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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CORNISH SAINTS & SINNERS ***

Cornish Saints and Sinners

By the Same Author

THE FISHERS

Crown 8vo.

THE SMUGGLERS.

CORNISH

SAINTS & SINNERS

BY
J. HENRY HARRIS
WITH NUMEROUS DRAWINGS BY
L. RAVEN-HILL

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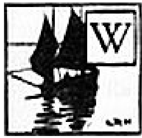
CORNISH SAINTS AND SINNERS

Chapter I



E were three.

Guy Moore, who had scraped through his "final," and eaten his call dinner, and talked sometimes of full-bottomed wigs and woolsacks.

George Milner, surnamed the "Bookworm."

Myself.

It was an old arrangement between Guy and myself to go somewhere as soon as the Long Vacation commenced, and the Bookworm, a relation of Guy's, was included on account of his health. The doctor told him that if he did not take a timely rest now he'd never read all the books in the British Museum library, which he had set himself to do before going to Paris to read there, and then some other place, and so on. Bookworms are like that. Our mutual friend was an earnest young man, and had the reader's look about the eyes; and when he went to bed he read unknown books in his sleep. The doctor said, "Get him away—plenty of air, plenty of walking, no books."

We met in Guy's chambers, and talked Cornwall; but the trouble was with the Bookworm, who wanted to take a truck-load of books with him.

We decided on going to Penzance, and then rambling just where we would. A visit to the land of a lost language attracted the Bookworm, who at once added a few score books to be read on the spot.

Guy was appointed guardian of the common purse, and empowered to make all arrangements.

The books were left behind.

A splendid day in August we had for our run westward. The Bookworm had a corner, and by-and-by the spirit of wonder crept over him as he looked at the blue skies and the green grass. There was a world outside of books, after all.

"Here's the briny! Out with your head, man, and suck it all in; it's the wine of life," shouted Guy.

Up went all the blinds, and down went all the windows, and every one who could gazed upon the blue sea shoaling into green with white-flaked edging on the frizzling sands. It is the custom to pay this homage to the sea for being good enough to be just where it is, between Starcross and Teignmouth. Right and left, the Bookworm saw heads thrust out and faces in ecstasy, as though the whole human freight of the flying train was in rapt adoration. White handkerchiefs waved, and the pure voices of children trilled spontaneous anthems whenever the vexatious tunnels permitted them to gaze upon old England's symbol of power and freedom. It was a new experience to the Bookworm, and it surprised him that anything not printed and stitched and bound should stir so much emotion. It was Nature's book in red sandstone and blue sea illuminated by the sun, on which his tired eyes rested for a few moments; he felt refreshed by the mere vision, his pulses throbbing with new sensations. And when the vision passed in the broad

valley of the Teign, he asked simply—

"Is there more of this?"

"Plenty," said Guy, promptly.

According to Guy's account, we were to have just whatever we liked, when we liked, and where we liked. Seascape and moorscape, hill and vale, sailing and fishing, riding and driving, and golfing, and all that sort of thing. And then there were certain mysterious regions where we were to find tracks of the fairies, and come across odds and ends of things, and people too. We were not to have any guide-books; he insisted on that. What was the good of guide-books to fellows on their rambles? Who cared how many yards he was from anywhere, or how many miles it was from one place to another? All that was worth remembering could be picked up on the spot, and then there wouldn't be any danger of everything running into one blurred outline of travel, just as happened to a fellow after tramping for weeks through picture-galleries and curio-shops, and all that sort of thing. Guy said he knew a fellow who did the whole county most thoroughly guide-book in hand. He started from Bude, and did the north coast; and then he turned around and did the south coast. He scored his guide-book like a chart of navigation, and his marginal notes played leap-frog all over the show. When he got to Plymouth he lost the precious book, and if it wasn't for railway labels and hotel bills, he wouldn't have known where he'd been.

A commercial man, having totted up his accounts, seemed greatly interested in Guy's remarks, and glided into the conversation. He told us he hadn't had a holiday for thirty years, and never expected another in this life. He became quite confidential, and gave us his views about happiness in the world to come. He never intended going "on the road" again for a living in the next world, he said, if there were any telephones about. He didn't like telephones when the boss was always at the other end.

We ran through the apple country, and the commercial man said these orchards were simply nothing to be compared with those a few miles away, where the real Devon cider was made. He told some funny stories about cider and its makers—the way in which sweet cider was discovered, and the hand that Old Nick had in the matter.

"It's a short story," said he, good-naturedly. "Old John Bowden had the finest orchard land in South Devon, and it appears that in the olden times the land was the property of Tavistock Abbey, and the good Fathers used to come over every season to make cider and have a frolic. Sometimes the good old cider, being no respecter of persons, got into the good Fathers' heads. Now, you must know that the best of cider is a trifle sharp to the palate—the natives call it 'rough'—and the Fathers were in the habit of toning some rare good stuff, reserved for high days and holidays, in empty wine-casks. One season, the wine-casks falling short, the Abbot of Tavistock drew up a sort of prize competition, like the magazines do now, offering something tasty to the inventor of a process for making 'rough' cider sweet without the use of wine, which, I suppose, worked out expensive, and, moreover, encouraged more drinking than was allowed under the tippling act. I must now tell you that, for a very long time, things hadn't gone on smoothly between the monks of Tavistock Abbey and Old Nick, who was constantly prowling about the premises, picking up little bits of information, and making the good Fathers uncomfortable. Well, he chanced upon this prize competition notice on an old door covered over with cast horse-shoes and vermin nailed up for 'good luck' and to keep his satanic majesty off the premises. However, there he was, and read the notice.

FATHER JOHN AND THE CIDER.

"A very obliging little old man turned up at the orchards one season, and offered his services, and was taken in to do odd jobs about the pound-house, and as he wasn't particular about his bed, he was allowed to curl himself up in one of the big empty cider-casks. In truth, after the work was over for the day, the good Fathers had other fish to fry, and thought no more about him; but the strange workman was most busy when he was supposed to be sound asleep.

"Of all the Fathers of the Abbey, Brother John was the keenest on winning the prize for turning 'rough' cider into sweet, and he spent hours in the pound-house alone, spoiling good stuff, without getting one foot forrarder. 'Dang my old buttons!' said he, after another failure.

"It wasn't so much the language as the temper of Brother John which attracted the notice of the little old man who slept in the cask, and he whispered something which made the good brother turn pale and tremble in his shoes. He was not above temptation, it is true, but he was a brave man for all that, and dissimulated so well that the stranger was so off his guard as to sleep in his cask and leave one of his cloven feet sticking out of the bung-hole. Brother John bided his time and covered the bung-hole, and then arranged for such a flow of cider into the cask upon the sleeping stranger as to settle his hash, unless it was the very old Nick himself. Old Nick it was, and when he awoke to the situation he was so hot with passion that the cider bubbled in the cask, and he disappeared, leaving the strongest of strong smell of brimstone behind. Brother John kept the secret to himself, not knowing what might come of it; but when he tasted the cider his eyes sparkled, for it was as sweet as honey, and when sweet cider was wanted at the Abbey, he used to pour it 'rough' upon the fumes of burning sulphur, and, lo and behold! it became sweet. It was Old Nick who gave away the secret to Brother John, who was smart enough to learn it. A Devon man calls sweet cider 'matched,' on account of its connection with old Brimstone."

"Did Brother John patent the process?" asked Guy.

"No, he didn't, though Old Nick tempted him; but Brother John was too wide awake to have his fingers burnt by patent lawyers and their agents."

"Is that story in print?" asked the Bookworm, preparing to make a note for future reference.

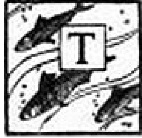
"I should say not. It's just one of those trifles you pick up on the road. Plenty about when Old Nick is concerned. They say his majesty didn't cross the Tamar in olden days; or, if he did, then he hopped back again in double-quick time. That may be, but he's a season ticket-holder now, and has good lodgings, and I ought to know, for I do business all through the country," said the man of samples, stepping out of the carriage.

"A trifle rough on us lawyers," said Guy. "Poor beggar has suffered, I suppose."

Across the bridge, and we are in the land of pasties and cream—the land of a lost language, of legend and romance, where the old seems new and the new seems old, and the breath of life everywhere.

Penzance.

Chapter II



HE proper thing to do when you awake at Penzance is to run down to the sea and bathe. We were told all about it in the smoking-room. It is a sort of ceremony with something belonging to it. When once you've bathed in the sea you're free of the country, like the Israelites, after swimming the Jordan. Everybody asks his neighbour, "Have you bathed?" If you have, it's all right.

We missed the Bookworm soon after breakfast, but Guy said we would soon find him if we drew the libraries. Guy supposed that reading was like dram-drinking to a fellow who had got himself into the Bookworm's condition, and it would be just as well to let him have a dose occasionally. We decided to "do" Penzance on our own account.

There's nothing much to "do." All the streets run down to the sea, and then run up again. It is a capital arrangement and saves one asking questions. It is humiliating for a Londoner to be seen asking his way about, and takes the fine bloom off his swagger not to be able to find his way to the next street, in a town all the inhabitants of which could be put into one corner of the Crystal Palace. Guy said he'd rather walk miles than ask such a silly question.

Penzance had a reputation long before any modern rivals were heard of, and was the Madeira of England before the Riviera made its *début* as a professional beauty in the sunny south. Professional beauties want "touching up" sometimes, and Penzance has been doing a little in that way lately, though without destroying the charm which draws admirers, and keeps them. It is one of those towns in which you seem to be always walking in the shadow of a long yesterday. Go into the market, and buy a rib of beef, and you are brought face to face with an ancient cross whose age no man can surely tell. You buy a fish, still panting, from the creel of a wrinkled specimen of human antiquity which takes snuff, and bargains in unfamiliar words. Shops with modern frontages are filled with dark serpentine, which carries you back to geologic time; and at the photographers, the last professional beauty on the stage is surrounded by monuments in stone, weathered and hoary before the Druids used them for mystic rites. And the names are strange. A sound of bitter wailing is in Marazion, and Market Jew brings to mind the lost ten tribes. You learn in time that Market Jew has nothing to do with Jewry, nor Marazion with lamentation; but all this comes gradually, and there is ever the sensation of having an old and vanished past always with you. You may step from Alverton Street, Pall Mall and Piccadilly rolled into one, with its motor-cars and bikes, knickers and chiffons, into Market Jew, reminding you of antiquity and gabardines, or *vice versâ*, just as you happen to be taking your walks abroad.

Penzance has one "lion"—Sir Humphry Davy. Sir Humphry and his little lamp is a story with immortal youth, like that of Washington and his little hatchet. Sir Humphry meets you at unexpected places and times—there was something *à la* Sir Humphry on the breakfast menu. We heard about him soon after our arrival, from an American tourist of independent views. He said that Sir Humphry would not be a boss man now because he didn't know a good thing when he had it, and gave away his invention in a spirit of benevolence, which was destructive of all sound commercial principles. Then he figured out how many millions, in dollars, Sir Humphry might have made, if only he had patented his little lamp and run the show himself.

Sir Humphry is a sort of patron saint, and some people feel all the better for looking at his statue in marble outside the Market House. He was born here, but his bones rest in peace at Geneva. They may be brought over at the centenary of his death, and canonized by the miners, whose saint he is, and God reward him for placing science at the service of humanity.

We found ourselves in the Morrab Gardens; the Public Library is there, and Guy said we might surprise the Bookworm if he came out to breathe. We didn't see him, but we saw the gardens—a little paradise with exotic blooms, and fountains playing, and the air laden with perfume. We sat down, but didn't feel like talking—a delicious, do-nothing sort of feeling was over us. We didn't know then what it was, but found that it was the climate—the restful, seductive climate.

A couple of fishwomen with empty baskets passed us, and they talked loud enough, but it might have been Arabic for all we knew. The letters of the alphabet seemed to be waltzing with the s's and z'z to the old women's accompaniment, and words reached us from a distance like the hum of bees. We were inclined to sleep, so moved on; but the feeling while it lasted was delicious. It may be only coincidence, but the Bookworm discovered that Morrab is a Semitic word, and means "the place of the setting sun." The Morrab Gardens face the west; and to sit in a library in a

miniature garden of Eden with an Arabic name is, in his opinion, the height of human enjoyment. The natives think a lot of the garden.

Serpentine and saints are common—the former is profitable; but there was an over-production of the latter a long time ago, and the market is still inactive. Some parishes had more than one saint, and some saints had more than one *alias*, to the great confusion of all saint lovers. The memory of saints, however, will last as long as the Mount stands. The Mount, dedicated to St. Michael, makes one curious about the early history of the good people who came here long ago, when the sea was salt enough to float millstones. The cheapest way of coming across in those days from the "distressful country," was to sit on a millstone and wait for a fair breeze. The saints were quite ready to grind any other man's corn as soon as they landed, and the millstones were convenient for that purpose. The rights of aliens to eat up natives were articles of belief and practice.

Penzance appeared on the saints' charts as the "Holy Headland," which was a mark to steer by; but St. Michael, it appears, drifted out of his course, and landed at the Mount, where the giant lived, and thereby hangs a tale.

Saint Michael and the Conger.

There are more St. Michaels than one, but the hero of this story landed at the Mount in a fog. The Mount was then the marine residence of an ancient giant, well known as keeping a sharp look-out for saints through a telescope, which he stole from an unfortunate Phœnician ship laden with tin and oysters. The giant had an evil reputation, but did nothing by halves. He was asleep when St. Michael landed; and when he slept, he snored, and when he snored, the Mount shook.

The poor saint was in a terrible funk, wandering about for days, reading the notices which the giant posted up warning saints not to land, unless they wished to be cooked in oil, after the manner of sardines. There was nothing to be picked up just then but seaweed, and the dry bones which the giant threw away—and there wasn't enough on the bones to support a saint after he had done with them. St. Michael had got rid of the very last drop of the best LL. whisky, and sat on the empty keg, and dreamed of his own peat fire at Ballyknock, and the little shebeen where a drop was to be had for the asking. It was fear of the fierce giant above which alone kept him from singing the poem which he had composed about "Home, sweet home."

The saint was very sad, and had almost given up hope, when something in the sea attracted his attention, and he saw a great conger rise, tail first, and stretch itself, until the tail topped the rock. Its head remained in the sea. The giant was snoring, and the Mount shook. St. Michael was the gold medallist of his college, and could put two and two together with the help of his fingers. "A sign," said he, girding on his sword, and putting on his best pair of spurs. The conger was to be for him a Jacob's ladder.

So he dug his spurs well into the fish's side, and climbed and climbed until he reached the top, and, with one mighty stroke, cut off the giant's head. There wasn't much personal estate—only the telescope—and the saint took that, but forgot to send a "return" to Somerset House, and pay death duties. The conger wagged his tail, by way of saying he was tired and wanted to be off, so the saint slipped down quite easily—so easily that he found the earth hard when he touched bottom. Those who have eyes to see may see the mark to this day.

ST. MICHAEL ABD THE CONGER.

Then the conger disappeared in the sea, but returned again, this time head first, and licked the saint's hand, who blessed it. Now the conger is very fine and large, and abundant in its season, and the white scars down its sides are the marks of the saint's spurs, which tell the story of the climb. There are some who say it was a bean-stalk which grew in the night for the saint to climb, and those who believe it, may.

The giant's blood flowed over the cliff, and a church sprung up, which St. Michael dedicated to himself, and then went away, for the Mount was not inhabited in those days.[A]

This was the beginning of the war between the saints and giants, which continued for centuries, and might have lasted until now, only the saints came out on top.

Saint Michael crops up in various places, and, for convenience, I may add here what is known of him. He became the patron saint of the county after meeting with the arch-enemy at Helston. There was no time to advise the newspapers, and get special correspondents on the spot, but it was reported that the battle was tough and long. The enemy carried a red-hot boulder under his arm, and hurled it at the saint; but he was out of practice, and the ball went wide. Then the saint got in with his trusty blackthorn, and basted the enemy so well that he couldn't fly away fast enough for comfort.

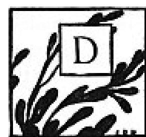
N.B.—The boulder was picked up when cool, and is still on view at the Angel Hotel.

Saint Michael, having now done enough for mere reputation, grew ambitious, and turned author, and that finished him. He wrote "The Story of my Life," but the publishers returned the manuscript with compliments; and when he found he had to pay double postage on the unstamped parcels, his great heart broke.

The Bookworm got back in time for dinner. He had been to all the libraries, and made friends of all the curators, and was going to have a good time.

We met the American gentleman in the smoking-room, and he gave us more opinions. He said this part of the world was a durned sight too slow for the twentieth century. It was, say, two hundred years behind the age. He expected that an American citizen would come across one day, and just show the people what to do, and how to do it. This Cornwall was a big show for the man who knew how to handle it. He took a special interest in the matter, because of the Gulf Stream, and he wasn't sure whether or no this part of the old country came within the Monroe doctrine. If it's England where the British flag waves, then isn't it America where American water runs? And if the Gulf Stream wasn't America, what was? He told us frankly that he, John B. Bellamy, Kansas City, Mo., U.S.A., had ideas.

Chapter III



Dolly Pentreath, the fishwife of Mousehole, had a reputation as wide, but different, as Sir Humphry's. Her portrait is sold in Penzance, wherein Dolly is only a name now. She belonged to the adjoining parish of Paul, and so there is no statue to her in the Market-place, where she sold fish, and talked the old Cornish with the real twenty-two carat stamp upon it. The Bookworm said Dolly's fame had done a good deal towards advertising the land of a lost language. He showed us the portrait of a determined-looking, passionate old party in short skirts, and a creel on her back. We had seen already several ancient dames carrying fish quite as capable of taking care of themselves, which indicated that if the language is lost, the race survives. It's a nice walk along the shore to Mousehole. We might have lingered at Newlyn, only the Bookworm wanted to get upon classic ground, where old Dolly used to smoke her pipe, and drink her flagon of beer with the best, and talk Cornish—the real old

lingo, hot, sweet, and strong, so that those who heard her once never forgot it. Dolly lived to one hundred and two, and then departed, carrying with her, in her queer old brain, the completest vocabulary of the Cornish language upon earth. This is the legend, to which is to be added that she had the reputation of being a "witch." There exists an ancient corner in the village where Dolly would be at home again if she could come back; and the Bookworm walked up and down, and in and out, touching the stones and rubbing shoulders against the pillars, as though he expected to feel an electric shock, or receive the straight tip from the old lady that he'd touched the spot, like Homocea. He may have passed over it, but he was happy. If he could only have found an old clay pipe that Dolly had smoked!

An old man sitting on a post watched us out of a corner of his eye. He knew what we were up to, and that there was a trifle at the end of it. Guy tackled him.

"Dolly Pentreath? Oh yes; she died poor, and was buried in the parish churchyard of Paul. People came in shoals to see her monument and read the inscription."

"Had anybody got anything belonging to her?"

Not that he knew by. "She might have had a Bible or a hymn-book, but she wasn't given that way much. So many people wanted 'relics,' and if there ever were any, they would have been sold long ago."

All this was straight enough, and his blue eye looked as clear as the well of truth. We stood around him as an oracle, and he began his story.

"Dolly Pentreath was a fine woman, with a voice that you could hear to Newlyn. She had the heart of a lion, and it was told of her that when a press-gang landed in search of men for the navy, Dolly took up a hatchet and fought them back to their boats, and so cursed them in old Cornish that that crew never ventured to come again.[B] And she was artful as well as brave, and saved a man, 'wanted' by the law for the purpose of hanging, by hiding him in her chimney. Dolly lived in an old house overlooking the quay, the walls of which were thick, and in the chimney was a cavity in which a man could stand upright, and it was a convenient hiding-place for many things. 'Back along' Mousehole was one family, and the ties of blood spoke eloquently; so, when a man rushed into Dolly's cottage, saying the officers were after him, and would hang him to the yardarm of the ship out in the bay, from which he had taken French leave the week before, he did not appeal in vain.

"There was no time to lose, and Dolly rose to the occasion. Up the chimney she popped the man; then, taking an armful of dried furze, she made a fire in the wide open grate, and filled the crock with water. Into the middle of the kitchen she pulled a 'keeve,' which she used for washing, and when the naval officer and his men burst into the kitchen, Dolly was sitting on a stool, with her legs bare, and her feet dangling over the 'keeve.' This was the situation.

DOLLY PENTREATH.

"'A man, indeed!' quoth Dolly; 'and me washing my feet!' She was only waiting for the water to 'het,' and they might all wash their own, if they liked. Search? Of 'coose' they might, and be sugared. (This was old Cornish, of course.) Would they like to look into the crock, and see if a man was boiling there?

"Search they did, and found no man; but Dolly found her tongue, and let them have it; and then she found her thick shoes and let them fly; and then she made for the chopper, and that cleared the house. Dolly made the most noise when she heard the poor man cough in his hiding-place. The aromatic smoke from the burning furze tickled his throat, and though life depended on silence, he could not keep it. Then Dolly gave tongue, and old Cornish—the genuine article—rattled amongst the rafters, like notes from brazen trumpets blown by tempests. She threw wide her door, and, with bare legs and feet, proclaimed to all the world the mission of the young lieutenant and his men, who now saw anger in all eyes, and made good their retreat whilst in whole skins. Then Dolly liberated the man in the chimney. In the dark night a fishing lugger stole out of Mousehole with the deserter on board, and made for Guernsey, which, in those days, was a sort of dumping-ground for all who were unable to pay their debts at home, or were 'wanted' for the hangman."

The old man, with true blue eyes, turned a quid in his mouth, and said, with the simplicity of a child, "And that man was my mother's father."

Guy was preparing to cross-examine the man of truth, but we would not have it. It was his own witness. He had found him sitting on an iron stump, and was bound to treat him as a witness of truth. Why shouldn't his own mother's father have been a deserter from the king's ship, and been saved by Dolly Pentreath? Guy agreed; but, said he, it was suspicious that that man should have been sitting on that very stump, at the very right moment, and have the right story on the tip of his tongue for the right people to listen to. There was too much "coincidence." We let it go at that.

The Bookworm had the old man with the truthful blue eyes all to himself for a time, and discovered the very room in the Keigwin Arms in which Dolly was wont to take her pint and her pipe at her ease, and the window out of which she would thrust her hard old face and shout to the fishers when they came to the landing-place. The old lady was keen on her bargains, and when she had bought her "cate," she trudged into Penzance with "creel" on back, and spoiled the Egyptians, according to the rules of art. The costume of the fishwife is the same now as then—the short skirt, the turned-up sleeves, the pad for resting the creel. Newhaven fishwives, but with less colour.

The Bookworm tried some old Cornish, which he had picked up the previous day, upon the old man with the truthful blue eyes, but he shook his head mournfully. "*Karenza whelas karenza*," repeated the Bookworm; but the old man looked blank, and did not blush at not knowing the family language. The finest chords of his heart were untouched; but he brightened up when the Bookworm sought his hand furtively, and left something there. Guy said he was perpetuating testimony.

The old fellow offered to go with us to Paul, and show us Dolly's monument, but Guy said the place was consecrated ground, and something tragic might happen if he refreshed his memory too largely on the spot. The truthful-looking eyes were unabashed.

"I don't care," said the Bookworm, as we walked along the road—"I don't care; we have received from the old fellow the impressions which he received from those who saw Dolly Pentreath in life—her passionate self-will and pluck, her artfulness, her readiness of tongue, and quickness in making a situation. What could be more dramatic in a cottage with only a fireplace, a wash-tray, and a stool in it for accessories? I don't care how much is invention—the living impression is that Dolly would have done this under the circumstances, and so the true woman has been presented to us."

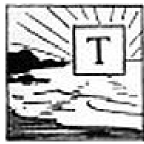
"I wish you joy of her, only I'm glad she doesn't cook my dinner," said Guy. "Let us reckon up her virtues—she snuffed, she smoked, she took her pint, and she cussed upon small provocation; these are the four cardinal virtues in your heroine. I wonder how often she was before her betters for assault and battery, and using profane language in an unknown tongue?"

We saluted the monolith in the churchyard in memory of Dolly Pentreath, but no one can say for certain that it covers the ashes of that ancient volcano in petticoats. Guy said he could not thrill unless he was sure the old lady was there, and the Bookworm ought to do all the thrilling for the party.

We were glad to have seen the monument, and the Bookworm said it was a sign of the *bonne entente* which is to be. "The Republic of Letters is superior to public prejudices and racial antipathies," he added, with a magnificent wave of the hand.

We saluted, the monument, including the shades of Dolly and Prince Lucian, if they happened to be around, and departed with the conviction that we had behaved very nicely towards the lost language and the "Republic of Letters."

Chapter IV



THE American citizen was not very interested in our doings. He thought that one language was good enough for the whole earth, and that was English, improved by the United States. There were languages still spoken in America which, he guessed, wouldn't be missed if they died out, as well as the people who spoke them. He wasn't gone on lost languages, or lost trades, or lost anything, but was a living man, and wanted people about him to show life. He had been told to take back some "relics" of the late King Arthur, because there was money in them, and he was going to Tintagel to look round—a button, or shoe-lace, or lock of hair picked up on the spot would fetch something considerable. There was a market for "relics" on the other side. We told him we weren't keen on "relics" for commercial purposes, and were going the other way first, so he would have it all his own way as far as we were concerned.

We reached the Land's End at the lowest of low water, and touched the very last bit of rock visible, so as to be able to say we'd touched the very last stone of dry England. We left it there for future generations to touch.

Cornwall is a tract of land with one-third in pickle, and what can't be walked over can be sailed over. When you sail far enough you reach the Scilly Isles, which is a sort of knuckle-end to the peninsula which once was land. There isn't very much to be found out in books about the land under the sea. Of course it is there, or water wouldn't be on top.

The Cornwall under the sea is the land of romance, where, some say, King Arthur was born. There is no getting away from this land under the sea, for the old fairies rise from it still, and spread enchantment. We were told that every little boy and girl born in the peninsula is breathed over by the fairies, and in after-life, wherever they may be, they turn their faces in sleep towards the west, and dream. From under the sea there rises, morn and eve, the sound of bells, telling their own tale with infinite charm. The stranger who comes into the county must hear these sounds and thrill, and see in sunshine and shadow, on hill and in coombe, on moor and fen, the fluttering of impalpable wings; for if he hears and sees them not, he will depart the stranger he came, though he live a lifetime in the land. In Cornwall everything is alive—the mine, the moor, the sea, the deep pools, the brooks, the groves, the sands, the caves; everything has its moan and harmony and inspiration. And the land under the sea, which is called Lyonesse by the poets, was a fairy zone, and some say it sank in the night, and some say other things harder to believe.

Cornwall under the sea has been there a long time. Some people, who like to be accurate above all things, say it disappeared in the year 1089, and contained 140 parish churches, and God wot how many chapels, and baptistries, and holy wells, and places. The only survivor was a Trevelyan, of Basil, near Launceston, who was on the back of a swimming horse. As it is not improbable that the inhabitants of Lyonesse traded with somebody elsewhere and owed them money, it is wonderful that the bad debts should have been wiped out without a murmur, and that no entry has been found in any court, or in the accounts and deeds of abbeys and priories of any interest in the 140 parish churches, and chapels, and holy wells, and baptistries. The Trevelyans seem to have been a larkish family, for when one of them was arrested for debt, he fetched a beehive and presented it to the bailiffs, who ran away from honey and honeycomb as fast as they could. The chimes which rise from the 140 parish churches under the sea are very beautiful to those who hear them. The square-set man who tacked himself on to us smiled when we asked him to say honestly if he had heard them. He had heard people say that they had. Some people are wonderfully quick at hearing.

The fact remains that from Land's End to Scilly is blue water, and from Scilly to Sandy Hook is blue water also. There are some other facts of almost equal interest, if one cares about them; but the first and foremost fact is, that every one standing for the first time upon the bluff,

perpendicular cliffs at the Land's End, turns his face seawards, and says, "There's nothing between me and America." Many people also think that the waves breaking on the dark rocks travel all the way from Sandy Hook without stopping for the privilege of dying on English soil. Wherever they come from they're welcome, and so also are the winds laden with Atlantic brine, which certainly have touched no land since they left the other side. No American tourist ever comes as far west as Penzance without rushing to the Land's End to get a lung-full of home air, as pure and unadulterated as it can be got in this old country.

Guy was particularly interested in the Gulf Stream, which we found was another matter of unfailing interest to everybody, and at all times and seasons. Some things may be explained every hour of the day without being explained away, like the sun's light, or a rainbow, or a new baby's eyes. Guy wanted to have the Gulf Stream pointed out to him, just as though it were painted red on the chart, or sent up clouds of steam. There wasn't much fun in looking for the Gulf Stream, only, being on the spot, one was obliged to do it. We had heard such a lot about it at the hotel, and the square-set man told us that people always made a dash for the Gulf Stream when they came here. His story of the old lady bringing eggs with her to cook in the Stream kept us in good temper when we found for ourselves that the water was just the same as any other sea-water, as far as we could tell, and that we should not have suspected the Gulf Stream of being near if we hadn't been told. Guy said it was a fine thing to know it was somewhere about, even if we couldn't see it, because it was a sort of link between the old world and the new, and made it easy to understand why Mr. Choate was made a Bencher. Guy promised to think the matter out, and put it in another way if we couldn't quite understand the reference.

The square-set man said he was sure there was a Gulf Stream, because foreign seaweed was picked up sometimes; and if it wasn't for the Stream, early potatoes and broccoli wouldn't be early, and the flowers at Scilly would be just the same as at other places. It's a long way for a stream to come, and the square-set man told us that at one time it must have been stronger than now, for it carried away the mainland between us and Scilly; but when Guy cross-examined him on what he called a question of fact, he broke down, and finished off by saying that that was what "people said." Guy was willing that there should be a Gulf Stream, but he bristled when told that the peninsula was snapped off like a carrot, and carried away by a stream from the Gulf of Mexico. His English pride was hurt, and he declared that he'd rather do without early potatoes and broccoli and flowers from Scilly for the rest of his life than that foreign water should ever be said to have carried away English acres, and so many of them. The invasion of England by the Gulf Stream indeed! Then where were the Navy League, and the Coast Defence Committee, and Mr. Balfour's great speech in the House of Commons?

There was one spot that we must see and stand upon, and the square-set man was sure of himself this time. We must go and stand upon the rock where Wesley stood before composing the hymn, "Lo, on a narrow neck of land." People come from all quarters of the universe for this privilege, and some people actually go away and compose hymns and send copies to the square-set man. He did not say what he did with them, but he did not talk respectfully of an absent lady who mailed him a poem from New York and forgot the postage stamps.

