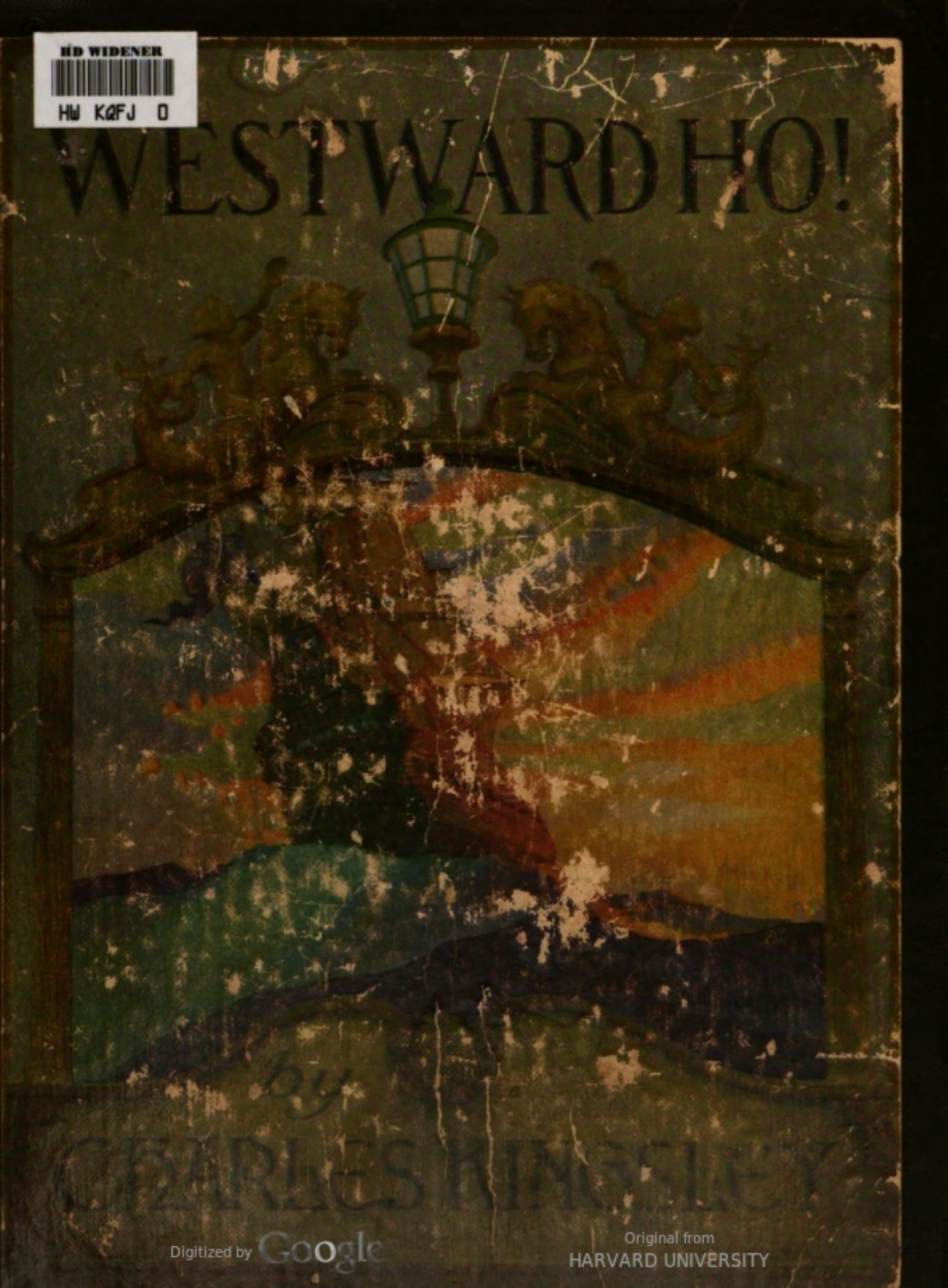
HD WIDENER
HW KQFJ 0

WESTWARD HO!



by

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Digitized by Google
Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

2.2412.16.55

HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Digitized by Google
Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google
Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google
Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Franz M. George

East Northfield

Massachusetts

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WESTWARD HO!

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WESTWARD HO!

or, the Voyages and Adventures of Sir Amyas Leigh, Knight, of Burrough, in the County of Devon ❧ In the reign of Her Most Glorious Majesty Queen Elizabeth

BY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

To Franz
from Amy
March 6, 1925.

Pictures by N.C. WYETH

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
MCMXX

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

16.55

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

Copyright, 1920, by
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Published October, 1920

THE SCRIBNER PRESS

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	How Mr. Oxenham Saw the White Bird	1
II	How Amyas Came Home the First Time	12
III	Of Two Gentlemen of Wales, and How They Hunted with the Hounds, and Yet Ran with the Deer	26
IV	The Two Ways of Being Crost in Love	36
V	Clovelly Court in the Olden Time	50
VI	The Coombes of the Far West	65
VII	The True and Tragical History of Mr. John Oxenham of Plymouth	72
VIII	How the Noble Brotherhood of the Rose Was Founded	97
IX	How Amyas Kept His Christmas Day	107
X	How the Mayor of Bideford Baited His Hook with His Own Flesh	127
XI	How Eustace Leigh Met the Pope's Legate	134
XII	How Bideford Bridge Dined at Annery House	147
XIII	How the Golden Hind Came Home Again	161
XIV	How Salvation Yeo Slew the King of the Gubbings	168
XV	How Mr. John Brimblecombe Understood the Nature of an Oath	187
XVI	The Most Chivalrous Adventure of the Good Ship Rose	195
XVII	How They Came to Barbados, and Found No Men Therein	207
XVIII	How They Took the Pearls at Margarita	211
XIX	What Befell at La Guayra	218
XX	Spanish Bloodhounds and English Mastiffs	237
XXI	How They Took the Communion Under the Tree at Higuerote	254
XXII	The Inquisition in the Indies	268
XXIII	The Banks of the Meta	272
XXIV	How Amyas Was Tempted of the Devil	283
XXV	How They Took the Gold-Train	299

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXVI	How They Took the Great Galleon	319
XXVII	How Salvation Yeo Found His Little Maid Again	342
XXVIII	How Amyas Came Home the Third Time	351
XXIX	How the Virginia Fleet Was Stopped by the Queen's Command	362
XXX	The Great Armada	377
XXXI	How Amyas Threw His Sword Into the Sea	392
XXXII	How Amyas Let the Apple Fall	408

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

JOHN OXENHAM 4

He seemed in the eyes of the schoolboy a very magnifico,—some prince or duke at least.

ROSE OF TORRIDGE 24

. . . and not a week passed but, by mysterious hands, some nosegay, or languishing sonnet, was conveyed into The Rose's chamber. . . .

ROSE SALTERNE AND THE WHITE WITCH 66

But before the Jesuits came, two other persons were standing on that lonely beach. . . .

JOHN BRIMBLECOMBE 104

And now behold him brought in red-hand to judgment. . . .

THE DUEL ON THE BEACH 158

. . . the devil's game is begun in earnest.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROSE 204

. . . and Mrs. Leigh went to the rocky knoll outside the churchyard wall, and watched the ship glide out between the yellow dunes.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE FOREST 278

Amyas had seen hundreds of those delicate dark-skinned daughters of the forest, but never such a one as this.

SALVATION YEO FINDS HIS LITTLE MAID AGAIN 348

"Oh dear! oh dear! my sweet young lady! my pretty little maid! and don't you know me?"

THE DESPAIR OF AMYAS 402

"Shame!" cried Amyas, hurling his sword far into the sea, "to lose my right, my right! when it was in my very grasp! Unmerciful!"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WESTWARD HO!

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WESTWARD HO!

CHAPTER I

HOW MR. OXENHAM SAW THE WHITE BIRD

"The hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea."

ALL who have travelled through the delicious scenery of North Devon must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upwards from its broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, toward the pleasant upland on the west. Pleasantly the old town stands there, beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts, and the fierce thunder heats of the midland; and pleasantly it has stood there for now, perhaps, eight hundred years since the first Grenvil, cousin of the Conqueror, returning from the conquest of South Wales, drew round him trusty Saxon serfs, and free Norse rovers with their golden curls, and dark Silurian Britons from the Swansea shore, and all the mingled blood which still gives to the seaward folk of the next county their strength and intellect, and, even in these levelling days, their peculiar beauty of face and form.

But at the time whereof I write, Bideford was not merely a pleasant country town, whose quay was haunted by a few coasting craft. It was one of the chief ports of England; it furnished seven ships to fight the Armada: even more than a century afterwards, "it sent more vessels to the northern trade than any port in England, saving London and Topsham." And it is to the sea-life and labour of Bideford, and Dartmouth, and Topsham, and Plymouth (then a petty place), and many another little western town, that England owes the foundation of her naval and commercial glory. It was the men of Devon, the Drakes and Hawkinses, Gilberts and Raleighs, Grenviles and Oxenhams, and a host more of "forgotten worthies," whom we shall learn one day to honour as they deserve, to whom she owes her commerce, her colonies, her very existence.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

It is in memory of these men, their voyages and their battles, their faith and their valour, their heroic lives and no less heroic deaths, that I write this book.

One bright summer's afternoon, in the year of grace 1575, a tall and fair boy came lingering along Bideford quay, in his scholar's gown, with satchel and slate in hand, watching wistfully the shipping and the sailors, till, just after he had passed the bottom of the High Street, he came opposite to one of the many taverns which looked out upon the river. In the open bay window sat merchants and gentlemen, discoursing over their afternoon's draught of sack; and outside the door was gathered a group of sailors, listening earnestly to some one who stood in the midst. The boy, all alive for any sea-news, must needs go up to them, and take his place among the sailor-lads who were peeping and whispering under the elbows of the men; and so came in for the following speech, delivered in a loud bold voice, with a strong Devonshire accent, and a fair sprinkling of oaths.

"If you don't believe me, go and see, or stay here and grow all over blue mould. I tell you, as I am a gentleman, I saw it with these eyes, and so did Salvation Yeo there, through a window in the lower room; and we measured the heap, as I am a christened man, seventy foot long, ten foot broad, and twelve foot high, of silver bars, and each bar between a thirty and forty pound weight. And says Captain Drake: 'There, my lads of Devon, I've brought you to the mouth of the world's treasure-house, and it's your own fault now if you don't sweep it out as empty as a stock-fish.'"

"Why didn't you bring some of they home, then, Mr. Oxenham?"

"Why weren't you there to help to carry them? We would have brought 'em away, safe enough, and young Drake and I had broke the door abroad already, but Captain Drake goes off in a dead faint; and when we came to look, he had a wound in his leg you might have laid three fingers in, and his boots were full of blood, and had been for an hour or more; but the heart of him was that, that he never knew it till he dropped, and then his brother and I got him away to the boats, he kicking and struggling, and bidding us let him go on with the fight, though every step he took in the sand was in a pool of blood; and so we got off. And tell me, ye sons of shotten herrings, wasn't it worth more to save him than the dirty silver? for silver we can get again, brave boys: there's more fish in the sea than ever came out of it, and more silver in Nombre de Dios than would pave all the streets in the west country: but of such captains as Franky Drake, Heaven never makes but one at a time; and if we lose him, good-bye to England's luck, say I, and who don't agree, let him choose his weapons, and I'm his man."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

He who delivered this harangue was a tall and sturdy personage, with a florid black-bearded face, and bold restless dark eyes, who leaned, with crossed legs and arms akimbo, against the wall of the house; and seemed in the eyes of the school-boy a very magnifico, some prince or duke at least. He was dressed (contrary to all sumptuary laws of the time) in a suit of crimson velvet, a little the worse, perhaps, for wear; by his side were a long Spanish rapier and a brace of daggers, gaudy enough about the hilts; his fingers sparkled with rings; he had two or three gold chains about his neck, and large earrings in his ears, behind one of which a red rose was stuck jauntily enough among the glossy black curls; on his head was a broad velvet Spanish hat, in which instead of a feather was fastened with a great gold clasp a whole Quezal bird, whose gorgeous plumage of fretted golden green shone like one entire precious stone. As he finished his speech, he took off the said hat, and looking at the bird in it—

"Look ye, my lads, did you ever see such a fowl as that before? That's the bird which the old Indian kings of Mexico let no one wear but their own selves; and therefore I wear it,—I, John Oxenham of South Tawton, for a sign to all brave lads of Devon, that as the Spaniards are the masters of the Indians, we're the masters of the Spaniards:" and he replaced his hat.

A murmur of applause followed: but one hinted that he "doubted the Spaniards were too many for them."

"Too many? How many men did we take Nombre de Dios with? Seventy-three were we, and no more when we sailed out of Plymouth Sound; and before we saw the Spanish Main, half were 'gastados,' used up, as the Dons say, with the scurvy; and in Port Pheasant Captain Rawse of Cowes fell in with us, and that gave us some thirty hands more; and with that handful, my lads, only fifty-three in all, we picked the lock of the new world! And whom did we lose but our trumpeter, who stood braying like an ass in the middle of the square, instead of taking care of his neck like a Christian? I tell you, those Spaniards are rank cowards, as all bullies are. They pray to a woman, the idolatrous rascals! and no wonder they fight like women."

"You'm right, Captain," sang out a tall gaunt fellow who stood close to him; "one westcountryman can fight two easterlings, and an easterling can beat three Dons any day. Eh! my lads of Devon?

"For O! it's the herrings and the good brown beef,
And the cider and the cream so white;
O! they are the making of the jolly Devon lads,
For to play, and eke to fight."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Come," said Oxenham, "come along! Who lists? who lists? who'll make his fortune?

"Oh, who will join, jolly mariners all?
And who will join, says he, O!
To fill his pockets with the good red goold,
By sailing on the sea, O!"

"Who'll list?" cried the gaunt man again; "now's your time! We've got forty men to Plymouth now, ready to sail the minute we get back, and we want a dozen out of you Bideford men, and just a boy or two, and then we'm off and away, and make our fortunes, or go to heaven.

"Our bodies in the sea so deep,
Our souls in heaven to rest!
Where valiant seamen, one and all,
Hereafter shall be blest!"

"Now," said Oxenham, "you won't let the Plymouth men say that the Bideford men daren't follow them? North Devon against South, it is. Who'll join? who'll join? It is but a step of a way, after all, and sailing as smooth as a duck-pond as soon as you're past Cape Finisterre. I'll run a Clovelly herring-boat there and back for a wager of twenty pound, and never ship a bucketful all the way. Who'll join? Don't think you're buying a pig in a poke. I know the road, and Salvation Yeo, here, too, who was the gunner's mate, as well as I do the narrow seas, and better. You ask him to show you the chart of it, now, and see if he don't tell you over the ruttier as well as Drake himself."

On which the gaunt man pulled from under his arm a great white buffalo horn covered with rough etchings of land and sea, and held it up to the admiring ring.

"See here, boys all, and behold the pictur of the place, dra'ed out so natural as ever was life. I got mun from a Portingal, down to the Azores; and he'd pricked mun out, and pricked mun out, wheresoever he'd sailed, and whatsoever he'd seen. Take mun in your hands now, Simon Evans, take mun in your hands; look mun over, and I'll warrant you'll know the way in five minutes so well as ever a shark in the seas."

And the horn was passed from hand to hand; while Oxenham, who saw that his hearers were becoming moved, called through the open window for a great tankard of sack, and passed that from hand to hand, after the horn.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons

John Oxenham

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

The school-boy, who had been devouring with eyes and ears all which passed, and had contrived by this time to edge himself into the inner ring, now stood face to face with the hero of the emerald crest, and got as many peeps as he could at the wonder. But when he saw the sailors, one after another, having turned it over a while, come forward and offer to join Mr. Oxenham, his soul burned within him for a nearer view of that wondrous horn, as magical in its effects as that of Tristrem, or the enchanter's in Ariosto; and when the group had somewhat broken up, and Oxenham was going into the tavern with his recruits, he asked boldly for a nearer sight of the marvel, which was granted at once.

And now to his astonished gaze displayed themselves cities and harbours, dragons and elephants, whales which fought with sharks, plate ships of Spain, islands with apes and palm-trees, each with its name over-written, and here and there, "Here is gold;" and again, "Much gold and silver;" inserted most probably, as the words were in English, by the hands of Mr. Oxenham himself. Lingeringly and longingly the boy turned it round and round. Oh, if he could but possess that horn, what needed he on earth beside to make him blest!

"I say, will you sell this?"

"Yea, marry, or my own soul, if I can get the worth of it."

"I want the horn,—I don't want your soul; it's somewhat of a stale sole, for aught I know; and there are plenty of fresh ones in the bay."

And therewith, after much fumbling, he pulled out a tester (the only one he had), and asked if that would buy it?

"That! no, nor twenty of them."

The boy thought over what a good knight-errant would do in such case, and then answered, "Tell you what: I'll fight you for it."

"Thank'ee, sir!"

"Break the jackanapes's head for him, Yeo," said Oxenham.

"Call me jackanapes again, and I break yours, sir." And the boy lifted his fist fiercely.

Oxenham looked at him a minute smilingly. "Tut! tut! my man, hit one of your own size, if you will, and spare little folk like me!"

"If I have a boy's age, sir, I have a man's fist. I shall be fifteen years old this month, and know how to answer any one who insults me."

"Fifteen, my young cockerel? you look liker twenty," said Oxenham, with an admiring glance at the lad's broad limbs, keen blue eyes, curling golden locks, and round honest face. "Fifteen? If I had half-a-dozen such lads as you, I would make knights of them before I died. Eh, Yeo?"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"He'll do," said Yeo; "he will make a brave gamecock in a year or two, if he dares ruffle up so early at a tough old hen-master like the Captain."

At which there was a general laugh, in which Oxenham joined as loudly as any, and then bade the lad tell him why he was so keen after the horn.

"Because," said he, looking up boldly, "I want to go to sea. I want to see the Indies. I want to fight the Spaniards. Though I am a gentleman's son, I'd a deal liever be a cabin-boy on board your ship." And the lad, having hurried out his say fiercely enough, dropped his head again.

"And you shall," cried Oxenham, with a great oath. "Whose son are you, my gallant fellow?"

"Mr. Leigh's, of Burrough Court."

"Bless his soul! I know him as well as I do the Eddystone, and his kitchen too. Who sups with him to-night?"

"Sir Richard Grenvil."

"Dick Grenvil? I did not know he was in town. Go home and tell your father John Oxenham will come and keep him company. There, off with you! I'll make all straight with the good gentleman, and you shall have your venture with me; and as for the horn, let him have the horn, Yeo, and I'll give you a noble for it."

"Not a penny, noble Captain. If young master will take a poor mariner's gift, there it is, for the sake of his love to the calling, and Heaven send him luck therein." And the good fellow, with the impulsive generosity of a true sailor, thrust the horn into the boy's hands, and walked away to escape thanks.

"And now," quoth Oxenham, "my merry men all, make up your minds what mannered men you be minded to be before you take your bounties. I want none of your rascally lurching longshore vermin, who get five pounds out of this captain, and ten out of that, and let him sail without them after all, while they are stowed away under women's mufflers, and in tavern cellars. If any man is of that humour, he had better to cut himself up, and salt himself down in a barrel for pork, before he meets me again; for by this light, let me catch him, be it seven years hence, and if I do not cut his throat upon the street, it's a pity! But if any man will be true brother to me, true brother to him I'll be, come wreck or prize, storm or calm, salt water or fresh, victuals or none, share and fare alike; and here's my hand upon it, for every man and all! and so—

"Westward ho! with a rumbelow,
And hurra for the Spanish Main, O!"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

After which oration Mr. Oxenham swaggered into the tavern, followed by his new men; and the boy took his way homewards, nursing his precious horn, trembling between hope and fear, and blushing with maidenly shame, and a half-sense of wrong-doing at having revealed suddenly to a stranger the darling wish which he had hidden from his father and mother ever since he was ten years old.

Now this young gentleman, Amyas Leigh, chosen by me as the hero and centre of this story, was not, saving for his good looks, by any means what would be called now-a-days an "interesting" youth, still less a "highly-educated" one; for, with the exception of a little Latin, which had been driven into him by repeated blows, as if it had been a nail, he knew no books whatsoever, save his Bible, his Prayer-book, the old "Mort d'Arthur" of Caxton's edition, which lay in the great bay window in the hall, and the translation of "Las Casas' History of the West Indies," which lay beside it, lately done into English under the title of "The Cruelties of the Spaniards." He devoutly believed in fairies, whom he called pixies; and held that they changed babies, and made the mushroom rings on the downs to dance in. When he had warts or burns, he went to the white witch at Northam to charm them away; he thought that the sun moved round the earth, and that the moon had some kindred with a Cheshire cheese, and he held that the swallows slept all the winter at the bottom of the horse-pond. Nevertheless he learnt certain things which he would hardly have been taught just now in any school in England; for his training had been that of the old Persians, "to speak the truth and to draw the bow," both of which savage virtues he had acquired to perfection, as well as the equally savage ones of enduring pain cheerfully, and of believing it to be the finest thing in the world to be a gentleman; by which word he had been taught to understand the careful habit of causing needless pain to no human being, poor or rich, and of taking pride in giving up his own pleasure for the sake of those who were weaker than himself. Moreover, having been entrusted for the last year with the breaking of a colt, and the care of a cast of young hawks which his father had received from Lundy Isle, he had been profiting much in perseverance, thoughtfulness, and the habit of keeping his temper. He knew the names and ways of every bird, and fish, and fly, and could read, as cunningly as the oldest sailor, the meaning of every drift of cloud which crossed the heavens. Lastly, he had been for some time past, on account of his extraordinary size and strength, undisputed cock of the school, and the most terrible fighter among all Bideford boys; he took much delight, and contrived, strange as it may seem, to extract from it good, not only for himself but for others, doing justice among his

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

school-fellows with a heavy hand, and succouring the oppressed and afflicted; so that he was the terror of all the sailor-lads, and the pride and stay of all the town's boys and girls, and hardly considered that he had done his duty in his calling if he went home without beating a big lad for bullying a little one. For the rest, he never thought about thinking, or felt about feeling; and had no ambition whatsoever beyond pleasing his father and mother and going to sea when he was big enough.

So let us watch him up the hill as he goes hugging his horn, to tell all that has passed to his mother, from whom he had never hidden anything in his life, save only that sea-fever; and that only because he foreknew that it would give her pain; and because, moreover, being a prudent and sensible lad, he knew that he was not yet old enough to go, and that, as he expressed it to her that afternoon, "there was no use hollaing till he was out of the wood."

So he goes up between the rich lane-banks, heavy with drooping ferns and honeysuckle; out upon the windy down toward the old Court, nestled amid its ring of wind-clipt oaks; through the grey gateway into the homeclose; and then he pauses a moment to look around. Beneath him, on his right, the Torridge, like a land-locked lake, sleeps broad and bright between the old park of Tapeley and the charmed rock of the Hubbastone, where, seven hundred years ago, the Norse rovers landed to lay siege to Kenwith Castle, a mile away on his left hand; and not three fields away, are the old stones of "The Bloody Corner," where the retreating Danes, cut off from their ships, made their last fruitless stand against the Saxon sheriff and the valiant men of Devon. Within that charmed rock, so Torridge boatmen tell, sleeps now the old Norse Viking in his leaden coffin, with all his fairy treasure and his crown of gold; and as the boy looks at the spot, he fancies, and almost hopes, that the day may come when he shall have to do his duty against the invader as boldly as the men of Devon did then. And past him, far below, upon the soft south-eastern breeze, the stately ships go sliding out to sea. When shall he sail in them, and see the wonders of the deep? And as he stands there with beating heart and kindling eye, the cool breeze whistling through his long fair curls, he is a symbol, though he knows it not, of brave young England longing to wing its way out of its island prison, to discover and to traffic, to colonise and to civilise, until no wind can sweep the earth which does not bear the echoes of an English voice. Patience, young Amyas! Thou too shalt forth, and westward ho, beyond thy wildest dreams; and see brave sights, and do brave deeds, which no man has since the foundation of the world.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Mr. Oxenham came that evening to supper as he had promised: but as people supped in those days in much the same manner as they do now, we may drop the thread of the story for a few hours, and take it up again after supper is over.

"Come now, Dick Grenvil, do thou talk the good man round, and I'll warrant myself to talk round the good wife."

The personage whom Oxenham addressed thus familiarly answered by a somewhat sarcastic smile, and, "Mr. Oxenham gives Dick Grenvil" (with just enough emphasis on the "Mr." and the "Dick," to hint that a liberty had been taken with him).

Sir Richard Grenvile was a truly heroical personage, a wise and gallant gentleman, lovely to all good men, awful to all bad men; in whose presence none dare say or do a mean or a ribald thing; whom brave men left, feeling themselves nerved to do their duty better, while cowards slipped away, as bats and owls before the sun. So he lived and moved, whether in the Court of Elizabeth, giving his counsel among the wisest; or in the streets of Bideford, capped alike by squire and merchant, shopkeeper and sailor; or riding along the moorland roads between his houses of Stow and Bideford, while every woman ran out to her door to look at the great Sir Richard, the pride of North Devon; ever the same steadfast, God-fearing, chivalrous man, conscious of the pride of a race and name which claimed direct descent from the grandfather of the Conqueror, and was tracked down the centuries by valiant deeds and noble benefits to his native shire, himself the noblest of his race. Men said that he was proud: but he could not look round him without having something to be proud of; that he was stern and harsh to his sailors: but it was only when he saw in them any taint of cowardice or falsehood; that he was subject, at moments, to such fearful fits of rage, that he had been seen to snatch the glasses from the table, grind them to pieces in his teeth, and swallow them: but that was only when his indignation had been aroused by some tale of cruelty or oppression; and, above all, by those West Indian devilries of the Spaniards, whom he regarded (and in those days rightly enough) as the enemies of God and man. Of this last fact Oxenham was well aware, and therefore felt somewhat puzzled and nettled, when, after having asked Mr. Leigh's leave to take young Amyas with him, and set forth in glowing colours the purpose of his voyage, he found Sir Richard utterly unwilling to help him with his suit, saying: "You have asked his father and mother; what is their answer?"

"Mine is this," said Mr. Leigh; "if it be God's will that my boy should become, hereafter, such a mariner as Sir Richard Grenvil, let him go, and God be with him; but let him first bide here at home and

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

school-fellows with a heavy hand, and succouring the oppressed and afflicted; so that he was the terror of all the sailor-lads, and the pride and stay of all the town's boys and girls, and hardly considered that he had done his duty in his calling if he went home without beating a big lad for bullying a little one. For the rest, he never thought about thinking, or felt about feeling; and had no ambition whatsoever beyond pleasing his father and mother and going to sea when he was big enough.

So let us watch him up the hill as he goes hugging his horn, to tell all that has passed to his mother, from whom he had never hidden anything in his life, save only that sea-fever; and that only because he foreknew that it would give her pain; and because, moreover, being a prudent and sensible lad, he knew that he was not yet old enough to go, and that, as he expressed it to her that afternoon, "there was no use hollaing till he was out of the wood."

So he goes up between the rich lane-banks, heavy with drooping ferns and honeysuckle; out upon the windy down toward the old Court, nestled amid its ring of wind-clipt oaks; through the grey gateway into the homeclose; and then he pauses a moment to look around. Beneath him, on his right, the Torridge, like a land-locked lake, sleeps broad and bright between the old park of Tapeley and the charmed rock of the Hubbastone, where, seven hundred years ago, the Norse rovers landed to lay siege to Kenwith Castle, a mile away on his left hand; and not three fields away, are the old stones of "The Bloody Corner," where the retreating Danes, cut off from their ships, made their last fruitless stand against the Saxon sheriff and the valiant men of Devon. Within that charmed rock, so Torridge boatmen tell, sleeps now the old Norse Viking in his leaden coffin, with all his fairy treasure and his crown of gold; and as the boy looks at the spot, he fancies, and almost hopes, that the day may come when he shall have to do his duty against the invader as boldly as the men of Devon did then. And past him, far below, upon the soft south-eastern breeze, the stately ships go sliding out to sea. When shall he sail in them, and see the wonders of the deep? And as he stands there with beating heart and kindling eye, the cool breeze whistling through his long fair curls, he is a symbol, though he knows it not, of brave young England longing to wing its way out of its island prison, to discover and to traffic, to colonise and to civilise, until no wind can sweep the earth which does not bear the echoes of an English voice. Patience, young Amyas! Thou too shalt forth, and westward ho, beyond thy wildest dreams; and see brave sights, and do brave deeds, which no man has since the foundation of the world.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Mr. Oxenham came that evening to supper as he had promised: but as people supped in those days in much the same manner as they do now, we may drop the thread of the story for a few hours, and take it up again after supper is over.

"Come now, Dick Grenvil, do thou talk the good man round, and I'll warrant myself to talk round the good wife."

The personage whom Oxenham addressed thus familiarly answered by a somewhat sarcastic smile, and, "Mr. Oxenham gives Dick Grenvil" (with just enough emphasis on the "Mr." and the "Dick," to hint that a liberty had been taken with him).

Sir Richard Grenvile was a truly heroical personage, a wise and gallant gentleman, lovely to all good men, awful to all bad men; in whose presence none dare say or do a mean or a ribald thing; whom brave men left, feeling themselves nerved to do their duty better, while cowards slipped away, as bats and owls before the sun. So he lived and moved, whether in the Court of Elizabeth, giving his counsel among the wisest; or in the streets of Bideford, capped alike by squire and merchant, shopkeeper and sailor; or riding along the moorland roads between his houses of Stow and Bideford, while every woman ran out to her door to look at the great Sir Richard, the pride of North Devon; ever the same steadfast, God-fearing, chivalrous man, conscious of the pride of a race and name which claimed direct descent from the grandfather of the Conqueror, and was tracked down the centuries by valiant deeds and noble benefits to his native shire, himself the noblest of his race. Men said that he was proud: but he could not look round him without having something to be proud of; that he was stern and harsh to his sailors: but it was only when he saw in them any taint of cowardice or falsehood; that he was subject, at moments, to such fearful fits of rage, that he had been seen to snatch the glasses from the table, grind them to pieces in his teeth, and swallow them: but that was only when his indignation had been aroused by some tale of cruelty or oppression; and, above all, by those West Indian devilries of the Spaniards, whom he regarded (and in those days rightly enough) as the enemies of God and man. Of this last fact Oxenham was well aware, and therefore felt somewhat puzzled and nettled, when, after having asked Mr. Leigh's leave to take young Amyas with him, and set forth in glowing colours the purpose of his voyage, he found Sir Richard utterly unwilling to help him with his suit, saying: "You have asked his father and mother; what is their answer?"

"Mine is this," said Mr. Leigh; "if it be God's will that my boy should become, hereafter, such a mariner as Sir Richard Grenvil, let him go, and God be with him; but let him first bide here at home and

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

be trained, if God give me grace, to become such a gentleman as Sir Richard Grenvil."

Sir Richard bowed low, and Mrs. Leigh catching up the last word—

"There, Mr. Oxenham, you cannot gainsay that, unless you will be discourteous to his worship. And for me—though it be a weak woman's reason, yet it is a mother's: he is my only child. His elder brother is far away. God only knows whether I shall see him again. Ah! Mr. Oxenham, you have no child, or you would not ask for mine!"

"And how do you know that, my sweet Madam?" said the adventurer, turning first deadly pale, and then glowing red. Her last words had touched him to the quick in some unexpected place; and rising, he courteously laid her hand to his lips, and said—"I say no more. Farewell, sweet Madam, and God send all men such wives as you. Farewell, friend Leigh—farewell, gallant Dick Grenvil. God send I see thee Lord High Admiral when I come home."

"Tut, tut, man! good words," said Leigh; "Let us drink to our merry meeting before you go." And rising, and putting the tankard of malmsey to his lips, he passed it to Sir Richard, who rose, and saying, "To the fortune of a bold mariner and a gallant gentleman," drank, and put the cup into Oxenham's hand.

The adventurer's face was flushed, and his eye wild. Whether from the liquor he had drunk during the day, or whether from Mrs. Leigh's last speech, he had not been himself for a few minutes. He lifted the cup, and was in act to pledge them, when he suddenly dropped it on the table, and pointed, staring and trembling, up and down, and round the room, as if following some fluttering object.

"There! Do you see it? The bird!—the bird with the white breast!"

Each looked at the other; but Leigh, who was a quick-witted man, and an old courtier, forced a laugh instantly, and cried—

"Nonsense, brave Jack Oxenham! Leave white birds for men who will show the white feather. Mrs. Leigh waits to pledge you."

Oxenham recovered himself in a moment, pledged them all round, drinking deep and fiercely; and after hearty farewells, departed, never hinting again at his strange exclamation.

After he was gone, and while Leigh was attending him to the door, Mrs. Leigh and Grenvil kept a few minutes' dead silence. At last—

"God help him!" said she.

"Amen!" said Grenvil, "for he never needed it more. But, indeed, Madam, I put no faith in such omens."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"But, Sir Richard, that bird has been seen for generations before the death of any of his family. I know those who were at South Tawton when his mother died, and his brother also; and they both saw it. God help him!"

"But, indeed, Mrs. Leigh, I make no account of omens. When God is ready for each man, then he must go; and when can he go better? And now come hither to me, my adventurous godson, and don't look in such doleful dumps. I hear you have broken all the sailor-boys' heads already."

"Nearly all," said young Amyas, with due modesty. "But am I not to go to sea?"

"All things in their time, my boy, and God forbid that either I or your worthy parents should keep you from that noble calling which is the safeguard of this England and her queen. But you do not wish to live and die the master of a trawler?"

"I should like to be a brave adventurer, like Mr. Oxenham."

"God grant you become a braver man than he! Come, now, I will make you a promise. If you will bide quietly at home, and learn from your father and mother all which befits a gentleman and a Christian, as well as a seaman, the day shall come when you shall sail with Richard Grenvil himself, or with better men than he, on a nobler errand than gold-hunting on the Spanish Main."

"O my boy, my boy!" said Mrs. Leigh, "hear what the good Sir Richard promises you. Many an earl's son would be glad to be in your place."

"And many an earl's son will be glad to be in his place a score years hence, if he will but learn what I know you two can teach him."

And so Amyas Leigh went back to school, and Mr. Oxenham went his way to Plymouth again, and sailed for the Spanish Main.

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER II

HOW AMYAS CAME HOME THE FIRST TIME

"Si taceant homines, facient te sidera notum,
Sol nescit comitis immemor esse sui."

Old Epigram on Drake.

FIVE years are past and gone. It is nine of the clock on a still, bright November morning; but the bells of Bideford church are still ringing for the daily service two hours after the usual time; and instead of going soberly according to wont, cannot help breaking forth every five minutes into a jocund peal, and tumbling head over heels in ecstasies of joy. Bideford streets are a very flower-garden of all the colours, swarming with seamen and burghers, and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets, and tapestries from every window. The ships in the pool are dressed in all their flags, and give tumultuous vent to their feelings by peals of ordnance of every size. Every stable is crammed with horses; and Sir Richard Grenvil's house is like a very tavern, with eating and drinking, and unsaddling, and running to and fro of grooms and serving-men. Along the little churchyard, packed full with women, streams all the gentle blood of North Devon; and so on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, or at least as near as may be; for the old men are all safe packed away in the corporation pews, and the young ones care only to get a place whence they may eye the ladies. And at last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music, flutes and hautboys, drums and trumpets, which come braying, and screaming, and thundering merrily up to the very church doors, and then cease; and the churchwardens and sidesmen bustle down to the entrance, rods in hand, and there is a general whisper and rustle, not without glad tears and blessings from many a woman, and from some men also, as the wonder of the day enters, and the rector begins, not the morning service, but the good old thanksgiving after a victory at sea.

And what is it which has thus sent old Bideford wild with that "goodly joy and pious mirth"? Why are all eyes fixed, with greedy

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

admiration, on those four weather-beaten mariners, decked out with knots and ribbons by loving hands; and yet more on that gigantic figure which walks before them, a beardless boy, and yet with the frame and stature of a Hercules, towering, like Saul of old, a head and shoulders above all the congregation, with his golden locks flowing down over his shoulders? And why, as the five go instinctively up to the altar, and there fall on their knees before the rails, are all eyes turned to the pew where Mrs. Leigh of Burrough has hid her face between her hands, and her hood rustles and shakes to her joyful sobs? Because there was fellow-feeling of old in merry England, in county and in town; and these are Devon men, and men of Bideford, whose names are Amyas Leigh of Burrough, John Staveley, Michael Heard, and Jonas Marshall of Bideford, and Thomas Braund of Clovelly; and they, the first of all English mariners, have sailed round the world with Francis Drake, and are come hither to give God thanks.

It is a long story. To explain how it happened we must go back for a page or two, almost to the point from whence we started in the last chapter.

For somewhat more than a twelvemonth after Mr. Oxenham's departure, young Amyas had gone on quietly enough, according to promise, with the exception of certain occasional outbursts of fierceness common to all young male animals, and especially to boys of any strength of character. His scholarship, indeed, progressed no better than before; but his home education went on healthily enough; and he was fast becoming, young as he was, a right good archer, and rider, and swordsman (after the old school of buckler practice), when his father, having gone down on business to the Exeter Assizes, caught (as was too common in those days) the gaol-fever from the prisoners; sickened in the very court; and died within a week.

And now Mrs. Leigh was left to God and her own soul, with this young lion-cub in leash, to tame and train for this life and the life to come. At little past forty, she was left a widow: lovely still in face and figure; and still more lovely from the divine calm which brooded, like the dove of peace and the Holy Spirit of God (which indeed it was), over every look, and word, and gesture. No wonder that Sir Richard and Lady Grenvile loved her; no wonder that her children worshipped her; no wonder that the young Amyas, when the first burst of grief was over, and he knew again where he stood, felt that a new life had begun for him; that his mother was no more to think and act for him only, but that he must think and act for his mother. And so it was, that on the very day after his father's funeral,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

when school-hours were over, instead of coming straight home, he walked boldly into Sir Richard Grenvile's house, and asked to see his godfather.

"You must be my father now, sir," said he firmly.

And Sir Richard looked at the boy's broad strong face, and swore a great and holy oath, like Glasgerion's, "by oak, and ash, and thorn," that he would be a father to him, and a brother to his mother, for Christ's sake. And Lady Grenville took the boy by the hand, and walked home with him to Burrough; and after that all things went on at Burrough as before; and Amyas rode, and shot, and boxed, and wandered on the quay at Sir Richard's side; for Mrs. Leigh was too wise a woman to alter one tittle of the training which her husband had thought best for his younger boy. It was enough that her elder son had of his own accord taken to that form of life in which she in her secret heart would fain have moulded both her children. For Frank had won himself honour at home and abroad; first at the school at Bideford; then at Exeter College, where he had become a friend of Sir Philip Sidney's, and many another young man of rank and promise; and next, in the summer of 1572, on his way to the University of Heidelberg, he had gone to Paris, with (luckily for him) letters of recommendation to Walsingham, at the English Embassy: by which letters he not only fell in a second time with Philip Sidney, but saved his own life (as Sidney did his) in the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day. At Heidelberg he had stayed two years, winning fresh honour from all who knew him, and resisting all Sidney's entreaties to follow him into Italy. For, scorning to be a burden to his parents, he had become at Heidelberg tutor to two young German princes, whom, after living with them at their father's house for a year or more, he at last, to his own great delight, took with him down to Padua, "to perfect them," as he wrote home.

At last, a few months before his father died, he had taken back his pupils to their home in Germany, from whence he was dismissed, as he wrote, with rich gifts; and then Mrs. Leigh's heart beat high, at the thought that the wanderer would return; but, alas! within a month after his father's death, came another long letter from Frank: but the letter never reached the eyes of him for whose delight it had been penned: and the widow had to weep over it alone, and to weep more bitterly than ever at the conclusion, in which, with many excuses, Frank said that he had, at special entreaty, set out down the Danube stream to Buda, that he might, before finishing his travels, make experience of that learning for which the Hungarians were famous throughout Europe. And after that, though he wrote again and again to the father whom he fancied living, no letter in return reached

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

him from home for nearly two years; till, fearing some mishap, he hurried back to England, to find his mother a widow, and his brother Amyas gone to the South Seas with Captain Drake of Plymouth. And yet, even then, after years of absence, he was not allowed to remain at home. For Sir Richard, to whom idleness was a thing horrible and unrighteous, would have him up and doing again before six months were over, and sent him off to Court to Lord Hunsdon.

There, being as delicately beautiful as his brother was huge and strong, he had speedily, by Carew's interest and that of Sidney and his Uncle Leicester, found entrance into some office in the Queen's household; and he was now basking in the full sunshine of Court favour, and fair ladies' eyes, and the fast friendship of that bright meteor Sidney, who had returned with honour in 1577, at the early age of twenty-five, acknowledged as one of the most remarkable men of Europe, the patron of all men of letters, the counsellor of warriors and statesmen, and the confidant and advocate of William of Orange.

Poor Mrs. Leigh, as one who had long since learned to have no self, and to live not only for her children, but in them, submitted without a murmur, and only said, smiling, to her stern friend—"You took away my mastiff-pup, and now you must needs have my fair greyhound also."

But why did Amyas go to the South Seas? Amyas went to the South Seas for two causes, each of which has, before now, sent many a lad to far worse places: first, because of an old schoolmaster; secondly, because of a young beauty. I will take them in order and explain.

Vindex Brimblecombe (commonly called Sir Vindex, after the fashion of the times), was, in those days, master of the grammar-school of Bideford. He was, at root, a godly and kind-hearted pedant enough; but, like most schoolmasters in the old flogging days, had his heart pretty well hardened by long, baneful licence to inflict pain at will on those weaker than himself. Be that as it may, old Sir Vindex had heart enough to feel that it was now his duty to take especial care of the fatherless boy to whom he tried to teach his *qui, quæ, quod:* but the only outcome of that new sense of responsibility was a rapid increase in the number of floggings, which rose from about two a week to one per diem, not without consequences to the pedagogue himself.

For all this while, Amyas had never for a moment lost sight of his darling desire for a sea-life; and when he could not wander on the quay and stare at the shipping, or go down to the pebble-ridge at Northam, and there sit, devouring, with hungry eyes, the great expanse of ocean, which seemed to woo him outward into boundless

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

space, he used to console himself, in school-hours, by drawing ships and imaginary charts upon his slate, instead of minding his "humanities."

Now it befell, upon an afternoon that he was very busy at a map, or bird's-eye view of an island, whereon was a great castle, and at the gate thereof a dragon, terrible to see; while, in the foreground came that which was meant for a gallant ship, with a great flag aloft, but which, by reason of the forest of lances with which it was crowded, looked much more like a porcupine carrying a sign-post; and, at the roots of those lances, many little round o's, whereby were signified the heads of Amyas and his schoolfellows, who were about to slay that dragon, and rescue the beautiful princess who dwelt in that enchanted tower. To behold which marvel of art, all the other boys at the same desk must needs club their heads together, and with the more security, because Sir Vindex, as was his custom after dinner, was lying back in his chair, and slept the sleep of the just.

But when Amyas, by special instigation of the evil spirit who haunts successful artists, proceeded further to introduce, heedless of perspective, a rock, on which stood the lively portraiture of Sir Vindex—nose, spectacles, gown, and all; and in his hand a brandished rod, while out of his mouth a label shrieked after the runaways, "You come back!" while a similar label replied from the gallant bark, "Good-bye, master!" the shoving and tittering rose to such a pitch, that Cerberus awoke, and demanded sternly what the noise was about. To which, of course, there was no answer.

"You, of course, Leigh! Come up, sir, and show me your exercitation."

Now of Amyas's exercitation not a word was written; and, moreover, he was in the very article of putting the last touches to Mr. Brimblecombe's portrait. Whereon, to the astonishment of all hearers, he made answer—

"All in good time, sir!" and went on drawing.

"In good time, sir! Insolent, *veni et vapula!*"

But Amyas went on drawing.

"Come hither, sirrah, or I'll flay you alive!"

"Wait a bit!" answered Amyas.

The old gentleman jumped up, ferula in hand, and darted across the school, and saw himself upon the fatal slate.

"*Proh flagitium!* what have we here, villain?" and clutching at his victim, he raised the cane. Whereupon, with a serene and cheerful countenance, up rose the mighty form of Amyas Leigh, a head and shoulders above his tormentor, and that slate descended on the bald coxcomb of Sir Vindex Brimblecombe, with so shrewd a blow, that

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

slate and pate cracked at the same instant, and the poor pedagogue dropped to the floor, and lay for dead.

After which Amyas arose, and walked out of the school, and so quietly home; and having taken counsel with himself, went to his mother, and said, "Please, mother, I've broken schoolmaster's head."

"Broken his head, thou wicked boy!" shrieked the poor widow; "what didst do that for?"

"I can't tell," said Amyas penitently; "I couldn't help it. It looked so smooth, and bald, and round, and—you know?"

"I know? Oh, wicked boy! thou hast given place to the devil; and now, perhaps, thou hast killed him."

"Killed the devil?" asked Amyas, hopefully and doubtfully.

"No, killed the schoolmaster, sirrah! Is he dead?"

"I don't think he's dead; his coxcomb sounded too hard for that. But had not I better go and tell Sir Richard?"

