were by that means present at the unhappy rencounter between him and Mr Fitzpatrick." "I own, sir," said Mrs Miller, "when I saw this gentleman come into the room to you, I told Mr Nightingale that I apprehended you had sent him thither to inquire into the affair." Allworthy shewed marks of astonishment in his countenance at this news, and was indeed for two or three minutes struck dumb by it. At last, addressing himself to Mr Nightingale, he said, "I must confess myself, sir, more surprized at what you tell me than I have ever been before at anything in my whole life. Are you certain this was the gentleman?" "I am most certain," answered Nightingale. "At Aldersgate?" cries Allworthy. "And was you in company with this lawyer and the two fellows?"—"I was, sir," said the other, "very near half an hour." "Well, sir," said Allworthy, "and in what manner did the lawyer behave? did you hear all that past between him and the fellows?" "No, sir," answered Nightingale, "they had been together before I came.—In my presence the lawyer said little; but, after I had several times examined the fellows, who persisted in a story directly contrary to what I had heard from Mr Jones, and which I find by Mr Fitzpatrick was a rank falshood, the lawyer then

desired the fellows to say nothing but what was the truth, and seemed to speak so much in favour of Mr Jones, that, when I saw the same person with you, I concluded your goodness had prompted you to send him thither."—"And did you not send him thither?" says Mrs Miller.—"Indeed I did not," answered Allworthy; "nor did I know he had gone on such an errand till this moment."—"I see it all!" said Mrs Miller, "upon my soul, I see it all! No wonder they have been closeted so close lately. Son Nightingale, let me beg you run for these fellows immediately—find them out if they are above-ground. I will go myself"—"Dear madam," said Allworthy, "be patient, and do me the favour to send a servant upstairs to call Mr Dowling hither, if he be in the house, or, if not, Mr Blifil." Mrs Miller went out muttering something to herself, and presently returned with an answer, "That Mr Dowling was gone; but that the t'other," as she called him, "was coming."

Allworthy was of a cooler disposition than the good woman, whose spirits were all up in arms in the cause of her friend. He was not however without some suspicions which were near akin to hers. When Blifil came into the room, he asked him with a very serious countenance, and with a less friendly look than he had ever before given him, "Whether he knew anything of Mr Dowling's having seen any of the persons who were present at the duel between Jones and another gentleman?"

There is nothing so dangerous as a question which comes by surprize on a man whose business it is to conceal truth, or to defend falshood. For which reason those worthy personages, whose noble office it is to save the lives of their fellow-creatures at the Old Bailey, take the utmost care, by frequent previous examination, to divine every question which may be asked their clients on the day of tryal, that they may be supplied with proper and ready answers, which the most fertile invention cannot supply in an instant. Besides, the sudden and violent impulse on the blood, occasioned by these surprizes, causes frequently such an alteration in the countenance, that the man is obliged to give evidence against himself. And such indeed were the alterations which the countenance of Blifil underwent from this sudden question, that we can scarce blame the eagerness of Mrs Miller, who immediately cried out, "Guilty, upon my honour! guilty, upon my soul!"

Mr Allworthy sharply rebuked her for this impetuosity; and then turning to Blifil, who seemed sinking into the earth, he said, "Why do you hesitate, sir, at giving me an answer? You certainly must have employed him; for he would not, of his own accord, I believe, have undertaken such an errand, and especially without acquainting me."

Blifil then answered, "I own, sir, I have been guilty of an offence, yet may I hope your pardon?"—"My pardon," said Allworthy, very angrily.—"Nay, sir," answered Blifil, "I knew you would be offended; yet surely my dear uncle will forgive the effects of the most amiable of human weaknesses. Compassion for those who do not deserve it, I own is a crime; and yet it is a crime from which you yourself are not entirely free. I know I have been guilty of it in more than one instance to this very person; and I will own I did send

Mr Dowling, not on a vain and fruitless enquiry, but to discover the witnesses, and to endeavour to soften their evidence. This, sir, is the truth; which, though I intended to conceal from you, I will not deny."

"I confess," said Nightingale, "this is the light in which it appeared to me from the gentleman's behaviour."

"Now, madam," said Allworthy, "I believe you will once in your life own you have entertained a wrong suspicion, and are not so angry with my nephew as you was."