It was Guy's idea to stay where we were. He put it very nicely to the Bookworm about "communing with Nature, the great unwritten book, and all that sort of thing, you know." Guy was afraid that he would make a bee-line for the library if we returned to Penzance, and that we should have to dig him out again. "We'll keep him in the open, and let the square-set man stuff him with pre-historic monuments—something solid, you know, after the Gulf Stream." Guy's mind was constantly running on the Gulf Stream. He didn't care a fig for the stream, he said, in the course of the evening, and it was welcome to travel where it would; but when it came to taking away English soil, he wouldn't hear it; no, not if all the scientists in the universe were against him.

Most people carry away something—pebbles, or blooms, or bits of seaweed, or something of that sort—and there's plenty left; and all seem to carry away "impressions." The guide-books don't help the impressionists much, for everything appears different to every other person, as though the local fairies had a hand in it.

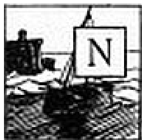
The square-set man called upon us in the evening, and told us stories of people whom he had conducted around the cliffs, and from monument to monument. The cliffs, we found, were "grand," "sublime," or "terrible;" and the rest was summed up in "charming," "queer," "fantastic," "unaccountable," "odd," "sweet," and the like. Specialists, of course, had their own pet phrases; but our friend was particularly struck with the fancy of the gentleman who saw in the cliffs only admirable situations for solving the great mystery. The higher the point, the more he seemed delighted. "Now, this is what I call a grand place for committing suicide," he finished off by saying, and "tipped" so liberally that Mr. Square-set is on the look-out for his return. An emotion once so deeply stirred will surely need be stirred again, he hinted.

When we asked Square-set to sit down and chat a bit, he said he'd be very pleased to "tich-pipe;" and when I passed him my pouch, he said he hadn't smoked since he was a young man.

"What you want to touch-a-pipe for if you don't smoke, I can't imagine," said Guy; and then we found that "tich-pipe" had nothing to do with the weed, but simply meant an interval of rest.

The Bookworm made a note.

CHAPTER V



o one ever comes here without inquiring for "wreckers"—Cornish wreckers are in demand. Guy put artful questions artfully, but could get no admissions beyond that—that he had "heard tell" that in ancient days things were done which no honest, God-fearing man should do. He was always being asked about wreckers and their doings, and a real, live sample on show would be a fortune to any man. What was called "wrecking" now was simply picking up and carrying away little odds and ends which the sea threw up high and dry upon the beaches. And why not? Who had a better title to them?

THE VILLAGE SHOP, MOUSEHOLE.

Guy said he supposed it was all right; and he remembered there was authority for saying that the king is rex because all wrecks belong to him. If so, then wreckers are rexers in their own right, and can do no wrong. Mr. Square-set was not impressed, but he assured us that the double-dyed villain of Cornish romances innumerable was extinct now, and Mr. Carnegie's millions could not purchase a specimen for the British Museum. It was a disappointment not to find a "wrecker"—the bold, bad man who tied lanterns to cows' tails, and sent up false lights to lure passing ships to destruction. We wanted to shake hands with one and stand him drinks, and make notes of his bushy eyebrows and the colour of his eyes, and then turn him inside out to discover what his secret thoughts were when hatching diabolical plans. Our faith in Cornish romances received a great shock just then, and Guy's cherished ambition to write "The Chronicles of Joseph Penruddock, Wrecker," suffered frost-bite. The world will never know more.

Of deeds of derring-do for the saving of life our square-set friend was full. This was another picture—a picture of black night and tempest, and noble souls wrestling with death and destruction, with scarce one faint chance in their favour. He told us of a man who hung over the precipitous cliff which we had stood on that morning, shuddering as we looked down in the full light of day, and the sea calm as the surface of a mirror; he told us of a man who descended that cliff by a rope when a storm was raging, and the sea "boiling" beneath him, and how he brought back in his arms a burden, battered, but still living, and how, in mid-air, the strands of the rope were chafed, so that those above trembled as they hauled. And as he spoke an inward glow spread over the man's face and revealed him. Guy seized the man's hands in both his own and wrung them, saying, "Great Scott! and you are the man who did this thing!" He told us afterwards that he couldn't help himself, and wasn't the least ashamed of being a bit "soft" just then. To think that this hero was the man we picked up scratching himself against a cromlech and looking for a job!

We couldn't get away from the sea now, and Mr. Square-set told us how differently sailors in misfortune were treated now than formerly—how they were fed and clothed and sent from one end of the country to the other, wherever they wished to go—in fact, by rail. In his young days it was not so, and a shipwrecked mariner was compelled to tramp wherever he chose to go, either to his own home or to the next port, in the hope of getting a berth. But a tramp in fine weather, sleeping in the fields and outhouses at night, and begging at decent houses by day, was very much enjoyed by the men, who became heroes when they returned home. He told us the story of

Two Ancient Mariners

who hailed from Cornwall, and once found themselves stranded in the port of London, with little but what they stood upright in. They were young men and merry-hearted, and stood by each other in fair weather or foul, as shipmates should. They hailed from the same fishing village, and wished to be home during the "feast" week, which was near at hand. Failing to find a coasting vessel bound west, they started to walk, and part of their arrangement was to take it in turns to call at gentlemen's houses and ask for assistance. They preferred not to go to the same house together, but to leave one on the look-out, in case of "squalls." They got on well enough for some days, sleeping where they could, and telling yarns of peril and disaster, most likely, in their opinion, to melt the hearts of hearers. And the story went like this—

"They came to a great gentleman's house, and it was Tommy Hingston's turn to go in, and Bill Baron's to watch outside. Tommy went up, as bold as brass, and asked for the gentleman, who was at home, and received him very kindly; and when he found he had come from London, he asked him for the latest news.

"'There's fine news, sure 'nuff,' says Tom.

"'Then let me have it, my man.'

"'Haven't 'ee heard it, yer honour? Haven't 'ee heard that London was as black as night at noon-day?'

"'Most remarkable,' said the gentleman; 'and can you tell me what caused the darkness?'

"'Sartin sure I can. A monstrous great bird flew over the town, and shut out the sun with his wings.'

"'That is astonishing. And did you hear anything else?'

"'Ess; they've a-turned Smithfield Market into a kitchen, and all the people are to be fed upon whitepot.'

"'You really mean it?'

"'I tasted it, yer honour,' replied Tom.

"'And was there anything else worthy of notice?'

"Tom scratched his head. 'There was something else,' he added, in a sort of hardly-worth-talking-about style. 'The River Thames catched on fire.'

"'Ah,' said the gentleman, rising and ringing the bell; 'and I have "catched" a rank imposter, and, being a magistrate, will commit you forthwith to prison as a rogue and a vagabond.'

"Billy Baron was keeping watch outside, and as his mate did not return, he grew uneasy. By-and-by he marched up and 'faced the brass knocker,' and was brought before the gentleman, who was now writing out a committal order, and Tom he saw standing, bolt upright, by the side of a man who had charge of him.

"Billy was a soft-hearted man, and burst into tears. Then the gentleman told Billy, in very straight terms, what he thought of his mate—a lying imposter, whom he was sending to prison.

"'Never!' said Billy, firmly. 'I'll lay my life on him.'

"'Very well; then, tell me, did you see a great bird fly over London, so large as to hide the light of the sun with its wings?'

"'No, sir,' replied Billy. 'I didn't see the bird, but I seed four horses dragging an egg, which people said a great bird had laid.'

"'You *are* a truthful man,' said the gentleman.

"'I hope so,' said Billy, with one eye on his mate.

"'I hope so, too. Then, tell me, did you eat some whitepot at Smithfield Market?'

"'No, I didn't, yer honour, but I seed a store full of gurt horn spoons.'

"'He told me something else, and I'm sure you'll answer truthfully. He told me he saw the River Thames on fire.'

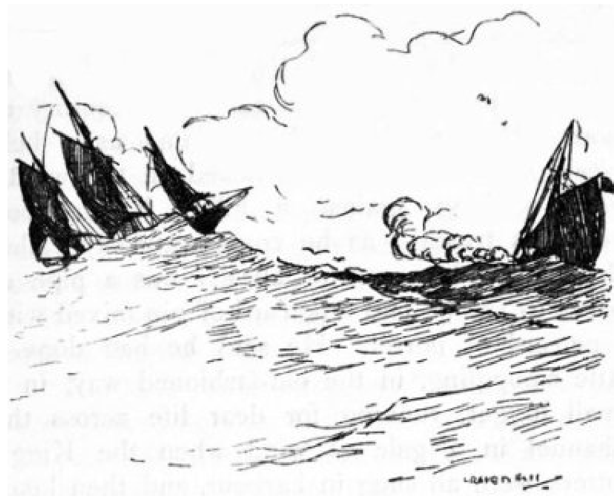
"'However cud 'ee have said that, Tom?' blurted out Billy, reproachfully. 'He never seed the river on fire, but what we did see was waggon and waggon-loads of fish carted away with burnt fins and tails.'

"'And they would have been taken from the burning river?'

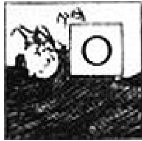
"'I do not doubt it; but, mind, I dedn't zee it,' said Billy, with the air of a martyr to the truth.

"The gentleman, no longer able to contain himself, sent Tom and Billy down to the kitchen, and gave them the best 'blaw out' they had on the journey. And, when they left, he told them, by way of compliment, that they were 'real Cornish diamonds, and the best pair of liars' he had ever known.

"And they were hard to beat," said Mr. Square-set.



Chapter VI



UR square-set friend owned up to smuggling as one of the virtues of his countrymen. The real thing is getting scarce now. One evening he brought an old acquaintance with him, introducing him crisply as "Uncle Bill." We saw a good deal of Uncle Bill afterwards, who was ninety next birthday, and ready and willing to "fight, wrassel, or run" with any man of his age in this country or the next. We did not doubt him, for his blue eye was clear, he moved easily, and his pink finger-tips and filbert-shaped nails showed breed. Uncle Bill looked as though he intended to carry out his bat for a century or more. He was, he said, as sound as a bell, except that he was a bit "tiched on the wind" when walking against a hill. Never took "doctor's traade," as he contemptuously called physic, and his cure for all ills was a pipe of 'bacca to smoke and a pen'ard of gin mixed with a pen'ard of porter. He said he had done a little smuggling, in the old-fashioned way, in a small lugger, running for dear life across the Channel in a gale of wind when the King's cutters were all snug in harbour, and then landing the tubs of spirits and parcels of lace and other things under the very noses of the preventive men. "They dedn't prevent we," said Uncle Bill, his face all a-glow with the pleasures of memory. He told us that he settled down to fishing when his "calling," and that of his father before him, was interfered with; but the dash and peril and the fame of successful smuggling suited him, and warmed up the cockles of his heart now only to think about. He spoke of himself as an injured man because he received no compensation for disturbance.

Guy worked at the subject, and came to the conclusion that Cornwall was as intended by Nature for smuggling as the inhabitants were for carrying it on. Every little bay and creek and cavern, villages and farmhouses, even the tombs in the parish churches, could tell tales. And the women, they were hand in glove with their husbands and sweethearts, fathers and brothers; and all that made life worth living then was made dependent on a successful "run" from a little French port with goods honestly bought and paid for, but—the sorrow and shame of it!—made contraband the moment they touched English soil.

"Bad laws made smugglers," said the Bookworm, provokingly, to Guy, who always fires up with professional wrath when he hears of anything bad in connection with the law.

"Bad fiddlesticks! People smuggled because they liked it—just as you liked it when you smuggled those nice little Tauchnitz editions last year, and without thinking of the poor devil of an author in England that you were robbing," replied Guy.

"That never occurred to me," said the Bookworm, meekly.

"Of course not. You are only a petty smuggler, but a smuggler all the same. And do you mean to tell me that 'bad laws,' forsooth, made you smuggle the books? Not a bit of it. You liked the game, and you know it."

There is a grandeur about the old smuggler which increases with age. He put his little all upon a venture—nothing of the limited liability principle about him. The lugger which left a Cornish fishing cove was, as a rule, family property, owned by father and sons, or by two or three brothers. The family capital was put into one purse, carried away, and converted into honest brandy, wines, and other articles of commerce. Then the struggle commenced between the individual who pitted his own cunning and frail boat against the King's cruisers and all the resources of a mighty State. He was surrounded by "spies" from the moment his cargo was on board until he was ready to slip from his moorings. He could trust no man. And then his voyage across the Channel was a race for life—in fog, in tempest, when only a madman would run the risk, the old smuggler would "up sail and off;" and if a King's officer liked to follow, then all he'd see would be the drippings from the smuggler's keel. The god of storms was the smuggler's divinity, and he loved his little craft, which was, for the time, a thing of life fleeing from pursuit, from imprisonment, and even death when cannon-balls flew about. How the old smuggler prayed for storm and night, for any peril which would enable him to show courage and mastery over the elemental forces which should drive his pursuers to destruction!

And how he would fight when brought to bay! When becalmed, the King's cutter would send a boat alongside to board the lugger, every man armed with pistol and cutlass, and wearing the uniform of authority. Then the smuggler would fight for property and life, cast off the grappling-irons, and cut down the man who ventured to set foot upon his little craft. And all the while the old man at the helm looked fixedly at the heavens and across the water to see if, perchance, a "breath of wind" was stirring—only a breath might be his salvation when he was too far inshore for the King's cutter to venture, and his men fighting off the cutters crew like heroes. Then a puff, and the sail draws; then more wind, and, inch by inch, the lugger sails away from cutter and cutter's crew, only, perhaps, to fall in with another enemy which has to be out-sailed, or out-manœuvred, or fought off, as best serves the purpose. No surrender when boat and cargo is the bread of the family.

Then the old smuggler reaches home, and every shadow may spell ruin; and all that is done is done in fear, and he has to be cunning always, and ready to fight to the death. The old smuggler belonged to the heroic age, and in all genuine stories he bulks colossal against a midnight sky black with tempest. The race has not disappeared; the conditions have changed, that is all. Uncle Bill told us that he could find a crew to-morrow if there was but a fair prospect of making five hundred pounds on the venture. And "I'd be one," said he.

If Nature intended a county for smuggling, it is Cornwall, which seems somehow to have been caught when cooling between two seas and pressed inward and upward, so that it is full of little bights and bays and caverns, which might have been vents for the gases to escape when the sea pressure at the sides became unbearable, and the earth groaned like the belle of the season in tight corsets. The caverns are given up to bats and otters and slimy things now, but in the "good old days!" The women, by all accounts, took kindly to smuggling, and stood shoulder to shoulder with their men when there was a fight with the preventive men, and ran off with the "tubs" of spirit and whatever they could carry, whilst the men held the King's officers in check. A young man who was content with a "living wage" on sea or on land wasn't thought much of by the black-haired, black-eyed damsels of the coast, who were up to snuff in the free-trade principles of their day and generation. The children were taught to look upon the sea as their own, and to regard smuggling as an honourable calling, and thousands of infant tongues prayed at night for God's blessing on smuggling ventures. And the Church was with the people, and blessed them, and shared their profits when there was no danger of being found out. "Nothing venture, nothing have" was the good old motto bound upon the smugglers' arms and hearts like phylacteries, and was to them as prayer.

A SHORT CUT.

Uncle Bill had a pen'ard of gin in his beer to clear his pipes one evening, and told us some yarns which he had heard from his father, who was called Enoch, who died in his bed at the age of ninety-six, and would have lived longer, only he "catched a cauld dru washing his feet in fresh water."

Uncle Bill was a young man, but not too young to go courting when his father made his last run across the Channel for a cargo of spirits. It came about in this way. Enoch and his family

possessed five hundred one-pound notes issued by a bank which had failed, and so were practically worthless. This was a serious matter, and Enoch proposed, at the family council, to run across to Brittany and exchange the worthless notes for tubs of good brandy. Everything was done in secrecy and in hot haste to prevent suspicion, and to get the cargo of contraband on board before news of the bank's failure reached the French merchants. Had they been members of the Japanese Intelligence Department they could not have kept the secret better. They had a splendid run, landed the cargo all serene, and cleared cent. per cent.

"I have often blessed God that there were no telegraphs in those days," said Uncle Bill, fervently.

"What became of the notes?" asked Guy.

"I don't know," replied Uncle Bill, with a lively wink. "All I know is we had the brandy."

"Is this genuine, or only make-up?" asked Guy.

"As true as the Gospel," replied Uncle Bill.

He told us many other stories, but we thought this best worth preserving, as it showed native cunning, promptness, and audacity.

"And I have lived to hear a man bless God that there were no such things as electric telegraphs," said the Bookworm, realizing that he was now in an England of a century ago.

Uncle Bill was a good old sort, and once when he came to see us he pulled a medicine-bottle from the folds of his knitted frock, and, taking out the cork, invited us to taste. It was pure cognac, and its flavour was what the old man called "rich." The spirit had not been coloured, and had a history, which the old man told with relish. News was one day brought to the coastguard station by a boatman that a cask was stranded on an adjacent beach, and the coastguard officer, who loved his joke and good company, summoned numerous good men and true (Uncle Bill being one) to go to the beach, and there hold an inquest upon the said cask and its contents.

"My men," said the coastguard officer, "I summon you in the name of the Queen (God bless her) to come with me to Treganna beach, and to taste the contents of a cask which we shall find there. I think it's a brandy cask," he added, "and you are to act as Queen's tasters. Now, my men, if you declare that the contents of the cask are wines or spirits, then the same will be seized on behalf of the Crown, and the Excise will claim it; and if you further declare that the contents taste of salt water, then the cask will be staved in, and the contents run out upon the beach. You are the jurors, and meet me here in half an hour. If any of 'ee have a tin can it might be handy" said he, with a wink.

When the jurors met again, they all had something in their hands in the shape of tin cans or pitchers; and there were men upon this jury who had not tasted spirits at their own expense for many years, and they carried the largest pitchers.

The coastguard officer produced a gimlet, and broached the cask, and every man tasted.

"The smell of it was enough for me," said Uncle Bill; "but I tasted, like the rest. It went down 'ansum, sure nuff. And some of us tasted again, to make sure for sartin."

Says the coastguard officer, "What is it, my men?"

"Cognac."

"So say you all?"

"One and all, for sure."

"Then I seize the cask, in the Queen's name."

He took out a bit of chalk, and marked the broad arrow upon it; but our jugs were empty. The best of the game was to come.

"Now, my men, tell me, as good men and true, whether the brandy has been touched with salt water."

So we all tasted again, and said it was sickly, and brackish, and made such faces that you might think we were poisoned.

"And so say you all?"

"Ess, one and all."

"And your verdict is that the cask of brandy, seized in the Queen's name, is brackish?"

"That is our verdict."

"Then I order the cask to be stove in and its contents run upon the beach."

And when the head was stove in, he turned his back upon us, and every can and jug and pitcher was filled, and, if we'd only known, we'd have had more pails and buckets and pitchers.

"I've got a drop still left, and 'tis precious," said Uncle Bill.

This medicine-bottle was his gift to us, and we now knew the flavour of cognac cast upon the

shore, which had never paid the Queen's penny.

"I don't wonder that smuggling was popular," said Guy.

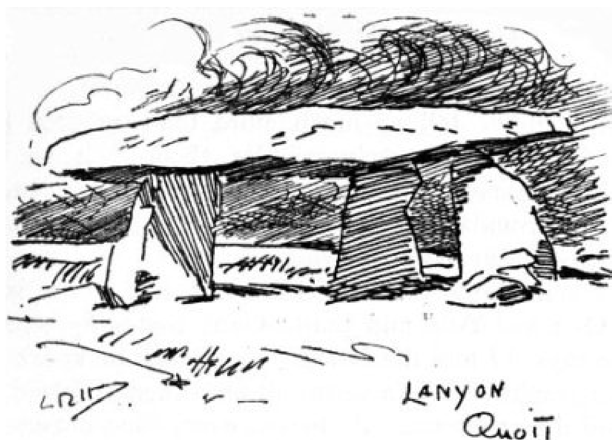
Smuggling made the sort of sailor that Nelson loved, a man who could fight and forgive when worsted, like the old smuggler of Talland, who had it recorded on his tombstone that he prayed God to pardon those wicked preventive men who shed his innocent blood.

It was in the Lizard district that smuggling reached its zenith. The Bookworm put a copy of the "Autobiography of a Smuggler" into his pocket when he tramped over to Prussia Cove, a place which Nature and a little art intended for an emporium for smugglers. Blind harbours, blind caves, hidden galleries, mysterious inlets and exits form a delicate network of safety and concealment. Only a century ago, the man who lived here was the king of Cornish smugglers and privateers, and defended himself with his own cannon.[C] Now the fine caves are fern-arched, and the water drips, drips, drips upon nothing precious. The smugglers borrowed these caves from the piskies who have re-entered into possession, for here are the piskie sands and piskie caves.

"Here, in cool grot, the piskies dwell," hummed Guy.

The caves seemed none the worse for having been smugglers' storehouses; but the gingerbeer and sandwich man left his trail, as usual. What he couldn't reach or cut down, he left alone, but broken glass he left behind.

Guy ran across a gentleman anxious to tell us things. He was a "pensioner." The man with a pension is a common object by the seashore. After a time, you get to know him as a superior sort of being reduced from his high estate, and only making the two ends meet by the grace of God. "Get a pension, and don't worry" is very good advice when the pension is big enough; but generally the pension-man is a trifle seedy—his pension won't spread all over him, but leaves him minus gloves, with patched shoes, and short everywhere. This honest old gentleman was Guy's find, and he was so eager to tell all he knew, and more on top of it, that Guy was glad, at last, to get rid of him with some excuse covered deftly with a small consideration.



Chapter VII

HERE is a good deal of history in Cornwall. Some may be read in stones, and some in books. The stone reading is very interesting to those who like it, and affords a good scope for imagination. Without imagination, stone reading is a trifle dull. Stones are everywhere at the Land's End and Lizard—some are stationary, and some "rock," and all are weather-worn. The Bookworm had a trick of running his hands over the surfaces of pre-historic monuments, like a blind man reading. It was just a fancy of his that he was shaking hands with antiquity. Our Mr. Square-set put his pencil mark in our Murray against what is called the "show-stones," and he couldn't tell us much more than we could find out for ourselves. We thought it best to let ancient stone history alone until we had a dull Sunday, or a wet day; and look out for what was nearer our own times.

We found that the Cornishman's motto is "One and All," and that "One" comes first, so he says, "I and the King;" and, when he speaks geographically, it is Cornwall first, then England, and then the rest. Formerly, everything outside of England was Cornwall, but he is not so sure now. However, he always takes a bit of the old county with him when he travels, so that the piskies may find him. A Cornishman abroad is given to "wishtness," and so he gets up clubs in London and other places, and talks of pasties and cream, blue skies and sapphire seas, and sings "Trelawney," and dances the "Flurry" dance, and One and All's it generally.

The Cornish had their own kings and queens—and as the kings were liberal to themselves in the matter of queens, they were not always happy. The Bookworm helped us a good deal at times, and told us that the ancient kings were not much given to diplomatic correspondence, nor to the keeping of "memorials of the reign," so that modern historians had a pretty free hand. The kings, however, must have been numerous at one time, as there was a king at Gweek and another at

Marazion—as thick as tenants on a gentleman's estate. Cornish history had, however, been worked up by poets, and the characters of the old kings drawn by Tennyson and Kingsley were not too amiable. There was Tennyson's Cornish king, who had an uncomfortable way of sneaking round on tiptoe and striking a man in the back. The poet had not made allowance for the fact that King Modred lived in days before private inquiry offices were invented, and so was obliged to do his own dirty work, instead of employing a professional spy at per hour and expenses. For real knowledge of Cornish kings, Kingsley whips creation. Listen!

"Fat was the feasting, and loud was the harping, in the halls of Alef, King of Gweek." There was going to be a wedding, so that may pass. Then we come to details worthy of the poet historian: "Savory was the smell of fried pilchard and hake; more savory still that of roast porpoise; most savory of all that of fifty huge squab pies, built up of layers of apples, bacon, onions, and mutton, and at the bottom of each a squab, or young cormorant, which diffused both through the pie and through the ambient air, a delicate odour of mingled guano and polecat." There was a little toddy, of course, to wash it down, and a few songs with harp accompaniment, and the bride, being properly elated with the perfume of "guano and polecat," was very civil, and, being a princess in her own right, and queen of Marazion, gave the vocalist a ring to remember her by. The next morning the newly-wedded pair start off on their honeymoon, and this is what happens. The King of Marazion grips his bride's arm until she screams, and says, "And you shall pass your bridal night in my dog-kennel, after my dog-whip has taught you not to give rings again to wandering harpers."

Tennyson and Kingsley have been read pretty generally by men and women of the Anglo-Saxon race, and some people may even think that the Cornish kings were like these portraits, and fed upon "guano and polecat" flavoured pies, and whipped their brides to sleep in dog-kennels in their bridal garments. Poets have always been privileged.

There were Cornish "kings," of course, just as there were Cornish "saints" and a Cornish language, and all three played their little parts, and went off the stage, without even the lights being turned down for them. With regard to the kings, this seemed to have happened: when the local rates and taxes were getting too high, and trouble was brewing about the Education Act, the kings saw that they must go under, and gave way to a Duke. Edward the Black Prince, having won his spurs in the Crusades, the kings asked him to take over what they could no longer keep, or didn't want, and so, "like a Cornishman's gift, what he does not want for himself" became a proverb. The proverb may be relied on as authentic. The Prince of Wales has been the Duke of Cornwall ever since, so the Cornish people have had a very close connection with royalty from pre-historic times, as the Bookworm discovered; then through Kingsley's "guano and polecat" period, and then from Edward the Black Prince down to the present, which we can verify for ourselves every year, when the Duchy accounts are published, and the ancient tribute passes into the noble Duke's banking account. History loses much of its charm for poets and romantic souls when it enters the prosaic region of banker's ledger and cheque book, but this sort of prose has advantages.

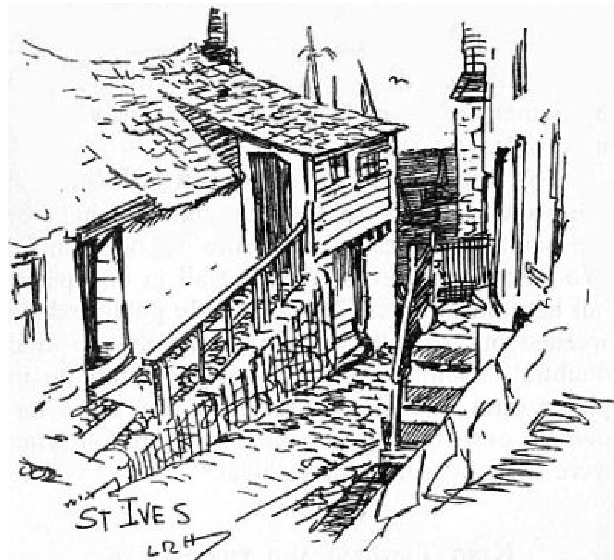
The Cornish had a long way to walk when they wanted just to talk matters over with their sovereign. They went in their thousands to London on several occasions when things were not to their liking, and the late Queen was the first sovereign of the realm to come into the county and "God bless" the people on their own doorsteps. Charles I. came into the county under very peculiar circumstances, and, though he was qualifying for martyrdom, he found time to write a very handsome letter of thanks "to the Inhabitants of the county of Cornwall" for giving the Cromwelliams more than they bargained for, or wanted even, on several occasions. This letter is still to be found painted on boards in parish churches, and as conspicuously placed as the Lord's Prayer or the Ten Commandments. The practice of reading the letter in churches and chapels has long been discontinued, but the testimony to unselfish devotion and gallant defence of a sovereign whose star was setting in blood remains.

Good Queen Bess rather liked Cornishmen, or said she did, which answered the same purpose. She said that "Cornish gentlemen were all born courtiers, with a becoming confidence," two qualities which naturally attracted her as woman and lady. Climate probably has something to do with native politeness, and that is why the Eastern races are so civil to one another.

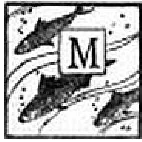
The people are like Japs for politeness to one another on a deal. When a man is drawing the long bow and coming it too strong, the other fellow will say, "I wonder if it is so," with the slightest possible accent of suspicion in his tone. We were present when two men were trying to make a deal in horseflesh, "halter for halter," as the saying is. The owner of a weedy-looking chestnut wished to swop with the owner of a useful black cob, and his rhetoric was florid. Sometimes he drew on his imagination in praise of the chestnut, and the owner of the black cob would say, "I wonder now," just by way of note of admiration. Then the chestnut's owner, growing bolder and more vigorous in his style, garnished his language with many fancy words, and wound up by asking, "Doan't 'ee believe me?" And the other man replied, as politely as a Chesterfield, "I'll believe 'ee to oblige 'ee." The Foreign Office couldn't beat it.

PADSTOW.

The Bookworm discovered that Cornwall had somehow linked itself with great names in history, or, rather, that some great names had linked themselves with Cornwall, using her as a gallant for a season, and then passing out of her life. Camelford had three successful wooers in Lord Lansdowne, Lord Brougham, and "Ossian" Macpherson; Lostwithiel was wooed and won by Joseph Addison; then Horace Walpole, jilted at Callington, made up to East Looe, still attractive, when the great Lord Palmerston came along with a buttonhole in his coat and the blarney. Then John Hampden found a first love in Grampound, and Sir Francis Drake a soft place in the bosom of Bossiney, a mere village close to the angry roar of Tintagel's sea. But all these seats were mere lights o' love, and some were swept away on account of their dissoluteness before the great Reform Bill, and then the rest went, and none were remembered on account of their gallant political lovers. Guy said it didn't make a bit of difference what the constituency was, or where, so long as the man was right. He saw a great many advantages in the old pocket borough; and if he ever went into Parliament (which he might) as a stepping-stone to the Woolsack (like the veteran Lord Chancellor, who found comfortable quarters at Launceston), he'd like to have the fewest number of constituents, and those all of one mind. But the Bookworm would not have it that way, and stuck to his guns that it was the constituency which really had a seat in Parliament, and constituency and member were one and indivisible; and when not, there was failure somewhere in first principles. The Bookworm always takes these things so seriously, Guy says.



Chapter VIII

OST of the saints came into Cornwall, dropping little bits of fame and reputation as they travelled from parish to parish, and from holy well to holy well. Old Fuller says they were born under a travelling planet, "neither bred where born, nor beneficed where bred, nor buried where beneficed," but wandering ever. Cornwall is known as the "Land of Saints," and county teams are usually "Saints." "The Saints *v.* Week-enders. Six goals to three. Five to one on Saints." It sounds a bit curious, but you get used to it.

The true story of the saints is a little mixed; the giants and the piskies come in, and wherever the saints went there was sure to be trouble. We picked up a few stories, not all in one place, but here and there. Those already published we weeded out, together with some which appeared doubtful. Some needed a little patching up in places, and the Bookworm said the most imperfect were the most genuine. The following were thought worthy of survival.

KING TEWDRIG AND THE SAINTS.

King Tewdrig and the Saints.