The poor mother could hardly help laughing, in spite of her terror, at Amyas's perfect coolness (which was not in the least meant for insolence), and being at her wits' end, sent him, as usual to his godfather.

Amyas rehearsed his story again, with pretty nearly the same exclamations, to which he gave pretty nearly the same answers; and then—

"What was he going to do to you, then, sirrah?"

"Flog me, because I could not write my exercise, and so drew a picture of him instead."

"What! art afraid of being flogged?"

"Not a bit; besides, I'm too much accustomed to it; but I was busy, and he was in such a desperate hurry; and, oh, sir, if you had but seen his bald head, you would have broken it yourself!"

Now Sir Richard had, twenty years ago, in like place, and very much in like manner, broken the head of Vindex Brimblecombe's father, schoolmaster in his day; and therefore had a precedent to direct him; and he answered—

"Amyas, sirrah! those who cannot obey will never be fit to rule. If thou canst not keep discipline now, thou wilt never make a company or a crew keep it when thou art grown. Dost mind that, sirrah?"

"Yes," said Amyas.

"Then go back to school this moment, sir, and be flogged."

"Very well," said Amyas, considering that he had got off very cheaply; while Sir Richard, as soon as he was out of the room, lay back in his chair, and laughed till he cried again.

So Amyas went back, and said that he was come to be flogged; whereon the old schoolmaster, whose pate had been plastered mean-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

while, wept tears of joy over the returning prodigal, and then gave him such a switching as he did not forget for eight-and-forty hours.

But that evening Sir Richard sent for old Vindex, who entered, trembling, cap in hand; and having primed him with a cup of sack, said,—

"Well, Mr. Schoolmaster! My godson has been somewhat too much for you to-day. There are a couple of nobles to pay the doctor."

"O Sir Richard, *gratias tibi et Domino!* but the boy hits shrewdly hard. Nevertheless I have repaid him in inverse kind. But, indeed, the boy is a brave boy, and a quick boy, Sir Richard, but more forgetful than Lethe; and—*sapienti loquor*—it were well if he were away, for I shall never see him again without my head aching. Moreover, he put my son Jack upon the fire last Wednesday, as you would put a football, though he is a year older, your worship, because, he said, he looked so like a roasting pig, Sir Richard."

"Alas, poor Jack!"

"And what's more, your worship, he is a fire-eater and swashbuckler, beyond all Christian measure; and will do to death some of her majesty's lieges ere long, if he be not wisely curbed. It was but a month agone that he bemoaned himself, I hear, as Alexander did, because there were no more worlds to conquer, saying that it was a pity he was so strong; for, now he had thrashed all the Bideford lads, he had no sport left; and so, as my Jack tells me, last Tuesday week he fell upon a young man of Barnstaple and smote him clean over the quay into the mud, because he said that there was a prettier maid in Barnstaple than ever Bideford could show; and then offered to do the same to any man who dare say that Mistress Rose Salterne, his Worship the Mayor's daughter, was not the fairest lass in all Devon."

"Eh? Say that over again, my good sir," quoth Sir Richard. "I say, good sir, whence dost thou hear all these pretty stories?"

"My son Jack, Sir Richard, my son Jack."

"Mr. Schoolmaster, no wonder if thy son gets put on the fire, if thou employ him as a tale-bearer."

The poor pedagogue, thus cunningly caught in his own trap, stood trembling before his patron, who, as hereditary head of the Bridge Trust, which endowed the school and the rest of the Bideford charities, could, by a turn of his finger, sweep him forth with the besom of destruction; and he gasped with terror as Sir Richard went on—

"Therefore, mind you, Sir Schoolmaster, unless you shall promise me never to hint word of what has passed between us two, and that neither you nor yours shall henceforth carry tales of my godson, or

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

speak his name within a day's march of Mistress Salterne's, look to it, if I do not——"

What was to be done in default was not spoken; for down went poor old Vindex on his knees:—

"Oh, Sir Richard! I promise! O sir, consider your dignities, and my old age—and my great family—nine children—oh, Sir Richard, and eight of them girls!—Do eagles war with mice? say the ancient!"

"Thy large family, eh? How old is that fat-witted son of thine?"

"Sixteen, Sir Richard; but that is not his fault, indeed!"

"Nay, I suppose he would be still sucking his thumb if he dared —get up, man—get up and seat yourself."

"Heaven forbid!" murmured poor Vindex, with deep humility.

"Why is not the rogue at Oxford, with a murrain on him, instead of lurching about here carrying tales, and ogling the maidens?"

"I had hoped, Sir Richard—and therefore I said it was not his fault—but there was never a servitorship at Exeter open."

"Go to, man—go to! I will speak to my brethren of the Trust, and to Oxford he shall go this autumn, or else to Exeter gaol, for a strong rogue, and a masterless man. Do you hear?"

"Hear?—oh, sir, yes! and return thanks. Jack shall go, Sir Richard, doubt it not—I were mad else; and, Sir Richard, may I go too?"

And therewith Vindex vanished, and Sir Richard enjoyed a second mighty laugh, which brought in Lady Grenvile, who possibly had overheard the whole; for the first words she said were—

"I think, my sweet life, we had better go up to Burrough."

So to Burrough they went; and after much talk, and many tears, matters were so concluded that Amyas Leigh found himself riding joyfully towards Plymouth, by the side of Sir Richard, and being handed over to Captain Drake, vanished for three years from the good town of Bideford.

And now he is returned in triumph, and the observed of all observers; and looks round and round, and sees all faces whom he expects, except one; and that the one which he had rather see than his mother's. He is not quite sure. Shame on himself!

And now the prayers being ended, the Rector ascends the pulpit, and begins his sermon; and when, the sermon ended, the Communion Service had begun, and the bread and the wine were given to those five mariners, and they rose to join with heart and voice not merely in the *Gloria in Excelsis*, but in the *Te Deum*, which was the closing act of all. And no sooner had the clerk given out the first verse of that great hymn, than it was taken up by five hundred voices within

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the church, and the chaunt was caught up by the crowd outside, and rang away over roof and river, up to the woods of Annery, and down to the marshes of the Taw, in wave on wave of harmony. And as it died away, the shipping in the river made answer with their thunder, and the crowd streamed out again toward the Bridge Head, whither Sir Richard Grenvile, and Sir John Chichester, and Mr. Salterne, the Mayor, led the five heroes of the day to await the pageant which had been prepared in honour of them. And as they went by, there were few in the crowd who did not press forward to shake them by the hand, and not only them, but their parents and kinsfolk who walked behind, till Mrs. Leigh, her stately joy quite broken down at last, could only answer between her sobs, "Go along, good people —God a mercy, go along—and God send you all such sons!"

"God give me back mine!" cried an old red-cloaked dame in the crowd; and then, struck by some hidden impulse, she sprang forward, and catching hold of young Amyas's sleeve—

"Kind sir! dear sir! For Christ his sake answer a poor old widow woman!"

"What is it, dame?" quoth Amyas, gently enough.

"Did you see my son to the Indies?—my son Salvation?"

"Salvation?" replied he, with the air of one who recollected the name.

"Yes, sure, Salvation Yeo, of Clovelly. A tall man and black, and sweareth awfully in his talk, the Lord forgive him!"

Amyas recollected now. It was the name of the sailor who had given him the wondrous horn five years ago.

"My good dame," said he, "the Indies are a very large place, and your son may be safe and sound enough there, without my having seen him. I knew one Salvation Yeo. But he must have come with——. By the by, godfather, has Mr. Oxenham come home?"

There was a dead silence for a moment among the gentlemen round; and then Sir Richard said solemnly, and in a low voice, turning away from the old dame,—

"Amyas, Mr. Oxenham has not come home; and from the day he sailed, no word has been heard of him and all his crew."

"Oh, Sir Richard! and you kept me from sailing with him! Had I known this before I went into church, I had had one mercy more to thank God for."

"Thank Him all the more in thy life, my child!" whispered his mother.

"And no news of him whatsoever?"

"None; but that the year after he sailed, a ship belonging to Andrew Barker, of Bristol, took out of a Spanish caravel, somewhere off

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the Honduras, his two brass guns; but whence they came the Spaniard knew not, having bought them at Nombre de Dios."

"Yes!" cried the old woman; "they brought home the guns and never brought home my boy!"

"They never saw your boy, mother," said Sir Richard.

"But I've seen him! I saw him in a dream four years last Whitsuntide, as plain as I see you now, gentles, a-lying upon a rock, calling for a drop of water to cool his tongue, like Dives to the torment! Oh! dear me!" and the old dame wept bitterly.

"There is a rose noble for you!" said Mrs. Leigh.

"And there another!" said Sir Richard. And in a few minutes four or five gold coins were in her hand. But the old dame did but look wonderingly at the gold a moment, and then—

"Ah! dear gentles, God's blessing on you, and Mr. Cary's mighty good to me already; but gold won't buy back childer! O! young gentleman! young gentleman! make me a promise; if you want God's blessing on you this day, bring me back my boy, if you find him sailing on the seas! Bring him back, and an old widow's blessing be on you!"

Amyas promised—what else could he do?—and the group hurried on; but the lad's heart was heavy in the midst of joy, with the thought of John Oxenham, as he walked through the churchyard, and down the short street which led between the ancient school and still more ancient town-house.

However, he was bound in all courtesy to turn his attention now to the show which had been prepared in his honour; and which was really well enough worth seeing and hearing.

First, preceded by the waits, came along the bridge toward the town-hall, a device prepared by the good rector, who, standing by, acted as showman, and explained anxiously to the bystanders the import of a certain "allegory" wherein on a great banner was depicted Queen Elizabeth herself, who, in ample ruff and farthingale, a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other, stood triumphant upon the necks of two sufficiently abject personages, whose triple tiara and imperial crown proclaimed them the Pope and King of Spain; next, amid much cheering, two great tinsel fish, a salmon, and a trout, symbolical of the wealth of Torridge, waddled along, by means of two human legs and a staff apiece, which protruded from the fishes' stomachs. They drew (or seemed to draw, for half the 'prentices in the town were shoving it behind, and cheering on the panting monarchs of the flood) a car wherein sate, amid reeds and river-flags, three or four pretty girls in robes of grey-blue spangled with gold, their heads wreathed one with a crown of the sweet bog-myrtle,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

another with hops and white convolvulus, the third with pale heather and golden fern. They stopped opposite Amyas; and she of the myrtle wreath, rising and bowing to him and the company, began with a pretty blush to say her say:—

"Great Eliza's virgin hand
Welcomes you to Fairy-land,
While your native Naiads bring
Native wreaths as offering.
Simple though their show may be,
Britain's worship in them see.
'Tis not price, nor outward fairness,
Gives the victor's palm its rareness;
Simplest tokens can impart
Noble throb to noble heart:
Græcia, prize thy parsley crown,
Boast thy laurel, Cæsar's town;
Moorland myrtle still shall be
Badge of Devon's Chivalry!"

And so ending, she took the wreath of fragant gale from her own head, and stooping from the car, placed it on the head of Amyas Leigh, who made answer—

"There is no place like home, my fair mistress; and no scent to my taste like this old home-scent in all the spice-islands I ever sailed by!"

Then came the cry—

"Room there, good people, for the gallant 'prentice lads!"

And on they came, headed by a giant of buckram and pasteboard armour, forth of whose stomach looked, like a clock-face in a steeple, a human visage, to be greeted, as was the fashion then, by a volley of quips and puns from high and low.

Whereon, up came a fresh member of the procession; namely no less a person than Vindex Brindlecombe, the ancient schoolmaster, with five-and-forty boys at his heels, who halting, pulled out his spectacles, and thus signified his forgiveness of his whilome broken head:—

"That the world should have been circumnavigated, ladies and gentles, were matter enough of jubilation to the student of Herodotus and Plato, Plinius and—ahem! much more when the circumnavigators are Britons. More again, when inhabitants of Devon; but, most of all, men of Bideford School. Oh renowned school! Oh schoolboys ennobled by fellowship with him! Oh most happy pedagogue, to whom it has befallen to have chastised a circumnavigator."

"Hark how the old fox is praising himself all along on the sly," said Cary.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"I bring, therefore, as my small contribution to this day's feast; first a Latin epigram, as thus——"

"Hillo ho! schoolmaster!" shouted a voice from behind; "move on, and make way for Father Neptune!" Whereon a whole storm of raillery fell upon the hapless pedagogue. And diving through the crowd, he vanished, while Father Neptune, crowned with sea-weeds, a trident in one hand, and a live dog-fish in the other, swaggered up the street surrounded by a tall body-guard of mariners, and followed by a great banner, on which was depicted a globe, with Drake's ship sailing thereon upside down, and overwritten—

"See every man the Pelican,
Which round the world did go,
While her stern-post was uppermost,
And topmasts down below,
And by the way she lost a day,
Out of her log was stole:
But Neptune kind, with favouring wind,
Hath brought her safe and whole."

"Now, lads!" cried Neptune; "hand me my parable that's writ for me, and here goeth!" And at the top of his bull-voice, he began roaring,—

"I am King Neptune bold,
The ruler of the seas;
I don't understand much singing upon land,
But I hope what I say will please.

"Here be five Bideford men,
Which have sail'd the world around,
And I watch'd them well, as they all can tell,
And brought them home safe and sound.

"For it is the men of Devon,
To see them I take delight,
Both to tack and to hull, and to heave and to pull
And to prove themselves in fight.

"Where be those Spaniards proud,
That make their valiant boasts;
And think for to keep the poor Indians for their sheep,
And to farm my golden coasts?

"For the sea my realm it is,
As good Queen Bess's is the land;
So freely come again, all merry Devon men,
And there's old Neptune's hand."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Holla, boys! holla! Blow up, Triton, and bring forward the freedom of the seas."

Triton, roaring through a conch, brought forward a cockle-shell full of salt-water, and delivered it solemnly to Amyas, who, of course, put a noble into it, and returned it after Grenvile had done the same.

"Holla, Dick Admiral!" cried Neptune, who was pretty far gone in liquor; "we knew thou hadst a right English heart in thee, for all thou standest there as taut as a Don who has swallowed his rapier."

"Grammercy, stop thy bellowing, fellow, and on; for thou smellest vilely of fish."

"Everything smells sweet in its right place. I'm going home."

"I thought thou wert there all along, being already half-seas over," said Cary.

"Ay, right Upsee-Dutch; and that's more than thou ever wilt be, thou 'long-shore stay-at-home. Why wast making sheep's eyes at Mistress Salterne here, while my pretty little chuck of Burrough there was playing at shove-groat with Spanish doubloons?"

"Go to the devil, sirrah!" said Cary. Neptune had touched on a sore subject; and more cheeks than Amyas Leigh's reddened at the hint.

"Amen, if Heaven so please!" and on rolled the monarch of the seas; and so the pageant ended.

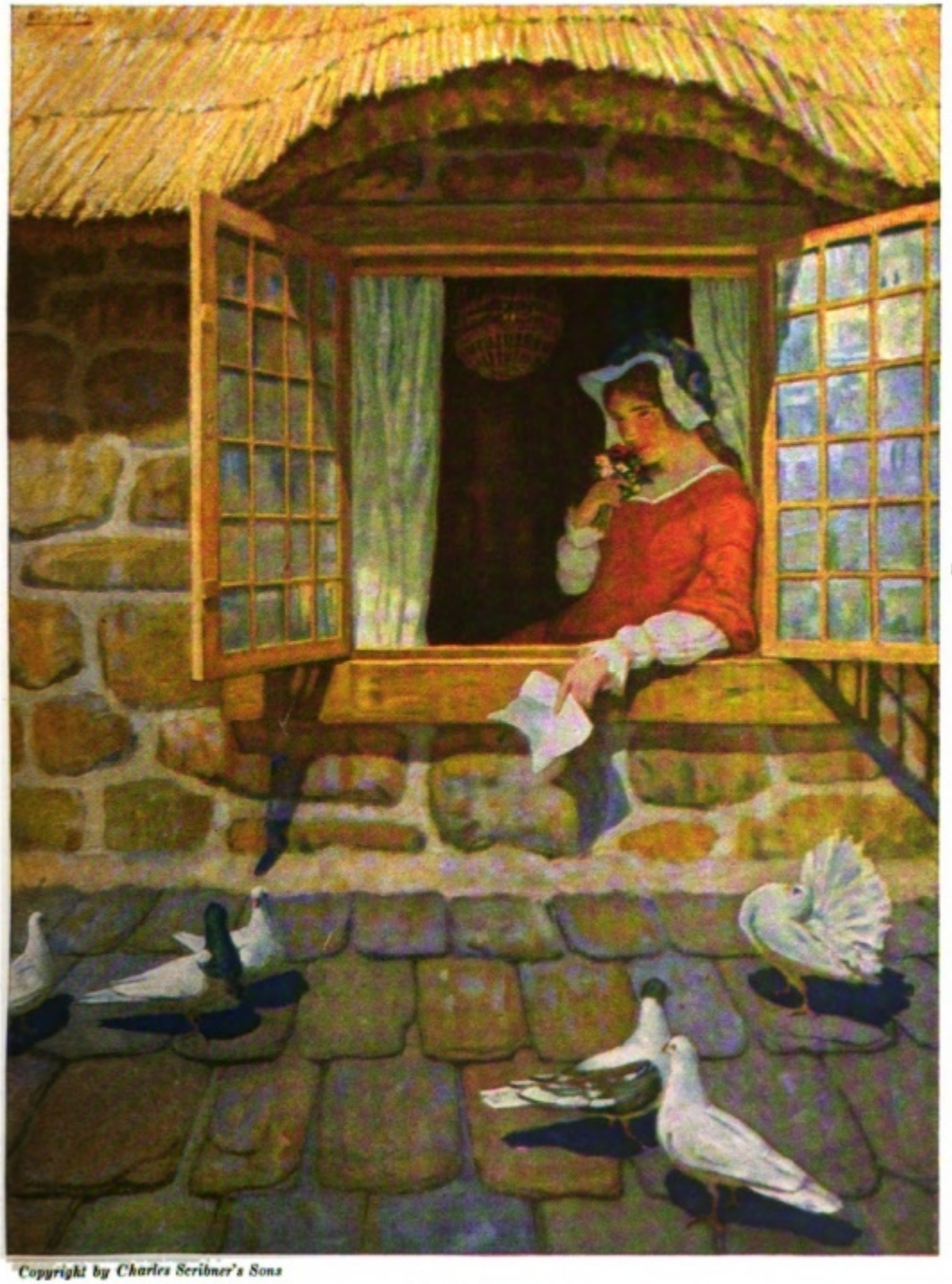
The moment Amyas had an opportunity, he asked his brother Frank, who had returned from court for a time and had been master of the revel, where Rose Salterne was.

"What! the mayor's daughter? With her uncle by Kilkhampton, I believe."

Now cunning Master Frank, whose daily wish was to "seek peace and ensue it," told Amyas this, because he must needs speak the truth: but he was purposed at the same time to speak as little truth as he could, for fear of accidents; and, therefore, omitted to tell his brother how that he, two days before, had entreated Rose Salterne herself to appear as the nymph of Torridge; which honour she, who had no objection either to exhibit her pretty face, to recite pretty poetry, or to be trained thereto by the cynosure of North Devon, would have assented willingly, but that her father stopped the pretty project by a peremptory countermove, and packed her off, in spite of her tears, to the said uncle on the Atlantic cliffs; after which he went up to Burrough, and laughed over the whole matter with Mrs. Leigh.

"I am but a burgher, Mrs. Leigh, and you a lady of blood; but I am too proud to let any man say that Simon Salterne threw his daughter at your son's head;—no; not if you were an empress!"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons

Rose of Torridge

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"And to speak truth, Mr. Salterne, there are young gallants enough in the country quarrelling about her pretty face every day, without making her a tourney-queen to tilt about."

Which was very true; for during the three years of Amyas's absence, Rose Salterne had grown into so beautiful a girl of eighteen, that half North Devon was mad about the "Rose of Torridge," as she was called; and there was not a young gallant for ten miles round (not to speak of her father's clerks and 'prentices, who moped about after her like so many Malvolios, and treasured up the very parings of her nails) who would not have gone to Jerusalem to win her. So that all along the vales of Torridge and of Taw, and even away to Clovelly (for young Mr. Cary was one of the sick), not a gay bachelor but was frowning on his fellows, and vieing with them in the fashion of his clothes, the set of his ruffs, the harness of his horse, the carriage of his hawks, the pattern of his sword-hilt; and those were golden days for all tailors and armourers, from Exmoor to Okehampton town; and not a week passed but, by mysterious hands, some nosegay, or languishing sonnet, was conveyed into The Rose's chamber, all which she stowed away, with the simplicity of a country girl, finding it mighty pleasant; and took all compliments quietly enough, probably because on the authority of her mirror, she considered them no more than her due.

And now, to add to the general confusion, home was come young Amyas Leigh, more desperately in love with her than ever. For, as is the way with sailors (who after all are the truest lovers, as they are the finest fellows, God bless them, upon earth), his lonely ship-watches had been spent in imprinting on his imagination, month after month, year after year, every feature and gesture and tone of the fair lass whom he had left behind him.

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER III

OF TWO GENTLEMEN OF WALES, AND HOW THEY HUNTED WITH THE HOUNDS, AND YET RAN WITH THE DEER

"I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman; I remember his name."—*Much Ado About Nothing.*

AMYAS slept that night a tired and yet a troubled sleep; and his mother and Frank, as they bent over his pillow, could see that his brain was busy with many dreams.

And no wonder; for over and above all the excitement of the day, the recollection of John Oxenham had taken strange possession of his mind; and all that evening, as he sat in the bay-windowed room where he had seen him last, Amyas was recalling to himself every look and gesture of the lost adventurer, and wondering at himself for so doing, till he retired to sleep, only to renew the fancy in his dreams. At last he found himself, he knew not how, sailing westward ever, up the wake of the setting sun, in chase of a tiny sail which was John Oxenham's. Upon him was a painful sense that, unless he came up with her in time, something fearful would come to pass: but the ship would not sail. All around floated the sargasso beds, clogging her bows with their long snaky coils of weed; and still he tried to sail, and tried to fancy that he was sailing, till the sun went down and all was utter dark. And then the moon arose, and in a moment John Oxenham's ship was close aboard; her sails were torn and fluttering; the pitch was streaming from her sides; her bulwarks were rotting to decay. And what was that line of dark objects dangling along the mainyard?—A line of hanged men! And, horror of horrors, from the yard-arm close above him, John Oxenham's corpse looked down with grave-light eyes, and beckoned and pointed, as if to show him his way, and strove to speak, and could not, and pointed still, not forward, but back along their course. And when Amyas looked back, behold, behind him was the snow range of the Andes glittering in the moon, and he knew that he was in the South Seas once more, and that all America was between him and home. And still the corpse kept pointing back, and back, and looking at him with yearning eyes of agony, and lips which longed to tell some awful secret; till he sprang up, and

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

woke with a shout of terror, and found himself lying in the little coved chamber in dear old Burrough, with the grey autumn morning already stealing in.

Feverish and excited, he tried in vain to sleep again; and after an hour's tossing, rose and dressed, and started for a bathe on his beloved old pebble ridge. As he passed his mother's door, he could not help looking in. The dim light of morning showed him the bed; but its pillow had not been pressed that night. His mother, in her long white night-dress, was kneeling at the other end of the chamber at her prie-dieu, absorbed in devotion. Gently he slipped in without a word, and knelt down at her side. She turned, smiled, passed her arm around him, and went on silently with her prayers. Why not? They were for him, and he knew it, and prayed also; and his prayers were for her, and for poor lost John Oxenham, and all his vanished crew.

At last she rose, and standing above him, parted the yellow locks from off his brow, and looked long and lovingly into his face. There was nothing to be spoken, for there was nothing to be concealed between these two souls as clear as glass. Each knew all which the other meant; each knew that its own thoughts were known. At last the mutual gaze was over; she stooped and kissed him on the brow, and was in the act to turn away as a tear dropped on his forehead. Her little bare feet were peeping out from under her dress. He bent down and kissed them again and again; and then looking up, as if to excuse himself,—

"You have such pretty feet, mother!"

Instantly, with a woman's instinct, she had hidden them. She had been a beauty once, as I said; and though her hair was grey, and her roses had faded long ago, she was beautiful still, in all eyes which saw deeper than the mere outward red and white.

"Your dear father used to say so thirty years ago."

"And I say so still: you always were beautiful; you are beautiful now."

"What is that to you, silly boy? Will you play the lover with an old mother? Go and take your walk, and think of younger ladies, if you can find any worthy of you."

And so the son went forth, and the mother returned to her prayers.

He walked down to the pebble ridge, where the surges of the bay have defeated their own fury, by rolling up in the course of ages a rampart of grey boulder-stones, some two miles long, as cunningly curved, and smoothed, and fitted, as if the work had been done by human hands, which protects from the high tides of spring and autumn a fertile sheet of smooth, alluvial turf. Sniffing the keen salt air like a young sea-dog, he stripped and plunged into the breakers,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and dived, and rolled, and tossed about the foam with stalwart arms, till he heard himself hailed from off the shore, and looking up, saw standing on the top of the rampart the tall figure of his cousin Eustace.

Amyas was half-disappointed at his coming; for, love-lorn rascal, he had been dreaming all the way thither of Rose Salterne, and had no wish for a companion who would prevent his dreaming of her all the way back. Nevertheless, not having seen Eustace for three years, it was but civil to scramble out and dress, while his cousin walked up and down upon the turf inside.

Eustace Leigh was the son of a younger brother of Leigh of Burrough, who had more or less cut himself off from his family, and indeed from his countrymen, by remaining a Papist. True, though born a Papist, he had not always been one; for like many of the gentry, he had become a Protestant under Edward the Sixth, and then a Papist again under Mary. But, to his honour be it said, at that point he had stopped, having too much honesty to turn Protestant a second time as hundreds did, at Elizabeth's accession. So a Papist he remained, living out of the way of the world in a great, rambling, dark house, still called "Chapel," on the Atlantic cliffs, in Moorwinstow parish, not far from Sir Richard Grenvile's house of Stow.

Now, if there was one man on earth above another, of whom Eustace Leigh stood in dread, it was his cousin Amyas. In the first place, he knew Amyas could have killed him with a blow; and there are natures, who, instead of rejoicing in the strength of men of greater prowess than themselves, look at such with irritation, dread, at last, spite; expecting, perhaps, that the stronger will do to them what they feel they might have done in his place. Every one, perhaps, has the same envious, cowardly devil haunting about his heart; but the brave men, though they be very sparrows, kick him out; the cowards keep him, and foster him; and so did poor Eustace Leigh.

Next, he could not help feeling that Amyas despised him. They had not met for three years; but before Amyas went, Eustace never could argue with him; simply because Amyas treated him as beneath argument. No doubt he was often rude and unfair enough; but the whole mass of questions concerning the unseen world, which the priests had stimulated in his cousin's mind were to Amyas simply, as he expressed it, "wind and moonshine;" and he treated his cousin as a sort of harmless lunatic, and, as they say in Devon, "half-baked." And Eustace knew it; and knew, too, that his cousin did him an injustice. "He used to undervalue me," said he to himself; "let us see whether he does not find me a match for him now."

But in justice be it said, all this came upon Eustace, not because

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

he was a Romanist, but because he was educated by the Jesuits. Had he been saved from them, he might have lived and died as simple and honest a gentleman as his brothers, who turned out like true Englishmen (as did all the Romish laity) to face the great Armada, and one of whom was fighting at that very minute under St. Leger in Ireland, and as brave and loyal a soldier as those Roman Catholics whose noble blood has stained every Crimæan battle-field; but his fate was appointed otherwise.

"Ah, my dearest cousin!" said Eustace, "how disappointed I was this morning at finding I had arrived just a day too late to witness your triumph! But I hastened to your home as soon as I could, and learning from your mother that I should find you here, hurried down to bid you welcome again to Devon."

"Well, old lad, it does look very natural to see you. I often used to think of you walking the deck o' nights. Uncle and the girls are all right, then? But is the old pony dead yet? And how's Dick the smith, and Nancy? Grown a fine maid by now, I warrant. 'Slid, it seems half a life that I've been away."

"And you really thought of your poor cousin? Be sure that he, too, thought of you, and offered up nightly his weak prayers for your safety (doubtless, not without avail) to those saints, to whom would that you——"

"Halt there, coz. If they are half as good fellows as you and I take them for, they'll help me without asking."

"They have helped you, Amyas."

"Maybe; I'd have done as much, I'm sure, for them, if I'd been in their place."

"And do you not feel, then, that you owe a debt of gratitude to them; and, above all, to her, whose intercessions have, I doubt not, availed for your preservation? Her, the star of the sea, the all-compassionate guide of the mariner?"

"Humph!" said Amyas. "Here's Frank; let him answer."

And, as he spoke, up came Frank, and after due greetings, sat down beside them on the ridge.

"I say, brother, here's Eustace trying already to convert me; and telling me that I owe all my luck to the Blessed Virgin's prayers for me."

"It may be so," said Frank; "at least you owe it to the prayers of that most pure and peerless virgin, by whose commands you sailed; and for whose sake you were preserved from flood and foe, that you might spread the fame and advance the power of the spotless championess of truth, and right, and freedom,—Elizabeth, your queen."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Amyas answered this rhapsody by a loyal chuckle. Eustace smiled meekly: but answered somewhat venomously nevertheless,

"I, at least, am certain that I speak the truth, when I call my patroness a virgin undefiled."

Both the brothers' brows clouded at once. Amyas, as he lay on his back on the pebbles, said quietly to the gulls over his head,

"I wonder what the Frenchman, whose head I cut off at the Azores, thinks by now about all that."

"Cut off a Frenchman's head?" said Frank.

"Yes, faith; and so fleshed my maiden sword. I'll tell you. It was in some tavern; I and George Drake had gone in, and there sat this Frenchman, with his sword on the table, ready for a quarrel (I found afterwards he was a noted bully), and begins with us loudly enough about this and that; but, after a while, by the instigation of the devil, what does he vent but a dozen slanders against her majesty's honour, one atop of the other. I was ashamed to hear them, and I should be more ashamed to repeat them."

"I have heard enough of such," said Frank. "They come mostly through lewd rascals about the French ambassador. Let the curs bark."

"But I didn't let the cur bark; for I took him by the ears, to show him out into the street. Whereon he got to his sword, and I to mine; and a very near chance I had of never bathing on the pebble-ridge more; for the fellow did not fight with edge and buckler, like a Christian, but had some newfangled French devil's device of scryming and foining with his point, ha'ing and stamping, and tracing at me, that I expected to be full of eyelet holes ere I could close with him."

"Thank God that you are safe, then!" said Frank. "I know that play well enough, and dangerous enough it is."

"Of course you know it; but I didn't, more's the pity."

"Well, I'll teach it thee, lad, but how did you escape his pinking iron?"

"How? Had it through my left arm before I could look round; and at that I got mad, and leapt upon him, and caught him by the wrist, and then had a fair side-blow; and, as fortune would have it, off tumbled his head on the table, and there was an end of his slanders."

"So perish all her enemies!" said Frank; and Eustace, who had been trying not to listen, rose and said,

"I trust that you do not number me among them?"

"As you speak, I do, coz," said Frank. "But for your own sake, let me advise you to put faith in the true report of those who have daily experience of their mistress's excellent virtue, as they have of

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the sun's shining, and of the earth's bringing forth fruit, and not in the tattle of a few cowardly back-stair rogues, who wish to curry favour with the Guises. Come, we will say no more. Walk round with us by Appledore, and then home to breakfast."

But Eustace declined, having immediate business, he said, in Northam town, and then in Bideford; and so left them to lounge for another half-hour on the beach, and then walk across the smooth sheet of turf to the little white fishing village, which stands some two miles above the bar, at the meeting of the Torridge and the Taw.

Now it came to pass, that Eustace Leigh, as we have seen, told his cousins that he was going to Northam: but he did not tell them that his point was really the same as their own, namely, Appledore; and, therefore, after having satisfied his conscience by going as far as the very nearest house in Northam village, he struck away sharp to the left across the fields, whereby he went several miles out of his road; and also, as is the wont of crooked spirits, only outwitted himself. For his cousins going merrily, like honest men, along the straight road across the turf, arrived in Appledore, opposite the little "Mariner's Rest" Inn, just in time to see what Eustace had taken so much trouble to hide from them, namely, four of Mr. Thomas Leigh's horses standing at the door, held by his groom, saddles and mail-bags on back, and mounting three of them, Eustace Leigh and two strange gentlemen.

"There's one lie already this morning," growled Amyas; "he told us he was going to Northam."

"He may have changed his mind."

"Bless your pure imagination, my sweet boy," said Amyas, laying his great hand on Frank's head, and mimicking his mother's manner. "I say, dear Frank, let's step into this shop and buy a pennyworth of whipcord."

"What do you want with whipcord, man?"

"To spin my top, to be sure."

"Top? how long hast had a top?"

"I'll buy one, then, and save my conscience; but the upshot of this sport I must see. Why may not I have an excuse ready made as well as Master Eustace?"

So saying, he pulled Frank into the little shop, unobserved by the party at the inn-door.

"What strange cattle has he been importing now? Look at that three-legged fellow, trying to get aloft on the wrong side. How he claws at his horse's ribs, like a cat scratching an elder stem!"

The three-legged man was a tall, meek-looking person, who had bedizened himself with gorgeous garments, a great feather, and a

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

sword so long and broad, that it differed little in size from the very thin and stiff shanks between which it wandered uncomfortably.

"Look, if his third leg is not turned into a tail! Why does not some one in charity haul in half-a-yard of his belt for him?"

It was too true; the sword, after being kicked out three or four times from its uncomfortable post between his legs, had returned unconquered; and the hilt getting a little too far back by reason of the too great length of the belt, the weapon took up its post triumphantly behind, standing out point in air, a tail confest, amid the tittering of the ostlers, and the cheers of the sailors.

At last the poor man, by dint of a chair, was mounted safely, while his fellow-stranger, a burly, coarse-looking man, equally gay, and rather more handy, made so fierce a rush at his sadlle, that, like "vaulting ambition who o'erleaps his selle," he "fell on t'other side:" or would have fallen, had he not been brought up short by the shoulders of the ostler at his off-stirrup. In which shock off came hat and feather.

"Pardie, the bulldog-faced one is a fighting man. Dost see, Frank? he has had his head broken."

"That scar came not, my son, but by a pair of most Catholic and apostolic scissors. My gentle buzzard, that is a priest's tonsure."

"Hang the dog! O, that the sailors may but see it, and put him over the quay head. I've a half mind to go and do it myself."

"My dear Amyas," said Frank, laying two fingers on his arm, "these men, whosoever they are, are the guests of our uncle, and therefore the guests of our family. Ham gained little by publishing Noah's shame; neither shall we, by publishing our uncle's."

"Murrain on you, old Franky, you never let a man speak his mind, and shame the devil."

"I have lived long enough in courts, old Amyas, without a murrain on you, to have found out first, that it is not so easy to shame the devil; and secondly, that it is better to outwit him; and the only way to do that, sweet chuck, is very often not to speak your mind at all."

Nevertheless, Amyas was not proof against the temptation of going over to the inn-door, and asking who were the gentlemen who went with Mr. Leigh.

"Gentlemen of Wales," said the ostler, "who came last night in a pinnace from Milford-haven, and their names, Mr. Morgan Evans and Mr. Evan Morgans."

At which Amyas observed aloud, "that the Welsh gentlemen seemed rather poor horsemen."

In the meanwhile Messrs. Evans and Morgans were riding away, as fast as the rough by-lanes would let them, along the fresh coast of

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the bay, steering carefully clear of Northam town on the one hand, and on the other, of Portledge, where dwelt that most Protestant justice of the peace, Mr. Coffin.

But they were not destined to reach their point as peaceably as they could have wished. For just as they got opposite Clovelly Dike, they heard a halloo from the valley below, answered by a fainter one far ahead. At which, the two valiant gentlemen of Wales, no longer Morgan Evans and Evans Morgan, but Father Parsons and Father Campian, Jesuits, looked at each other, and then both stared round at the wild, desolate, open pasture (for the country was then all unenclosed), and the great dark furze-grown banks above their heads; and Campian remarked gently to Parsons, that this was a very dreary spot, and likely enough for robbers.

And as he spoke, up from the ditch close beside him, as if rising out of the earth, burst through the furze-bushes an armed cavalier.

"Pardon, gentlemen!" shouted he, as the Jesuit and his horse recoiled against the groom. "Stand, for your lives!"

Then seeing Eustace Leigh, cried, "Hillo, old lad! where ridest so early?" and peering down for a moment into the ruts of the narrow track-way, struck spurs into his horse, shouting, "A fresh slot! right away for Hartland! Forward gentlemen all! follow, follow, follow!"

"Who is this roysterer?" asked Parsons, loftily.

"Will Cary, of Clovelly; an awful heretic: and here come more behind."

And as he spoke four or five more mounted gallants plunged in and out of the great dikes, and thundered on behind the party; whose horses, quite understanding what game was up, burst into full gallop, neighing and squealing; and in another minute the hapless Jesuits were hurling along over moor and moss after a "hart of grease."

Parsons, who, though a vulgar bully, was no coward, supported the character of Mr. Evan Morgans well enough; and he would have really enjoyed himself, had he not been in agonies of fear lest those precious saddle-bags in front of him should break from their lashings, and rolling to the earth, expose to the hoofs of heretic horses, perhaps to the gaze of heretic eyes, such a cargo of bulls, dispensations, secret correspondences, seditious tracts, and so forth, that at the very thought of their being seen, his head felt loose upon his shoulders. But the future martyr behind him, Mr. Morgan Evans, gave himself up at once to abject despair, and as he bumped and rolled along, sought vainly for comfort in professional ejaculations in the Latin tongue.

Now riding on his quarter, not in the rough track-way like a cockney, but through the soft heather like a sportsman, was a very gallant knight whom we all know well by this time, Richard Grenvile by

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

name; who had made Mr. Cary and the rest his guests the night before, and then ridden out with them at five o'clock that morning, after the wholesome early ways of the time, to rouse a well-known stag in the glens at Buckish, by help of Mr. Coffin's hounds from Portledge. Who being as good a Latiner as Campian's self, pushed his horse alongside of Mr. Eustace Leigh, and at the first check said, with two low bows toward the two strangers—

"I hope Mr. Leigh will do me the honour of introducing me to his guests. I should be sorry, and Mr. Cary also, that any gentle strangers should become neighbours of ours, even for a day, without our knowing who they are who honour our western Thule with a visit; and showing them ourselves all due requital for the compliment of their presence."

After which, the only thing which poor Eustace could do (especially as it was spoken loud enough for all bystanders), was to introduce in due form Mr. Evan Morgans and Mr. Morgan Evans, who, hearing the name, and what was worse, seeing the terrible face with its quiet searching eye, felt like a brace of partridge-poults cowering in the stubble, with a hawk hanging ten feet over their heads.

"Gentlemen," said Sir Richard blandly, cap in hand; "I fear that your mails must have been somewhat in your way in this unexpected gallop. If you will permit my groom, who is behind, to disencumber you of them and carry them to Chapel, you will both confer an honour on me, and be enabled yourselves to see the mort more pleasantly."

A twinkle of fun, in spite of all his efforts, played about good Sir Richard's eye as he gave this searching hint. The two Welsh gentlemen stammered out clumsy thanks; and pleading great haste and fatigue from a long journey, contrived to fall to the rear and vanish with their guides, as soon as the slot had been recovered.

"Will!" said Sir Richard, pushing alongside of young Cary.

"Your worship?"

"Jesuits, Will!"

"May the father of lies fly away with them over the nearest cliff!"

"He will not do that while this Irish trouble is about. Those fellows are come to practise here for Saunders and Desmond."

"How then?"

"Let Clovelly beach be watched night and day like any mousehole. No one can land round Harty Point with these south-westers. Stop every fellow who has the ghost of an Irish brogue, come he in or go he out, and send him over to me."

"Some one should guard Bude-haven, sir."

"Leave that to me. Now then, forward, gentlemen all, or the stag will take the sea at the Abbey."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

And on they crashed down the Hartland glens, through the oak-scrub and the great crown-ferns; and the baying of the slow-hound and the tantaras of the horn died away farther and fainter toward the blue Atlantic, while the conspirators, with lightened hearts, pricked fast across Bursdon upon their evil errand. But Eustace Leigh had other thoughts and other cares than the safety of his father's two mysterious guests, important as that was in his eyes; for he was one of the many who had drunk in sweet poison (though in his case it could hardly be called sweet) from the magic glances of the Rose of Torridge. He had seen her in the town, and for the first time in his life fallen utterly in love; and now that she had come down close to his father's house, he looked on her as a lamb fallen unawares into the jaws of the greedy wolf, which he felt himself to be. But as yet his suit was in very embryo. He could not even tell whether Rose knew of his love; and he wasted miserable hours in maddening thoughts, and tost all night upon his sleepless bed, and rose next morning fierce and pale, to invent fresh excuses for going over to her uncle's house, and lingering about the fruit which he dared not snatch.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IV

THE TWO WAYS OF BEING CROST IN LOVE

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."—LOVELACE.

AND what all this while has become of the fair breaker of so many hearts, to whom I have not yet even introduced my readers?

She was sitting in the little farm-house beside the mill, buried in the green depths of the Valley of Combe, half-way between Stow and Chapel, sulking as much as her sweet nature would let her, at being thus shut out from all the grand doings at Bideford, and forced to keep a Martinmas Lent in that far western glen. So lonely was she, in fact, that though she regarded Eustace Leigh with somewhat of aversion, she could not find it in her heart to avoid a chat with him whenever he came down to the farm and to its mill, which he contrived to do, on I know not what would-be errand, almost every day. Her uncle and aunt at first looked stiff enough at these visits, and the latter took care always to make a third in every conversation; but still Mr. Leigh was a gentleman's son, and it would not do to be rude to a neighbouring squire and a good customer; and Rose was the rich man's daughter and they poor cousins, so it would not do either to quarrel with her; and besides, the pretty maid, half by wilfulness, and half by her sweet winning tricks, generally contrived to get her own way wheresoever she went; and she herself had been wise enough to beg her aunt never to leave them alone,—for she "could not a-bear the sight of Mr. Eustace, only she must have some one to talk with down here." On which her aunt considered, that she herself was but a simple country-woman; and that townsfolks' ways of course must be very different from hers; and that people knew their own business best; and so forth, and let things go on their own way. Eustace, in the meanwhile, who knew well that the difference in creed between him and Rose was likely to be the very hardest obstacle in the way of his love, took care to keep his private opinions well in the back-ground; and instead of trying to convert the folk at the mill, daily bought milk or flour from them, and gave it away to the old women

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

in Moorwinstow (who agreed that after all, for a Papist, he was a godly young man enough).

But the suspicions of Father Parsons were aroused. He spoke to Father Campian. "There's a woman in the wind. I'll lay my life on it. I saw him blush up crimson yesterday when his mother asked him whether some Rose Salterne or other was still in the neighbourhood."

The upshot of this conversation was that in a day or two Father Campian asked Father Francis, the household chaplain, to allow him as an especial favor to hear Eustace's usual confession on the ensuing Friday. By putting to him such questions as may be easily conceived by those who know anything about the confessional he discovered, satisfactorily enough, that he was what Campian would have called "in love". He smiled and set to work most vigorously to discover who the lady might be. Poor Eustace dodged in every possible way, though he knew that the good father was too cunning for him. At last, when Campian, finding the business not such a bad one, had asked something about her worldly wealth, Eustace saw a door of escape and sprang at it, saying, "Even if she be a heretic, she is heiress to one of the wealthiest merchants in Devon."

"Ah!" said Campian thoughtfully. "And she is but eighteen you say?"

"Only eighteen."

"Ah! well, my son, there is time. She may be reconciled to the Church: or you may change."

"I shall die first."

"Ah, poor lad! Well; she may be reconciled, and her wealth may be of use to the cause of Heaven."

"And it shall be of use. Only absolve me, and let me be at peace. Let me have but her," he cried piteously. "I do not want her wealth,—not I! Let me have but her, and that but for one year, one month, one day!—and all the rest,—money, fame, talents, yea, my life itself, hers if it be needed,—are at the service of Holy Church. Ay, I shall glory in showing my devotion by some special sacrifice,—some desperate deed. Prove me now, and see what there is I will not do!"

And so Eustace was absolved; after which Campian added,—

"This is indeed well, my son; for there is a thing to be done now, but it may be at the risk of life."

"Prove me!" cried Eustace impatiently.

"Here is a letter which was brought me last night; no matter from whence; you can understand it better than I, and I longed to have shown it you, but that I feared my son had become——"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"You feared wrongly, then, my dear Father Campian."

So Campian translated to him the cipher of the letter.

"This to Evan Morgans, gentleman, at Mr. Leigh's house in Moorwinstow, Devonshire. News may be had by one who will go to the shore of Clovelly, any evening after the 25th of November, at dead low tide, and there watch for a boat, rowed by one with a red beard, and a Portugal by his speech. If he be asked, 'How many?' he will answer, 'Eight hundred and one.' Take his letters and read them. If the shore be watched, let him who comes show a light three times in a safe place under the cliff above the town; below is dangerous landing. Farewell, and expect great things!"

"I will go," said Eustace; "to-morrow is the 25th, and I know a sure and easy place. Your friend seems to know these shores well."