Mrs Miller was silent; for, though she could not so hastily be pleased with Blifil, whom she looked upon to have been the ruin of Jones, yet in this particular instance he had imposed upon her as well as upon the rest; so entirely had the devil stood his friend. And, indeed, I look upon the vulgar observation, "That the devil often deserts his friends, and leaves them in the lurch," to be a great abuse on that gentleman's character. Perhaps he may sometimes desert those who are only his cup acquaintance; or who, at most, are but half his; but he generally stands by those who are thoroughly his servants, and helps them off in all extremities, till their bargain expires.

As a conquered rebellion strengthens a government, or as health is more perfectly established by recovery from some diseases; so anger, when removed, often gives new life to affection. This was the case of Mr Allworthy; for Blifil having wiped off the greater suspicion, the lesser, which had been raised by Square's letter, sunk of course, and was forgotten; and Thwackum, with whom he was greatly offended, bore alone all the reflections which Square had cast on the enemies of Jones.

As for that young man, the resentment of Mr Allworthy began more and more to abate towards him. He told Blifil, "He did not only forgive the extraordinary efforts of his good-nature, but would give him the pleasure of following his example." Then, turning to Mrs Miller with a smile which would have become an angel, he cried, "What say you, madam? shall we take a hackney-coach, and all of us together pay a visit to your friend? I promise you it is not the first visit I have made in a prison."

Every reader, I believe, will be able to answer for the worthy woman; but they must have a great deal of good-nature, and be well acquainted with friendship, who can feel what she felt on this occasion. Few, I hope, are capable of feeling what now passed in the mind of Blifil; but those who are will acknowledge that it was impossible for him to raise any objection to this visit. Fortune, however, or the gentleman lately mentioned above, stood his friend, and prevented his undergoing so great a shock; for at the very instant when the coach was sent for, Partridge arrived, and, having called Mrs Miller from the company, acquainted her with the dreadful accident lately come to light; and hearing Mr Allworthy's intention, begged her to find some means of stopping him: "For," says he,

"the matter must at all hazards be kept a secret from him; and if he should now go, he will find Mr Jones and his mother, who arrived just as I left him, lamenting over one another the horrid crime they have ignorantly committed."

The poor woman, who was almost deprived of her senses at his dreadful news, was never less capable of invention than at present. However, as women are much readier at this than men, she bethought herself of an excuse, and, returning to Allworthy, said, "I am sure, sir, you will be surprized at hearing any objection from me to the kind proposal you just now made; and yet I am afraid of the consequence of it, if carried immediately into execution. You must imagine, sir, that all the calamities which have lately befallen this poor young fellow must have thrown him into the lowest dejection of spirits; and now, sir, should we all on a sudden fling him into such a violent fit of joy, as I know your presence will occasion, it may, I am afraid, produce some fatal mischief, especially as his servant, who is without, tells me he is very far from being well."

"Is his servant without?" cries Allworthy; "pray call him hither. I will ask him some questions concerning his master."

Partridge was at first afraid to appear before Mr Allworthy; but was at length persuaded, after Mrs Miller, who had often heard his whole story from his own mouth, had promised to introduce him.

Allworthy recollected Partridge the moment he came into the room, though many years had passed since he had seen him. Mrs Miller, therefore, might have spared here a formal oration, in which, indeed, she was something prolix; for the reader, I believe, may have observed already that the good woman, among other things, had a tongue always ready for the service of her friends.

"And are you," said Allworthy to Partridge, "the servant of Mr Jones?" "I can't say, sir," answered he, "that I am regularly a servant, but I live with him, an't please your honour, at present. Non sum qualis eram, as your honour very well knows."

Mr Allworthy then asked him many questions concerning Jones, as to his health, and other matters; to all which Partridge answered, without having the least regard to what was, but considered only what he would have things appear; for a strict adherence to truth was not among the articles of this honest fellow's morality or his religion.

During this dialogue Mr Nightingale took his leave, and presently after Mrs Miller left the room, when Allworthy likewise despatched Blifil; for he imagined that Partridge when alone with him would be more explicit than before company. They were no sooner left in private together than Allworthy began, as in the following chapter.

## Chapter vi. — In which the history is farther continued

"Sure, friend," said the good man, "you are the strangest of all human beings. Not only to have suffered as you have formerly for obstinately persisting in a falshood, but to persist in it thus to the last, and to pass thus upon the world for a servant of your own son! What interest can you have in all this? What can be your motive?"

"I see, sir," said Partridge, falling down upon his knees, "that your honour is prepossessed against me, and resolved not to believe anything I say, and, therefore, what signifies my protestations? but yet there is one above who knows that I am not the father of this young man."

