

**The History of the
Late Mr. Jonathan
Wild
The Great
VOL.II**

**By
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***Free*editorial** 

THE HISTORY OF THE LATE MR. JONATHAN WILD THE GREAT

CHAPTER ONE

CHARACTERS OF SILLY PEOPLE, WITH THE PROPER USES FOR WHICH SUCH ARE DESIGNED.

One reason why we chose to end our first book, as we did, with the last chapter, was, that we are now obliged to produce two characters of a stamp entirely different from what we have hitherto dealt in. These persons are of that pitiful order of mortals who are in contempt called good-natured; being indeed sent into the world by nature with the same design with which men put little fish into a pike-pond, in order to be devoured by that voracious water-hero.

But to proceed with our history: Wild, having shared the booty in much the same manner as before, i.e. taken three-fourths of it, amounting to eighteen-pence, was now retiring to rest, in no very happy mood, when by accident he met with a young fellow who had formerly been his companion, and indeed intimate friend, at school. It hath been thought that friendship is usually nursed by similitude of manners, but the contrary had been the case between these lads; for whereas Wild was rapacious and intrepid, the other had always more regard for his skin than his money; Wild therefore had very generously compassionated this defect in his school-fellow, and had brought him off from many scrapes, into most of which he had first drawn him, by taking the fault and whipping to himself. He had always indeed been well paid on such occasions; there are a sort of people who, together with the best of the bargain, will be sure to have the obligation too on their side; so it had happened here: for this poor lad had considered himself in the highest degree obliged to Mr. Wild, and had contracted a very great esteem and friendship for him; the traces of which an absence of many years had not in the least effaced in his mind. He no sooner knew Wild, therefore, than he accosted him in the most friendly manner, and invited him home with him to breakfast (it being now near nine in the morning), which invitation our hero with no great difficulty consented to. This young man, who was about Wild's age, had some time before set up in the trade of a jeweller, in the materials or stock for which he had laid out the greatest part of a little fortune, and had married a very agreeable woman for love, by whom he then had two children. As our reader is to be more acquainted with this person, it may not be improper to open somewhat of his character, especially as it will serve as a kind of foil to the noble and great disposition of our hero, and as the one seems sent into this world as a proper object on which the talents of the other were to be displayed with a proper and just success.

Mr. Thomas Heartfree then (for that was his name) was of an honest and open disposition. He was of that sort of men whom experience only, and not their own natures, must inform that there are such things as deceit and hypocrisy in the world, and who, consequently, are not at five-and-twenty so difficult to be imposed upon as the oldest and most subtle. He was possessed of several great weaknesses of mind, being good-natured, friendly, and generous to a great excess. He had, indeed, too little regard to common justice, for he had forgiven some debts to his acquaintance only because they could not pay him, and had entrusted a bankrupt, on his setting up a second time, from having been convinced that he had dealt in his bankruptcy with a fair and honest heart, and that he had broke through misfortune only, and not from neglect or imposture. He was withal so silly a fellow that he never took the least advantage of the ignorance of his customers, and contented himself with very moderate gains on his goods; which he was the better enabled to do, notwithstanding his generosity, because his life was extremely temperate, his expenses being solely confined to the cheerful entertainment of his friends at home, and now and then a moderate glass of wine, in which he indulged himself in the company of his wife, who, with an agreeable person, was a mean-spirited, poor, domestic, low-bred animal, who confined herself mostly to the care of her family, placed her happiness in her husband and her children, followed no expensive fashions or diversions, and indeed rarely went abroad, unless to return the visits of a few plain neighbours, and twice a-year afforded herself, in company with her husband, the diversion of a play, where she never sat in a higher place than the pit.

To this silly woman did this silly fellow introduce the GREAT WILD, informing her at the same time of their school acquaintance and the many obligations he had received from him. This simple woman no sooner heard her husband had been obliged to her guest than her eyes sparkled on him with a benevolence which is an emanation from the heart, and of which great and noble minds, whose hearts never dwell but with an injury, can have no very adequate idea; it is therefore no wonder that our hero should misconstrue, as he did, the poor, innocent, and ample affection of Mrs. Heartfree towards her husband's friend, for that great and generous passion, which fires the eyes of a modern heroine, when the colonel is so kind as to indulge his city creditor with partaking of his table to-day, and of his bed tomorrow. Wild, therefore, instantly returned the compliment as he understood it, with his eyes, and presently after bestowed many encomiums on her beauty, with which, perhaps, she, who was a woman, though a good one, and misapprehended the design, was not displeased any more than the husband.

When breakfast was ended, and the wife retired to her household affairs, Wild, who had a quick discernment into the weaknesses of men, and who, besides the knowledge of his good (or foolish) disposition when a boy, had now discovered several sparks of

goodness, friendship, and generosity in his friend, began to discourse over the accidents which had happened in their childhood, and took frequent occasions of reminding him of those favours which we have before mentioned his having conferred on him; he then proceeded to the most vehement professions of friendship, and to the most ardent expressions of joy in this renewal of their acquaintance. He at last told him, with great seeming pleasure, that he believed he had an opportunity of serving him by the recommendation of a gentleman to his custom, who was then on the brink of marriage. "And, if he be not already engaged, I will," says he, "endeavour to prevail on him to furnish his lady with jewels at your shop."

Heartfree was not backward in thanks to our hero, and, after many earnest solicitations to dinner, which were refused, they parted for the first time.

But here, as it occurs to our memory that our readers may be surprised (an accident which sometimes happens in histories of this kind) how Mr. Wild, the elder, in his present capacity, should have been able to maintain his son at a reputable school, as this appears to have been, it may be necessary to inform him that Mr. Wild himself was then a tradesman in good business, but, by misfortunes in the world, to wit, extravagance and gaming, he had reduced himself to that honourable occupation which we have formerly mentioned.

Having cleared up this doubt, we will now pursue our hero, who forthwith repaired to the count, and, having first settled preliminary articles concerning distributions, he acquainted him with the scheme which he had formed against Heartfree; and after consulting proper methods to put it in execution, they began to concert measures for the enlargement of the count; on which the first, and indeed only point to be considered, was to raise money, not to pay his debts, for that would have required an immense sum, and was contrary to his inclination or intention, but to procure him bail; for as to his escape, Mr. Snap had taken such precautions that it appeared absolutely impossible.

CHAPTER TWO

GREAT EXAMPLES OF GREATNESS IN WILD, SHEWN AS WELL BY HIS BEHAVIOUR TO BAGSHOT AS IN A SCHEME LAID, FIRST, TO IMPOSE ON HEARTFREE BY MEANS OF THE COUNT, AND THEN TO CHEAT THE COUNT OF THE BOOTY.

Wild undertook therefore to extract some money from Bagshot, who, notwithstanding the depredations made on him, had carried off a pretty considerable booty from their engagement at dice the preceding day. He found Mr. Bagshot in expectation of his bail, and, with a countenance full of concern, which he could at any time, with wonderful art, put on, told him that all was discovered; that the count knew him, and intended to prosecute him for the robbery, "had not I exerted (said he) my utmost interest, and with great difficulty prevailed on him in case you refund the money—" "Refund the money!" cried Bagshot, "that is in your power: for you know what an inconsiderable part of it fell to my share." "How!" replied Wild, "is this your gratitude to me for saving your life? For your own conscience must convince you of your guilt, and with how much certainty the gentleman can give evidence against you." "Marry come up!" quoth Bagshot; "I believe my life alone will not be in danger. I know those who are as guilty as myself. Do you tell me of conscience?" "Yes, sirrah!" answered our hero, taking him by the collar; "and since you dare threaten me I will shew you the difference between committing a robbery and conniving at it, which is all I can charge myself with. I own indeed I suspected, when you shewed me a sum of money, that you had not come honestly by it." "How!" says Bagshot, frightened out of one half of his wits, and amazed out of the other, "can you deny?" "Yes, you rascal," answered Wild, "I do deny everything; and do you find a witness to prove it: and, to shew you how little apprehension I have of your power to hurt me, I will have you apprehended this moment."—At which words he offered to break from him; but Bagshot laid hold of his skirts, and, with an altered tone and manner, begged him not to be so impatient. "Refund then, sirrah," cries Wild, "and perhaps I may take pity on you." "What must I refund?" answered Bagshot. "Every farthing in your pocket," replied Wild; "then I may have some compassion on you, and not only save your life, but, out of an excess of generosity, may return you something." At which words Bagshot seeming to hesitate, Wild pretended to make to the door, and rapt out an oath of vengeance with so violent an emphasis, that his friend no longer presumed to balance, but suffered Wild to search his pockets and draw forth all he found, to the amount of twenty-one guineas and a half, which last piece our generous hero returned him again, telling him he might now sleep secure. but advised him for the future never to threaten his friends.

