

fore have been begun in the last months of Fielding's life; and, according to Murphy, he made very careful preparation for the work, as attested by long extracts from the *Fathers* and the leading controversialists, which, after his death, were preserved by his brother. Beyond a passage or two in Richardson's *Correspondence*, and a sneering reference by Walpole to Fielding's "account how his dropsy was treated and teased by an innkeeper's wife in the Isle of Wight," there is nothing to show how the *Journal* was received, still less that it brought any substantial pecuniary relief to "those innocents," to whom reference had been made in the "Dedication." The play was not placed upon the stage until 1778. Its story, which is related in the *Advertisement*, is curious. After it had been set aside in 1742,<sup>1</sup> it seems to have been submitted to Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. Sir Charles was just starting for Russia, as Envoy Extraordinary. Whether the MS. went with him or not is unknown; but it was lost until 1775 or 1776, when it was recovered in a tattered and forlorn condition by Mr. Johnes, M.P. for Cardigan, from a person who entertained a very poor and even contemptuous opinion of its merits. Mr. Johnes thought otherwise. He sent it to Garrick, who at once recognised it as "Harry Fielding's Comedy." Revised and retouched by the actor and Sheridan, it was produced at Drury Lane, as *The Fathers*, with a prologue and epilogue by Garrick. For a few nights it was received with interest, and even some flickering enthusiasm. It was then withdrawn, and there is no likelihood that it will ever be revived.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Chapter. IV., p. 89.

THE END.