"How!" said Allworthy, "will you yet deny what you was formerly convicted of upon such unanswerable, such manifest evidence? Nay, what a confirmation is your being now found with this very man, of all which twenty years ago appeared against you! I thought you had left the country! nay, I thought you had been long since dead.—In what manner did you know anything of this young man? Where did you meet with him, unless you had kept some correspondence together? Do not deny this; for I promise you it will greatly raise your son in my opinion, to find that he hath such a sense of filial duty as privately to support his father for so many years."

"If your honour will have patience to hear me," said Partridge, "I will tell you all."—Being bid go on, he proceeded thus: "When your honour conceived that displeasure against me, it ended in my ruin soon after; for I lost my little school; and the minister, thinking I suppose it would be agreeable to your honour, turned me out from the office of clerk; so that I had nothing to trust to but the barber's shop, which, in a country place like that, is a poor livelihood; and when my wife died (for till that time I received a pension of £12 a year from an unknown hand, which indeed I believe was your honour's own, for nobody that ever I heard of doth these things besides)—but, as I was saying, when she died, this pension forsook me; so that now, as I owed two or three small debts, which began to be troublesome to me, particularly one[\*] which an attorney brought up by law-charges from 15s. to near £30, and as I found all my usual means of living had forsook me, I packed up my little all as well as I could, and went off.

[\*] This is a fact which I knew happen to a poor clergyman in

Dorsetshire, by the villany of an attorney who, not contented with

the exorbitant costs to which the poor man was put by a single

action, brought afterwards another action on the judgment, as it was

called. A method frequently used to oppress the poor, and bring money into the pockets of attorneys, to the great scandal of the law, of the nation, of Christianity, and even of human nature itself.

"The first place I came to was Salisbury, where I got into the service of a gentleman belonging to the law, and one of the best gentlemen that ever I knew, for he was not only good to me, but I know a thousand good and charitable acts which he did while I staid with him; and I have known him often refuse business because it was paultry and oppressive." "You need not be so particular," said Allworthy; "I know this gentleman, and a very worthy man he is, and an honour to his profession."—"Well, sir," continued Partridge, "from hence I removed to Lymington, where I was above three years in the service of another lawyer, who was likewise a very good sort of a man, and to be sure one of the merriest gentlemen in England. Well, sir, at the end of the three years I set up a little school, and was likely to do well again, had it not been for a most unlucky accident. Here I kept a pig; and one day, as ill fortune would have it, this pig broke out, and did a trespass, I think they call it, in a garden belonging to one of my neighbours, who was a proud, revengeful man, and employed a lawyer, one—one—I can't think of his name; but he sent for a writ against me, and had me to size. When I came there, Lord have mercy upon me—to hear what the counsellors said! There was one that told my lord a parcel of the confoundedest lies about me; he said that I used to drive my hogs into other folk's gardens, and a great deal more; and at last he said, he hoped I had at last brought my hogs to a fair market. To be sure, one would have thought that, instead of being owner only of one poor little pig, I had been the greatest hog-merchant in England. Well—" "Pray," said Allworthy, "do not be so particular, I have heard nothing of your son yet." "O it was a great many years," answered Partridge, "before I saw my son, as you are pleased to call him.—I went over to Ireland after this, and taught school at Cork (for that one suit ruined me again, and I lay seven years in Winchester jail)."—"Well," said Allworthy, "pass that over till your return to England."—"Then, sir," said he, "it was about half a year ago that I landed at Bristol, where I staid some time, and not finding it do there, and hearing of a place between that and Gloucester where the barber was just dead, I went thither, and there I had been about two months when Mr Jones came thither." He then gave Allworthy a very particular account of their first meeting, and of everything, as well as he could remember, which had happened from that day to this; frequently interlarding his story with panegyrics on Jones, and not forgetting to insinuate the great love and respect which he had for Allworthy. He concluded with saying, "Now, sir, I have told your honour the whole truth." And then repeated a most solemn protestation, "That he was no more the father of Jones than of the Pope of Rome;" and imprecated the most bitter curses on his head, if he did not speak truth.



"What am I to think of this matter?" cries Allworthy. "For what purpose should you so strongly deny a fact which I think it would be rather your interest to own?" "Nay, sir," answered Partridge (for he could hold no longer), "if your honour will not believe me, you are like soon to have satisfaction enough. I wish you had mistaken the mother of this young man, as well as you have his father."—And now being asked what he meant, with all the symptoms of horror, both in his voice and countenance, he told Allworthy the whole story, which he had a little before expressed such desire to Mrs Miller to conceal from him.