Irish saints swarmed as thick as flies in summer in the reign of Tewdrig the King, who built his castle on the sands at Hayle, wherein it now is, only the X-rays are not strong enough to make it visible. This Tewdrig was a good old sort, and was called Theodore by the saints as long as he had anything to give. But the saints letting it be known in the distressful land that they had struck oil, their friends and relatives swarmed across the Channel in such crowds that the King was in danger of being eaten out of house and home. He summoned the Keeper of the Victuals, and asked for a report. He had it; and it was short and sad—as sad in its way as an army stores inquiry. Every living thing in air and field and wood had been devoured. All the salted meats in the keeves had disappeared, "and if you don't stop this immigration of Irish saints," said the unhappy official, "we shall be eaten up alive." The good King became serious. Whilst they were talking, a messenger came with the news that a great batch of saints had come ashore. The King and his Keeper of the Victuals—when there were any to keep—looked at each other solemnly. "Put the castle in mourning," said the King. When the new arrivals danced up to the gate, with teeth well set for action and stomachs empty, the Keeper of the Victuals spoke sadly. "The good King died," he said, "the moment he heard that more saints had arrived. Those who came first ate all his substance and emptied his keeves, and there was nothing left of him now but bones. The last words of the good King were, 'Give them my bones.'" The Keeper of the Victuals turned, as though to fetch the good King's bones for the saints to feast on; but they one and all departed and spread the story. The King played the game and ordered his own funeral; and when the time came, he got up and looked through a peep-hole to see the procession. "The saints," said he, "have spared my bones, but they will surely come and see the last of me." But he was mistaken. The story that all the keeves were empty spread, and there wasn't a "saint" left in the land on the morrow. Then the King showed himself to his own people, and a law was passed, intituled "An Act against Alien Saints' Immigration." The country recovered its ancient prosperity, and the Keeper of the Victuals filled the keeves with salted meats, and there were wild birds in the air, and

beasts in the field, and the King once more feasted in his own hall.

St. Ia came across the Channel on a cabbage leaf, and the wind and tide carried her gaily to King Tewdrig's shore, but when the Customs asked her what she had to declare, she only held up the cabbage leaf. As she was a princess in her own right, and good-looking for an emigrant, the Customs officers were sad, but showed her a printed paper, rule xli, which stated that "foreigners without luggage, or visible means of subsistence, must not be allowed to land." The saint pointed to the cabbage leaf, and argued that it was "luggage" and "visible means of subsistence," and would have made good her point but for the King's Chancellor, who said that the cabbage leaf, being "pickled," was a manufactured article, and liable to duty under the new fiscal regulations. St. Ia always left her purse at home when she travelled, so she was unable to pay the duty. Once more she committed herself to the mercies of the sea on her cabbage leaf, and was carried to St. Ives, where she landed, and was made much of. She stayed there for a time, planted her leaf, and was blessed with a wonderful crop of pickled cabbages, the like of which had never before been seen or heard of. But she revenged herself upon King Tewdrig by writing to all the papers, and the saints, who deserted the King when they had almost eaten him up, made a fine how-de-doo, and an "Irish grievance," and the bad name which they gave the King stuck to him. The saints wrote the books in those days, and those who came after repeated what they wrote, until the people believed, and called it "history."

ST. IA.

Guy said it was very unconstitutional to lay the fault upon the King, who, it was well known, could do no wrong. It was the duty of the Prime Minister to bear all faults, and it was noticeable that many prime ministers were round-shouldered, so that they might carry faults lightly.

The Battle of St. Breage.

The saints and piskies had a battle-royal at St. Breage. A three-line whip was sent over to Ireland, and as soon as it was known that there was a little fighting to do, and a cracked skull almost certain, for the glory of God, the saints sent up a shout, straightened their blackthorns, and came across the water in whole battalions. The cause was popular. St. Patrick had driven the snakes into the sea, and why not the saints drive the piskies out of Cornwall? Hooroo! Paddy's blood was up, and he was spoiling for a bit of fun. The saints had the best of it, but so much blood was spilt on both sides that the sand was turned into stone. There is no other such stone in the district, and St. Breage had a block carved into a cross, and set up as a memorial, which may be seen to this day, only it has a hole in it which was made by the Giant Golons, who wore it on his watchchain until the date of his conversion.

"When anything has to be accounted for in this land, put it down to the saints, or the piskies, or Old Artful, and you're sure to be right. Nothing ever took place in the ordinary course of things. A month of Cornwall would be enough to drive a modern scientist stark, staring mad," said Guy.

"It would be curious to speculate what sort of world we should be living in to-day if things really happened, as they are said to have happened, between fairies and piskies, saints and giants, each

possessing supernatural powers. And yet law and custom grew out of beliefs in the invisible-visible," said the Bookworm.

THE STORY OF AN ARTFUL MAID.

There were women as well as men saints, and when a woman came to the front she made a sensation. St. Agnes was a woman. She was not born a saint, but became one. She was christened Ann, plain Ann, and was a good little girl, with blue eyes, and light brown hair much given to curl into love locks. She stayed at home until she grew up, and became restless, and wanted to see the world for herself. She did not complain more than other girls that her dresses were not tailor-made, and she had no particular grievance, only she felt that she must have a change. She wrote a dear little note, and enclosed one of her love locks to her dear and loving parents, freely forgiving them all the trouble and expense she had been to them, and went on her own.

She was supposed to be delicate on the chest, and Cornwall having a great reputation, she made all haste to get there. In those days there were a good many pilgrims on the road who used to entertain one another with stories of many lands and their adventures therein, and delicate little Agnes heard in this way about a famous Cornish giant, named Bolster. Mr. Bolster was in many respects a monster, and his story had great interest for little Agnes, because it was said he changed his wife every New Year's Day. He was called "Bolster" because he used to smother the old ones. Agnes wanted an adventure, and as her saint-like qualities developed, she felt more and more drawn towards Mr. Bolster, until she determined to try her hand upon him. It was a bold thing; but Agnes was bold, and when she felt at all timid she said aloud, "Courage!"

Mr. Bolster was a very fine fellow, the Colossus of his age. When his right foot rested on the summit of one hill his left foot rested on the summit of another, and the only thing that troubled him was corns, and when the weather changed, sometimes he had such twinges that he often thought he had a "conscience," and wished to get rid of it. At other times his conscience was "passive." Agnes heard about the corns, and a light played in her eyes of heavenly blue. She had an idea.

New Year was approaching, and Mr. Bolster was on the look-out for a fresh partner of his joys. When Agnes sighted him he was standing with one foot on Carn Brea and the other on Beacon, looking at the little virgins round about playing at "touch." His habit was to make a selection, watch the young lady home, and then, at New Years dawn, to carry her off just when she was busiest dreaming of mince-pies. Agnes guessed that the psychological moment had come, so she walked up Carn Brea and tickled Mr. Bolster's right foot with a bramble, quite close to his pet corn. Mr. Bolster, thinking that conscience was at him again, lifted his foot angrily; but, happily for Agnes, saw her kneeling at his foot.

"Hulloa!" he shouted.

Agnes presented her card.

BEAUTIFUL FOR EVER!

MISS AGNES.

Corns Extracted, Bunions Attended to.

Beauty at his feet, and the New Year near. Corns extracted. Was there ever such luck? So he took the little maiden up in his arms and promised, then and there, that she should be the next Mrs. Bolster. "Not long to wait," he added with a chuckle, the present Mrs. B. not having turned out to his liking.

Mr. Bolster had neglected his personal appearance very much lately, and when he sat Agnes on his knee in the gloaming, she began his education. "Beautiful for Ever!" was her trade mark. If Bolster only wore curls, what a head! Hyacinthine locks, what an Apollo! Bolster looked at her dear little love locks, and then put his great hand over his own hair, which was long and matted, and began to think that, after all, short, crisp curls would be an improvement. He did not surrender at once, but Agnes said she couldn't, she really couldn't, be the next Mrs. Bolster and trim his pet corns unless he had hyacinthine locks, like an up-to-date hero in a novel. She found a bit of chalk and drew on a blackboard the head of a Hercules with Apollo's locks. Mr. Bolster was touched in a weak spot, and to keep him soft, Agnes vowed that she would never be Mrs. Bolster until he was such a man—such a curled darling.

Mr. Bolster's hair was long and matted, and Agnes got a rake, and combed and combed until it all came off, and there was none to curl. New Year came, and Mrs. Bolster in possession went the way of all the giant's wives, and Agnes sat upon Bolster's knee and wept because of her vow which she must keep—no curls, no Agnes. She stroked his bald pate, saying the new hair was sprouting already, and it would curl so sweet when short that his own mother wouldn't know him. Then Agnes put him on health diet to make him young again, and when his hair really began to grow she became afraid, for she caught him heating the curling-tongs in secret, as though he meant business at an early date.

Agnes sat upon his knee and wept. He was so stout. She could not clasp his manly waist. He must reduce—he must, he must. The tears were in her beautiful eyes. Once more she touched the spot,

and Mr. Bolster, the Colossus, was soft. He'd do anything, and then he took an oath at which the stars trembled.

There was a little basin in the rock which the giant used for shaving-water now he had become a dandy. Water trickled down the crevice into the sea when the cork plug was removed. Agnes prescribed a little blood-letting—for she was skilled in phlebotomy—"just a basinful, you know," said she, with great pleading eyes of heavenly blue. Mr. Bolster threw his mighty arm carelessly across the basin.

"Only a basinful this time," said Agnes, pulling out the plug.

"Wake me up when it's full," said Bolster.

He slept and slept, dreaming of Agnes, and the vital stream flowed and ran down the crevice into the sea. And Agnes looked over the cliff and saw the sea blush, and blush deeper still.

"Is it nearly full?" asked Bolster, in a tone of lazy happiness.

"Not yet—not yet, my love," said Agnes, stroking his bald head where the curls were to grow.

So he slept and woke again, and asked, "Is it nearly full?"

"Yet a little more; it runs so slowly now," said Agnes.

And Bolster slept again.

Agnes looked over the cliff and the sea was deeply dyed, so great a stream had flowed from the mighty form, smiling in sleep, but pale in death.

He woke and tried to rise, but Agnes soothed him, saying—

"But a little more, 'tis nearly to the brim."

And his last vision was of Agnes.

So the land was rid of Bolster; but the people were not so thankful to Agnes as they might have been, so she "skipped." She led a wandering life, making and selling an ointment which people rubbed over their eyes to make them see clearer, and her fame followed her, so people began to praise and dedicate churches to her. The place where Bolster was slain became St. Agnes, and the basin into which his life's blood flowed may be seen to this day. A pebble thrown in finds its way to the sea if there is nothing to prevent it.

Guy said he liked to hear stories told on the spot, things seemed so real. Here was the very basin which held Bolster's shaving-water before it became the receiver for his blood. Just as good being here as reading an illustrated article in a magazine.

The Bookworm said the story was only one of a class, and it was quite easy to separate fact from fiction when we once knew how. In this case, Bolster was not a real person, but a snow-god, to whom the people offered a virgin every New Year to make him melt and let the earth bring forth her increase. St. Agnes made the people see the error of their ways—that was the ointment which she made for giving people clearer vision—and so it was said that she had slain Bolster. She was, no doubt, artful, and was all the more popular in consequence, it becoming a saying that "an artful maid is stronger than Bolster."

Guy said he liked the story best as it was, and had no patience with the Bookworm's treatment of it as a myth. He'd put money on Agnes, he said, to make her way in the world as well as any twentieth-century woman.

Chapter IX

A liking for stories of the saints grows with the supply. The Bookworm discovered in them the makings of history, and Guy mere love for the marvellous and dramatic situations. He thought St. Agnes would work up splendidly. It is well that saints catch on, because one can't get away from them. No sooner is one out of the parish of St. A., than he's into the parish of St. B., and from St. B. to St. C., and so on through the alphabet. It must have been a sore trial to the aborigines to see so many foreign saints upon the soil without visible means of subsistence, yet claiming exemption from income tax.

Wherever there was a well a saint took possession of it. The votive offerings of the natives to the bright, sparkling divinity dwelling in springs of water passed into their hands, the water cures became "miracles," and chapels and baptistries were built over the wells. Chapels and hermits' cells abound. There is one spring which insures a man from hanging if he is but christened with its water in childhood. There is another, in which a madman may be ducked until he is cured; there is another, in which a maiden may see her "future;" and there are others which can cure sad souls and sadder bodies.

As things are reckoned now, the best of the saints did not have a good time. The ruined chapel in the Saints' Valley was at one time the residence of a holy man, who never saw human form, or heard human voice, unless some one in distress needed his good offices to heal or console the sick or dying. It was a dark and dreary cell, with two slits in the walls for light and air, and a thin stream trickled through, and fell into a rocky basin outside, now green with fern and lichen. This feeble stream cut a channel in the rock, so we thought the cell must be pretty old; but there was no niche, or anything to show that lamp or image swung from the roof, or nestled somewhere to cheer the poor man. Whoever he was, he left no trace, not even a scratch in the rock recording his name. We would not have been much the wiser, after all, even if we had known the name of the poor human who endured torture here, and had the courage to live, and not throw himself to the first wolves who came howling around.

The ideas conjured up were unpleasant, and Guy gave a shout when he got outside, just to be sure that he was himself. He was sure, he said, no penal settlement in the world possessed a solitary system so depressingly solitary as this. He was quite prepared to take an affidavit neither now, nor at any time, to go in for honours in saintship.

The Bookworm said stories of the saints made what we saw much more interesting than if we merely looked at them through the eyes of guide-books. There was the "Cheese-wring." What did Murray say? Just this—

> "This remarkable object consists of tabular blocks of granite heaped one upon the other, after the manner of cheeses, to the height of twenty-four feet, but has probably acquired its name from its supposed resemblance to the press employed in the preparation of cider.... It derives its extraordinary appearance from the circumstance of the stones at the base being less than half the size of those they support, which are ten or twelve feet in diameter. Hence, the shape of the pile is that of a huge fungus, with a stalk so slenderly proportioned for the weight of the head, that the spectator will find it hard to divest himself of the idea of its instability."

He had, he said, made notes of a short story which accounted for the fantastic mass of weathered granite in quite a different way, and made of the stone a lasting memorial of the triumph of the saints over the early giants in the land—faith against strength.

St. Tue and the Giants.

The story opened at a period when the saints had been some time in the land, and the people took kindly to them, and brought them fish on Fridays. The giants grew jealous, and resolved on holding a conference, and when they were all assembled, Uther was voted to the chair, because he had the broadest shoulders and the best headpiece of all the race from the Tamar to Pol-

Pedyn. The question was, What shall we do with the saints? Various methods had been already tried—boiling, baking, and grilling were no use. The giants were not a united family, and were fond of hurling rocks at one another, and fighting and wrestling for fun or glory, just as the humour prompted. Uther, the president, put the matter before them in a statesmanlike way. First of all, he counted six up, and then he counted half a dozen; then he said, if you take six from six, there's nothing, but if you wipe out six, six remains. The speech was so precise and clear, that it was pencilled down on a half-sheet of notepaper, and, in time, became the model for future prime ministers. It was certainly very well received. Then there was a discussion, and some said one thing, and some another, and when all spoke at once, it was very difficult to know what was said or meant. The president tried to keep order, but was just as helpless as Mr. Speaker in modern days. Fortunately it was an open-air meeting, and the sky was not cracked.

Saint Tue had a little well all to himself, but was a small and weakly man, who took cod-liver oil fasting; but he was young and full of zeal. The conference was held in what he called his "sphere of influence," and when he heard the mighty shouts, he looked upwards and saw a sign. Then he hastened to the conference, and, by dodging in and out between the giants' legs, he managed to reach the president, who was threatening to leave the chair unless better order was kept.

"Pick me up," said St. Tue.

So Uther picked him up and showed him to the assembly; and, being a strong man himself, he admired pluck.

"What do you want here, my little man?" asked Uther, thinking into which pocket he should pop him to ensure his safety.

"I want to challenge you to a trial of strength; but let me speak to the giants," replied the saint.

Uther stood St. Tue on the palm of his hand and held out his arm, so that he might speak, which he did in a loud voice, telling them solemnly that they were warring against heaven and one mightier than they, and finished by challenging the mightiest to a contest of rock-hurling. If he were beaten, all the saints would leave the land; but if he won, then the giants were to cease their persecution and be baptized with the sign of the cross.

Now, Uther was a champion rock-hurler, and it was a pastime with him to throw rocks like quoits, and so truly as to balance them one over the other, the top being the largest. The game was no child's play; and the assembly said if Uther would accept the challenge, they would abide by the result. When they looked at St. Tue and the rocks to be hurled, they laughed mockingly.

There were twelve rocks in all. They had been used before, and were fairly round. The smallest was hurled first, and Uther pitched it one hundred feet. St Tues knees shook. What if his faith should fail now? He cast his eyes upwards, and then, oh, blessed miracle! the rock was as a feather in his hand, and he hurled it with such precision that it capped number one as though it grew there.

So the game went on, and the pile grew more and more like a mushroom. The giants shouted mightily when Uther's rock capped the saint's; but when the saint's capped Uther's, they groaned aloud, and showed temper.

It was the saint's turn to hurl the last rock, which, being the heaviest and largest, and having to be thrown the highest, required the greatest skill and judgment and strength. The slightest error, and the pile would topple over. The silence was so great that a grasshopper was heard to chirp. True as a die the rock settled on the rest, and the whole mass swayed upon its stem, but fell not.

The victory was not yet, and a thirteenth rock was brought, and so huge was it that the giant knew it was beyond his powers to hurl; but he raised it with both hands and threw it with all his might and strength, and fell prone to earth, exhausted. The rock fell short, and was rolled back to where St. Tue stood, trembling once again. Would Heaven fail him now? But no. His eyes were opened, and he saw an angelic host raise the stone to his hand, carry it through the air, and place it as a crown upon the "wring," that man might wonder at for evermore. But the giants were blind with rage, and saw not.

THE LEGEND OF THE CHEESE-WRING.

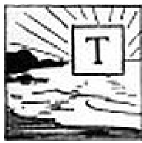
Then Uther bowed his head in humility and confessed his sins, and was baptized; and some followed his example, but more returned to their castles and did what scathe they could. But the saints rejoiced when they heard what St. Tue had done, and were made free of the land; and made so free with it that all the best they took to themselves, and so pursued the giants with soap and water and Sunday clothes, and so trimmed their beards and nails, that the race dwindled and dwindled and died out. So the saints triumphed, and the Cheese-wring is their memorial.

St. Tue founded the "Union of Saints," and then his troubles began in such earnest that he had to increase his doses of cod-liver oil in order to bear them. He was nursed in his last days by the good St. Keyne, who came over from Wales for the purpose. An elm, an oak, and an ash tree grew over his grave, whose roots formed an arch, and under the arch a spring of pure water gushed forth. So St. Keyne lived by the well, and Cornish brides, drinking first of the water, wear divided skirts, and feed their husbands with long spoons.

Guy said he thought we had had enough of saints, both he and she, for the present.

CHAPTER X

HE Cornish taste has not hitherto rioted in "graven images." Ancient monuments were so plentiful


that it may have been thought quite unnecessary to add to the number in any shape or form, especially when it was known that the finest monoliths were split up and carted away for gate-posts for cattle to rub against; or, worse than all, be burnt for lime. However, graven images are rare in the county. A good citizen of Edinburgh or Glasgow would put all the statuary in the county in his back garden. Sir Humphry Davy stands outside the market at Penzance, and Richard Lander, the plucky African traveller, is skied on a Doric column on the top of a hill in Truro. Foote, the comedian, Polwhele, county historian, and Henry Martyn, the sainted missionary, over whose barren love story and early death rivers of salt tears have flowed, were all born in Truro; but we didn't see any graven images recording the fact. Guy sought information from an intelligent policeman, who said he knew Henry Martyn well, and a quiet man he was, when sober! There are some capital sites in the city for a few statues to Cornish worthies, and the effigy of the sainted Martyn would, at all events, help to preserve his memory from sad imputations. There is a Cornish flavour about the great Earl of Chatham, who should have been born at the family mansion at Boconnoc instead of at Westminster, where his mother happened to be; and a Cornish flavour, too, about the gifted Lady Hester Stanhope, who did not forget to speak well of Cornish miners, "on account of their race," in her Syrian home. Cousin Jack might remember this, and shell out liberally, if the public fancy runs one day towards statues. The Molesworths have a claim to be set up in marble, and so has Richard Trevithick, the Camborne miner, and so also John Couch Adams, the discoverer of the planet Neptune. These are a few worthies to go on with, and by the time their statues are unveiled some, now living, may be ripe for immortality in stone. The few modern monuments are not remarkable, as such. The Gilbert monument, at Bodmin, outgrew its strength, and is not likely to startle remote posterity as a nineteenth-century antiquity. Once upon a time there was a battle at Stamford Hill, not far from Bude, when Sir Bevill Grenvill and his stalwarts gave the Roundheads a fair drubbing. Then a monument was erected to record the historic event, and it tumbled down. Sir Bevill Grenvill had a giant servant, named Anthony Payne, and the great Kneller painted his portrait, and the canvas has a place of honour in the museum of the Royal Institution. The Bookworm remarked that it was not at all singular that the county had turned out no sculptors, when public bodies did so little to encourage art, and that what they did was done so badly.

Truro is not the capital of the county, though many people think it ought to be. It has a cathedral now, which counts for something, and is the home of the "classy" people, which counts for a great deal when the question is one of capital with a big C. Every few years there is a battle-royal over the capital question, and the archæologists and the antiquarians dust each other with seals and charters, Domesday Books and inquisitions, and all the rest of it. The grand tournament is between Bodmin and Launceston, which latter possesses an old castle, or what is left of one, and was anciently the place for the hanging of criminals for capital offences. But as the judges were served with small beer at dinner, and their beds were not properly aired, they moved on to Bodmin, where the beer was stronger, and the bed-linen better looked after. Besides, the tallow candles gave better light in the Bodmin than in the Launceston lodgings, which was important to judges on circuit, when they had to sit up late and read papers, and "note up" evidence badly written with their own hand and bad pens. The Launceston people didn't seem to care much about their privileges at the time of losing them. In fact, they were just then feeling sore at having lost one member of Parliament under the Reform Bill, and the market was flat for honours which didn't mean cash in hand. Then Bodmin took on the assizes, and the hangings, and became the capital with a big C, and built a lunatic asylum and a jail, up to date. The question now is whether our Gracious Lord the King would hold out a little finger to the Mayor of Launceston or to the Mayor of Bodmin as most truly representing the capital of Cornwall. The point has to be settled. Then Truro comes in and laughs at both, and, pointing to its cathedral, says, "If you want a capital with a big C, look here," which pleases all the "classy" people, and sets the rest laughing, except the ancient Britons of Penzance, who swagger about climate, also with a big C. As climate and capital both begin with C, it is easy to argue that they are very much alike. Bodmin and Launceston tilt in rusty armour, and Truro and Penzance with bodkins, and no harm is done.

The Bookworm made a tour of the libraries and museums, and somewhere met a "kindred soul," which so pleased him that he pronounced Truro the literary town in the duchy. Certainly, the city has a professorial air, which is native. If ever there is a Cornish university it will come to Truro, if it walk upon crutches to get there. Caps and gowns taking snuff and looking lexicons coming out of the shadow of Church Lane would be as natural as life; and then the undergrads swelling Boscawen Street in term! They are not there just now, but the place looks as though cut out for academic maternity. The professorial air belonged to the place before the cathedral was dreamt of—perhaps the cathedral came because the place had the right sort of style about it. There is a county look about the shops in Boscawen Street, which is all its own. Some of the shops just put up wire blinds, with a legend painted on them, discouraging to the vulgar looking for bargains and misfits. "Nothing of the sort here; our customers write cheques, you know." There are other shops with "discount for cash" writ large all over them, but they seem out of place, somehow. There was always this sort of county family style about the town and people, who were always fond of sports, and had a cock-pit.

"Taking snuff and looking lexicons."

What strikes the stranger first is the inexhaustible water supply. Miniature canals ripple along on both sides of the streets—clear, bright, fresh water, which would be worth no end of money in a thirsty land. Ripple, ripple, ripple, all day long, and all the year through, never overflowing, never drying up, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. Hydrophobia is unknown amongst dogs, and is only observable amongst the higher animals—generally on pay days and holidays. The inhabitants, however, pay water taxes quite cheerfully, and are not extravagant users in their houses. It is a reproach to Londoners, who are so extravagant with water, to see how thrifty the people are. The people of Helston are blessed with water running free in the same way.

Cornish people do not live much in towns; they seem to prefer living amongst the rocks and trees, upon the downs, amongst the shadows of they know not what, and sounds which are as echoes from long ago. A very small town elsewhere fills the untravelled with amazement; and stories are told of the cunning which was shown by an old man who carried a piece of chalk in his pocket and placed a mark on the corner of every street he turned, and so made his way plain when he wished to return; but the poor fellow was sadly puzzled when a joker rubbed out his marks and put facsimiles in wrong places. But, in truth, Cornish towns are not very puzzling to an ordinary pavement trotter, and the houses are not much to look at. Solid walls pierced with holes and covered by a roof is a "house." There are whole streets like this in all the towns, and most of the shops have the appearance of being private houses "accommodated." In a land where the Phœnician and Greek came, and the Roman dwelt; where Spaniard, Frenchman, and Fleming settled, leaving their names and blood behind, one might expect to find specimens of the architecture of many periods and countries; but it is no use looking for what does not exist. The Cornish never seem to have invited the envy and hatred of others by the outward beauty of their dwellings. The Fore Street of a town, however ancient and celebrated for riches and commerce, never gives one the idea that merchant princes dwelt here, and loved to dwell in earthly tabernacles with polished beams, and hanging galleries, and oriel windows, painted, decorated, and varnished, as we see in many a High Street, in many a town in the rest of England. The Cornish genius had no great turn for architecture—its municipal buildings are plain and thrifty, like the dwelling-houses. To be "wind and water tight" is the native idea of comfort; and then plenty of whitewash and a little paint. There must have been native artists in abundance during the centuries, but they were seldom employed with chisel and brush in decorating private dwellings or corporation buildings. The county turned out one little painter who "mixed his colours with brains," and so became the rage for a London season; but when you come to a town, don't inquire, "What artist was born here?" The old people didn't throw away money on decorative art. If there is a bit to be found anywhere, it is generally in or about a church, and stranger fingers executed it.

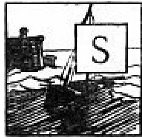
On the moors, and on the coast, the idea of a dwelling is that of a stone hut with window and chimney, not so very much in advance of the dwellings of the Palæolithic Age, which shows how slow the evolution of one idea may be whilst others are travelling at motor pace. Where stone abounds the dwelling is a cave above the ground; where stone is scarce the yellow earth is mixed with a little chopped straw, and makes a wall as much like the neighbouring soil as peas in a pod.

This is "cob" wall, and, when covered with thatch and half hidden with flowering creepers, cob-wall cottages are pleasant to look at. Specimens of stone dwellings with thatched roofs abound in the Lizard district, and cob-wall cottages, more or less in ruins, are almost everywhere. Men and women are in the habit of leaving their boots and clogs outside their dwellings, and when the doors are open there is a great display of old crockery and china ornaments in stiff-looking cupboards with glass doors. Very like a painting by a Dutch artist is the interior of a Cornish cottage on a moor.

Old fishing towns which have not yet been too much "improved" show the practical side of the Cornishman's mind in the matter of dwellings. The idea of a street never occurred to him. What he wanted was a place on shore in which to store his nets and fishing gear, sails and spars, and over that a loft, which he divided into rooms fitted up with "lockers," like the cuddy of his boat, or the cabin of a ship, and that was his castle. He reached the ground by means of stone or wooden steps, having the appearance on land of steps let down from the gangway of a ship. In fact, the idea of a dwelling was that of a ship in stone, and the similarity was the greater when a "hatch" was lifted up in the kitchen and descent made into the cellar below, just as one would descend into the hold of a ship through the open hatchway. The Cornish fisher's idea of comfort was snugness. His dwelling overlooked the harbour, and he could see his boat lying to her moorings, and open his window and talk to the men as they passed, and consult the sky and clouds. He could do a lot from his window, his chin resting on his arms, with the least possible trouble to himself. When a fisher cannot live so as to see the harbour from his window, he lives as near the harbour as he can, so as to be out of his boat and into his bed in the shortest time. He detests walking one step further than he can help after he lands, so the idea of regular streets never dawned upon the original builders of Newlyn and St. Ives, Polperro and Looe, Fowey and Mevagissey. A street is an accident, unless it is modern—the ancient builders of the old towns deeming it sufficient to leave a gangway between the houses, as at Polperro, where a man with broad shoulders can block up the whole thoroughfare. In the villages and coves at the Lizard and the Land's End, the fishers' dwellings have a physiognomy in common, and tell of struggle and endurance; and in favoured places, jasmine and myrtle, fuchsia, geranium, and roses step in and cover all the weather-beaten stone and shabby lintels with glory and perfume.

THE PORCH, LAUNCESTON CHURCH.

Chapter XI



T. Ives is small for its age, but is growing now. The town divides itself into two parts, the new and the old. The new is new, and the old is fragrant. The history of St. Ives also divides itself into two, the ancient and the modern; and the ancient goes back to the time of the saints. It was a woman who founded St. Ives. It is well to keep this in mind, because the well-known St. Ives was a lawyer, and so honest that he was never once struck off the rolls. Some of the piety of the ancient lady is said to linger about the town. It was she who introduced a new breed of cats, and the old town is still famous for cats. There are Manx cats and Persian cats and St. Ives cats. The St. Ives cat is "at home" in the streets, and may be found in corners and on doorsteps, or stretched at full length across the roads, and sidewalks when there are any. St. Ives is apparently owned by cats, so respectful are the inhabitants, and so careful not to tread on their tails or toes. If a cat is stretched out enjoying the sunshine, a man will drive his cart around it, to the danger of humans paying rates and taxes. The St. Ives cat has a well-to-do, lascivious-looking air, and is only properly awake at nights. In the daytime the animal slinks along courts and side streets, and rubs itself against water-butts and tar-barrels and fish-flaskets, until it has an odour of mixed scents as strong as a distillery of perfumes. Nothing can beat pilchard oil mixed with garbage, which the St. Ives cat loves. When the boats return in the early hours of the morning, the cats make tracks for the quay, and every cat knows its own boat, and waits for the men to come ashore, and then purrs and purrs, and rubs its scented fur against the men's long-boots. The men belong to the cats, every cat a man and every man a cat. Women and mice don't count much with St. Ives cats—it's men and fish for them.

Smiler's Pious Cat.