"Ah! what is it we do not know?" said Campian, with a mysterious smile. "And now?"

"And now, to prove to you how I trust to you, you shall come with me, and see this—the lady of whom I spoke, and judge for yourself whether my fault is not a venial one."

"Ah, my son, have I not absolved you already? What have I to do with fair faces? Nevertheless, I will come, both to show you that I trust you, and it may be to help toward reclaiming a heretic, and saving a lost soul: who knows?"

So the two set out together; and, as it was appointed, they had just got to the top of the hill between Chapel and Stow mill, when up the lane came none other than Mistress Rose Salterne herself, in all the glories of a new scarlet hood, from under which her large dark languid eyes gleamed soft lightnings through poor Eustace's heart and marrow. Up to them she tripped on delicate ankles and tiny feet, tall, lithe, and graceful, a true West-country lass; and as she passed them with a pretty blush and courtesy, even Campian looked back at the fair innocent creature, whose long dark curls, after the then country fashion, rolled down from beneath the hood below her waist, entangling the soul of Eustace Leigh within their glossy nets.

"There!" whispered he, trembling from head to foot. "Can you excuse me now? Will you let me return for a moment? I will follow you: let me go!"

Campian saw that it was of no use to say no, and nodded. Eustace darted from his side, and running across a field, met Rose full at the next turn of the road.

She started, and gave a pretty little shriek.

"Mr. Leigh! I thought you had gone forward."

"I came back to speak to you, Rose—Mistress Salterne, I mean."

"To me?"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"To you I must speak, tell you all, or die!" And he pressed up close to her. She shrunk back somewhat frightened.

"Do not stir; do not go, I implore you! Rose, only hear me!" And fiercely and passionately seizing her by the hand, he poured out the whole story of his love.

There was little, perhaps, of all his words which Rose had not heard many a time before; but there was a quiver in his voice, and a fire in his eye, from which she shrank by instinct.

"Let me go!" she said; "you are too rough, sir!"

"Ay!" he said, seizing now both her hands, "rougher, perhaps, than the gay gallants of Bideford, who serenade you, and write sonnets to you, and send you posies. Rougher, but more loving, Rose! Do not turn away! I shall die if you take your eyes off me! Tell me,—tell me, now here—this moment—before we part—if I may love you!"

"Go away!" she answered, struggling, and bursting into tears. "This is too rude. If I am but a merchant's daughter, I am God's child. Remember that I am alone. Leave me; go! or I will call for help!"

But Eustace only grasped her hands the more fiercely, and looked into her face with keen and hungry eyes; but she was in earnest, nevertheless, and a loud shriek made him aware that, if he wished to save his own good name, he must go; but there was one question, for an answer to which he would risk his very life.

"Yes, proud woman! I thought so! Some one of those gay gallants has been beforehand with me. Tell me who——"

But she broke from him, and passed him, and fled down the lane.

"Mark it!" cried he, after her. "You shall rue the day when you despised Eustace Leigh! Mark it, proud beauty!" And he turned back to join Campian, who stood in some trepidation.

"You have not hurt the maiden, my son? I thought I heard a scream."

"Hurt her! No. Would God that she were dead, nevertheless, and I by her! Say no more to me, father. We will home." Even Campian knew enough of the world to guess what had happened, and they both hurried home in silence.

And so Eustace Leigh played his move, and lost it.

Poor little Rose, having run nearly to Chapel, stopped for very shame, and walked quietly by the cottages which stood opposite the gate, and then turned up the lane towards Moorwinstow village, whither she was bound. But on second thoughts, she felt herself so "red and flustered," that she was afraid of going into the village, for fear (as she said to herself) of making people talk, and so, turning

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

into a by-path, struck away toward the cliffs, to cool her blushes in the sea-breeze. And there finding a quiet grassy nook beneath the crest of the rocks, she sat down on the turf, and fell into a great meditation.

Rose Salterne was a thorough specimen of a West-coast maiden, full of passionate impulsive affections, and wild dreamy imaginations. Left early without a mother's care, she had fed her fancy upon the legends and ballads of her native land, till she believed—what did she not believe?—of mermaids and pixies, charms and witches, dreams and omens, and all that world of magic in which most of the country-women, and countrymen too, believed firmly enough but twenty years ago. Then her father's house was seldom without some merchant, or sea-captain from foreign parts, and she devoured their tales with greedy ears whenever she could. And when these failed, there was still boundless store of wonders open to her in old romances which were then to be found in every English house of the better class. The Legend of King Arthur, Florice and Blancheflour, Sir Ysumbras, Sir Guy of Warwick, Palamon and Arcite, and the Romaunt of the Rose. And with her head full of these, it was no wonder if she likened herself of late more than once to some of those peerless princesses of old, for whose fair hand paladins and kaisers thundered against each other in tilted field; and perhaps she would not have been sorry (provided, of course, no one was killed) if duels and passages of arms in honour of her, as her father reasonably dreaded, had actually taken place.

For Rose was not only well aware that she was wooed, but found the said wooing (and little shame to her) a very pleasant process. Not that she had any wish to break hearts: she did not break her heart for any of her admirers, and why should they break theirs for her? They were all very charming, each in his way (the gentlemen, at least; for she had long since learnt to turn up her nose at merchants and burghers); but one of them was not so very much better than the other.

Of course, Mr. Frank Leigh was the most charming; but then, as a courtier and squire of dames, he had never given her a sign of real love, nothing but sonnets and compliments, and there was no trusting such things from a gallant.

And very charming was Mr. William Cary, with his quips and his jests, and his galliards and lavoltas; over and above his rich inheritance; but then, charming also Mr. Coffin of Portledge, though he were a little proud and stately; but which of the two should she choose? It would be very pleasant to be mistress of Clovelly Court; but just as pleasant to find herself lady of Portledge.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

And Mr. Hugh Fortescue, too—people said that he was certain to become a great soldier—perhaps as great as his brother Arthur—and that would be pleasant enough, too, though he was but the younger son of an innumerable family: but then, so was Amyas Leigh. Ah, poor Amyas! Her girl's fancy for him had vanished, or rather, perhaps, it was very much what it always had been, only that four or five more girls' fancies beside it had entered in, and kept it in due subjection. But still, she could not help thinking a good deal about him, and his voyage, and the reports of his great strength, and beauty, and valour, which had already reached her in that out-of-the-way corner; and though she was not in the least in love with him, she could not help hoping that he had at least (to put her pretty little thought in the mildest shape) not altogether forgotten her; and was hungering, too, with all her fancy to give him no peace till he had told her all the wonderful things which he had seen and done in this ever-memorable voyage. So that altogether, it was no wonder, if in her last night's dream the figure of Amyas had been even more forward and troublesome than that of Frank or the rest.

But, moreover, another figure had been forward and troublesome enough in last night's sleep-world; and forward and troublesome enough, too, now in to-day's waking-world, namely, Eustace, the rejected. How strange that she should have dreamt of him the night before! and dreamt, too, of his fighting with Mr. Frank and Mr. Amyas! It must be a warning—see, she had met him the very next day in this strange way; so the first half of her dream had come true. And after all, though Mr. Eustace had been very rude and naughty, yet still it was not his own fault; he could not help being in love with her. And—and, in short, the poor little maid felt herself one of the most important personages on earth, with all the cares (or hearts) of the country in her keeping.

Poor little Rose! Had she but had a mother! But she was to learn her lesson, such as it was, in another school. She was too shy (too proud perhaps) to tell her aunt her mighty troubles; but a counsellor she must have; and after sitting with her head in her hands, for half-an-hour or more, she arose suddenly, and started off along the cliffs toward Marsland. She would go and see Lucy Passmore, the white witch; Lucy knew everything; Lucy would tell her what to do; perhaps even whom to marry.

Lucy was a fat, jolly woman of fifty, with little pig-eyes, which twinkled like sparks of fire, and eyebrows which sloped upwards and outwards, like those of a satyr, as if she had been (as indeed she had) all her life looking out of the corners of her eyes. Her qualifications as white witch were boundless cunning, equally boundless good na-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ture, considerable knowledge of human weaknesses, some mesmeric power, some skill in "yarbs," as she called her simples, a firm faith in the virtue of her own incantations, and the faculty of holding her tongue. By dint of these she contrived to gain a fair share of money, and also (which she liked even better) of power, among the simple folk for many miles around. If a child was scalded, a tooth ached, a piece of silver was stolen, a heifer shrew-struck, a pig bewitched, a young damsel crost in love, Lucy was called in, and Lucy found a remedy, especially for the latter complaint. Now and then she found herself on ticklish ground, for the kind-heartedness which compelled her to help all distressed damsels out of a scrape, sometimes compelled her also to help them into one; whereon enraged fathers called Lucy ugly names, and threatened to send her into Exeter gaol for a witch, and she smiled quietly, and hinted that if she were "like some that were ready to return evil for evil, such talk as that would bring no blessing on them that spoke it;" which being translated into plain English, meant, "If you trouble me, I will overlook (*i.e.* fascinate) you, and then your pigs will die, your horses stray, your cream turn sour, your barns be fired, your son have St. Vitus's dance, your daughter fits, and so on, woe on woe, till you are very probably starved to death in a ditch, by virtue of this terrible little eye of mine, at which, in spite of all your swearing and bullying, you know you are now shaking in your shoes for fear. So you had much better hold your tongue, give me a drink of cider, and leave ill alone, lest you make it worse."

The Prophetess, when Rose approached her oracular cave, was seated on a tripod in front of the fire, distilling strong waters out of pennyroyal. But no sooner did her distinguished visitor appear at the hatch, than the still was left to take care of itself, and a clean apron and mutch having been slipt on, Lucy welcomed Rose with endless courtesies, and—"Bless my dear soul alive, who ever would have thought to see the Rose of Torridge to my poor little place!"

Rose sat down: and then? How to begin was more than she knew, and she stayed silent a full five minutes, looking earnestly at the point of her shoe, till Lucy, who was an adept in such cases, thought it best to proceed to business at once, and save Rose the delicate operation of opening the ball herself; and so, in her own way, half fawning, half familiar—

"Well, my dear young lady, and what is it I can do for ye? For I guess you want a bit of old Lucy's help, eh? Though I'm most mazed to see ye here, surely. I should have supposed that pretty face could manage they sort of matters for itself. Eh?"

Rose thus bluntly charged, confessed at once, and with many

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

blushes and hesitations, made her soon understand that what she wanted was "To have her fortune told."

"Eh? Oh! I see. The pretty face managed it a bit too well already, eh? Tu many o'mun, pure fellows? Well, tain't every mayden has her pick and choose, like some I know of, as be blest in love by stars above. So you h'aint made up your mind, then?"

Rose shook her head.

"Ah—well," she went on, in a half bantering tone. "Not so asy, is it, then? One's gude for one thing, and one for another, eh? One has the blood, and another the money."

And so the "cunning woman" (as she truly was), talking half to herself, ran over all the names which she thought likely, peering at Rose all the while out of the corners of her foxy bright eyes, while Rose stirred the peat ashes steadfastly with the point of her little shoe, half angry, half ashamed, half frightened, to find that "the cunning woman" had guessed so well both her suitors and her thoughts about them, and tried to look unconcerned at each name as it came out.

"Well, well," said Lucy, "think over it—think over it, my dear life; and if you did set your mind on any one—why, then—then maybe I might help you to a sight of him."

"A sight of him?"

"His sperrit, dear life, his sperrit only, I mane. I 'udn't have no keeping company in my house, no, not for gowld untowld, I 'udn't; but the sperrit of mun—to see whether mun would be true or not, you'd like to know that, now, 'udn't you, my darling?"

Rose sighed and stirred the ashes about vehemently.

"I must first know who it is to be. If you could show me that—now——"

"Oh, I can show ye that, tu, I can. Ben there's a way to 't, a sure way; but 'tis mortal cold for the time o' year, you zee."

"But what is it, then?" said Rose, who had in her heart been longing for something of that very kind, and had half made up her mind to ask for a charm.

"Why, you'm not afraid to goo into the say by night for a minute, are you? And to-morrow night would serve, too; 'twill be just low tide to midnight."

"If you would come with me perhaps——"

"I'll come, I'll come, and stand within call, to be sure. Only do ye mind this, dear soul alive, not to goo telling a crumb about mun, noo, not for the world, or yu'll see nought at all, indeed, now. And beside, there's a noxious business grow'd up against me up to Chapel there; and I hear tell how Mr. Leigh saith I shall to Exeter gaol for

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

a witch—did ye ever hear the likes?—Do ye try my bit of a charm, now; do ye!"

Rose could not resist the temptation; and between them both the charm was agreed on, and the next night was fixed for its trial, on the payment of certain current coins of the realm (for Lucy, of course, must live by her trade); and slipping a tester into the dame's hand as earnest, Rose went away home, and got there in safety.

But in the meanwhile, at the very hour that Eustace had been prosecuting his suit in the lane at Moorwinstow, a very different scene was being enacted in Mrs. Leigh's room at Burrough.

For the night before, Amyas, as he was going to bed, heard his brother Frank in the next room tune his lute, and then begin to sing. And both their windows being open, and only a thin partition between the chambers, Amyas's admiring ears came in for every word of the canzonet, sung in that delicate and mellow tenor voice for which Frank was famed among all fair ladies; the simple sailor sighed, and longed that he too could write such neat verses, and sing them so sweetly. How he would besiege the ear of Rose Salterne with amorous ditties! But still, he could not be everything; and if he had the bone and muscle of the family, it was but fair that Frank should have the brains and voice; and, after all, he was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and it was just the same as if he himself could do all the fine things which Frank could do; for as long as one of the family won honour, what matter which of them it was? Whereon he shouted through the wall, "Good night, old song-thrush; I suppose I need not pay the musicians."

"What, awake?" answered Frank. "Come in here, and lull me to sleep with a sea-song."

So Amyas went in, and found Frank laid on the outside of his bed not yet undrest.

"I am a bad sleeper," said he; "I spend more time, I fear, in burning the midnight oil than prudent men should. Come and be my jongleur, my minne-singer, and tell me about Andes, and cannibals, and the ice-regions, and the fire-regions, and the paradises of the West."

So Amyas sat down, and told: but somehow, every story which he tried to tell came round, by crooked paths, yet sure, to none other point than Rose Salterne, and how he thought of her here and thought of her there, and how he wondered what she would say if she had seen him in this adventure, and how he longed to have had her with him to show her that glorious sight, till Frank let him have his own way, and then out came the whole story of the simple fellow's daily and

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

hourly devotion to her, through those three long years of world-wide wanderings.

"And oh, Frank, I could hardly think of anything but her in the church the other day, God forgive me! and it did seem so hard for her to be the only face which I did not see—and have not seen her yet, either."

"So I thought, dear lad," said Frank, with one of his sweetest smiles; "and tried to get her father to let her impersonate the nymph of Torridge."

"Did you, you dear kind fellow? That would have been too delicious."

"Just so, too delicious; wherefore, I suppose, it was ordained not to be."

"And is she as pretty as ever?"

"Ten times as pretty, dear lad, as half the young fellows round have discovered. If you mean to win her and wear her (and God grant you may fare no worse!) you will have rivals enough to get rid of."

"Humph!" said Amyas, "I hope I shall not have to make short work with some of them."

"I hope not," said Frank, laughing. "Now go to bed, and to-morrow give your sword to mother to keep, lest you should be tempted to draw it on any of her Majesty's lieges."

"No fear of that, Frank; I am no swash-buckler, thank God; but if any one gets in my way, I'll serve him as the mastiff did the terrier, and just drop him over the quay into the river, to cool himself, or my name's not Amyas."

And the giant swung himself laughing out of the room, and slept all night like a seal, not without dreams, of course, of Rose Salterne.

The next morning, according to his wont, he went into his mother's room, whom he was sure to find up and at her prayers; for he liked to say his prayers, too, by her side, as he used to do when he was a little boy. It seemed so homelike, he said, after three years' knocking up and down in no-man's land. But coming gently to the door, for fear of disturbing her, and entering unperceived, beheld a sight which stopped him short.

Mrs. Leigh was sitting in her chair, with her face bowed fondly down upon the head of his brother Frank, who knelt before her, his face buried in her lap. Amyas could see that his whole form was quivering with stifled emotion. Their mother was just finishing the last words of a well-known text—"for my sake, and the Gospel's, shall receive a hundredfold in this present life, fathers, and mothers, and brothers, and sisters."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"But not a wife!" interrupted Frank, with a voice stifled with sobs; "that was too precious a gift for even Him to promise to those who gave up a first love for His sake!"

"And yet," said he, after a moment's silence, "has He not heaped me with blessings enough already, that I must repine and rage at His refusing me one more, even though that one be—No, mother! I am your son, and God's; and you shall know it, even though Amyas never does!" And he looked up with his clear blue eyes and white forehead; and his face was as the face of an angel.

Both of them saw that Amyas was present, and started and blushed. His mother motioned him away with her eyes, and he went quietly out, as one stunned. Why had his name been mentioned?

Love, cunning love, told him all at once. This was the meaning of last night's canzonet! This was why its words had seemed to fit his own heart so well! His brother was his rival. And he had been telling him all his love last night. What a stupid brute he was! How it must have made poor Frank wince! And then Frank had listened so kindly; even bid him God speed in his suit. What a gentleman old Frank was, to be sure! No wonder the Queen was so fond of him, and all the Court ladies!——Why, if it came to that, what wonder if Rose Salterne should be fond of him too? Hey-day! "That would be a pretty fish to find in my net when I come to haul it!" quoth Amyas to himself, as he paced the garden; and clutching desperately hold of his locks with both hands, as if to hold his poor confused head on its shoulders, he strode and tramped up and down the shell-paved garden walks for a full half hour, till Frank's voice (as cheerful as ever, though he more than suspected all) called him.

"Come in to breakfast, lad; and stop grinding and creaking upon those miserable limpets, before thou hast set every tooth in my head on edge!"

Amyas, whether by dint of holding his head straight, or by higher means, had got the thoughts of the said head straight enough by this time; and in he came, and fell upon the broiled fish and strong ale, with a sort of fury, as determined to do his duty to the utmost in all matters that day; and therefore, of course, in that most important matter of bodily sustenance; while his mother and Frank looked at him, not without anxiety and even terror, doubting what turn his fancy might have taken in so new a case; at last—

"My dear Amyas, you will really heat your blood with all that strong ale! Remember, those who drink beer, think beer."

"Then they think right good thoughts, mother. And in the meanwhile, those who drink water, think water. Eh, old Frank? and here's your health."

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"And clouds are water," said his mother, somewhat reassured by his genuine good humour; "and so are rainbows; and clouds are angels' thrones, and rainbows the sign of God's peace on earth."

Amyas understood the hint, and laughed. "Then I'll pledge Frank out of the next ditch, if it please you and him. But first—I say—he must hearken to a parable; a manner mystery, miracle play, I have got in my head, like what they have at Easter, to the town-hall. Now then, hearken, madam, and I and Frank will act." And up rose Amyas, and shoved back his chair, and put on a solemn face.

Mrs. Leigh looked up, trembling; and Frank, he scarce knew why, rose.

"No; you pitch again. You are King David, and sit still upon your throne. David was a great singer, you know, and a player on the viols; and ruddy, too, and of a fair countenance; so that will fit. Now, then, mother, don't look so frightened. I am not going to play Goliath, for all my cubits; I am to present Nathan the prophet. Now, David, hearken, for I have a message unto thee, O King!

"There were two men in one city, one rich, and the other poor: and the rich man had many flocks and herds, and all the fine ladies in Whitehall to court if he liked; and the poor man had nothing but——"

And in spite of his broad smile, Amyas's deep voice began to tremble and choke.

Frank sprang up, and burst into tears:—"Oh! Amyas, my brother, my brother! stop! I cannot endure this. Oh, God! was it not enough to have entangled myself in this fatal fancy, but over and above, I must meet the shame of my brother's discovering it?"

"What shame, then, I'd like to know?" said Amyas, recovering himself. "Look here, brother Frank! I've thought it all over in the garden; and I was an ass and a braggart for talking to you as I did last night. Of course you love her! Everybody must; and I was a fool for not recollecting that; and if you love her, your taste and mine agree, and what can be better? I think you are a sensible fellow for loving her, and you think me one. And as for who has her, why, you're the eldest; and first come first served is the rule, and best to keep to it. Besides, brother Frank, I'm no scholar, yet I'm not so blind but that I tell the difference between you and me; and of course your chance against mine, for a hundred to one; and I am not going to be fool enough to row against wind and tide too. I'm good enough for her, I hope; but if I am, you are better, and the good dog may run, but it's the best that takes the hare; and so I have nothing more to do with the matter at all; and if you marry her, why, it will set the old house on its legs again, and that's the first thing to be thought

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

of, and you may just as well do it as I, and better too. Not but that it's a plague, a horrible plague!" went on Amyas, with a ludicrously doleful visage; "but so are other things too, by the dozen; it's all in the day's work, as the huntsman said when the lion ate him. What must be must, man is but dust; if you can't get crumb, you must fain eat crust. So I'll go and join the army in Ireland, and get it out of my head, for cannon balls fright away love as well as poverty does; and that's all I've got to say." Wherewith Amyas sat down, and returned to the beer; while Mrs. Leigh wept tears of joy.

"Amyas! Amyas!" said Frank; "you must not throw away the hopes of years, and for me, too! Oh, how just was your parable! Ah! mother mine! to what use is all my scholarship and my philosophy, when this dear simple sailor-lad outdoes me at the first trial of courtesy!"

"My children, my children, which of you shall I love best? Which of you is the more noble? I thanked God this morning for having given me one such son; but to have found that I possess two!" And Mrs. Leigh laid her head on the table, and buried her face in her hands, while the generous battle went on.

"But, dearest Amyas!——"

"But, Frank! if you don't hold your tongue, I must go forth. It was quite trouble enough to make up one's mind, without having you afterwards trying to unmake it again."

"Amyas! if you give her up to me, God do so to me, and more also, if I do not hereby give her up to you!"

"He had done it already—this morning!" said Mrs. Leigh, looking up through her tears. "He renounced her for ever on his knees before me! only he is too noble to tell you so."

"The more reason I should copy him," said Amyas, setting his lips, and trying to look desperately determined, and then suddenly jumping up, he leapt upon Frank, and throwing his arms around his neck, sobbed out, "There, there, now! For God's sake, let us forget all, and think about our mother, and the old house, and how we may win her honour before we die! and that will be enough to keep our hands full, without fretting about this woman and that.—What an ass I have been for years! instead of learning my calling, dreaming about her, and don't know at this minute whether she cares more for me than she does for her father's 'prentices!"

"Oh, Amyas! every word of yours puts me to fresh shame! Will you believe that I know as little of her likings as you do?"

"Don't tell me that, and play the devil's game by putting fresh hopes into me, when I am trying to kick them out. I won't believe it.

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

If she is not a fool, she must love you; and if she don't why, behanged if she is worth loving!"

"My dearest Amyas! I must ask you too to make no more such speeches to me. All those thoughts I have forsworn."

"Only this morning; so there is time to catch them again before they are gone too far."

"Only this morning," said Frank, with a quiet smile: "but centuries have passed since then."

"Centuries? I don't see many grey hairs yet."

"I should not have been surprised if you had, though," answered Frank, in so sad and meaning a tone that Amyas could only answer—

"Well, you are an angel!"

"You, at least, are something even more to the purpose, for you are a man!"

And both spoke truth, and so the battle ended; and Frank went to his books, while Amyas, who must needs be doing, if he was not to dream, started off to the dockyard to potter about a new ship of Sir Richard's, and forget his woes, in the capacity of Sir Oracle among the sailors. And so he had played his move for Rose, even as Eustace had, and lost her: but not as Eustace had.

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER V

CLOVELLY COURT IN THE OLDEN TIME

"It was among the ways of good Queen Bess,
Who ruled as well as ever mortal can, sir,
When she was stogg'd, and the country in a mess,
She was wont to send for a Devon man, sir."

West Country Song.

THE next morning Amyas Leigh was not to be found. Not that he had gone out to drown himself in despair, or even to bemoan himself "down by the Torridge side." He had simply ridden off, Frank found, to Sir Richard Grenvile at Stow: his mother at once divined the truth, that he was gone to try for a post in the Irish army, and sent off Frank after him to bring him home again, and make him at least reconsider himself.

So Frank took horse and rode thereon ten miles or more: and then, as there were no inns on the road in those days, indeed in these, and he had some ten miles more of hilly road before him, he turned down the hill towards Clovelly Court, to obtain, after the hospitable humane fashion of those days, good entertainment for man and horse from Mr. Cary the squire.

And when he walked self-invited, like the loud-shouting Menelaus, in the long dark wainscoted hall of the Court, the first object he beheld was the mighty form of Amyas, who, seated at the long table, was alternately burying his face in a pasty, and the pasty in his face, his sorrows having, as it seemed, only sharpened his appetite, while young Will Cary, kneeling on the opposite bench, with his elbows on the table, was in that graceful attitude laying down the law fiercely to him in a low voice.

"Hillo! lad," cried Amyas; "come hither and deliver me out of the hands of this fire-eater, who I verily believe will kill me, if I do not let him kill some one else."

"Ah! Mr. Frank," said Will Cary, who, like all other young gentlemen of these parts, held Frank in high honour, and considered him a very oracle and cynosure of fashion and chivalry, "welcome

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

here: I was just longing for you, too; I wanted your advice on half-a-dozen matters. Sit down, and eat. There is the ale."

"None so early, thank you."

"Ah no!" said Amyas, burying his head in the tankard, and then mimicking Frank, "avoid strong ale o' mornings. And yet, though I cannot see through the bottom of the tankard already, I can see plain enough still to see this, that Will shall not fight."

"Shall I not, eh? who says that? Mr. Frank, I appeal to you, now; only hear."

"We are in the judgment-seat," said Frank, settling to the pasty. "Proceed, appellant."

"Well, I was telling Amyas, that Tom Coffin, of Portledge; I will stand him no longer."

"Let him be, then," said Amyas; "he could stand very well by himself, when I saw him last."

"Plague on you, hold your tongue. Has he any right to look at me as he does, whenever I pass him?"

"That depends on how he looks; a cat may look at a king, provided she don't take him for a mouse."

"Oh, I know how he looks, and what he means too, and he shall stop, or I will stop him. And the other day when I spoke of Rose Salterne—he burst out laughing in my face; and is not that a fair quarrel? And what is more, I know that he wrote a sonnet, and sent it to her to Stow by a market woman. What right has he to write sonnets when I can't? It's not fair play, Mr. Frank, or I am a Jew, and a Spaniard, and a Papist; it's not!" And Will smote the table till the plates danced again.

"My dear knight of the burning pestle, I have a plan, a device, a disentanglement, according to most approved rules of chivalry. Let us fix a day, and summon by tuck of drum all young gentlemen under the age of thirty, dwelling within fifteen miles of the habitation of that peerless Oriana."

"And all 'prentice-boys too," cried Amyas out of the pasty.

"And all 'prentice-boys. The bold lads shall fight first, with good quarterstaves, in Bideford Market, till all heads are broken; and the head which is not broken, let the back belonging to it pay the penalty of the noble member's cowardice. After which grand tournament the young gentlemen shall adjourn into a convenient field, sand, or bog—which will be better, as no man will be able to run away, if he be up to his knees in soft peat: and there stripping to our shirts, with rapiers of equal length and keenest temper, each shall slay his man, catch who catch can, and the conquerors fight again, like a most valiant main of gamecocks as we are, till all be dead, and out of their woes;

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

after which the survivor, bewailing before heaven and earth the cruelty of our Fair Oriana, and the slaughter which her basiliscine eyes have caused, shall fall gracefully upon his sword, and so end the woes of this our lovelorn generation. *Placetne Domini?* as they used to ask in the Senate at Oxford."

"Really," said Cary, "this is too bad."

"My dear Mr. Cary," went on Frank, suddenly changing his bantering tone to one of the most winning sweetness; "do not fancy that I cannot feel for you. But oh, Mr. Cary, does it not seem to you an awful thing to waste selfishly upon your own quarrel that divine wrath which, as Plato says, is the very root of all virtues, and which has been given you, like all else which you have, that you may spend it in the service of her whom all bad souls fear, and all virtuous souls adore—our peerless queen? Who dares, while she rules England, call his sword or his courage his own, or any one's but hers. Are there no Spaniards to conquer, no wild Irish to deliver from their oppressors, that two gentlemen of Devon can find no better place to flesh their blades than in each other's valiant and honourable hearts?"

"By heaven!" cried Amyas, "Frank speaks like a book; and for me, I do think that Christian gentlemen may leave love quarrels to bulls and rams."

"And that the heir of Clovelly," said Frank, smiling, "may find more noble examples to copy than the stags in his own deer-park."

"Well," said Will penitently, "you are a great scholar, Mr. Frank, and you speak like one; but gentlemen must fight sometimes, or where would be their honour?"

"I speak," said Frank a little proudly, "not merely as a scholar, but as a gentleman, and one who has fought ere now, and to whom it has happened, Mr. Cary, to kill his man (on whose soul may God have mercy); but it is my pride to remember that I have never yet fought in my own quarrel, and my trust in God that I never shall. For as there is nothing more noble and blessed than to fight in behalf of those whom we love, so to fight in our own private behalf is a thing not to be allowed to a Christian man, unless refusal imports utter loss of life or honour."

"And I can tell you, Will," said Amyas, "I am not troubled with fear of ghosts; but when I cut off the Frenchman's head, I said to myself, 'If that braggart had been slandering me instead of her gracious Majesty, I should expect to see that head lying on my pillow every time I went to bed at night."

"God forbid!" said Will with a shudder. "But what shall I do? for to the market to-morrow I will go, if it were choke-full of Coffins, and a ghost in each coffin of the lot."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Leave the matter to me," said Amyas. "I have my device, as well as scholar Frank here; and if there be, as I suppose there must be, a quarrel in the market to-morrow, see if I do not——"

"Well, you are two good fellows," said Will. "Let us have another tankard in."

"And drink the health of Mr. Coffin, and all gallant lads of the North," said Frank; "and now to my business. I have to take this runaway youth here home to his mother; and if he will not go quietly, I have orders to carry him across my saddle."

"I hope your nag has a strong back, then," said Amyas; "but I must go on and see Sir Richard, Frank. It is all very well to jest as we have been doing, but my mind is made up."

"Stop," said Cary. "You must stay here to-night; first, for good fellowship's sake; and next, because I want the advice of our Phœnix here, our oracle, our paragon. There, Mr. Frank, can you construe that for me? Speak low, though, gentlemen both." Whereon Will Cary, drawing his chair close to Frank's, put quietly into his hand a dirty letter.

"This was the letter left for me," whispered he, "by a country fellow this morning. Look at it and tell me what I am to do."

Whereon Frank opened, and read—

"Mister Cary, be you wary
By deer park end to-night.
Yf Irish ffoxe com out of rocks
Grip and hold hym tight."

"I would have showed it my father," said Will, "but——"

"I verily believe it to be a blind. See now, this is the handwriting of a man who has been trying to write vilely, and yet cannot. Look at that B, and that G; their *formæ formativæ* never were begotten in a hedge-school. And what is more, this is no Devon man's handiwork. We say 'to' and not 'by,' Will, eh? in the West country?"

"Of course."

"And 'man,' instead of 'him'?"

Whereon Amyas was called to counsel. He pondered awhile, thrusting his hands into his long curls; and then—

"Will, my lad, have you been watching at the Deer Park End of late?"

"Never."

"Where then?"

"At the town-beach."

"Where else?"

"At the town-head."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Where else?"

"Why, the fellow is turned lawyer! Above Freshwater."

"Where is Freshwater?"

"Why, where the water-fall comes over the cliff, half-a-mile from the town. There is a path there up into the forest."

"I know. I'll watch there to-night. Do you keep all your old haunts safe, of course, and send a couple of stout knaves to the mill, to watch the beach at the Deer Park End, on the chance; for your poet may be a true man, after all. But my heart's faith is, that this comes just to draw you off from some old beat of yours, upon a wild goose chase. If they shoot the miller by mistake, I suppose it don't much matter?"

"Marry, no.

> "'When a miller's knock'd on the head,
> The less of flour makes the more of bread.'"

"But why are you so ready to watch Freshwater to-night, Master Amyas?" asked old Mr. Cary, who had entered and quietly taken his place with the group.

"Because, sir, those who come, if they come, will never land at Mouthmill; if they are strangers, they dare not; and if they are bay's-men, they are too wise, as long as the westerly swell sets in. As for landing at the town, that would be too great a risk; but Freshwater is as lonely as the Bermudas; and they can beach a boat up under the cliff at all tides, and in all weathers, except north and nor'-west. I have done it many a time, when I was a boy."

"And give us the fruit of your experience now in your old age, eh? Well, you have a grey head on green shoulders, my lad; and I verily believe you are right. Who will you take with you to watch?"

"Sir," said Frank, "I will go with my brother: and that will be enough."

"Enough? He is big enough, and you brave enough, for ten; but still, the more the merrier."

"But the fewer, the better fare. If I might ask a first and last favour, worshipful sir," said Frank very earnestly, "you would grant me two things: that you would let none go to Freshwater but me and my brother; and that whatsoever we shall bring you back shall be kept as secret as the commonweal and your loyalty shall permit. I trust that we are not so unknown to you, or to others, that you can doubt for a moment but that whatsoever we may do will satisfy at once your honour and our own."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"My dear young gentleman, there is no need of so many courtier's words. I am your father's friend, and yours. And God forbid that a Cary—for I guess your drift—should ever wish to make a head or a heart ache."

Few more words were exchanged, till the two brothers were safe outside the house; and then—

"Amyas," said Frank, "that was a Devon man's handiwork, nevertheless; it was Eustace's handwriting."

"Impossible!"

"No, lad. I have been secretary to a prince, and learnt to interpret cipher, and to watch every pen-stroke; and, young as I am, I think that I am not easily deceived. Would God I were! Come on, lad; and strike no man hastily, lest thou cut off thine own flesh."

So forth the two went, along the park to the eastward, and past the head of the little wood-embosomed fishing-town, a steep stair of houses clinging to the cliff far below them, the bright slate roofs and white walls glittering in the moonlight; and on some half-mile farther, along the steep hill-side, fenced with oak wood down to the water's edge, by a narrow forest path, to a point where two glens meet and pour their streamlets over a cascade some hundred feet in height into the sea below. By the side of this waterfall a narrow path climbs upward from the beach; and here it was that the two brothers expected to meet the messenger.

Frank insisted on taking his station below Amyas. He said that he was certain that Eustace himself would make his appearance, and that he was more fit than Amyas to bring him to reason by parley; that if Amyas would keep watch some twenty yards above, the escape of the messenger would be impossible. Moreover, he was the elder brother, and the post of honour was his right. So Amyas obeyed him, after making him promise that if more than one man came up the path, he would let them pass him before he challenged, so that both might bring them to bay at the same time.

So Amyas took his station under a high marl bank, and, bedded in luxuriant crown-ferns, kept his eye steadily on Frank, who sat down on a little knoll of rock (where is now a garden on the cliff-edge) which parts the path and the dark chasm down which the stream rushes to its final leap over the cliff.

There Amyas sat a full half-hour, and glanced at whiles from Frank to look upon the scene around. Outside the south-west wind blew fresh and strong, and the moonlight danced upon a thousand crests of foam; but within the black jagged point which sheltered the town, the sea did but heave, in long oily swells of rolling silver, onward into the black shadow of the hills, within which the town

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and pier lay invisible, save where a twinkling light gave token of some lonely fisher's wife, watching the weary night through for the boat which would return with dawn. Here and there upon the sea, a black speck marked a herring-boat, drifting with its line of nets; and right off the mouth of the glen, Amyas saw, with a beating heart, a large two-masted vessel lying-to—that must be the "Portugal!" Eagerly he looked up the glen, and listened; but he heard nothing but the sweeping of the wind across the downs five hundred feet above, and the sough of the waterfall upon the rocks below; he saw nothing but the vast black sheets of oak-wood sloping up to the narrow blue sky above, and the broad bright hunter's moon, and the woodcocks, which, chuckling to each other, hawked to and fro, like swallows, between the tree-tops and the sky.

At last he heard a rustle of the fallen leaves; he shrank closer and closer into the darkness of the bank. Then swift light steps—not down the path, from above, but upward, from below; his heart beat quick and loud. And in another half-minute a man came in sight, within three yards of Frank's hiding-place.

Frank sprang out instantly. Amyas saw his bright blade glance in the clear October moonlight.

"Stand, in the queen's name!"

The man drew a pistol from under his cloak, and fired full in his face. Had it happened in these days of detonators, Frank's chance had been small; but to get a ponderous wheel-lock under weigh was a longer business, and before the fizzing of the flint had ceased, Frank had struck up the pistol with his rapier, and it exploded harmlessly over his head. The man instantly dashed the weapon in his face and closed.

The blow, luckily, did not take effect on that delicate forehead, but struck him on the shoulder: nevertheless, Frank staggered, and lost his guard, and before he could recover himself, Amyas saw a dagger gleam, and one, two, three blows fiercely repeated.

Mad with fury, he was with them in an instant. They were scuffling together so closely in the shade that he was afraid to use his sword point; but with the hilt he dealt a single blow full on the ruffian's cheek. It was enough; with a hideous shriek, the fellow rolled over at his feet, and Amyas set his foot on him, in act to run him through.

"Stop! stay!" almost screamed Frank; "it is Eustace! our cousin Eustace!" and he leant against a tree.

Amyas sprang towards him: but Frank waved him off.

"It is nothing—a scratch. He has papers: I am sure of it. Take them; and for God's sake let him go!"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Villain! give me your papers!" cried Amyas, setting his foot once more on the writhing Eustace, whose jaw was broken across.

"You struck me foully from behind," moaned he, his vanity and envy even then coming out, in that faint and foolish attempt to prove Amyas not so very much better a man.

"Hound, do you think that I dare not strike you in front? Give me your papers, letters, whatever Popish devilry you carry; or as I live, I will cut off your head, and take them myself, even if it cost me the shame of stripping your corpse. Give them up! Traitor, murderer! give them, I say!" And setting his foot on him afresh, he raised his sword.

Eustace was usually no craven: but he was cowed. Between agony and shame, he had no heart to resist. He shuddered; pulled a packet from his bosom, and threw it from him, murmuring, "I have not given it."

"Swear to me that these are all the papers which you have in cipher or out of cipher. Swear on your soul, or you die!"

Eustace swore.

"Tell me, who are your accomplices?"

"Never!" said Eustace. "Cruel! have you not degraded me enough already?" and the wretched young man burst into tears, and hid his bleeding face in his hands.

One hint of honour made Amyas as gentle as a lamb. He lifted Eustace up, and bade him run for his life.

"I am to owe my life, then, to you?"

"Not in the least; only to your being a Leigh. Go, or it will be worse for you!" And Eustace went; while Amyas, catching up the precious packet, hurried to Frank. He had fainted already, and his brother had to carry him as far as the park before he could find any of the other watchers. The blind, as far as they were concerned, was complete. They had heard and seen nothing. Whosoever had brought the packet had landed they knew not where; and so all returned to the Court, carrying Frank, who recovered gradually, having rather bruises than wounds; for his foe had struck wildly, and with a trembling hand.

Half-an-hour after, Amyas, Mr. Cary, and his son Will were in deep consultation over the following epistle, the only paper in the packet which was not in cipher:—

"✠ Dear Brother N. *S. in Ch^to. et Ecclesia.*

"This is to inform you and the friends of the cause, that S. Josephus has landed in Smerwick, with eight hundred valiant Crusaders, burning with holy zeal to imitate last year's martyrs of Carrigfolium, and to expiate their offences (which I fear may have been

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

many) by the propagation of our most holy faith. I have purified the fort (which they are strenuously rebuilding) with prayer and holy water, from the stain of heretical footsteps, and consecrated it afresh to the service of Heaven, as the first-fruits of the isle of saints; and having displayed the consecrated banner to the adoration of the faithful, have returned to Earl Desmond, that I may establish his faith, weak as yet, by reason of the allurements of this world. If you can do anything, do it quickly, for a great door and effectual is opened, and there are many adversaries. But be swift, for so do the poor lambs of the Church tremble at the fury of the heretics, that a hundred will flee before one Englishman.

"Your loving brother,

"N. S."

"Sir Richard must know of this before daybreak," cried old Cary. "Eight hundred men landed! Spaniards in Ireland? not a dog of them must go home again."

"Not a dog of them," answered Will.

"And we must have those Jesuits."

"What? Mr. Evans and Mr. Morgans? God help us—they are at my uncle's! Consider the honour of our family!"

"Judge for yourself, my dear boy," said old Mr. Cary gently: "would it not be rank treason to let these foxes escape, while we have this damning proof against them?"

"I will go myself, then."

"Why not? You may keep all straight, and Will shall go with you. Call a groom, Will, and get your horse saddled, and my Yorkshire grey. As for Frank, the ladies will see to him well enough, and glad enough, too, to have so fine a bird in their cage for a week or two."

"And my mother?"

"We'll send to her to-morrow by daybreak. Come, a stirrup cup to start with, hot and hot. Now, boots, cloaks, swords, a deep pull and a warm one, and away!"

And the jolly old man bustled them out of the house and into their saddles, under the broad bright winter's moon.

"You must make your pace, lads, or the moon will be down before you are over the moors." And so away they went.

Neither of them spoke for many a mile. Amyas, because his mind was fixed firmly on the one object of saving the honour of his house; and Will, because he was hesitating between Ireland and the wars, and Rose Salterne and love-making. At last he spoke suddenly.

"I'll go, Amyas."

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Whither?"

"To Ireland with you, old man. I have dragged my anchor at last."

"What anchor, my lad of parables?"

"See, here am I, a tall and gallant ship."

"Modest even if not true."

"Inclination, like an anchor, holds me tight."

"To the mud."

"Nay, to a bed of roses—not without their thorns. When up comes duty like a jolly breeze, blowing dead from the north-east, and as bitter and cross as a north-easter too, and tugs me away toward Ireland. I hold on by the rose-bed—any ground in a storm—till every strand is parted, and off I go, westward ho! to get my throat cut in a bog-hole with Amyas Leigh."

"Earnest, Will?"

"As I am a sinful man."

"Well done, young hawk of the White Cliff!"

And they rode on again in silence, Amyas in the meanwhile being not a little content (in spite of his late self-renunciation) to find that one of his rivals at least was going to raise the siege of the Rose garden for a few months, and withdraw his forces to the coast of Kerry.

As they went over Bursdon, Amyas pulled up suddenly.

"Did you not hear a horse's step on our left?"

"On our left—coming up from Welsford moor? Impossible at this time of night. It must have been a stag, or a sownder of wild swine: or may be only an old cow."

"It was the ring of iron, friend. Let us stand and watch."

Bursdon and Welsford were then, as now, a rolling range of dreary moors, unbroken by tor or tree, or anything save few and far between a world-old furze-bank which marked the common rights of some distant cattle farm, and crossed then, not as now, by a decent road, but by a rough confused track-way, the remnant of an old Roman road from Clovelly dikes to Launceston. To the left it trended down towards a lower range of moors, which form the watershed of the heads of Torridge; and thither the two young men peered down over the expanse of bog and furze, which glittered for miles beneath the moon, one sheet of frosted silver, in the heavy autumn dew.

"If any of Eustace's party are trying to get home from Freshwater, they might save a couple of miles by coming across Welsford, instead of going by the main track, as we have done," said Amyas.

"If any of his party are mad, they'll try it, and be stogged till the day of judgment. There are bogs in the bottom twenty feet deep. Plague on the fellow, whoever he is, he has dodged us! Look there!"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

It was too true. The unknown horseman had evidently dismounted below, and led his horse up on the other side of a long furze-dike; till coming to the point where it turned away again from his intended course, he appeared against the sky, in the act of leading his nag over a gap.

"Ride like the wind!" and both youths galloped across furze and heather at him; but ere they were within a hundred yards of him, he had leapt again on his horse, and was away far ahead.

"There is the dor to us, with a vengeance," cried Cary, putting in the spurs.

"It is but a lad; we shall never catch him."

"I'll try, though; and do you lumber after as you can, old heavy-sides;" and Cary pushed forward.

Amyas lost sight of him for ten minutes, and then came up with him dismounted, and feeling disconsolately at his horse's knees.

"Look for my head. It lies somewhere about among the furze there; and oh! I am as full of needles as ever was a pincushion."

"Are his knees broken?"

"I daren't look. No, I believe not. Come along, and make the best of a bad matter. The fellow is a mile ahead, and to the right, too."

"He is going for Moorwinstow, then; but where is my cousin?"

"Behind us, I dare say. We shall nab him at least."

"Cary, promise me that if we do, you will keep out of sight, and let me manage him."

"My boy, I only want Evan Morgans and Morgan Evans. He is but the cat's paw, and we are after the cats themselves."

And so they went on another dreary six miles, till the land trended downwards, showing dark glens and masses of woodland far below.

"Now, then, straight to Chapel, and stop the foxes' earth? Or through the King's Park to Stow, and get out Sir Richard's hounds, hue and cry, and queen's warrant in proper form?"

"Let us see Sir Richard first; and whatsoever he decides about my uncle, I will endure as a loyal subject must."