Thus did our hero execute the greatest exploits with the utmost ease imaginable, by means of those transcendent qualities which nature had indulged him with, viz., a bold heart, a thundering voice, and a steady countenance.

Wild now returned to the count, and informed him that he had got ten guineas of Bagshot; for, with great and commendable prudence, he sunk the other eleven into his own pocket, and told him with that money he would procure him bail, which he after prevailed on his father, and another gentleman of the same occupation, to become, for two guineas each, so that he made lawful prize of six more, making Bagshot debtor for the whole ten; for such were his great abilities, and so vast the compass of his understanding, that he never made any bargain without overreaching (or, in the vulgar phrase, cheating) the person with whom he dealt.

The count being, by these means, enlarged, the first thing they did, in order to procure credit from tradesmen, was the taking a handsome house ready furnished in one of the new streets; in which as soon as the count was settled, they proceeded to furnish him with servants and equipage, and all the insignia of a large estate proper to impose on poor Heartfree. These being all obtained, Wild made a second visit to his friend, and with much joy in his countenance acquainted him that he had succeeded in his endeavours, and that the gentleman had promised to deal with him for the jewels which he intended to present his bride, and which were designed to be very splendid and costly; he therefore appointed him to go to the count the next morning, and carry with him a set of the richest and most beautiful jewels he had, giving him at the same time some hints of the count's ignorance of that commodity, and that he might extort what price of him he pleased; but Heartfree told him, not without some disdain, that he scorned to take any such advantage; and, after expressing much gratitude to his friend for his recommendation, he promised to carry the jewels at the hour and to the place appointed.

I am sensible that the reader, if he hath but the least notion of greatness, must have such a contempt for the extreme folly of this fellow, that he will be very little concerned at any misfortunes which may befall him in the sequel; for to have no suspicion that an old schoolfellow, with whom he had, in his tenderest years, contracted a friendship, and who, on the accidental renewing of their acquaintance, had professed the most passionate regard for him, should be very ready to impose on him; in short, to conceive that a friend should, of his own accord, without any view to his own interest, endeavour to do him a service, must argue such weakness of mind, such ignorance of the world, and such an artless, simple, undesigning heart, as must render the person possessed of it the lowest creature and the properest object of contempt imaginable, in the eyes of every man of understanding and discernment.

Wild remembered that his friend Heartfree's faults were rather in his heart than in his head; that, though he was so mean a fellow that he was never capable of laying a design to injure any human creature, yet was he by no means a fool, nor liable to any gross

imposition, unless where his heart betrayed him. He therefore instructed the count to take only one of his jewels at the first interview, and reject the rest as not fine enough, and order him to provide some richer. He said this management would prevent Heartfree from expecting ready money for the jewel he brought with him, which the count was presently to dispose of, and by means of that money, and his great abilities at cards and dice, to get together as large a sum as possible, which he was to pay down to Heartfree at the delivery of the set of jewels, who would be thus void of all manner of suspicion and would not fail to give him credit for the residue.

By this contrivance, it will appear in the sequel that Wild did not only propose to make the imposition on Heartfree, who was (hitherto) void of all suspicion, more certain; but to rob the count himself of this sum. This double method of cheating the very tools who are our instruments to cheat others is the superlative degree of greatness, and is probably, as far as any spirit crusted over with clay can carry it, falling very little short of diabolism itself.

This method was immediately put in execution, and the count the first day took only a single brilliant, worth about three hundred pounds, and ordered a necklace, earrings, and solitaire, of the of three thousand more, to be prepared by that day sevensnight.

The interval was employed by Wild in prosecuting his scheme of raising a gang, in which he met with such success, that within a few days he had levied several bold and resolute fellows, fit for any enterprize, how dangerous or great soever.

We have before remarked that the truest mark of greatness is insatiability. Wild had covenanted with the count to receive three-fourths of the booty, and had, at the same time, covenanted with himself to secure the other fourth part likewise, for which he had formed a very great and noble design; but he now saw with concern that sum which was to be received in hand by Heartfree in danger of being absolutely lost. In order therefore to possess himself of that likewise, he contrived that the jewels should be brought in the afternoon, and that Heartfree should be detained before the count could see him; so that the night should overtake him in his return, when two of his gang were ordered to attack and plunder him.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTAINING SCENES OF SOFTNESS, LOVE, AND HONOUR ALL IN THE GREAT STILE.

The count had disposed of his jewel for its full value, and this he had by dexterity raised to a thousand pounds; this sum therefore he paid down to Heartfree, promising him the rest within a month. His house, his equipage, his appearance, but, above all, a certain plausibility in his voice and behaviour would have deceived any, but one whose great and wise heart had dictated to him something within, which would have secured him from any danger of imposition from without. Heartfree therefore did not in the least scruple giving him credit; but, as he had in reality procured those jewels of another, his own little stock not being able to furnish anything so valuable, he begged the count would be so kind to give his note for the money, payable at the time he mentioned; which that gentleman did not in the least scruple; so he paid him the thousand pound in specie, and gave his note for two thousand eight hundred pounds more to Heartfree, who burnt with gratitude to Wild for the noble customer he had recommended to him.

As soon as Heartfree was departed, Wild, who waited in another room, came in and received the casket from the count, it having been agreed between them that this should be deposited in his hands, as he was the original contriver of the scheme, and was to have the largest share. Wild, having received the casket, offered to meet the count late that evening to come to a division, but such was the latter's confidence in the honour of our hero, that he said, if it was any inconvenience to him, the next morning would do altogether as well. This was more agreeable to Wild, and accordingly, an appointment being made for that purpose, he set out in haste to pursue Heartfree to the place where the two gentlemen were ordered to meet and attack him. Those gentlemen with noble resolution executed their purpose; they attacked and spoiled the enemy of the whole sum he had received from the count.

As soon as the engagement was over, and Heartfree left sprawling on the ground, our hero, who wisely declined trusting the booty in his friends' hands, though he had good experience of their honour, made off after the conquerors: at length, they being all at a place of safety, Wild, according to a previous agreement, received nine-tenths of the booty: the subordinate heroes did indeed profess some little unwillingness (perhaps more than was strictly consistent with honour) to perform their contract; but Wild, partly by argument, but more by oaths and threatenings, prevailed with them to fulfil their promise.

Our hero having thus, with wonderful address, brought this great and glorious action to a happy conclusion, resolved to relax his mind after his fatigue, in the conversation of

the fair. He therefore set forwards to his lovely Laetitia; but in his way accidentally met with a young lady of his acquaintance, Miss Molly Straddle, who was taking the air in Bridges-street. Miss Molly, seeing Mr. Wild, stopped him, and with a familiarity peculiar to a genteel town education, tapped, or rather slapped him on the back, and asked him to treat her with a pint of wine at a neighbouring tavern. The hero, though he loved the chaste Laetitia with excessive tenderness, was not of that low sniveling breed of mortals who, as it is generally expressed, TYE THEMSELVES TO A WOMANS APRON-STRINGS; in a word, who are tainted with that mean, base, low vice, or virtue as it is called, of constancy; therefore he immediately consented, and attended her to a tavern famous for excellent wine, known by the name of the Rummer and Horseshoe, where they retired to a room by themselves. Wild was very vehement in his addresses, but to no purpose; the young lady declared she would grant no favour till he had made her a present; this was immediately complied with, and the lover made as happy as he could desire.

The immoderate fondness which Wild entertained for his dear Laetitia would not suffer him to waste any considerable time with Miss Straddle. Notwithstanding, therefore, all the endearments and caresses of that young lady, he soon made an excuse to go down stairs, and thence immediately set forward to Laetitia without taking any formal leave of Miss Straddle, or indeed of the drawer, with whom the lady was afterwards obliged to come to an account for the reckoning.