"Ded 'ee ever hear th' story of Smiler's cat? No? Well, then, I'll tell 'ee," said a man, gutting a fish upon an iron post, and throwing tid-bits to a long lanky tabby with one mild blue eye and one a dark grassy green. "He wadn't a fighter, egcept he was provoked, and then he was game; but he was a most orderly cat and pious. Now you may laugh, but ef iver there was a pious cat, 'twas Smiler's. Smiler wadn't pious, but Bob was. Bob was black with a white tie round his neck, so he had a respectable appearance, and was looked up to by all the cats in the parish. Bob knew when Smiler had a good week, and knew where to find him when he'd had enough and 'twas time to go home. Smiler was a peaceful man at all times, and when he'd had full 'lowance, and more, he'd sit down and talk over old times, and his father and mother, and begin to cry. Then Bob would rub against his legs and make for the door, and Smiler would follow 'zackly like a cheeld—ess he would. When 'twas dark Bob 'ud walk back-'ards and show Smiler the way by the light of es eyes—starboard and port, port and starboard—till Smiler got home. Bob was that pious he wouldn't eat no vish on a Sunday, and he was so looked up to by all the cats that not one would run down to the quay on a Saturday or a Sunday night—not sure 'nuff—not if all the boats came in chock-vull of vish. 'No Sunday vish for St. Ives!' was the motto with Bob, and all the cats followed. Smiler was that happy on Saturdays that he cudn't rise on Sundays, and Bob used to keep watch and listen to the Salvation Army services which he cud hear quite plain through the open window. Bob got to like the music and grew serious, and tuk to followin' th' band. People tuk notice, and said 'twas Smiler's Bob, and expected to see Smiler foller the cat, as he did at nights when he was well 'bowsed.'

"Bob was going after Smiler one night, as usual, after 'sharing,' and, as ill fortune would have it, he met an old friend in the cat-line, and they went off together, which was sad for Smiler, who went wrong, and slipped into the water, without being seen or heard. Bob went about like a mazed cat, and never rested till he sniffed out Smiler, caught by a mooring chain. It was wonderful to see Bob follerin' at the funeral, and many would have taken care ov him, but he had a 'call,' and follered the Salvation Army, and to the last day of his innocent life would eat no vish on a Sunday—not no vish even caught on a Saturday; no risks for Bob. If some people was only as good as some cats," said the man, resuming work and throwing a morsel to the long lanky tabby, "why, then I say there'd be no call for bad blood between East and West on the score of Sunday fishing and Sunday markets."

"How do you account for this uncommon piety in a cat?" asked Guy.

"'Twas bred in him, s'poase. Anyhow, he was uncommon pious, and his good example is follered. Thiccy theer cat wud no more ate vish catched on Sunday than he'd fly. Wad'ee, Tom?"

Tom purred.

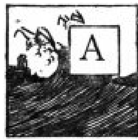
"I knawed it," said the man, washing the fish and pushing his forefinger through its gills.

The St. Ives women always enjoyed the reputation of being well endowed with tongue. Some people think their old vivacity is the result of foreign blood, but it is singular that the "gift" of tongue should follow only in the female line. A St. Ives man is quiet enough until his blood is up, and then he wants to hit something, or throw something overboard, and make a big noise in the open air. There is the story of three young women slipping into their pattens and going to the well with their pitchers for water. Their husbands were at sea. The young women began to talk, and they talked on and on until their husbands returned, and found them just at the beginning of an argument. So they off to sea once more, and back again, and the three women were still at the well, and getting interested in the argument. Then the three men took a long voyage, and returning with well-lined purses found their wives, now grown white, still at the well, but on the point of adjourning till the morrow to take up the thread of the old argument.

A CORNISH FISH WIFE.

The St. Ives woman, however, has a turn for business. What her man catches she sells, and pays his bills for nets and barking and repairs. On land she's "boss," and has a "sharing cake" once a week when she settles accounts. The "sharing cake" is an ancient institution, and must be respected. It has its ceremonial, too, and must be broken with the fingers, not cut with a knife, because cold steel would bring bad luck. The customs of women are very different in the North and South. Like Newlyn, St. Ives is the home of artists of world-wide reputation.

Chapter XII



Cornish Sunday to a man of cities is a weariness to the flesh, and a temptation to pray for Monday to come quickly; but for the natives it is a blessed day—a day of feathers and soft down, a day for chewing the cud and being lazy without reproach. The fishermen rarely fish on Saturdays because the sacred idleness of the Sunday may be broken by the salesmen and railway porters—so the day of rest is made to stretch over as much of two days as is worth the having. Farmers are not so well off as fishers, but do what they can in the resting line, and that is something. When we walked through any of the villages on a Sunday we found the people mostly looking over their garden gates, casting glances "up-along," or "down-along," or "athwart," just to see what was going on, and who was moving. They don't like cycles or cyclists on Sundays, and when one comes along all the men in their shirt-sleeves, and all the women helping them to do nothing, squirm as though wounded in a tender place. Every time it is the same—the same inward shrinking from activity on a day of rest. Those who do nothing all the week feel just the same, and lie about, and squat about, indoors, when not outside resting their ample chins upon ample arms upon gates and walls, staring "up-along," and "down-along," and "athwart," watching one another.

Whatever can sleep, sleeps, and the people don't seem properly awake until after tea, when the women make ready for chapel, and the men go after them. The men wouldn't stir but for the women, and the women make a bee-line for chapel. Sunday is given up to preaching and preachers. If you see a man driving on a Sunday, you may put him down for a "local" brother, who works at his trade all the week and is preacher on Sundays. You may know him by a certain smile of goodness that plays around his mouth, for he is going to have a good time. The lay preacher is a by-product of Methodism, and a valuable one in large and scattered circuits too poor for anything but a little chapel of four walls and a brush of whitewash. The Methodist clergy live in the towns and work around the circuit, so the people in the villages see their minister sometimes. The ordained minister is a "rounder," because of his travelling round. The lay, or "local," brothers come in and fill up gaps, and they travel from place to place according to a "plan"—a sort of calendar and time-table combined. It is a system, and it works, and congregations are not wearied with the same face and voice two Sundays in succession. It is good for the lay brother, who can run one sermon for three months without much fear of being bowled out.

The lay preacher is almost a professional once a week, and goes so far as to wear a clerical bowler, but the white necktie is reserved, as a rule, for his betters. There is no written law upon the subject, but it is understood that the white necktie is for the professional "rounder." The lay brother has privileges, and may drive proudly through the land of saints on Sundays and be welcomed, though no one else may let or hire a trap for love or money. The lay brother may not ride a bicycle, which is a pity, looked at from the side of horseflesh.

"I'll drive 'ee to plaize 'ee, but I'd rather not," said a good-tempered landlord, one Sunday, when we wished to pay respects to an ancient monument.

"Why would you rather not?"

"People talk so, and say nasty things to the children."

"But some one has just driven past, and every one smiled and how-de-doo'd him."

"That's oal right. He's goin' to praich."

"But the pony looked tired."

"I shud zay so. Six mile and stiffish hills, and not wance ded ee git out ov th' trap."

"Do you mean that a preacher of the Gospel over-drives his horse?"

"I mane that ef a hill is as stiff as a house a praicher won't never walk on a Zunday—not wan inch of th' way."

Now the vent-peg was out, our host's eloquence ran freely, and much he said of the over-driving and under-feeding of hired horses by lay preachers on Sundays, and of the reluctance which people had to take on the "horse hire" contracts for the Sunday work, because the men who walked the hills fast enough in their weekday clothes would not walk an inch in their Sunday clothes when "planned" for preaching. A false standard of dignity this, which made men cruel. And then the under-feeding? There is no excuse for this. The lay brother is served with all the luxuries of the season at the tables of the brethren on whom he is billeted as a soldier of the cross, and should not forget the hard-working little animal which has dragged him the whole distance, and will have to drag him back again, and the worse the weather the quicker the pace.

Lay preaching is the homely fare of Sunday congregations, who thrive on it because it suits them and sticks in their memories. The "higher criticism" is not wanted by them. Here are a few specimens, picked up in various places.

"You'll never want friends whilst you've God and your victuals."

"Some people's religion is like badly baked dough—put in with the bread and took out with the cakes."

"What the Bible says is true, as true as I've a-got specketty stockings on."

"I do pity the poor ould devil, he lost such a good plaace oal dru catching a cold en es faith. Ess, my dears, he was like some folks along weth we, who get boilin' hot when they'm convarted, and then catch chill dru sittin' en a draught."

"There was wance a great man who gave a great supper to a braave lot of guests. And ded'm come? Not for sure, but they all sent excuses. Wan said, 'I've boughten a piece of land, an' must go an' try et;' an' another said, 'I've boughten vive yoke of oxen, an' must try they;' an' another said, 'I've married a wife, an' must stap to home to try she.'"

"Cast your bread upon the waters, and doan't 'ee luk fust to see whichee way th' wind es blawing. Aw, my dears, there's many a man wean't trust the Loard weth a penny loaf, and so they lose the blessing, like ould Timothy Tack, who spent sixpence to find thrupence."

"Love your neighbour, that is a commandment; but ef you b'lieve in him he's sure to do 'ee!"

"Some people say, 'You can't believe a thing unless you can see and feel it;' but I say you can. Look 'ee now. Here's my hand—fowr fingers an' a thum'. Well, that's fact, edn't et? Now then" (hiding his hand from view), "my hand has got fowr fingers an' a thum', but you can't see'm. Well, that's b'leef. Never say, then, you can't b'lieve what you can't see and feel."

"When I was a boy, a man used to come round crying 'Bellows to mend,' and the schoolmaster our way put up a sign, 'Manners to mend.' Now, I think we might put up that sign in chapels where people come on Sundays trapesing in as though they were going by train, and quattin' down, and spittin' on th' floor, for oal th' world 'twas a tiddly-wink. Them's manners to mend, sure 'nuff, an' would be th' better for mendin', like Jakey Luney's britches, ragged behind."

Sometimes the local brother's homily is very pointed, but no offence is taken. The preacher is one of themselves, and they will take a lot from him in good part. If a stranger were to take the same liberty there would be trouble. Here is a specimen from an address spoken from the pulpit in the free-and-easy manner of every-day conversation.

"You wean't get into heaven just because you've a pious mother or a pious father. Not for sure. Now, I'll tell 'ee a story about a man who deceived moast everybody when he was in the flesh, and he liked chateing so much that he al'ys prayed loudest after he'd tooked in somebody—an' there's more like'n down along weth we now. We'll just give him a name, an' call him Jim Tresidder. He was on the 'plan,' like me, and people said 'twas good to hear him hold forth, and I s'poase 'twas. Jim put a bold face upon it when he marched up to the golden gate, and rapped weth his knuckles upon the little shutter, till Peter looked out. 'Who ar'ee?' asks Peter. 'Doan't 'ee knaw me? Why, I'm Jim Tresidder.' Then he tunied up a bit, and began to sing, 'Heaven is my home.' Now, Peter must have liked the look of Jim—he had sich a pious look weth un, for he stretched forth his hand for the key hanging over his head to open the gate weth. 'I'm oal right now,' thinks Jim, singing louder and louder. 'Avoor I let 'ee in,' says Peter, 'I'll have a look at the book,' and he turned over the leaves till he came to the T's. 'You'm Jim Tresidder of Trevalsa,' ses he. 'Ess,' says Jim. 'Then I'm sorry for 'ee,' says Peter, hanging up the key wance more. Then he showed Jim the book through the peep-hole, and when he seed oal the people he'd chated, and the evil he had caused, his heart sank into his shoes. 'I'll live in a dark corner, anywhere, if you'll only let me in. My poor mother is waiting for me. She was called Jane, an' was pious—now do 'ee lev me in, there's a dear man,' ses he, the great tears rolling down his chacks. 'Your mother is here weth the shining ones,' says Peter, 'but you caan't come in because of she, no, f'y, you caan't, for up here every fish do hang by his own gills. And you will hang too—on the outside.'"

The county is honeycombed with dissent, and the fat of the land is labelled "Wesleyan." The beneficed clergy are beautifully housed, with gardens and stables, and all the appointments of gentlemen; but the "livings" are not fat. Some country clergy take "paying guests," and some let

their houses in the summer. The orthodox Wesleyan ministers are fairly well off, and live rent free; and the others live as best they can, and get commissions on the sale of books and periodicals. One of the brethren left a record of thirty thousand teeth drawn during his professional career. As a rule, they "draw" well, and will draw coin from the most unlikely places. A child having swallowed a piece of silver, the doctor, in despair, sent for the minister, saying the case was hopeless if he failed to get it. The coin was recovered.[D]

There is a good deal of "religion" to be met with, and not so much need for Salvation Army music as in some places. There are certain times when people want to feel good, but they don't all feel the same way at the same time, which saves monotony. They say that at St. Agnes the people start being good when the cold weather sets in, and the feeling lasts until potato-planting time, and then, somehow, the good feeling sloughs off. I don't know what becomes of it, only it is put on one side for the next season, just like a boy puts on one side his bag of marbles and brings out tops. It's the same boy, but a new game. In the summer it's a struggle to be good anywhere, there's so many fairs and feasts and frolics, and the young men and maidens are so fond of courting on the cliffs and downs. It's the custom of the country and suits well enough, so strangers may turn their heads on one side—it's none of their business. In the autumn the good feeling comes again and extends along the coast, especially when the fishing is "slight." The young men get tired of the maidens about this time, and want to be good for evermore, and the want grows with the badness of the season. One sign of goodness in the country is thrift. The man who neither chews, nor smokes, nor drinks beer, and who never spends a copper without looking on both sides of it, is sure to be good.

You always know when the good season is coming on by the people singing. They are pretty good, in spots, at singing, but the "gift," as they call it, is not universal. A gift is supposed to run in families, and a man with the voice of a crow will insist on singing because his great-grandfather once played the double bass in a church choir. There is a musical zone in the West, and the young women who work in the open air have very sweet voices. These are the "bal" maidens, and work on the dressing-floors of the mines. When the time comes round for them to feel good they "tuney up" a bit, and take the young men who work underground along with them to the love-feasts and prayer-meetings in the little Bethels scattered all about the moors.

They call themselves "Weslums" when they are not something ending in "ists" or "ite," and are bursting with goodness every Whit-Monday, just as sure as the day comes round. Why Whit-Monday more than any other day in the year would puzzle any one who did not know that on a certain day the cuckoo must sing. It's a sort of something which makes the bird sing, and it's a sort of something which makes the "Weslums" feel good on Whit-Monday, and draws them with invisible bands towards Gwennap Pit. Whit-Monday is the anniversary of an occasion when John Wesley, *the* John Wesley, *our* John Wesley preached in the pit—- not the pit as it is, but the pit as it was.

John Wesley wouldn't know the pit, or the people who flock there now on Whit-Mondays. The old pit was an abandoned mine of no particular shape, but inclined to be round, like a bowl warped in the firing. Then the miners came with pickaxe and shovel, and cut terraces against the land, and made the ring quite round, with its terraces rising one above another, until it became a sort of county monument to which the "Weslums" are drawn in their tens of thousands as to a shrine. John Wesley is a "Saint" in Cornwall, and all those who went before him have to take back seats; and Whit-Monday, at the Pit, is now a sort of religious carnival, with picnic combined, at which Saint John would have shied when in the flesh, like good St. Anthony at a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, with fiddles and a ballet. When Wesley first came among the people they had an unpleasant trick of throwing stones and turves at him, and hustling him out of one parish into another, and then out upon the downs, where he might live upon frosty turnips when there were no blackberries. "Starring" in the country was not pleasant at times; and cold, wet, and starving, the little-great man often had the appearance of a scarecrow riding upon a tough little nag as starved as himself. But he caught on, and emptied the cock-pit and wrestling ring, and provided entertainments wherein were mighty wrestlings with the invisible for immortal stakes. So he reached the natural cravings of a dramatic people for excitement and scenic change, and made them actors, with the blue heavens above, the earth trembling, and the hill-sides lined with living faces, wet and radiant. Greater than he have tramped the county since, but conditions have altered, and only *one* Wesley is possible. And that is why people are drawn as to a shrine to Gwennap Pit, and the feeling comes upon them every Whit-Monday that they must go there, for there is a troubling of the waters then, and they may be healed. The old spirit of votive offerings survives in the land of saints and holy wells.

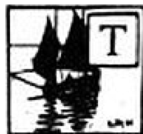
The Cornish must have been a very well-meaning folk at one time, estimated by the number of churches which they built. They built little else, perhaps, but they did build good and substantial churches, mostly with square towers and four pinnacles, to be seen of men far and near. In the parish of Paul, near Penzance, the towers of fifteen parish churches may be counted from one spot, and, though not so thick everywhere, the minds of the people centred around the churches for more reasons than one. In the old days, when roads were few and detestably bad, people reckoned church towers as guides, and calculated distances from church tower to church tower. Every man who ventured far from home knew the church towers by sight and the bells by sound; they were marks at sea as well, and mariners knew them and their bells as well as now they know bell-buoys and lighthouses upon the charts. A hamlet with a church became a "town," so a man says he's going to Church-town, and still measures the distance between places by saying it is so far from one church tower to the other.

Then came the little chapel, four-square and whitewashed, with plain glass windows, winking and blinking in the daytime, but a place of joy. Some people measure distances as from Bethel to Zion, and then no other question is needed on the point of worship. It's all there, when the chapel comes before the church. The day of bitterness is passing, but the preference comes out accidentally.

Now there is a third building seen from far and seen everywhere, and that is the school which has been raised by the people with more hardship and self-denial than in the rest of the kingdom, because of the smallness of means, which often makes the dividing line with downright poverty very fine indeed. Only the thrift of the people would have enabled them to uprear schools finer in every respect than chapels, and first and foremost amongst the buildings of the county. The schools rank next the churches, and are usually built where they may be seen.

The parsons had to fight tooth and nail for their tithes of cows and calves and pigs and other things, and had to look sharp that butter and cheese were not palmed off on them as of like value. The Vicar of Zennor made a note in the parish register that three of his tithe-paying parishioners had planted butter and cheese in the chancel of the church, where he let it stay until it became too ripe for endurance, and then he ordered the churchwardens to remove it, which they did; and the three smart farmers lost their produce, and the vicar got his tithe of living animals, after all. A vicar wanted knowledge not included in university curricula to make the two ends meet in a Cornish parish in the good old times. They have to struggle now to hold their own and make a bit, which some say they are doing, and some shake their heads, so one may think what he likes.

Chapter XIII



HE Cornish are born actors and actresses, but the natural talent is suppressed early, and it is not considered respectable to do or say anything like a "play-actor." But the talent breaks bounds and shows itself even in the last moments of the aged, composing their features, so as to "look 'ansum" after death.

The county has no theatre, no vaudeville, nothing in which to develop the dramatic instincts of a dramatic people. Now and again a travelling company, or piece of one, gives a performance in a hall licensed for dramatic presentations; but the people have become shy of being seen with uncovered faces at plays not labelled "sacred." Susannah, with realistic touches, would be popular, if the Lord Chamberlain could see his way to license the performance. When away from home the people patronize theatres and music-halls, and, on their return, sing favourite hymns to comic opera. Dancing is prohibited in places, and is "taboo" even when winked at; but some of the day schools are now teaching children how to use their feet and legs to music, under the head of "exercises" or "physical instruction." When an Italian organ-grinder comes into a village, the children dance as though they like it. The Flora, or Flurry, dance has some claim to be Cornish, and in time may be danced well again in the open air at fairs and feasts.

The Cornish are imaginative, vivacious, quick to realize situations. When there is any difficulty about words, a man or woman will get over it by acting the part. Watch the men disputing, and you see unrehearsed comedy—and very good comedy in its way. The old Cornish were very fond of mysteries and miracle-plays, which were performed in the open, and for the love of the thing. If one may believe, tens of thousands of people used to tramp over the pathless downs to see a miracle-play, or a series of plays, performed in some natural amphitheatre. The plays speak for themselves. Some still exist, and we have only to fancy the tens of thousands standing and squatting around, gazing rapt and full-eyed upon the stage hour after hour, and then day by day, until the mysteries were finished for the season. Men, women, and children all "trapsed" to these

plays, and, like the Japs of to-day, never left the scene as long as there was anything to see. The performances were realistic enough, and angels and devils took their parts in a manner to upset any respectable system of theology. The actors learned their parts, and the prompter, book in hand, followed the actors and told them what to say when they were at a loss. The prompter was known as the "ordinary," and on one occasion the ordinary, being a pleasant conceited gentleman, played "a merry prank" with a poor actor who was not well up in his part. The story runs: "His turn came: quoth the ordinary, 'Go forth, man, and show thyself.' The gentleman steps out upon the stage, and, like a bad clerk in Scripture matters, cleaving more to the letter than the sense, pronounced those words aloud. 'Oh,' says the fellow softly in his ear, 'you mar all the play.' And with this his passion the actor makes the audience in like sort acquainted. Hereon the prompter falls to flat railing and cursing in the bitterest terms he could devise; which the gentleman with a set gesture and countenance still soberly related, until the ordinary, driven at last into mad rage, was fain to give all over; which trousse, though it break off the interlude, yet defrauded not the beholders, but dismissed them with a great deal more sport and laughter than twenty such guaries could have afforded."[E]

In former times, Midsummer Eve festivities were celebrated with much joyousness and dancing through the streets, and the lighting of bonfires at night, so that, seen from the sea, the coast-line showed a blaze of light. This was originally a pagan celebration of the summer solstice, and the Romish Church took it over and rechristened it, calling the rejoicing the festivals of St. John and St. Peter. The Reformed Church took over the festivals as a legacy, and they lingered on in the land until dissent brought out their fire brigades and at last extinguished them. There is another "pagan" celebration which will not die. The public May-time rejoicings were nearly extinguished once, but are active again, and the good people of Helston dress up, and sing and dance from morn to night, because the spring has come again, and the land may once more be made beautiful with flower and corn. At one time the Church encouraged these public rejoicings, and gave them as much of a religious appearance as possible, but now there is nothing to suggest religion except the "collection" which the dancers make for their own benefit.

When the Cornish language fell into disuse, fell also all prospect of a drama indigenous to a land of which one can never say how much is real. The sad autumn leaves fell upon the literary remembrances of the people when old Dolly Pentreath died, and as some one must have been the last to speak the language, as well Dolly as another, and better, perhaps, as we can see her portrait and her monolith. The old popular performances under the blue sky died out with the tongue, and then followed the travelling showman and the lady in tights and spangles, and then the old Christmas mummers with their diabolrie and three-men songs. The English drama in no form has any hold in the county now, and even Shakespeare is caviare to the general. Only one Cornishman made his mark upon the stage, and of no great credit he, so we let him pass; but the county is foster-mother to Sir Henry Irving, fittest of all men to have been a son, so well he "loved the fancies and legends of the people."[F]

"There are comedies and tragedies with scenes laid in Cornwall in plenty, but no Cornish drama or dramatist," said the Bookworm. And yet there might have been.

BOSCASTLE HABOUR.

Tregeagle is the Cornish Faust. The story took a few centuries to develop, and there is nothing to

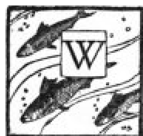
be added now to heighten its dramatic effect. Tregeagle was a young man of ambition, with a vein of discontent running through his composition. One day, when brooding over what he was, and what he would be, seeing all things in false perspective, Old Artful made his acquaintance, and there was the usual bargain, signed, sealed and delivered. "This is my act and deed," said Tregeagle, putting his finger on the red seal drawn from his own veins. Tregeagle was to live in airy-fairy palaces, and have the run of every man's preserves until such time as Old Artful choose, and then—well, what was left of his tissue-paper soul would be wanted in another place. Old Artful behaved in the handsomest manner, and Mr. Tregeagle lived in a palace in up-to-date splendour, with men-servants and maid-servants, and every one took off his hat or curtsied as he passed, and he was as hard to the poor as a landlord's agent, and rode roughshod over whom he would. In fact, he couldn't be a greater swell before the days of motors. All went gaily with him, until, one day, he consulted his diary and found that his lease under the contract had nearly expired, and then he became "hurried in his mind," and lost appetite, and cast about to see if he could save himself, and pay no forfeit. Now, Old Artful was a good judge of character and knew his man, so, when the time was up, he let the fairy palace, with all its beautiful gardens and stables and greenhouses, sink into the earth, and covered them over with water so deep that some said no plummet could find bottom. Having trapped his man so nicely, Old Artful was in good humour, and gave Tregeagle a limpet-shell with a hole in it, and told him he might work out his redemption by emptying the lake; for, said he, "you can't expect to have all the good things of this world without paying for them, either in money or marbles." Tregeagle looked at the limpet-shell, so small that a thimbleful of water would overflow it, and then at the hole in the bottom, but he cared little for that as he could stop it up with his finger. It was a hopeless task, yet he was comforted by the thought that in the matter of the hole, by stopping it with his finger, he would score one off Old Artful. Then he commenced baling the water from the lake; and when he would rest, Old Artful's imps spurred him on and on until he shrieked and roared, so that all the people round about him shook in their shoes. "To roar like Tregeagle," became a saying when one was groaning under deserved punishment. The unhappy man is still working at his task, and it is said there is not so much water in the lake as aforetime.

"Then Old Artful will have outwitted himself after all, for he gave the fellow a task intended to be endless," said Guy.

"There is hope; and that is where the Cornish story differs from many variations of Faust," said the Bookworm.

"I like the Cornish all the better for that," said Guy.

Chapter XIV

E always removed our hats before entering a church: it is the custom of the country, and we were without prejudices. If we saw a clergyman wondering at the rapid growth of nettles and docks and wild heliotrope over his little freehold, we took off our hats to him. I don't mention this in a vain-glorious spirit, only once or twice we were looked on with suspicion, and shown dirty finger-marks upon walls, and scratches made with knives upon monuments, and detestable rhymes scribbled in pencil, where they could be seen. We were shown some writing which was discovered pinned to the altar after a strange "gentleman and lady" had made the round of the church, and gone away. The verger apologized when showing us the writing, which he did only in order to justify his looking upon us with some degree of suspicion. We felt sorry for the "lady and gentleman," and they might have been sorry for themselves, if we could have talked to them for a few minutes in a convenient place.

The vicar came in and insisted on showing us his "treasures." They were not many, and we wished them more, for his sake, he was so anxious to make us forget having been told that a

"gentleman" with a soft cap, and a "lady" with no cap at all, should have been guilty of pinning an indecent writing to God's altar. He pitied them; and Guy felt that he would like to have the chance of pitying the gentleman with the soft cap after a strictly private interview.

The vicar tapped the Bookworm, and would have us stay to luncheon. They exchanged views, and talked book catalogues, and dry goods like that. We got out into the grounds, which were a little paradise. Something from all quarters of the world grew there, and in the open, too—nothing to hurt them, winter or summer, in this charming place. We got away from books and dry stuff at last, and found that our genial vicar could talk other things.

"The *bien entente*, or *entente cordiale*, or whatever you like to call it, which startled Europe, is so old a thing amongst us, that we were set laughing when told of the new discovery—the diplomatic radium of the hour," said the vicar, laughing.

"I thought you Cornish were very alarmed at French invasions, and hated Frenchmen like the lost archangel holy water. What were the popular stories with which you sent children sobbing to bed, about the Great Napoleon?" asked the Bookworm.

"Stories innumerable, and they served a purpose. A thousand such stories might be invented to-morrow, and some would be believed, with a German, a Russian, or a yellow bug-a-boo for figurehead. But, let me tell you, there has always been a link between England and France, and that is the Cornu-Breton link. Cornish boats were often safe in French harbours when Napoleon was fitting out his great Armada, and Nelson driving Frenchmen from the seas. We wanted brandy and silks, and the French merchants wanted money, so the *bien entente* was all serene. Then we wanted salt for curing, and there was nothing more common in our harbours than French *chasse-marées* laden with sea-salt; and who more popular than the Breton sailor in a Cornish port, in blue blouse and sabots, and pockets stuffed full of prunes, which he shook out as he walked, followed by a queue of children singing, 'How do you do, Johnny Crapaud?' And then, most touching, when Frenchy and the little *mousse*, trusting themselves alone in Cornish lanes, gathered bucketfuls of esculent snails for soup. The *bien entente* was all right still, though there were wars and rumours of wars. The Cornu-Breton link held fast when Cornwall raised its volunteers when Napoleon the Third sent a thrill of fear through the land, when Fashoda was a burning word, and when the Paris journals made the English blood boil during the Boer war. And what was the Cornu-Breton link?"

The vicar paused, and then added: "The link is here. It is knocking at my gate."

There was a chubby-faced youngster at the back door, in blue smock and knitted cap, bending under the weight of the onions he was carrying suspended from a pole on his shoulder.

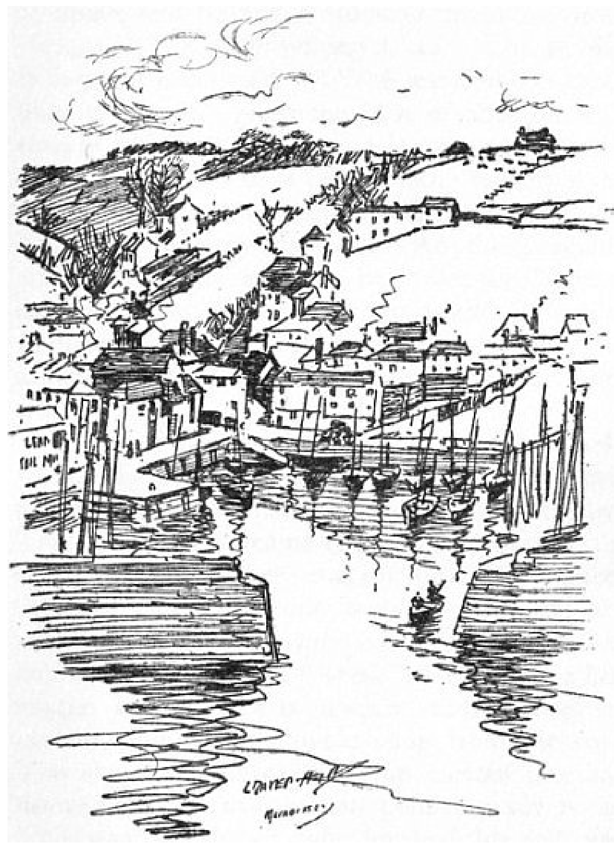
"This is the Cornu-Breton link—onions followed salt, and salt brandy. These chubby-faced boys invade us every year and 'dump' all the spare onions they grow in their little gardens at home. It is their harvest, and the brave little hearts, trudging in a strange land, with raw shoulders, are welcomed everywhere, whatever the party passions of the hour. It is a small link, but it is steel, and when London and Paris were drinking champagne to the new sensation, we were buying our onions off our little Breton friends, giving them milk to drink, and sharing pasties, and giving them ointments with which to rub their poor little raw shoulders, and then resting them in barns so that they might be up and off with sunrise to sell their onions."