So they rode through the King's Park, while Sir Richard's colts came whinnying and staring round the intruders, and down through a rich woodland lane five hundred feet into the valley, till they could hear the brawling of the little trout-stream, and beyond, the everlasting thunder of the ocean surf.

Down through warm woods, all fragrant with dying autumn flowers, leaving far above the keen Atlantic breeze, into one of those delicious Western Combes, and so past the mill, and the little knot of flower-clad cottages. In the window of one of them a light was still burning. The two young men knew well whose window that

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

was; and both hearts beat fast; for Rose Salterne slept, or rather seemed to wake, in that chamber.

"Folks are late in Combe to-night," said Amyas, as carelessly as he could.

Cary looked earnestly at the window, and then sharply enough at Amyas; but Amyas was busy settling his stirrup; and Cary rode on, unconscious that every fibre in his companion's huge frame was trembling like his own.

"Muggy and close down here," said Amyas, who, in reality, was quite faint with his own inward struggles.

"We shall be at Stow gate in five minutes," said Cary, looking back and down longingly as his horse climbed the opposite hill; but a turn of the zigzag road hid the cottage, and the next thought was, how to effect an entrance into Stow at three in the morning without being eaten by the ban-dogs, who were already howling and growling at the sound of the horse-hoofs.

However, they got safely in, after much knocking and calling, through the postern-gate in the high west wall, into a mansion.

Sir Richard, in his long gown, was soon downstairs in the hall; the letter read, and the story told; but ere it was half finished—

"Anthony, call up a groom, and let him bring me a horse round. Gentlemen, if you will excuse me five minutes, I shall be at your service."

In half an hour they were down and up across the valley again, under the few low ashes clipt flat by the sea-breeze which stood round the lonely gate of Chapel.

"Mr. Cary, there is a back path across the downs to Marsland; go and guard that." Cary rode off; and Sir Richard, as he knocked loudly at the gate—

"Mr. Leigh, you see that I have consulted your honour, and that of your poor uncle, by adventuring thus alone. What will you have me do now, which may not be unfit for me and you?"

"Oh, sir!" said Amyas, with tears in his honest eyes, "you have shown yourself once more what you always have been—my dear and beloved master on earth, not second even to my admiral Sir Francis Drake."

"Or the queen, I hope," said Grenvile, smiling, "but *pocas palabras*. What will you do?"

"My wretched cousin, sir, may not have returned—and if I might watch for him on the main road—unless you want me with you."

"Richard Grenvile can walk alone, lad. But what will you do with your cousin?"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Send him out of the country, never to return; or if he refuses, run him through on the spot."

"Go, lad." And as he spoke, a sleepy voice asked inside the gate, "Who was there?"

"Sir Richard Grenvile. Open, in the queen's name?"

"Sir Richard? He is in bed, and be hanged to you. No honest folk come at this hour of night."

"Amyas!" shouted Sir Richard. Amyas rode back.

"Burst that gate for me, while I hold your horse."

Amyas leaped down, took up a rock from the roadside, such as Homer's heroes used to send at each other's heads, and in an instant the door was flat on the ground, and serving-man on his back inside, while Sir Richard quietly entering over it, like Una into the hut, told the fellow to get up and hold his horse for him (which the clod, who knew well enough that terrible voice, did without further murmurs), and then strode straight to the front door. It was already opened. The household had been up and about all along, or the noise at the entry had aroused them.

Sir Richard knocked, however, at the open door; and, to his astonishment, his knock was answered by Mr. Leigh himself, fully dressed, and candle in hand.

"Sir Richard Grenvile! What, sir! is this neighbourly, not to say gentle, to break into my house in the dead of night?"

"I broke your outer door, sir, because I was refused entrance when I asked in the queen's name. I knocked at your inner one, as I should have knocked at the poorest cottager's in the parish, because I found it open. You have two Jesuits here, sir! and here is the queen's warrant for apprehending them. I have signed it with my own hand, and, moreover, serve it now, with my own hand, in order to save you scandal—and it may be, worse. I must have these men, Mr. Leigh."

"My dear Sir Richard!——"

"I must have them, or I must search the house; and you would not put either yourself or me to so shameful a necessity?"

"My dear Sir Richard!——"

"Must I, then, ask you to stand back from your own doorway, my dear sir?" said Grenvile. And then changing his voice to that fearful lion's roar, for which he was famous, and which it seemed impossible that lips so delicate could utter, he thundered, "Knaves, behind there! Back!"

This was spoken to half-a-dozen grooms and serving-men, who, well armed, were clustered in the passage.

"What? swords out, you sons of cliff rabbits?" And in a moment,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Sir Richard's long blade flashed out also, and putting Mr. Leigh gently aside, as if he had been a child, he walked up to the party, who vanished right and left; having expected a cur dog, in the shape of a parish constable, and come upon a lion instead. They were stout fellows enough, no doubt, in a fair fight: but they had no stomach to be hanged in a row at Launceston Castle, after a preliminary running through the body by that redoubted admiral and most unpeaceful justice of the peace.

"And now, my dear Mr. Leigh," said Sir Richard, as blandly as ever, "where are my men? The night is cold; and you, as well as I, need to be in our beds."

"The men, Sir Richard—the Jesuits—they are not here, indeed."

"Not here, sir?"

"On the word of a gentleman, they left my house an hour ago. Believe me, sir, they did. I will swear to you if you need."

"I believe Mr. Leigh of Chapel's word without oaths. Whither are they gone?"

"Nay, sir—how can I tell? They are—they are, as I may say, fled, sir; escaped."

"With your connivance; at least with your son's. Where are they gone?"

"As I live, I do not know."

"Mr. Leigh—is this possible? Can you add untruth to that treason from the punishment of which I am trying to shield you?"

Poor Mr. Leigh burst into tears.

"Oh! my God! my God! is it come to this? Over and above having the fear and anxiety of keeping these black rascals in my house, and having to stop their villainous mouths every minute, for fear they should hang me and themselves, I am to be called a traitor and a liar in my old age, and that, too, by Richard Grenvile!" And the poor old man sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands, and then leaped up again.

"Bless my heart! Excuse me, Sir Richard—to sit down and leave you standing. 'Slife, sir, sorrow is making a hawbuck of me. Sit down, my dear sir! my worshipful sir! or rather come with me into my room, and hear a poor wretched man's story, for I swear before God the men are fled; and my poor boy Eustace is not home either, and the groom tells me that his devil of a cousin has broken his jaw for him; and his mother is all but mad this hour past. Good lack! good lack!"

"He nearly murdered his angel of a cousin, sir!" said Sir Richard severely.

"What, sir? They never told me."

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"He had stabbed his cousin Frank three times, sir, before Amyas, who is as noble a lad as walks God's earth, struck him down. And in defence of what, forsooth, did he play the ruffian and the swash-buckler, but to bring home to your house this letter, sir, which you shall hear at your leisure, the moment I have taken order about your priests." And walking out of the house he went round and called to Cary to come to him.

"The birds are flown, Will," whispered he. "There is but one chance for us, and that is Marsland Mouth. If they are trying to take boat there, you may be yet in time. If they are gone inland we can do nothing till we raise the hue and cry to-morrow."

And Will galloped off over the downs toward Marsland, while Sir Richard ceremoniously walked in again, and professed himself ready and happy to have the honour of an audience in Mr. Leigh's private chamber. And as we know pretty well already what was to be discussed therein, we had better go over to Marsland Mouth, and, if possible, arrive there before Will Cary: seeing that he arrived hot and swearing, half an hour too late.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VI

THE COOMBES OF THE FAR WEST

"Far, far from hence
The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay
Among the green Illyrian hills, and there
The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
And by the sea and in the brakes
The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
More virginal and sweet than ours."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

AND even such are those delightful glens, which cut the high table-land of the confines of Devon and Cornwall, and opening each through its gorge of down and rock, towards the boundless Western Ocean. Each is like the other, and each is like no other English scenery. Each has its upright walls, inland of rich oak-wood, nearer the sea of dark green furze, then of smooth turf, then of weird black cliffs which range out right and left far into the deep sea, in castles, spires, and wings of jagged iron-stone. Each has its narrow strip of fertile meadow, its crystal trout stream winding across and across from one hill-foot to the other; its grey stone mill, with the water sparkling and humming round the dripping wheel; its dark rock pools above the tide mark, where the salmon-trout gather in from their Atlantic wanderings, after each autumn flood: its ridge of blown sand, bright with golden trefoil and crimson lady's finger; its grey bank of polished pebbles, down which the stream rattles toward the sea below. Each has its black field of jagged shark's-tooth rock which paves the cove from side to side, streaked with here and there a pink line of shell sand, and laced with white foam from the eternal surge, stretching in parallel lines out to the westward, in strata set upright on edge, or tilted towards each other at strange angles by primeval earthquakes;—such is the "Mouth"—as those coves are called; and such the jaw of teeth which they display, one rasp of which would grind abroad the timbers of the stoutest ship. To landward, all richness, softness, and peace; to seaward, a waste and howling wilderness of rock and roller, barren to the fisherman, and hopeless to the shipwrecked mariner.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

In only one of these "Mouths" is a landing for boats, made possible by a long sea-wall of rock, which protects it from the rollers of the Atlantic; and that mouth is Marsland, the abode of the White Witch, Lucy Passmore; whither, as Sir Richard Grenvile rightly judged, the Jesuits were gone. But before the Jesuits came, two other persons were standing on that lonely beach, under the bright October moon, namely, Rose Salterne and the White Witch herself; for Rose, fevered with curiosity and superstition, and allured by the very wildness and possible danger of the spell, had kept her appointment; and, a few minutes before midnight, stood on the grey shingle beach with her counsellor.

"You be safe enough here to-night, Miss. My old man is snoring sound abed, and there's no other soul ever sets foot here o' nights, except it be the mermaids now and then. Goodness, Father, where's our boat? It ought to be up here on the pebbles."

Rose pointed to a strip of sand some forty yards nearer the sea, where the boat lay.

"Oh, the lazy old villain! he's been round the rocks after pollock this evening, and never taken the trouble to hale the boat up. I'll trounce him for it when I get home. I only hope he's made her fast where she is, that's all! He's more plague to me than ever my money will be. O deary me!"

And the goodwife bustled down toward the boat, with Rose behind her.

"Iss, 'tis fast, sure enough: and the oars aboard too! Well, I never! Oh, the lazy thief, to leave they here to be stole! I'll just sit in the boat, dear, and watch mun, while you go down to the say; for you must be all alone to yourself you know, or you'll see nothing. There's the looking-glass; now go, and dip your head three times, and mind you don't look to land or sea before you've said the words, and looked upon the glass. Now, be quick, it's just upon midnight."

And she coiled herself up in the boat, while Rose went faltering down the strip of sand, some twenty yards farther, and there slipping off her clothes, stood shivering and trembling for a moment before she entered the sea.

She was between two walls of rock: that on her left hand, some twenty feet high, hid her in deepest shade; that on her right, though much lower, took the whole blaze of the midnight moon. Great festoons of live and purple sea-weed hung from it, shading dark cracks and crevices, fit haunts for all the goblins of the sea. On her left hand, the peaks of the rock frowned down ghastly black; on her right hand, far aloft, the downs slept bright and cold.

The breeze had died away; not even a roller broke the perfect still-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons

Rose Salterne and the White Witch

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ness of the cove. The gulls were all asleep upon the ledges. Over all was a true autumn silence; a silence which may be hard. She stood awed, and listened in hope of a sound which might tell her that any living thing beside herself existed.

There was a faint bleat, as of a new-born lamb, high above her head; she started and looked up. Then a wail from the cliffs, as of a child in pain, answered by another from the opposite rocks. They were but the passing snipe, and the otter calling to her brood; but to her they were mysterious, supernatural goblins, come to answer to her call. Nevertheless, they only quickened her expectation; and the witch had told her not to fear them. If she performed the rite duly, nothing would harm her: but she could hear the beating of her own heart, as she stepped, mirror in hand, into the cold water, waded hastily, as far as she dare, and then stopped aghast.

She could see every shell which crawled on the white sand at her feet, every rock-fish which played in and out of the crannies, and stared at her with its broad bright eyes; while the great palmate oar-weeds which waved along the chasm, half-seen in the glimmering water, seemed to beckon her down with long brown hands to a grave amid their chilly bowers. She turned to flee: but she had gone too far now to retreat; hastily dipping her head three times, she hurried out to the sea-marge, and looking through her dripping locks at the magic mirror, pronounced the incantation—

"A maiden pure, here I stand,
Neither on sea, nor yet on land;
Angels watch me on either hand.
If you be landsman, come down the strand;
If you be sailor, come up the sand;
If you be angel, come from the sky,
Look in my glass, and pass me by;
Look in my glass, and go from the shore;
Leave me, but love me for evermore."

The incantation was hardly finished; her eyes were straining into the mirror, where, as may be supposed, nothing appeared but the sparkle of the drops from her own tresses, when she heard rattling down the pebbles the hasty feet of men and horses.

She darted into a cavern of the high rock, and hastily dressed herself: the steps held on right to the boat. Peeping out, half-dead with terror, she saw there four men, two of whom had just leaped from their horses, and turning them adrift, began to help the other two in running the boat down.

Whereon, out of the stern sheets arose, like an angry ghost, the portly figure of Lucy Passmore, and shrieked in shrillest treble—

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Eh! ye villains, ye roogs, what do ye want staling poor folks' boats by night like this?"

The whole party recoiled in terror, and one turned to run up the beach, shouting at the top of his voice, "'Tis a marmaiden—a marmaiden asleep in Willy Passmore's boat!"

"I wish it were any sich good luck," she could hear Will say; "'tis my wife, oh dear!" and he cowered down, expecting the hearty cuff which he received duly, as the White Witch, leaping out of the boat, dared any man to touch it, and thundered to her husband to go home to bed.

The wily dame, as Rose well guessed, was keeping up this delay chiefly to gain time for her pupil: but she had also more solid reasons for making the fight as hard as possible; for she, as well as Rose, had already discerned in the ungainly figure of one of the party the same suspicious Welsh gentleman, on whose calling she had divined long ago; and she was so loyal a subject as to hold in extreme horror her husband's meddling with such "Popish skulkers" (as she called the whole party roundly to their face)—unless on consideration of a very handsome sum of money. In vain Parsons thundered, Campian entreated, Mr. Leigh's groom swore, and her husband danced round in an agony of mingled fear and covetousness.

"No," she cried, "as I am an honest woman and loyal! This is why you left the boat down to the shoore, you old traitor, you, is it? Stand back, cowards! Will you strike a woman?"

This last speech (as usual) was merely indicative of her intention to strike the men; for, getting out one of the oars, she swung it round and round fiercely, and at last caught Father Parsons such a crack across the shins, that he retreated with a howl.

"Lucy, Lucy!" shrieked her husband, in shrillest Devon falsetto, "be you mazed? Be you mazed, lass? They promised me two gold nobles before I'd lend them the boot!"

"Tu?" shrieked the matron, with a tone of ineffable scorn. "And do yu call yourself a man?"

"Tu nobles! tu nobles!" shrieked he again, hopping about at oar's length.

"Tu? And would you sell your soul under ten?"

"Oh, if that is it," cried poor Campian, "give her ten, give her ten, brother Pars—Morgans, I mean; and take care of your shins. Certainly she is some Lamia, some Gorgon, some——"

"Take that, for your Lamys and Gorgons to an honest woman!" and in a moment poor Campian's thin legs were cut from under him. "Ten nobles, or I'll kep ye here till morning!" And the ten nobles were paid into her hand.

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

And now the boat, its dragon guardian being pacified, was run down to the sea, and close past the nook where poor little Rose was squeezing herself into the farthest and darkest corner, among wet seaweed and rough barnacles, holding her breath as they approached.

They passed her, and the boat's keel was already in the water; Lucy had followed them close, for reasons of her own, and perceiving close to the water's edge a dark cavern, cunningly surmised that it contained Rose, and planted her ample person right across its mouth, while she grumbled at her husband, the strangers, and above all at Mr. Leigh's groom, to whom she prophesied pretty plainly Launceston-gaol and the gallows.

But the night's adventures were not ended yet; for just as the boat was launched, a faint halloo was heard upon the beach, and a minute after, a horseman plunged down the pebbles, and along the sand, and pulling his horse up on its haunches close to the terrified group, dropped, rather than leaped, from the saddle.

The serving-man sprang upon the new-comer: and then recoiled—

"God forgive me, it's Mr. Eustace! Oh, dear sir, I took you for one of Sir Richard's men! Oh, sir, you're hurt!"

"A scratch, a scratch!" almost moaned Eustace. "Help me into the boat, Jack. Gentlemen, I must with you."

"Not with us, surely, my dear son, vagabonds upon the face of the earth?" said kind-hearted Campian.

"With you, for ever. All is over here. Whither God and the cause lead"—and he staggered toward the boat.

As he passed Rose, she saw his ghastly bleeding face, half bound up with a handkerchief, which could not conceal the convulsions of rage, shame, and despair, which twisted it from all its usual beauty. His eyes glared wildly round—and once, right into the cavern. They met hers, so full, and keen, and dreadful, that forgetting she was utterly invisible, the terrified girl was on the point of shrieking aloud.

"He has overlooked me!" said she, shuddering to herself, as she recollected his threat of yesterday.

"Who has wounded you?" asked Campian.

"My cousin—Amyas—and taken the letter!"

"The Devil take him, then!" cried Parsons, stamping up and down upon the sand in fury.

"Ay, curse him—you may! I dare not! He saved me—sent me here!"—and with a groan, he made an effort to enter the boat.

"Oh, my dear young gentleman," cried Lucy Passmore, her woman's heart bursting out at the sight of pain, "you must not goo forth with a grane wound like to that. Do ye let me just bind mun up—do ye now!" and she advanced.

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Eustace thrust her back.

"No! better bear it. I deserve it—devils! I deserve it! On board, or we shall all be lost—William Cary is close behind me!"

And at that news the boat was thrust into the sea, faster than ever it went before, and only in time; for it was just round the rocks, and out of sight, when the rattle of Cary's horsehoofs was heard above.

"That rascal of Mr. Leigh's will catch it now, the Popish villain!" said Lucy Passmore. "And now then, my dear life, us be better to goo hoom and get you sommat warm. You'm mortal cold, I rackon, by now. I was cruel fear'd for ye: but I kept mun off clever, didn't I, now?"

"I wish—I wish I had not seen Mr. Leigh's face!"

"Iss, dreadful, weren't it, poor young soul; a sad night for his poor mother!"

"Lucy, I can't get his face out of my mind. I'm sure he overlooked me."

"O then! who ever heard the like o' that? When young gentlemen do overlook young ladies, tain't thikketheor aways, I knoo. Never you think on it."

"But I can't help thinking of it," said Rose. "Stop. Shall we go home yet? Where's that servant?"

"Never mind, he waint see us, here under the hill. I'd much sooner to know where my old man was. I've a sort of a forecasting in my inwards, like, as I always has when aught's gwain to happen, as though I shuldn't zee mun again, like, I have, Miss. Well—he was a bedient old soul, after all, he was. Goodness, Father! and all this while us have forgot the very thing us come about! Who did you see?"

"Only that face!" said Rose, shuddering.

"Not in the glass, maid? Say then, not in the glass?"

"Would to heaven it had been! Lucy, what if he were the man I was fated to——"

"He? Why, he's a praste, a Popish praste, that can't marry if he would, poor wratch."

"He is none; and I have cause enough to know it!" And, for want of a better confidant, Rose poured into the willing ears of her companion the whole story of yesterday's meeting.

"He's a pretty wooer!" said Lucy at last contemptuously. "Be a brave maid, then, be a brave maid, and never terrify yourself with his unlucky face. It's because there was none here worthy of ye, that ye seed none in glass. Maybe he's to be a foreigner, from over seas, and that's why his sperit was so long a coming. A duke, or a prince to the least, I'll warrant, he'll be, that carries off the Rose of Bideford."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

But in spite of all the good dame's flattery, Rose could not wipe that fierce face away from her eyeballs. She reached home safely, and crept to bed undiscovered: and when the next morning, as was to be expected, found her laid up with something very like a fever, from excitement, terror, and cold, the phantom grew stronger and stronger before her, and it required all her woman's tact and self-restraint to avoid betraying by her exclamations what had happened on that fantastic night. After a fortnight's weakness, however, she recovered and went back to Bideford: but ere she arrived there, Amyas was far across the seas on his way to Milford Haven, as shall be told in the ensuing chapters.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VII

THE TRUE AND TRAGICAL HISTORY OF MR. JOHN OXENHAM OF PLYMOUTH

"The fair breese blew, the white foam flew;
The furrow follow'd free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea."

The Ancient Mariner.

ABOUT eleven o'clock the following forenoon Sir Richard and Amyas were pacing up and down the terraced garden at the old house at Stow, talking long, earnestly, and slow; for they both knew that the turning point of the boy's life was come.

"Yes," said Sir Richard, after Amyas, in his blunt simple way, had told him the whole story about Rose Salterne and his brother,—"yes, sweet lad, thou hast chosen the better part, thou and thy brother also, and it shall not be taken from you. Only be strong, lad, and trust in God that He will make a man of you."

"I do trust," said Amyas. "And I may go to Ireland to-morrow?"

"You shall sail in the 'Mary' for Milford Haven, with these letters to Winter. If the wind serves, you may bid the master drop down the river to-night, and be off; for we must lose no time."

"Winter?" said Amyas. "He is no friend of mine, since he left Drake and us so cowardly at the Straits of Magellan."

"Duty must not wait for private quarrels, even though they be just ones, lad: but he will not be your general. When you come to the Marshal, or the Lord Deputy, give either of them this letter, and they will set you work,—and hard work too, I warrant."

"I want nothing better."

"Right, lad; the best reward for having wrought well already, is to have more to do; and he that has been faithful over a few things, must find his account in being made ruler over many things. That is the true and heroical rest, which only is worthy of gentlemen and sons of God. Do thy work, lad; and leave thy soul to the care of Him who is just and merciful in this, that He rewards every man according to his work. Is there respect of persons with God? Now come in, and take the letters, and to horse. And if I hear of thee dead

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

there at Smerwick fort, with all thy wounds in front, I shall weep for thy mother, lad; but I shall have never a sigh for thee."

But that day's events were not over yet. For, when they went down into the house, the first person whom they met was the old steward, in search of his master.

"There is a manner of roog, Sir Richard, a masterless man, at the door; a very forward fellow, and must needs speak with you."

"A masterless man? He had better not to speak to me, unless he is in love with gaol and gallows."

"Well, your worship," said the steward, "I expect that is what he does want, for he swears he will not leave the gate till he has seen you."

"What, has the fellow a tail or horns?"

"Massy no: but I be afeard of treason for your honour; for the fellow is pinked all over in heathen patterns, and as brown as a filbert; and a tall roog, a very strong roog, sir, and a foreigner, too, and a mighty staff with him. I expect him to be a manner of Jesuit, or wild Irish, sir; and indeed the grooms have no stomach to handle him, nor the dogs neither, or he had been under the pump before now, for they that saw him coming up the hill swear that he had fire coming out of his mouth."

"Fire out of his mouth?" said Sir Richard. "The men are drunk."

"Pinked all over? He must be a sailor," said Amyas; "let me out and see the fellow, and if he needs putting forth——"

"Why, I dare say he is not so big but what he will go into thy pocket. So go, lad, while I finish my writing."

Amyas went out, and at the back door, leaning on his staff, stood a tall, raw-boned, ragged man, "pinked all over," as the steward had said.

"Hillo, lad!" quoth Amyas. "Before we come to talk, put down thy staff, man, and speak like a Christian, if thou be one."

"I am a Christian, though I look like a heathen; and no rogue, though a masterless man, alas! But I want nothing, deserving nothing, and only ask to speak with Sir Richard, before I go on my way."

There was something stately and yet humble about the man's tone and manner which attracted Amyas, and he asked more gently where he was going and whence he came.

"From Padstow Port, sir, to Clovelly town, to see my old mother, if indeed she be yet alive, which God knoweth."

"Clovally man! why didn't thee say thee was Clovally man?" asked all the grooms at once, to whom a West countryman was of course a brother. The old steward asked—

"What's thy mother's name, then?"

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Susan Yeo."

"What, that lived under the archway?" asked a groom.

"Lived?" said the man.

"Iss, sure; her died three days since, so we heard, poor soul."

The man stood quite silent and unmoved for a minute or two; and then said quietly to himself, in Spanish, "That which is, is best."

"You speak Spanish?" asked Amyas, more and more interested.

"I had need to do so, young sir; I have been five years in the Spanish Main, and only set foot on shore two days ago; and if you will let me have speech of Sir Richard, I will tell him that at which both the ears of him that heareth it shall tingle; and if not, I can but go on to Mr. Cary of Clovelly, if he be yet alive, and there disburthen my soul; but I would sooner have spoken with one that is a mariner like to myself."

"And you shall," said Amyas. "Steward, we will have this man in; for all his rags, he is a man of wit." And he led him in.

"I only hope he ben't one of those Popish murderers," said the old steward, keeping at a safe distance from him as they entered the hall.

"Popish, old master? There's little fear of my being that. Look here!" And drawing back his rags, he showed a ghastly scar, which encircled his wrist and wound round and up his forearm.

"I got that on the rack," said he quietly, "in the Inquisition at Lima."

"By heaven, you are a brave fellow!" said Amyas. "Come along straight to Sir Richard's room."

So in they went, where Sir Richard sat in his library among books, despatches, state-papers, and warrants.

"Hillo, Amyas, have you bound the wild man already, and brought him in to swear allegiance?"

But before Amyas could answer, the man looked earnestly on him—"Amyas?" said he; "is that your name, sir?"

"Amyas Leigh is my name, at your service, good fellow."

"Of Burrough by Bideford?"

"Why then? What do you know of me?"

"Oh sir, sir! young brains and happy ones have short memories; but old and sad brains too too long ones often! Do you mind one that was with Mr. Oxenham, sir? A swearing reprobate he was, God forgive him, and hath forgiven him too, for His dear Son's sake—one, sir, that gave you a horn, a toy with a chart on it?"

"Soul alive!" cried Amyas, catching him by the hand; "and are you he? The horn? why I have it still, and will keep it to my dying day, too. But where is Mr. Oxenham?"

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Yes, my good fellow, where is Mr. Oxenham?" asked Sir Richard, rising. "You are somewhat over-hasty in welcoming your old acquaintance, Amyas, before we had heard from him whether he can give honest account of himself and of his captain. For there is more than one way by which sailors may come home without their captains. God grant that there may have been no such traitorous dealing here."

"Sir Richard Grenvile, if I had been a guilty man to my noble captain, as I have to God, I had not come here this day to you, from whom villainy has never found favour, nor ever will; for I know your conditions well, sir; and trust in the Lord, that if you will be pleased to hear me, you shall know mine."

"Steady, steady, good fellow! tell us the story without more bush-beating."

"Well, sirs, I went, as Mr. Leigh knows, to Nombre de Dios, with Mr. Drake and Mr. Oxenham, in 1572, where what we saw and did, your worship, I suppose, knows as well as I; and there was, as you've heard may be, a covenant between Mr. Oxenham and Mr. Drake to sail the South Seas together, which they made, your worship, in my hearing, under the tree over Panama. For when Mr. Drake came down from the tree, after seeing the sea afar off, Mr. Oxenham and I went up and saw it too; and when we came down, Drake says, 'John, I have made a vow to God that I will sail that water, if I live and God gives me grace;' which he had done, sir, upon his bended knees, like a godly man as he always was, and would I had taken after him! and Mr. O. says, 'I am with you, Drake, to live or die, and I think I know some one there already, so we shall not be quite among strangers;' and laughed withal. Well, sirs, that voyage, as you know, never came off, because Captain Drake was fighting in Ireland; so Mr. Oxenham, who must be up and doing, sailed for himself, and I who loved him, God knows, like a brother (saving the difference in our ranks), helped him to get the crew together, and went as his gunner. That was in 1575; as you know, he had a 140-ton ship, sir, and seventy men out of Plymouth and Fowey and Dartmouth, and many of them old hands of Drake's, besides a dozen or so from Bideford that I picked up when I saw young Master here."

"Thank God that you did not pick me up too."

"Amen, amen!" said Yeo, clasping his hands on his breast. "Those seventy men, sir,—seventy gallant men, sir, with every one of them an immortal soul within him,—where are they now? Gone, like the spray!" And he swept his hands abroad with a wild and solemn gesture. "And their blood is upon my head!"

Both Sir Richard and Amyas began to suspect that the man's brain was not altogether sound.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"God forbid, my man," said the knight kindly.

"Thirteen men I persuaded to join in Bideford town, beside William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And what if it be said to me at the day of judgment, 'Salvation Yeo, where are those fourteen men whom thou didst tempt to their deaths by covetousness and lust of gold?' Not that I was alone in my sin, if the truth must be told. For all the way out Mr. Oxenham was making loud speech, after his pleasant way, that he would make all their fortunes, and take them to such a Paradise, that they should have no lust to come home again. And I—God knows why—for every one boast of his would make two, even to lying and empty fables, and anything to keep up the men's hearts. For I had really persuaded myself that we should all find treasures beyond Solomon his temple, and Mr. Oxenham would surely show us how to conquer some golden city or discover some island all made of precious stones. And one day, as the Captain and I were talking after our fashion, I said, 'And you shall be our king, Captain.' To which he, 'If I be, I shall not be long without a queen, and that no Indian one either.' And after that he often jested about the Spanish ladies, saying that none could show us the way to their hearts better than he. Which speeches I took no account of then, sirs: but after I minded them, whether I would or not. Well, sirs, we came to the shore of New Spain, near the old place—that's Nombre de Dios; and there Mr. Oxenham went ashore into the woods with a boat's crew, to find the negroes who helped us three years before. Those are the Cimaroons, gentles, negro slaves who have fled from those devils incarnate, their Spanish masters, and live wild, like the beasts that perish; men of great stature, sirs, and fierce as wolves in the onslaught, but poor jabbering mazed fellows if they be but a bit dismayed.

"Well, sirs, after three days the Captain comes back, looking heavy enough, and says, 'We played our trick once too often, when we played it once. There is no chance of stopping another reço (that is, a mule-train, sirs) now. The Cimaroons say that since our last visit they never move without plenty of soldiers, two hundred shot at least. Therefore,' he said, 'my gallants, we must either return empty-handed from this, the very market and treasury of the whole Indies, or do such a deed as men never did before, which I shall like all the better for that very reason.' And we, asking his meaning, 'Why,' he said, 'if Drake will not sail the South Seas, we will;' adding profanely that Drake was like Moses, who beheld the promised land afar; but he was Joshua, who would enter into it, and smite the inhabitants thereof. And, for our confirmation, showed me and the rest the superscription of a letter: and said, 'How I came by this is none of

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

your business: but I have had it in my bosom ever since I left Plymouth; and I tell you now, what I forebore to tell you at first, that the South Seas have been my mark all along! such news have I herein of plate-ships, and gold-ships, and what not, which will come up from Quito and Lima this very month, all which, with the pearls of the Gulf of Panama, and other wealth unspeakable, will be ours, if we have but true English hearts within us.'

"At which, gentles, we were like madmen for lust of that gold, and cheerfully undertook a toil incredible; for first we run our ship aground in a great wood which grew in the very sea itself, and then took out her masts, and covered her in boughs, with her four cast pieces of great ordnance (of which more hereafter), and leaving no man in her, started for the South Seas across the neck of Panama, with two small pieces of ordnance and our culverins, and good store of victuals, and with us six of those negroes for a guide, and so twelve leagues to a river which runs into the South Sea.

"And there, having cut wood, we made a pinnace (and work enough we had at it) of five-and-forty foot in the keel; and in her down the stream, and to the Isle of Pearls in the Gulf of Panama."

"Into the South Sea? Impossible!" said Sir Richard. "Have a care what you say, my man; for there is that about you which would make me sorry to find you out a liar."

"Impossible or not, liar or none, we went there, sir."

"Question him, Amyas, lest he turn out to have been beforehand with you."

The man looked inquiringly at Amyas, who said—

"Well, my man, of the Gulf of Panama I cannot ask you, for I never was inside it, but what other parts of the coast do you know?"

"Every inch, sir, from Cabo San Francisco to Lima; more is my sorrow, for I was a galley-slave there for two years and more."

"You know Lima?"

"I was there three times, worshipful gentlemen, and the last was February come two years; and there I helped lade a great plate-ship, the 'Cacafuogo,' they called her."

Amyas started. Sir Richard nodded to him gently to be silent, and then—

"And what became of her, my lad?"

"God knows, who knows all, and the devil who freighted her. I broke prison six weeks afterwards, and never heard but that she got safe into Panama."

"You never heard, then, that she was taken?"

"Taken, your worships? Who should take her?"

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Why should not a good English ship take her as well as another?" said Amyas.

"Lord love you, sir; yes faith, if they had but been there. Many's the time that I thought to myself, as we went alongside, 'Oh, if Captain Drake was but here, well to windward, and our old crew of the Dragon!' Ask your pardon, gentles: but how is Captain Drake, if I may make so bold?"

Neither could hold out longer.

"Fellow, fellow!" cried Sir Richard, springing up, "either thou art the cunningest liar that ever earned a halter, or thou hast done a deed the like of which never man adventured. Dost thou not know that Captain Drake took that 'Cacafuogo' and all her freight, in February come two years?"

"Captain Drake! God forgive me, sir; but—Captain Drake in the South Seas? He saw them, sir, from the tree-top over Panama, when I was with him, and I too; but sailed them, sir? — sailed them?"

"Yes, and round the world too," said Amyas, "and I with him; and took that very 'Cacafuogo' off Cape San Francisco, as she came up to Panama."

One glance at the man's face was enough to prove his sincerity. The great stern Anabaptist, who had not winced at the news of his mother's death, dropt right on his knees on the floor and burst into violent sobs.

"Glory to God! Glory to God! O Lord, I thank thee! Captain Drake in the South Seas! The blood of thy innocents avenged, O Lord! The spoiler spoiled, and the proud robbed; and all they whose hands were mighty have found nothing. Glory, glory! Oh, tell me, sir, did she fight?"

"We gave her three pieces of ordnance only, and struck down her mizen mast, and then boarded sword in hand, but never had need to strike a blow; and before we left her, one of her own boys had changed her name, and rechristened her the 'Calcaplata.' "

"Glory, glory! Cowards they are, as I told them. I told them they never could stand the Devon mastiffs, and well they flogged me for saying it; but they could not stop my mouth. O sir, tell me, did you get the ship that came up after her?"

"What was that?"

"A long race-ship, sir, from Guayaquil, with an old gentleman on board,—Don Francisco de Xararte was his name, and by token, he had a gold falcon hanging to a chain round his neck, and a green stone in the breast of it. I saw it as we rowed him aboard. O tell me, sir, tell me for the love of God, did you take that ship?"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"We did take that ship, and the jewel too, and her Majesty has it at this very hour."

"Then tell me, sir," said he slowly, as if he dreaded an answer; "tell me, sir, and oh, try and mind—was there a little maid aboard with the old gentleman?"

"A little maid? Let me think. No; I saw none."

The man settled his features again sadly.

"I thought not. I never saw her come aboard. Still I hoped, like; I hoped. Alackaday! God help me, Salvation Yeo!"

"What have you to do with this little maid, then, good fellow!" asked Grenvile.

"Ah, sir, before I tell you that, I must go back and finish the story of Mr. Oxenham, if you will believe me enough to hear it."

"I do believe thee, good fellow, and honour thee too."

"Then, sir, I can speak with a free tongue. Where was I?"

"Where was he, Amyas."

"At the Isle of Pearls."

"Well, sirs both—To the Island of Pearls we came, we and some of the negroes. We found many huts, and Indians fishing for pearls, and also a fair house, with porches; but no Spaniard therein, save one man; at which Mr. Oxenham was like a man transported, and fell on that Spaniard, crying, 'Perro, where is your mistress? Where is the bark from Lima?' To which he boldly enough, 'What was his mistress to the Englishman?' But Mr. O. threatened to twine a cord round his head till his eyes burst out; and the Spaniard, being terrified, said that the ship from Lima was expected in a fortnight's time. So for ten days we lay quiet, letting neither negro nor Spaniard leave the island, and took good store of pearls, feeding sumptuously on wild cattle and hogs until the tenth day, when there came by a small bark; her we took, and found her from Quito, and on board 60,000 pezos of gold and other store. With which if we had been content, gentlemen, all had gone well. And some were willing to go back at once, having both treasure and pearls in plenty; but Mr. O., he waxed right mad, and swore to slay any one who made that motion again, assuring us that the Lima ship of which he had news was far greater and richer, and would make princes of us all; which bark came in sight on the sixteenth day, and was taken without shot or slaughter. The taking of which bark, I verily believe, was the ruin of every mother's son of us."

And being asked why, he answered, "First, because of the discontent which was bred thereby; for on board was found no gold, but only 100,000 pezos of silver."

Moreover, the weight of that silver was afterwards a hindrance

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

to them, and a fresh cause of discontent. "So that it had been well for us, sirs, if we had left it behind, as Mr. Drake left his three years before, and carried away the gold only. In which I do see the evident hand of God, and His just punishment for our greediness of gain; who caused Mr. Oxenham, by whom we had hoped to attain a great wealth, to be a snare to us, and a cause of utter ruin."

"Do you think, then," said Sir Richard, "that Mr. Oxenham deceived you wilfully?"

"I will never believe that, sir: Mr. Oxenham had his private reasons for waiting for that ship, for the sake of one on board, whose face would that he had never seen, though he saw it then, as I fear, not for the first time by many a one." And so was silent.

"Come," said both his hearers, "you have brought us thus far, and you must go on."

"Gentlemen, I have concealed this matter from all men, both on my voyage home and since; and I hope you will be secret in the matter, for the honour of my noble Captain, and the comfort of his friends who are alive. For I think it shame to publish harm of a gallant gentleman, and of an ancient and worshipful family, and to me a true and kind Captain, when what is done cannot be undone, and least said soonest mended. Neither now would I have spoken of it, but that I was inwardly moved to it for the sake of that young gentleman there (looking at Amyas), that he might be warned in time of God's wrath against the crying sin of adultery, and flee youthful lusts, which war against the soul."

"Thou hast done wisely enough, then," said Sir Richard; "and look to it if I do not reward thee: but the young gentleman here, thank God, needs no such warnings, having got them already both by precept and example, where thou and poor Oxenham might have had them also."

"You mean Captain Drake, your worship?"

"I do, sirrah. If all men were as clean livers as he, the world would be spared one half the tears that are shed in it."

"Amen, sir. At least there would have been many a tear spared to us and ours. For—as all must out—in that bark of Lima he took a young lady, as fair as the sunshine, sir, and seemingly above two or three-and-twenty years of age, having with her a tall young lad of sixteen, and a little girl, a marvellously pretty child, of about a six or seven. And the lady herself was of an excellent beauty, like a whale's tooth for whiteness, so that all the crew wondered at her, and could not be satisfied with looking upon her. And, gentlemen, this was strange, that the lady seemed in no wise afraid or mournful, and bid her little girl fear nought, as did also Mr. Oxenham: but the

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

lad kept a very sour countenance, and the more when he saw the lady and Mr. Oxenham speaking together apart.

"Well, sir, after this good luck we were minded to have gone straight back to the river whence we came, and so home to England with all speed. But Mr. Oxenham persuaded us to return to the island, and get a few more pearls. As we were about to go ashore, I, going down into the cabin of the prize, saw Mr. Oxenham and that lady making great cheer; and being bidden by Mr. Oxenham to fetch out the lady's mails, and take them ashore, heard how the two laughed together about the old ape of Panama (which ape, or devil, rather, I saw afterwards to my cost).

"Mr. Oxenham bade take the little maid ashore. And she asking whether the lad should be taken ashore, he answered, 'Let the spawn of Beelzebub stay on shore.' After which I, coming on deck again, stumbled over that very lad, upon the hatchway ladder, who bore so black and despiteful a face, that I verily believe he had overheard their speech. So he went ashore with the lady to that house, whence for three days he never came forth, and would have remained longer, but that the men, finding but few pearls, and being wearied with the watching and warding so many Spaniards, and negroes came clamouring to him, and swore that they would return or leave him there with the lady. So all went on board the pinnace again, every one in ill humour with the Captain, and he with them.

"Well, sirs, we came back to the mouth of the river, and there began our troubles; for the negroes, as soon as we were on shore, called on Mr. Oxenham to fulfil the bargain he had made with them. And now it came out (what few of us knew till then) that he had agreed with the Cimaroons that they should have all the prisoners which were taken, save the gold. And he, though loth, was about to give up the Spaniards to them, near forty in all, supposing that they intended to use them as slaves: but as we all stood talking, one of the Spaniards, understanding what was forward, threw himself on his knees before Mr. Oxenham, and shrieking like a madman, entreated not to be given up into the hands of 'those devils,' said he, 'who never take a Spanish prisoner, but they roast him alive, and then eat his heart among them.' We asked the negroes if this was possible? To which some answered, What was that to us? But others said boldly that it was true enough, and that revenge made the best sauce, and nothing was so sweet as Spanish blood. At this we were like men amazed for very horror; and Mr. Oxenham said, 'You incarnate fiends, if you had taken these fellows for slaves, it had been fair enough; for you were once slaves to them, and I doubt not cruelly used enough: but as for this abomination,' says he, 'God do so to me, and more also, if I let one of them

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

come into your murderous hands.' So there was a great quarrel; but Mr. Oxenham stoutly bade put the prisoners on board the ships again, and so let the prizes go, taking with him only the treasure, and the lady and the little maid. And so the lad went on to Panama, God's wrath having gone out against us.

"Well, sirs, the Cimaroons after that went away from us, swearing revenge (for which we cared little enough), and we rowed up the river to a place where three streams met, and then up the least of the three, some four days' journey, till it grew all shoal and swift; and there we hauled the pinnace upon the sands, and Mr. Oxenham asked the men whether they were willing to carry the gold and silver over the mountains to the North Sea. Some of them at first were loth to do it, and I and others advised that we should leave the plate behind, and take the gold only, for it would have cost us three or four journeys at the least. But Mr. Oxenham promised every man 100 pezos of silver over and above his wages, which made them content enough, and we were all to start the morrow morning. But, sirs, that night, as God had ordained, came a mishap by some rash speeches of Mr. Oxenham's, which threw all abroad again; for when we had carried the treasure about half a league inland, and hidden it away in a house which we made of boughs, Mr. O. being always full of that his fair lady, spoke to me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade, and a few more, saying, 'That we had no need to return to England, seeing that we were already in the very garden of Eden, and wanted for nothing, but could live without labour or toil; and that it was better, when we got over to the North Sea, to go and seek out some fair island, and there dwell in joy and pleasure till our lives' end. And we two,' he said, 'will be king and queen, and you, whom I can trust, my officers; and for servants we will have the Indians, who, I warrant, will be more fain to serve honest and merry masters like us than those Spanish devils,' and much more of the like; which words I liked well. But the rest, sirs, took the matter all across, and began murmuring against the Captain, saying that poor honest mariners like them had always the labour and the pain, while he took his delight with his lady; and that they would have at least one merry night before they were slain by the Cimaroons, or eaten by panthers and lagartos; and so got out of the pinnace two great skins of Canary wine, which were taken in the Lima prize, and sat themselves down to drink. Moreover, there were in the pinnace a great sight of hens, which came from the same prize, by which Mr. O. set great store, keeping them for the lady and the little maid; and falling upon these, the men began to blaspheme, saying, 'What a plague had the Captain to fill the boat with dirty live lumber for that giglet's sake? They

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

had a better right to a good supper than ever she had, and might fast awhile to cool her hot blood;' and so cooked and ate those hens, plucking them on board the pinnace, and letting the feathers fall into the stream. But when William Penberthy, my good comrade, saw the feathers floating away down, he asked them if they were mad, to lay a trail by which the Spaniards would surely track them out, if they came after them, as without doubt they would. But they laughed him to scorn, and said that no Spanish cur dared follow on the heels of true English mastiffs as they were, and other boastful speeches; and at last, being heated with wine, began afresh to murmur at the Captain, saying that he meant to defraud them of the plate which he had promised, and others that he meant to desert them in a strange land, and so forth, till Mr. O., hearing the hubbub, came out to them from the house, when they reviled him foully, swearing that he meant to cheat them; and one Edward Stiles, a Wapping man, mad with drink, dared to say that he was a fool for not giving up the prisoners to the negroes, and drawing his sword, ran upon the Captain: for which I was about to strike him through the body; but the Captain caught him such a buffet behind the ear, that he fell down stark dead, and all the rest stood amazed. Then Mr. Oxenham called out, 'All honest men who know me, and can trust me, stand by your lawful Captain against these ruffians.' Whereon, sirs, I, and Penberthy my good comrade, and four Plymouth men, who had sailed with Mr. O. in Mr. Drake's ship, and knew his trusty and valiant conditions, came over to him, and swore before God to stand by him and the lady. Then said Mr. O. to the rest, 'Will you carry this treasure, knaves, or will you not? Give me an answer here.' And they refused, unless he would, before they started, give each man his share. So Mr. O. waxed very mad, and swore that he would never be served by men who did not trust him, and so went in again; and that night was spent in great disquiet, I and those five others keeping watch about the house of boughs till the rest fell asleep, in their drink. And next morning, when the wine was gone out of them, Mr. O. asked them whether they would go to the hills with him, and find those negroes, and persuade them after all to carry the treasure. To which they agreed after awhile, thinking that so they should save themselves labour; and went off with Mr. Oxenham, leaving us six who had stood by him to watch the lady and the treasure, after he had taken an oath of us that we would deal justly and obediently by him and by her, which God knows, gentlemen, we did. So he parted with much weeping and wailing of the lady, and was gone seven days; and all that time we kept that lady faithfully and honestly, bringing her the best we could find, and serving her upon our bended knees, both for her

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

admirable beauty, and for her excellent conditions, for she was certainly of some noble kin, and courteous, and without fear, as if she had been a very princess. But she kept always within the house, which the little maid (God bless her!) did not, but soon learned to play with us and we with her, so that we made great cheer of her, gentlemen, sailor fashion. And she was wonderful sharp, sirs, was the little maid, and picked up her English from us fast, calling us jolly mariners, which I doubt but she has forgotten by now, but I hope in God it be not so;" and therewith the good fellow began wiping his eyes.