Mr. Wild, on his arrival at Mr. Snap's, found only Miss Doshy at home, that young lady being employed alone, in imitation of Penelope, with her thread or worsted, only with this difference, that whereas Penelope unravelled by night what she had knit or wove or spun by day, so what our young heroine unravelled by day she knit again by night. In short, she was mending a pair of blue stockings with red clocks; a circumstance which perhaps we might have omitted, had it not served to show that there are still some ladies of this age who imitate the simplicity of the ancients.

Wild immediately asked for his beloved, and was informed that she was not at home. He then enquired where she was to be found, and declared he would not depart till he had seen her, nay not till he had married her; for, indeed, his passion for her was truly honourable; in other words, he had so ungovernable a desire for her person, that he would go any length to satisfy it. He then pulled out the casket, which he swore was full of the finest jewels, and that he would give them all to her, with other promises, which so prevailed on Miss Doshy, who had not the common failure of sisters in envying, and often endeavouring to disappoint, each other's happiness, that she desired Mr. Wild to sit down a few minutes, whilst she endeavoured to find her sister and to bring her to him. The lover thanked her, and promised to stay till her return; and Miss Doshy, leaving Mr. Wild to his meditations, fastened him in the kitchen by barring the door (for

most of the doors in this mansion were made to be bolted on the outside), and then, slapping to the door of the house with great violence, without going out at it, she stole softly up stairs where Miss Laetitia was engaged in close conference with Mr. Bagshot. Miss Letty, being informed by her sister in a whisper of what Mr. Wild had said, and what he had produced, told Mr. Bagshot that a young lady was below to visit her whom she would despatch with all imaginable haste and return to him. She desired him therefore to stay with patience for her in the mean time, and that she would leave the door unlocked, though her papa would never forgive her if he should discover it. Bagshot promised on his honour not to step without his chamber; and the two young ladies went softly down stairs, when, pretending first to make their entry into the house, they repaired to the kitchen, where not even the presence of the chaste Laetitia could restore that harmony to the countenance of her lover which Miss Theodosia had left him possessed of; for, during her absence, he had discovered the absence of a purse containing bank-notes for 900 pounds, which had been taken from Mr. Heartfree, and which, indeed, Miss Straddle had, in the warmth of his amorous caresses, unperceived drawn from him. However, as he had that perfect mastery of his temper, or rather of his muscles, which is as necessary to the forming a great character as to the personating it on the stage, he soon conveyed a smile into his countenance, and, sealing as well his misfortune as his chagrin at it, began to pay honourable addresses to Miss Letty. This young lady, among many other good ingredients had three very predominant passions; to wit, vanity, wantonness, and avarice. To satisfy the first of these she employed Mr. Smirk and company; to the second, Mr. Bagshot and company; and our hero had the honour and happiness of solely engrossing the third. Now, these three sorts of lovers she had very different ways of entertaining. With the first she was all gay and coquette; with the second all fond and rampant; and with the last all cold and reserved. She therefore told Mr. Wild, with a most composed aspect, that she was glad he had repented of his manner of treating her at their last interview, where his behaviour was so monstrous that she had resolved never to see him any more; that she was afraid her own sex would hardly pardon her the weakness she was guilty of in receding from that resolution, which she was persuaded she never should have brought herself to, had not her sister, who was there to confirm what she said (as she did with many oaths), betrayed her into his company, by pretending it was another person to visit her: but, however, as he now thought proper to give her more convincing proofs of his affections (for he had now the casket in his hand), and since she perceived his designs were no longer against her virtue, but were such as a woman of honour might listen to, she must own—and then she feigned an hesitation, when Theodosia began: "Nay, sister, I am resolved you shall counterfeit no longer. I assure you, Mr. Wild, she hath the most violent passion for you in the world; and indeed, dear Tishy, if you offer to go back, since I plainly see Mr. Wild's designs are honourable, I will betray all you have ever said." "How, sister!" answered Laetitia; "I protest you will drive me out of the room: I did not expect this usage from you." Wild then fell on his knees, and, taking hold of her hand, repeated a

speech, which, as the reader may easily suggest it to himself, I shall not here set down. He then offered her the casket, but she gently rejected it; and on a second offer, with a modest countenance and voice, desired to know what it contained. Wild then opened it, and took forth (with sorrow I write it, and with sorrow will it be read) one of those beautiful necklaces with which, at the fair of Bartholomew, they deck the well-bewhitened neck of Thalestris queen of Amazons, Anna Bullen, queen Elizabeth, or some other high princess in Drollic story. It was indeed composed of that paste which Derdaeus Magnus, an ingenious toy- man, doth at a very moderate price dispense of to the second-rate beaus of the metropolis. For, to open a truth, which we ask our reader's pardon for having concealed from him so long, the sagacious count, wisely fearing lest some accident might prevent Mr. Wild's return at the appointed time, had carefully conveyed the jewels which Mr. Heartfree had brought with him into his own pocket, and in their stead had placed in the casket these artificial stones, which, though of equal value to a philosopher, and perhaps of a much greater to a true admirer of the compositions of art, had not however the same charms in the eyes of Miss Letty, who had indeed some knowledge of jewels; for Mr. Snap, with great reason, considering how valuable a part of a lady's education it would be to be well instructed in these things, in an age when young ladies learn little more than how to dress themselves, had in her youth placed Miss Letty as the handmaid (or housemaid as the vulgar call it) of an eminent pawnbroker. The lightning, therefore, which should have flashed from the jewels, flashed from her eyes, and thunder immediately followed from her voice. She beknaved, be-rascalled, be-rogued the unhappy hero, who stood silent, confounded with astonishment, but more with shame and indignation, at being thus outwitted and overreached. At length he recovered his spirits, and, throwing down the casket in a rage, he snatched the key from the table, and, without making any answer to the ladies, who both very plentifully opened upon him, and without taking any leave of them, he flew out at the door, and repaired with the utmost expedition to the count's habitation.

CHAPTER FOUR

IN WHICH WILD, AFTER MANY FRUITLESS ENDEAVOURS TO DISCOVER HIS FRIEND, MORALISES ON HIS MISFORTUNE IN A SPEECH, WHICH MAY BE OF USE (IF RIGHTLY UNDERSTOOD) TO SOME OTHER CONSIDERABLE SPEECH- MAKERS.

Not the highest-fed footman of the highest-bred woman of quality knocks with more impetuosity than Wild did at the count's door, which was immediately opened by a well-drest liveryman, who answered that his master was not at home. Wild, not satisfied with this, searched the house, but to no purpose; he then ransacked all the gaming-houses in town, but found no count: indeed, that gentleman had taken leave of his house the same instant Mr. Wild had turned his back, and, equipping himself with boots and a post-horse, without taking with him either servant, clothes, or any necessaries for the journey of a great man, made such mighty expedition that he was now upwards of twenty miles on his way to Dover.

Wild, finding his search ineffectual, resolved to give it over for that night; he then retired to his seat of contemplation, a night- cellar, where, without a single farthing in his pocket, he called for a sneaker of punch, and, placing himself on a bench by himself, he softly vented the following soliloquy:—

"How vain is human GREATNESS! What avail superior abilities, and a noble defiance of those narrow rules and bounds which confine the vulgar, when his best-concerted schemes are liable to be defeated! How unhappy is the state of PRIGGISM! How impossible for human prudence to foresee and guard against every circumvention! It is even as a game of chess, where, while the rook, or knight, or bishop, is busied forecasting some great enterprize, a worthless pawn exposes and disconcerts his scheme. Better had it been for me to have observed the simple laws of friendship and morality than thus to ruin my friend for the benefit of others. I might have commanded his purse to any degree of moderation: I have now disabled him from the power of serving me. Well! but that was not my design. If I cannot arraign my own conduct, why should I, like a woman or a child, sit down and lament the disappointment of chance? But can I acquit myself of all neglect? Did I not misbehave in putting it into the power of others to outwit me? But that is impossible to be avoided. In this a prig is more unhappy than any other: a cautious man may, in a crowd, preserve his own pockets by keeping his hands in them; but while the prig employs his hands in another's pocket, how shall he be able to defend his own? Indeed, in this light, what can be imagined more miserable than a prig? How dangerous are his acquisitions! how unsafe, how unquiet his possessions! Why then should any man wish to be a prig, or where is his greatness? I answer, in his mind: 'tis the inward glory, the secret consciousness of doing great and