The vicar beckoned to the boy, who came and told us of his home at Paimpol; this was his second season here, and next year he would not come because he was conscript, and would serve on board a man-of-war. His eyes glistened when he talked of meeting British ships, and the Cornish bluejackets who knew him as a little onion boy. And they would be friends!

Guy tipped the boy when no one was looking, and so did his best to keep the Cornu-Breton link intact.

I do believe the good vicar was sorry when we went.

The people are not given to "hustle;" if the word has reached the county, the thing hasn't in any great quantity. There is still a blessed refuge in the world for men and women tired of "hustle" in all its moods and tenses. Being on time at a railway station is genuine distress to natives until they get used to it, and the language is not strong in equivalents for "hustle." To make moderate haste is to "hurry-all," to be in a genuine hurry is to be "stark-staring-mad." The idea of smoothness resulting from leisure suits the Cornish genius at home, and he has a pleasing word for it in "suant." When everything is as "suant as oil," it is perfection itself. "Who carries the broth must go suant," gives the idea of abundance of time in which to perform an errand without mishap. To be too slow for anything is only to be "asleep"—there is no anger in the reproach, just a gentle reminder, that is all. Anything mouldy and vinewed is said to be "sleeping"—in a delicious state of rest which it would be a pity to disturb. A Cornishman only does one job at a time; when he talks he rests from all other work.



MEVAGISSEY.

Guy said he must have his hair cut; the Bookworm might please himself; it might suit his style of beauty to be mistaken for an ancient bard. The first town we came to we looked out for the striped pole, and there was one outside a tobacco shop. It was afternoon when we entered the shop with a partition running through it, so one half was sacred to the "weed," and the other half to the performance of ancient rites. A green curtain divided the double shop from the rear. The shop was empty, but the curtain was half drawn, and we saw a man polishing his boots. This was the barber, who finished his job, and met us, smiling. Guy induced the Bookworm to take the chair first, because his hair being darker would not show the illustrative finger-marks so clearly as his own. Guy talked to the barber about boot-polish, and so interested him that he stopped operations and talked. A man came in and propped up the partition with a shoulder, and Mr. Figaro left his job and served a packet of cigarettes. Then the new-comer began a story about one Billy Tregarne who, falling down a clay-pit, was mistaken for the miller by his own wife, who turned him to doors with much abuse and a "scat in the chacks." It was all very interesting, but took time, and the Bookworm was only half trimmed. The new-comer suddenly remembered that he had left his shop open with no one to "mind" it, and walked away as leisurely as he came. Then Mr. Figaro worked away, only stopping occasionally to enjoy an inward chuckle; and when Guy went off without being operated on, he seemed quite glad at having no more to do just then.

In towns, tradesmen spend a good deal of time in their shop doors, looking "up-along" and "down-along," or across the street, and hold conversations with each other in their several shop doors.

The inhabitants live long and die leisurely. When one is a trifle over-anxious people tell him not to worry, for "you'll live till you die, like Nicketty Booth."

The man in the highway never misses a chance for a gossip, and will give old nuts for news, to any extent.

"Holloa! my man; which is the way to Church-town?" Guy shouted to a labourer, who seemed to be doing his best to prop up a hedge.

The man struck work at once and came forward leisurely. He eyed us up and down, making a mental register of our marks. Then he seemed to take an interest in us and our business.

"Going Church-town, art a?"

"Yes, and which is the way?"

"Want to see Farmer? Well, then, a ed'n home. Farmer had fine field of wheat in ten-acre field, sure 'nuff, and he's gone to market. He was drashing yesterday, and the drashing machine cut off Tom Curnow's fingers. Ess sure, 'e ded."

"We don't want Farmer," said Guy, cutting in.

"Well, then, Tom Trebilcock? Tom's cow calved last week, and she's a good milker. Didn't know Tom was going to sell."

"Never mind Tom; tell us the road, the way, the what-you-like-to-call-it, to Church-town."

"There's passun's house close by the church, and passun's little mare is a good un to travel. They

do say——"

"How do we get there?"

"Ef so be you'm in a hurry you need'n go, cos Farmer's drivin' mare to market."

"We'd like to get there in daylight," said Guy, gravely.

"Sartinly;" and then the man gathered himself together for a supreme effort. "You do go through meadow-close, and plain-close, and then into high-lane, and volly on, an' there you be, sure."

"But where is meadow-close?"

"Oh, back along."

"But where?"

"Back along to stile."

"Thanks very much, my good man, and may your shadow never grow less."

We left the man apparently wondering what sort of animals there were at large who didn't know the way to Church-town. Gradually he unbent himself, and went back to prop up the hedge.

In conversation a good deal of ground is covered in a non-committal sort of way by illustrations well understood by the parties, but Greek to any stranger. A worthy person who does mischief with the best intentions is said to be like "Aunt Gracie's vear"—which means that the little pig, with the best intentions in the world, sucked the old sow to death. Few would suspect that "Betsy Bowden's leg" tells a tragedy, but it does:—

"Old age and sorrows did she decay,
And her bad leg carried she away."

To have "Betsy Bowden's leg" is a very serious matter to those who understand what it means.

"It's as well to leave high English at home," said the local doctor, whom Guy picked up in his rambles. "I was asked by a woman on leaving the house of a patient the other day what the matter was? and, in a moment of forgetfulness, I said it was a case of 'strangulated hernia.' 'My dear life!' said the woman, opening her eyes wide, 'that's a very different story to what I heard.' 'And what did you hear?' 'Why, I heard that the man had a kink in his innards.' We meant the same thing; but you must live amongst people really to understand and be understood."

Sometimes a humorous situation is created, and the incident lives. An officer inspecting volunteers wished to dismiss them. "Stand at ease! Attention! Disperse!" The men stood still with wonder in their eyes. "Disperse!" repeated the officer, and still the men stood still. The sergeant saluted. "May I give the order?" "Certainly." Then the sergeant: "Stand at ease! Attention! Scat up!" And every man went his way, and the corps are the "Scat-ups" to this day.

A coastguard told us the story of a young officer of the kid-glove type giving an order to the men in the maintop. "Maintop, ahoy!" "Aye, aye, sir." "Extinguish the illuminator." "No such rope, sir." Then the boatswain: "Maintop, ahoy!" "Aye, aye, sir." "Douse the glim." Light goes out.

A bargain is dear to the soul of a Cornishman; only send round the crier with the bell, announcing a sale, and he'll be there, and pay cheerfully more than the things are worth, if only he's told that he's getting a bargain. To get something for next to nothing is to be happy. A man will walk two miles to ride one, and build his house out of shape rather than remove a bit of rock which can be worked into the wall. Much ingenuity is shown in using up odds and ends of things. A sailor will tell you that any man can make a sail if he has plenty of canvas to cut from, but the man for his money is the man who "makes do what won't do." To throw anything on the scrap-heap as long as there's wear or use in it, would make an average man turn green, and wish for the better land. He's thrifty in the wrong place, and can't help it; but once get him away from home and he develops and does well, as times go. We were told that Bryant, of blacking and match fame, and Pears, of soap fame, are not only Cornish, but hail from neighbouring parishes; and Ralph Allen, the lucky, was born at St. Blazey. Ralph was a man of many parts. He brought some order and method into our country mail services, ran the Bath theatre, married a beautiful wife, and made £16,000 a year out of a Government contract. Once outside the charmed circle of his native land, a Cornishman gets on just as well as a Scotchman, and is as thrifty as need be.

There is an ingrained dislike amongst the Cornish towards mean-looking things, and things ugly or deformed. A well set-up man, with head thrown back defiantly, and arms swinging, is forgiven much on account of his appearance of strength and general can-take-care-of-myselfness. A weak-looking man with a mean face must walk warily if he's to get credit at all for the good that is actually in him. An elegant woman, well-dressed, is immaculate; and a woman with an eye generous and passionate has her sins condoned almost before they are committed. But let a woman squint and be anæmic, short in nose, and long in chin, a bit "hunchy" and out of shape, and goodness becomes an added offence to her sin of living. "A poor, wakely thing," and "a wisht, old-fashioned maid," are offences to the community, and are willingly parted with. Downright ugliness in man or woman is looked on as the devil's hall-mark;—"mark you the man whom nature marks," is a proverb. The first question asked about a stranger is, what does he, or she, look like? A great deal depends on the answer—a good-looking and fair-spoken person may travel far and suffer no hunger in the land. The devil is sin, and sin the father of ugliness, hence an ugly person

has the devil for father, and is treated accordingly.

The Cornish are a very hopeful race. Bad times depress, but there is always to-morrow to look forward to, and to-morrow may be better than to-day. Without this bank of hope to draw upon, the two main industries of the county, mining and fishing, would have caved in long, long ago. Contentment is another sign by which you may know the Cornishman at home. If a man meets with misfortune, or a friend has gone under, he sums it all up by saying, "Well, there 'tis." The phrase "there 'tis," is like a plaister of figs covering a sore, hiding much, but giving rise to hope that a healing process may be going on.

"How be gettin' on, Jim, without the ould woman?" asks a man of his fellow who has buried his wife. "Slight, sure 'nuff, at first, but there 'tis;" and then he goes on about his work, as though the last word was said upon the matter. Equally content is another aged pilgrim who has lost the partner of his joys. "Do 'ee miss her, Bill?" "Ess, sure." "Lonely, s'poase?" "Ess, tes lonely, but tes quiet." Bill was content. "When the cyder is rinned away every drap, 'tis too late to be thinkene of plugging the tap," is a little bit of old proverbial philosophy which escaped Martin Tupper. The same spirit is in the words, "Well, there 'tis," whether the cyder cask runs dry, or a mine is "knocked," or a ship is wrecked, or a pitcher is broken. "Well, there 'tis," says the victim, with the beautiful serenity of fatalism. "There 'tis," and hope springs up amongst the ruins of shattered hopes, and the Cornishman goes on his way again, trundling his own wheelbarrow, without appealing to the heavens and the earth and all that therein is to listen to his misfortunes. When he has a stroke of good luck he's very quiet about it.

"I knaw he 'ave a chate somebody, he's so quiet," one man will say of another on a market day.

Chapter XV

ICKLE a Cornishman, and he'll smile. He likes it; and when you have rested, begin again, and he'll still smile. Some people want different handling, like Kaffirs in mines, who only smile nicely after being knocked down with a crowbar. "Going! And I'm just beginning to like 'ee," is a common form of regret towards a civil-tongued stranger who has found out the way to tickle. Cornishmen abroad tickle one another at their annual dinners, when all that's fair and lovely to the sight "belongs" to the land of pasties and cream.

There are some dialects which make people restless, and some which make people tearful, and some to want to go to theatres and operas, and some to churches, and some—well, elsewhere. An Irish M.P., on the wrongs of Ireland, is sure to make you tearful; and a Scotchman, mellow, is certain to cry himself when eloquent on Bobby Burns; but the ordinary Englishman is not moved to tears by ordinary English. His language is very good for getting about with in trains and tramcars, and finding out the prices of things, and making profits from the Equator to the Pole. A hard-hearted sort of a language, that wants filing and sand-papering a bit to reach the heart—like French, just by way of making a comparison, which will not be odious now the *bien entente* is on the carpet.

One should come into the duchy to hear how the English language may acquire a languorous ease, which makes one want to sit still at the first milestone, and never to go any further. At first, Guy wanted everything "sharp"—boots "sharp," breakfast "sharp," everything to the minute, and every one on the alert. The Cornish constitution wasn't made to work that way in Cornish air. A woman was selling fruit at a street corner, and Guy bought some. A small boy was sent to change a coin, and Guy grew tired and impatient of waiting. Then he murmured, and talked of calling again at Christmas, if the boy was likely to be back by then. The woman was sweetly placid, and asked Guy if he was in a hurry? Guy said he wasn't suffering from that complaint, only he liked to see boys smart, and things done quickly, and so help the world to spin.

"I hate to be kept waiting," said he.

"It doan't sim long to we," said the woman, counting the coppers slowly, one by one, into Guy's impatient palm, when the boy did return.

It doesn't seem long to the native to "quat," and listen to another telling a yarn of endless length which might all be packed into a sixpenny "wire." The stranger has to get rid of irritable impatience before the restful influences of the words, and the manner of speaking them, lay hold of him; and when they do he is in a peaceful oasis. A bustling commercial man never dreams of opening his samples until he's inquired about all the family, down to the third generation; and in villages he has to remember that his customer's cow was bad last journey, that his black minorca hen hatched out fifteen eggs, and that the rats carried away ten in a single night. Then he has to see the missus, and talk babies, and corns, and indigestion; and then, when no one is looking, he undoes his samples, and business is introduced as though by accident.

Who can be in a hurry when he finds that to get to a place three or four miles away he must take the road to Trevalsamin, then cross the town place at Ponsandain, which brings you to the stile at Hallywiden, leave Ventongimps to the right, and the church-town of Trevespanvean will come in view, then down by Trebarva well, and you will reach your destination? Imagine this direction given in a zigzag fashion, with comments and sketches of scenery thrown in, and the story of a man who tackled a bull down by Trannack-Treneer bottom, and was carried home on a gate, and then lived——. You can't get away from the man until a sense of peace has fallen upon you; and you don't care if you take the journey now, or put it off until to-morrow.

The old people who invented these names were in no humour for hurry, and names are as thick as blackberries, for every field, and brake, and bottom has its own particular name, which is always repeated in full in conversation, no odds how often it occurs. A farmer knows his fields by their names, just as he knows his children by theirs. The English language shows its restful side in Cornwall.

Since our first parents were turned out of Eden, there has been no paradise for children more perfect than Cornwall. We didn't know it until we were told so by an old man hobbling along by the side of a donkey with panniers on its back, and in the panniers fresh fish to sell in the villages through which we were to pass. The old man was in trouble on account of the school children jumping on his donkey's back, and riding off at their own sweet wills. Then a boat came in with a little "cate" of fish, which the old man bought to sell to country, but nowhere could the donkey be found. Then he went about seeking, until, at last, he ran the animal to earth in a quarry in a brake, where the children had hidden it in order to ride back again in triumph after school. This was the old man's grievance, and he called heaven and earth to witness that there was no place under the sun where the rising generation better deserved hanging than in this parish; or where parents more deserved hanging for bringing up such varmints.

Guy tried his hand at a little friendly examination, and we learnt that things were different when the old man was young; when his very own father would have thought no more of cutting him down with a shovel, or stretching him stiff with a hammer, if he went leastways contrary, than he would have of eating a pasty. Well, if he did not like it he had to put up with it, like the rest, and it taught him how children ought to be trained. But now——

The old man was too full of words to speak for a time, but a passage cleared itself, and then we found it was all the fault of the school, and the rates, that children were varmints, and ought to be nailed up to barn doors, like weasels and wants, and sich-like. "Lay a finger upon a cheeld now, and the wimmen'll screech murder, marbleu! just as ef the French was coming. An' th' men's no better, tes oal, 'Coom here, Johnny, my son, an' plaise doan'ee break th' cloam, an' plaise doan'ee make a malkin ov yersel'; an' plaise doan'ee stale Tom Cobbledick's jackass, and hide'n away, when he do waant to go to country weth vish.' I'd 'plaise' em, th' varmints; I'd scat th' brains ov'm out!"

The old man told us frankly that the maidens were a tarnation sight worse than the boys under the new order of things. They didn't steal away his donkey, but they were the cause of quarrels among the women, and the women egged on the men, until there was neither rest nor peace in the parish. "There's that maid of Nancy Golley's," said he, "an' you'd s'poase she was the quietest maid in the country to see her on a Sunday, with a feather in her hat a yard long, and oal the fashions on her back. An' so she es quiet till she do see another maid come down along weth something on her back which she thinks would suit her beauty better. Then what do she do but go over to the other maid, oal artful-like, an' begin to purr round, and find out what it cost, and what tallyman her mother got it from; and then she rounds and says, ted'n paid for, and she ought to be ashamed to wear it, when her old granny is eating parish bread. Then the two wimmen begin upon their own account, and rip up each other, an' set th' men on; and they'd have killed one t'other, only the parish com'd in and tooked sides, and fout till they cud'n blaw nor strike. And this trubble oal becase the maidens were dressed up, and sent to school to learn bukes, instead of goin' to work. I'd giv' it to th' varmints, ess, sure I wud," said he, with a sing-song drawl, but all his ill-temper gone.

The old man turned down a by-lane to sell a fish at a farmhouse, first telling us how to find Church-town and Mrs. Tregarthen's inn, where there was "a drap of good beer" on tap, and we could pay for a pint for him to drink when he came along.

Guy said it was refreshing to hear higher criticism of this sort; and wondered what the Education Department would think did they but know what a man of the soil thought of their strenuous efforts to spoil the rod and teach the "varmints" to have it their own way? The Bookworm

wouldn't be provoked into saying anything, and so we reached the inn, and found a very good larder there.

There was a pleasant hum of talk outside the inn, where a knot of young miners were chatting over what concerned them most. The corner of the building seemed to be the favourite spot in the whole village, and the young men took turns to scratch themselves between the shoulders against the corner-stones. It soothed them, and when they'd all scratched in turns, they did a sort of jig with heel and toe, kicking the wall with the heels of their boots. They never came inside; and this was their way of showing that they had no animosity to the institutions of their country. Our window was open, and Guy said this would be a good opportunity for studying the language of the district. "When people are together they talk it pure," said he, arousing the Bookworm's attention.

Picking up a dialect in this way is not so easy; everybody seems talking at once, and there's no full-stops, and the commas, when there are any, seem to be in the wrong places. After a time, we captured a few syllables, and the Bookworm wrote down phonetically a conversation with two voices only—

"Say-yu, whatkoorarta?"

"Laastkoor b'nite."

"Adurnedkoorthat."

We all heard it, and there was no doubt about the sounds; every shorthand writer would be sure on that point. Then we called in Mrs. Tregarthen's husband and read over the transcript, and he said it was all right, and we might take away as much of the dialect as we pleased in the same way. He spoke slowly, and it came out like this—

"Say you, what coor art thou?"

"Last coor by night."

"A durned coor that."

A "coor" is a turn, or shift, in mine work, and the last shift by night is not popular. Guy asked the Bookworm how long he thought it would take him to pick up the dialect? and suggested leaving him behind, and calling for him later. The Bookworm was used to this sort of thing from Guy.

We picked up a dialect story, and preserved a sentence or two, warranted to be genuine.

"Giv' me a kiss, me aul' dear," said Phil Pentreath, fisherman, just home from a cruise, throwing his arms around his wife, who has got herself up for the occasion, and does not want to be rumpled. She flushes, and is in a great rage, but can't get over the ground quicker than this—

"Taake yer baastlie wristeses awah fr'm me neck, you stinken', ravishen' aythen! Lemmego! I waan't kiss'ee, and you oall auver sunken' grease-oil an' tar. My sawl an' bawdee! I shud be fitty parfit ashaamed, ef I was you, kissen' your wife in broad daalight, an' daown-steers, too." An East End girl would cut half across London in the time.

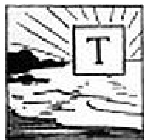
TWO COTTAGES, MEVAGISSEY.

Cornish maids don't like cool lovers, and you may kiss early and often, and be thought none the worse of by the maid you are sweet on. If nothing comes of it the kissing part will be all right, and can be wiped out, or carried forward, at pleasure. Kissing is a mode of salutation in some districts where the population is stationary and all the families somehow connected, and a strange kiss is welcome as varying the flavour. It is a sign of religious communion among the Methodists—the old people enjoy it at their love-feasts, and the young take kindly to the godly example. There is no such county on earth for "kiss-in-the-ring" at teas and picnics—old and young, rich and poor, pastors and flock, run after one another, chasing and doubling and tumbling, and then "smack, smack," and the captives are led back with eyes sparkling and lips watering for more runs and more kisses. Pious elders see their young ministers dashing after the maidens, lifting up their chins, and kissing them on the lips, and holding them in tight embrace the while, and they just nod to one another and smile, as who should say, "Bless the dear lambs, lev 'em enjoy themselves while they'm young." But only say "dance," and the dear old faces are troubled with visions of the "pit" yawning beneath their feet. There are different ways of kissing in different parishes, so a young man may tell in the dark what parish a girl comes from by the way she acts, if only he has had sufficient practice. It all comes to the same thing, though the maidens think themselves slighted if not kissed often enough. As a rule they get on very well.

The common furze which blooms perpetually has, on that account, got mixed up with kissing; and when a girl is asked, "When is kissing out of season?" her ready answer is, "When the furze is out of bloom;" that is to say, never. The rich chrome yellow is very seductive, but the thorns!

In the south, when a maid is disappointed in love she takes to her bed, and is waited upon by the rest of the family, just as though she were passing through a sickness known to the pharmacopæia. It is a matter of public interest; and the maid is said to be "wisht" about it, and going into a "decline." Generally, it comes all right again, and the maid gets up and walks out with her young man, and receives the congratulations of the parish. Then things are hurried up, and the end comes.

Chapter XVI



The girls learn early that "it is not good for man to live alone," and never forget it. It is the one text that sticks, and they make the running early for the boys, who are a shy and awkward lot, and want encouragement at first. Then the boys wake up, and the girls catch them, as they intended to do when they first started; and the boys grow into men, and are never "alone" any more. Marriages may be made in heaven for other folks, but the Cornish maidens like them better on earth, and please themselves pretty much in the matter. Misfits will happen sometimes, but they have a nice, soft, easy way of their own, and slip through life "as well as moast, and better'n some."

The women make very good wives, and seldom become acquainted with the learned president of the Divorce Court; and if they don't believe the men are "saints," they wink the other eye and say little. A country-woman, tired of her bargain, inquired of a solicitor where she could get a bottle of the "drops" for the dissolution of her marriage, apparently thinking that nothing weaker than legal aquafortis, or Dutch drops, would be any good to dissolve the bond. Very few Cornish women have figured in the Divorce Court, which stands to their credit, so many being the wives of sailors at sea nine months out of the year, or of miners in foreign lands, whom they may not see for years after a brief honeymoon. In the Cornish version of the old mystery play of the Deluge, willing obedience to the husband is shown in the dialogue between Noah and his spouse. Noah says it is time to get into the ark, and the lady says, "Oh, master dear! I will do everything like as thou wishest." In the Chester play on the same subject the wife of Noah is a perverse, wilful, passionate woman, who will not go into the ark unless every one of her "gossipes" go with her. And when her sons get her in by superior force, she gives poor Noah a slap in the face, saying, "Have that for thy note!" The unknown Cornish translator changed the note to suit his audience. A married woman makes the best of her bargain, and finds "Oh, master dear!" better than fisticuffs.

NOTICE.

ALL WHO WANT
A HAPPY HOME,
TRY CORNWALL.

The women take a pride in doing little things for their husbands—polishing their Sunday boots, brushing and putting away their clothes, and turning them out spick-and-span, like dandies. A man isn't allowed to look after anything but his sea-boots and oileys, if he's a fisher; or his working togs, if some other trade. When there are girls in a family the boys are "tended" like little princes; and when the girls marry they look after their husbands so carefully that they seldom stray far away. Ladies who write social conundrums to the newspapers, and ask how it is that they only get a bit of their husbands, and that bit not worth the having, should live in a Cornish village for a season, and keep their eyes open. Not very exciting, to be sure, but, if all is true, worth the experiment. The beautiful influence of climate comes in, "and so it is; and you must put up with it, my dear," is the grease-box which makes the wheels run smoothly.

The women keep shop in the small towns and villages whilst the men go to sea, or fishing, or whatever work they profess to do. A bell tinkles when you open the door, and, by-and-by, the missus comes into view, wiping her hands on her apron. She may have what's wanted, but generally she's "run out," and is expecting it within a week or so. She goes on wiping her hands, and looks as contented as though she had sold something. Then the little shops look like a dry-goods store after an earthquake, and if the thing wanted isn't on top it is not much good looking for it.[G] It's just their way, and the business flourishes like a plant in native soil. Sometimes the post-office is mixed up with the "business," and a dear little cherub sits up aloft somewhere and watches over the property of the Postmaster-General. Letters and parcels muddle through, somehow, which is proof positive that the age of miracles is not over and done with.

For the spectator a wedding is a very dull and slow affair now, even in out-of-the-way districts

and in the fishing coves and villages, where the old customs have struggled hard to live. Young people are married all the same, but much of the joy at the life that is to be has been gradually elbowed out of the ceremony, and all that belongs to it. It used to be a very different sort of thing when the people were more prone to dancing and fiddling and feasting, and only half enjoyed a thing unless all their world enjoyed with them. The Bookworm chanced on some faded letters describing some of the merry-makings not more than a century ago, when a wedding was an event, not for John and Mary merely, but for the whole parish. The fiddler skipped before the happy pair to church, and every one, not in the procession with wedding favours, lined up, and made nice little speeches, as the spirit moved them; and the spirit moved them so often that the bride had few blushes to spare when she reached the chancel steps. And then the feast and dance and mystic rites, concluding with the bedding of the bride. Then more dancing for the guests; and more young couples vowed that day to marry within the year than on any other occasion. It was a "quiet" wedding which finished up with a three days' rejoicing.

If John and Mary lived on a farm, or were servants at the "big house," then there were high jinks in the great kitchen and squire's hall, and no one merrier than parson and clerk, who led the revels with voice and flute, and the schoolmaster brought his fiddle, if he had one. A wedding was a very human affair, and everybody's business, not so very long ago. In the fishing villages there was more colour and boisterous mirth than elsewhere, for the men dressed their boats, and made sport, and sang and danced, and got drunk and sober, and then drunk again, until the morn broke. And the next day, and the next to that, the pot was kept a-boiling, and then the women captured their men and toddled them home, and hid away their boots, until the delirium of the wedding march had passed away.

No more feasting and fiddling now. The "day" is kept secret, and the "happy pair" arrive, somehow, before a registrar, and are hitched up, according to law. Mary may marry John now, and no one be the wiser—a cold, cheerless, colourless thing is this sort of wedding.

A funeral is still an event, and touches hidden springs, which must gush forth, and will take no denial. The people have a superstitious reverence for the dead. The doors and windows of the chamber are thrown open for the unfettered spirit to escape, and, one by one, neighbours and friends take a last look at familiar features. To be "a 'ansum corpse, white as a lily and light as cobwebs," is a consolation to an old rip, when looking at his wasted hands. A village funeral is a long procession with sacred hymns. Then a cup of tay and a bit of curranty cake amongst the women, who talk and sigh, and tell each other of their own complaints, and the complaints which carried off their friends. Widow-women are great at funerals, which freshen up their memories. "My man was teeled a year agone, an' I do miss 'un," says number one. "Ess, fath, my dear, and no wan do knaw what tes like them that's lonely," says number two. "Tes bitter cauld in winter, an' I tells my maid her poor father would be weth me now ef 'twadn't for want of bref. Tes a wisht complaint, that," continues number one, sighing. "'Twadn't like that weth my man, fur he had es bref up to the last," replies number two, triumphantly vindicating the superior merits of her dear departed.

Widow-women don't often change their names. If without money they are not tempted; and if they have enough they may tempt, but seldom yield. The next-of-kin are very watchful over the shekels; and the man who marries a widow with relations does not always enter paradise. A widow-woman is looked on in the light of an investment. Here is a short story. Mrs. Treloar was a widow-woman with a bit of property—just comfortable, as times go. She was no great beauty, but the chapel steward cast a longing eye towards her, and wished to lose no time. Said he: "We doan't want to go coorting, do us? Waste of precious time for us who are both old enuf to know our own minds." Said she: "You knaw, s'poase, ef I do marry agen, boy Tom'll have the property?" Then he: "Why, es that so? Then you won't sell at that price, I'm thinkin'. Good day, my dear." No harm done.

Guy made the observation that the people we saw about were not much given to frills. He supposed they had them packed up somewhere, but there being no swagger concerts, and bands on swagger piers, with swagger subscription tickets for the season, no one unpacked them. It would be too absurd to go about freshly dollied up, three times daily, to show one's self to sea-cliffs, and sea-sands, moss-grown monoliths, and British tumuli, and all that sort of thing. The piskies would laugh. The Bookworm remembered a French professor writing that when he visited the Acropolis at Athens he removed his rings and watchchain as being too much out of keeping with his surroundings. He said he smiled at the confession at the time as "too Frenchy," but it had a new meaning for him here. Wherever we went no one we met seemed to want to show off their "frills" to one another, or to the hoary fragments of antiquity permitted to survive—one would just as soon think of dressing up and showing off in a museum of extinct animals. It must take a lot off a woman's brain, Guy said, to know that she need not unpack her things; and he supposed that was one reason why so many took their fresh air and sunshine treatment now on Cornish moors and beaches, instead of crowding stuffy old German spas, where it was the rule to put in time in showing new "frills" to one another.

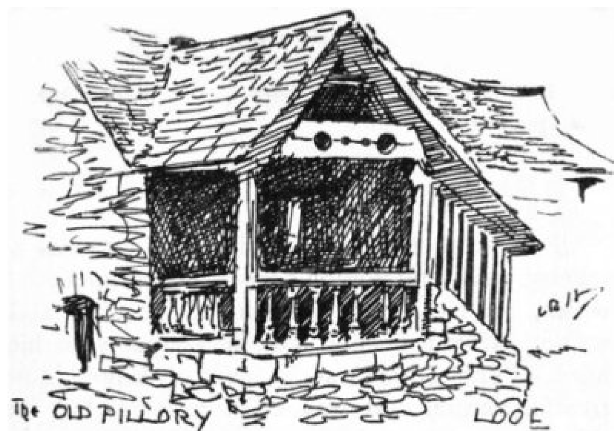
The curiosity of the people inhabiting highways, byways, and villages as to the going and coming of strangers has been so gratified of late, that little short of a dancing bear would cause a woman to run to her door, and stare wide-eyed and open-mouthed. The advent of the hatless one in many colours, making the sun to blush, or in oilskins in wet weather, seemingly satisfied the native, and made every other vagary, hats or no hats, clothes or none, not only possible, but something to be looked for amongst strangers. A tall, thin lady, showing much wrist and leg, swinging a stick, and wearing her hair short, passed along the road, taking it easy at five miles an hour. She

was a new arrival at a whitewashed house with thatched roof at the end of the village. We were chatting to an old woman in a big blue sunbonnet (called a "gook"), who had rested her basket on the top step of the market cross.

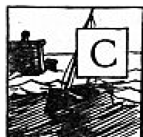
"Stranger?" asked Guy.

"Iss, sure; we doan't grow that soart in this soil, but they may wan day, for I do mind when they ded'n grow mangel-wuzzels. What do I caal 'em? Why, I do caal 'em great he-shees—they'm spoiled fur women, and bain't vitty fur men."

This was a wayside verdict on a choice variety of the sort.