"Well, sir, on the seventh day we six were down by the pinnace clearing her out, and the little maid with us gathering of flowers, and William Penberthy fishing on the bank, about a hundred yards below, when on a sudden he leaps up and runs toward us, crying, 'Here come our hens' feathers back again with a vengeance!' and so bade catch up the little maid, and run for the house, for the Spaniards were upon us.

"Which was too true; for before we could win the house, there were full eighty shot at our heels, but could not overtake us; nevertheless, some of them stopping, fixed their calivers and let fly, killing one of the Plymouth men. The rest of us escaped to the house, and catching up the lady, fled forth, not knowing whither we went, while the Spaniards, finding the house and treasure, pursued us no farther.

"For all that day and the next we wandered in great misery, the lady weeping continually, and calling for Mr. Oxenham most piteously, and the little maid likewise, till with much ado we found the track of our comrades, and went up that as best we might: but at nightfall, by good hap, we met the whole crew coming back, and with them 200 negroes or more, with bows and arrows. At which sight was great joy and embracing, and it was a strange thing, sirs, to see the lady; for before that she was altogether desperate: and yet she was now a very lioness, as soon as she had got her love again; and prayed him earnestly not to care for that gold, but to go forward to the North Sea, vowing to him in my hearing that she cared no more for poverty than she had cared for her good name, and then—they being a little apart from the rest—pointed round to the green forest, and said in Spanish—which I suppose they knew not that I understood,—'See, all round us is Paradise. Were it not enough for you and me to stay here for ever, and let them take the gold or leave it as they will?'

"But he answered—'No, no, my life. It stands upon my honour both to fulfil my bond with these men, whom I have brought hither, and to take home to England at least something of my prize as a proof of my own valour.'

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Then she smiling—'Am I not prize enough, and proof enough?' But he would not be so tempted, and turning to us offered us the half of that treasure, if we would go back with him, and rescue it from the Spaniard. At which the lady wept and wailed much; but I took upon myself to comfort her, though I was but a simple mariner, telling her that it stood upon Mr. Oxenham's honour; and that in England nothing was esteemed so foul as cowardice, or breaking word and troth betwixt man and man; and that better was it for him to die seven times by the Spaniards, than to face at home the scorn of all who sailed the seas. So, after much ado, back they went again; I and Penberthy, and the three Plymouth men which escaped from the pinnace, keeping the lady as before.

"Well, sirs, we waited five days, having made houses of boughs as before, without hearing aught; and on the sixth we saw coming afar off Mr. Oxenham, and with him fifteen or twenty men, who seemed very weary and wounded; and when we looked for the rest to be behind them, behold there were no more; at which, sirs, as you may well think, our hearts sank within us.

"And Mr. O., coming nearer, cried out afar off, 'All is lost!' and so walked into the camp without a word, and sat himself down at the foot of a great tree with his head between his hands, speaking neither to the lady nor to any one.

"But the men were full of curses against the negroes, for their cowardice and treachery; and told me, and I believe truly, how they forced the enemy awaiting them in a little copse of great trees, well fortified with barricades of boughs. And how Mr. Oxenham divided both the English and the negroes into two bands, that one might attack the enemy in front, and the other in the rear, and so set upon them with great fury, and would have utterly driven them out, but that the negroes, who had come on with much howling, like very wild beasts, being suddenly scared with the shot and noise of the ordnance, turned and fled, leaving the Englishmen alone; in which evil strait Mr. O. fought like a very Guy of Warwick, and I verily believe every man of them likewise; for there was none of them who had not his shrewd scratch to show. And indeed, Mr. Oxenham's party had once gotten within the barricades, but the Spaniards being sheltered by the tree trunks, shot at them with such advantage, that they had several slain, and seven more taken alive, only among the roots of that tree. So seeing that they could prevail nothing, having little but their pikes and swords, they were fain to give back; though Mr. Oxenham swore he would not stir a foot, and making at the Spanish Captain was borne down with pikes, and hardly pulled away by some, who at last reminding him of his lady, persuaded him to come away with

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the rest. Whereon the other party fled also; but what had become of them they knew not, for they took another way. And so they miserably drew off, having lost in men eleven killed and seven taken alive, besides five of the rascal negroes who were killed before they had time to run; and there was an end of the matter.

"But the next day, gentlemen, in came some five-and-twenty more, being the wreck of the other party, and with them a few negroes; and these last proved themselves no honester men than they were brave, for there being great misery among us English, and every one of us straggling where he could to get food, every day one or more who went out never came back, and that caused a suspicion that the negroes had betrayed them to the Spaniards, or may be, slain and eaten them. So these fellows being upbraided, with that altogether left us, telling us boldly, that if they had eaten our fellows, we owed them a debt instead of the Spanish prisoners; and we, in great terror and hunger, went forward and over the mountains till we came to a little river which ran northward, which seemed to lead into the Northern Sea; and there Mr. O.—who, sirs, I will say, after his first rage was over, behaved himself all through like a valiant and skilful commander—bade us cut down trees and make canoes, to go down to the sea; which we began to do with great labour and little profit, hewing down trees with our swords, and burning them out with fire, which, after much labour, we kindled; but as we were a-burning out of the first tree, and cutting down of another, a great party of negroes came upon us, and with much friendly show bade us flee for our lives, for the Spaniards were upon us in great force. And so we were up and away again, hardly able to drag our legs after us for hunger and weariness, and the broiling heat. And some were taken (God help them!) and some fled with the negroes, of whom what became God alone knoweth; but eight or ten held on with the Captain, among whom was I, and fled downward toward the sea for one day; but afterwards finding, by the noise in the woods, that the Spaniards were on the track of us, we turned up again toward the inland, and coming to a cliff, climbed up over it, drawing up the lady and the little maid with cords of liana (which hang from those trees as honeysuckle does here, but exceeding stout and long, even to fifty fathoms); and so breaking the track, hoped to be out of the way of the enemy.

"By which, nevertheless, we only increased our misery. For two fell from that cliff, as men asleep for very weariness, and miserably broke their bones; and others, whether by the great toil, or sunstrokes, or eating of strange berries, fell sick of fluxes and fevers; where was no drop of water, but rock of pumice stone as bare as the back of my hand, and full, moreover, of great cracks, black and without bottom,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

over which we had not strength to lift the sick, but were fain to leave them there aloft, in the sunshine, like Dives in his torments, crying aloud for a drop of water to cool their tongues; and every man a great stinking vulture or two sitting by him, like an ugly black fiend out of the pit, waiting till the poor soul should depart out of the corpse: but nothing could avail, and for the dear life we must down again and into the woods, or be burned up alive upon those rocks.

"So getting down the slope on the farther side, we came into the woods once more, and there wandered for many days, I know not how many; our shoes being gone, and our clothes all rent off us with brakes and briars. And yet how the lady endured all was a marvel to see; for she went barefoot many days, and for clothes was fain to wrap herself in Mr. Oxenham's cloak; while the little maid went all but naked: but ever she looked still on Mr. Oxenham, and seemed to take no care as long as he was by, comforting and cheering us all with pleasant words; yea, and once sitting down under a great fig-tree, sang us all to sleep with very sweet music; yet, waking about midnight, I saw her sitting still upright, weeping very bitterly.

"And so, to make few words of a sad matter, at last there were none left but Mr. Oxenham and the lady and the little maid, together with me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And Mr. Oxenham always led the lady, and Penberthy and I carried the little maid. And for food we had fruits, such as we could find, and water we got from the leaves of certain lilies which grew on the bark of trees, which I found by seeing the monkeys drink at them; and the little maid called them monkey-cups, and asked for them continually, making me climb for them. And so we wandered on, and upward into very high mountains, always fearing lest the Spaniards should track us with dogs, which made the lady leap up often in her sleep, crying that the bloodhounds were upon her. And it befell upon a day, that we came into a great wood of ferns (which grew not on the ground like ours, but on stems as big as a pinnace's mast, and the bark of them was like a fine meshed net, very strange to see), where was very pleasant shade, cool and green; and there, gentlemen, we sat down on a bank of moss, like folk desperate and foredone, and every one looked the other in the face for a long while. After which I took off the bark of those ferns, for I must needs be doing something to drive away thought, and began to plait slippers for the little maid.

"And as I was plaiting, Mr. Oxenham said, 'What hinders us from dying like men, every man falling on his own sword?' To which I answered that I dare not; for a wise woman had prophesied of me, sirs, that I should die at sea, and yet neither by water nor battle, where-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

fore I did not think right to meddle with the Lord's purposes. And William Penberthy said, 'That he would sell his life, and that dear, but never give it away.' But the lady said, 'Ah, how gladly would I die!' Then Mr. Oxenham fell into a very great weeping, a weakness I never saw him in before or since; and with many tears besought me never to desert that little maid, whatever might befall; which I promised, swearing to it like a heathen, but would, if I had been able, have kept it like a Christian. But on a sudden there was a great cry in the wood, and coming through the trees on all sides Spanish arquebusiers, a hundred strong at least, and negroes with them, who bade us stand or they would shoot. William Penberthy leapt up, crying, 'Treason!' and running upon the nearest negro ran him through, and then another, and then falling on the Spaniards, fought manfully till he was borne down with pikes, and so died. But I, seeing nothing better to do, sat still and finished my plaiting. And so we were all taken, and I and Mr. Oxenham bound with cords; but the soldiers made a litter for the lady and child, by commandment of Señor Diego de Trees, their commander, a very courteous gentleman.

"Well, sirs, we were brought down to the place where the house of boughs had been by the river-side; there we went over in boats, and found waiting for us certain Spanish gentlemen, and among others one old and ill-favoured man, grey-bearded and bent, in a suit of black velvet, who seemed to be a great man among them. And if you will believe me, Mr. Leigh, that was none other than the old man with the gold falcon at his breast, Don Francisco Xararte by name, whom you found aboard of the Lima ship. And had you known as much of him as I do, or as Mr. Oxenham did either, you had cut him up for shark's bait, or ever you let the cur ashore again.

"Well, sirs, as soon as the lady came to shore, that old man ran upon her sword in hand, and would have slain her, but some there held him back. On which he turned to, and reviled with every foul and spiteful word which he could think of, so that some there bade him be silent for shame; and Mr. Oxenham said, 'It is worthy of you, Don Francisco, thus to trumpet abroad your own disgrace. Did I not tell you years ago that you were a cur; and are you not proving my words for me?'

"He answered, 'English dog, would to Heaven I had never seen you!'

"And Mr. Oxenham, 'Spanish ape, would to Heaven that I had sent my dagger through your herring-ribs when you passed me behind St. Ildegonde's church, eight years last Easter-eve.' At which the old man turned pale, and then began again to upbraid the lady,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

vowing that he would have her burnt alive, and other devilish words, to which she answered at last—

"'Would that you had burnt me alive on my wedding morning, and spared me eight years of misery!' And he—

"'Misery? Hear the witch, Señors! Oh, have I not pampered her, heaped with jewels, clothes, coaches, what not? The saints alone know what I have spent on her. What more would she have of me?'

"'Fool!' she said again, after a while, 'I will waste no words upon you. I would have driven a dagger to your heart months ago, but that I was loth to set you free so soon from your gout and your rheumatism. Selfish and stupid, know when you bought my body from my parents, you did not buy my soul! Farewell, my love, my life! and farewell, Señors! May you be more merciful to your daughters than my parents were to me!' And so, catching a dagger from the girdle of one of the soldiers, smote herself to the heart, and fell dead before them all.

"At which Mr. Oxenham smiled, and said, 'That was worthy of us both. If you will unbind my hands, Señors, I shall be most happy to copy so fair a schoolmistress.'

"And all the while, gentlemen, he still kept his eyes fixed on the lady's corpse, till he was led away with me.

"And now, sirs, what befell me after that matters little; for I never saw Captain Oxenham again, nor ever shall in this life."

"He was hanged, then?"

"So I heard for certain the next year, and with him the gunner and sundry more: but some were given away for slaves to the Spaniards, and may be alive now, unless, like me, they have fallen into the cruel clutches of the Inquisition. For the Inquisition now, gentlemen, claims the bodies and souls of all heretics all over the world (as the devils told me with their own lips, when I pleaded that I was no Spanish subject); and none that it catches, whether peaceable merchants, or shipwrecked mariners, but must turn or burn."

"But how did you get into the Inquisition?"

"Why, sir, after we were taken, we set forth to go down the river again; and the old Don took the little maid with him in one boat (and bitterly she screeched at parting from us, and from the poor dead corpse), and Mr. Oxenham with Don Diego de Trees in another, and I in a third. And from the Spaniards I learnt that we were to be taken down to Lima, to the Viceroy; but that the old man lived hard by Panama, and was going straight back to Panama forthwith with the little maid. But they said, 'It will be well for her if she ever gets there. And when I heard that, seeing that there was nothing but

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

death before me, I made up my mind to escape; and the very first night, sirs, by God's help, I did it, and went southward away into the forest, avoiding the tracks of the Cimaroons, till I came to an Indian town. And there, gentlemen, I got more mercy from heathens than ever I had from Christians; for when they found that I was no Spaniard, they fed me and gave me a house, and a wife (and a good wife she was to me), and painted me all over in patterns, as you see; and because I had some knowledge of surgery and blood-letting, I rose to great honour among them, though they taught me more of simples than ever I taught them of surgery. So I lived with them merrily enough, being a very heathen like them, or indeed worse, for they worshipped their Xemes, but I nothing. And in time my wife bare me a child; in looking at whose sweet face, gentlemen, I forgot Mr. Oxenham and his little maid, and my oath, ay, and my native land also. Wherefore it was taken from me, else had I lived and died as the beasts which perish; for one night, after we were all lain down, came a noise outside the town, and I starting up saw armed men and calivers shining in the moonlight, and heard one read in Spanish, with a loud voice, some fool's sermon, after their custom when they hunt the poor Indians, how God had given to St. Peter the dominion of the whole earth, and St. Peter again the Indies to the Catholic king; wherefore, if they would all be baptized and serve the Spaniard, they should have some monkey's allowance or other of more kicks than pence; and if not, then have at them with fire and sword; but I dare say your worships know that devilish trick of theirs better than I."

"I know it, man. Go on."

"Well—no sooner were the words spoken than, without waiting to hear what the poor innocents within would answer (though that mattered little, for they understood not one word of it), what do the villains but let fly right into the town with their calivers, and then rush in, sword in hand, killing pell-mell all they met, one of which shots, gentlemen, passing through the doorway, and close by me, struck my poor wife to the heart, that she never spoke word more. I, catching up the babe from her breast, tried to run: but when I saw the town full of them, and their dogs with them in leashes, which was yet worse, I knew all was lost, and sat down again by the corpse with the babe on my knees, waiting the end, like one stunned and in a dream; for now I thought God from whom I had fled had surely found me out, as He did Jonah, and the punishment of all my sins was come. Well, gentlemen, they dragged me out, and all the young men and women, and chained us together by the neck; and one, catching the pretty babe out of my arms, calls for water and a priest, and no sooner was it christened than, catching the babe by the heels, he

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

dashed out its brains,—oh! gentlemen, gentlemen!—against the ground, as if it had been a kitten; and so did they to several more innocents that night, after they had christened them; saying it was best for them to go to heaven while they were still sure thereof; and so marched us all for slaves, leaving the old folk and the wounded to die at leisure. But when morning came, and they knew by my skin that I was no Indian, and by my speech that I was no Spaniard, they began threatening me with torments, till I confessed that I was an Englishman, and one of Oxenham's crew. At that says the leader, 'Then you shall to Lima, to hang by the side of your Captain the pirate; by which I first knew that my poor Captain was certainly gone; but alas for me! the priest steps in and claims me for his booty, calling me Lutheran, heretic, and enemy of God; and so, to make short a sad story, to the Inquisition at Carthagena I went, where what I suffered, gentlemen, were as disgustful for you to hear, as unmanly for me to complain of; but so it was, that being twice racked, and having endured the water-torment as best I could, I was put to the scarpines, whereof I am, as you see, somewhat lame of one leg to this day. At which I could abide no more, and so, wretch that I am! denied my God, in hope to save my life; which indeed I did, but little it profited me; for though I had turned to their superstition, I must have two hundred stripes in the public place, and then go to the galleys for seven years. And there, gentlemen, ofttimes I thought that it had been better for me to have been burned at once and for all: but you know as well as I what a floating hell of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, stripes and toil, is every one of those accursed craft. In which hell, nevertheless, gentlemen, I found the road to heaven,—I had almost said heaven itself. For it fell out, by God's mercy, that my next comrade was an Englishman like myself, a young man of Bristol, who, as he told me, had been some manner of factor on board poor Captain Barker's ship, and had been a preacher here in England. And, oh! Sir Richard Grenvile, if that man had done for you what he did for me, you would never say a word against those who serve the same Lord, because they don't altogether hold with you. For from time to time, sir, seeing me altogether despairing and furious, like a wild beast in a pit, he set before me in secret earnestly the sweet promise of God in Christ,—who says, 'Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,'—till all that past sinful life of mine looked like a dream when one awaketh, and I forgot all my bodily miseries in the misery of my soul, so did I loathe and hate myself for my rebellion against that loving God who had chosen me before the foundation of the world, and come to seek and save me

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

when I was lost; and falling into very despair at the burden of my heinous sins, knew no peace until I gained sweet assurance that my Lord had hanged my burden upon His cross, and washed my sinful soul in His most sinless blood, Amen!"

And Sir Richard Grenvile said Amen also.

"But, gentlemen, if that sweet youth won a soul to Christ, he paid as dearly for it as ever did saint of God. For after a three or four months, there came one night to the barranco at Lima, where we were kept when on shore, three black devils of the Holy Office, and carried him off without a word, only saying to me, 'Look that your turn come not next, for we hear that you have had much talk with the villain.' But they left me aboard the galley for a few months more (that was a whole voyage to Panama and back), in daily dread lest I should find myself in their cruel claws again. But when we came back to Lima, the officers came on board again, and said to me, 'That heretic has confessed nought against you, so we will leave you for this time: but because you have been seen talking with him so much, and the Holy Office suspects your conversion to be but a rotten one, you are adjudged to the galleys for the rest of your life in perpetual servitude.'"

"But what became of him?" asked Amyas.

"He was burned, sir, a day or two before we got to Lima, and five others with him at the same stake, of whom two were Englishmen; old comrades of mine, as I guess."

"Ah!" said Amyas, "we heard of that when we were off Lima. If we had had our fleet with us (as we should have had if it had not been for John Winter) we would have gone in and rescued them all, poor wretches, and sacked the town to boot: but what could we do with one ship?"

"Well, gentlemen, when I heard that I must end my days in that galley, I was for awhile like a madman: but in a day or two there came over me, I know not how, a full assurance of salvation, both for this life and the life to come, such as I had never had before; and it was revealed to me (I speak the truth, gentlemen, before Heaven) that now I had been tried to the uttermost, and that my deliverance was at hand.

"And all the way up to Panama (that was after we had laden the 'Cucafuogo') I cast in my mind how to escape, and found no way: but just as I was beginning to lose heart again, a door was opened by the Lord's own hand; for (I know not why) we were marched across from Panama to Nombre, which had never happened before, and there put all together into a great barranco close by the quay-side, shackled, as is the fashion, to one long bar that ran the whole length

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

of the house. And the very first night that we were there, I, looking out of the window, spied, lying close abroad of the quay, a good-sized caravel well armed and just loading for sea; and the land breeze blew off very strong, so that the sailors were laying out a fresh warp to hold her to the shore. And it came into my mind, that if we were aboard of her, we should be at sea in five minutes; and looking at the quay, I saw all the soldiers who had guarded us scattered about drinking and gambling, and some going into taverns to refresh themselves after their journey. That was just at sundown; and half an hour after, in comes the gaoler to take a last look at us for the night, and his keys at his girdle. Whereon, sirs (whether by madness, or whether by the spirit which gave Samson strength to rend the lion), I rose against him as he passed me, without forethought or treachery of any kind, chained though I was, caught him by the head, and threw him there and then against the wall, that he never spoke word after; and then with his keys freed myself and every soul in that room, and bid them follow me, vowing to kill any man who disobeyed my commands. They followed, as men astounded and leaping out of night into day, and death into life, and so aboard that caravel and out of the harbour, with no more hurt than a few chance-shot from the soldiers on the quay. But my tale has been over-long already, gentlemen——"

"Go on till midnight, my good fellow, if you will."

"Well, sirs, they chose me for captain, and a certain Genoese for lieutenant, and away to go. I would fain have gone ashore after all, and back to Panama to hear news of the little maid: but that would have been but a fool's errand. Some wanted to turn pirates: but I, and the Genoese too, who was a prudent man, though an evil one, persuaded them to run for England and get employment in the Netherland wars, assuring them that there would be no safety in the Spanish Main, when once our escape got wind. And the more part being of one mind, for England we sailed, eastward toward the Canaries. In which voyage what we endured (being taken by long calms), by scurvy, calentures, hunger, and thirst, no tongue can tell; till of a hundred and forty poor wretches a hundred and ten were dead. And last of all, when we thought ourselves safe, we were wrecked by south-westers on the coast of Brittany, near to Cape Race, from which but nine souls of us came ashore with their lives; and so to Brest, where I found a Flushinger who carried me to Falmouth; and so ends my tale, in which if I have said one word more or less than truth, I can wish myself no worse, than to have it all to undergo a second time."

And his voice, as he finished, sank from very weariness of soul; while Sir Richard sat opposite him in silence, his elbows on the table,

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

his cheeks on his doubled fists, looking him through and through with kindling eyes. No one spoke for several minutes; and then—

"Amyas, you have heard this story. You believe it?"

"Every word, sir, or I should not have the heart of a Christian man."

"So do I. Anthony!"

The butler entered.

"Take this man to the buttery; clothe him comfortably, and feed him with the best; and bid the knaves treat him as if he were their own father."

But Yeo lingered.

"If I might be so bold as to ask your worship a favour?——"

"Anything in reason, my brave fellow."

"If your worship could put me in the way of another adventure to the Indies?"

"Another! Hast not had enough of the Spaniards already?"

"Never enough, sir, while one of the idolatrous tyrants is left unhanged," said he, with a right bitter smile. "But it's not for that only, sir: but my little maid—Oh, sir! my little maid, that I swore to Mr. Oxenham to look to, and never saw her from that day to this! I must find her, sir, or I shall go mad, I believe. Not a night but she comes and calls to me in my dreams, the poor darling; and not a morning but when I wake there is my oath lying on my soul, like a great black cloud, and I no nearer the keeping of it. I told that poor young minister of it when we were in the galleys together; and he said oaths were oaths, and keep it I must; and keep it I will, sir, if you'll but help me."

"Have patience, man. God will take as good care of thy little maid as ever thou wilt. There are no adventures to the Indies forward now: but if you want to fight Spaniards, here is a gentleman will show you the way. Amyas, take him with you to Ireland. If he has learnt half the lesson God has set him to learn, he ought to stand you in good stead."

Yeo looked eagerly at the young giant.

"Will you have me, sir? There's few matters I can't turn my hand to: and maybe you'll be going to the Indies again, some day, eh? and take me with you? I'd serve your turn well, though I say it, either for gunner or for pilot. I know every stone and tree from Nombre to Panama, and all the ports of both the seas. You'll never be content, I'll warrant, till you've had another turn along the gold coasts, will you now?"

Amyas laughed and nodded; and the bargain was concluded.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

So out went Yeo to eat, and Amyas having received his despatches, got ready for his journey home.

"Go the short way over the moors, lad; and send back Cary's grey when you can. You must not lose an hour, but be ready to sail the moment the wind goes about."

So they started: but as Amyas was getting into the saddle, he saw that there was some stir among the servants who seemed to keep carefully out of Yeo's way, whispering and nodding mysteriously; and just as his foot was in the stirrup, Anthony, the old butler, plucked him back.

"Dear father alive, Mr. Amyas!" whispered he: "and you ben't going by the moor road all alone with that chap?"

"Why not, then? I'm too big for him to eat, I reckon."

"Oh, Mr. Amyas! he's not right, I tell you; not company for a Christian—to go forth with creatures as has flames of fire in their inwards."

"Tale of a tub."

"Tale of a Christian, sir. There was two boys pig-minding, seed him at it down the hill—and saw the flames come out of the mouth of mun, and the smoke out of mun's nose like a vire-drake. Oh, sir! and to go with he after dark over moor!"

And the old man wrung his hands, while Amyas, bursting with laughter, rode off down the park, with the unconscious Yeo at his stirrup.

They had gone ten miles or more; the day began to draw in, and the western wind to sweep more cold and cheerless every moment, when Amyas, knowing that there was not an inn hard by around for many a mile ahead, took a pull at a certain bottle which Lady Grenvile had put into his holster, and then offered Yeo a pull also.

He declined; he had meat and drink too about him, Heaven be praised!

"Meat and drink? Fall to, then, man, and don't stand on manners."

Whereon Yeo, seeing an old decayed willow by a brook, went to it, and took therefrom some touchwood, to which he set a light with his knife and a stone, while Amyas watched, a little puzzled and startled, as Yeo's fiery reputation came into his mind. Was he really a Salamander-Sprite, and going to warm his inside by a meal of burning tinder? But now Yeo, in his solemn methodical way, pulled out of his bosom a brown leaf, and began rolling a piece of it up neatly to the size of his little finger; and then, putting the one end into his mouth and the other on the tinder, sucked at it till it was a-light; and

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

drinking down the smoke, began puffing it out again at his nostrils with a grunt of deepest satisfaction.

On which Amyas burst into a loud laugh, and cried—

"Why, no wonder they said you breathed fire! Is not that the Indians' tobacco?"

"Yea, verily, Heaven be praised! but did you never see it before?"

"Never, though we heard talk of it along the coast; but we took it for one more Spanish lie. Humph—well, live and learn!"

"Ah, sir, no lie, but a blessed truth, as I can tell you, who have ere now gone in the strength of this weed three days and nights without eating; and therefore, sir, the Indians always carry it with them on their war-parties: and no wonder; for when all things were made none was made better than this; to be a lone man's companion, a bachelor's friend, a hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a wakeful man's sleep, and a chilly man's fire, sir."

The truth of which eulogium Amyas tested in after years, as shall be fully set forth in due place and time.

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER VIII

HOW THE NOBLE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ROSE WAS FOUNDED

"It is virtue, yea virtue, gentlemen, that maketh gentlemen; that maketh the poor rich, the base-born noble, the subject a sovereign, the deformed beautiful, the sick whole, the weak strong, the most miserable most happy. There are two principal and peculiar gifts in the nature of man, knowledge and reason; the one commandeth, and the other obeyeth: these things neither the whirling wheel of fortune can change, neither the deceitful cavillings of worldlings separate, neither sickness abate, neither age abolish."—LILLY's *Euphues*, 1586.

IT now falls to my lot to write of the foundation of that most chivalrous brotherhood of the Rose, which after a few years made itself not only famous in its native county of Devon, but formidable, as will be related hereafter, both in Ireland and in the Netherlands, in the Spanish Main and the heart of South America.

Amyas could not sail the next day, or the day after; for the south-wester freshened, and blew three parts of a gale dead into the bay. So having got the Mary Grenvile down the river into Appledore pool, ready to start with the first shift of wind, he went quietly home; and when his mother started on a pillion behind the old serving-man to ride to Clovelly, where Frank lay wounded, he went in with her as far as Bideford, and there met, coming down the High Street, a procession of horsemen headed by Will Cary, who, clad cap-à-pié in shining armour, sword on thigh, and helmet at saddle-bow, looked as gallant a young gentleman as ever Bideford dames peeped at from door and window. Behind him, upon country ponies, came four or five stout serving-men, carrying his lances and baggage, and their own long-bows, swords, and bucklers; and behind all, in a horse-litter, to Mrs. Leigh's great joy, Master Frank himself. He deposed that his wounds were only flesh-wounds, the dagger having turned against his ribs; that he must see the last of his brother; and that with her good leave he would not come home to Burrough, but take up his abode with Cary in the Ship Tavern, close to the Bridge-foot. This he did forthwith, and settling himself on a couch, held his levee there in state, mobbed by all the gossips of the town, not without white fibs as to who had brought him into that sorry plight.

But in the meanwhile, he and Amyas concocted a scheme, which was put into effect the next day (being market-day); first by the inn-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

keeper, who began under Amyas's orders a bustle of roasting, boiling, and frying, unparalleled in the annals of the Ship Tavern; and next by Amyas himself, who, going out into the market, invited as many of his old schoolfellows, one by one apart, as Frank had pointed out to him, to a merry supper, by which crafty scheme, in came each of Rose Salterne's gentle admirers, and found himself, to his considerable disgust, seated at the same table with six rivals, to none of whom had he spoken for the last six months. However, all were too well bred to let the Leighs discern as much; and they (though, of course, they knew all) settled their guests, Frank on his couch lying at the head of the table, and Amyas taking the bottom: and contrived, by filling all mouths with good things, to save them the pain of speaking to each other till the wine should have loosened their tongues and warmed their hearts. In the meanwhile both Amyas and Frank, ignoring the silence of their guests with the most provoking good-humour, chatted, and joked, and told stories, and made themselves such good company, that Will Cary, who always found merriment infectious, melted into a jest, and then into another, and finding good-humour far more pleasant than bad, tried to make Mr. Coffin laugh, and only made him bow, and to make Mr. Fortescue laugh, and only made him frown; and unabashed nevertheless, began playing his light artillery upon the waiters, till he drove them out of the room bursting with laughter.

So far so good. And when the cloth was drawn, and sack and sugar became the order of the day, and "Queen and Bible" had been duly drunk with all the honours, Frank tried a fresh move, and—

"I have a toast, gentlemen—here it is. 'The gentlemen of the Irish wars; and may Ireland never be without a St. Leger to stand by a Fortescue, a Fortescue to stand by a St. Leger, and a Chichester to stand by both.'"

Which toast of course involved the drinking the healths of the three representatives of those families, and their returning thanks, and paying a compliment each to the other's house: and so the ice cracked a little further; and young Fortescue proposed the health of "Amyas Leigh, and all bold mariners;" to which Amyas replied by a few blunt kindly words, "that he wished to know no better fortune than to sail round the world again with the present company as fellow-adventurers, and so give the Spaniards another taste of the men of Devon."

"And now, gentlemen," said Frank, who saw that it was the fit moment for the grand assault which he had planned all along; "let me give you a health which none of you, I dare say, will refuse to drink with heart and soul as well as with lips;—the health of one

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

whom beauty and virtue have so ennobled, that in their light the shadow of lowly birth is unseen. Gentlemen, your hearts, I doubt not, have already bid you, as my unworthy lips do now, to drink 'The Rose of Torridge.'"

If the Rose of Torridge herself had walked into the room she could hardly have caused more blank astonishment than Frank's bold speech. Every guest turned red, and pale, and red again, and looked at the other as much as to say, "What right has any one but I to drink her? Lift your glass, and I will dash it out of your hand;" but Frank, with sweet effrontery, drank "The health of the Rose of Torridge, and a double health to that worthy gentleman, whoever he may be, whom she is fated to honour with her love!"

"Well done, cunning Frank Leigh!" cried blunt Will Cary; "none of us dare quarrel with you now, however much we may sulk at each other. For there's none of us, I'll warrant, but thinks that she likes him the best of all; and so we are bound to believe that you have drunk our healths all round."

"And so I have: and what better thing can you do, gentlemen, than to drink each other's healths all round likewise: and so show yourselves true gentlemen, true Christians, ay, and true lovers? Why should we not make this common love to her, whom I am unworthy to name, the sacrament of a common love to each other? Why should we not follow the heroical examples of those ancient knights, who having but one grief, one desire, one goddess, held that one heart was enough to contain that grief, to nourish that desire, to worship that divinity; and so uniting themselves in friendship till they became but one soul in two bodies, lived only for each other in living only for her, vowing as faithful worshippers to abide by her decision, to find their own bliss in hers, and whomsoever she esteemed most worthy of her love, to esteem most worthy also, and count themselves, by that her choice, the bounden servants of him whom their mistress had condescended to advance to the dignity of her master?—as I (not without hope that I shall be outdone in generous strife) do here promise to be the faithful friend, and, to my ability, the hearty servant, of him who shall be honoured with the love of the Rose of Torridge."

He ceased, and there was a pause.

At last young Fortescue spoke.

"I may be paying you a left-handed compliment, sir: but it seems to me that you are so likely, in that case, to become your own faithful friend and hearty servant (even if you have not borne off the bell already while we have been asleep), that the bargain is hardly fair between such a gay Italianist and us country swains."

"You undervalue yourself and your country, my dear sir. But

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

set your mind at rest. I know no more of that lady's mind than you do: nor shall I know. For the sake of my own peace, I have made a vow neither to see her, nor to hear, if possible, tidings of her, till three full years are past. Dixi?"

Mr. Coffin rose.

"Gentlemen, I may submit to be outdone by Mr. Leigh in eloquence, but not in generosity; if he leaves these parts for three years, I do so also."

"And go in charity with all mankind," said Cary. "Give us your hand, old fellow. If you are a Coffin, you were sawn out of no wishy-washy elm-board, but right heart-of-oak. I am going, too, as Amyas here can tell, to Ireland away, to cool my hot liver in a bog, like a Jack-hare in March. Come, give us thy neif, and let us part in peace. I was minded to have fought thee this day——"

"I should have been most happy, sir," said Coffin.

—"But now I am all love and charity to mankind. Can I have the pleasure of begging pardon of the world in general, and thee in particular? Does any one wish to pull my nose; send me an errand; make me lend him five pounds; ay, make me buy a horse of him, which will be as good as giving him ten? Come along! Join hands all round, and swear eternal friendship, as brothers of the sacred order of the—of what? Frank Leigh? Open thy mouth, Daniel, and christen us!"

"The Rose!" said Frank quietly, seeing that his new love-philtre was working well, and determined to strike while the iron was hot, and carry the matter too far to carry it back again.

"The Rose!" cried Cary, catching hold of Coffin's hand with his right, and Fortescue's with his left. "Come, Mr. Coffin! Bend, sturdy oak! 'Woe to the stiffnecked and stout-hearted!' says Scripture."

And somehow or other, whether it was Frank's chivalrous speech, or Cary's fun, or Amyas's good wine, or the nobleness which lies in every young lad's heart, if their elders will take the trouble to call it out, the whole party came in to terms one by one, shook hands all round, and vowed on the hilt of Amyas's sword to make fools of themselves no more, at least by jealousy: but to stand by each other and by their lady-love, and neither grudge nor grumble, let her dance with, flirt with, or marry with whom she would; and in order that the honour of their peerless dame, and the brotherhood which was named after her, might be spread through all lands, and equal that of Angelica or Isonde of Brittany, they would each go home, and ask their father's leave (easy enough to obtain in those brave times) to go abroad wheresoever there were "good wars," to emulate there the

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

courage and the courtesy of Walter Manny and Gonzalo Fernandes, Bayard and Gaston de Foix. Why not? Sidney was the hero of Europe at five-and-twenty; and why not they?

And Frank watched and listened with one of his quiet smiles (his eyes, as some folks do, smiled even when his lips were still) and only said: "Gentlemen, be sure that you will never repent this day."

"Repent?" said Cary. "I feel already as angelical as thou lookest, Saint Silvertongue. What was it that sneezed—the cat?"

"The lion, rather, by the roar of it," said Amyas, making a dash at the arras behind him. "Why, here is a doorway here! and——"

And rushing under the arras, through an open door behind, he returned, dragging out by the head Mr. John Brimblecombe.

Who was Mr. John Brimblecombe?

If you have forgotten him, you have done pretty nearly what every one else in the room had done. But you recollect a certain fat lad, son of the schoolmaster, whom Sir Richard punished for talebearing three years before, by sending him, not to Coventry, but to Oxford. That was the man. He was now one-and-twenty, and a bachelor of Oxford, where he had learnt such things as were taught in those days, with more or less success; and he was now hanging about Bideford once more, intending to return after Christmas and read divinity, that he might become a parson, and a shepherd of souls in his native land.

Jack was in person exceedingly like a pig. The same plump mulberry complexion, garnished with a few scattered black bristles; the same sleek skin, looking always as if it was upon the point of bursting; the same little toddling legs; the same dapper bend in the small of the back; the same cracked squeak; the same low upright forehead, and tiny eyes; the same round self-satisfied jowl; the same charming sensitive little cocked nose, always on the look-out for a savoury smell, —and yet while watching for the best, contented with the worst; a pig of self-helpful and serene spirit, as Jack was, and therefore, like him, fatting fast while other pigs' ribs are staring through their skins.

Such was Jack; wistfully that day did his eyes, led by his nose, survey at the end of the Ship Inn passage the preparations for Amyas's supper; and looked inward with his little twinkling right eye and sniffed inward with his little curling right nostril, and beheld, in the kitchen beyond, salad in stacks and faggots: salad of lettuce, salad of cress and endive, salad of boiled coleworts, salad of pickled coleworts, salad of angelica, salad of scurvy-wort, and seven salads more; for potatoes were not as yet, and salads were during eight months of the year the only vegetable. And on the dresser, and before the fire, whole hecatombs of fragrant victims, which needed neither frankincense nor myrrh; Clovelly herrings and Torridge salmon, Ex-

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

moor mutton and Stow venison, stubble geese and woodcocks, curlew and snipe, hams of Hampshire, chitterlings of Taunton, and Botargos of Cadiz, such as Pantagrue himself might have devoured. And Jack eyed them, as a ragged boy eyes the cakes in a pastrycook's window.

"Ah, Mr. Brimblecombe!" said the host, bustling out with knife and apron to cool himself in the passage. "Here are doings! Nine gentlemen to supper!"

"Nine! Are they going to eat all that?"

"Well, I can't say—that Mr. Amyas is as good as three to his trencher: but still there's crumbs, Mr. Brimblecombe, crumbs; and Waste not want not is my doctrine; so you and I may have a somewhat to stay our stomachs, about an eight o'clock."

"Eight?" said Jack, looking wistfully at the clock. "It's but four now. Well, it's kind of you, and perhaps I'll look in."

"Just you step in now, and look to this venison. There's a breast! you may lay your two fingers into the say there, and not get to the bottom of the fat. That's Sir Richard's sending. He's all for them Leighs, and no wonder, they'm brave lads, surely; and there's a saddle-o'-mutton! I rode twenty miles for mun yesterday, I did, over beyond Barnstaple; and five year old, Mr. John, it is, if ever five years was; and not a tooth to mun's head, for I looked to that; and smelt all the way home like any apple; and if it don't ate so soft as ever was scald cream, never you call me Thomas Burman."

"Humph!" said Jack. "And that's their dinner. Well, some are born with a silver spoon in their mouth."

"Some be born with roast beef in their mouths, and plum-pudding in their pocket to take away the taste o' mun; and that's better than empty spunes, eh?"

"For them that get it," said Jack. "But for them that don't——" And with a sigh he returned to his small ale, and then lingered in and out of the inn, watching the dinner as it went into the best room, where the guests were assembled.

And as he lounged there, Amyas went in, and saw him, and held out his hand, and said—

"Hillo, Jack! how goes the world? How you've grown!" and passed on;—what had Jack Brimblecombe to do with Rose Salterne?

So Jack lingered on, hovering around the fragrant smell like a fly round a honey-pot, till he found himself invisibly attracted, and as it were led by the nose out of the passage into the adjoining room, and to that side of the room where there was a door; and once there he could not help hearing what passed inside; till Rose Salterne's name fell on his ear. So, as it was ordained, he was taken in the fact.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

And now behold him brought in red-hand to judgment, not without a kick or two from the wrathful foot of Amyas Leigh. Whereat there fell on him a storm of abuse, which, for the honour of that gallant company, I shall not give in detail; but which abuse, strange to say, seemed to have no effect on the impenitent and unabashed Jack, who, as soon as he could get his breath, made answer fiercely, amid much puffing and blowing.

"What business have I here? As much as any of you. If you had asked me in, I would have come: but as you didn't, I came without asking."

"You shameless rascal!" said Cary. "Come if you were asked, where there was good wine? I'll warrant you for that!"

But Jack went on desperately.

"I was in the next room, drinking of my beer. I couldn't help that, could I? And then I heard her name; and I couldn't help listening then. Flesh and blood couldn't."

"Nor fat either!"

"No, nor fat, Mr. Cary. Do you suppose fat men haven't souls to be saved as well as thin ones, and hearts to burst, too, as well as stomachs? Fat! Fat can feel, I reckon, as well as lean. Do you suppose there's nought inside here but beer?"

"Nought but beer?—Cheese, I suppose?"

"Bread?"

"Beef?"

"Love!" cried Jack. "Yes, Love!—Ay, you laugh; but my eyes are not so grown up with fat but what I can see what's fair as well as you. I tell you, and I don't care who knows it, I've loved her these three years as well as e'er a one of you, I have. I've thought o' nothing else, prayed for nothing else, God forgive me! And then you laugh at me, because I'm a poor parson's son, and you fine gentlemen: God made us both, I reckon. You?—you make a deal of giving her up to-day. Why, it's what I've done for three miserable years as ever poor sinner spent; ay, from the first day I said to myself, 'Jack, if you can't have that pearl, you'll have none; and that you can't have, for it's meat for your masters: so conquer or die.' And I couldn't conquer. I can't help loving her, worshipping her, no more than you; and I will die: but you needn't laugh meanwhile at me that have done as much as you, and will do again."

"It is the old tale," said Frank to himself; "whom will not love transform into a hero?"

And so it was. Jack's squeaking voice was firm and manly, his pig's eyes flashed very fire, his gestures were so free and earnest, that

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the ungainliness of his figure was forgotten; and when he finished with a violent burst of tears, Frank, forgetting his wounds, sprang up and caught him by the hand.

"John Brimblecombe, forgive me! Gentlemen, if we are gentlemen, we ought to ask his pardon. Has he not shown already more chivalry, more self-denial, and therefore more true love, than any of us? My friends, let the fierceness of affection, which we have used as an excuse for many a sin of our own, excuse his listening to a conversation in which he well deserved to bear a part."

"Ah," said Jack, "you make me one of your brotherhood; and see if I do not dare to suffer as much as any of you! You laugh? Do you fancy none can use a sword unless he has a baker's dozen of quarterings in his arms, or that Oxford scholars know only how to handle a pen?"

"Let us try his metal," said St. Leger. "Here's my sword, Jack; draw, Coffin! and have at him."

"Nonsense!" said Coffin, looking somewhat disgusted at the notion of fighting a man of Jack's rank; but Jack caught at the weapon offered to him.

"Give me a buckler, and have at any of you!"

"Here's a chair bottom," cried Cary; and Jack, seizing it in his left, flourished his sword so fiercely, and called so loudly to Coffin to come on, that all present found it necessary, unless they wished blood to be spilt, to turn the matter off with a laugh: but Jack would not hear of it.

"Nay: if you will let me be of your brotherhood, well and good: but if not, one or other I will fight: and that's flat."

"You see, gentlemen," said Amyas, "we must admit him or die the death; so we needs must go when Sir Urian drives. Come up, Jack, and take the oaths. You admit him, gentlemen?"

"Let me but be your chaplain," said Jack, "and pray for your luck when you're at the wars. If I do stay at home in a country curacy, 'tis not much that you need be jealous of me with her, I reckon," said Jack, with a pathetical glance at his own stomach.

"Sia!" said Cary: "but if he be admitted, it must be done according to the solemn forms and ceremonies in such cases provided. Take him into the next room, Amyas, and prepare him for his initiation."

"What's that?" asked Amyas, puzzled by the word. But judging from the corner of Will's eye that initiation was Latin for a practical joke; he led forth his victim behind the arras again, and waited five minutes while the room was being darkened, till Frank's voice called to him to bring in the neophyte.

"John Brimblecombe," said Frank in a sepulchral tone, "you can-

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons

John Brimblecombe

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

not be ignorant, as a scholar and bachelor of Oxford, of that dread Sacrament by which Catiline bound the soul of his fellow-conspirators. Wherefore, O Jack! we too have determined, following that ancient and classical example, to fill, as he did, a bowl with the life-blood of our most heroic selves, and to pledge each other therein, with vows whereat the stars shall tremble in their spheres, and Luna, blushing, veil her silver cheeks. Your blood alone is wanted to fill up the goblet. Sit down, John Brimblecombe, and bare your arm!"