Allworthy was almost as much shocked at this discovery as Partridge himself had been while he related it. "Good heavens!" says he, "in what miserable distresses do vice and imprudence involve men! How much beyond our designs are the effects of wickedness sometimes carried!" He had scarce uttered these words, when Mrs Waters came hastily and abruptly into the room. Partridge no sooner saw her than he cried, "Here, sir, here is the very woman herself. This is the unfortunate mother of Mr Jones. I am sure she will acquit me before your honour. Pray, madam——"

Mrs Waters, without paying any regard to what Partridge said, and almost without taking any notice of him, advanced to Mr Allworthy. "I believe, sir, it is so long since I had the honour of seeing you, that you do not recollect me." "Indeed," answered Allworthy, "you are so very much altered, on many accounts, that had not this man already acquainted me who you are, I should not have immediately called you to my remembrance. Have you, madam, any particular business which brings you to me?" Allworthy spoke this with great reserve; for the reader may easily believe he was not well pleased with the conduct of this lady; neither with what he had formerly heard, nor with what Partridge had now delivered.

Mrs Waters answered—"Indeed, sir, I have very particular business with you; and it is such as I can impart only to yourself. I must desire, therefore, the favour of a word with you alone: for I assure you what I have to tell you is of the utmost importance."

Partridge was then ordered to withdraw, but before he went, he begged the lady to satisfy Mr Allworthy that he was perfectly innocent. To which she answered, "You need be under no apprehension, sir; I shall satisfy Mr Allworthy very perfectly of that matter."

Then Partridge withdrew, and that past between Mr Allworthy and Mrs Waters which is written in the next chapter.

## Chapter vii. — Continuation of the history.

Mrs Waters remaining a few moments silent, Mr Allworthy could not refrain from saying, "I am sorry, madam, to perceive, by what I have since heard, that you have made so very ill a use——" "Mr Allworthy," says she, interrupting him, "I know I have faults, but ingratitude to you is not one of them. I never can nor shall forget your goodness, which I own I have very little deserved; but be pleased to wave all upbraiding me at present, as I have so important an affair to communicate to you concerning this young man, to whom you have given my maiden name of Jones."

"Have I then," said Allworthy, "ignorantly punished an innocent man, in the person of him who hath just left us? Was he not the father of the child?" "Indeed he was not," said Mrs Waters. "You may be pleased to remember, sir, I formerly told you, you should one day know; and I acknowledge myself to have been guilty of a cruel neglect, in not having discovered it to you before. Indeed, I little knew how necessary it was." "Well, madam," said Allworthy, "be pleased to proceed." "You must remember, sir," said she, "a young fellow, whose name was Summer." "Very well," cries Allworthy, "he was the son of a clergyman of great learning and virtue, for whom I had the highest friendship." "So it appeared, sir," answered she; "for I believe you bred the young man up, and maintained him at the university; where, I think, he had finished his studies, when he came to reside at your house; a finer man, I must say, the sun never shone upon; for, besides the handsomest person I ever saw, he was so genteel, and had so much wit and good breeding." "Poor gentleman," said Allworthy, "he was indeed untimely snatched away; and little did I think he had any sins of this kind to answer for; for I plainly perceive you are going to tell me he was the father of your child."

"Indeed, sir," answered she, "he was not." "How!" said Allworthy, "to what then tends all this preface?" "To a story," said she, "which I am concerned falls to my lot to unfold to you. O, sir! prepare to hear something which will surprize you, will grieve you." "Speak," said Allworthy, "I am conscious of no crime, and cannot be afraid to hear." "Sir," said she, "that Mr Summer, the son of your friend, educated at your expense, who, after living a year in the house as if he had been your own son, died there of the small-pox, was tenderly lamented by you, and buried as if he had been your own; that Summer, sir, was the father of this child." "How!" said Allworthy; "you contradict yourself." "That I do not," answered she; "he was indeed the father of this child, but not by me." "Take care, madam," said Allworthy, "do not, to shun the imputation of any crime, be guilty of falshood. Remember there is One from whom you can conceal nothing, and before whose tribunal falshood will only aggravate your guilt." "Indeed, sir," says she, "I am not his mother; nor would I now think myself so for the world." "I know your reason," said Allworthy, "and shall rejoice as much as you to find it otherwise; yet you must