Chapter XVII

ORNISH humour has its practical side with a tang. "To curing your old cow till she died," is native. A candidate for Parliamentary honours once sent the freemen of the borough a silver teapot, as a prize to be sailed for at the forthcoming regatta. The freemen returned it with the remark that "the taypot do not draw well enuf." The teapot came back again filled with golden guineas, which so improved its "drawing" powers that the freemen kept it. A Cornishman likes a story about some one who comes out on top by a trick; or one which hides his meaning by a play of words, until the situation is revealed in a flash. We picked up a few specimens.

As Deep as Old Hugh.

Two brothers went a-fishing, and one was a scholar, with a reputation beyond his attainments,

which, in fact, were limited to reading and writing, after a fashion, and reckoning with his head. The other was a man of simple and trustful nature, and was often puzzled, but let things go without inquiring deeply into them. The scholar was called Hugh, and as he managed to come out on top on most occasions, he was considered both cunning and wise, and people encouraged their children to cram themselves with book-learning in order to become "as deep as old Hugh;" and "deep as old Hugh" became a proverb which he locally shared with old Nick, who, up to this time, had the monopoly. The simple brother was Dick. Hugh and Dick were partners in a small boat and nets, and earned a poor living by their trammels, and drag-nets, and crab-pots. What they caught they equally divided, but Hugh always had the best half, which puzzled Dick; but scratch his head as he might, he could never get to the bottom of the mystery, everything being so fair and aboveboard, and done in the light of day. One day they were out and caught six mackerel and six scads. Now, scads are of small value, and yet Dick got them all, and Hugh all the mackerel. Hugh did the sharing: "Here's a mackerel for me, and a scad for you," said he, making a division; "and a scad for you, and a mackerel for me; and a mackerel for me and a scad for you," and so on, until *all* the scads fell to Dick, and *all* the mackerel to himself. Hugh's system was perfect, and, if it could be adapted, might be depended on to break the bank of Monte Carlo every night. "How is it that I've got all the scads?" asked Dick. "It's all right," replied Hugh, pleasantly. "And if you don't think so, I'll do it over again—here's a mackerel for me and a scad for you, and a scad for you and a mackerel for me," and so on to the end, until Dick got *all* the scads as before.

MAKING CRAB POTS.

"He would have settled the fiscal question in no time," said Guy. "'A mackerel for me and a scad for you'—a fair motto for protectionists." The game was played in the Far East with the Mikado, but the Czar got the scads. It's safest played with the blind.

The Man who slept with a Badger.

Guy wanted something done to a shoe, and walked into a room where a man was sitting, waxing a long thread, and whistling to the thrushes and blackbirds hung around in cages. The fellow was most obliging, Guy told us, and put aside the work he was doing, and asked several questions about himself—where he came from; where he was going; how long he intended to stay; and whether his father and mother were living? Then the cobbler told him about himself, and how many of the Tremains—he being called Reuben Tremain—lay in the parish churchyard. All this time Guy's shoe rested on his apron. Just a few stitches were all that was wanted, and Mr. Tremain got in one when he started talking of London, what a "braave plaace" it must be, and what a "pure few" people it contained, all being true that he had heard. Guy forgot about his shoe, and gave an entertaining sketch of a London crowd in Fleet Street on Lord Mayor's Day, and the Lord Mayor's show was described in his best style. And then the Crystal Palace on a fête day, and on a Handel Festival day, and the Houses of Parliament, and Madame Tussaud's! Guy made the Arabian Nights' Entertainments look small, and he began to fear that Reuben Tremain would be paralyzed with admiration, and unable to put in another stitch. All the morning was gone, and Guy still sat on a low three-legged stool, with one shoe off, as happy as any Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack. He really was enjoying himself with the simple Reuben.

"Ded 'ee ever hear tell ov a man up to Lunnon who slept with a badger?" asked the cobbler, at length piercing the shoe with his awl for another stitch.

"A real, live badger?"

"Ess, sure, live enough."

"Never," said Guy, turning up his nose.

"Why, a badger——" And he put his thumb and finger to his nostrils, with a sign which meant more than words.

"I knaw a man," said the cobbler, confidentially, "who have slept with a badger for ten year, come next Michaelmas Fair goose day. And he got so accustomed to it that he cudn't sleep apart. Would 'ee like to see the badger?"

"Very much."

"And the man?"

"Oh, certainly. One of Nature's freaks."

"Two ov em!" said Reuben, solemnly, putting in the last stitch, and handing the shoe to Guy.

"You'd like to see what's to be seen, s'poase?"

The cobbler whistled shrilly whilst untying his apron, and a woman with dark hazel eyes, and a face aquiline and refined, appeared. Guy made his best bow.

"The gentleman do want to see the badger that the man slept with," said Reuben, slowly.

"And the man, I should like to see the man who had such extraordinary taste," added Guy, saying something just to enable him to look at the woman without being rude.

The woman reddened, and her eyes sparkled.

"Tell un, my dear, what name you owned to avoor you was married," said the cobbler.

"Badger; and too good for you," replied the lady.

"That's the badger, and this is the man," said the cobbler, with a smile.

Guy was very cross when he told the story. Only to think that he had painted London town and London wit in such colours; and then to be dropped on by a simple cobbler before a handsome woman! But he wasn't cross long, and he went out and bought a pretty chain, and gave it to the cobbler to lead his "badger" with. So Guy and the cobbler cried quits.

The Parson trumps.

To be able to do a "clane off trick" is to be the hero in a parish for generations, and Parson Arscott was quoted at all the fairs as a masterpiece for doing the thing clane off at a horse deal. The story goes that the reverend gentleman attended Summercourt Fair, which is famed throughout the land. If you can't get what you want at Summercourt Fair, you must be hard to please, for the lame and the blind are there, the young and the aged, the sound and unsound, and you buy on your own judgment and without warranty. Parson Arscott knew a good horse when he saw it, and went early and looked about him. In the thick of the fair the parson went and examined the horses' tails, and so attracted attention to himself, for every one knows that to tell a horse's age you must open its mouth, and look at its teeth. And the curious part of the business was that the parson knew as much about the animal he was handling by lifting its tail as other people did by opening its mouth. At length, parson came to a nice little cob that suited him, and the deal began. It was a weary deal, but parson was firm. "I've looked at his tail, and I know he's rising five," said he; and he was right,—whatever the parson said about the cob was right, and yet he never once looked at its mouth. There was a trifle of five pounds between them when the shades of evening began to fall, and no hope of any advance on the part of the parson. At last the dealer said, "Tell me how you know a horse's age by his tail, and you shall have the cob." The parson counted down the guineas, and whispered, "I looked into his mouth beforehand." "Parson Arscott's deal" makes a horse-dealer shiver to this day.

The Parson euchred.

But sharp as the parson was at the fair, he was no match for a woman on her own ground. Parson was round collecting his tithes, and came to a farm whereon the farmer's wife presented her husband with a tenth child, and an old sow littered ten years.

"Passun es out in the town plaace, and es coom vur th' tithe pig. Which shall us giv'm?" asked the farmer of his better half, sitting in the kitchen suckling her baby.

"Tithe pig, es et? What next, I wonder? I'll tithe pig'n," says Mrs. Farmer, rising and taking the infant with her.

The parson was very polite, of course, to Mrs. Farmer and number ten, and asked about the christening.

"That's vur you to zay, passun," says the lady, holding out number ten. "He do belong to you."

The parson flushed. This was not in his line.

"Ess sure 'e do—tes the tithing cheeld, and now you take un."

Farmer made his appearance with the weakliest of the ten vears squealing in his arms, and the parson made towards him, but the woman was equal to the occasion and stood between them, shouting, "No cheeld, no vear," and that time she had her way, and saved the little pig.

So there arose a saying in the parish that a parson might cheat the devil, but a woman could cheat a parson.

"Every one to his trade," said Guy.

To be "sure for sartin" is an averment of absolute knowledge, but a Cornishman is not often willing to speak to anything in so pronounced a fashion. To be "sure as can be" admits of a loophole and many explanations in the event of error. Something non-committal in the shape of speech suits him best. Things of no consequence become mysterious when screened with secrecy. An ordinary conversation is like this—

"Where are you going?"

"Down along."

"Where to?"

"Past the corner."

"How far?"

"A pure bit."

"Will you be long?"

"Maybe."

"Say an hour?"

"If you like."

"Or two?"

"Shudn't wonder."

And so on, and so on, until the questioner is tired of asking further questions. The people don't notice anything peculiar about this want of directness in reply to the simplest questions. To tell the truth, and yet to mislead, is looked on as an accomplishment which may be turned to profit without scandal, as by the man who sold a blind horse as free from vice. "To be blind is a misfortune and not a vice," replied the seller, when charged with deceit.

Cornish diamonds are hard to beat on a deal. We chanced upon a couple one market day chaffering about a pig in a tap-room.

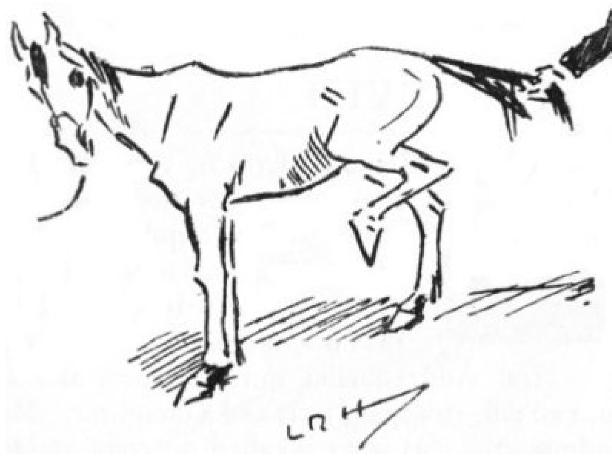
"Twenty score weight, and fippence a pound."

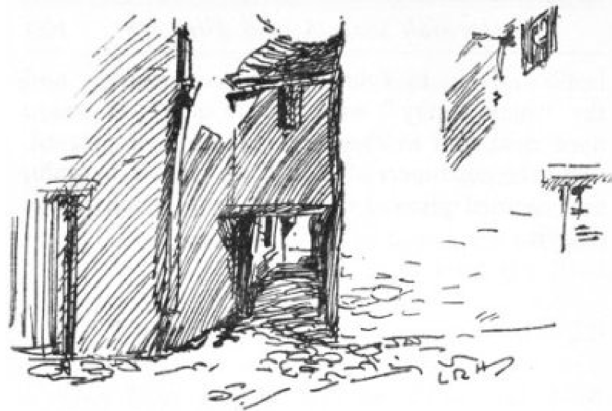
"Fourpence ha'penny, and I'll take the head and oal ov'm."

"An' barley eighteen shillin' a bushel! I'll see to it."

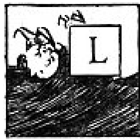
One hour already by the clock had been consumed by the little farmer who had a pig to sell, and the little pork-butcher who wanted to buy one, and there was this ha'penny between them. Friendly customers chaffed a bit and threw in a word between drinks, and it seemed that the jobber who could keep a stiff upper lip and his temper longest would come out on top. The unfortunate pig was haggled over with and without the hams, with and without the bacon fat, with one ham only, with its head, without its head, with only half its head, and every cunning offer of the little pork-butcher was resisted with a fineness of perception of self-interest that would have done credit to the peace plenipotentiaries at Portsmouth.

Another hour passed, and the butcher advanced one farthing—fourpence three-farthings, but without the head, and then there was the "luck penny." At last the whole carcase was sold, head and all, at fourpence three-farthings, and the "luck penny" was "spent out." It was a hard deal, and neither seemed too well pleased. Only the customers all said it was a fair bargain, and seemed pleased when the men shook hands over it.





Chapter XVIII



IFE on a farm by the roar of the sea approaches the ideal upon earth. It isn't quite the ideal, because the ideal is always round the corner; but it is near it, and that is something to be thankful for. Mrs. Andrawartha ran the farm, and she had two tall, strapping sons and a daughter. Mrs. Andrawartha was what is called a "comfortable" woman; and "comfort" is the one virtue prized above rubies in these parts.

OLD NEWLYN.

It was through accident that we struck the farm one afternoon, the fact being that the Bookworm was limping, having slightly sprained his ankle. There wasn't much to recommend us at first sight—three dusty wayfarers, with small knapsacks, and no warts or other indications of royal lineage upon either of us. The farmhouse was situated in an old-fashioned garden, and a good, roomy porch, with seats on either side, offered hospitality. Open windows were visible through luxuriant

fuchsias and creepers, but what the walls were built of no one could tell, so completely covered were they with flowering plants. It was a sort of place which wanted to be looked at again and again, something fresh coming into view each time; and the oftener you looked at it the more you liked it.

The Bookworm rapped modestly with his knuckles upon the thick door, but no one came. We could hear voices, and an aromatic perfume filled the passage. The Bookworm tried again, and only hurt his knuckles. Then Guy said he'd negociate, and if he got into trouble we were there to help him. The smell of burning furze and brambles guided him to the great kitchen, and he winked again and coughed as the smoke from the wide open fireplace filled his eyes. There was a little maid heaping up the thorns and brambles, and somewhere in the blue haze he saw the supple outline of a young girl, with her arms bare. They were heating the brick oven for bread-baking. A very sweet voice floated through the film of blue, aromatic smoke. A sudden draught cleared the smoke, and Guy stood face to face with the owner of the voice; and a nice face it was, now radiant with the heat from the burning brambles. The bare arms were dimpled, and the whole figure was cased in a white wrapper, showing to perfection the clear skin, and brown hair, and light hazel eyes of the young girl. This was Miss Andrawartha.

Mrs. Andrawartha was in the "living-room" (and a nice room it was), overlooking much of the farm land, the sea beyond, and the great cliffs, rising sheer from the yellow sands, playing hide-and-seek between them. The lady was portly, and sat in a chair made for comfort before the open window, and Guy, ushered into the presence of such homely dignity, wished to stammer an excuse, and back out. Remembrance of the sprained foot alone restrained him.

"You can stop here as long as you've a mind to, if only you behave yourselves," said the lady in the chair.

"Three of us?" queried Guy.

"The house is big enough," said the lady.

Guy made a rush for the porch. "Come in, you beggars," said he; "there's a queen inside, and a divinity in the kitchen."

At the evening meal we were incorporated with the family. Mrs. Andrawartha, in her chair of comfort, presided, supported by her two tall sons, then us, then the farm servants, and the daughter of the house at the other end of the table.

Our presence made no difference to the social economy of the farm, except that Mrs. Andrawartha presided over a late breakfast in the living-room. This was quite a personal compliment, and never could woman look more "comfortable" than the widow Andrawartha at table.

"If this is farm life, I'm a convert for ever," said Guy, chipping an egg and catching the white cream in his spoon.

The bread, just perfumed with the aroma of the burning furze with which the clome oven was heated, was delicious by itself, but with the butter thick upon it, the palate rose to the occasion and was satisfied. The home-cured ham in front of the comfortable widow would take no denial, and must be tasted. The cream, with its sheen of gold, and the honey, winking wickedly at the cream, would not be put aside; so there was nothing for it but to mix them both in holy matrimony upon the perfumed bed of bread. There was such a blend of delicate flavours and sightly delicacies that our eyes would shut, so that nothing might interfere with the joys of taste. Only a few flowers were on the table, but through the open window floated the scents of the garden, and the bees hummed and waltzed, and there was room for all, and to spare, at the table of the comfortable widow.

"Great Scott!" said Guy. "I shall never forget. Such everything! Only the worst of it is, I shall never like anything again for evermore. Fancy shop eggs, and 'best Dosset,' and alumed bread, and stale ham after this feast of the gods, when they lived among men. There's one saint still in Cornwall—the saint of good things at the shrine of the comfortable widow."

We left the Bookworm to himself and the odd volumes of the *Arminian Magazine*, and suchlike food for such as he, and he seemed as pleased as Punch at the thought of being alone with anything musty, fusty, and out of date.

"Incurable," said Guy. "This reading habit sticks to a fellow of his sort, like dram-drinking to a tramp."

Guy was in the seventh heaven of delight when the daughter of the house told him that in an orchard, through which the brook ran to the sea, there were some trout. Her father used to bring home "a fine passul" sometimes, and his rod and lines were all in the house, for the boys never troubled the fish. So Guy went a-fishing, his heart full of content with his breakfast, and susceptible to the diviner impressions which the daughter of the house in blue print and white apron might make upon him. The boys called her "Phil," but her name was Phyllis; he had got so far as that, when the widow's voice awoke him from contemplation of eyes and hair, and all the points which young men like to study at chance meetings.

He found the brook, and then the orchard. The water was as bright as glass, and the sun-motes danced upon it between the shadows. Trout there were in the stream, but they had not tasted a

worm for a month, except by chance, and the flies were not to their liking. Guy walked up stream to where the brook was fed by two trickling rills, where there was some depth of water, and an old, overhanging bank, and current enough for his fly to sail downward, temptingly, to the eyes of adventurous trout wanting to see life. At the deepest part the stream was shadowed by a large apple tree, and here Guy changed his flies, and cast deftly towards the spot where he felt sure the king of the stream must linger, if, indeed, it had a king. Presently, a melodious splash above his own fly told its secret, and Guy's hopes rose until he caught a little beauty, and then another, and another, and laid them on the grass, covering them with dock leaves with loving tenderness. Small fry that he would have been thankful for on other days he returned to the stream with words of advice.

Breakfast doesn't last for ever, and Guy began to feel peckish, but he wasn't going to give up yet, not he. He'd take home a fry of trout which would send an incense above the farm to the blue heavens, and make all invisible spirits envious. Presently he heard dry branches breaking under a light footstep, and the daughter of the farm stood by him, a ministering angel, with a pasty and a bottle of milk in a basket covered with a cloth of purest white. This was what she used to do for her father, who wouldn't leave off until he had a dish to his liking; and mother, thinking all men who fished for trout were the same, sent her with the basket of "croust" to keep off the pangs. So the dainty messenger. Then Guy uncovered his spoil, and Phyllis played him artlessly, so that he, in his turn, rose and bolted the sweet bait, and turned to go down stream again, only to know that he was in the toils, unless the fair angler should let him go.

She must go herself now, and Guy, who could not get away on his own account, felt grieved that release must come. It was sudden, but irresistible, and the thrilling exquisite. Then came the shock. "I am bespoke already, sir." The line parted.

Guy fished and fished until after sunset, but joy of capture was gone. He had himself been captured, and felt pity. Still he brought home a fine basket, and the comfortable widow served them up for breakfast, whole, and still beautiful.

The Bookworm, nursing his slight sprain, enjoyed himself in his own fashion, and, rummaging at the back of the open book-case, unearthed a book, bound in parchment, which commenced with farm accounts, and ended with "Receipts and Charms for the Cure of Man and Beastes." The pages were undated, but were written a hundred years ago by one Andrawartha, grandfather of the comfortable widow's husband. The document bore the following preface:—

"Lest I forget what has been told to me, I commit to paper charms and other devices for the cure of men and beastes. My forbears used these charms for more years than I can tell, and those who use them must have faith in them that they will work their work, or they labour in vain. And I pray God that I commit no sin in handing down what I have been taught, but that it may be counted merit in me to preserve what has been found out with much labour, and hath spared man and beast great and grievous sufferings in the flesh, and saved much money, when it could ill be spent, as, God wot, is the case on farms in this country.

"'Mortal are we and subject to diseases,
We all must die even when and how God pleases!
Into the world but one way we do come,
A thousand ways from hence we are sent home.'"

Some of the receipts would offend moderns, but all were seemingly set down in good faith; and the Bookworm copied many, with permission.

"A tooth from a dead man's mouth carried in the pocket is an infallible charm against toothache."

"The eighth psalm read three times a day, three days running, cures the thrush."

"To keep away evil spirits from cattle, nail four horse-shoes in the form of a cross against the door."

"A church key applied to a wound stops bleeding."

"Bore a hole in a nutmeg and tie round your neck, and nibble nine mornings fasting, and boils will disappear in spring and autumn."

"Breathe over a newly made grave, and cure a cough."

"Take spoonful of earth from grave of newly interred virgin, dissolve in water, and drink fasting, to cure 'decline.'"

"Toad's liver fried is good for rheumatism, so also are adders' tails; the adders must be killed whilst dew is on them."

"The sign of the cross drawn on wood, stone, or metal, and bound over a wound, stops bleeding in man or beast."

For toothache was this formula: "Upon a rock St. Peter stood, towards Jerusalem. And Peter prayed, 'Lord, forgive me my sins, and I shall be free. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—Amen.' Say three times a day, three days running, and drink powdered brimstone water between whiles."

To cure heartache: "Sleep with key of church door around your neck."

"Water taken from church font is good for children with rickets, and will straighten bow-legged children, and children with 'wobbles.'"

"Black spiders dried and powdered cure heart-burn." There were many other cures for heart-burn, and all of them nasty, so nasty that spider-powder sprinkled in water was dainty by comparison.

Meteorolites and curious stones when ground to powder will cure men or beasts of all common diseases, and blue snake-stones are infallible in case of snake-bite.

There were love philtres innumerable, and it appeared that a deserted maid had only to steal her lover's jacket, turn the sleeves inside out, bury it at midnight in a churchyard, and then, presto! the lover's heart would turn, and turn, as the jacket rotted in the ground, until he came back repentant to his ancient flame.

The Bookworm made notes of many other things which would do for the curious in such matters, and remarked as singular that, in all the book, there was no reference to saints or invocations to saints, which, he said, was very strange in the land of saints. Guy confessed that the matter was beyond him, and said he did not care if he never heard the word "saint" again. Saint this, and saint that, and saint the other—there was too much of it in one small county, to his taste.

Chapter XIX

Mrs. Andrawartha took kindly to the Bookworm; he was the lame duck of the party, and so she took a motherly interest in him, and got him to talk about himself and his sleepless, restless nights, until he came into this land wherein Nature was at rest, beautifying herself after passionate upheavals. And then she told him fairy stories about piskies with half-shy credulity, and sorrow in her face and voice that the old order had changed and given place to new. In her young days a pedlar with a big dog used to travel from farmhouse to farmhouse, and always got hospitality in exchange for news. At night all the household crowded around the pedlar to hear him fiddle and sing, and tell stories of the piskies, and of men who listened to the songs of mermaids, and disappeared from family and life. This pedlar—"Uncle" Anthony he was called—was a poet, and his piskies were real, as real as sunshine and shadow and the music of the birds. He knew them by name and talked to them, and met them by moonlight on the moors, and what "Uncle" Anthony said was gospel truth.

THE OLD MILL.

There was an old miller, living at an old mill not so very far away, who had the reputation of knowing more about piskies than any man breathing. It was only a walking distance for the Bookworm, and Guy took his rod with him, having been told that below the mill he might cast a fly with some prospect of sport. Whipping a stream is something, and Guy said he'd rather cast at shadows than hang about a dusty old mill, listening to a foolish old man prating about foolish things. In fact, he was a little strong in his language, as he usually was when talking about people or things which did not interest him very much.

The old piskie man at the mill was, in fact, the Bookworm's "find," which was quite enough, as a rule, to put Guy in opposition, and incline him to use epigrammatic language touched with red.

We reached the mill, the like of which is hardly to be found again within the four corners of the kingdom. It was a one-story building, and that so low that we had to be careful when inside not to knock our heads against the beams, and the machinery was as primitive as the process of grinding corn between revolving stones driven by water power. The ancient hopper was being slowly consumed by worms, and the "bolting" cloths hung limp and dusty, like the cloths sent home from Egyptian tombs. We first spied the miller looking through a ventilation hole, which served as a window. When we entered the mill he was sitting on the lid of a thick oak chest, which had outlived the centuries, and seemed quite capable of lasting for ever.

The miller was withered, like the chest, and might have been believed if he said he was as old as the mill, only his eyes were bright and ferrety as they took stock of us through the flour dust accumulated on his eyebrows and lashes—a sort of flour mummy outside of his grave-clothes out for an airing, he looked. The machinery was in motion when we entered, and a fine dust soon settled upon us, and then set us coughing and choking, so that we made a hasty retreat through the door, the top half of which was already open.

The miller's cottage was a thatched dwelling tacked on to the mill, which was also thatched, but nothing was visible of the cottage but windows, on account of the clustering roses and myrtles and fuschias which clung to the old "cob" walls, and crept along the eaves, and scrambled along the thatch.

The old miller followed us out into the open, and stopped the wheel by turning off the water; and then we noticed that the dripping wheel was festooned with lichen, and was half-hidden under the shadow of a huge flowering laurel. There were only three other cottages in the village, and these were all flower-laden; and now the clat, clat, clatter of the old wheel was stopped, the air was musical with the hum of insect symphonies. And then the perfume!

We looked at one another and wondered.

"Quiet like," said the old man; and that was all he had to say about this antique gem in a garden of myrtles and roses. "Quiet like," indeed! Surely men may live in beauty until they cease to see it.

We were out piskie-hunting to-day, all except Guy, who already had his eye upon the stream

which passed the old mill, then broadened where it could be seen glistening in the sunshine. He wasn't long before he deserted us, and we were not sorry, being sure that if he once commenced questioning the miller in his off-hand manner, the old man would dry up quickly, and we should hear little.

The Bookworm took the old man's fancy by telling him about a new process for grinding flour between rollers so hard that they could only be cut by diamonds, and then, with many windings, got on the track of the piskies. He took a lot of starting, it is true, but when once started he covered a good deal of ground. He would take his own course, and a crooked one it was, but capable of being straightened out, which is more than can truly be said of the discourses of some very learned people.

He was as "sure and sartin" that piskies were real beings, and existed even now, as that "water was wet," and he ought to know, because there was a piskie which belonged to the old mill. There was some trouble one day at the mill about the non-delivery of "grist," the miller being charged with taking unfair toll, and he shifted the responsibility on to his wife, who thereupon transferred the blame to the piskie, as the person least likely to suffer in consequence. It so happened that the piskie got to know of the slander, and he came to the mill in a great rage, and swore an oath binding in fairyland, not to do another stroke of work in the old mill for two generations.

"When I was a boy," said the old man, "I used to see the piskie that belonged to the mill sitting on the stones when they were grinding as comfortable as a fly would rest upon a turning wheel. And why not? When my father went to market, and stopped away days, when there was no need, the work was done all the same. My father liked that very well, only the piskie would give too good 'tummels' when he filled the sacks; and when my father took too much toll, then he would tickle the palm of his hand, and make it itch, to remind him that he was cheating. When a miller is honest, a tuft of hair grows in the middle of his palm; but it didn't ever sprout in my fathers, which made him poor-tempered sometimes. The piskie was in the shape of a man—very dark, black-haired, and cross-eyed. He could work best, the old folks said, when not seen; only his voice was large for his size, and made people know when he was about. He was the spirit of the mill, and belonged to it, so there was no question of payment; and the children grew knowing he was there, and were not afraid. Why should they be? When the piskie said he would do no more work for two generations, my father stuck to work himself, which was better for him in the long run; and I've had to stick to it, and shall stick to it till I die, and then the piskie will be free to come again."

"And are there piskies now?"

"Why not?"

"I don't know. But do people believe in them?" asked the Bookworm.

The old miller seemed to resent the question, and was so long in replying that we thought we had made a mess of it. It, however, appeared that he was only thinking; and at last he said—

"For sartin sure they do. You can't make butter if the piskies turn the cream against the sun, and every dairymaid will tell 'ee so. If the piskie up to Barton farm has a spite against a new maid, he'll spoil her baking of bread, so that the bread will come out of the oven full of 'piskie-spits,' and he'll play her tricks until she is turned out of the house. When I was a boy, the piskies used to have fine fun with the maidens up to Barton on winter nights when all the work was done. They used to blaw out the candles and kiss the maids, and the maids would screech and find fault with the boys, and 'scat their chacks' for being too free in the dark. The piskies were full of fun, and would whisper in a maid's ear when she was sleeping, and tickle her nose to wake her when she had bad dreams. When the maids were courting they'd lead 'em a pretty dance, and drive 'em to quarrel with their sweethearts, and then help 'em to make it up again."

But the old man did not think they were as plentiful as they used to be, for the simple reason that people had learnt to do without them. What would be the good of the piskies in the harvest-field now, when everything was done by machinery; or in dairies, where butter was made in churns; or in flour-mills, where corn was broken between rollers so hard that a diamond could only scratch them? The old man found it as hard to swallow the Bookworm's description of roller mills as we found it to swallow his stories, and his were much more inviting. The ancient miller rambled on and on, telling us of tricks played upon his very own grandfather, who, returning from market with more brandy toddy under his belt than his weak head could carry, dared to cross a piskie ring on the moor without first turning his pockets inside out by way of homage. The poor man was pinched black and blue, was bound with bonds innumerable, no thicker than spiders' webs, and then, to tantalize him, his eyes were "struck" with magic unguent, and he was able to see the feasting and rioting going on all around him, without being able to enjoy the situation—all of which he did most steadfastly believe.

"Blow the piskies!" said Guy, rejoining us without warning. "Blow the piskies! Did you ever catch one, Master Miller?"

A look of horror passed over the withered old face, which made it look uncanny. Catch a piskie, indeed! Had he been asked whether he'd ever robbed a church, he might have taken it less seriously.

"Never mind," said Guy, airily, seeing that he'd been guilty of something—"never mind; if you never have, you still may. Specimens getting scarcer, suppose, and a bit expensive; only, you just

pin one on to a card and send it to me registered, for safety, and I'll come down handsomely."

The old man never recovered power of speech while we were with him, and he shook hands with the Bookworm and me automatically. We left him with eyes wide open, staring before him. I don't think he quite understood Guy's humour. The idea of catching a piskie and pinning it to a card, like small boys do cockchafers, came too suddenly upon him. Then to register a piskie and send it through the post-office—deporting an ancient divinity under a postage stamp—set up ideas which wanted thinking out.

I told Guy I feared the shock would be too much for the old man; but he only laughed, and said—

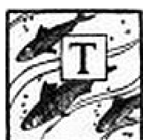
"Blow the piskie, and look at my beauty!"

He had managed to catch a trout too small for anything, and he patted himself on the back, and talked about it until he really believed he had done something deserving the world's gratitude.

"After all," said the Bookworm, when tired of listening to Guy and "fly" this or "fly" the other—"after all, there's no great difference between Guy and the miller. Guy's little trout has become a fairy already, and to-morrow will be even more wonderful than the miller's piskies. The mind's receptivity must——"

I know I lost a great deal, and ought to be sorry for it, I dare say; but the word "receptivity" was too much, and I managed to escape that time.

Chapter XX



THERE was a queer, dried stick of a man at the farm whom we never heard speak except to say "Ess, maister," and "zackly." His name was Jacob, and he was famous for having given a shrewd answer on one occasion when asked how he knew when he had had enough to eat. "When I do feel my buttons," said he; and people then said that Jacob was wiser than he looked, which was, no doubt, true, for he did not look very wise. The old boy had a trick of wandering about at nights, and was credited with having

seen strange things which he was "a nation sight too artful to talk about." After the evening meal Mrs. Andrawartha induced him to stay with us, and tell us the story of something which happened at a neighbouring farm. Jacob was reared on the place, and so knew all about it. The widow translated as he went along, and the story ran like this:—

Jacob's Piskie Story.