wonderful actions, which can alone support the truly GREAT man, whether he be a CONQUEROR, a TYRANT, a STATESMAN, or a PRIG. These must bear him up against the private curse and public imprecation, and, while he is hated and detested by all mankind, must make him inwardly satisfied with himself. For what but some such inward satisfaction as this could inspire men possessed of power, wealth, of every human blessing which pride, avarice, or luxury could desire, to forsake their homes, abandon ease and repose, and at the expense of riches and pleasures, at the price of labour and hardship, and at the hazard of all that fortune hath liberally given them, could send them at the head of a multitude of prigs, called an army, to molest their neighbours; to introduce rape, rapine, bloodshed, and every kind of misery among their own species? What but some such glorious appetite of mind could inflame princes, endowed with the greatest honours, and enriched with the most plentiful revenues, to desire maliciously to rob those subjects of their liberties who are content to sweat for the luxury, and to bow down their knees to the pride, of those very princes? What but this can inspire them to destroy one half of their subjects, in order to reduce the rest to an absolute dependence on their own wills, and on those of their brutal successors? What other motive could seduce a subject, possessed of great property in his community, to betray the interest of his fellow-subjects, of his brethren, and his posterity, to the wanton disposition of such princes? Lastly, what less inducement could persuade the prig to forsake the methods of acquiring a safe, an honest, and a plentiful livelihood, and, at the hazard of even life itself, and what is mistaken called dishonour, to break openly and bravely through the laws of his country, for uncertain, unsteady, and unsafe gain? Let me then hold myself contented with this reflection, that I have been wise though unsuccessful, and am a CHEAT though an unhappy man."

His soliloquy and his punch concluded together; for he had at every pause comforted himself with a sip. And now it came first into his head that it would be more difficult to pay for it than it was to swallow it; when, to his great pleasure, he beheld at another corner of the room one of the gentlemen whom he had employed in the attack on Heartfree, and who, he doubted not, would readily lend him a guinea or two; but he had the mortification, on applying to him, to hear that the gaming-table had stript him of all the booty which his own generosity had left in his possession. He was therefore obliged to pursue his usual method on such occasions: so, cocking his hat fiercely, he marched out of the room without making any excuse, or any one daring to make the least demand.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTAINING MANY SURPRISING ADVENTURES, WHICH OUR HERO, WITH GREAT GREATNESS, ACHIEVED.

We will now leave our hero to take a short repose, and return to Mr. Snaps' where, at Wild's departure, the fair Theodosia had again betaken herself to her stocking, and Miss Letty had retired up stairs to Mr. Bagshot; but that gentleman had broken his parole, and, having conveyed himself below stairs behind a door, he took the opportunity of Wild's sally to make his escape. We shall only observe that Miss Letty's surprize was the greater, as she had, notwithstanding her promise to the contrary, taken the precaution to turn the key; but, in her hurry, she did it ineffectually. How wretched must have been the situation of this young creature, who had not only lost a lover on whom her tender heart perfectly doated, but was exposed to the rage of an injured father, tenderly jealous of his honour, which was deeply engaged to the sheriff of London and Middlesex for the safe custody of the said Bagshot, and for which two very good responsible friends had given not only their words but their bonds.

But let us remove our eyes from this melancholy object and survey our hero, who, after a successless search for Miss Straddle, with wonderful greatness of mind and steadiness of countenance went early in the morning to visit his friend Heartfree, at a time when the common herd of friends would have forsaken and avoided him. He entered the room with a chearful air, which he presently changed into surprize on seeing his friend in a night-gown, with his wounded head bound about with linen, and looking extremely pale from a great effusion of blood. When Wild was informed by Heartfree what had happened he first expressed great sorrow, and afterwards suffered as violent agonies of rage against the robbers to burst from him. Heartfree, in compassion to the deep impression his misfortunes seemed to make on his friend, endeavoured to lessen it as much as possible, at the same time exaggerating the obligation he owed to Wild, in which his wife likewise seconded him, and they breakfasted with more comfort than was reasonably to be expected after such an accident; Heartfree expressing great satisfaction that he had put the count's note in another pocket- book; adding, that such a loss would have been fatal to him; "for, to confess the truth to you, my dear friend," said he, "I have had some losses lately which have greatly perplexed my affairs; and though I have many debts due to me from people of great fashion, I assure you I know not where to be certain of getting a shilling." Wild greatly felicitated him on the lucky accident of preserving his note, and then proceeded, with much acrimony, to inveigh against the barbarity of people of fashion, who kept tradesmen out of their money.

While they amused themselves with discourses of this kind, Wild meditating within himself whether he should borrow or steal from his friend, or indeed whether he could

not effect both, the apprentice brought a bank-note of L500 in to Heartfree, which he said a gentlewoman in the shop, who had been looking at some jewels, desired him to exchange. Heartfree, looking at the number, immediately recollected it to be one of those he had been robbed of. With this discovery he acquainted Wild, who, with the notable presence of mind and unchanged complexion so essential to a great character, advised him to proceed cautiously; and offered (as Mr. Heartfree himself was, he said, too much flustered to examine the woman with sufficient art) to take her into a room in his house alone. He would, he said, personate the master of the shop, would pretend to shew her some jewels, and would undertake to get sufficient information out of her to secure the rogues, and most probably all their booty. This proposal was readily and thankfully accepted by Heartfree. Wild went immediately up stairs into the room appointed, whither the apprentice, according to appointment, conducted the lady.

The apprentice was ordered down stairs the moment the lady entered the room; and Wild, having shut the door, approached her with great ferocity in his looks, and began to expatiate on the complicated baseness of the crime she had been guilty of; but though he uttered many good lessons of morality, as we doubt whether from a particular reason they may work any very good effect on our reader, we shall omit his speech, and only mention his conclusion, which was by asking her what mercy she could now expect from him? Miss Straddle, for that was the young lady, who had had a good education, and had been more than once present at the Old Bailey, very confidently denied the whole charge, and said she had received the note from a friend. Wild then, raising his voice, told her she should be immediately committed, and she might depend on being convicted; "but," added he, changing his tone, "as I have a violent affection for thee, my dear Straddle, if you will follow my advice, I promise you, on my honour, to forgive you, nor shall you be ever called in question on this account." "Why, what would you have me to do, Mr. Wild?" replied the young lady, with a pleasanter aspect. "You must know then," said Wild, "the money you picked out of my pocket (nay, by G—d you did, and if you offer to flinch you shall be convicted of it) I won at play of a fellow who it seems robbed my friend of it; you must, therefore, give an information on oath against one Thomas Fierce, and say that you received the note from him, and leave the rest to me. I am certain, Molly, you must be sensible of your obligations to me, who return good for evil to you in this manner." The lady readily consented, and advanced to embrace Mr. Wild, who stepped a little back and cried, "Hold, Molly; there are two other notes of L200 each to be accounted for—where are they?" The lady protested with the most solemn asseverations that she knew of no more; with which, when Wild was not satisfied, she cried, "I will stand search." "That you shall," answered Wild, "and stand strip too." He then proceeded to tumble and search her, but to no purpose, till at last she burst into tears, and declared she would tell the truth (as indeed she did); she then confessed that she had disposed of the one to Jack Swagger, a great favourite of the ladies, being an Irish gentleman, who had been bred clerk to an attorney, afterwards

whipt out of a regiment of dragoons, and was then a Newgate solicitor, and a bawdy house bully; and, as for the other, she had laid it all out that very morning in brocaded silks and Flanders lace. With this account Wild, who indeed knew it to be a very probable one, was forced to be contented: and now, abandoning all further thoughts of what he saw was irretrievably lost, he gave the lady some further instructions, and then, desiring her to stay a few minutes behind him, he returned to his friend, and acquainted him that he had discovered the whole roguery; that the woman had confessed from whom she had received the note, and promised to give an information before a justice of peace; adding, he was concerned he could not attend him thither, being obliged to go to the other end of the town to receive thirty pounds, which he was to pay that evening. Heartfree said that should not prevent him of his company, for he could easily lend him such a trifle. This was accordingly done and accepted, and Wild, Heartfree, and the lady went to the justice together.

The warrant being granted, and the constable being acquainted by the lady, who received her information from Wild, of Mr. Fierce's haunts, he was easily apprehended, and, being confronted by Miss Straddle, who swore positively to him, though she had never seen him before, he was committed to Newgate, where he immediately conveyed an information to Wild of what had happened, and in the evening received a visit from him.