remember, you yourself confest it before me." "So far what I confest," said she, "was true, that these hands conveyed the infant to your bed; conveyed it thither at the command of its mother; at her commands I afterwards owned it, and thought myself, by her generosity, nobly rewarded, both for my secrecy and my shame." "Who could this woman be?" said Allworthy. "Indeed, I tremble to name her," answered Mrs Waters. "By all this preparation I am to guess that she was a relation of mine," cried he. "Indeed she was a near one." At which words Allworthy started, and she continued—"You had a sister, sir." "A sister!" repeated he, looking aghast.—"As there is truth in heaven," cries she, "your sister was the mother of that child you found between your sheets." "Can it be possible?" cries he, "Good heavens!" "Have patience, sir," said Mrs Waters, "and I will unfold to you the whole story. Just after your departure for London, Miss Bridget came one day to the house of my mother. She was pleased to say she had heard an extraordinary character of me, for my learning and superior understanding to all the young women there, so she was pleased to say. She then bid me come to her to the great house; where, when I attended, she employed me to read to her. She expressed great satisfaction in my reading, shewed great kindness to me, and made me many presents. At last she began to catechise me on the subject of secrecy, to which I gave her such satisfactory answers, that, at last, having locked the door of her room, she took me into her closet, and then locking that door likewise, she said she should convince me of the vast reliance she had on my integrity, by communicating a secret in which her honour, and consequently her life, was concerned. She then stopt, and after a silence of a few minutes, during which she often wiped her eyes, she enquired of me if I thought my mother might safely be confided in. I answered, I would stake my life on her fidelity. She then imparted to me the great secret which laboured in her breast, and which, I believe, was delivered with more pains than she afterwards suffered in child-birth. It was then contrived that my mother and myself only should attend at the time, and that Mrs Wilkins should be sent out of the way, as she accordingly was, to the very furthest part of Dorsetshire, to enquire the character of a servant; for the lady had turned away her own maid near three months before; during all which time I officiated about her person upon trial, as she said, though, as she afterwards declared, I was not sufficiently handy for the place. This, and many other such things which she used to say of me, were all thrown out to prevent any suspicion which Wilkins might hereafter have, when I was to own the child; for she thought it could never be believed she would venture to hurt a young woman with whom she had intrusted such a secret. You may be assured, sir, I was well paid for all these affronts, which, together with being informed with the occasion of them, very well contented me. Indeed, the lady had a greater suspicion of Mrs Wilkins than of any other person; not that she had the least aversion to the gentlewoman, but she thought her incapable of keeping a secret, especially from you, sir; for I have often heard Miss Bridget say, that, if Mrs Wilkins had committed a murder, she believed she would acquaint you with it. At last the expected day came, and Mrs Wilkins, who had been kept a week in readiness, and put off from time to time, upon some pretence or

other, that she might not return too soon, was dispatched. Then the child was born, in the presence only of myself and my mother, and was by my mother conveyed to her own house, where it was privately kept by her till the evening of your return, when I, by the command of Miss Bridget, conveyed it into the bed where you found it. And all suspicions were afterwards laid asleep by the artful conduct of your sister, in pretending ill-will to the boy, and that any regard she shewed him was out of meer complacence to you."

Mrs Waters then made many protestations of the truth of this story, and concluded by saying, "Thus, sir, you have at last discovered your nephew; for so I am sure you will hereafter think him, and I question not but he will be both an honour and a comfort to you under that appellation."

"I need not, madam," said Allworthy, "express my astonishment at what you have told me; and yet surely you would not, and could not, have put together so many circumstances to evidence an untruth. I confess I recollect some passages relating to that Summer, which formerly gave me a conceit that my sister had some liking to him. I mentioned it to her; for I had such a regard to the young man, as well on his own account as on his father's, that I should willingly have consented to a match between them; but she express the highest disdain of my unkind suspicion, as she called it; so that I never spoke more on the subject. Good heavens! Well! the Lord disposeth all things.—Yet sure it was a most unjustifiable conduct in my sister to carry this secret with her out of the world." "I promise you, sir," said Mrs Waters, "she always profest a contrary intention, and frequently told me she intended one day to communicate it to you. She said, indeed, she was highly rejoiced that her plot had succeeded so well, and that you had of your own accord taken such a fancy to the child, that it was yet unnecessary to make any express declaration. Oh! sir, had that lady lived to have seen this poor young man turned like a vagabond from your house: nay, sir, could she have lived to hear that you had yourself employed a lawyer to prosecute him for a murder of which he was not guilty—Forgive me, Mr Allworthy, I must say it was unkind.—Indeed, you have been abused, he never deserved it of you." "Indeed, madam," said Allworthy, "I have been abused by the person, whoever he was, that told you so." "Nay, sir," said she, "I would not be mistaken, I did not presume to say you were guilty of any wrong. The gentleman who came to me proposed no such matter; he only said, taking me for Mr Fitzpatrick's wife, that, if Mr Jones had murdered my husband, I should be assisted with any money I wanted to carry on the prosecution, by a very worthy gentleman, who, he said, was well apprized what a villain I had to deal with. It was by this man I found out who Mr Jones was; and this man, whose name is Dowling, Mr Jones tells me is your steward. I discovered his name by a very odd accident; for he himself refused to tell it me; but Partridge, who met him at my lodgings the second time he came, knew him formerly at Salisbury."