A farmer, Nicholas Annear by name, was known far and wide as Ould Hurry-all. Every one about him was always glad to see his back turned, so as to have "a bit" of peace and quietness in the house. His wife was just the opposite, and took things easy, and when Nickey was going to drive to market in his cart, he nearly drove every one on the place mazed. 'Twas hurry, hurry, hurry all the time; and one day he was worse than ever, and broke all the clome dishes in his tantrums. The poor woman threw her apron over her head, and began to weep and sob so as to be heard a mile off.

Now, you must know, there's a little man piskie which belonged to the Missus's family, and came with her to her new home when she was married. He used to do odd jobs for her to make things go smooth when Nickey was taisey-like, which was every day now, for he got worse with age.

"What's the matter, Missus?" asks the little man.

"I wish I was dead," says Missus. "That Nickey'll drive me as mad as a curly, an' I'm only a shadder now."

She weighed ten score, but she thought she was failing.

"I'll give'm a lesson," says the little man.

Now, what did the piskie do? He hopped on to the cart by the side of Nickey, only Nickey couldn't see him, and he made a picture right before his very eyes so that he saw the church tower standing in the market-place as large as life. And he drove and he drove, hurry, hurry all the time, and he'd scarce give himself time to speak a civil word to people as he passed along. He drove, and he drove, and he drove, and there was the church tower before him. The pigs in the cart squealed louder and louder as they got more and more famished, and the horse began to fail, and Nickey got madder and madder. Evening began to fall, and still the church tower was in front of him; and then night came, and the pigs were quiet through hunger, and the horse could scarcely put one leg before the other.

And what did the little man do? Oh, he was artful. When the market was all over, and night came, he removed the picture of the church tower in the market-place from Nickey's eyes, and, lo and behold! the horse was standing, dead tired and ready to drop, outside of the very gate which it had been driven from in the morning.

Nicholas Annear was a reformed man after that, and was no more in a hurry over things than his neighbours. But the story got about, of course, and the people have a saying now that "a man in a hurry will be late to market."

The Early Church seems to have had a great deal of trouble with piskies, and every effort was made to put the people out of love with them. It was said that they were the souls of unbaptized infants and servants of "Old Artful," and for that reason they would neither enter a church nor come within sound of church bells. But Mrs. Andrawartha told us of a legend which goes back further, namely, that piskies are the children of Adam and Eve, who wouldn't be washed on Saturday nights before going to bed. Those who could get away did, to avoid having their eyes filled with soap, and two hid away so effectually that they were never found again, although Adam and Eve sent the crier round, and then cried themselves until they were tired. These wandering children lived upon fern-seed, mixed with dew flavoured with sunbeams, until they acquired the power of becoming invisible, and then they returned home, and did household work, and other things, for the family; but they were like the famous soap that wouldn't wash. The old people used to tell children that they would be turned into piskies if they wouldn't have their Saturday-night tubbing and say their prayers and go to bed.

There is a little brown moth called the "piskie," and children are now told that if they are not good these piskie-moths will play them tricks in their sleep. The School Boards have wrestled with the piskie and failed, and now the County Council is in the ring. Still the piskie, visible and invisible, lives.

The Bookworm was on his legs again, and we all were sorry to leave the farm and the comfortable widow. Guy managed to linger behind and get a last word with Phyllis, the daughter of the house, and exchange photographs, or, perhaps, something dearer to romance. The two tall sons walked with us "a pure distance," and told us the names of the farms round about, names which none but a native could ever remember. They told us that the Andrawarthas had farmed this land, from father to son, for over three centuries. The eldest son was going to marry soon and bring home his wife, but would not dispossess his mother during her lifetime. Only the other son would go afield—Australia or Canada—and set up for himself; and Phyllis was to be married soon to a neighbouring farmer, who would follow his own father by-and-bye. Everything seemed so orderly as they talked, as though the currents of life flowed strong and deep, and the idea of home was never disturbed. The young people did not stay at home dividing and subdividing lands

and chattels until there was nothing to divide, but went abroad and set up new homesteads, calling them by the old names. Young Andrawartha said, whether he settled in Canada or Australia, he'd call his farm after the old place. If he couldn't have anything else he'd have the name to comfort him. Many of the young men did that, he said, when they settled in a new place.

The Bookworm said Cornwall was a bigger place than it looked, or than could be gripped between the arms of the Atlantic, because of the tributaries it sent all over the world, every man taking with him a bit of Cornish earth and love, and setting up a new colony beyond the seas, just as the old Greeks carried with them some of the fire from the ancient hearths.

Guy said he would remember the name of the farm for the rest of his life, and he tramped along with laggard steps, and would have given much for an excuse to run back and find a dropped handkerchief, and shake hands over again with the comfortable widow, on the chance of seeing Phyllis the bespoke. When we got off the estate, and the young men left us, he wanted to know whether it was possible to fancy the dainty Phyllis as "comfortable" in days to come as her portly mother?

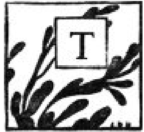
We turned round just to take a last look at the farmhouse wherein we had been so well treated. The dwelling and all the outhouses made a goodly show, and, at a distance, the yellow lichen—a poor, poverty-looking thing enough—covering the roofs, had the appearance of burnished gold. Nature here will insist on dressing herself out in most unlikely places, and has a trick of her own for covering up ugliness. A flash of sunshine, a breath of air, a pinch of dust kissed with dew, and flat slates on ugly roofs are covered with cloth of gold for the tired feet of winged spirits of the air. This was the last view that three tramps had, and the remembrance remains with them.

A Cornishman seldom travels without a pasty. When small, a pasty is a snack; when large, it's a meal. Mrs. Andrawartha gave each of us a pasty to keep us from fainting by the way, just the same as a considerate hostess elsewhere would slip a packet of dainty sandwiches into the hands of departing guests. "You'll find'm good," said she, with honest pride; and we did.

The home of the pasty is Cornwall. It may be met with in Devon, and is possible in Yorkshire, but Cornwall is its home now. In a sense the pasty is Cornish. There are other dishes, but the pasty comes first, the making of which is handed down from generation to generation. Every created thing that may be eaten goes into a pasty—fish, flesh, or fowl, and the herb of the field, whether sweet or sour, to say nothing of fruits and humble potatoes and turnips. When a woman has a rage for pasty-making, nothing comes amiss when the strip of dough is ready. There's a knack in turning out a shapely pasty no longer than one's hand, or big enough for a family to carve at and come again. All pasties are alike on the outside; and the cable-twist running from end to end, delicately tapering from the centre towards the points, is a work of art to look at. As the pasty goes to the oven, so it comes out, puffed up a little with self-conscious pride at having gone through the fiery trial and come out a generous brown, with every cable-twist intact, and every curve swelling with inward importance. The origin of the pasty is lost with the language, but the thing is universal, and the friend of all. The workman takes it in his bag, the traveller pops it in his pocket, the family sit around it. No knife, no fork, no tablecloth is wanted; out comes the pasty, and the feast begins. A pasty fresh from the oven sends up an incense which makes a hungry man thankful to be alive. A man will call at a friend's house with his pasty in his pocket, and the good woman will warm it for him, and he'll join the family circle without any one thinking it an intrusion. Tea is the drink with a pasty. Anything else will do, from white wine to cider; but tea is the drink for choice.

A pie is another Cornish dish, and lends itself to the racial aptitude for secrecy. Almost anything under the sun may be put into a pie, and no one be the wiser, for the crust puts on a brave face and hides the poverty (should there be poverty) underneath. No end of stories have been told of pies. A person in a sarcastic mood has been known to send a neighbour a pie with a halter in it; but the piskies did something better than that, and sent the barren wife of the Earl of Cornwall a pie which, when opened, was filled with sweet herbs and wild flowers, in the midst of which a little heir lay smiling. And then, as a set-off, Old Nick comes in and watches a woman make an "all-sorts" pie, in which nothing seemed out of place; and so afraid was he that his own dear self would be included that he skipped out of the county. The pie, like the pasty, is a mystery until it is opened, unless the crust is decorated with the foot of a duck, or some other indication of contents. The heads of pilchards peeping through the crust suggested the name of "star-gazey pie;" but a stranger in the land may never see it—indeed, he may never see many things.

Chapter XXI



Through August and down to the middle of September is the season for blackberries, and wherever the bramble can grow, there the black, luscious fruit hangs ripe and tempting. The Bookworm hazarded the guess, as we tramped along, that the plant followed the Celtic immigration in Cornwall and Brittany. The Bretons make money of the fruit, but here whoever is minded may pick and eat and carry away; and no one was ever prosecuted for wandering over fields in search of the fruit, and pulling down bits of hedges to secure it. During the season, blackberry parties go out with crook-sticks and baskets, and faces as clean as usual, and return tired and torn, with hands and lips and faces dyed all over with the dark juice. Some say it was the blackberry juice which the ancient inhabitants used for frightening away the Roman legions; but nothing positive is now known. It is, however, the fact that the Cornish dye just as much of themselves as is visible with blackberry juice once a year; and this may be a survival of an ancient custom. Just for a wonder, it was neither saint nor piskie who was quoted in connection with blackberries, but Old Nick himself, who ate so many one thirteenth of September that he felt real ill, and he cursed the fruit with such a terrible curse that, after the fatal thirteenth, the fruit is said to be unfit for food, and is allowed to rot where it grows.

If the blackberry isn't a native, it ought to be, considering the impudent way in which it takes possession of the hedges and fences, scrambling over everything, and sucking in all the sunshine which comes out of the sky. Anywhere, everywhere it grows, even along the bleak sea-cliffs washed with sea-spray and ruffled with bitter winds; but the fruit is most sweet and generous when growing in sheltered spots on moor and in valley. We were told to be sure to have blackberry pie, and we had it at the farm; and if the immortals didn't envy us when eating blackberry pie, smothered with Mrs. Andrawartha's cream, it's proof positive that they don't know about one good thing in the eating line.

The Wesleyans are especially fond of blackberries. Of course there's a reason for it. The Bookworm stumbled on it, as usual, and we went to the circuit minister, who said he was quite right, and it was the fruit which kept John Wesley alive on St. Hilary downs. The story is all right, and can be verified in print. Here it is: "One day we had been preaching on St. Hilary down. As we returned, John Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, 'Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries, for this is the best county I ever saw for getting a stomach, and the worst I ever saw for getting food.'" Guy said there ought to be a blackberry day as well as a primrose day. Why not? White roses and orchids are consecrated to other illustrious persons, and why not blackberries to John Wesley?

Of course the blackberry has its legend, and this is one as it was told to us.

The Romance of Princess Olwen.

The fairest princess in Cornwall, as every one knew, was the daughter of Bran Dhu, and it was the surprise of every one that his daughter should be so fair when he was so dark, dark as his own black heart; and that was dark enough, in all conscience. More golden was her hair than the flower of the furze, and her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave. A twin sister she had who favoured their father, and she was as dark as a thunder-cloud, and as passionate as the other was gentle. The twins grew up, and got on very well together, until the son of the king stopped at Bran Dhu's castle and received a cup of milk from the hand of the fair princess, who was called Olwen, when he ought to have received it from Gertha, she of the flashing eyes and heart of fire. Bran Dhu had made other arrangements for his fair daughter, whom he removed the very next day to the dwelling of a herdsman whose wife was a witch, and who had strict orders not to let the young prince see the fair princess, even if he should chance upon her whereabouts. It wasn't long before the young prince came again, and this time Gertha handed him a cup of milk; but he had no eyes for her, and rode away. Whenever he came he only saw Gertha, and rode away disappointed, which so wounded her vanity that she ended by hating her sister of the yellow hair and sea-foam skin. The young prince went to his father, who commanded Bran Dhu to come and see him, bringing the fair Olwen with him. Now, Bran Dhu was a subtle man, and told lies as naturally as other great people, and he said that Olwen went on a visit in the country and died,

and was buried by the old herdsman and his wife. He didn't mind telling where Olwen really was, because the herd's wife had orders to turn the fair young princess into a bramble whenever the king or young prince came in search of her. The young prince was very much in love, and rode off to the herd's house, and the herd's wife showed him the clothes which Olwen had worn, and the mound covering her, and the bramble thick with blossom festooning the hedge. He was so sorrowful that he did not notice that the bloom was out of season. He came again and again and talked to the herd's wife, for his heart was sore, and there was always the bramble in full bloom.

Now, at the King's court there was a "wise man," who smelt a rat as soon as ever he heard about the bramble being in bloom, in season and out of season, whenever the prince happened to be there; so he turned the young prince into a chough, and told him to fly over to the herdsman's house and look around. The Cornish chough was common enough in those days, and the old witch took no notice of the black bird with red beak hopping about the garden, its head on one side, and one eye on Olwen the fair.

The "wise man," when he knew that Olwen was really in the flesh, took in the whole situation.

The young prince flew over to the herdsman's house and hopped around, and followed his lady love until she got into a wood, when he resumed his proper shape and told his love, sweet and strong, and stayed so late that the old witch caught him at it, and told Bran Dhu, who became as mad as a hatter, and told Gertha, who became madder than he. And they went over to the herdsman's and ordered the witch to turn Olwen into a bramble, and pour some magic drops upon her fair blooms so that she should become green and red and black in turns, sour to the taste, and ugly to look upon.

Then the "wise man" anointed the beak of the chough, saying, "Fly away and kiss the bloom, and your love shall become sweet and more sweet, and when the berry is sweetest to your taste, pluck it and bring it to me."

And so he did. Then the "wise man" broke the spell, and prince and princess were married; but the bramble flourished and spread everywhere, and all the people marvelled when they ate of it or turned it into wine, as they do to this day.

And all true lovers know that sweetest is the love which has been hard to get, and has passed through its sour and bitter stages and is plucked when ripest.

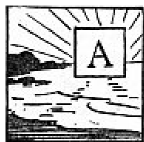
PRINCESS OLWEN IS CHANGED INTO A BRAMBLE.

We saw a Cornish chough during our tramp; but it is getting scarce now, and tens of thousands of people may come and go without ever seeing one. When the bird "with vermeil-tinted legs and bright red beak" has quite vanished from its old haunts, it will probably be held in the highest esteem, like it once was when it lived in the odour of sanctity. The chough was at one time a sacred bird in Cornwall, just as the long-legged ibis on the banks of the Nile, and, according to the story, had secret relations with Old Nick, just as its cousin, the raven, had in Wales. An odour of sulphur may have been the consequence; but as even birds may reform, the chough cut its old acquaintance, and was selected as the future habitation for the spirit of King Arthur. When a

Cornishman sees a chough he raises his hat, if he has one, or pulls his forelock if he hasn't, which means the same thing, namely, that the chough is of sainted lineage, and worthy of the very highest respect. It is not so easy to see a chough now outside of a "collection."

The chough is of very aristocratic appearance, and, in consequence, all poor and ragamuffin and envious relations of the crow tribe are doing their best to get rid of him by any means. No doubt dynamite would be used if the crow socialists knew how to handle it. It was an unfortunate day for the chough when Shakespeare advertised it as the "russet-pated chough," and that might not have been so very bad, only it set some people saying that Shakespeare did not know what he was talking about, which provoked others to reply, and so the newspapers debated whether Shakespeare should be criticized. Then all Cornwall was ransacked for choughs, to see whether he was "russet-pated." If "pate" means "head," then he isn't, but if "pate" means "foot," then he is "russet-patted," or footed. Those who held that the poet knew what he was writing about, scored one; but the discussion cost the chough dear, so many people finding it necessary to shoot every chough they saw. Every year King Arthur visits his own tomb in the form of a chough, and some people hope that *one* chough will be allowed to live in the land just so long as the old King likes to revisit his own grave and attend to its weeding. It would be a pity for an old tradition to die out for want of a bird to carry it on.

Chapter XXII



Cornish "van" is a miracle on wheels; but we're told that the real, genuine article, like Penaluna's, which still covers its five miles in one hour and a quarter, is getting rarer and more rare. Penzance and Helston, Truro and Redruth, and most of the market towns are visited on market days by newly-painted antiquities on wheels. They line up a street, or a square, for a few hours, and then disappear again until the next market day. The better class machine is a "Royal Mail," or a "Standard," a "Comet," or some such swagger thing; but "Penaluna's van" has a first-grade certificate in the miracle line. Rail and motor-cars have thinned out this ancient sort of vehicle pretty considerably.

Mrs. Penaluna runs a refreshment house six miles from a market town, and Mr. Penaluna is the carrier by descent. For three generations the Penalunas carried whatever there was to carry, and it seems that when one machine wore out, another was built after the same pattern, and then another, and another, so that Penaluna's van is now pretty much the same as its predecessors, and the type has been preserved in spite of steam and petrol. Mr. Penaluna's van went to the market town twice a week, and Mr. Penaluna's motto was to look after his parcels, and let passengers take care of themselves. Our traps were amongst the rest of the bales and boxes and parcels, "stowed away" according to the carrier's idea of the fitness of things. We looked inside, and said we'd walk to the town later in the day. We didn't see much accommodation for passengers. We were mistaken. One woman after another got into the van with baskets of dairy produce and things, and settled themselves somehow. The van was canvas-covered, and its sides bulged, so we thought it must be full. We didn't understand. People came along with more baskets and got in, so Guy said they must be sticking to the roof, feet upwards, like flies. Every moment we expected to see the van come apart, and let its contents into the road; but it didn't, and held together by force of habit, we supposed. Time was up, and we thought the good Mr. Penaluna would start, but he was in no hurry; there was a regular customer to come, and she always came last. Somebody did come—a crowning glory of twenty stun—with a girl by her side carrying things. The "regular" waddled up, and said it was warmish, and hands were spread out to take in things and help the lady when she was ready, and Mr. Penaluna was behind to give a helpful push. The lady with liberal breadth of beam and no featherweight disappeared, inch by inch, and we stood by expecting to hear shrieks from the inside victims. Only nothing of the sort happened, and Mr. Penaluna closed the door with a bang and the proud air of a railway porter, and the living purgatory on wheels waltzed away. Mr. Penaluna got up on a swinging knifeboard, and cracked his whip in a professional way about the ears of the wiry pair of horses in front.

Guy asked Mrs. Penaluna whether she thought that the women inside would come out alive? which seemed to amuse her. She said Penaluna might hap to pick up one or two more on the road. "There's always room for one more in Penaluna's van," said she, with a grand sweep of the

arm, indicating that a good slice of creation might be carried to market twice a week, and no mistake about it.

The Bookworm was under a promise not to go past the first milestone, but to sit on it, and wait until we overtook him. Guy said we needn't hurry, as he saw him sneak a book into his pocket, and he wouldn't know how the time passed until the sun went down.

"If the little beggar can lose himself, he will," said Guy, jumping on a hedge and looking round. Then he shouted "Coo-e-e-e-y!" and an answer came a few yards off, where the Bookworm was sitting on a heap of stones chatting to a man with his sleeves turned up, and who was the parish stonebreaker. This Mr. Stonebreaker worked in a disused quarry, wherein he was sheltered from all winds, and had for company a sleek-looking donkey, which he rode to and fro morning and evening. The Bookworm struck the place just about luncheon-time. The man had taken off his wire goggles, pulled out his pasty, and the donkey's head rested on his shoulder, waiting for the two ends of the pasty to be put into its mouth. Mr. Stonebreaker rolled up his jacket for the Bookworm to sit on, and offered him a bit of pasty; and when we joined the party of three, they made a very pretty picture. The man was a droll fellow and set the Bookworm laughing, and the animal joined in in its very best style. The Bookworm rose and shook hands with his newly-found friend.

"Wasting the poor devil's time, and never tipped him, I'll bet," said Guy, with an air of disgust.

"I couldn't," replied the Bookworm, the idea that Guy thought him mean creeping over him. "The man treated me as an equal, and played the host, and how could I tip him?"

"You have sold the good name of every tourist for evermore," said Guy, hastily; and before we knew what he was up to, he bolted back to the old quarry.

"Catch!" shouted he, spinning a coin towards the man.

"Thank'ee kindly, but what be un vur?"

Then Guy made a speech, and the man laughed, and returned the coin, without any sign of displeasure.

"I'll be hanged if a coin ever came back to me in this way before. I shall keep it for luck," said Guy.

"Ef you bain't in a hurry I'll tell 'ee a story," said the man, as leisurely as though he were lord of the manor.

"I shall be taking up your valuable time," said Guy.

"Never mind me: we can afford it, caan't us, old 'un?" (stroking the donkey's head). "Us can al'ys find time when we do work by the day." Then he began.

"You doan't know our Passun, s'poase? Well, then, tedn't 'bout he, but the wan avoor, who had a purty field ov corn wan year, sure 'nuff, and he hired Jim Tredinnick to come over and drash un. Now, Passun was writing es sarmon, and could heer Jim's drashal going wan, du, dre, like a church bell tolling for a burying. 'This will never do,' saith Passun to hisself, and down he goes to the barn, and Jim was there making believe to sweat a leak, and the ould drashal was going wan, du, dre, like the church bell. 'The man'll eat up the vally of the corn in the drashing ov it,' said Passun, as he went back to his room. Now, whether Passun falled asleep, or dramed weth his eyes wide open, or whether it was rale, I dunno, but the piskie that used to belong to the place stood avoor him weth es drashdals over his shoulder. Now Passun wasn't proud, and telled him about Jim Tredinnick, how he was hired by the day and his meat to drash the corn in the barn, and 'I shall be ate out ov house and home,' said Passun, 'he is that slow.'

"Then the little man laughed, and took the drashels off his shoulders, and began to beat on the floor, stroke by stroke with Jim Tredinnick in the barn, and he made a tune ov it, like this: 'By the day, by the day, by the day-day-day. By the day, by the day, by the day-day-day.' 'Twas slow music, sure; but 'twas what Jim Tredinnick was making in the barn. Then the little man changed it, and worked his drashels lively, and the tune he made was like this: 'By the job, by the job, by the job-job-job; by the job, by the job, by the job,' as quick as you plaise. Then Passun rubbed es eyes, and went over to the barn, and made a fresh bargain with Jim Tredinnick, and his corn was oal drashed that very night."

"Well?" said Guy, interrogatively.

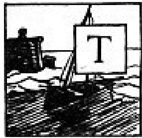
"If I had been breaking these stones by the job you wouldn't have heard this story," said the man, with a humorous twist of his mouth.

"You're a genius," said Guy, shying a shilling at him, and running away at top speed.

"The fellow is a millionaire," said Guy, overtaking us. "I shall never be able to say I haven't met a rich man. I had to shy the coin at him, and I don't know now whether he'll trouble to pick it up."

"He's a gentleman, and his donkey knows it," said the Bookworm; and it was his last word on the subject.

Chapter XXIII



HREE occupations are followed—farming, mining, and fishing, but the Cornish are a handy race, and it is not an uncommon thing for a man to cultivate a farm, work in a mine, and fish in the sea. A "wheelbarrow farm" is a small holding which a man may get along with, with the assistance of a wheelbarrow, and is common enough in the mining districts. When a mine is near the sea, the wheelbarrow farmer has a boat, and puts in time fishing when not underground. There are no factories, as understood elsewhere, and if you see smoke afar off, it's just some farmer burning weeds, or a railway engine puffing along. There's never smoke enough in any one place to soil a butterfly's wing, and some medical men have already made note of the fact.

In *the* mining district people talk tin and copper, and dream about little else, though it's tin for choice. Redruth is the reputed headquarters of the tin worship. When we reached the town, everybody seemed to be in the street, talking at once. We thought some great calamity had happened, but found out that it was only the usual when men came in from Camborne, and round about. There is an inner temple, called an Exchange, but most of the exchanging seems to be done in the street. Men talk together, and then out come little note-books. It looks like street-betting, but the policeman takes no notice, so, of course, it's something else. Millions sterling have changed hands in this way, and in this street, but we were told that times were dull now. People were lively enough, and whether they win or lose, they go on talking and dreaming of tin.

It has been a wonderful land, this, and the stories told of fortunes made in tin and copper give fairy tales a back seat; but then, for every fortune made, a fortune is lost; and the way to get ten shillings worth of tin is to melt twenty shillings worth of gold, we were told. Of course, there's the other side, but we hadn't time to go into it—it was too much like fiscal politics.

The people about here are prosperous to look at, but we were told that they were ruined regularly once a week or fortnight, as the case may be. Strangers may make mistakes when they see ruined people for the first time, but they get to know that when a tin man looks most prosperous, he's most ruined. A copper man may be afflicted in the same way, but tin was uppermost when we were in the place.

The great men in these parts are captains—mine captains. A Newmarket horse-trainer and jockey combined is not more looked up to on the heath than a mine captain here. He is the man who knows, and can put a friend on to a good thing; people always think a mine captain has a good thing up his sleeve, and you must be civil to him, to make him shake it out. They are modest men, however, and live in small houses to check any tendency to pride, and on Sundays Cap'n Jack and Cap'n Jose, and the best samples, go preaching. The kingdom of heaven is very much like a mine to a miner, and if she "cuts rich" he wants to be there.

A mine is "she," and has many wooers when rich, or reputed to have great expectations. Mines in these parts are also feminine in the coquettish way in which they show just sufficient of their attractions at one time to lure men on and on, and then—nothing! The caprices of a season's beauty are not greater than those of a mine, nor is the condition of a Derby favourite more closely watched and canvassed. A mine may look well, or be in a bad way, and all the men crowd around Wheal This and Wheal That as though her breath were perfumed, and then turn their backs upon her when old age and wrinkles come, and her "eyes are picked out," and she's neglected, and left to grow dropsical, and pass from memory. Sometimes a pet Wheal over-runs the constable, and ruins all her lovers, and then no secret is made of her wicked little ways; but no professional beauty is more run after and talked about when she's in her prime.

Guy was relieved to find that the Gulf Stream was not held responsible for tin. We had heard so much of the Gulf Stream, how it made the 'taties grow, and the flowers bloom, and the air warm, and the wind cool, and the skies blue, and the rain wet; but no one here said it had anything to do with the making of tin. You may stream for tin, but that is only one way of getting it; and the Gulf Stream doesn't come in, and there are tin crystals in streams, but this is a detail known mostly to natives.

Miners call themselves "Cousin Jacks," and a Cornish miner in any part of the universe answers to "Cousin Jack." The Bookworm tried to find the origin of the name from a man "tending the engine" at a mine, who replied, "S'poase Adam gave it out when he named t'other animals." This was a good beginning. The men change their clothes in the engineroom; they call it "shifting," and a shift is worth the trouble, for a miner coming up from the bowels of the earth with a bit of tallow candle in his cap looks a clay-gnome of bad character, and gentle manners only increase prejudice, for why should such a forbidding-looking animal be gentle?

He was not in the least surprised to see us, but when he had shifted, we were surprised to see him. He was no longer gnome, but man, and good at that. Was there anything we would like to see or hear about? He was entirely at our disposal. He showed us crystals of pure tin, colourless, and flashing like diamonds. He supposed that tin might be manufactured the same as diamonds, but wasn't sure, and thought that Nature must have taken a lot of trouble when making tin. Would not be surprised if the pressure of the two seas had much to do with it. It was very singular that Cornwall was the richest spot in the universe in tin stone. There was plenty of tin elsewhere, but not Cornish tin, oh, dear, no! Tin was known in the days of Moses, and where could it have come from but here? As a commercial commodity, tin certainly first came from Cornwall, and so, first of all, brought Britain under the influence of the older civilizations. Cæsar no more discovered Britain than Columbus America, and Cornish miners were gentlemen in manners, and hospitable in the days of Diodorus Siculus, who attributed their advance in civilization to their frequent intercourse with Greeks and Phœnicians. It was on record that a Phœnician merchant, finding that he was followed, ran his ship ashore rather than let another into the secret of getting tin. Mr. Chamberlain could have done no better, could he?

THE CHAPEL ROCK, BUDE.

Mining was a science now, more or less exact, and very exacting. We were in the centre of a great school of mines, and students came here from all parts to learn their business and get diplomas. He told us something of superstitions common to miners. Science explains everything, of course; but can't get rid of old beliefs in a hurry. A mine's reputation was sometimes her weak point, just like a fine lady's, and when it was blown upon, then, good-day and good-bye! Get a chat, when you can, with an underground mine captain.

South Africa is a sort of outlying farm for the mining division, and when things are brisk every mail brings twenty or thirty thousand pounds sterling for wives and families and the old folks at home. Every market night is an object-lesson in political economy. When the Boer War was on, most of the shops were in mourning, and people went about with hunger in their eyes. Cousin Jack goes abroad to make money, and what he saves he sends home. On his return his delight is to get a wheelbarrow farm, and come into Redruth market, and talk tin. Cousin Jack likes to come home to die and be buried. He's like a Chinaman in his love for native dust.

Some Cornishmen live where they are born, but, as a rule, they drift to all quarters of the world, and look longingly homewards, like the Jew towards Jerusalem. The most conservative of all men is the fisher, whose little all can be put on board his boat, and who is seldom far from the smoke of his own chimney. The miners are restless, and always ready to strike their tent and march. Only, wherever they go overseas, their children are Cornish—the saints and piskies, the nuggies and buccas, are all drummed into them, and there's no sun so bright, no sea so blue, no air so soft in all the world, as in the dear old county which they "belong" to, and shall see one day.

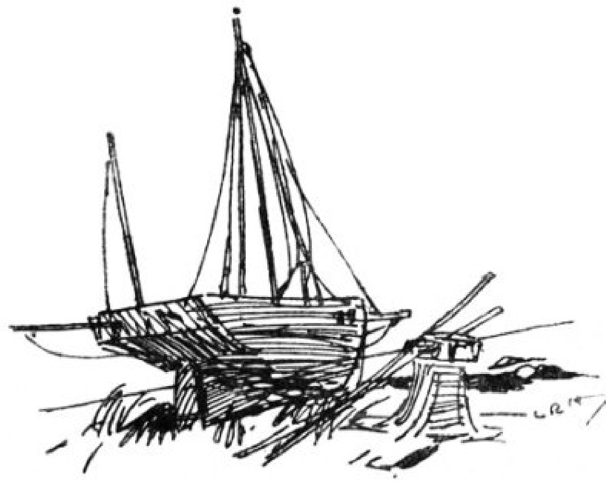
There spring up melodies in the little hearts over the seas, until they are Cornish in every beat and throb. A youngster was posting a letter in Sydney, New South Wales, and a friend of the family asked, "Where's that letter going, sonnie?" "Home." "Where's home?" "Why, Cornwall, to be sure."[H] Outside of itself the county has a large population containing a goodly percentage of the salt of the earth.