"But, Mr. Frank!——" said Jack; who was as superstitious as any old wife, and what with the darkness and the discourse, already in a cold perspiration.

"But me no buts! or depart as recreant, not by the door like a man, but up the chimney like a flittermouse."

"But, Mr. Frank!"

"Thy vital juice, or the chimney! Choose!" roared Cary in his ear.

"Well, if I must," said Jack; "but it's desperate hard that because you can't keep faith without these barbarous oaths, I must take them too, that have kept faith these three years without any."

At this pathetic appeal Frank nearly melted: but Amyas and Cary had thrust the victim into a chair and all was prepared for the sacrifice.

"Bind his eyes, according to the classic fashion," said Will.

"Oh no, dear Mr. Cary; I'll shut them tight enough, I warrant: but not with your dagger, dear Mr. William—sure, not with your dagger? I can't afford to lose blood, though I do look lusty—I can't indeed; sure, a pin would do—I've got one here, to my sleeve, somewhere—Oh!"

"See the fount of generous juice! Flow on, fair stream. How he bleeds!—pints, quarts! Ah, this proves him to be in earnest!"

"A true lover's blood is always at his finger's ends."

"He does not grudge it; of course not. Eh, Jack? What matters an odd gallon for her sake?"

"For her sake? Nothing, nothing! Take my life, if you will: but —oh, gentlemen, a surgeon, if you love me! I'm going off—I'm fainting!"

"Drink, then, quick; drink and swear! Pat his back, Cary. Courage, man! it will be over in a minute. Now, Frank!——"

And Frank spoke—

"If plighted troth I fail, or secret speech reveal,
May Cocytean ghosts around my pillow squeal;
While Ate's brazen claws distringe my spleen in sunder,
And drag me deep to Pluto's keep, 'mid brimstone, smoke, and thunder!"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Placetne, dominie?"

"Placet!" squeaked Jack, who thought himself at the last gasp, and gulped down full three-quarters of the goblet which Cary held to his lips.

"Ugh—Ah—Puh! Mercy on us! It tastes mighty like wine!"

"A proof, my virtuous brother," said Frank, "of thy abstemiousness, which has thus forgotten what wine tastes like. Go in peace, thou hast conquered!"

"Put him out of the door, Will," said Amyas, "or he will swoon on our hands."

"Give him some sack," said Frank.

"Not a blessed drop of yours, sir," said Jack. "I like good wine as well as any man on earth, and see as little of it; but not a drop of yours, sirs, after your frumps and flouts about hanging-on and trencher-scraping. When I first began to love her, I bid good-bye to all dirty tricks; for I had some one then for whom to keep myself clean."

And so Jack was sent home, with a pint of good red Alicant wine in him (more, poor fellow, than he had tasted at once in his life before); while the rest, in high glee with themselves and the rest of the world, relighted the candles, had a right merry evening, and parted like good friends and sensible gentlemen of Devon, thinking (all except Frank) Jack Brimblecombe and his vow the merriest jest they had heard for many a day. After which they all departed: Amyas and Cary to Winter's squadron; Frank (as soon as he could travel) to the Court again; and with him young Basset, whose father Sir Arthur, being in London, procured for him a page's place in Leicester's household. Fortescue and Chichester went to their brothers in Dublin; St. Leger to his uncle the Marshal of Munster; Coffin joined Champernoun and Norris in the Netherlands; and so the Brotherhood of the Rose was scattered far and wide, and Mistress Salterne was left alone with her looking-glass.

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IX

HOW AMYAS KEPT HIS CHRISTMAS DAY

"Take aim, you noble musqueteers,
And shoot you round about;
Stand to it, valiant pikemen,
And we shall keep them out.
There's not a man of all of us
A foot will backward flee;
I'll be the foremost man in fight,
Says brave Lord Willoughby!"

Elizabethan Ballad.

It was the blessed Christmas afternoon. The light was fading down; the even-song was done; and the good folks of Bideford were trooping home in merry groups, the father with his children, the lover with his sweetheart, to cakes and ale, and flapdragons and mummer's plays, and all the happy sports of Christmas night. One lady only, wrapped close in her black muffler and followed by her maid, walked swiftly, yet sadly, toward the long causeway and bridge which led to Northam town. Sir Richard Grenvile and his wife caught her up and stopped her courteously.

"You will come home with us, Mrs. Leigh," said Lady Grenvile, "and spend a pleasant Christmas night?"

Mrs. Leigh smiled sweetly, and laying one hand on Lady Grenvile's arm, pointed with the other to the westward, and said—

"I cannot well spend a merry Christmas night while that sound is in my ears."

The whole party around looked in the direction in which she pointed. But what was the sound which troubled Mrs. Leigh? None of them, with their merry hearts, and ears dulled with the din and bustle of the town, had heard it till that moment; and yet now—listen! It was dead calm. There was not a breath to stir a blade of grass. And yet the air was full of sound, a low deep roar which hovered over down and wood, salt-marsh and river, like the roll of a thousand wheels, the tramp of endless armies, or—what it was—the thunder of a mighty surge upon the boulders of the pebble ridge.

"The ridge is noisy to-night," said Sir Richard. "There has been wind somewhere."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"There is wind now, where my boy is, God help him!" said Mrs. Leigh: and all knew that she spoke truly. The spirit of the Atlantic storm had sent forward the token of his coming, in the smooth ground-swell which was heard inland, two miles away. To-morrow the pebbles, which were now rattling down with each retreating wave, might be leaping to the ridge top, and hurled like round-shot far ashore upon the marsh by the force of the advancing wave, fleeing before the wrath of the western hurricane.

"God help my boy!" said Mrs. Leigh again.

"God is as near him by sea as by land," said good Sir Richard.

"True: but I am a lone mother; and one that has no heart just now but to go home and pray."

And so Mrs. Leigh went onward up the lane, and spent all that night in listening between her prayers to the thunder of the surge, till it was drowned, long ere the sun rose, in the thunder of the storm.

And where is Amyas on this same Christmas afternoon?

Amyas is sitting bareheaded in a boat's stern in Smerwick bay, with the spray whistling through his curls, as he shouts cheerfully—

"Pull, and with a will, my merry men all, and never mind shipping a sea. Cannon balls are a cargo that don't spoil by taking salt-water."

His mother's presage has been true enough. Christmas eve has been the last of the still, dark, steaming nights of the early winter; and the western gale has been roaring for the last twelve hours upon the Irish coast.

The short light of the winter day is fading fast. Behind him is a leaping line of billows lashed into mist by the tempest. Beside him green foam-fringed columns are rushing up the black rocks, and falling again in a thousand cataracts of snow. Before him is the deep and sheltered bay: but it is not far up the bay that he and his can see; for some four miles out at sea begins a sloping roof of thick grey cloud, which stretches over their heads, and up and far inland, cutting the cliffs off at mid-height, hiding all the Kerry mountains, and darkening the hollows of the distant firths into the blackness of night. And underneath that awful roof of whirling mist the storm is howling inland ever, sweeping before it the great foam-sponges, and the grey salt spray, till all the land is hazy, dim, and dun. Let it howl on! for there is more mist than ever salt spray made, flying before that gale; more thunder than ever sea-surge wakened echoing among the cliffs of Smerwick bay; along those sand-hills flash in the evening gloom red sparks which never came from heaven; for that fort, now christened by the invaders the Fort Del Oro, where flaunts the hated golden flag of Spain, holds San Josepho and eight hundred of the foe; and but three nights ago, Amyas and Yeo, and the rest of Winter's shrewdest

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

hands, slung four culverins out of the Admiral's main deck, and floated them ashore, and dragged them up to the battery among the sand-hills; and now it shall be seen whether Spanish and Italian condottieri can hold their own on British ground against the men of Devon.

Small blame to Amyas if he was thinking, not of his lonely mother at Burrough Court, but of those quick bright flashes on sand-hill and on fort, where Salvation Yeo was hurling the eighteen-pound shot with deadly aim, and watching with a cool and bitter smile of triumph the flying of the sand, and the crashing of the gabions. Amyas and his party had been on board, at the risk of their lives, for a fresh supply of shot; for Winter's battery was out of ball, and had been firing stones for the last four hours, in default of better missiles. They ran the boat on shore through the surf, where a cove in the shore made landing possible, and almost careless whether she stove or not, scrambled over the sand-hills with each man his brace of shot slung across his shoulder; and Amyas, leaping into the trenches, shouted cheerfully to Salvation Yeo—

"More food for the bull-dogs, Gunner, and plums for the Spaniards' Christmas pudding!"

"Don't speak to a man at his business, Master Amyas. Five mortal times have I missed; but I will have that accursed Popish rag down, as I'm a sinner."

"Down with it, then; nobody wants you to shoot crooked. Take good iron to it, and not footy paving-stones."

"I believe, sir, that the foul fiend is there, a turning of my shot aside, I do. I thought I saw him once; but, thank Heaven, here's ball again. Ah, sir, if one could but cast a silver one! Now, stand by, men!"

And once again Yeo's eighteen-pounder roared, and away. And, oh glory! the great yellow flag of Spain, which streamed in the gale, lifted clean into the air, flagstaff and all, and then pitched wildly down head-foremost, far to leeward.

A hurrah from the sailors, answered by the soldiers of the opposite camp, shook the very cloud above them: but ere its echoes had died away, a tall officer leapt upon the parapet of the fort, with the fallen flag in his hand, and rearing it as well as he could upon his lance point, held it firmly against the gale, while the fallen flagstaff was raised again within.

In a moment a dozen long bows were bent at the daring foeman: but Amyas behind shouted—

"Shame, lads! Stop and let the gallant gentleman have due courtesy!"

So they stopped, while Amyas, springing on the rampart of the

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

battery, took off his hat, and bowed to the flag-holder, who, as soon as relieved of his charge, returned the bow courteously, and descended.

It was by this time all but dark, and the firing began to slacken on all sides; Salvation and his brother gunners, having covered up their slaughtering tackle with tarpaulings, retired for the night, leaving Amyas, who had volunteered to take the watch till midnight; and the rest of the force having got their scanty supper of biscuit (for provisions were running very short) lay down under arms among the sand-hills, and grumbled themselves to sleep.

He had paced up and down in the gusty darkness for some hour or more, singing softly the words of the old Christmas carol:

"As Joseph was a-walking
He heard an angel sing—
'This night shall be the birth night
Of Christ, our heavenly King.

His birthbed shall be neither
In housen nor in hall,
Nor in the place of paradise,
But in the oxen's stall.

He neither shall be rocked
In silver nor in gold,
But in the wooden manger
That lieth on the mould.

He neither shall be washen
With white wine nor with red,
But with the fair spring water
That on you shall be shed.

He neither shall be clothed
In purple nor in pall,
But in the fair white linen
That usen babies all.'

As Joseph was a-walking
Thus did the angel sing,
And Mary's Son at midnight
Was born to be our King.

Then be you glad, good people,
At this time of the year;
And light you up your candles,
For His star it shineth clear."

So he began to think about his mother, and how she might be spending her Christmas; and then about Frank, and wondered at what

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

grand Court festival he was assisting, amid bright lights and sweet music and gay ladies, and how he was dressed, and whether he thought of his brother there far away on the dark Atlantic shore; and then he said his prayers and his creed; and then he tried not to think of Rose Salterne, and of course thought about her all the more. So on passed the dull hours, till it might be past eleven o'clock, and all lights were out in the battery and the shipping, and there was no sound of living thing but the monotonous tramp of the two sentinels beside him, and now and then a grunt from the party who slept under arms some twenty yards to the rear.

So he paced to and fro, looking carefully out now and then over the strip of sand-hill which lay between him and the fort; but all was blank and black, and moreover it began to rain furiously.

Suddenly he seemed to hear a rustle among the harsh sand-grass. True, the wind was whistling through it loudly enough: but that sound was not altogether like the wind. Then a soft sliding noise; something had slipped down a bank, and brought the sand down after it. Amyas stopped, crouched down beside a gun, and laid his ear to the rampart, whereby he heard clearly, as he thought, the noise of approaching feet; whether rabbits or Christians, he knew not: but he shrewdly guessed the latter.

Now Amyas was of a sober and business-like turn, at least when he was not in a passion; and thinking within himself that if he made any noise, the enemy (whether four or two-legged) would retire, and all the sport be lost, he did not call to the two sentries, who were at the opposite ends of the battery; neither did he think it worth while to rouse the sleeping company, lest his ears should have deceived him, and the whole camp turn out to repulse the attack of a buck rabbit. So he crouched lower and lower beside the culverin, and was rewarded in a minute or two by hearing something gently deposited against the mouth of the embrasure, which, by the noise, should be a piece of timber.

"So far, so good," said he to himself; "when the scaling ladder is up, the soldier follows, I suppose. I can only humbly thank them for giving my embrasure the preference. There he comes! I hear his feet scuffling."

He could hear plainly enough some one working himself into the mouth of the embrasure: but the plague was, that it was so dark that he could not see his hand between him and the sky, much less his foe at two yards off. However, he made a pretty fair guess as to the whereabouts, and, rising softly, discharged such a blow downwards as would have split a yule log. A volley of sparks flew up from the hapless Spaniard's armour, and a grunt issued from within it, which

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

proved that, whether he was killed or not, the blow had not improved his respiration.

Amyas felt for his head, seized it, dragged him in over the gun, sprang into the embrasure on his knees, felt for the top of the ladder, found it, hove it clean off and out, with four or five men on it, and then of course tumbled after it ten feet into the sand, roaring like a town bull to her Majesty's liege subjects in general.

Sailor-fashion, he had no armour on but a light morion and a cuirass, so he was not too much encumbered to prevent his springing to his legs instantly, and setting to work, cutting and foining right and left at every sound, for sight there was none.

Battles (as soldiers know, and newspaper editors do not) are usually fought, not as they ought to be fought, but as they can be fought; and while the literary man is laying down the law at his desk as to how many troops should be moved here, and what rivers should be crossed there, and where the cavalry should have been brought up, and when the flank should have been turned, the wretched man who has to do the work finds the matter settled for him by pestilence, want of shoes, empty stomachs, bad roads, heavy rains, hot suns, and a thousand other stern warriors who never show on paper.

So with this skirmish; "according to Cocker," it ought to have been a very pretty one; for Hercules of Pisa, who planned the sortie, had arranged it all (being a very *sans-appel* in all military science) upon the best Italian precedents, and had brought against this very hapless battery a column of a hundred to attack directly in front, a company of fifty to turn the right flank, and a company of fifty to turn the left flank, with regulations, orders, passwords, countersigns, and what not; so that if every man had had his rights (as seldom happens), Don Guzman Maria Magdalena de Soto, who commanded the sortie, ought to have taken the work out of hand, and annihilated all therein. But alas! here stern fate interfered. They had chosen a dark night, as was politic; they had waited till the moon was up, lest it should be too dark, as was politic likewise: but, just as they had started, on came a heavy squall of rain, through which seven moons would have given no light, and which washed out the plans of Hercules of Pisa as if they had been written on a schoolboy's slate. The company who were to turn the left flank walked manfully down into the sea, and never found out where they were going till they were knee-deep in water. The company who were to turn the right flank, bewildered by the utter darkness, turned their own flank so often, that tired of falling into rabbit-burrows and filling their mouths with sand, they halted and prayed to all the saints for a compass and lantern; while the centre body, who held straight on by a trackway to within fifty yards of the

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

battery, so miscalculated that short distance, that while they thought the ditch two pikes' length off, they fell into it one over the other, and of six scaling ladders, the only one which could be found was the very one which Amyas threw down again. After which the clouds broke, the wind shifted, and the moon shone out merrily. And so was the deep policy of Hercules of Pisa, on which hung the fate of Ireland and the Papacy, decided by a ten minutes' squall.

But where is Amyas?

In the ditch, aware that the enemy is tumbling into it, but unable to find them; while the company above, finding it much too dark to attempt a counter sortie, have opened a smart fire of musketry and arrows on things in general, whereat the Spaniards are swearing like Spaniards (I need say no more), and the Italians spitting like venomous cats; while Amyas, not wishing to be riddled by friendly balls, has got his back against the foot of the rampart, and waits on Providence.

Suddenly the moon clears; and with one more fierce volley, the English sailors, seeing the confusion, leap down from the embrasures, and to it pell-mell. Whether this also was "according to Cocker," I know not: but the sailor, then as now, is not susceptible of highly-finished drill.

Amyas is now in his element, and so are the brave fellows at his heels; and there are ten breathless, furious minutes among the sand-hills; and then the trumpets blow a recall, and the sailors drop back again by twos and threes, and are helped up into the embrasures over many a dead and dying foe; while the guns of Fort del Oro open on them, and blaze away for half-an-hour without reply; and then all is still once more. And in the meanwhile, the sortie against the Deputy's camp has fared no better, and the victory of the night remains with the English.

Twenty minutes after, Winter and the captains who were on shore were drying themselves round a peat-fire on the beach, and talking over the skirmish, when Will Cary asked—

"Where is Leigh? who has seen him? I am sadly afraid he has gone too far, and been slain."

"Slain? Never less, gentlemen!" replied the voice of the very person in question, as he stalked out of the darkness into the glare of the fire, and shot down from his shoulders into the midst of the ring, as he might a sack of corn, a huge dark body, which was gradually seen to be a man in rich armour; who being so shot down, lay quietly where he was dropped, with his feet (luckily for him mailed) in the fire.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"I say," quoth Amyas, "some of you had better take him up, if he is to be of any use. Unlace his helm, Will Cary."

"Pull his feet out of the embers; I dare say he would have been glad enough to put us to the scarpines; but that's no reason we should put him to them."

As has been hinted, there was no love lost between Admiral Winter and Amyas; and Amyas might certainly have reported himself in a more ceremonious manner. So Winter, whom Amyas either had not seen, or had not chosen to see, asked him pretty sharply, "What the plague he had to do with bringing dead men into camp?"

"If he's dead, it's not my fault. He was alive enough when I started with him, and I kept him right end uppermost all the way; and what would you have more, sir?"

"Mr. Leigh!" said Winter, "it behoves you to speak with somewhat more courtesy, if not respect, to captains who are your elders and commanders."

"Ask your pardon, sir," said the giant, as he stood in front of the fire with the rain steaming and smoking off his armour; "but I was bred in a school where getting good service done was more esteemed than making fine speeches."

"Whatsoever school you were trained in, sir," said Winter, nettled at the hint about Drake, "it does not seem to have been one in which you learned to obey orders. Why did you not come in when the recall was sounded?"

"Because," said Amyas, very coolly, "in the first place, I did not hear it; and in the next, in my school I was taught when I had once started not to come home empty-handed."

This was too pointed; and Winter sprang up with an oath—"Do you mean to insult me, sir?"

"I am sorry, sir, that you should take a compliment to Sir Francis Drake as an insult to yourself. I brought in this gentleman because I thought he might give you good information; if he dies meanwhile, the loss will be yours, or rather the queen's."

"Help me, then," said Cary, glad to create a diversion in Amyas's favour, "and we will bring him round;" while Raleigh rose, and catching Winter's arm, drew him aside, and began talking earnestly.

"What a murrain have you, Leigh, to quarrel with Winter?" asked two or three.

"I say, my reverend fathers and dear children, do get the Don's talking tackle free again, and leave me and the Admiral to settle it our own way."

There was more than one captain sitting in the ring; but discipline, and the degrees of rank, were not so severely defined as now; and

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Amyas, as a "gentleman adventurer," was, on land, in a position very difficult to be settled, though at sea he was as liable to be hanged as any other person on board; and on the whole it was found expedient to patch the matter up. So Captain Raleigh returning, said that though Admiral Winter had doubtless taken umbrage at certain words of Mr. Leigh's, yet that he had no doubt that Mr. Leigh meant nothing thereby but what was consistent with the profession of a soldier and a gentleman, and worthy both of himself and of the Admiral.

From which proposition Amyas found it impossible to dissent; whereon Raleigh went back, and informed Winter that Leigh had freely retracted his words, and fully wiped off any imputation which Mr. Winter might conceive to have been put upon him, and so forth.

Whereon the whole party turned their attention to the captive, who, thanks to Will Cary, was by this time sitting up, standing much in need of a handkerchief, and looking about him, having been unhelmed, in a confused and doleful manner.

"Take the gentleman to my tent," said Winter, "and let the surgeon see to him. Mr. Leigh, who is he?——"

"An enemy, but whether Spaniard or Italian I know not; but he seemed somebody among them, I thought the captain of a company. He and I cut at each other twice or thrice at first, and then lost each other; and after that I came on him among the sand-hills, trying to rally his men, and swearing like the mouth of the pit, whereby I guess him a Spaniard. But his men ran; so I brought him in."

"And how?" asked Raleigh. "Thou art giving us all the play but the murders and the marriages."

"Why, I bid him yield, and he would not. Then I bid him run, and he would not. And it was too pitch-dark for fighting; so I took him by the ears, and shook the wind out of him, and so brought him in."

"Shook the wind out of him?" cried Cary, amid the roar of laughter which followed. "Dost know thou hast nearly wrung his neck in two? His vizor was full of blood."

"He should have run or yielded, then," said Amyas; and getting up, slipped off to find some ale, and then to sleep comfortably in a dry burrow which he scratched out of a sandbank.

The next morning, as Amyas was discussing a scanty breakfast of biscuit (for provisions were running very short in camp) Raleigh came up to him.

"What, eating? That's more than I have done to-day."

"Sit down, and share, then."

"Nay, lad, I did not come a-begging. I have set some of my rogues to dig rabbits; but as I live, young Colbrand, you may thank your stars that you are alive to-day to eat. Poor young Cheek—Sir

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

John Cheek, the grammarian's son—got his quittance last night by a Spanish pike, rushing headlong on, just as you did. But have you seen your prisoner?"

"No; nor shall, while he is in Winter's tent."

"Why not, then? What quarrel have you against the Admiral, friend Bobadil? Cannot you let Francis Drake fight his own battles, without thrusting your head in between them?"

"Well, that is good! As if the quarrel was not just as much mine, and every man's in the ship. Why, when he left Drake, he left us all, did he not?"

"And what if he did? Let bygones be bygones is the rule of a Christian, and of a wise man too, Amyas. Here the man is, at least, safe home, in favour and in power; and a prudent youth will just hold his tongue, mumchance, and swim with the stream."

"But that's just what makes me mad; to see this fellow, after deserting us there in unknown seas, win credit and rank at home here for being the first man who ever sailed back through the Straits. What had he to do with sailing back at all! As well make the fox a knight for being the first that ever jumped down a jakes to escape the hounds. The fiercer the flight the fouler the fear, say I."

"Amyas! Amyas! thou art a hard hitter, but a soft politician."

"I am no politician, Captain Raleigh, nor ever wish to be. An honest man's my friend, and a rogue's my foe; and I'll tell both as much, as long as I breathe."

"And die a poor saint," said Raleigh, laughing. "But if Winter invites you to his tent himself, you won't refuse to come?"

"Why, no, considering his years and rank; but he knows too well to do that."

"He knows too well not to do it," said Raleigh, laughing as he walked away. And verily in half-an-hour came an invitation, extracted, of course, from the Admiral by Raleigh's silver tongue, which Amyas could not but obey.

"We all owe you thanks for last night's service, sir," said Winter, who had for some good reasons changed his tone. "Your prisoner is found to be a gentleman of birth and experience, and the leader of the assault last night. He has already told us more than we had hoped, for which also we are beholden to you; and, indeed my Lord Grey has been asking for you already."

"I have, young sir," said a quiet and lofty voice; and Amyas saw limping from the inner tent the proud and stately figure of the stern Deputy, Lord Grey of Wilton, a brave and wise man, but with a naturally harsh temper, which had been soured still more by the wound which had crippled him, while yet a boy, at the battle of Leith. He

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

owed that limp to Mary Queen of Scots; and he did not forget the debt.

"I have been asking for you; having heard from many, both of your last night's prowess, and of your conduct and courage beyond the promise of your years, displayed in that ever-memorable voyage, which may well be ranked with the deeds of the ancient Argonauts."

Amyas bowed low; and the Lord Deputy went on, "You will needs wish to see your prisoner. You will find him such a one as you need not be ashamed to have taken, and as need not be ashamed to have been taken by you: but here he is, and will, I doubt not, answer as much for himself. Know each other better, gentlemen both: last night was an ill one for making acquaintances. Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto, know the hidalgo, Amyas Leigh!"

As he spoke, the Spaniard came forward, still in his armour, all save his head, which was bound up in a handkerchief.

He was an exceedingly tall and graceful personage, golden-haired and fair-skinned, with hands as small and white as a woman's; his lips were delicate, but thin, and compressed closely at the corners of the mouth; and his pale blue eye had a glassy dulness. In spite of his beauty and his carriage, Amyas shrank from him instinctively; and yet he could not help holding out his hand in return, as the Spaniard holding out his, said languidly, in most sweet and sonorous Spanish—

"I kiss his hands and feet. The Señor speaks, I am told, my native tongue?"

"I have that honour."

"Then accept in it (for I can better express myself therein than in English, though I am not altogether ignorant of that witty and learned language) the expression of my pleasure at having fallen into the hands of one so renowned in war and travel; and of one also," he added, glancing at Amyas's giant bulk, "the vastness of whose strength, beyond that of common mortality, makes it no more shame for me to have been overpowered and carried away by him than if my captor had been a paladin of Charlemagne's."

Honest Amyas bowed and stammered, a little thrown off his balance by the unexpected assurance and cool flattery of his prisoner; but he said,—

"If you are satisfied, illustrious Señor, I am bound to be so. I only trust, that in my hurry and the darkness, I have not hurt you unnecessarily."

The Don laughed a pretty little hollow laugh: "No, kind Señor, my head, I trust, will after a few days have become united to my shoulders; and, for the present, your company will make me forget any slight discomfort."

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Pardon me, Señor, but by this daylight I should have seen that armour before."

"I doubt it not, Señor, as having been yourself also in the forefront of the battle," said the Spaniard, with a proud smile.

"If I am right, Señor, you are he who yesterday held up the standard after it was shot down."

"I do not deny that undeserved honour; and I have to thank the courtesy of you and your countrymen for having permitted me to do so with impunity."

"Ah, I heard of that brave feat," said the Lord Deputy. "You should consider yourself, Mr. Leigh, honoured by being enabled to show courtesy to such a warrior."

How long this interchange of solemn compliments, of which Amyas was getting somewhat weary, would have gone on, I know not; but at that moment Raleigh entered hastily—

"My Lord, they have hung out a white flag, and are calling for a parley!"

The Spaniard turned pale, and felt for his sword, which was gone; and then, with a bitter laugh, murmured to himself—"As I expected."

"I am very sorry to hear it. Would to Heaven they had simply fought it out!" said Lord Grey half to himself; and then, "Go, Captain Raleigh, and answer them that (saving this gentleman's presence) the laws of war forbid a parley with any who are leagued with rebels against their lawful sovereign."

"But what if they wish to treat for this gentleman's ransom?"

"For their own, more likely," said the Spaniard; "but tell them, on my part, Señor, that Don Guzman refuses to be ransomed; and will return to no camp where the commanding officer, unable to infect his captains with his own cowardice, dishonours them against their will."

"You speak sharply, Señor," said Winter, after Raleigh had gone out.

"I have reason, Señor Admiral, as you will find, I fear, ere long."

"We shall have the honour of leaving you here, for the present, sir, as Admiral Winter's guest," said the Lord Deputy.

"But not my sword, it seems."

"Pardon me, Señor; but no one has deprived you of your sword," said Winter.

"I don't wish to pain you, sir," said Amyas, "but I fear that we were both careless enough to leave it behind last night."

A flash passed over the Spaniard's face, which disclosed terrible depths of fury and hatred beneath that quiet mask, as the summer lightning displays the black abysses of the thunder-storm; but like

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

the summer lightning it passed almost unseen; and blandly as ever, he answered—

"I can forgive you for such a neglect, most valiant sir, more easily than I can forgive myself. Farewell, sir! One who has lost his sword is no fit company for you." And as Amyas and the rest departed he plunged into the inner tent, stamping and writhing, gnawing his hands with rage and shame.

As Amyas came out on the battery, Yeo hailed him—

"Master Amyas! Hillo, sir! For the love of Heaven tell me!"

"What then?"

"Is his Lordship staunch? Will he do the Lord's work faithfully, root and branch: or will he spare the Amalekites?"

"The latter, I think, old hip-and-thigh," said Amyas, hurrying forward to hear the news from Raleigh, who appeared in sight once more.

"They ask to depart with bag and baggage," said he, when he came up.

"God do so to me, and more also, if they carry away a straw!" said Lord Grey. "Make short work of it, sir!"

"I do not know how that will be, my Lord; as I came up a captain shouted to me off the walls that there were mutineers; and, denying that he surrendered, would have pulled down the flag of truce, but the soldiers beat him off."

"A house divided against itself will not stand long, gentlemen. Tell them that I give no conditions. Let them lay down their arms, and trust in the Bishop of Rome who sent them hither, and may come to save them if he wants them. Gunners, if you see the white flag go down, open your fire instantly. Captain Raleigh, we need your counsel here. Mr. Cary, will you be my herald this time?"

"A better Protestant never went on a pleasanter errand, my Lord."

So Cary went, and then ensued an argument, as to what should be done with the prisoners in case of a surrender.

I cannot tell whether my Lord Grey meant, by offering conditions which the Spaniard would not accept, to force them into fighting the quarrel out, and so save himself the responsibility of deciding on their fate; or whether his mere natural stubbornness, as well as his just indignation, drove him on too far to retract: but the council of war which followed was both a sad and a stormy one, and one which he had reason to regret to his dying day. What was to be done with the enemy? They already outnumbered the English; and some fifteen hundred of Desmond's wild Irish hovered in the forests round, ready to side with the winning party, or even to attack the English at the

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

least sign of vacillation or fear. They could not carry the Spaniards away with them, for they had neither shipping nor food, not even handcuffs enough for them; and as Mackworth told Winter when he proposed it, the only plan was for him to make San Josepho a present of his ships, and swim home himself as he could. To turn loose in Ireland, as Captain Touch urged, on the other hand, seven hundred such monsters of lawlessness, cruelty, and lust, as Spanish and Italian condottieri were in those days, was as fatal to their own safety as cruel to the wretched Irish. All the captains, without exception, followed on the same side. "What was to be done, then?" asked Lord Grey impatiently. "Would they have him murder them all in cold blood?"

And for a while every man, knowing that it must come to that, and yet not daring to say it; till Sir Warham St. Leger, the Marshal of Munster, spoke out stoutly—"Foreigners had been scoffing them too long and too truly with waging these Irish wars as if they meant to keep them alive, rather than end them. Mercy and faith to every Irishman who would show mercy and faith, was his motto; but to invaders, no mercy. Ireland was England's vulnerable point; it might be some day her ruin; a terrible example must be made of those who dare to touch the sore. Rather pardon the Spaniards for landing in the Thames than in Ireland!"—till Lord Grey became much excited, and turning as a last hope to Raleigh, asked his opinion: but Raleigh's silver tongue was that day not on the side of indulgence. He skilfully recapitulated the arguments of his fellow-captains, improving them as he went on, till each worthy soldier was surprised to find himself so much wiser a man than he had thought; and finished by one of his rapid and passionate perorations upon his favourite theme—the West Indian cruelties of the Spaniards.

"Captain Raleigh, Captain Raleigh," said Lord Grey, "the blood of these men be on your head!"

"It ill befits your Lordship," answered Raleigh, "to throw on your subordinates the blame of that which your reason approves as necessary."

"I should have thought, sir, that one so noted for ambition as Captain Raleigh would have been more careful of the favour of that queen for whose smiles he is said to be so longing a competitor. If you have not yet been of her counsels, sir, I can tell you you are not likely to be. She will be furious when she hears of this cruelty."

Lord Grey had lost his temper: but Raleigh kept his, and answered quietly—

"Her Majesty shall at least not find me among the number of those who prefer her favour to her safety."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"And now, Captain Raleigh," said Lord Grey, "as you have been so earnest in preaching this butchery, I have a right to ask none but you to practise it."

Raleigh bit his lip, and replied by the "quip courteous"—

"I am at least a man, my Lord, who thinks it shame to allow others to do that which I dare not do myself."

Lord Grey might probably have returned "the countercheck quarrelsome," had not Mackworth risen;—

"And I, my Lord, being in that matter at least one of Captain Raleigh's kidney, will just go with him to see that he takes no harm by being bold enough to carry out an ugly business, and serving these rascals as their countrymen served Mr. Oxenham."

"I bid you good morning, then, gentlemen, though I cannot bid you God speed," said Lord Grey; and sitting down again, covered his face with his hands, and, to the astonishment of all bystanders, burst, say the chroniclers, into tears.

Amyas followed Raleigh out. The latter was pale, but determined, and very wroth against the Deputy.

"Does the man take me for a hangman," said he, "that he speaks to me thus? But such is the way of the great. If you neglect your duty, they haul you over the coals; if you do it, you must do it on your own responsibility. Farewell, Amyas; you will not shrink from me as a butcher when I return?"

"God forbid! But how will you do it?"

"March one company in, and drive them forth, and let the other cut them down as they come out.—Pah!"

. . . . . .

It was done. Right or wrong, it was done. The shrieks and curses had died away, and the Fort del Oro was a red shambles, which the soldiers were trying to cover from the sight of heaven and earth, by dragging the bodies into the ditch, and covering them with the ruins of the rampart; while the Irish, who had beheld from the woods that awful warning, fled trembling into the deepest recesses of the forest. It was done; and it never needed to be done again. The hint was severe, but it was sufficient. Many years passed before a Spaniard set foot again in Ireland.

The Spanish and Italian officers were spared, and Amyas had Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto duly adjudged to him, as his prize by right of war. The next question was, where to bestow Don Guzman till his ransom should arrive: and as Amyas could not well deliver the gallant Don into the safe custody of Mrs. Leigh at Burrough, and still less into that of Frank at Court, he was

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

fain to write to Sir Richard Grenvile, and ask his advice, and in the meanwhile keep the Spaniard with him upon parole, which he frankly gave,—saying that as for running away, he had nowhere to run to; and as for joining the Irish he had no mind to turn pig; and Amyas found him, as shall be hereafter told, pleasant company enough. But one morning Raleigh entered,—

"I have done you a good turn, Leigh, if you think it one. I have talked St. Leger into making you my lieutenant, and giving you the custody of a right pleasant hermitage—some castle Shackatory or other in the midst of a big bog, where time will run swift and smooth with you, between hunting wild Irish, snaring snipes, and drinking yourself drunk with usquebaugh over a turf fire."

"I'll go," quoth Amyas; "anything for work." So he went and took possession of his lieutenancy and his black robber tower, and there passed the rest of the winter, fighting or hunting all day, and chatting and reading all the evening, with Señor Don Guzman, who, like a good soldier of fortune, made himself thoroughly at home, and a general favourite with the soldiers.

At first, indeed, his Spanish pride and stateliness, and Amyas's English taciturnity, kept the two apart somewhat; but they soon began, if not to trust, at least to like each other; and Don Guzman told Amyas, bit by bit, who he was, of what an ancient house, and of what a poor one; and laughed over the very small chance of his ransom being raised, and the certainty that, at least, it could not come for a couple of years, seeing that the only De Soto who had a penny to spare was a fat old dean at St. Yago de Leon, in the Caraccas, at which place Don Guzman had been born. This of course led to much talk about the West Indies, and the Don was as much interested to find that Amyas had been one of Drake's world-famous crew, as Amyas was to find that his captive was the grandson of none other than that most terrible of man-hunters, Don Ferdinando de Soto, the conqueror of Florida, of whom Amyas had read many a time in Las Casas. Don Guzman told many a good story of the Indies, and told it well; and over and above his stories, he had among his baggage two books,—the one Antonio Galvano's "Discoveries of the World," a mine of winter evening amusement to Amyas; and the other, a manuscript book, which, perhaps, it had been well for Amyas had he never seen. For it was none other than a sort of rough journal which Don Guzman had kept as a lad, when he went down with the Adelantado Gonzales Ximenes de Casada, from Peru to the River of Amazons, to look for the golden country of El Dorado, and the city of Manoa, which stands in the midst of the White Lake.

Golden phantom! so possible, so probable, to imaginations which

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

were yet reeling before the actual and veritable prodigies of Peru, Mexico, and the East Indies. Little thought Amyas, as he devoured the pages of that manuscript, that he was laying a snare for the life of the man whom, next to Drake and Grenvile, he most admired on earth.

But Don Guzman, on the other hand, seemed to have an instinct that that book might be a fatal gift to his captor; for one day ere Amyas had looked into it, he began questioning the Don about El Dorado. Whereon Don Guzman replied with one of those smiles of his, which (as Amyas said afterwards) was so abominably like a sneer, that he had often hard work to keep his hands off the man—

"Ah! You have been eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, Señor? Well; if you have any ambition to follow many another brave captain to the pit, I know no shorter or easier path than is contained in that little book."

"I have never opened your book," said Amyas; "your private manuscripts are no concern of mine; but my man who recovered your baggage read part of it, knowing no better; and now you are at liberty to tell me as little as you like."

The "man" it should be said, was none other than Salvation Yeo, who had attached himself by this time inseparably to Amyas, in quality of body-guard.

Amyas once asked him, how he reconciled this Irish sojourn with his vow to find his little maid? Yeo shook his head.

"I can't tell, sir, but there's something that makes me always to think of you when I think of her; and that's often enough, the Lord knows. Whether it is that I ben't to find the dear without your help; or whether it is your pleasant face puts me in mind of hers; or what, I can't tell; but don't you part me from you, sir, for I'm like Ruth, and where you lodge I lodge; and where you go I go; and where you die—though I shall die many a year first—there I'll die, I hope and trust; for I can't abear you out of my sight; and that's the truth thereof."

So Yeo remained with Amyas, while Cary went elsewhere with Sir Warham St. Leger, and the two friends met seldom for many months; so that Amyas's only companion was Don Guzman, who, as he grew more familiar, and more careless about what he said and did in his captor's presence, often puzzled and scandalised him by his waywardness. Fits of deep melancholy alternated with bursts of Spanish boastfulness, utterly astonishing to the modest and sober-minded Englishman, who would often have fancied him inspired by usquebaugh, had he not had ocular proof of his extreme abstemiousness.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Miserable?" said he, one night in one of these fits. "And have I not a right to be miserable?—Why should I not curse the virgin and all the saints, and die! I have not a friend, not a ducat on earth; not even a sword—hell and the furies! It was my all: the only bequest I ever had from my father, and I lived by it and earned by it. Two years ago I had as pretty a sum of gold as cavalier could wish—and now!—this is the end!—No, it is not! I'll have that El Dorado yet! Pooh! Cortes and Pizarro? we'll see whether there are not as good Castilians as they left still. I can do it, Señor. I know a track, a plan; over the Llanos is the road; and I'll be Emperor of Manoa yet—possess the jewels of all the Incas; and gold, gold! Pizarro was a beggar to what I will be!"

"Conceive, sir," he broke forth during another of these peacock fits, as Amyas and he were riding along the hill-side; "conceive! with forty chosen cavaliers (what need of more?) I present myself before the golden king, trembling amid his myriad guards at the new miracle of the mailed centaurs of the West; and without dismounting, I approach his throne, lift the crucifix which hangs around my neck, and pressing it to my lips, present it for the adoration of the idolater, and give him his alternative; that which Gayferos and the Cid, my ancestors, offered the Soldan and the Moor—baptism or death! He hesitates; perhaps smiles scornfully upon my little band; I answer him by deeds, as Don Ferdinando, my illustrious grandfather, answered Atahuallpa at Peru, in sight of all his court and camp."

"With your lance-point, as Gayferos did the Soldan?" asked Amyas, amused.

"No, sir; persuasion first, for the salvation of a soul is at stake. Not with the lance-point, but the spur, sir, thus!"—

And striking his heels into his horse's flanks, he darted off at full speed.

"The Spanish traitor!" shouted Yeo. "He's going to escape! Shall we shoot, sir? Shall we shoot?"

"For Heaven's sake, no!" said Amyas, looking somewhat blank, nevertheless, for he much doubted whether the whole was not a ruse on the part of the Spaniard, and he knew how impossible it was for his fifteen stone of flesh to give chase to the Spaniard's twelve. But he was soon reassured; the Spaniard wheeled round towards him, and began to put the rough hackney through all the paces of the manège with a grace and skill which won applause from the beholders.

"Thus!" he shouted, waving his hand to Amyas, between his curvets and caracoles, "did my illustrious grandfather exhibit to the Paynim emperor the prowess of a Castilian cavalier! Thus!—and thus!—and thus, at last, he dashed up to his very feet, as I to yours,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and bespattering that unbaptized visage with his Christian bridle-foam, pulled up his charger on his haunches, thus!"

And (as was to be expected from a blown Irish garron on a peaty Irish hill-side) down went the hapless hackney on his tail, away went his heels a yard in front of him, and ere Don Guzman could "avoid his selle," horse and man rolled over into a neighbouring bog-hole.

"After pride comes a fall," quoth Yeo with unmoved visage as he lugged him out.

"And what would you do with the Emperor at last?" asked Amyas when the Don had been scrubbed somewhat clean with a bunch of rushes. "Kill him, as your grandfather did Atahuallpa?"

"My grandfather," answered the Spaniard indignantly, "was one of those who, to their eternal honour, protested to the last against that most cruel and unknightly massacre. He could be terrible to the heathen; but he kept his plighted word, sir, and taught me to keep mine, as you have seen to-day."

"I have, Señor," said Amyas. "You might have given us the slip easily enough just now, and did not. Pardon me, if I have offended you."

The Spaniard (who, after all, was cross principally with himself and the "unlucky mare's son," as the old romances have it, which had played him so scurvy a trick) was all smiles again forthwith; and Amyas, as they chatted on, could not help asking him next—

"I wonder why you are so frank about your own intentions to an enemy like me, who will forestall you if he can."

"Sir, a Spaniard needs no concealment, and fears no rivalry. He is the soldier of the Cross, and in it he conquers, like Constantine of old. Not that you English are not very heroes; but you have not, sir, and you cannot have, who have forsworn our Lady and the choir of saints, the same divine protection, the same celestial mission, which enables the Catholic cavalier single-handed to chase a thousand Paynims."

And Don Guzman crossed himself devoutly, and muttered half-a-dozen Ave Marias in succession, while Amyas rode silently by his side, utterly puzzled at this strange compound of shrewdness with fanaticism, of perfect high-breeding with a boastfulness which in an Englishman would have been the sure mark of vulgarity.

At last came a letter from Sir Richard Grenvile, complimenting Amyas on his success and promotion, bearing a long and courtly message to Don Guzman (whom Grenvile had known when he was in the Mediterranean, at the battle of Lepanto), and offering to receive him as his own guest at Bideford, till his ransom should arrive; a

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

proposition which the Spaniard (who of course was getting sufficiently tired of the Irish bogs) could not but gladly accept; and one of Winter's ships, returning to England in the spring of 1581, delivered duly at the quay of Bideford the body of Don Guzman Maria Magdalena. Raleigh, after forming for that summer one of the triumvirate by which Munster was governed after Ormond's departure, at last got his wish and departed for England and the Court; and Amyas was left alone with the snipes and yellow mantles for two more weary years.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER X

HOW THE MAYOR OF BIDEFORD BAITED HIS HOOK WITH HIS OWN FLESH

"And therewith he blent, and cried ha!
As though he had been stricken to the harte."

Palamon and Arcite.

So it befell to Chaucer's knight in prison; and so it befell also to Don Guzman; and it befell on this wise.

He settled down quietly enough at Bideford on his parole, in better quarters than he had occupied for many a day, and took things as they came, like a true soldier of fortune; till, after he had been with Grenvile hardly a month, old Salterne the Mayor came to supper.

Now Don Guzman, however much he might be puzzled at first at our strange English ways of asking burghers and such low-bred folk to eat and drink above the salt, in the company of noble persons, was quite gentleman enough to know that Richard Grenvile was gentleman enough to do only what was correct, and according to the customs and proprieties. So after shrugging the shoulders of his spirit, he submitted to eat and drink at the same board with a tradesman who sat at a desk, and made up ledgers, and took apprentices; and hearing him talk with Grenvile neither unwisely nor in a vulgar fashion, actually before the evening was out condescended to exchange words with him himself. Whereon he found him a very prudent and courteous person, quite aware of the Spaniard's superior rank, and making him feel in every sentence that he was aware thereof; and yet holding his own opinion, and asserting his own rights as a wise elder in a fashion which the Spaniard had only seen before among the merchant princes of Genoa and Venice.

At the end of supper, Salterne asked Grenvile to do his humble roof the honour, etc., etc., of supping with him the next evening, and then turning to the Don, said quite frankly, that he knew how great a condescension it would be on the part of a nobleman of Spain to sit at the board of a simple merchant: but that if the Spaniard deigned to do him such a favour, he would find that the cheer was fit enough for any rank, whatsoever the company might be; which invitation

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Don Guzman, being on the whole glad enough of anything to amuse him, graciously condescended to accept, and gained thereby an excellent supper, and, if he had chosen to drink it, much good wine.