"And did this Mr Dowling," says Allworthy, with great astonishment in his countenance, "tell you that I would assist in the prosecution?"—"No, sir," answered she, "I will not charge him wrongfully. He said I should be assisted, but he mentioned no name. Yet you must pardon me, sir, if from circumstances I thought it could be no other."—"Indeed, madam," says Allworthy, "from circumstances I am too well convinced it was another. Good Heaven! by what wonderful means is the blackest and deepest villany sometimes discovered!—Shall I beg you, madam, to stay till the person you have mentioned comes, for I expect him every minute? nay, he may be, perhaps, already in the house."

Allworthy then stepped to the door, in order to call a servant, when in came, not Mr Dowling, but the gentleman who will be seen in the next chapter.

### Chapter viii. — Further continuation.

The gentleman who now arrived was no other than Mr Western. He no sooner saw Allworthy, than, without considering in the least the presence of Mrs Waters, he began to vociferate in the following manner: "Fine doings at my house! A rare kettle of fish I have discovered at last! who the devil would be plagued with a daughter?" "What's the matter, neighbour?" said Allworthy. "Matter enough," answered Western: "when I thought she was just a coming to; nay, when she had in a manner promised me to do as I would ha her, and when I was a hoped to have had nothing more to do than to have sent for the lawyer, and finished all; what do you think I have found out? that the little b—hath bin playing tricks with me all the while, and carrying on a correspondence with that bastard of yours. Sister Western, whom I have quarrelled with upon her account, sent me word o't, and I ordered her pockets to be searched when she was asleep, and here I have got un signed with the son of a whore's own name. I have not had patience to read half o't, for 'tis longer than one of parson Supple's sermons; but I find plainly it is all about love; and indeed what should it be else? I have packed her up in chamber again, and to-morrow morning down she goes into the country, unless she consents to be married directly, and there she shall live in a garret upon bread and water all her days; and the sooner such a b— breaks her heart the better, though, d—n her, that I believe is too tough. She will live long enough to plague me." "Mr Western," answered Allworthy, "you know I have always protested against force, and you yourself consented that none should be used." "Ay," cries he, "that was only upon condition that she would consent without. What the devil and doctor Faustus! shan't I do what I will with my own daughter, especially when I desire nothing but her own good?" "Well, neighbour," answered Allworthy, "if you will give me leave, I will undertake once to argue with the young lady." "Will you?" said Western; "why that is kind now, and neighbourly, and mayhap you will do more than I have been able to do with her; for I promise you she hath a very good opinion of you." "Well, sir," said Allworthy, "if you will go home, and release the young lady from her captivity, I will wait upon her within this half-hour." "But suppose," said Western, "she should run away with un in the meantime? For lawyer Dowling tells me there is no hopes of hanging the fellow at last; for that the man is alive, and like to do well, and that he thinks Jones will be out of prison again presently." "How!" said Allworthy; "what, did you employ him then to enquire or to do anything in that matter?" "Not I," answered Western, "he mentioned it to me just now of his own accord." "Just now!" cries Allworthy, "why, where did you see him then? I want much to see Mr Dowling." "Why, you may see un an you will presently at my lodgings; for there is to be a meeting of lawyers there this morning about a mortgage. 'Icod! I shall lose two or dree thousand pounds, I believe, by that honest gentleman, Mr Nightingale." "Well, sir," said Allworthy, "I will be with you within the half-hour." "And do for once," cries the

squire, "take a fool's advice; never think of dealing with her by gentle methods, take my word for it those will never do. I have tried 'um long enough. She must be frightened into it, there is no other way. Tell her I'm her father; and of the horrid sin of disobedience, and of the dreadful punishment of it in t'other world, and then tell her about being locked up all her life in a garret in this, and being kept only on bread and water." "I will do all I can," said Allworthy; "for I promise you there is nothing I wish for more than an alliance with this amiable creature." "Nay, the girl is well enough for matter o' that," cries the squire; "a man may go farther and meet with worse meat; that I may declare o'her, thof she be my own daughter. And if she will but be obedient to me, there is narrow a father within a hundred miles o' the place, that loves a daughter better than I do; but I see you are busy with the lady here, so I will go huome and expect you; and so your humble servant."