Wild affected great concern for his friend's misfortune, and as great surprize at the means by which it was brought about. However, he told Fierce that he must certainly be mistaken in that point of his having had no acquaintance with Miss Straddle: but added, that he would find her out, and endeavour to take off her evidence, which, he observed, did not come home enough to endanger him; besides, he would secure him witnesses of an alibi, and five or six to his character; so that he need be under no apprehension, for his confinement till the sessions would be his only punishment.

Fierce, who was greatly comforted by these assurances of his friend, returned him many thanks, and, both shaking each other very earnestly by the hand, with a very hearty embrace they separated.

The hero considered with himself that the single evidence of Miss Straddle would not be sufficient to convince Fierce, whom he resolved to hang, as he was the person who had principally refused to deliver him the stipulated share of the booty; he therefore went in quest of Mr. James Sly, the gentleman who had assisted in the exploit, and found and acquainted him with the apprehending of Fierce. Wild then, intimating his fear lest Fierce should impeach Sly, advised him to be beforehand, to surrender himself to a justice of peace and offer himself as an evidence. Sly approved Mr. Wild's opinion, went

directly to a magistrate, and was by him committed to the Gatehouse, with a promise of being admitted evidence against his companion.

Fierce was in a few days brought to his trial at the Old Bailey, where, to his great confusion, his old friend Sly appeared against him, as did Miss Straddle. His only hopes were now in the assistances which our hero had promised him. These unhappily failed him: so that, the evidence being plain against him, and he making no defence, the jury convicted him, the court condemned him, and Mr. Ketch executed him.

With such infinite address did this truly great man know how to play with the passions of men, to set them at variance with each other, and to work his own purposes out of those jealousies and apprehensions which he was wonderfully ready at creating by means of those great arts which the vulgar call treachery, dissembling, promising, lying, falsehood, &c., but which are by great men summed up in the collective name of policy, or politics, or rather pollitrics; an art of which, as it is the highest excellence of human nature, perhaps our great man was the most eminent master.

CHAPTER SIX

OF HATS.

Wild had now got together a very considerable gang, composed of undone gamesters, ruined bailiffs, broken tradesmen, idle apprentices, attorneys' clerks, and loose and disorderly youth, who, being born to no fortune, nor bred to any trade or profession, were willing to live luxuriously without labour. As these persons wore different PRINCIPLES, i.e. HATS, frequent dissensions grew among them. There were particularly two parties, viz., those who wore hats FIERCELY cocked, and those who preferred the NAB or trencher hat, with the brim flapping over their eyes. The former were called CAVALIERS and TORY RORY RANTER BOYS, &c.; the latter went by the several names of WAGS, roundheads, shakebags, old-nolls, and several others. Between these, continual jars arose, insomuch that they grew in time to think there was something essential in their differences, and that their interests were incompatible with each other, whereas, in truth, the difference lay only in the fashion of their hats. Wild, therefore, having assembled them all at an alehouse on the night after Fierce's execution, and, perceiving evident marks of their misunderstanding, from their behaviour to each other, addressed them in the following gentle, but forcible manner:

CHAPTER SEVEN

SHEWING THE CONSEQUENCE WHICH ATTENDED HEARTFREE'S ADVENTURES WITH WILD; ALL NATURAL AND COMMON ENOUGH TO LITTLE WRETCHES WHO DEAL WITH GREAT MEN; TOGETHER WITH SOME PRECEDENTS OF LETTERS, BEING THE DIFFERENT METHODS OF ANSWERING A DUN.

Let us now return to Heartfree, to whom the count's note, which he had paid away, was returned, with an account that the drawer was not to be found, and that, on enquiring after him, they had heard he had run away, and consequently the money was now demanded of the endorser. The apprehension of such a loss would have affected any man of business, but much more one whose unavoidable ruin it must prove. He expressed so much concern and confusion on this occasion, that the proprietor of the note was frightened, and resolved to lose no time in securing what he could. So that in the afternoon of the same day Mr. Snap was commissioned to pay Heartfree a visit, which he did with his usual formality, and conveyed him to his own house.

Mrs. Heartfree was no sooner informed of what had happened to her husband than she raved like one distracted; but after she had vented the first agonies of her passion in tears and lamentations she applied herself to all possible means to procure her husband's liberty. She hastened to beg her neighbours to secure bail for him. But, as the news had arrived at their houses before her, she found none of them at home, except an honest Quaker, whose servants durst not tell a lie. However, she succeeded no better with him, for unluckily he had made an affirmation the day before that he would never be bail for any man. After many fruitless efforts of this kind she repaired to her husband, to comfort him at least with her presence. She found him sealing the last of several letters, which he was despatching to his friends and creditors. The moment he saw her a sudden joy sparkled in his eyes, which, however, had a very short duration; for despair soon closed them again; nor could he help bursting into some passionate expressions of concern for her and his little family, which she, on her part, did her utmost to lessen, by endeavouring to mitigate the loss, and to raise in him hopes from the count, who might, she said, be possibly only gone into the country. She comforted him likewise with the expectation of favour from his acquaintance, especially from those whom he had in a particular manner obliged and served. Lastly, she conjured him, by all the value and esteem he professed for her, not to endanger his health, on which alone depended her happiness, by too great an indulgence of grief; assuring him that no state of life could appear unhappy to her with him, unless his own sorrow or discontent made it so.

In this manner did this weak poor-spirited woman attempt to relieve her husband's pains, which it would have rather become her to aggravate, by not only painting out his

misery in the liveliest colours imaginable, but by upbraiding him with that folly and confidence which had occasioned it, and by lamenting her own hard fate in being obliged to share his sufferings.

Heartfree returned this goodness (as it is called) of his wife with the warmest gratitude, and they passed an hour in a scene of tenderness too low and contemptible to be recounted to our great readers. We shall therefore omit all such relations, as they tend only to make human nature low and ridiculous.

Those messengers who had obtained any answers to his letters now returned. We shall here copy a few of them, as they may serve for precedents to others who have an occasion, which happens commonly enough in genteel life, to answer the impertinence of a dun.

LETTER I.—

MR. HEARTFREE,—My lord commands me to tell you he is very much surprized at your assurance in asking for money which you know hath been so little while due; however, as he intends to deal no longer at your shop, he hath ordered me to pay you as soon as I shall have cash in hand, which, considering many disbursements for bills long due, &c., can't possibly promise any time, &c., at present. And am your humble servant,

ROGER MORCRAFT.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,—The money, as you truly say, hath been three years due, but upon my soul I am at present incapable of paying a farthing; but as I doubt not, very shortly not only to content that small bill, but likewise to lay out very considerable further sums at your house, hope you will meet with no inconvenience by this short delay in, dear sir, your most sincere humble servant,

CHA. COURTLY.

LETTER III.

MR. HEARTFREE,—I beg you would not acquaint my husband of the trifling debt between us; for, as I know you to be a very good-natured man, I will trust you with a secret; he gave me the money long since to discharge it, which I had the ill luck to lose at play. You may be assured I will satisfy you the first opportunity, and am, sir, your very humble servant,

CATH. RUBBERS.

Please to present my compliments to Mrs. Heartfree.

LETTER IV.

MR. THOMAS HEARTFREE, SIR,—Yours received: but as to sum mentioned therein, doth not suit at present. Your humble servant, PETER POUNCE.

LETTER V.

SIR,—I am sincerely sorry it is not at present possible for me to comply with your request, especially after so many obligations received on my side, of which I shall always entertain the most grateful memory. I am very greatly concerned at your misfortunes, and would have waited upon you in person, but am not at present very well, and besides, am obliged to go this evening to Vauxhall. I am, sir, your most obliged humble servant,

CHA. EASY.

P.S.—I hope good Mrs. Heartfree and the dear little ones are well.

There were more letters to much the same purpose; but we proposed giving our readers a taste only. Of all these, the last was infinitely the most grating to poor Heartfree, as it came from one to whom, when in distress, he had himself lent a considerable sum, and of whose present flourishing circumstances he was well assured.

CHAPTER EIGHT

IN WHICH OUR HERO CARRIES GREATNESS TO AN IMMODERATE HEIGHT.