Now Mr. Salterne was, of course, as a wise merchant, as ready as any man for an adventure to foreign parts, as was afterwards proved by his great exertions in the settlement of Virginia; and he was, therefore, equally ready to rack the brains of any guest whom he suspected of knowing anything concerning strange lands; and so he thought no shame, first to try to loose his guest's tongue by much good sack, and next to ask him prudent and well-concocted questions concerning the Spanish Main, Peru, the Moluccas, China, the Indies, and all parts.

The first of which schemes failed; for the Spaniard was as abstemious as any monk, and drank little but water; the second succeeded not over well, for the Spaniard was as cunning as any fox, and answered little but wind.

In the midst of which tongue-fence in came the Rose of Torridge, looking as beautiful as usual; and hearing what they were upon, added, artlessly enough, her questions to her father's: to her Don Guzman could not but answer; and without revealing any very important commercial secrets, gave his host and his host's daughter a very amusing evening.

Now Don Guzman, being idle (as captives needs must be), and also full of bread (for Sir Richard kept a very good table), had already looked round for mere amusement's sake after some one with whom to fall in love. Lady Grenvile, as nearest, was, I blush to say, thought of first; but the Spaniard was a man of honour, and Sir Richard his host; so he had put Lady Grenvile out of his mind; and so left room to take Rose Salterne into it, not with any distinct purpose of wronging her: but, as I said before, half to amuse himself, and half, too, because he could not help it. For there was an innocent freshness about the Rose of Torridge, fond as she was of being admired, which was new to him and most attractive. "The train of the peacock," as he said to himself, "and yet the heart of the dove," made so charming a combination, that if he could have persuaded her to love no one but him, perhaps he might become fool enough to love no one but her. And at that thought he was seized with a very panic of prudence, and resolved to keep out of her way; and yet the days ran slowly, and Lady Grenvile when at home was stupid enough to talk and think about nothing but her husband; and when she went to Stow, and left the Don alone in one corner of the great house at Bideford, what could he do but lounge down to the butt-gardens to show off his fine black cloak and fine black feather, see the shooting,

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

have a game or two of rackets with the youngsters, a game or two of bowls with the elders, and get himself invited home to supper by Mr. Salterne?

And there, of course, he had it all his own way, and ruled the roast (which he was fond enough of doing) right royally, not only on account of his rank, but because he had something to say worth hearing, as a travelled man. For those times were the day-dawn of English commerce; and not a merchant in Bideford, or in all England, but had his imagination all on fire with projects of discoveries, companies, privileges, patents, and settlements. Everywhere English commerce, under the genial sunshine of Elizabeth's wise rule, was spreading and taking root; and as Don Guzman talked with his new friends, he soon saw (for he was shrewd enough) that they belonged to a race which must be exterminated if Spain intended to become (as she did intend) the mistress of the world; and that it was not enough for Spain to have seized in the Pope's name the whole new world, and claimed the exclusive right to sail the seas of America; not enough to have crushed the Hollanders; not enough to have degraded the Venetians into her bankers, and the Genoese into her mercenaries; not enough to have incorporated into herself, with the kingdom of Portugal, the whole East Indian trade of Portugal, while these fierce islanders remained to assert, with cunning policy and texts of Scripture, and, if they failed, with sharp shot and cold steel, free seas and free trade for all the nations upon earth. He saw it, and his countrymen saw it too: and therefore the Spanish armada came: but of that hereafter. And Don Guzman knew also, by hard experience, that these same islanders, who sat in Salterne's parlour, talking broad Devon through their noses, were no mere counters of money and hucksters of goods: but men who, though they thoroughly hated fighting, and loved making money instead, could fight, upon occasion, after a very dogged and terrible fashion, as well as the bluest blood in Spain; and who sent out their merchant-ships armed up to the teeth, and filled with men who had been trained from childhood to use those arms, and had orders to use them without mercy if either Spaniard, Portugal, or other created being dared to stop their money-making. And one evening he waxed quite mad, when, after having civilly enough hinted that if Englishmen came where they had no right to come, they might find themselves sent back again, he was answered by a volley of—

"We'll see that, sir."

"Depends on who says 'No right.'"

"You found might right," said another, "when you claimed the Indian seas; we may find right might when we try them."

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Try them, then, gentlemen, by all means, if it shall so please your worships; and find the sacred flag of Spain as invincible as ever was the Roman eagle."

"We have, sir. Did you ever hear of Francis Drake?"

"Or of George Fenner and the Portugals at the Azores, one against seven?"

"Or of John Hawkins, at St. Juan d'Ulloa?"

"You are insolent burghers," said Don Guzman, and rose to go.

"Sir," said old Salterne, "as you say, we are burghers and plain men, and some of us have forgotten ourselves a little, perhaps; we must beg you to forgive our want of manners, and to put it down to the strength of my wine; for insolent we never meant to be, especially to a noble gentleman and a foreigner."

But the Don would not be pacified; and walked out, calling himself an ass and a blinkard for having demeaned himself to such a company, forgetting that he had brought it on himself.

Salterne (prompted by the great devil Mammon) came up to him next day, and begged pardon again; promising, moreover, that none of those who had been so rude should be henceforth asked to meet him, if he would deign to honour his house once more. And the Don actually was appeased, and went there the very next evening, sneering at himself the whole time for going.

"Fool that I am! that girl has bewitched me, I believe. Go I must, and eat my share of dirt, for her sake."

So he went; and, cunningly enough, hinted to old Salterne that he had taken such a fancy to him, and felt so bound by his courtesy and hospitality, that he might not object to tell him things that he would not mention to every one; for that the Spaniards were not jealous of single traders, but of any general attempt to deprive them of their hard-earned wealth: that, however, in the meanwhile, there were plenty of opportunities for one man here and there to enrich himself, etc.

Old Salterne, shrewd as he was, had his weak point, and the Spaniard had touched it; and delighted at this opportunity of learning the mysteries of the Spanish monopoly, he often actually set Rose on to draw out the Don, without a fear (so blind does money make men) lest she might be herself drawn in. For, first, he held it as impossible that she would think of marrying a Popish Spaniard as of marrying the man in the moon; and, next, as impossible that he would think of marrying a burgher's daughter as of marrying a negress; and trusted that the religion of the one, and the family pride of the other, would keep them as separate as beings of two different species. And so it came to pass, that for weeks and months the merchant's house

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

was the Don's favourite haunt, and he saw the Rose of Torridge daily, and the Rose of Torridge heard him.

And as for her, poor child, she had never seen such a man. He had, or seemed to have, all the high-bred grace of Frank, and yet he was cast in a manlier mould. He had marvels to tell by flood and field as many and more than Amyas; and he told them with a grace and an eloquence of which modest, simple, old Amyas possessed nothing. Besides, he was on the spot, and the Leighs were not, nor indeed were any of her old lovers; and what could she do but amuse herself with the only person who came to hand?

So thought, in time, more ladies than she; for the country, the north of it at least, was all but bare just then of young gallants, what with the Netherland wars and the Irish wars; and the Spaniard became soon welcome at every house for many a mile round.

And his stories, certainly, were worth hearing. He seemed to have been everywhere, and to have seen everything: born in Peru, and sent home to Spain at ten years old; brought up in Italy; a soldier in the Levant; an adventurer to the East Indies; again in America, first in the islands, and then in Mexico. Then back again to Spain, and thence to Rome, and thence to Ireland. Shipwrecked; captive among savages; looking down the craters of volcanoes; hanging about all the courts of Europe; fighting Turks, Indians, lions, elephants, alligators, and what not? At five-and-thirty he had seen enough for three lives, and knew how to make the best of what he had seen.

And now, as he said to Rose one evening, what had he left on earth, but a heart trampled as hard as the pavement? Whom had he to love? Who loved him? He had nothing for which to live but fame: and even that was denied to him, a prisoner in a foreign land.

"Had he no kindred, then?" asked pitying Rose.

"My two sisters are in a convent;—they had neither money nor beauty; so they are dead to me. My brother is a Jesuit, so he is dead to me. My father fell by the hand of Indians in Mexico; my mother, a penniless widow, is companion, duenna—whatsoever they may choose to call it—carrying fans and lap-dogs for some princess or other there in Seville, of no better blood than herself; and I—devil! I have lost even my sword—and so fares the house of De Soto."

Don Guzman, of course, intended to be pitied, and pitied he was accordingly. And then he would turn the conversation, and begin telling Italian stories, after the Italian fashion; so that Rose had wept over the sorrows of Juliet and Desdemona, and over many another moving tale, long before they were ever enacted on an English stage.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

And so on, and so on. What need of more words? Before a year was out, Rose Salterne was far more in love with Don Guzman than he with her; and both suspected each other's mind, though neither hinted at the truth; she from fear, and he, to tell the truth, from sheer Spanish pride of blood. For he soon began to find out that he must compromise that blood by marrying the heretic burgher's daughter, or all his labour would be thrown away.

He had seen with much astonishment, and then practised with much pleasure, that graceful old English fashion of saluting every lady on the cheek at meeting, and he had seen, too, fuming with jealous rage, more than one Bideford burgher, redolent of onions, profane in that way the velvet cheek of Rose Salterne.

So, one day, he offered his salute in like wise; but he did it when she was alone; for something within (perhaps a guilty conscience) whispered that it might be hardly politic to make the proffer in her father's presence: however, to his astonishment, he received a prompt though quiet rebuff.

"No, sir; you should know that my cheek is not for you."

"Why," said he, stifling his anger, "it seems free enough to every counter-jumper in the town!"

Was it love, or simple innocence, which made her answer apologetically?

"True, Don Guzman; but they are my equals."

"And I?"

"You are a nobleman, sir; and should recollect that you are one."

"Well," said he, forcing a sneer, "it is a strange taste to prefer the shopkeeper!"

"Prefer?" said she, forcing a laugh in her turn; "it is a mere form among us. They are nothing to me, I can tell you."

"And I, then, less than nothing?"

Rose turned very red; but she had nerve to answer—

"And why should you be anything to me? You have condescended too much, sir, already to us, in giving us many a—many a pleasant evening. You must condescend no further. You wrong yourself, sir, and me too. No, sir; not a step nearer!—I will not! A salute between equals means nothing: but between you and me—I vow, sir, if you do not leave me this moment, I will complain to my father."

"Do so, madam! I care as little for your father's anger, as you for my misery."

"Cruel!" cried Rose, trembling from head to foot.

"I love you, madam!" cried he, throwing himself at her feet. "I adore you! Never mention differences of rank to me more; for I have forgotten them; forgotten all but love, all but you, madam! My

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

light, my lodestar, my princess, my goddess! You see where my pride is gone; remember I plead as a suppliant, a beggar—though one who may be one day a prince, a king! ay, and a prince now, a very Lucifer of pride to all except to you; to you a wretch who grovels at your feet, and cries, 'Have mercy on me, on my loneliness, my homelessness, my friendlessness.' Ah, Rose (madam I should have said, forgive the madness of my passion), you know not the heart which you break. Cold Northerns, you little dream how a Spaniard can love. Love? Worship, rather; as I worship you, madam; as I bless the captivity which brought me the sight of you, and the ruin which first made me rich. Is it possible, Saints and Virgin! do my own tears deceive my eyes, or are there tears, too, in those radiant orbs?"

"Go, sir!" cried poor Rose, recovering herself suddenly; "and let me never see you more." And, as a last chance for life, she darted out of the room.

"Your slave obeys you, madam, and kisses your hands and feet for ever and a day," said the cunning Spaniard, and drawing himself up, walked serenely out of the house; while she, poor fool, peeped after him out of her window upstairs, and her heart sank within her as she watched his jaunty and careless air.

How much of that rhapsody of his was honest, how much premeditated, I cannot tell: though she, poor child, began to fancy that it was all a set speech, when she found that he had really taken her at her word, and set foot no more within her father's house. So she reproached herself for the cruelest of women; settled, that if he died, she should be his murderess; watched for him to pass at the window, in hopes that he might look up, and then hid herself in terror the moment he appeared round the corner; and so forth, and so forth:—one love-making is very like another; and really it is fiddling while Rome is burning, to spend more pages over the sorrows of poor little Rose Salterne, while the destinies of Europe are hanging on the marriage between Elizabeth and Anjou: and Sir Humphrey Gilbert is stirring heaven and earth, and Devonshire, of course, as the most important portion of the said earth, to carry out his dormant patent, which will give to England in due time (we are not jesting now) Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Canada, and the Northern States; and to Humphrey Gilbert himself something better than a new world, namely another world, and a crown of glory therein which never fades away.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER XI

HOW EUSTACE LEIGH MET THE POPE'S LEGATE

"Misguided, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
Thou see'st to be too busy is some danger."

Hamlet.

It is the spring of 1582-3. The grey March skies are curdling hard and high above black mountain peaks. The keen March wind is sweeping harsh and dry across a dreary sheet of bog, still red and yellow with the stains of winter frost. One brown knoll alone breaks the waste, and on it a few leafless wind-clipt oaks stretch their moss-grown arms, like giant hairy spiders, above a desolate pool which crisps and shivers in the biting breeze, while from beside its brink rises a mournful cry, and sweeps down, faint and fitful, amid the howling of the wind.

Along the brink of the bog, picking their road among crumbling rocks and green spongy springs, a company of English soldiers are pushing fast, clad cap-à-pié in helmet and quilted jerkin, with arquebus on shoulder, and pikes trailing behind them; stern steadfast men, who, two years since, were working the guns at Smerwick fort, and have since then seen many a bloody fray, and shall see more before they die. Two captains ride before them on shaggy ponies, the taller in armour, stained and rusted with many a storm and fray, the other in brilliant inlaid cuirass and helmet, gaudy sash and plume, and sword hilt glittering with gold, a quaint contrast enough to the meagre garron which carries him and his finery. Beside them, secured by a cord which a pikeman has fastened to his own wrist, trots a bare-legged Irish kerne, whose only clothing is his ragged yellow mantle, and the unkempt "glib" of hair, through which his eyes peer out, right and left, in mingled fear and sullenness. He is the guide of the company, in their hunt after the rebel Baltinglas; and woe to him if he play them false.

"A pleasant country, truly, Captain Raleigh," says the dingy officer to the gay one. "I wonder how, having once escaped from it to Whitehall, you have the courage to come back and spoil that gay suit with bog-water and mud."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"A very pleasant country, my friend Amyas; what you say in jest, I say in earnest."

"Hillo! Our tastes have changed places. I am sick of it already, as you foretold. Would Heaven that I could hear of some adventure Westward-ho! and find these big bones swinging in a hammock once more. Pray what has made you so suddenly in love with bog and rock, that you come back to tramp them with us? I thought you had spied out the nakedness of the land long ago."

"Bog and rock? Nakedness of the land? What is needed here but prudence and skill, justice and law? This soil, see, is fat enough, if men were here to till it. These rocks—who knows what minerals they may hold? I hear of gold and jewels found already in divers parts; and Daniel, my brother Humphrey's German assayer, assures me that these rocks are of the very same kind as those which yield the silver in Peru. Tut, man! if her gracious Majesty would but bestow on me some few square miles of this same wilderness, in seven years' time I would make it blossom like the rose, by God's good help."

"Humph! I should be more inclined to stay here, then."

"So you shall, and be my agent, if you will, to get in my mine-rents and my corn-rents, and my fishery-rents, eh? Could you keep accounts, old knight of the bear's-paw?"

"Well enough for such short reckonings as yours would be, on the profit side at least. No, no—I'd sooner carry lime all my days from Cauldy to Bideford, than pass another twelve-month in the land of Ire, among the children of wrath. There is a curse upon the face of the earth, I believe."

"There is no curse upon it, save the old one of man's sin—'Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to thee.' But if you root up the thorns and thistles, Amyas, I know no fiend who can prevent your growing wheat instead; and if you till the ground like a man, you plough and harrow away nature's curse."

"It is sword and bullet, I think, that are needed here, before plough and harrow, to clear away some of the curse. Until a few more of these Irish lords are gone where the Desmonds are, there is no peace for Ireland."

"Humph! not so far wrong, I fear. And yet—Irish lords? These very traitors are better English blood than we who hunt them down. When Yeo here slew the Desmond the other day, he no more let out a drop of Irish blood, than if he had slain the Lord Deputy himself."

"His blood be on his own head," said Yeo. "He looked as wild a savage as the worst of them, more shame to him; and the Ancient

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

here had nigh cut off his arm before he told us who he was; and then, your worship, having a price upon his head, and like to bleed to death too——"

"Enough, enough, good fellow," said Raleigh. "Thou hast done what was given thee to do. Leigh, what noise was that?"

"An Irish howl, I fancied: but it came from off the bog; it may be only a plover's cry."

"Something not quite right, Sir Captain, to my mind," said the Ancient. "They have ugly stories here of pucks and banshees, and what not of ghosts. There it was again, wailing just like a woman. They say the banshee cried all night before Desmond was slain."

"Perhaps, then, this one may be crying for Baltinglas; for his turn is likely to come next—not that I believe in such old wives' tales."

"Shamus, my man," said Amyas to the guide, "do you hear that cry in the bog?"

The guide put on the most stolid of faces, and answered in broken English:

"Shamus hear nought. Perhaps—what you call him?—fishing in ta pool."

"An otter, he means, and I believe he is right. Stay, no! Did you not hear it then, Shamus? It was a woman's voice."

"Shamus is shick in his ears ever since Christmas."

"Shamus will go after Desmond if he lies," said Amyas. "Ancient, we had better send a few men to see what it is; there may be a poor soul taken by robbers, or perhaps starving to death, as I have seen many a one."

"And I, too, poor wretches; and by no fault of their own or ours either: but if their lords will fall to quarrelling, and then drive each other's cattle, and waste each other's lands, sir, you know——"

"I know," said Amyas impatiently; "why dost not take the men, and go?"

"Cry you mercy, noble Captain: but—I fear nothing born of woman."

"Well, what of that?" said Amyas, with a smile.

"But these pucks, sir. The wild Irish do say that they haunt the pools; and they do no manner of harm, sir, when you are coming upon them; but when you are past, sir, they jump on your back like to apes, sir,—and who can tackle that manner of fiend?"

"Why, then, by thine own showing, Ancient," said Raleigh, "thou may'st go and see all safely enough, and then if the puck jumps on thee as thou comest back, just run in with him here, and I'll buy him of thee for a noble; or thou may'st keep him in a cage, and make money in London by showing him for a monster."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Good heavens forefend, Captain Raleigh! but you talk rashly! But if I must, Captain Leigh—

'Where duty calls
To brazen walls,
How base the slave who flinches.'

Lads, who'll follow me?"

"Thou askest for volunteers, as if thou wert to lead a forlorn hope. Pull away at the usquebaugh, man, and swallow Dutch courage, since thine English is oozed away. Stay, I'll go myself."

"And I with you," said Raleigh. "As the queen's true knight-errant, I am bound to be behindhand in no adventure. Who knows but we may find a wicked magician, just going to cut off the head of some saffron-mantled princess?" and he dismounted.

"Oh, sirs, sirs, to endanger your precious——"

"Pooh," said Raleigh. "I wear an amulet, and have a spell of art-magic at my tongue's end, whereby, Sir Ancient, neither can a ghost see me, nor I see them. Come with us, Yeo, the Desmond-slayer, and we will shame the devil, or be shamed by him."

"He may shame me, sir, but he will never frighten me," quoth Yeo; "but the bog, Captains?"

"Tut! Devonshire men, and heath-trotters born, and not know our way over a peat moor!"

And the three strode away.

They splashed and scrambled for some quarter of a mile to the knoll, while the cry became louder and louder as they neared.

"That's neither ghost nor otter, sirs, but a true Irish howl, as Captain Leigh said; and I'll warrant Master Shamus knew as much long ago," said Yeo.

And in fact, they could now hear plainly the "Ochone, Ochonerie," of some wild woman; and scrambling over the boulders of the knoll, in another minute came full upon her.

She was a young girl, sluttish and unkempt, of course, but fair enough: her only covering, as usual, was the ample yellow mantle. There she sat upon a stone, tearing her black dishevelled hair, and every now and then throwing up her head, and bursting into a long mournful cry, "for all the world," as Yeo said, "like a dumb four-footed hound, and not a Christian soul."

On her knees lay the head of a man of middle age, in the long soutane of a Romish priest. One look at the attitude of his limbs told them that he was dead.

The two paused in awe; and Raleigh's spirit, susceptible of all poetical images, felt keenly that strange scene,—the bleak and bitter

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

sky, the shapeless bog, the stunted trees, the savage girl alone with the corpse in that utter desolation. And as she bent her head over the still face, and called wildly to him who heard her not, and then, utterly unmindful of the intruders, sent up again that dreary wail into the dreary air, they felt a sacred horror, which almost made them turn away, and leave her unquestioned: but Yeo, whose nerves were of tougher fibre, asked quietly—

"Shall I go and search the fellow, Captain?"

"Better, I think," said Amyas.

Raleigh went gently to the girl, and spoke to her in English. She looked up at him, his armour and his plume, with wide and wondering eyes, and then shook her head, and returned to her lamentation.

Raleigh gently laid his hand on her arm, and lifted her up, while Yeo and Amyas bent over the corpse.

It was the body of a large and coarse-featured man: but wasted and shrunk as if by famine to a very skeleton. The hands and legs were cramped up, and the trunk bowed together, as if the man had died of cold or famine. Yeo drew back the clothes from the thin bosom, while the girl screamed and wept, but made no effort to stop him.

"Ask her who it is? Yeo, you know a little Irish," said Amyas.

He asked, but the girl made no answer. "The stubborn jade won't tell, of course, sir. If she were but a man, I'd make her soon enough."

"Ask her who killed him?"

"No one, she says; and I believe she says true, for I can find no wound. The man has been starved, sirs, as I am a sinful man. God help him, though he is a priest; and yet he seems full enough down below. What's here? A big pouch, sirs, stuffed full of somewhat."

"Hand it hither."

The two opened the pouch; papers, papers, but no scrap of food. Then a parchment. They unrolled it.

"Latin," said Amyas; "you must construe, Don Scholar."

"Is it possible?" said Raleigh, after reading a moment. "This is indeed a prize! This is Saunders himself?"

Yeo sprang up from the body as if he had touched an adder. "Nick Saunders, the Legacy, sir?"

"Nicholas Saunders, the Legate."

"The villain! why did not he wait for me to have the comfort of killing him? Dog!" and he kicked the corpse with his foot.

"Quiet! quiet! Remember the poor girl," said Amyas, as she shrieked at the profanation, while Raleigh went on, half to himself. "Yes, this is Saunders. Misguided fool; and this is the end! To this

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

thou hast come with thy plotting and thy conspiring, thy lying and thy boasting. Thou hast called on the Heavens to judge between thee and us, and here is their answer! What is that in his hand, Amyas? Give it me. A pastoral epistle to the Earl of Ormond, and all nobles of the realm of Ireland; 'To all who groan beneath the loathsome tyranny of an illegitimate adulteress, etc., Nicholas Saunders, by the grace of God, Legate, etc.' Bah! and this forsooth was thy last meditation!"

He ran his eye through various other documents, written in the usual strain: full of huge promises from the Pope and the King of Spain; frantic and filthy slanders against Elizabeth, Burghley, Leicester, Essex (the elder), Sidney, and every great and good man (never mind of which party) who then upheld the commonweal; bombastic attempts to terrify weak consciences, by denouncing endless fire against those who opposed the true faith; fulsome ascriptions of martyrdom and sanctity to every rebel and traitor who had been hanged for the last twenty years.

With a gesture of disgust, Raleigh crammed the foul stuff back again into the pouch. Taking it with them, they walked back to the company, and then remounting, marched away once more towards the lands of the Desmonds; and the girl was left alone with the dead.

An hour had passed, when another Englishman was standing by the wailing girl, and round him a dozen shockheaded kernes, skene on thigh and javelin in hand, were tossing about their tawny rags, and adding their lamentations to those of the lonely watcher.

The Englishman was Eustace Leigh; a layman still, but still at his old work. By two years of intrigue and labour from one end of Ireland to the other, he had been trying to satisfy his conscience for rejecting "the higher calling" of the celibate; for mad hopes still lurked within that fiery heart. His brow was wrinkled now; his features harshened; the scar upon his face, and the slight distortion which accompanied it, was hidden by a bushy beard from all but himself; and he never forgot it for a day, nor forgot who had given it to him.

He had been with Desmond, wandering in moor and moss for many a month in danger of his life; and now he was on his way to James Fitz-Eustace, Lord Baltinglas, to bring him the news of Desmond's death; and with him a remnant of the clan, who were either too stouthearted, or too desperately stained with crime, to seek peace from the English, and, as their fellows did, find it at once and freely.

There Eustace stood, looking down on all that was left of the most sacred personage of Ireland; the man who, as he once had hoped, was to regenerate his native land, and bring the proud island of the West once more beneath that gentle yoke, in which united Christendom

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

laboured for the commonweal of the universal Church. There he was, and with him all Eustace's dreams, in the very heart of that country which he had vowed, and believed as he vowed, was ready to rise in arms as one man, even to the baby at the breast (so he had said), in vengeance against the Saxon heretic, and sweep the hated name of Englishman into the deepest abysses of the surge which walled her coasts; with Spain and the Pope to back him, and the wealth of the Jesuits at his command; in the midst of faithful Catholics, valiant soldiers, noblemen who had pledged themselves to die for the cause, serfs who worshipped him as a demigod—starved to death in a bog!

"Blest Saunders!" murmured Eustace Leigh; "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like this!"

The corpse was buried; a few prayers said hastily; and Eustace Leigh was away again, not now to find Baltinglas; for it was more than his life was worth. The girl had told him of the English soldiers who had passed, and he knew that they would reach the earl probably before he did. The game was up; all was lost. So he retraced his steps, as a desperate resource, to the last place where he would be looked for: and after a month of disguising, hiding, and other expedients, found himself again in his native county of Devon, while Fitz-Eustace Viscount Baltinglas had taken ship for Spain, having got little by his famous argument to Ormond in behalf of his joining the Church of Rome.

And now let us return to Raleigh and Amyas, as they jog along their weary road. They have many things to talk of; for it is but three days since they met.

Amyas, as you see, is coming fast into Raleigh's old opinion of Ireland. Raleigh, under the inspiration of a possible grant of Desmond's lands, looks on bogs and rocks transfigured by his own hopes and fancy, as if by the glory of a rainbow. He looked at all things so, noble fellow, even thirty years after, when old, worn out, and ruined; well for him had it been otherwise, and his heart had grown old with his head! Amyas, who knows nothing about Desmond's lands, is puzzled at the change.

"Why, what is this, Raleigh? You are like children sitting in the market-place, and nothing pleases you. You wanted to get to Court, and you have got there; and are lord and master, I hear, or something very like it, already—and as soon as Fortune stuffs your mouth full of sweetmeats, do you turn informer on her?"

Raleigh laughed insignificantly: but was silent.

"And how is your friend Mr. Secretary Spenser, who was with us at Smerwick?"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Spenser? He has thriven even as I have; and he has found, as I have, that in making one friend at Court you make ten foes. I want to be great—great I am already, they say, if princes' favour can swell the frog into an ox; but I want to be liked, loved—I want to see people smile when I enter."

"So they do, I'll warrant," said Amyas.

"So do hyenas," said Raleigh; "grin because they are hungry, and I may throw them a bone; I'll throw you one now, old lad, or rather a good sirloin of beef, for the sake of your smile. That's honest, at least, I'll warrant, whosoever's else is not. Have you heard of my brother Humphrey's new project?"

"How should I hear anything in this waste howling wilderness?"

"Kiss hands to the wilderness, then, and come with me to Newfoundland!"

"You to Newfoundland?"

"Yes. I to Newfoundland, unless my little matter here is settled at once. Gloriana don't know it, and shan't till I'm off. She'd send me to the Tower, I think, if she caught me playing truant. I could hardly get leave to come hither; but I must out, and try my fortune. I am over ears in debt already, and sick of courts and courtiers. Humphrey must go next spring and take possession of his kingdom beyond seas, or his patent expires; and with him I go, and you too, my circumnavigating giant."

And then Raleigh expounded to Amyas the details of the great Newfoundland scheme.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Raleigh's half-brother, held a patent for "planting" the lands of Newfoundland and "Meta Incognita" (Labrador). He had collected a large sum; Sir Gilbert Peckham of London, Mr. Hayes of South Devon, and various other gentlemen, of whom more hereafter, had adventured their money; and a considerable colony was to be sent out the next year, with miners, assayers, and, what was more, Parmenius Budæus, Frank's old friend, who had come to England full of thirst to see the wonders of the New World; and over and above this, as Raleigh told Amyas in strictest secrecy, Adrian Gilbert, Humphrey's brother, was turning every stone at Court for a patent of discovery in the North-West; and this Newfoundland colony, though it was to produce gold, silver, merchandise, and what not, was but a basis of operations, a half-way house from whence to work out the North-West passage to the Indies —that golden dream, as fatal to English valour as the Guiana one to Spanish—and yet hardly, hardly to be regretted, when we remember the seamanship, the science, the chivalry, the heroism, unequalled in the history of the English nation, which it has called forth among

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

those our later Arctic voyagers who have combined the knight-errantry of the middle age with the practical prudence of the modern, and dared for duty more than Cortez or Pizarro dared for gold.

Amyas, simple fellow, took all in greedily; he knew enough of the dangers of the Magellan passage to appreciate the boundless value of a road to the East Indies which would (as all supposed then) save half the distance, and be as it were a private possession of the English, safe from Spanish interference; and he listened reverently to Sir Humphrey's quaint proofs, half true, half fantastic, of such a passage, which Raleigh detailed to him—then said: "But if you must needs have an adventure, you insatiable soul you, why not try the golden city of Manoa?"

"Manoa?" asked Raleigh, who had heard, as most had, dim rumours of the place. "What do you know of it?"

Whereon Amyas told him all that he had gathered from the Spaniard; and Raleigh, in his turn, believed every word.

"Humph!" said he after a long silence. "To find that golden Emperor; offer him help and friendship from the Queen of England; defend him against the Spaniards; if we became strong enough, conquer back all Peru from the Popish tyrants, and reinstate him on the throne of the Incas, with ourselves for his body-guard—Hey, Amyas? We'll do it, lad!"

"We'll try," said Amyas; "but we must be quick, for there's one Berreo sworn to carry out the quest to the death; and if the Spaniards once get thither, their plan of works will be much more like Pizarro's than like yours; and by the time we come, there will be neither gold nor city left."

"Nor Indians either, I'll warrant the butchers; but, lad, I am promised to Humphrey; I have a bark fitting out already, and all I have, and more, adventured in her; so Manoa must wait."

"It will wait well enough, if the Spaniards prosper no better on the Amazon than they have done; but must I come with you? To tell the truth, I am quite shore-sick, and to sea I must go. What will my mother say?"

"I'll manage thy mother," said Raleigh; and so he did; for, to cut a long story short, he went back the month after, and he not only took home letters from Amyas to his mother, but so impressed on that good lady the enormous profits and honours to be derived from Meta Incognita, and (which was most true) the advantage to any young man of sailing with such a general as Humphrey Gilbert, most pious and most learned of seamen and of cavaliers, beloved and honoured above all his compeers by Queen Elizabeth, that she consented to Amyas's adventuring in the voyage some two hundred pounds

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

which had come to him as his share of prize-money, after the ever memorable circumnavigation. For Mrs. Leigh, be it understood, was no longer at Burrough Court. By Frank's persuasion, she had let the old place, moved up to London with her eldest son, and taken for herself a lodging somewhere by Palace Stairs, which looked out upon the silver Thames (for Thames was silver then), with its busy ferries and gliding boats, across to the pleasant fields of Lambeth, and the Archbishop's Palace, and the wooded Surrey hills; and there she spent her peaceful days, close to her Frank and to the Court. Elizabeth would have had her re-enter it, offering her a small place in the household; but she declined, saying that she was too old and heart-weary for aught but prayer. So by prayer she lived, under the sheltering shadow of the tall minster, where she went morn and even to worship, and to entreat for the two in whom her heart was bound up; and Frank slipped in every day if but for five minutes, and brought with him Spenser, or Raleigh, or Dyer, or Budæus, or sometimes Sidney's self: and there was talk of high and holy things, of which none could speak better than could she; and each guest went from that hallowed room a humbler and yet a loftier man. So slipped on the peaceful months, and few and far between came Irish letters, for Ireland was then farther from Westminster than is the Black Sea now; but those were days in which wives and mothers had learned (as they have learned once more, sweet souls!) to walk by faith and not by sight for those they love: and Mrs. Leigh was content (though when was she not content?) to hear that Amyas was winning a good report as a brave and prudent officer, sober, just, and faithful, beloved and obeyed alike by English soldiers and Irish kernes.

Those two years, and the one which followed, were the happiest which she had known since her husband's death. But the cloud was fast coming up the horizon, though she saw it not. A little longer, and the sun would be hid for many a wintry day.

Amyas went to Plymouth (with Yeo, of course, at his heels), and there beheld, for the first time, the majestic countenance of the philosopher of Compton Castle. He lodged with Drake, and found him not over-sanguine as to the success of the voyage.

"For learning and manners, Amyas, there's not his equal; and the queen may well love him, and Devon be proud of him; but book-learning is not business; book-learning didn't get me round the world; book-learning didn't make Captain Hawkins, nor his father neither, the best shipbuilders from Hull to Cadiz; and book-learning, I very much fear, won't plant Newfoundland."

However, the die was cast, and the little fleet of five sail assembled in Cawsand Bay. Amyas was to go as a gentleman adventurer

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

on board of Raleigh's bark; Raleigh himself, however, at the eleventh hour, had been forbidden by the queen to leave England. Ere they left, Sir Humphrey Gilbert's picture was painted by some Plymouth artist, to be sent up to Elizabeth in answer to a letter and a gift sent by Raleigh, which, as a specimen of the men of the time, I here transcribe:—

"BROTHER—I have sent you a token from her Majesty, an anchor guided by a lady, as you see. And further, her Highness willed me to send you word, that she wisheth you as great good hap and safety to your ship as if she were there in person, desiring you to have care of yourself as of that which she tendereth; and, therefore, for her sake, you must provide for it accordingly. Furthermore, she commandeth that you leave your picture with her. For the rest I leave till our meeting, or to the report of the bearer, who would needs be the messenger of this good news. So I commit you to the will and protection of God, who send us such life and death as he shall please, or hath appointed.

"Richmond, this Friday morning,

"Your true brother,

"W. RALEIGH."

"Who would not die, sir, for such a woman?" said Sir Humphrey (and he said truly), as he showed that letter to Amyas.

"Who would not? But she bids you rather live for her."

"I shall do both, young man; and for God too, I trust. We are going in God's cause; we go for the honour of God's Gospel, for the deliverance of poor infidels led captive by the devil; for the relief of my distressed countrymen unemployed within this narrow isle; and to God we commit our cause. We fight against the devil himself; and stronger is He that is within us than he that is against us."

Some say that Raleigh himself came down to Plymouth, accompanied the fleet a day's sail to sea, and would have given her Majesty the slip, and gone with them Westward-ho, but for Sir Humphrey's advice. It is likely enough but I cannot find evidence for it. At all events, on the 11th June the fleet sailed out, having, says Mr. Hayes, "in number about 260 men, among whom we had of every faculty good choice, as shipwrights, masons, carpenters, smiths, and such-like, requisite for such an action; also mineral men and refiners. Beside, for solace of our people and allurement of the savages, we were provided of musique in good variety; not omitting the least toys, as morris-dancers, hobby-horses, and May-like conceits, to delight the savage people, whom we intended to win by all fair means

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

possible." An armament complete enough, even to that tenderness towards the Indians, which is so striking a feature of the Elizabethan seamen (called out in them, perhaps, by horror at the Spanish cruelties, as well as by their more liberal creed), and to the daily service of God on board of every ship, according to the simple old instructions of Captain John Hawkins to one of his little squadrons, "Keep good company; beware of fire; serve God daily; and love one another"—an armament, in short, complete in all but men. The sailors had been picked up hastily and anywhere, and soon proved themselves a mutinous, and, in the case of the bark Swallow, a piratical set. The mechanics were little better. The gentlemen-adventurers, puffed with vain hopes of finding a new Mexico, became soon disappointed and surly at the hard practical reality; while over all was the head of a sage and an enthusiast, a man too noble to suspect others, and too pure to make allowances for poor dirty human weaknesses. He had got his scheme perfect upon paper; well for him, and for his company, if he had asked Francis Drake to translate it for him into fact! As early as the second day, the seeds of failure began to sprout above ground. The men of Raleigh's bark, the Vice-Admiral, suddenly found themselves seized, or supposed themselves seized, with a contagious sickness, and at midnight forsook the fleet, and went back to Plymouth; whereto Mr. Hayes can only say, "The reason I never could understand. Sure I am that Mr. Raleigh spared no cost in setting them forth. And so I leave it unto God!"

But Amyas said more. He told Butler the captain plainly that, if the bark went back, he would not; that he had seen enough ships deserting their consorts; that it should never be said of him that he had followed Winter's example, and that, too, on a fair easterly wind; and finally that he had seen Doughty hanged for trying to play such a trick, and that he might see others hanged too before he died. Whereon Captain Butler offered to draw and fight, to which Amyas showed no repugnance; whereon the captain, having taken a second look at Amyas's thews and sinews, reconsidered the matter, and offered to put Amyas on board of Sir Humphrey's Delight, if he could find a crew to row him.

Amyas looked around.

"Are there any of Sir Francis Drake's men on board?"

"Three, sir," said Yeo. "Robert Drew, and two others."

"Pelicans!" roared Amyas, "you have been round the world, and will you turn back from Westward-ho?"

There was a moment's silence, and then Drew came forward.

"Lower us a boat, captain, and lend us a caliver tc make signals

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

with, while I get my kit on deck; I'll after Captain Leigh, if I row him aboard all alone to my own hands."

"If I ever command ship, I will not forget you," said Amyas.

"Nor us either, sir, we hope; for we haven't forgotten you and your honest conditions," said both the other Pelicans; and so away over the side went all the five, and pulled away after the admiral's lantern, firing shots at intervals as signals. Luckily for the five desperadoes, the night was all but calm. They got on board before the morning, and so away into the boundless West.[1]

[1] The Raleigh, the largest ship of the squadron, was of only 200 tons burden; The Golden Hind, Hayes' ship, which returned safe, of 40; and The Squirrel (whereof more hereafter), of 10 tons! In such cockboats did these old heroes brave the unknown seas.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER XII

HOW BIDEFORD BRIDGE DINED AT ANNERY HOUSE

"Three lords sat drinking late yestreen,
And ere they paid the lawing,
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawing."—*Scotch Ballad.*

EVERY one who knows Bideford cannot but know Bideford Bridge; for it is the very omphalos, cynosure, and soul, around which the town, as a body, has organised itself; and as Edinburgh is Edinburgh by virtue of its castle, Rome Rome by virtue of its capitol, and Egypt Egypt by virtue of its Pyramids, so is Bideford Bideford by virtue of its Bridge. But all do not know that the bridge is a veritable esquire, bearing arms of its own (a ship and bridge proper on a plain field), and owning lands and tenements in many parishes, with which the said miraculous bridge has, from time to time, founded charities, built schools, waged suits at law, and finally (for this concerns us most) given yearly dinners, and kept for that purpose (luxurious and liquorish bridge that it was) the best stocked cellar of wines in all Devon.

To one of these dinners, as it happened, were invited in the year 1583 all the notabilities of Bideford, and beside them Mr. St. Leger of Annery close by, brother of the Marshal of Munster, and of Lady Grenvile; a most worthy and hospitable gentleman, who, finding riches a snare, parted with them so freely to all his neighbours as long as he lived, that he effectually prevented his children after him from falling into the temptations thereunto incident.

Between him and one of the bridge trustees arose an argument, whether a salmon caught below the bridge was better or worse than one caught above; and as that weighty question could only be decided by practical experiment, Mr. St. Leger vowed that as the bridge had given him a good dinner, he would give the bridge one; offered a bet of five pounds that he would find them, out of the pool below Annery, as firm and flaky a salmon as the Appledore one which they had just eaten; and then, in the fulness of his heart, invited the whole company present to dine with him at Annery three days after, and bring with them each a wife or daughter; and Don Guzman being at table, he was invited too.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

So there was a mighty feast in the great hall at Annery, such as had seldom been since Judge Hankford feasted Edward the Fourth there; and while every one was eating their best and drinking their worst, Rose Salterne and Don Guzman were pretending not to see each other, and watching each other all the more. But Rose, at least, had to be very careful of her glances; for not only was her father at the table, but just opposite her sat none other than Messrs. William Cary and Arthur St. Leger, lieutenants in her Majesty's Irish army, who had returned on furlough a few days before.

Rose Salterne and the Spaniard had not exchanged a word in the last six months, though they had met many times. The Spaniard by no means avoided her company, except in her father's house; he only took care to obey her carefully, by seeming always unconscious of her presence, beyond the stateliest of salutes at entering and departing. But he took care, at the same time, to lay himself out to the very best advantage whenever he was in her presence; to be more witty, more eloquent, more romantic, more full of wonderful tales than he ever yet had been. The cunning Don had found himself foiled in his first tactic; and he was now trying another, and a far more formidable one. In the first place, Rose deserved a very severe punishment, for having dared to refuse the love of a Spanish nobleman; and what greater punishment could he inflict than withdrawing the honour of his attentions, and the sunshine of his smiles? There was conceit enough in that notion, but there was cunning too; for none knew better than the Spaniard, that women, like the world, are pretty sure to value a man (especially if there be any real worth in him) at his own price; and that the more he demands for himself, the more they will give for him.

And now he would put a high price on himself, and pique her pride, as she was too much accustomed to worship, to be won by flattering it. He might have done that by paying attention to some one else: but he was too wise to employ so coarse a method, which might raise indignation, or disgust, or despair in Rose's heart, but would have never brought her to his feet—as it will never bring any woman worth bringing. So he quietly and unobtrusively showed her that he could do without her; and she, poor fool, as she was meant to do, began forthwith to ask herself—why? What was the hidden treasure, what was the reserve force which made him independent of her, while she could not say that she was independent of him? Had he a secret? how pleasant to know it! Some huge ambition? how pleasant to share it! Some mysterious knowledge? how pleasant to learn it! Some capacity of love beyond the common? how delicious to have it all for her own! He must be greater, wiser, richer-hearted than she was,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

as well as better-born. Ah, if his wealth would but supply her poverty! And so, step by step, she was being led to sue in formâ pauperis to the very man whom she had spurned when he sued in like form to her. That temptation of having some mysterious private treasure, of being the priestess of some hidden sanctuary, and being able to thank Heaven that she was not as other women are, was becoming fast too much for Rose, as it is too much for most. For none knew better than the Spaniard how much more fond women are, by the very law of their sex, of worshipping than of being worshipped, and of obeying than of being obeyed; how their coyness, often their scorn, is but a mask to hide their consciousness of weakness; and a mask, too, of which they themselves will often be the first to tire.

And Rose was utterly tired of that same mask as she sat at table at Annery that day; and Don Guzman saw it in her uneasy and downcast looks, and thinking (conceited coxcomb) that she must be by now sufficiently punished, stole a glance at her now and then, and was not abashed when he saw that she dropped her eyes when they met his, because he saw her silence and abstraction increase, and something like a blush steal into her cheeks. So he pretended to be as much downcast and abstracted as she was, and went on with his glances, till he once found her, poor thing, looking at him to see if he was looking at her; and then he knew his prey was safe, and asked her, with his eyes, "Do you forgive me?" and saw her stop dead in her talk to her next neighbour, and falter, and drop her eyes, and raise them again after a minute in search of his, that he might repeat the pleasant question. And then what could she do but answer with all her face and every bend of her pretty neck, "And do you forgive me in turn?"

Whereon Don Guzman broke out jubilant, like nightingale on bough, with story, and jest, and repartee; and became forthwith the soul of the whole company, and the most charming of all cavaliers. And poor Rose knew that she was the cause of his sudden change of mood, and blamed herself for what she had done, and shuddered and blushed at her own delight, and longed that the feast was over, that she might hurry home and hide herself alone with sweet fancies about a love the reality of which she felt she dared not face.

It was a beautiful sight, the great terrace at Annery that afternoon; with the smart dames in their gaudy dresses parading up and down in twos and threes before the stately house; or looking down upon the park, with the old oaks, and the deer, and the broad land-locked river spread out like a lake beneath, all bright in the glare of the midsummer sun; or listening obsequiously to the two great ladies who did the honours, Mrs. St. Leger the hostess, and her sister-in-law, fair Lady Grenvile. All chatted, and laughed, and eyed each other's

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

dresses, and gossiped about each other's husbands and servants: only Rose Salterne kept apart, and longed to get into a corner and laugh or cry, she knew not which.

"Our pretty Rose seems sad," said Lady Grenvile, coming up to her. "Cheer up, child! we want you to come and sing to us."

Rose answered she knew not what, and obeyed mechanically.

She took the lute, and sat down on a bench beneath the house, while the rest grouped themselves round her.

"What shall I sing?"

"Let us have your old song, 'Earl Haldan's Daughter.'"