As soon as Mr Western was gone Mrs Waters said, "I see, sir, the squire hath not the least remembrance of my face. I believe, Mr Allworthy, you would not have known me neither. I am very considerably altered since that day when you so kindly gave me that advice, which I had been happy had I followed." "Indeed, madam," cries Allworthy, "it gave me great concern when I first heard the contrary." "Indeed, sir," says she, "I was ruined by a very deep scheme of villany, which if you knew, though I pretend not to think it would justify me in your opinion, it would at least mitigate my offence, and induce you to pity me: you are not now at leisure to hear my whole story; but this I assure you, I was betrayed by the most solemn promises of marriage; nay, in the eye of heaven I was married to him; for, after much reading on the subject, I am convinced that particular ceremonies are only requisite to give a legal sanction to marriage, and have only a worldly use in giving a woman the privileges of a wife; but that she who lives constant to one man, after a solemn private affiance, whatever the world may call her, hath little to charge on her own conscience." "I am sorry, madam," said Allworthy, "you made so ill a use of your learning. Indeed, it would have been well that you had been possessed of much more, or had remained in a state of ignorance. And yet, madam, I am afraid you have more than this sin to answer for." "During his life," answered she, "which was above a dozen years, I most solemnly assure you I had not. And consider, sir, on my behalf, what is in the power of a woman stript of her reputation and left destitute; whether the good-natured world will suffer such a stray sheep to return to the road of virtue, even if she was never so desirous. I protest, then, I would have chose it had it been in my power; but necessity drove me into the arms of Captain Waters, with whom, though still unmarried, I lived as a wife for many years, and went by his name. I parted with this gentleman at Worcester, on his march against the rebels, and it was then I accidentally met with Mr Jones, who rescued me from the hands of a villain. Indeed, he is the worthiest of men. No young gentleman of his age is, I believe, freer from vice, and few have the twentieth part of his virtues; nay, whatever vices he hath had, I am firmly persuaded he hath now taken a resolution to abandon them." "I hope

he hath," cries Allworthy, "and I hope he will preserve that resolution. I must say, I have still the same hopes with regard to yourself. The world, I do agree, are apt to be too unmerciful on these occasions; yet time and perseverance will get the better of this their disinclination, as I may call it, to pity; for though they are not, like heaven, ready to receive a penitent sinner; yet a continued repentance will at length obtain mercy even with the world. This you may be assured of, Mrs Waters, that whenever I find you are sincere in such good intentions, you shall want no assistance in my power to make them effectual."

Mrs Waters fell now upon her knees before him, and, in a flood of tears, made him many most passionate acknowledgments of his goodness, which, as she truly said, savoured more of the divine than human nature.

Allworthy raised her up, and spoke in the most tender manner, making use of every expression which his invention could suggest to comfort her, when he was interrupted by the arrival of Mr Dowling, who, upon his first entrance, seeing Mrs Waters, started, and appeared in some confusion; from which he soon recovered himself as well as he could, and then said he was in the utmost haste to attend counsel at Mr Western's lodgings; but, however, thought it his duty to call and acquaint him with the opinion of counsel upon the case which he had before told him, which was that the conversion of the moneys in that case could not be questioned in a criminal cause, but that an action of trover might be brought, and if it appeared to the jury to be the moneys of plaintiff, that plaintiff would recover a verdict for the value.