Let us remove, therefore, as fast as we can, this detestable picture of ingratitude, and present the much more agreeable portrait of that assurance to which the French very properly annex the epithet of good. Heartfree had scarce done reading his letters when our hero appeared before his eyes; not with that aspect with which a pitiful parson meets his patron after having opposed him at an election, or which a doctor wears when sneaking away from a door when he is informed of his patient's death; not with that downcast countenance which betrays the man who, after a strong conflict between virtue and vice, hath surrendered his mind to the latter, and is discovered in his first treachery; but with that noble, bold, great confidence with which a prime minister assures his dependent that the place he promised him was disposed of before. And such concern and uneasiness as he expresses in his looks on those occasions did Wild testify on the first meeting of his friend. And as the said prime minister chides you for neglect of your interest in not having asked in time, so did our hero attack Heartfree for his giving credit to the count; and, without suffering him to make any answer, proceeded in a torrent of words to overwhelm him with abuse, which, however friendly its intention might be, was scarce to be outdone by an enemy. By these means Heartfree, who might perhaps otherwise have vented some little concern for that recommendation which Wild had given him to the count, was totally prevented from any such endeavour; and, like an invading prince, when attacked in his own dominions, forced to recel his whole strength to defend himself at home. This indeed he did so well, by insisting on the figure and outward appearance of the count and his equipage, that Wild at length grew a little more gentle, and with a sigh said, "I confess I have the least reason of all mankind to censure another for an imprudence of this nature, as I am myself the most easy to be imposed upon, and indeed have been so by this count, who, if he be insolvent, hath cheated me of five hundred pounds. But, for my own part," said he, "I will not yet despair, nor would I have you. Many men have found it convenient to retire or abscond for a while, and afterwards have paid their debts, or at least handsomely compounded them. This I am certain of, should a composition take place, which is the worst I think that can be apprehended, I shall be the only loser; for I shall think myself obliged in honour to repair your loss, even though you must confess it was principally owing to your own folly. Z—ds! had I imagined it necessary, I would have cautioned you, but I thought the part of the town where he lived sufficient caution not to trust him. And such a sum!—The devil must have been in you certainly!"

This was a degree of impudence beyond poor Mrs. Heartfree's imagination. Though she had before vented the most violent execrations on Wild, she was now thoroughly

satisfied of his innocence, and begged him not to insist any longer on what he perceived so deeply affected her husband. She said trade could not be carried on without credit, and surely he was sufficiently justified in giving it to such a person as the count appeared to be. Besides, she said, reflections on what was past and irretrievable would be of little service; that their present business was to consider how to prevent the evil consequences which threatened, and first to endeavour to procure her husband his liberty. "Why doth he not procure bail?" said Wild. "Alas! sir," said she, "we have applied to many of our acquaintance in vain; we have met with excuses even where we could least expect them." "Not bail!" answered Wild, in a passion; "he shall have bail, if there is any in the world. It is now very late, but trust me to procure him bail to-morrow morning."

Mrs. Heartfree received these professions with tears, and told Wild he was a friend indeed. She then proposed to stay that evening with her husband, but he would not permit her on account of his little family, whom he would not agree to trust to the care of servants in this time of confusion.

A hackney-coach was then sent for, but without success; for these, like hackney-friends, always offer themselves in the sunshine, but are never to be found when you want them. And as for a chair, Mr. Snap lived in a part of the town which chairmen very little frequent. The good woman was therefore obliged to walk home, whither the gallant Wild offered to attend her as a protector. This favour was thankfully accepted, and, the husband and wife having taken a tender leave of each other, the former was locked in and the latter locked out by the hands of Mr. Snap himself.

As this visit of Mr. Wild's to Heartfree may seem one of those passages in history which writers, Drawcansir-like, introduce only BECAUSE THEY DARE; indeed, as it may seem somewhat contradictory to the greatness of our hero, and may tend to blemish his character with an imputation of that kind of friendship which savours too much of weakness and imprudence, it may be necessary to account for this visit, especially to our more sagacious readers, whose satisfaction we shall always consult in the most especial manner. They are to know then that at the first interview with Mrs. Heartfree Mr. Wild had conceived that passion, or affection, or friendship, or desire, for that handsome creature, which the gentlemen of this our age agreed to call LOVE, and which is indeed no other than that kind of affection which, after the exercise of the dominical day is over, a lusty divine is apt to conceive for the well-drest sirloin or handsome buttock which the well-edified squire in gratitude sets before him, and which, so violent is his love, he devours in imagination the moment he sees it. Not less ardent was the hungry passion of our hero, who, from the moment he had cast his eyes on that charming dish, had cast about in his mind by what method he might come at it. This, as he perceived, might most easily be effected after the ruin of Heartfree, which, for other considerations, he

had intended. So he postponed all endeavours for this purpose till he had first effected that, by order of time, was regularly to precede this latter design; with such regularity did this our hero conduct all his schemes, and so truly superior was he to all the efforts of passion, which so often disconcert and disappoint the noblest views of others.

CHAPTER NINE

MORE GREATNESS IN WILD. A LOW SCENE BETWEEN MRS. HEARTFREE AND HER CHILDREN, AND A SCHEME OF OUR HERO WORTHY THE HIGHEST ADMIRATION, AND EVEN ASTONISHMENT.

When first Wild conducted his flame (or rather his dish, to continue our metaphor) from the proprietor, he had projected a design of conveying her to one of those eating-houses in Covent- garden, where female flesh is deliciously drest and served up to the greedy appetites of young gentlemen; but, fearing lest she should not come readily enough into his wishes, and that, by too eager and hasty a pursuit, he should frustrate his future expectations, and luckily at the same time a noble hint suggesting itself to him, by which he might almost inevitably secure his pleasure, together with his profit, he contented himself with waiting on Mrs. Heartfree home, and, after many protestations of friendship and service to her husband, took his leave, and promised to visit her early in the morning, and to conduct her back to Mr. Snap's.

Wild now retired to a night-cellar, where he found several of his acquaintance, with whom he spent the remaining part of the night in revelling; nor did the least compassion for Heartfree's misfortunes disturb the pleasure of his cups. So truly great was his soul that it was absolutely composed, save that an apprehension of Miss Tishy's making some discovery (as she was then in no good temper towards him) a little ruffled and disquieted the perfect serenity he would otherwise have enjoyed. As he had, therefore, no opportunity of seeing her that evening, he wrote her a letter full of ten thousand protestations of honourable love, and (which he more depended on) containing as many promises, in order to bring the young lady into good humour, without acquainting her in the least with his suspicion, or giving her any caution; for it was his constant maxim never to put it into any one's head to do you a mischief by acquainting him that it is in his power.

We must now return to Mrs. Heartfree, who past a sleepless night in as great agonies and horror for the absence of her husband as a fine well-bred woman would feel at the return of hers from a long voyage or journey. In the morning the children being brought to her, the eldest asked where dear papa was? At which she could not refrain from bursting into tears. The child, perceiving it, said,

"Don't cry, mamma; I am sure papa would not stay abroad if he could help it." At these words she caught the child in her arms, and, throwing herself into the chair in an agony of passion, cried out,

"No, my child; nor shall all the malice of hell keep us long asunder."

These are circumstances which we should not, for the amusement of six or seven readers only, have inserted, had they not served to shew that there are weaknesses in vulgar life to which great minds are so entirely strangers that they have not even an idea of them; and, secondly, by exposing the folly of this low creature, to set off and elevate that greatness of which we endeavour to draw a true portrait in this history.

Wild, entering the room, found the mother with one child in her arms, and the other at her knee. After paying her his compliments, he desired her to dismiss the children and servant, for that he had something of the greatest moment to impart to her.

She immediately complied with his request, and, the door being shut, asked him with great eagerness if he had succeeded in his intentions of procuring the bail. He answered he had not endeavoured at it yet, for a scheme had entered into his head by which she might certainly preserve her husband, herself, and her family. In order to which he advised her instantly to remove with the most valuable jewels she had to Holland, before any statute of bankruptcy issued to prevent her; that he would himself attend her thither and place her in safety, and then return to deliver her husband, who would be thus easily able to satisfy his creditors. He added that he was that instant come from Snap's, where he had communicated the scheme to Heartfree, who had greatly approved of it, and desired her to put it in execution without delay, concluding that a moment was not to be lost.