Rose shrank from it. It was a loud and dashing ballad, which chimed in but little with her thoughts; and Frank had praised it too, in happier days long since gone by. She thought of him, and of others, and of her pride and carelessness; and the song seemed ominous to her; and yet for that very reason she dared not refuse to sing, for fear of suspicion where no one suspected; and so she began perforce—

1

"It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She look'd across the sea;
She look'd across the water,
And long and loud laugh'd she;
'The locks of six princesses
Must be my marriage-fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Who comes a wooing me?'

2

"It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She walk'd along the sand;
When she was aware of a knight so fair,
Come sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
His mast of beaten gold,
And 'hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat,
Who saileth here so bold?'

3

"'The locks of five princesses
I won beyond the sea;
I shore their golden tresses,
To fringe a cloak for thee.
One handful yet is wanting,
But one of all the tale;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Furl up thy velvet sail!'

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

4

"He leapt into the water,
That rover young and bold;
He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,
He shore her locks of gold;
'Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Sail Westward-ho, and away!' "

As she ceased, a measured voice, with a foreign accent, thrilled through her.

"In the East, they say the nightingale sings to the rose; Devon, more happy, has nightingale and rose in one."

"We have no nightingales in Devon, Don Guzman," said Lady Grenvile; "but our little forest thrushes sing, as you hear, sweetly enough to content any ear. But what brings you away from the gentlemen so early?"

"These letters," said he, "which have just been put into my hand; and as they call me home to Spain, I was loth to lose a moment of that delightful company from which I must part so soon."

"To Spain?" asked half-a-dozen voices: for the Don was a general favourite.

"Yes, and thence to the Indies. My ransom has arrived, and with it the promise of an office. I am to be Governor of La Guayra in Caraccas. Congratulate me on my promotion."

A mist was over Rose's eyes. The Spaniard's voice was hard and flippant. Did he care for her after all? And if he did, was it nevertheless hopeless? How her cheeks glowed! Everybody must see it! Anything to turn away their attention from her, and that nervous haste which makes people speak, and speak foolishly too, just because they ought to be silent, she asked—

"And where is La Guayra?"

"Half round the world, on the coast of the Spanish Main. The loveliest place on earth, and the loveliest governor's house, in a forest of palms at the foot of a mountain eight thousand feet high: I shall only want a wife there to be in paradise."

"I don't doubt that you may persuade some fair lady of Seville to accompany you thither," said Lady Grenvile.

"Thanks, gracious Madam: but the truth is, that since I have had the bliss of knowing English ladies, I have begun to think that they are the only ones on earth worth wooing."

"A thousand thanks for the compliment; but I fear none of our free English maidens would like to submit to the guardianship of a

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

duenna. Eh, Rose? how should you like to be kept under lock and key all day by an ugly old woman with a horn on her forehead?"

Poor Rose turned so scarlet that Lady Grenvile knew her secret on the spot, and would have tried to turn the conversation: but before she could speak, some burgher's wife blundered out a commonplace about the jealousy of Spanish husbands; and another, to make matters better, giggled out something more true than delicate about West Indian masters and fair slaves.

"Ladies," said Don Guzman, reddening, "believe me that these are but the calumnies of ignorance. If we be more jealous than other nations, it is because we love more passionately. If some of us abroad are profligate. it is because they, poor men, have no helpmate, which like the amethyst, keeps its wearer pure. I could tell you stories, ladies, of the constancy and devotion of Spanish husbands, even in the Indies, as strange as ever romancer invented."

In the meanwhile, as it was ordained, Cary could see and hear through the window of the hall a good deal of what was going on.

"How that Spanish crocodile ogles the Rose!" whispered he to young St. Leger.

"What wonder? He is not the first by many a one."

"Ay—but—By heaven, she is making side-shots at him with those languishing eyes of hers, the little baggage!"

"What wonder? He is not the first, say I, and won't be the last. Pass the wine, man."

"I have had enough; between sack and singing, my head is as mazed as a dizzy sheep. Let me slip out."

"Not yet, man; remember you are bound for one song more."

So Cary, against his will, sat and sang another song; and in the meanwhile the party had broken up, and wandered away by twos and threes, among trim gardens and pleasaunces, and clipped yew-walks—

At last Cary got away and out; sober, but just enough flushed with wine to be ready for any quarrel; and luckily for him, had not gone twenty yards along the great terrace before he met Lady Grenvile.

"Has your Ladyship seen Don Guzman?"

"Yes—why, where is he? He was with me not ten minutes ago. You know he is going back to Spain."

"Going! Has his ransom come?"

"Yes, and with it a governorship in the Indies."

"Governorship! Much good may it do the governed."

"Why not, then? He is surely a most gallant gentleman."

"Gallant enough—yes," said Cary carelessly. "I must find him, and congratulate him on his honours."

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"I will help you to find him," said Lady Grenvile, whose woman's eye and ear had already suspected something. "Escort me, sir."

"It is but too great an honour to squire the Queen of Bideford," said Cary, offering his hand.

"If I am your queen, sir, I must be obeyed," answered she in a meaning tone. Cary took the hint, and went on chattering cheerfully enough.

But Don Guzman was not to be found in garden or in pleasaunce.

"Perhaps," at last said a burgher's wife, with a toss of her head, "your Ladyship may meet with him at Hankford's oak."

"At Hankford's oak! what should take him there?"

"Pleasant company, I reckon" (with another toss). "I heard him and Mrs. Salterne talking about the oak just now."

Cary turned pale and drew in his breath.

"Very likely," said Lady Grenvile quietly. "Will you walk with me so far, Mr. Cary?"

"To the world's end, if your Ladyship condescends so far." And off they went, Lady Grenvile wishing that they were going anywhere else, but afraid to let Cary go alone; and suspecting, too, that some one or other ought to go.

So they went down past the herds of deer, by a trim-kept path into the lonely dell where stood the fatal oak; and, as they went, Lady Grenvile, to avoid more unpleasant talk, poured into Cary's unheeding ears the story (which he probably had heard fifty times before) how old Chief-justice Hankford, weary of life and sickened at the horrors and desolations of the Wars of the Roses, went down to his house at Annery there, and bade his keeper shoot any man who, passing through the deer-park at night, should refuse to stand when challenged; and then going down into that glen himself, and hiding himself beneath that oak, met willingly by his keeper's hand the death which his own dared not inflict: but ere the story was half done, Cary grasped Lady Grenvile's hand so tightly that she gave a little shriek of pain.

"There they are!" whispered he, heedless of her; and pointed to the oak, where, half hidden by the tall fern, stood Rose and the Spaniard.

Her head was on his bosom. She seemed sobbing, trembling; he talking earnestly and passionately; but Lady Grenvile's little shriek made them both look up. To turn and try to escape was to confess all; and the two, collecting themselves instantly, walked towards her, Rose wishing herself fathoms beneath the earth.

"Mind, sir," whispered Lady Grenvile as they came up; "you have seen nothing."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Madam?"

"If you are not on my ground, you are on my brother's. Obey me!"

Cary bit his lip, and bowed courteously to the Don.

"I have to congratulate you, I hear, Señor, on your approaching departure."

"I kiss your hands, Señor, in return; but I question whether it be a matter of congratulation, considering all that I leave behind."

"So do I," answered Cary bluntly enough, and the four walked back to the house, Lady Grenvile taking everything for granted with the most charming good humour, and chatting to her three silent companions till they gained the terrace once more, and found four or five of the gentlemen, with Sir Richard at their head, proceeding to the bowling-green.

Lady Grenvile, in an agony of fear about the quarrel which she knew must come, would have gladly whispered five words to her husband: but she dared not do it before the Spaniard, and dreaded, too, a faint or a scream from the Rose, whose father was of the party. So she walked on with her fair prisoner, commanding Cary to escort them in, and the Spaniard to go to the bowling-green.

Cary obeyed: but he gave her the slip the moment she was inside the door, and then darted off to the gentlemen.

His heart was on fire: all his old passion for the Rose had flashed up again at the sight of her with a lover;—and that lover a Spaniard! He would cut his throat for him, if steel could do it! Only he recollected that Salterne was there, and shrank from exposing Rose; and shrank, too, as every gentleman should, from making a public quarrel in another man's house. Never mind. Where there was a will there was a way. He could get him into a corner, and quarrel with him privately about the cut of his beard, or the colour of his ribbon. So in he went; and, luckily or unluckily, found standing together apart from the rest, Sir Richard, the Don, and young St. Leger.

"Well, Don Guzman, you have given us wine-bibbers the slip this afternoon. I hope you have been well employed in the meanwhile?"

"Delightfully to myself, Señor," said the Don, who enraged at being interrupted, if not discovered, was as ready to fight as Cary, but disliked, of course, an explosion as much as he did; "and to others, I doubt not."

"So the ladies say," quoth St. Leger. "He has been making them all cry with one of his stories, and robbing us meanwhile of the pleasure we had hoped for from some of his Spanish songs."

"The devil take Spanish songs!" said Cary, in a low voice, but

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

loud enough for the Spaniard. Don Guzman clapt his hand on his sword-hilt instantly.

"Lieutenant Cary," said Sir Richard in a stern voice; "the wine has surely made you forget yourself!"

"As sober as yourself, most worshipful knight; but if you want a Spanish song, here's one; and a very scurvy one it is. like its subject—

"Don Desperado
Walked on the Prado,
And there he met his enemy.
He pulled out a knife, a,
And let out his life, a,
And fled for his own across the sea."

And he bowed low to the Spaniard.

The insult was too gross to require any spluttering.

"Señor Cary, we meet?"

"I thank your quick apprehension, Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto. When, where, and with what weapons?"

"For God's sake, gentlemen! Nephew Arthur, Cary is your guest; do you know the meaning of this?"

St. Leger was silent. Cary answered for him.

"An old Irish quarrel, I assure you, sir. A matter of years' standing. In unlacing the Señor's helmet, the evening that he was taken prisoner, I was lucky enough to twitch his mustachios. You recollect the fact, of course, Señor?"

"Perfectly," said the Spaniard; and then, half-amused and half-pleased, in spite of his bitter wrath, at Cary's quickness and delicacy in shielding Rose, he bowed, and——

"And it gives me much pleasure to find that he whom I trust to have the pleasure of killing to-morrow morning is a gentleman whose nice sense of honour renders him thoroughly worthy of the sword of a De Soto."

Cary bowed in return, while Sir Richard, who saw plainly enough that the excuse was feigned, shrugged his shoulders.

"What weapons, Señor?" asked Will again.

"I should have preferred a horse and pistols," said Don Guzman after a moment, half to himself, and in Spanish; "they make surer work of it than bodkins; but" (with a sigh and one of his smiles) "beggars must not be choosers."

"The best horse in my stable is at your service, Señor," said Sir Richard Grenvile instantly.

"And in mine also, Señor," said Cary; "and I shall be happy to allow you a week to train him, if he does not answer at first to a Spanish hand."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"You forget in your courtesy, gentle sir, that the insult being with me, the time lies with me also. We wipe it off to-morrow morning with simple rapiers and daggers. Who is your second?"

"Mr. Arthur St. Leger here, Señor: who is yours?"

The Spaniard felt himself alone in the world for one moment; and then answered with another of his smiles,—

"Your nation possesses the soul of honour. He who fights an Englishman needs no second."

"And he who fights among Englishmen will always find one," said Sir Richard. "I am the fittest second for my guest."

"You add only one more obligation, illustrious cavalier, to a two-years' prodigality of favours, which I shall never be able to repay."

"But, Nephew Arthur," said Grenvile, "you cannot surely be second against your father's guest, and your own uncle."

"I cannot help it, sir; I am bound by an oath, as Will can tell you. I suppose you won't think it necessary to let me blood?"

"You half deserve it, sirrah!" said Sir Richard, who was very angry: but the Don interposed quickly.

"Heaven forbid, Señors! We are no French duellists, who are mad enough to make four or six lives answer for the sins of two. This gentleman and I have quarrel enough between us, I suspect, to make a right bloody encounter."

"The dependence is good enough, sir," said Cary, licking his sinful lips at the thought. "Very well. Rapiers and shirts at three to-morrow morning—Is that the bill of fare? Ask Sir Richard where, Atty? It is against punctilio now for me to speak to him till after I am killed."

"On the sands opposite. The tide will be out at three. And now, gallant gentlemen, let us join the bowlers."

And so they went back and spent a merry evening, all except poor Rose, who, ere she went back, had poured all her sorrows into Lady Grenvile's ear. For the kind woman, knowing that she was motherless and guileless, carried her off into Mrs. St. Leger's chamber, and there entreated her to tell the truth, and heaped her with pity, but with no comfort. For indeed, what comfort was there to give?

. . . . . .

Three o'clock upon a still pure bright Midsummer morning. A broad and yellow sheet of ribbed tide-sands, through which the shallow river wanders from one hill-foot to the other, whispering round dark knolls of rock, and under low tree-fringed cliffs, and banks of golden broom. A mile below, the long bridge and the white walled

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

town, all sleeping pearly in the soft haze, beneath a cloudless vault of blue. The white glare of dawn, which last night hung high in the north-west, has travelled now to the north-east, and above the wooded wall of the hills the sky is flushing with rose and amber. The air is full of perfume; sweet clover, new-mown hay, the fragrant breath of kine, the dainty scent of sea-weed wreaths and fresh wet sand. Glorious day, glorious place, "bridal of earth and sky," decked well with bridal garlands, bridal perfumes, bridal songs,—What do those four cloaked figures there by the river brink, a dark spot on the fair face of the summer morn?

Yet one is as cheerful as if he too, like all nature round him, were going to a wedding; and that is Will Cary. He has been bathing down below, to cool his brain and steady his hand; and he intends to stop Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto's wooing for ever and a day. The Spaniard is in a very different mood; fierce and haggard, he is pacing up and down the sand. He intends to kill Will Cary; but then? Will he be the nearer to Rose by doing so? Can he stay in Bideford? Will she go with him? Shall he stoop to stain his family by marrying a burgher's daughter? It is a confused, all but desperate business; and Don Guzman is certain but of one thing, that he is madly in love with this fair witch, and that if she refuse him, then, rather than see her accept another man, he would kill her with his own hands.

Sir Richard Grenvile, too, is in no very pleasant humour, as St. Leger soon discovers, when the two seconds begin whispering over their arrangements.

"We cannot have either of them killed, Arthur."

"Mr. Cary swears he will kill the Spaniard, sir."

"He shan't. The Spaniard is my guest. I am answerable for him to Leigh, and for his ransom too. And how can Leigh accept the ransom if the man is not given up safe and sound? They won't pay for a dead carcass, boy! The man's life is worth two hundred pounds."

"A very bad bargain, sir, for those who pay the said two hundred for the rascal; but what if he kills Cary?"

"Worse still. Cary must not be killed. I am very angry with him, but he is too good a lad to be lost; and his father would never forgive us. We must strike up their swords at the first scratch."

"It will make them very mad, sir."

"Hang them! let them fight us then, if they don't like our counsel. It must be, Arthur."

"Be sure, sir," said Arthur, "that whatsoever you shall command I shall perform. It is only too great an honour to a young man as

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

I am to find myself in the same duel with your worship, and to have the advantage of your wisdom and experience."

Sir Richard smiles, and says—"Now, gentlemen! are you ready?"

The Spaniard pulls out a little crucifix, and kisses it devoutly, smiting on his breast; crosses himself two or three times, and says—"Most willingly, Señor."

Cary kisses no crucifix, but says a prayer nevertheless.

Cloaks and doublets are tossed off, the men placed, the rapiers measured hilt and point; Sir Richard and St. Leger place themselves right and left of the combatants, facing each other, the points of their drawn swords on the sand. Cary and the Spaniard stand for a moment quite upright, their sword-arms stretched straight before them, holding the long rapier horizontally, the left hand clutching the dagger close to their breasts. So they stand eye to eye, with clenched teeth and pale crushed lips, while men might count a score; St. Leger can hear the beating of his own heart; Sir Richard is praying inwardly that no life may be lost. Suddenly there is a quick turn of Cary's wrist and a leap forward. The Spaniard's dagger flashes, and the rapier is turned aside; Cary springs six feet back as the Spaniard rushes on him in turn. Parry, thrust, parry—the steel rattles, the sparks fly, the men breathe fierce and loud; the devil's game is begun in earnest.

Five minutes have the two had instant death a short six inches off from those wild sinful hearts of theirs, and not a scratch has been given. Yes! the Spaniard's rapier passes under Cary's left arm; he bleeds.

"A hit! a hit! Strike up, Atty!" and the swords are struck up instantly.

Cary, nettled by the smart, tries to close with his foe, but the seconds cross their swords before him.

"It is enough, gentlemen. Don Guzman's honour is satisfied!"

"But not my revenge, Señor," says the Spaniard, with a frown. "This duel is *à l'outrance,* on my part; and, I believe, on Mr. Cary's also."

"By heaven, it is!" says Will, trying to push past. "Let me go, Arthur St. Leger; one of us must down. Let me go, I say!"

"If you stir, Mr. Cary, you have to do with Richard Grenvile!" thunders the lion voice. "I am angry enough with you for having brought on this duel at all. Don't provoke me still further, young hot-head!"

Cary stops sulkily.

"You do not know all, Sir Richard, or you would not speak in this way."

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons

The duel on the beach

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Digitized by Google

Original from
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"I do, sir, all: and I shall have the honour of talking it over with Don Guzman myself."

"Hey!" said the Spaniard. "You came here as my second, Sir Richard, as I understood: but not as my counsellor."

"Arthur, take your man away! Cary! obey me as you would your father, sir! Can you not trust Richard Grenvile?"

"Come away, for God's sake!" says poor Arthur, dragging Cary's sword from him; "Sir Richard must know best!"

So Cary is led off sulking, and Sir Richard turns to the Spaniard,

"And now, Don Guzman, allow me, though much against my will, to speak to you as a friend to a friend. You will pardon me if I say that I cannot but have seen last night's devotion to——"

"You will be pleased, Señor, not to mention the name of any lady to whom I may have shown devotion. I am not accustomed to have my little affairs talked over by any unbidden counsellors."

"Well, Señor, if you take offence, you take that which is not given. Only I warn you, with all apologies for any seeming forwardness, that the quest on which you seem to be is one on which you will not be allowed to proceed."

"And who will stop me?" asked the Spaniard, with a fierce oath.

"You are not aware, illustrious Señor," said Sir Richard, parrying the question, "that our English laity look upon mixed marriages with full as much dislike as your own ecclesiastics."

"Marriage, sir? Who gave you leave to mention that word to me?"

Sir Richard's brow darkened; the Spaniard, in his insane pride, had forced upon the good knight a suspicion which was not really just.

"Is it possible, then Señor Don Guzman, that I am to have the shame of mentioning a baser word?"

"Mention what you will, sir. All words are the same to me; for just or unjust, I shall answer them alike only by my sword."

"You will do no such thing, sir. You forget that I am your host."

"And do you suppose that you have therefore a right to insult me? Stand on your guard, sir!"

Grenvile answered by slapping his own rapier home into the sheath with a quiet smile.

"Señor Don Guzman must be well enough aware of who Richard Grenvile is, to know that he may claim the right of refusing duel to any man, if he shall so think fit."

"Sir!" cried the Spaniard with an oath, "this is too much! Do you dare to hint that I am unworthy of your sword? Know, insolent Englishman, I am not merely a De Soto,—though that, by St. James, were enough for you or any man. I am a Sotomayor, a Mendoza, a

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Bovadilla, a Losada, a——sir! I have blood royal in my veins, and you dare to refuse my challenge?"

"Richard Grenvile can show quarterings, probably against even Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto, or against (with no offence to the unquestioned nobility of your pedigree) the bluest blood of Spain. But he can show, moreover, thank God, a reputation which raises him as much above the imputation of cowardice, as it does above that of discourtesy. If you think fit, Señor, to forget what you have just, in very excusable anger, vented, and to return with me, you will find me still, as ever, your most faithful servant and host. If otherwise, you have only to name whither you wish your mails to be sent, and I shall, with unfeigned sorrow, obey your commands concerning them."

The Spaniard bowed stiffly, answered, "To the nearest tavern, Señor," and then strode away. His baggage was sent thither. He took a boat down to Appledore that very afternoon, and vanished, none knew whither. A very courteous note to Lady Grenvile, enclosing the jewel which he had been used to wear round his neck, was the only memorial he left behind him: except, indeed, the scar on Cary's arm, and poor Rose's broken heart.

Now county towns are scandalous places at best; and though all parties tried to keep the duel secret, yet, of course, before noon all Bideford knew what had happened, and a great deal more; and what was even worse, Rose, in an agony of terror, had seen Sir Richard Grenvile enter her father's private room, and sit there closeted with him for an hour and more; and when he went, upstairs came old Salterne, with his stick in his hand, and after rating her soundly for far worse than a flirt, gave her (I am sorry to have to say it, but such was the mild fashion of paternal rule in those times, even over such daughters as Lady Jane Grey, if Roger Ascham is to be believed) such a beating that her poor sides were black and blue for many a day; and then putting her on a pillion behind him, carried her off twenty miles to her old prison at Stow Mill, commanding her aunt to tame down her saucy blood with bread of affliction and water of affliction. Which commands were willingly enough fulfilled by the old dame, who had always borne a grudge against Rose for being rich while she was poor, and pretty while her daughter was plain; so that between flouts, and sneers, and watchings, and pretty open hints that she was a disgrace to her family, and no better than she should be, the poor innocent child watered her couch with tears for a fortnight or more, stretching out her hands to the wide Atlantic, and calling wildly to Don Guzman to return and take her where he would, and she would live for him and die for him; and perhaps she did not call in vain.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER XIII

HOW THE GOLDEN HIND CAME HOME AGAIN

"The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave."

CAMPBELL.

"So you see, my dear Mrs. Hawkins, having the silver, as your own eyes show you, beside the ores of lead, manganese, and copper, and above all this gossan (as the Cornish call it), if my recipes, which I had from Doctor Dee, succeed only half so well as I expect, then I refine out the Luna, the silver, lay it by, and transmute the remaining ores into Sol, gold. Whereupon Peru and Mexico become superfluities, and England the mistress of the globe. Strange, no doubt; distant, no doubt: but possible, my dear madam, possible!"

"And what good to you if it be, Mr. Gilbert? If you could find a philosopher's stone to turn sinners into saints, now:—but nought save God's grace can do that: and that last seems ofttimes over long in coming." And Mrs. Hawkins sighed.

"But indeed, my dear madam, conceive now.—The Comb Martin mine thus becomes a gold mine, perhaps inexhaustible; yields me wherewithal to carry out my North-West patent; meanwhile my brother Humphrey holds Newfoundland, and builds me fresh ships year by year (for the forests of pine are boundless) for my China voyage."

"Sir Humphrey has better thoughts in his dear heart than gold, Mr. Adrian; a very close and gracious walker he has been this seven year. I wish my Captain John were so too."

"And how do you know I have nought better in my mind's eye than gold? Or, indeed, what better could I have? You shake your head: but say, dear madam (for gold England must have), which is better, to make gold bloodlessly at home, or take it bloodily abroad?"

"Oh, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Gilbert! is it not written, that those who make haste to be rich, pierce themselves through with many sorrows? Oh, Mr. Gilbert! God's blessing is not on it all. I am a simple body,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and you a great philosopher: but I hold there is no star for the seaman like the Star of Bethlehem; and that goes with 'peace on earth and good will to men,' and not with such arms as that, Mr. Adrian. I can't abide to look upon them."

And she pointed up to one of the bosses of the ribbed oakroof, on which was emblazoned the fatal crest which Clarencieux Hervey had granted years before to her husband, the "Demi-Moor proper, bound."

"Ah, Mr. Gilbert! since first he went to Guinea after those poor negroes, little lightness has my heart known. I tell you, Mr. Gilbert, those negroes are on my soul from morning until night! We are all mighty grand now, and money comes in fast: but the Lord will require the blood of them at our hands yet, He will!"

"My dearest madam, who can prosper more than you? If your husband copied the Dons too closely once or twice in the matter of those negroes (which I do not deny), was he not punished at once when he lost ships, men, all but life, at St. Juan d'Ulloa?"

"Ay, yes," she said; "and that did give me a bit of comfort, especially when the queen—God save her tender heart!—was so sharp with him for pity of the poor wretches; but it has not mended him. He is growing fast like the rest now, Mr. Gilbert, greedy to win, and niggardly to spend (God forgive him!) and always fretting and plotting for some new gain, and envying and grudging at Drake, and all who are deeper in the snare of prosperity than he is. Gold, gold, nothing but gold in every mouth—there it is! Ah! I mind when Plymouth was a quiet little God-fearing place as God could smile upon: but ever since my John, and Sir Francis, and poor Mr. Oxenham found out the way to the Indies, it's been a sad place. Not a sailor's wife but is crying 'Give, give,' like the daughters of the horseleech; and every woman must drive her husband out across seas to bring her home money to squander on hoods and farthingales."

The two interlocutors in this dialogue were sitting in a low oak-panelled room in Plymouth town, handsomely enough furnished, adorned with carving and gilding and coats of arms, and noteworthy for many strange knicknacks, Spanish gold and silver vessels on the sideboard; strange birds and skins, and charts and rough drawings of coast which hung about the room; while over the fireplace, above the portrait of old Captain Will Hawkins, pet of Henry the Eighth, hung the Spanish ensign which Captain John had taken in fair fight at Rio de la Hacha fifteen years before, when, with two hundred men, he seized the town in despite of ten hundred Spanish soldiers, and watered his ship triumphantly at the enemy's wells.

The gentleman was a tall fair man, with a broad and lofty fore-

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

head, wrinkled with study, and eyes weakened by long poring over the crucible and the furnace.

The lady had once been comely enough: but she was aged and worn, as sailors' wives are apt to be, by many sorrows. Many a sad day had she had already; for although John Hawkins, port-admiral of Plymouth, and Patriarch of British shipbuilders, was a faithful husband enough, and as ready to forgive as he was to quarrel, yet he was obstinate and ruthless, and in spite of his religiosity (for all men were religious then) was by no means a "consistent walker."

And sadder days were in store for her, poor soul. Nine years hence she would be asked to name her son's brave new ship, and would christen it The Repentance, giving no reason in her quiet steadfast way (so says her son Sir Richard) but that "Repentance was the best ship in which we could sail to the harbour of heaven;" and she would hear that Queen Elizabeth, complaining of the name for an unlucky one, had re-christened her The Dainty, not without some by-quip, perhaps, at the character of her most dainty captain, Richard Hawkins, the complete seaman and Euphuist afloat, of whom, perhaps, more hereafter.

With sad eyes Mrs. (then Lady) Hawkins would see that gallant bark sail Westward-ho, to go the world around, as many another ship sailed; and then wait, as many a mother beside had waited, for the sail which never returned; till, dim and uncertain, came tidings of her boy fighting for four days three great Armadas (for the coxcomb had his father's heart in him after all), a prisoner, wounded, ruined, languishing for weary years in Spanish prisons. And a sadder day than that was in store, when a gallant fleet should round the Ram Head, not with drum and trumpet, but with solemn minute-guns, and all flags half-mast, to tell her that her terrible husband's work was done, his terrible heart broken by failure and fatigue, and his body laid by Drake's beneath the far-off tropic seas.

And if, at the close of her eventful life, one gleam of sunshine opened for a while, when her boy Richard returned to her bosom from his Spanish prison, to be knighted for his valour, and made a Privy Councillor for his wisdom; yet soon, how soon, was the old cloud to close in again above her, until her weary eyes should open in the light of Paradise. For that son dropped dead, some say at the very council-table, leaving behind him nought but broken fortunes, and huge purposes which never were fulfilled; and the stormy star of that bold race was set for ever, and Lady Hawkins bowed her weary head and died, the groan of those stolen negroes ringing in her ears, having lived long enough to see her husband's youthful sin become a national institution, and a national curse for generations yet unborn.

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

I know not why she opened her heart that night to Adrian Gilbert, with a frankness which she would hardly have dared to use to her own family. Perhaps it was that Adrian, like his great brothers, Humphrey and Raleigh, was a man full of all lofty and delicate enthusiasms, tender and poetical, such as women cling to when their hearts are lonely; but so it was; and Adrian, half ashamed of his own ambitious dreams, sat looking at her a while in silence; and then—

"The Lord be with you, dearest lady. Strange, how you women sit at home to love and suffer, while we men rush forth to break our hearts and yours against rocks of our own seeking! You always remind me, madam, of my dear Mrs. Leigh of Burrough, and her counsels."

"Do you see her often? I hear of her as one of the Lord's most precious vessels."

"I would have done more ere now than see her," said he with a blush, "had she allowed me: but she lives only for the memory of her husband and the fame of her noble sons."

As he spoke the door opened, and in walked, wrapped in his rough sea-gown, none other than one of those said noble sons.

Adrian turned pale.

"Amyas Leigh! What brings you hither? How fares my brother? Where is the ship?"

"Your brother is well, Mr. Gilbert. The Golden Hind is gone on to Dartmouth, with Mr. Hayes. I came ashore here, meaning to go north to Bideford, ere I went to London. I called at Drake's just now, but he was away."

"The Golden Hind? What brings her home so soon?"

"Yet welcome ever, sir," said Mrs. Hawkins. "This is a great surprise, though. Captain John did not look for you till next year."

Amyas was silent.

"Something is wrong!" cried Adrian. "Speak!"

Amyas tried, but could not.

"Will you drive a man mad, sir? Has the adventure failed? You said my brother was well."

"He is well."

"Then what—Why do you look at me in that fashion, sir?" and springing up, Adrian rushed forward, and held the candle to Amyas's face.

Amyas's lips quivered, as he laid his hand on Adrian's shoulder.

"Your great and glorious brother, sir, is better bestowed than in settling Newfoundland."

"Dead?" shrieked Adrian.

"He is with the God whom he served!"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"He was always with Him, like Enoch: parable me no parables, if you love me, sir!"

"And like Enoch, he was not; for God took him."

Adrian clasped his hands over his forehead, and leaned against the table.

"Go on, sir, go on. God will give me strength to hear all."

And gradually Amyas opened to Adrian that tragic story of the unruliness of the men, ruffians, as I said before, caught up at haphazard; of conspiracies to carry off the ships, plunder the fishing vessels, desertions multiplying daily; licences from the General to the lazy and fearful to return home: till Adrian broke out with a groan—

"From him? Conspired against him? Deserted from him? Dotards, buzzards! Where would they have found such another leader?"

"Your illustrious brother, sir," said Amyas, "if you will pardon me, was a very great philosopher, but not so much of a General."

"General, sir? Where was braver man?"

"Not on God's earth: but that does not make a General, sir. If Cortes had been brave and no more, Mexico would have been Mexico still. The truth is, sir, Cortes, like my Captain Drake, knew when to hang a man; and your great brother did not."

Amyas, as I suppose, was right. Gilbert was a man who could be angry enough at baseness or neglect, but who was too kindly to punish it; he was one who could form the wisest and best-digested plans, but who could not stoop to that hail-fellow-well-met drudgery among his subordinates which has been the talisman of great captains.

Then Amyas went on to tell the rest of his story; the setting sail from St. John's to discover the southward coast; Sir Humphrey's chivalrous determination to go in the little Squirrel of only ten tons, and "overcharged with nettings, fights, and small ordnance," not only because she was more fit to examine the creeks, but because he had heard of some taunt against him among the men, that he was afraid of the sea.

After that, woe on woe; how, seven days after they left Cape Raz, their largest ship, the Delight, after she had "most part of the night like the swan that singeth before her death, continued in sounding of trumpets, drums, and fifes, also winding of the cornets and hautboys, and, in the end of their jollity, left off with the battle and doleful knells," struck the next day (the Golden Hind and the Squirrel sheering off just in time) upon unknown shoals; where were lost all but fourteen, and those who escaped, after all horrors of cold and

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

famine, were cast on shore in Newfoundland. How, worn out with hunger and want of clothes, the crews of the two remaining ships persuaded Sir Humphrey to sail toward England on the 31st of August.

Then Amyas told the last scene; how, when they were off the Azores, the storms came on heavier than ever, with "terrible seas, breaking short and pyramid-wise," till, on the 9th September, the tiny Squirrel nearly floundered and yet recovered; "and the General, sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out to us in the Hind so oft as we did approach within hearing, 'We are as near heaven by sea as by land,' reiterating the same speech, well beseeming a soldier resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was.

"The same Monday, about twelve of the clock, or not long after, the frigate (the Squirrel) being ahead of us in the Golden Hind, suddenly her lights were out; and withal our watch cried, the General was cast away, which was true; for in that moment, the frigate was devoured and swallowed up of the sea."

"Oh, my brother! my brother!" moaned poor Adrian; "the glory of his house, the glory of Devon!"

"Ah! what will the queen say?" asked Mrs. Hawkins through her tears.

"Tell me," asked Adrian, "had he the jewel on when he died?"

"The queen's jewel? He always wore that, and his own posy too, 'Mutare vel timere sperno.' He wore it; and he lived it."

"Ay," said Adrian, "the same to the last!"

And so the talk ended. There was no doubt that the expedition had been an utter failure; Adrian was a ruined man; and Amyas had lost his venture.

Adrian rose, and begged leave to retire; he must collect himself.

"Poor gentleman!" said Mrs. Hawkins; "it is little else he has left to collect."

"Or I either," said Amyas. "I was going to ask you to lend me one of your son's shirts, and five pounds to get myself and my men home."

"Five? Fifty, Mr. Leigh! God forbid that John Hawkins's wife should refuse her last penny to a distressed mariner, and he a gentleman born. But you must eat and drink."

"It's more than I have done for many a day worth speaking of."

And Amyas sat down in his rags to a good supper, while Mrs. Hawkins told him all the news which she could of his mother, whom Adrian Gilbert had seen a few months before in London; and then went on, naturally enough, to the Bideford news.

"And by the by, Captain Leigh, I've sad news for you from your

Digitized by Google Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

place; and I had it from one who was there at the time. You must know a Spanish captain, a prisoner——"

"What, the one I sent home from Smerwick?"

"You sent? Mercy on us! Then, perhaps, you've heard——"

"How can I have heard? What?"

"That he's gone off, the villain?"

"Without paying his ransom?"

"I can't say that; but there's a poor innocent young maid gone off with him, one Salterne's daughter—the Popish serpent!"

"Rose Salterne, the mayor's daughter, the Rose of Torridge!"

"That's her. Bless your dear soul, what ails you?"

Amyas had dropped back in his seat as if he had been shot; but he recovered himself before kind Mrs. Hawkins could rush to the cupboard for cordials.

"You'll forgive me, madam; but I'm weak from the sea; and your good ale has turned me a bit dizzy, I think."

"Ay, yes, 'tis too, too heavy, till you've been on shore a while. Try the aqua vitæ; my Captain John has it right good; and a bit too fond of it too, poor dear soul, between whiles, Heaven forgive him!"

So she poured some strong brandy and water down Amyas's throat, in spite of his refusals, and sent him to bed, but not to sleep; and after a night of tossing, he started for Bideford, having obtained the means for so doing from Mrs. Hawkins.

Digitized by Google

Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW SALVATION YEO SLEW THE KING OF THE GUBBINGS

"Ignorance and evil, even in full flight, deal terrible back-handed strokes at their pursuers."—Helps.

Now I am sorry to say, for the honour of my country, that it was by no means a safe thing in those days to travel from Plymouth to the north of Devon; because, to get to your journey's end, unless you were minded to make a circuit of many miles, you must needs pass through the territory of a foreign and hostile potentate, who had many times ravaged the dominions, and defeated the forces of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and was named (behind his back at least) the King of the Gubbings. Their wealth consisteth in other men's goods; they live by stealing the sheep on the moors; and vain is it for any to search their houses, being a work beneath the pains of any sheriff, and above the power of any constable. Such is their fleetness, they will outrun many horses; vivaciousness, they outlive most men; living in an ignorance of luxury, the extinguisher of life. They hold together like bees; offend one, and all will revenge his quarrel.

Amyas, in fear of these same Scythians and heathens, rode out of Plymouth on a right good horse, in his full suit of armour, carrying lance and sword, and over and above two great dags, or horse-pistols; and behind him Salvation Yeo, and five or six north Devon men (who had served with him in Ireland, and were returning on furlough), clad in head-pieces and quilted jerkins, each man with his pike and sword, and Yeo with arquebuse and match, while two sumpter ponies carried the baggage of this formidable troop.

They pushed on as fast as they could, through Tavistock, to reach before nightfall Lydford, where they meant to sleep; but what with buying the horses, and other delays, they had not been able to start before noon; and night fell just as they reached the frontiers of the enemy's country. A dreary place enough it was, by the wild glare of sunset. A high tableland of heath, banked on the right by the crags and hills of Dartmoor, and sloping away to the south and west toward the foot of the great cone of Brent-Tor, which towered up like an extinct volcano. Far away, down those waste slopes, they could see the tiny threads of blue smoke rising from the dens of the

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Gubbings; and more than once they called a halt, to examine whether distant furze-bushes and ponies might not be the patrols of an advancing army. It is all very well to laugh at it now, in the nineteenth century, but it was no laughing matter then; as they found before they had gone two miles farther.

On the middle of the down stood a wayside inn; a desolate and villainous-looking lump of lichen-spotted granite, with windows paper-patched, and rotting thatch kept down by stones and straw-banks; and at the back a rambling courtledge of barns and walls, around which pigs and barefoot children grunted in loving communion of dirt. At the door, rapt apparently in the contemplation of the mountain peaks which glowed rich orange in the last lingering sun-rays, but really watching which way the sheep on the moor were taking, stood the innkeeper, a brawny, sodden-visaged, blear-eyed six feet of brutishness, holding up his hose with one hand, for want of points, and clawing with the other his elf-locks, on which a fair sprinkling of feathers might denote that he was just out of bed, having been out sheep-stealing all the night before.

Presently he spies Amyas and his party coming slowly over the hill, pricks up his ears, and counts them; sees Amyas's armour; shakes his head and grunts; and then, being a man of few words, utters a sleepy howl—

"Mirooi!—Fushing pooale!"

A strapping lass—whose only covering (for country women at work in those days dispensed with the ornament of a gown) is a green bodice and red petticoat, neither of them over ample—brings out his fishing-rod and basket, and the man, having tied up his hose with some ends of string, examines the footlink.

"Don vlies' gone!"

"May be," says Mary; "shouldn't hav' left mun out to coort. May be old hen's ate mun off. I see her chocking about a while agone."

The host receives this intelligence with an oath, and replies by a violent blow at Mary's head, which she, accustomed to such slight matters dodges, and then returns the blow with good effect on the shock head.

Whereon mine host, equally accustomed to such slight matters, quietly shambles off, howling as he departs—

"Tell patrico!"

Mary runs in, combs her hair, slips a pair of stockings and her best gown over her dirt, and awaits the coming guests, who make a few long faces at the "mucksy sort of a place," but prefer to spend the night there than to bivouac close to the enemy's camp.

So the old hen who has swallowed the dun fly is killed, plucked,

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

and roasted, and certain "black Dartmoor mutton" is put on the gridiron, and being compelled to confess the truth by that fiery torment, proclaims itself to all noses as red-deer venison. In the meanwhile Amyas has put his horse and the ponies into a shed, to which he can find neither lock nor key, and therefore returns grumbling, not without fear for his steed's safety. The baggage is heaped in a corner of the room, and Amyas stretches his legs before a turf fire; while Yeo, who has his notions about the place, posts himself at the door, and the men are seized with a desire to superintend the cooking, probably to be attributed to the fact that Mary is cook.

Presently Yeo comes in again.

"There's a gentleman just coming up, sir, all alone."

"Ask him to make one of our party, then, with my compliments."

Yeo goes out, and returns in five minutes.

"Please, sir, he's gone in back ways, by the court."

"Well, he has an odd taste, if he makes himself at home here."

Out goes Yeo again, and comes back once more after five minutes, in high excitement.

"Come out, sir; for goodness' sake come out. I've got him. Safe as a rat in a trap, I have!"

"Who?"

"A Jesuit, sir."

"Nonsense, man!"

"I tell you truth, sir. I went round the house, for I didn't like the looks of him as he came up. I knew he was one of them villains the minute he came up, by the way he turned in his toes, and put down his feet so still and careful, like as if he was afraid of offending God at every step. So I just put my eye between the wall and the dern of the gate, and I saw him come up to the back door and knock, and call 'Mary!' quite still, like any Jesuit; and the wench flies out to him ready to eat him; and 'Go away,' I heard her say, 'there's a dear man;' and then something about a 'queer cuffin' (that's a justice in these canters' thieves' Latin); and with that he takes out a somewhat—I'll swear it was one of those Popish Agnuses—and gives it her; and she kisses it, and crosses herself, and asks him if that's the right way, and then puts it into her bosom, and he says, 'Bless you, my daughter;' and then I was sure of the dog: and he slips quite still to the stable, and peeps in, and when he sees no one there, in he goes, and out I go, and shut to the door, and back a cart that was there up against it, and call out one of the men to watch the stable, and the girl's crying like mad."

"What a fool's trick, man! How do you know that he is not some honest gentleman, after all?"

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"Fool or none, sir; honest gentlemen don't give maidens Agnuses. I've put him in; and if you want him let out again, you must come and do it yourself, for my conscience is against it, sir. If the Lord's enemies are delivered into my hand, I'm answerable, sir," went on Yeo as Amyas hurried out with him. "'Tis written, 'If any let one of them go, his life shall be for the life of him.'"

So Amyas ran out, pulled back the cart grumbling, opened the door, and began a string of apologies to—his cousin Eustace.

Yes, here he was, with such a countenance, half foolish, half venomous, as Reynard wears when the last spadeful of earth is thrown back, and he is revealed sitting disconsolately on his tail within a yard of the terriers' noses.

Neither cousin spoke for a minute or two. At last Amyas—

"Well, cousin hide-and-seek, how long have you added horse-stealing to your other trades?"

"My dear Amyas," said Eustace very meekly, "I may surely go into an inn stable without intending to steal what is in it."

"Of course, old fellow," said Amyas, mollified, "I was only in jest. But what brings you here? Not prudence, certainly."

"I am bound to know no prudence save for the Lord's work."

"That's giving away Agnus Deis, and deceiving poor heathen wenches, I suppose," said Yeo.

Eustace answered pretty roundly—

"Heathens? Yes, truly; you Protestants leave these poor wretches heathens, and then insult and persecute those who, with a devotion unknown to you, labour at the danger of their lives to make them Christians. Mr. Amyas Leigh, you can give me up to be hanged at Exeter, if it shall so please you to disgrace your own family; but from this spot neither you, no, nor all the myrmidons of your queen, shall drive me, while there is a soul here left unsaved."

"Come out of the stable, at least," said Amyas. "I shan't inform against you; and Yeo here will hold his tongue if I tell him, I know."

"It goes sorely against my conscience, sir; but being that he is your cousin, of course——"

"Of course; and now come in and eat with me; supper's just ready, and bygones shall be bygones, if you will have them so."

How much forgiveness Eustace felt in his heart, I know not; but he knew, of course, that he ought to forgive; and to go. So in he went; and yet he never forgot that scar upon his cheek; and Amyas could not look him in the face but Eustace must fancy that his eyes were on the scar, and peep up from under his lids to see if there was any smile of triumph on that honest visage. They talked away over the venison, guardedly enough at first; but as they went on, Amyas's

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

straightforward kindliness warmed poor Eustace's frozen heart; and ere they were aware, they found themselves talking over old haunts and old passages of their boyhood—uncles, aunts, and cousins; and Eustace, without any sinister intention, asked Amyas why he was going to Bideford, while Frank and his mother were in London.

"To tell you the truth, I cannot rest till I have heard the whole story about poor Rose Salterne."

"What about her?" cried Eustace.

"Do you not know?"

"How should I know anything here? For heaven's sake, what has happened?"

Amyas told him, wondering at his eagerness, for he had never had the least suspicion of Eustace's love.

Eustace shrieked aloud.

"Fool, fool that I have been! Caught in my own trap! Villain, villain that he is! After all he promised me at Lundy!"

And springing up, Eustace stamped up and down the room, gnashing his teeth, tossing his head from side to side, and clutching with outstretched hands at the empty air.

Amyas sat thunderstruck. His first impulse was to ask, "Lundy? What knew you of him? What had he or you to do at Lundy?" but pity conquered curiosity.

"Oh, Eustace! And you then loved her too?"

"Don't speak to me! Loved her? Yes, sir, and had as good a right to love her as any one of your precious brotherhood of the Rose. Don't speak to me, I say, or I shall do you a mischief!"

So Eustace knew of the brotherhood too! Amyas longed to ask him how; but what use in that? If he knew it, he knew it; and what harm? So he only answered—

"My good cousin, why be wroth with me? If you really love her, now is the time to take counsel with me how best we shall——"

Eustace did not let him finish his sentence. Conscious that he had betrayed himself upon more points than one, he stopped short in his walk, suddenly collected himself by one great effort, and eyed Amyas from underneath his brows with the old down look.

"How best we shall do what, my valiant cousin?" said he in a meaning and half-scornful voice. "What does your most chivalrous Brotherhood of the Rose purpose in such a case?"

Amyas a little nettled, stood on his guard in return, and answered bluntly—

"What the Brotherhood of the Rose will do, I can't yet say. What it ought to do, I have a pretty sure guess."

"So have I. To hunt her down as you would an outlaw, because

Digitized by Google
Original from HARVARD UNIVERSITY