Allworthy, without making any answer to this, bolted the door, and then, advancing with a stern look to Dowling, he said, "Whatever be your haste, sir, I must first receive an answer to some questions. Do you know this lady?"—"That lady, sir!" answered Dowling, with great hesitation. Allworthy then, with the most solemn voice, said, "Look you, Mr Dowling, as you value my favour, or your continuance a moment longer in my service, do not hesitate nor prevaricate; but answer faithfully and truly to every question I ask.—Do you know this lady?"—"Yes, sir," said Dowling, "I have seen the lady." "Where, sir?" "At her own lodgings."—"Upon what business did you go thither, sir; and who sent you?" "I went, sir, to enquire, sir, about Mr Jones." "And who sent you to enquire about him?" "Who, sir? why, sir, Mr Blifil sent me." "And what did you say to the lady concerning that matter?" "Nay, sir, it is impossible to recollect every word." "Will you please, madam, to assist the gentleman's memory?" "He told me, sir," said Mrs Waters, "that if Mr Jones had murdered my husband, I should be assisted by any money I wanted to carry on the prosecution, by a very worthy gentleman, who was well apprized what a villain I had to deal with. These, I can safely swear, were the very words he spoke."—"Were these the words, sir?" said Allworthy. "I cannot charge my memory exactly," cries Dowling, "but I believe I did speak to that purpose."—"And did Mr Blifil order you to say so?" "I am sure, sir, I should not have gone on my own accord, nor have



willingly exceeded my authority in matters of this kind. If I said so, I must have so understood Mr Blifil's instructions." "Look you, Mr Dowling," said Allworthy; "I promise you before this lady, that whatever you have done in this affair by Mr Blifil's order I will forgive, provided you now tell me strictly the truth; for I believe what you say, that you would not have acted of your own accord and without authority in this matter.—Mr Blifil then likewise sent you to examine the two fellows at Aldersgate?"—"He did, sir." "Well, and what instructions did he then give you? Recollect as well as you can, and tell me, as near as possible, the very words he used."—"Why, sir, Mr Blifil sent me to find out the persons who were eye-witnesses of this fight. He said, he feared they might be tampered with by Mr Jones, or some of his friends. He said, blood required blood; and that not only all who concealed a murderer, but those who omitted anything in their power to bring him to justice, were sharers in his guilt. He said, he found you was very desirous of having the villain brought to justice, though it was not proper you should appear in it." "He did so?" says Allworthy.—"Yes, sir," cries Dowling; "I should not, I am sure, have proceeded such lengths for the sake of any other person living but your worship."—"What lengths, sir?" said Allworthy.—"Nay, sir," cries Dowling, "I would not have your worship think I would, on any account, be guilty of subornation of perjury; but there are two ways of delivering evidence. I told them, therefore, that if any offers should be made them on the other side, they should refuse them, and that they might be assured they should lose nothing by being honest men, and telling the truth. I said, we were told that Mr Jones had assaulted the gentleman first, and that, if that was the truth, they should declare it; and I did give them some hints that they should be no losers."—"I think you went lengths indeed," cries Allworthy.—"Nay, sir," answered Dowling, "I am sure I did not desire them to tell an untruth;—nor should I have said what I did, unless it had been to oblige you."—"You would not have thought, I believe," says Allworthy, "to have obliged me, had you known that this Mr Jones was my own nephew."—"I am sure, sir," answered he, "it did not become me to take any notice of what I thought you desired to conceal."—"How!" cries Allworthy, "and did you know it then?"—"Nay, sir," answered Dowling, "if your worship bids me speak the truth, I am sure I shall do it.—Indeed, sir, I did know it; for they were almost the last words which Madam Blifil ever spoke, which she mentioned to me as I stood alone by her bedside, when she delivered me the letter I brought your worship from her."—"What letter?" cries Allworthy.—"The letter, sir," answered Dowling, "which I brought from Salisbury, and which I delivered into the hands of Mr Blifil."—"O heavens!" cries Allworthy: "Well, and what were the words? What did my sister say to you?"—"She took me by the hand," answered he, "and, as she delivered me the letter, said, 'I scarce know what I have written. Tell my brother, Mr Jones is his nephew—He is my son.—Bless him,' says she, and then fell backward, as if dying away. I presently called in the people, and she never spoke more to me, and died within a few minutes afterwards."—Allworthy stood a minute silent, lifting up his eyes; and then, turning to Dowling, said, "How came you, sir, not to deliver me this message?" "Your worship," answered he, "must remember that

you was at that time ill in bed; and, being in a violent hurry, as indeed I always am, I delivered the letter and message to Mr Blifil, who told me he would carry them both to you, which he hath since told me he did, and that your worship, partly out of friendship to 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 surprizing 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 Allworthy," 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 your 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.' and 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 that 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 would 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 enquiry 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 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 either 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 tousling 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 flimflam. 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 vorbid 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, Champagne, 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 into debt. She maintains a perfect intimacy with the lady of the Irish peer; and in acts of friendship to her repays all obligations she owes 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 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.

FINIS.

***Freeditorial*** 