The mention of her husband's approbation left no doubt in this poor woman's breast; she only desired a moment's time to pay him a visit in order to take her leave. But Wild peremptorily refused; he said by every moment's delay she risked the ruin of her family; that she would be absent only a few days from him, for that the moment he had lodged her safe in Holland, he would return, procure her husband his liberty, and bring him to her. I have been the unfortunate, the innocent cause of all my dear Tom's calamity, madam, said he, and I will perish with him or see him out of it. Mrs. Heartfree overflowed with acknowledgments of his goodness, but still begged for the shortest interview with her husband. Wild declared that a minute's delay might be fatal; and added, though with the voice of sorrow rather than of anger, that if she had not resolution enough to execute the commands he brought her from her husband, his ruin would lie at her door; and, for his own part, he must give up any farther meddling in his affairs.

She then proposed to take her children with her; but Wild would not permit it, saying they would only retard their flight, and that it would be properer for her husband to bring them. He at length absolutely prevailed on this poor woman, who immediately packed up the most valuable effects she could find, and, after taking a tender leave of

her infants, earnestly recommended them to the care of a very faithful servant. Then they called a hackney-coach, which conveyed them to an inn, where they were furnished with a chariot and six, in which they set forward for Harwich.

Wild rode with an exulting heart, secure, as he now thought himself, of the possession of that lovely woman, together with a rich cargo. In short, he enjoyed in his mind all the happiness which unbridled lust and rapacious avarice, could promise him. As to the poor creature who was to satisfy these passions, her whole soul was employed in reflecting on the condition of her husband and children. A single word scarce escaped her lips, though many a tear gushed from her brilliant eyes, which, if I may use a coarse expression, served only as delicious sauce to heighten the appetite of Wild.

CHAPTER TEN

SEA-ADVENTURES VERY NEW AND SURPRISING.

When they arrived at Harwich they found a vessel, which had put in there, just ready to depart for Rotterdam. So they went immediately on board, and sailed with a fair wind; but they had hardly proceeded out of sight of land when a sudden and violent storm arose and drove them to the southwest; insomuch that the captain apprehended it impossible to avoid the Goodwin Sands, and he and all his crew gave themselves up for lost. Mrs. Heartfree, who had no other apprehensions from death but those of leaving her dear husband and children, fell on her knees to beseech the Almighty's favour, when Wild, with a contempt of danger truly great, took a resolution as worthy to be admired perhaps as any recorded of the bravest hero, ancient or modern; a resolution which plainly proved him to have these two qualifications so necessary to a hero, to be superior to all the energies of fear or pity. He saw the tyrant death ready to rescue from him his intended prey, which he had yet devoured only in imagination. He therefore swore he would prevent him, and immediately attacked the poor wretch, who was in the utmost agonies of despair, first with solicitation, and afterwards with force.

Mrs. Heartfree, the moment she understood his meaning, which, in her present temper of mind, and in the opinion she held of him, she did not immediately, rejected him with all the repulses which indignation and horror could animate: but when he attempted violence she filled the cabin with her shrieks, which were so vehement that they reached the ears of the captain, the storm at this time luckily abating. This man, who was a brute rather from his education and the element he inhabited than from nature, ran hastily down to her assistance, and, finding her struggling on the ground with our hero, he presently rescued her from her intended ravisher, who was soon obliged to quit the woman, in order to engage with her lusty champion, who spared neither pains nor blows in the assistance of his fair passenger.

When the short battle was over, in which our hero, had he not been overpowered with numbers, who came down on their captain's side, would have been victorious, the captain rapped out a hearty oath, and asked Wild, if he had no more Christianity in him than to ravish a woman in a storm? To which the other greatly and sullenly answered, "It was very well; but d—n him if he had not satisfaction the moment they came on shore." The captain with great scorn replied, "Kiss,——" &c., and then, forcing Wild out of the cabin, he, at Mrs. Heartfree's request, locked her into it, and returned to the care of his ship.

The storm was now entirely ceased, and nothing remained but the usual ruffling of the sea after it, when one of the sailors spied a sail at a distance, which the captain wisely

apprehended might be a privateer (for we were then engaged in a war with France), and immediately ordered all the sail possible to be crowded; but his caution was in vain, for the little wind which then blew was directly adverse, so that the ship bore down upon them, and soon appeared to be what the captain had feared, a French privateer. He was in no condition of resistance, and immediately struck on her firing the first gun. The captain of the Frenchman, with several of his hands, came on board the English vessel, which they rifled of everything valuable, and, amongst the rest, of poor Mrs. Heartfree's whole cargo; and then taking the crew, together with the two passengers, aboard his own ship, he determined, as the other would be only a burthen to him, to sink her, she being very old and leaky, and not worth going back with to Dunkirk. He preserved, therefore, nothing but the boat, as his own was none of the best, and then, pouring a broadside into her, he sent her to the bottom.

The French captain, who was a very young fellow, and a man of gallantry, was presently enamoured to no small degree with his beautiful captive; and imagining Wild, from some words he dropt, to be her husband, notwithstanding the ill affection towards him which appeared in her looks, he asked her if she understood French. She answered in the affirmative, for indeed she did perfectly well. He then asked her how long she and that gentleman (pointing to Wild) had been married. She answered, with a deep sigh and many tears, that she was married indeed, but not to that villain, who was the sole cause of all her misfortunes. That appellation raised a curiosity in the captain, and he importuned her in so pressing but gentle a manner to acquaint him with the injuries she complained of, that she was at last prevailed on to recount to him the whole history of her afflictions. This so moved the captain, who had too little notions of greatness, and so incensed him against our hero, that he resolved to punish him; and, without regard to the laws of war, he immediately ordered out his shattered boat, and, making Wild a present of half-a-dozen biscuits to prolong his misery, he put him therein, and then, committing him to the mercy of the sea, proceeded on his cruise.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE GREAT AND WONDERFUL BEHAVIOUR OF OUR HERO IN THE BOAT.

It is probable that a desire of ingratiating himself with his charming captive, or rather conqueror, had no little share in promoting this extraordinary act of illegal justice; for the Frenchman had conceived the same sort of passion or hunger which Wild himself had felt, and was almost as much resolved, by some means or other, to satisfy it. We will leave him however at present in the pursuit of his wishes, and attend our hero in his boat, since it is in circumstances of distress that true greatness appears most wonderful. For that a prince in the midst of his courtiers, all ready to compliment him with his favourite character or title, and indeed with everything else, or that a conqueror, at the head of a hundred thousand men, all prepared to execute his will, how ambitious, wanton, or cruel soever, should, in the giddiness of their pride, elevate themselves many degrees above those their tools, seems not difficult to be imagined, or indeed accounted for. But that a man in chains, in prison, nay, in the vilest dungeon, should, with persevering pride and obstinate dignity, discover that vast superiority in his own nature over the rest of mankind, who to a vulgar eye seem much happier than himself; nay, that he should discover heaven and providence (whose peculiar care, it seems, he is) at that very time at work for him; this is among the arcana of greatness, to be perfectly understood only by an adept in that science.

What could be imagined more miserable than the situation of our hero at this season, floating in a little boat on the open seas, without oar, without sail, and at the mercy of the first wave to overwhelm him? nay, this was indeed the fair side of his fortune, as it was a much more eligible fate than that alternative which threatened him with almost unavoidable certainty, viz., starving with hunger, the sure consequence of a continuance of the calm.

Our hero, finding himself in this condition, began to ejaculate a round of blasphemies, which the reader, without being over-pious, might be offended at seeing repeated. He then accused the whole female sex, and the passion of love (as he called it), particularly that which he bore to Mrs. Heartfree, as the unhappy occasion of his present sufferings. At length, finding himself descending too much into the language of meanness and complaint, he stopped short, and after broke forth as follows: "D—n it, a man can die but once! what signifies it? Every man must die, and when it is over it is over. I never was afraid of anything yet, nor I won't begin now; no, d—n me, won't I. What signifies fear? I shall die whether I am afraid or no: who's afraid then, d—n me?" At which words he looked extremely fierce, but, recollecting that no one was present to see him, he relaxed a little the terror of his countenance, and, pausing a while, repeated the word, d—n!

"Suppose I should be d—ned at last," cries he, "when I never thought a syllable of the matter? I have often laughed and made a jest about it, and yet it may be so, for anything which I know to the contrary. If there should be another world it will go hard with me, that is certain. I shall never escape for what I have done to Heartfree. The devil must have me for that undoubtedly. The devil! Pshaw! I am not such a fool to be frightened at him neither. No, no; when a man's dead there's an end of him. I wish I was certainly satisfied of it though: for there are some men of learning, as I have heard, of a different opinion. It is but a bad chance, methinks, I stand. If there be no other world, why I shall be in no worse condition than a block or a stone: but if there should—d—n me I will think no longer about it.—Let a pack of cowardly rascals be afraid of death, I dare look him in the face. But shall I stay and be starved?—No, I will eat up the biscuits the French son of a whore bestowed on me, and then leap into the sea for drink, since the unconscionable dog hath not allowed me a single dram." Having thus said, he proceeded immediately to put his purpose in execution, and, as his resolution never failed him, he had no sooner despatched the small quantity of provision which his enemy had with no vast liberality presented him, than he cast himself headlong into the sea.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE STRANGE AND YET NATURAL ESCAPE OF OUR HERO.

Our hero, having with wonderful resolution thrown himself into the sea, as we mentioned at the end of the last chapter, was miraculously within two minutes after replaced in his boat; and this without the assistance of a dolphin or a seahorse, or any other fish or animal, who are always as ready at hand when a poet or historian pleases to call for them to carry a hero through the sea, as any chairman at a coffee-house door near St. James's to convey a beau over a street, and preserve his white stockings. The truth is, we do not chuse to have any recourse to miracles, from the strict observance we pay to that rule of Horace,

Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus.

The meaning of which is, do not bring in a supernatural agent when you can do without him; and indeed we are much deeper read in natural than supernatural causes. We will therefore endeavour to account for this extraordinary event from the former of these; and in doing this it will be necessary to disclose some profound secrets to our reader, extremely well worth his knowing, and which may serve him to account for many occurrences of the phenomenous kind which have formerly appeared in this our hemisphere.

Be it known then that the great Alma Mater, Nature, is of all other females the most obstinate, and tenacious of her purpose. So true is that observation,

Naturam expellas furca licet, usque recurret.

Which I need not render in English, it being to be found in a book which most fine gentlemen are forced to read. Whatever Nature, therefore, purposes to herself, she never suffers any reason, design, or accident to frustrate. Now, though it may seem to a shallow observer that some persons were designed by Nature for no use or purpose whatever, yet certain it is that no man is born into the world without his particular allotment; viz., some to be kings, some statesmen, some ambassadors, some bishops, some generals, and so on. Of these there be two kinds; those to whom Nature is so generous to give some endowment qualifying them for the parts she intends them afterwards to act on this stage, and those whom she uses as instances of her unlimited power, and for whose preferment to such and such stations Solomon himself could have invented no other reason than that Nature designed them so. These latter some great philosophers have, to shew them to be the favourites of Nature, distinguished by the

honourable appellation of NATURALS. Indeed, the true reason of the general ignorance of mankind on this head seems to be this; that, as Nature chuses to execute these her purposes by certain second causes, and as many of these second causes seem so totally foreign to her design, the wit of man, which, like his eye, sees best directly forward, and very little and imperfectly what is oblique, is not able to discern the end by the means. Thus, how a handsome wife or daughter should contribute to execute her original designation of a general, or how flattery or half a dozen houses in a borough- town should denote a judge, or a bishop, he is not capable of comprehending. And, indeed, we ourselves, wise as we are, are forced to reason *ab effectu*; and if we had been asked what Nature had intended such men for, before she herself had by the event demonstrated her purpose, it is possible we might sometimes have been puzzled to declare; for it must be confessed that at first sight, and to a mind uninspired, a man of vast natural capacity and much acquired knowledge may seem by Nature designed for power and honour, rather than one remarkable only for the want of these, and indeed all other qualifications; whereas daily experience convinces us of the contrary, and drives us as it were into the opinion I have here disclosed.

Now, Nature having originally intended our great man for that final exaltation which, as it is the most proper and becoming end of all great men, it were heartily to be wished they might all arrive at, would by no means be diverted from her purpose. She therefore no sooner spied him in the water than she softly whispered in his ear to attempt the recovery of his boat, which call he immediately obeyed, and, being a good swimmer, and it being a perfect calm, with great facility accomplished it.

Thus we think this passage in our history, at first so greatly surprising, is very naturally accounted for, and our relation rescued from the Prodigious, which, though it often occurs in biography, is not to be encouraged nor much commended on any occasion, unless when absolutely necessary to prevent the history's being at an end. Secondly, we hope our hero is justified from that imputation of want of resolution which must have been fatal to the greatness of his character.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOAT ADVENTURE, AND THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

Our hero passed the remainder of the evening, the night, and the next day, in a condition not much to be envied by any passion of the human mind, unless by ambition; which, provided it can only entertain itself with the most distant music of fame's trumpet, can disdain all the pleasures of the sensualist, and those more solemn, though quieter comforts, which a good conscience suggests to a Christian philosopher.

He spent his time in contemplation, that is to say, in blaspheming, cursing, and sometimes singing and whistling. At last, when cold and hunger had almost subdued his native fierceness, it being a good deal past midnight and extremely dark, he thought he beheld a light at a distance, which the cloudiness of the sky prevented his mistaking for a star: this light, however, did not seem to approach him, at least it approached by such imperceptible degrees that it gave him very little comfort, and at length totally forsook him. He then renewed his contemplation as before, in which he continued till the day began to break, when, to his inexpressible delight, he beheld a sail at a very little distance, and which luckily seemed to be making towards him. He was likewise soon espied by those in the vessel, who wanted no signals to inform them of his distress, and, as it was almost a calm, and their course lay within five hundred yards of him, they hoisted out their boat and fetched him aboard.

The captain of this ship was a Frenchman; she was laden with deal from Norway, and had been extremely shattered in the late storm. This captain was of that kind of men who are actuated by general humanity, and whose compassion can be raised by the distress of a fellow-creature, though of a nation whose king hath quarrelled with the monarch of their own. He therefore, commiserating the circumstances of Wild, who had dressed up a story proper to impose upon such a silly fellow, told him that, as himself well knew, he must be a prisoner on his arrival in France, but that he would endeavour to procure his redemption; for which our hero greatly thanked him. But, as they were making very slow sail (for they had lost their main-mast in the storm), Wild saw a little vessel at a distance, they being within a few leagues of the English shore, which, on enquiry, he was informed was probably an English fishing-boat. And, it being then perfectly calm, he proposed that, if they would accommodate him with a pair of scullers, he could get within reach of the boat, at least near enough to make signals to her; and he preferred any risque to the certain fate of being a prisoner. As his courage was somewhat restored by the provisions (especially brandy) with which the Frenchmen had supplied him, he was so earnest in his entreaties, that the captain, after many persuasions, at length complied, and he was furnished with scullers, and with some

bread, pork, and a bottle of brandy. Then, taking leave of his preservers, he again betook himself to his boat, and rowed so heartily that he soon came within the sight of the fisherman, who immediately made towards him and took him aboard.

No sooner was Wild got safe on board the fisherman than he begged him to make the utmost speed into Deal, for that the vessel which was still in sight was a distressed Frenchman, bound for Havre de Grace, and might easily be made a prize if there was any ship ready to go in pursuit of her. So nobly and greatly did our hero neglect all obligations conferred on him by the enemies of his country, that he would have contributed all he could to the taking his benefactor, to whom he owed both his life and his liberty.

The fisherman took his advice, and soon arrived at Deal, where the reader will, I doubt not, be as much concerned as Wild was, that there was not a single ship prepared to go on the expedition.

Our hero now saw himself once more safe on terra firma, but unluckily at some distance from that city where men of ingenuity can most easily supply their wants without the assistance of money, or rather can most easily procure money for the supply of their wants. However, as his talents were superior to every difficulty, he framed so dextrous an account of his being a merchant, having been taken and plundered by the enemy, and of his great effects in London, that he was not only heartily regaled by the fisherman at his house, but made so handsome a booty by way of borrowing, a method of taking which we have before mentioned to have his approbation, that he was enabled to provide himself with a place in the stage-coach; which (as God permitted it to perform the journey) brought him at the appointed time to an inn in the metropolis.

And now, reader, as thou canst be in no suspense far the fate of our great man, since we have returned him safe to the principal scene of his glory, we will a little look back on the fortunes of Mr. Heartfree, whom we left in no very pleasant situation; but of this we shall treat in the next book.