Redruth is under the shadow of Carn Brea, the home of paleolithic man. The "Castle" doesn't count for much now the Druids have been played out. The Bookworm told us that enough rubbish had been written about the Druids to build a respectable beacon fire, and what was worth preserving would go in a watch-pocket. However, there is Carn Brea, and those who wish to see the Druids' altars may, without let or hindrance. The Carn looks over the mines, and you may see the sea on the north and the sea on the south, winking like two eyes of heavenly blue. The guide-books recommend a clear day for preference. It is said that underneath this bare and poverty-looking ridge of rocks there is mineral wealth enough to buy up King Solomon's mines. It's nice to know that the riches of the world are under one's feet, and all poor people on the tramp who like the sensation can have it here free of charge. In fact, there is no charge for anything—you may drink at the holy wells, visit the churches, see the antiquities, go down the mines, walk through museums, and "do" everything with a smile and a civil tongue. No charge; tip as you please. A cheerful giver has his reward.

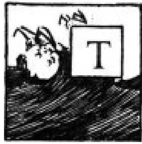
It was somewhere under the shadow of Carn Brea that "Baron Munchausen" was born in the lively brain of one Rudolph Eric Rasp, a fugitive Hanoverian, at one time Assay-master and store-keeper at Dolcoath Mine. Herr Rasp, Professor of Archæology, and Curator of the Museum at Cassel, and member of the Royal Society, England, appropriated some precious medals under his charge, and skipped. He hadn't learnt the tenth commandment properly, and forgot the eighth. People in places of trust are better educated now, but this was one hundred and fifty years ago. The Bookworm told us that Baron Munchausen was a real man, and Herr Rasp wrote his wonderful "adventures." No one knows the house in which Herr Rasp lived, but the Bookworm insisted on looking at every cottage and barn with the touch of antiquity upon it, within a radius of three miles from Dolcoath. He liked to do it, and was satisfied. The invention of coal gas as an illuminant took place at Redruth, and a tablet commemorating the discovery is actually placed outside the house in which William Murdoch, the inventor, lived. Murdoch was not a Cornishman, hence the tablet. The Bookworm touched the walls of the house, the door-handle, and the knocker, but we didn't see that anything special came of it. Camborne is also in the mining division, and has wider streets and fewer shops than Redruth; but, then, it has gone in for brains, and young men wishful to learn mining come here now, and go through a course of lectures in class-rooms, and go underground and work. "The Oxford of mining students" is Camborne, only the students live where they like, and have latch-keys. Joshua Cristall was born here, so also was Richard Trevithick, the first to apply steam to locomotives. We did not see any public monument to either.

The people in this division are "Weslums," and great on chapels, but "fall from grace" when there is a political election. It is sad, but politics stir up the old Adam worse than a drop in the price of tin. Candidates for parliamentary honours are only accepted by insurance offices at extra-risk premiums. Guy intends going in for Parliament one day, and studied the matter on the spot. He thinks he knows a softer place.

A good deal of woman-labour is employed in mines. They are the bal-maidens, and work on the dressing-floors. Work agrees with them, and Professor Sandow wouldn't find much room for developing the muscles of a bal-maiden. We saw some at work from the train, and heard them singing. We saw others nearer, and they were singing also. It's just part of the business to sing, and more hymns are sung over Cornish tin than over all the rest of the minerals raised in the world. One girl starts singing, and the rest join in; and very sweet singing it is when heard in the open. The surface men catch on, and there's just sweet harmony, whilst the stamps are dancing, and the great bob is going up and down, pumping out water. Nothing stops when the orchestra is in full swing. The men generally sing, too, when going and coming, and they like a hymn with a good, rousing march tune. After the night and early morning shifts, the hills and valleys are tuneful, and people hearing know what hour it is, as the shifts are regular. There are four shifts in the twenty-four hours. A shift is called a "coor."



Chapter XXIV



HE man in soft felt hat, and brown canvas bag slung across his side, with wicked-looking little hammer-head peeping out, is a common object. Specimens enough have been taken out of the county to metal a turnpike road, and yet the scientific stone-man comes and tumbles over the refuse-heaps once again, and chips little bits on his own account, and carries them off. To find sermons in stones is his reward, and there are sermons enough, in all conscience, in a county which is mostly stone, or something harder. When a man of science in a soft felt hat is missing, the first idea is that he's fallen down an old mine shaft, and that his stone treasures have taken him safely to the bottom, a hundred fathoms or so under water. It is well to beware of one's steps, and not to take short cuts in the dark across moors and downs which are honeycombed.

We were told we might amuse ourselves by turning over the rubbish-heaps, and, for reward, pick up a few specimens of ore,—no one would interfere with us; and we might wander at will in and about the ruins of square towers and "count-houses," which people fancy, at first sight, are baronial castles in ruins. They are ruins, right enough, and the money sunk in the engine shafts would have built castles and pyramids. These ruins look best at a distance, with big bundles of broom shivering and rotting in sunshine and storm. There is something weird and uncanny about the look of these ruins, with broom-bundles, like black things of misfortune, hung about them. The Bookworm said that broom was a sign or symbol of bad luck. We didn't find fortunes in turning over stones on rubble-heaps, and only secured a few tin and mundic and copper specimens of no value to the owner. Guy said they would look swagger when labelled, "Tin found on Scatmoor, Cornwall." The beginnings of a museum were in his pockets, he said, when they began to bulge out.

There were some small houses scattered about, and every house was in a garden. None were empty; but as all the mines around were idle, we began to wonder what the population lived on. There must be work somewhere, but a long way off, we thought; so far, indeed, that the men would tire morning and night when going and coming. The houses were low, two-storied dwellings, built of moor-stone, and roofed with thick turves kept in place by flat, heavy stones. The people we saw were mostly aged, or women with young children.

We came across an old fellow sitting on a big stone, blinking with watery eyes at an old ruined mine engine-house. He made us welcome, and offered us the whole of the stone he was sitting on; but we squatted on the turf, and let the green lizards run over us—we said we liked it like that. Very soon we were interested in the old boy, who told us he was Jim Tregedga, the son of Jim Tregedga before him, and he cited Tregedgas sufficient to reach back to the days of the Deluge. The house he lived in he built himself "out of coor," that is to say, in spare time, and he fenced in the bit of garden, ditto. It was moor land, and no one said him nay, so he took what he wanted, and the rest did the same. All the houses were built like that, and every man his own

landlord. All the mines around were working then, and at every shift hundreds of young men poured out of these stone hives and went to work underground or upon "grass." And all the maidens rose early and went to work upon the dressing-floors, singing like thrushes. The mine was the soul of the moor, and the pumps and stamps its music. The young men now are spread over South Africa and Australia, South America and the regions of Klondike; and the old people and young wives and children were left at home, dependent for daily bread upon the love of kindred whom they might never see again.

Things were so different in the old days, when Cousin Jack was full of money, and spent it like a king, and then went to work again with a good heart, and always ready to kiss the maidens, or "wrassle" and break a head on paydays. In fact, Cousin Jack wouldn't go home without a fight, unless he was poorly. This old man knew the names of all the mines round about, and their histories; when they "cut rich," and when they "cut out" and were shut down, and the broom hoisted to tell all the world that another bal had gone wrong.

MORWENSTOW CLIFFS.

Every mine had its own particular spirit, or family of spirits, called "nuggies." Every household was brought up in a firm faith in nuggies, and the good or bad fortune of a mine depended on the temper of the nuggies. Men working on "tribute" were very careful not to offend the spirits of the mine, and they had to be careful, or they would earn little, and were sometimes lucky to reach grass alive. These spirits had underground workshops, wherein they worked upon silver anvils, and the walls sparkled with crystals of pure tin and virgin silver. These workshops were called "parlours," and, as they were not always willing to be disturbed, they misled the miners, making them believe that the tinkling upon the silver anvils was in the very opposite direction:—such was their power. Or they would cease working altogether, and then the men would become disheartened, and say the nuggies had forsook the bal, and she might as well be "knacked" at once, for all the profit she would yield. But the nuggies were good to poor tributers sometimes, after they had been working for weeks and months on starvation wages. Months and months of work and no sound through the gloomy corridors but the tap, tap, of the steel-edged tools, and the fall of rock, barren and unprofitable; and then, all at once, the music on the silver anvils, and falling water, indicating the presence of the precious lode. If a man worked underground he was bound to believe in nuggies; and if he did not believe, and said so, then he was sure to be punished, for the nuggies had a way of leading men into trouble. A favourite way was to hide danger from a man until he was on the brink of it, and then, if stubborn and would not take warning, they'd let him fall over a precipice, or down an old shaft, and be heard of no more in the land of the living. What they gave, they gave freely, and took no toll—they wanted none, all the minerals in the universe belonging to the nuggie family; only they would have men civil, and civility brought rich rewards.

The talk was rambling, and Guy put many questions. Had deponent ever seen a nuggie? Well, he believed he had. He was working on Wheal Rose, first coor by night, and he saw a flash at the end of the stope, and Jan Trebilcock slapped his hand over his (deponent's) mouth so that he shouldn't screech. That was a nuggie going into his parlour, and Jan Trebilcock followed the lead

and came upon a lode as rich as King Solomon's mines whilst it lasted. And he'd heard old men say——

But Guy wouldn't have hearsay. Then deponent said he had heard the tinkling upon silver anvils, and beautiful it was, like the melody of church bells on a summer eve. The nuggies always took their anvils with them when they gave up possession of a workshop—they were wanted elsewhere.

"Provoking," said Guy. "Whenever we get very near to something it vanishes in this land of piskies and fairies and other enchantments."

A little lizard crawling over Guy turned brilliant colours, which, the old miner observing, said there was a "thunder planet" passing, and wished us to come into his cottage. We had wandered five miles, but thought we could return before the storm burst, in which, however, we were mistaken, for we had hardly trotted a couple of miles when it burst with sub-tropical fury. Had it been night, the sight would have been splendid; but we had to dart for cover into a man's house, like three drowned rats. There was no ceremony about our entrance, and none was wanted. An old man and woman were the only occupants, and they made us welcome, but our clothes stuck to us. We drank some hot tea and ate the remains of our pasties to the accompaniment of celestial artillery, which put to shame the battle of Mukden. Still it poured, and the cottage trembled sometimes when the thunder was loudest. The two old people were quite tranquil, and the only apparent trouble they had in the world was our wet clothes. The little rivulets which ran from us were dried up, but might be traced on the stone floor, making zigzag courses towards the door.

Then came the old man's hour for reading a Psalm, and he opened the "big book" without any apparent thought of strangers being present.

"'Th' Loard es ma sheper; I shall not waant'—no fath, I shaant.

"'He maaketh me to lie down en green pastures'—ez, that 'e do, th' precious dear."

And so, until he finished, and shut the book. "Now we will zay a few words, for th' dear Loard is with us;" and without more to do, he went down upon his knees and spread out his hands, and his face shone. If there was a soul in happiness in the universe, it was this one; and he did not forget the strangers under his roof. "Ef'm be out in th' wilderness, Loard, guide'm like a good sheper; and ef'm be cauld, warm 'em en Thy buzum, and turn 'em out to lie down en green pastures."

The rain stopped suddenly, and the thunder grew more distant, and the lightning less vivid, and when we were once more upon the downs a strange feeling crept over us.

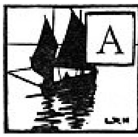
"I never thought I should have found myself kneeling in a miner's hut, saying my prayers," said Guy. "This would just have suited Softie Smith, who's in Orders now—going to be a bishop, or something. At school, Softie was always longer at his devotions than the rest, and we used to shy things at him to remind him that the dormitory was waiting. Sometimes the boys made extra good shots at Softie and got him waxy; and one night he suddenly rose from his knees, shouting, 'Amen-who-shied-that-boot?' It was a shout, by Jove! and the captain on his rounds heard it; but we were little angels when he came to us, and Softie got a wigging for making a row. After that we dropped the 'Softie,' and re-named him 'Amen-who-shied-that-boot?' which will sound splendidly when he's a bishop. 'My lord Amen-who-shied-that-boot, from Lower Egypt, then addressed the meeting,' will look well in the papers. The name'll push him on in the world, and that he'll owe to us."

The Bookworm wouldn't be drawn, and we walked, one on each side of him, until we reached the road, and then kept to it carefully, to avoid tumbling down some old, disused mine shaft. He gave our hands an extra grip before retiring, saying, "I shall never forget."

"I hope the little beggar isn't going to be ill," said Guy. "I don't like a fellow to talk solemnly, and grip your hands, and all that, after he's been wet to the skin."

But no harm came of it.

Chapter XXV



PICK and shovel brigade, with or without hats, might do some good work on the north coast, where the sand has buried towns and churches. People speak of places having been "drowned in sand," which they certainly were. The sands of Hayle, like those of great deserts, shift with storm and tempest, and have encroached from century to century. The sand-hills are called "towans" at Hayle, and very weary walking we found it in places where coarse, fibrous grasses have not covered the surface. What splendid results might follow the efforts of a pick and shovel brigade from Perran to Newquay! Two churches are known to have been buried at Perranporth, and one at Gwithian, near Hayle. These have been discovered, so there is no mistake about them, and they are said to be the earliest Christian monuments visible in Britain. There isn't much to see now. There was an oratory at St. Gwithian, and the altar was built into a cowshed. Guy said it did not seem that people cared very much for antiquities until they were destroyed, or belonged to some other country, like Egypt, for example.

The fine, dry sands here are splendid preservatives, and the Bookworm became enamoured of his idea of a pick and shovel brigade undertaking scientific exploration. Why not? There were exploration societies in Italy and Greece, and why not in Cornwall, wherein there is a lost history and a lost language to recover? Guy was sure that lots of fellows would put in a few weeks' digging and sifting and sorting if somebody would only take the matter in hand in a business-like way. If legend can be believed, there is at Crantock a Cornish Pompeii waiting to be uncovered. The ancient Crantock was reputed to have been a large and important sea-port with seven churches, and the place was literally "drowned" in a deluge of sand, brought upon the wings of the wind. The buried chronicles of Crantock (all in the Cornish language, of course) would be a splendid discovery. The present church was allowed to fall into decay, but is one of the show-churches in the north, and is now famous for the newspaper crusade against hatless women fingering their prayer-books within its walls. The "living" is said to be worth eighteen shillings per week. Fat livings do not abound—"a house, a glebe, a pound a day" does not fall to the lot of all parsons hereabout.

The Bookworm remarked that his Satanic Majesty was not held responsible for sand-storms, although Hell's mouth was on this coast. His Majesty is familiarly known as "Old Artful;" and people speak of one another as "artful" by way of compliment. There is at present a good deal of confusion in the stories told about Old Artful and his doings in this part of the world. It is said that he never crossed the Tamar, and the question may only be answered satisfactorily when spirits are summoned from the vasty deep and examined before a royal commission. The Bookworm took the matter in hand, with the following results in favour of Old Artful's presence:—

When the Phœnicians traded here for tin, Old Artful set up a smelting-house, and taught the tinners some tricks, which they afterwards improved on.

That St. Michael drove him away, and, out of pure spite, he cursed the blackberry, which is not now eaten after St. Michael's Day.

"One day the devil, having nothing to do,

That when visiting "Cheese-wring" he saw an old woman making a conger pie, and inquired what she put inside, and the old woman, smelling brimstone, said, "If you don't take yourself off pretty quick, I'll clap you inside, and then we shall have a devilled pie," which threat so alarmed him that he gave a hop, skip, and jump, and landed at Devil's Point in the sister county.

That Old Artful had a turn for housekeeping, and was pretty much at home at the Lizard, and left behind as memorials his "frying-pan" at Cadgwith and his "bellows" at Kynance. Then he had a post-office, the earliest on record, and no end of "devil's footsteps," "ovens," and "caves" are to be found in the peninsula.

That Old Artful, finding himself lonely and amongst the out-of-works, built a stone fence about seven miles in length, hence the couplet—

> "One day the devil, having nothing to do,
> Built a great hedge from Lerrin to Looe."

And very good workmanship it was, for it is still there. In this way the problem of employing the unemployed was solved.

That Old Artful took a great interest in the building of churches, sometimes altering the architect's plans, and sometimes choosing a site. Whenever a church is built in an inconvenient place, it is said that Old Artful would have it there and nowhere else, and paintings on the walls often recorded the fact, showing him removing at night the courses which the masons laid down during the day. Many of these paintings were whitewashed by pious Covenanters, but little bits have been restored. It is said that St. Mewan wanted a high tower to his church, and there was a battle-royal between him and Old Artful, who prevailed. The "cloven hoof" may be seen on a stone gate-post, a very short distance from the church. At Towednack, near St. Ives, Old Artful would not allow pinnacles to be put to the church tower.

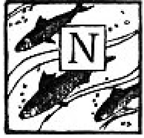
That at Ladock Old Artful changed himself into a raven, and made an inspection of the church tower; but the babies brought to be christened made such a row that he flew away.

"How can all these things have happened if Old Artful never crossed the Tamar?" asked the Bookworm, triumphantly.

Sailors say that Old Artful was never able to learn navigation properly, or find his sea-legs on board ship; and there is an idea that he does not take kindly to blue water, and was never able to swim. It is well known that Lloyd's underwriters will not insure a ship with Old Artful on board. He never interferes with the building of a ship, or does anything but provide a "locker"—called "Davy Jones's locker"—where poor Jack rigs himself out before dancing with the mermaids on "Fiddlers' Green."

Guy came to the conclusion that the Cornish climate was too restful for "sabbathless, restless Satan," who is never supposed elsewhere to be happy except in the wearing, tearing, raging, whirligig of pleasure and vice. Hence the idea of his not crossing the Tamar.

Chapter XXVI



Newquay is in Cornwall without being Cornish, and is one of the few towns which has no "saint" belonging to it. Most of the towns in the peninsula date back to the days of saints and giants, and then crystallize somehow. Newquay didn't grow that way, and was content to remain until quite recently the habitation of a score of fisher families, who lived by beach-combing and pilchard-seining. If the town of to-day were wiped out, there would remain the old fish-cellars, a few weather-beaten cottages, and the "Huer's hut" on the Headland. Newquay town is a modern creation, and lies between Padstow and St. Ives, which are rich in saints and antiquities, and stand apart and distinct from everything modern, crystallizing around and about, but receiving little of the old life and tones. The original name of the place was Towan Blistra, which sounds genuine. The growth of Newquay is no miracle. People who went there for their health got better, and then the "faculty" said, "Try Newquay;" then the Great Western Railway took up the cry, and shouted, "Try Newquay;" and that's all the process.

The sea and rocks, and sands and caves, are all genuine. The fine hotels are fine hotels, and fine hotels after their style are new in this part of the world. The houses have a hurried, built-by-contract look about them, and the whole place wants to be built over again, and built differently. Most of the inhabitants now are Cornish in a transition state, so you don't know quite where you are. The hotel porter was regal; the man in charge of the lift was imported with the machine, and when asked, said he thought a "piskie" was a new crank, or something like that, for working the lift. Newquay is like that now. You go there for the air, and you get it until every nerve is braced, and you get rid of the dismals, and eat and drink and sleep, until you find that the one pleasure of life is living, simply that. Even Cornish people come to Newquay to be toned. The Bookworm lost his restlessness at night entirely here, and no longer read strange books in his sleep.

If you want to talk with a real Newquay man, you will find him on the Headland, looking at the sea. We scraped acquaintance with one watching his nets dry on the grass. He told us he hadn't heard about piskies lately. When he was a boy, and fish was cured in the old cellars, and the Headland was the Headland, and no mistake about it, and when a fisherman was a fisherman, and everything was as it ought to be, and had been from time "back along," why, then, there were piskies, of course. Everything was different now, and he would not be surprised if piskies were never heard of any more. Guy said gently that that might be a good thing, but the man ironed out all intelligence from his face and said nothing. He did not wish to have old memories stirred just then.

NEWQUAY

The old men wandering about the Headland always looked seaward when talked to, as though they were sure of the sea, and the rocks, and the beaches; all else, round and about, was slipping from them—new houses, new streets, crowds of people in strange garments, and such faces! worn and wisht! why did they pitch upon this place? Guy said these old grumblers were very ungrateful. A fine town had sprung up, money poured into the place, and nothing was taken from it, and the old boys were not thankful. The Bookworm took the side of the native, and said no one liked the place which he called his own, and had grown to love, to be transformed by strange hands so suddenly. What did the ancient Briton think of the Roman villa with tesselated floors, and hot and cold baths, and clothes mended on the while-you-wait system? Much better, no doubt, than British huts and blue paint, but not to the native taste. A diet of Chablis and oysters disagreed at first with a stomach used to whelks and gingerbeer.

Variety is one of the attractions of the county. For a tourist who rides a bike or a motor, the variety is perpetual, and he must pull up even now and again and ask himself what has become of the last sensation. If you can rely upon your legs, you had best walk from village to village until you are where you wish to be. To lose one's self is an advantage sometimes; and you can't go very far wrong. When at Newquay, breathing in the Atlantic on the north, you are only twenty miles from your friends breathing in the soft airs of the sunny south. The tramp across the country, from north to south, is simply delicious. First of all, there are the moors, springy to the foot, restful to the eye, and the "coombes" running seawards and catching sunbeams, so that you get opposing lines of light and shadow, and charm everywhere.

We made our way from Newquay to Roche, one of the portals to the land of the white men—a wonderful land, producing the white clay which is shipped to all quarters of the globe. The heathen Chinee has found it out, and buys it in lumps. At first, he used to buy it by the yard in his calico. The Lancashire merchant bought the white clay and worked it into his inferior cotton goods, and John Chinaman paid extra for the loaded yarn. The heathen learnt the secret in the course of time, imported the clay, loaded his own yarn, and put the profit into his own pocket. Then the "Yellow peril" was talked about.

All the white patches in the hills and valleys visible from here spell "kaolin," or "china clay," and everything that china clay touches is white; white waggons piled up with square white blocks travel along white, dusty roads, drawn by white-powdered horses, driven by men as white as ghosts in the last stages of galloping consumption.

"Fish, tin, and copper," was the old commercial toast; but china clay has come in and taken a front seat. It is only a hundred and fifty years ago since a long-nosed Quaker found out that the stuff was good for pottery; and then chemists came in and found there was money in it for manufacturers of cotton and paper; and now the society beauty may have the satisfaction of knowing that her fair cheek is made fairer still by honest china clay most delicately perfumed. The men and women who handle the clay get the same stuff for nothing, and do well enough without the perfume. China clay, being a modern industry in this land of ancients, has no piskie, or nuggie, or bucca connected with it, and Guy took kindly to it on that account, saying it

represented the practical, hard-headed twentieth century. Who would buy Cornwall for its legends, he would like to know! Whereas all the world was buying mountains of china clay. He supposed if this long-nosed old Quaker had lived a thousand or two years ago he would have been turned into a piskie, and a fine crop of legends would have sprung up. We failed to trace any legend or folk-lore about china clay. It was all modern—modern discovery, modern uses, modern shipments; the only thing fabulous seemed to be the inexhaustible supply and the value of certain spots free from impurities. One might almost fancy legend at work—the wicked giant and the sainted virgin crumbling into kaolin rather than be the heroine of the romance with wedding bell accompaniment.

We came to a rock where there is a well which is said to ebb and flow with the tide; only it doesn't. The water is said to be brackish, which it probably is; but a reverend canon, writing on the spot, warned visitors against tasting it on that account. All brackish water does not come from the sea. However, this was a holy well once on a time, and young people even now drop bent pins into it and wish. It is very simple, and costs nothing. Then there is the cell in which St. Roche lived until he died, and then, the apartment being light and airy, and 680 feet above the sea, was occupied by successive saints. At present the apartment is unoccupied, but the parish is taking care of it. This is the cell wherein the damned soul of Tregeagle tried to find sanctuary when pursued by the fiends from Dozmary Pool. The inhabitants of the wild and desolate region between Roche and Dozmary hear the hell-hounds pursuing the shrieking soul on dark tempestuous nights, and on Christmas Eve the hunt is said to be on a grand scale. The inhabitants of the moors keep indoors after dark. The story is told in—

"The soul of Tregeagle in pain."

A Ballad of the Haunted Moor.

When the snow lay on the moor, brown moor,
And frost hung crystals on bracken and tree,
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp
Shook themselves free with deep-mouthed bay
To hunt a poor soul in pain.
A soul in pain, a notable soul,
The soul of Tregeagle, a deathless soul,
Burning in winter in Dozmary Pool,
Freezing in summer in Dozmary Pool,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

The Black hunter's horn rang clear, rang clear,
And the pack gave music, yap, yap, yap;
Gehenna and Sheöl led straight to the Pool,
Followed hot-foot by Blackman's whelp.
The wonderful pack runs strong in the night
To hunt a poor soul in pain.

A soul in pain, a notable soul;
The soul of Tregeagle, a deathless soul,
Flies from the Pool with a shriek, a shriek;
In terror there flies with a shriek
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

The Black hunter's horn rings clear, rings clear,
And the hungry pack, the hellish pack,
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp,
Scent the poor soul now from the Pool,
Free from the pool on the snow-clad moor,
Free to escape its terrible doom.
Tally-ho! A soul in pain, in pain!
The dark soul of Tregeagle in pain,
Flies in black night across the moor,
The desolate moor in snow and ice,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

Runs the Hunter's horse with hoofs on fire,
The terrible, howling pack breathe fire,
And yap, yap, yap, along the white track,
Follow the poor soul in pain, in pain—
Race the poor soul in terror and pain—
Gehenna still leading the pack.
To a light! a light! the hunted soul,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain,
Flies to a light on a rock, a rock—
Flies to a light on Roche Rock,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

The scent, the fiendish scent, lies well,
On snow-white moor and frosted fern;
The keen wind blows it back to the pack,
The Black hunter's pack with eyes of fire—
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp,
Yap, yap, yap! Hunting a soul in pain.
Mile upon mile, o'er cairn and crag,
O'er perilous ways in combe and hill;
In sight of dead spectres abroad to-night
Flies the scared soul in pitiless pain,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

A holy saint, a saint prays there:
He hears the cry of a soul in pain;
He knows the bark of the hellish pack,
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp
Hunting a soul in pain, in pain,
Hunting a soul in deathless pain.
The window is shut: no room, no room!
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp
Breathe liquid fire with nostrils wide;
The saint prays lusty for himself,
Not for Tregeagle in pain.

Back o'er the moor, the frozen moor,
Flies the curst soul to Dozmary Pool.
With gleaming fangs and eyes aflame,
The pack, the pack, the hellish pack
Race by his side, yap, yap, yap—
Race by the side of the soul in pain.
Back to the Pool, the frozen pool,
The burning soul, the notable soul,
Flies to its prison of tears, hot tears,
Flies to its cursed prison of tears,
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

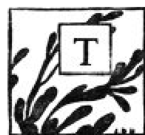
And the pack, the loathsome, hellish pack,
Gehenna and Sheöl and Blackman's whelp,
Were baulked of their prey this time, this time.
But still they wait on the lonesome moor,
To hunt the poor soul in pain, in pain—
The soul of Tregeagle in pain.

There is a lot of moorland about here, and a Cornish moor, with its poor soil and windswept bracken, turning brown and golden before its time, its gallant heaths struggling amongst the rocks, or blooming grandly in sheltered patches, tells its tale of hardship. There is not much to be

seen generally but rough ponies running wild, and rabbits and wild birds innumerable. A moor is not much of a place for a lonely man with sad indigestion bad upon him.

This was our first real experience of a Cornish moor, and we walked along gaily enough for a time; but conversation languished, for each was impressed in his own way by the immense void upon the earth. Whichever way we looked, there was nothing beyond speaking of limit to rolling moorland—the hills were only gaunt sentinels to a greater silence. To come from a city with millions treading on the heels of millions, and people in despair of getting breathing room, and then to find one's self upon a moor, is to experience a new sensation. Guy suddenly sent up a shout, sprinted a hundred yards and back again, and then wanted the Bookworm to "tuck in his tup'ny"—the loneliness had got upon his nerves, but he felt better after this performance. The story of Tregeagle hunted by hell-hounds had its origin in a locality more desolate than this, and the Bookworm said he was convinced that locality had much to do with the making and colouring of myths.

CHAPTER XXVII


HE capital of Clayland is St. Austell; but, as usual, nobody is very sure about the saint. If you say "Saintauzel" through the nose, you may be taken for a native. The church is in the centre of the town, and the narrow, crooked thoroughfares radiate from there. The town seems to have grown as wanted, every house pushing its neighbour towards the centre. The wealth of Ophir in black, glittering tin is said to underlie the town, and there is no doubt about the tin being there, for the nuggies may be heard working on their silver anvils, and bright lights dance upon the surface during autumnal mists. Any tinner will tell you the meaning of these mysterious illuminations; but the mines are not worked now, because the hills above and around are composed of the white clay which all the world wants.

"Saintauzel" is a Friday town. Most things are reckoned as from Friday to Friday, which is market day, and the inhabitants put on their Friday faces and Friday clothes. When it isn't Friday the inhabitants delight in watching the clay-waggons pass their shops, or in dodging them in the narrow, crooked labyrinths called streets. Everything gives way to the clay teams—butcher-boys and motor-drivers screw themselves into nothingness, or back down side-streets when the clay-man is in view, driving his horses in single file, all straining at their chains. An endless procession of heavy waggons rumbles through the narrow streets—waggons laden with powdered clay in barrels, or with square, white, glistening lumps uncovered; and the drivers, stiffened up with clay, like loaded yarn, crack their long whips and keep their teams at it. These drivers, born upon the hills, look a race to themselves—straight-backed, upright, and hard as nails. The clay which they absorb year by year doesn't hurt them. The amount which they swallow with their pasties must be fatal to microbes, as they seldom think of dying until tired of throwing about barrels of clay which would break an ordinary labourer's heart to handle. The old county is sent away in ships as fast as they can carry it, but there is some left.

Guy fancied that there was not so much "expression" in the faces and dramatic action with the people we met here as in other places, and hazarded a guess that this was a result of looking at so much inexpressionless clay. There is not much in clay to lay hold of the imagination, except its whiteness, and the purer the blanker it is; but, then, smirches in clay would cause a sensation, like the entrance of a lady with a past into a party of sweet young things playing at goodness in a social comedy. There is little in the article suggestive of anything but money. The people here are said to be very rich in comparison with those in other towns, and they need three banks to take care of their cash. The chief amusement at night is to walk around the banks, just to see that the doors are closed. The Bookworm made a few inquiries about libraries and art galleries, and that sort of thing, but there were none. He felt sad; he couldn't help it, he said, when he found people with money without books and pictures, and things of that sort. Samuel Drew was born here, so also was John William Colenso, the man who "made an epoch in criticism by his straightforwardness," and there is plenty of room for a statue to each. The old bull-ring is in evidence.

The hill on which the town stands stretches away a mile or so, and the further you go the better the view of the white, glistening patches, and the rills of white water trickling down the valleys seawards. "Milk!" is the one idea, milk flowing through the land—milk enough and to spare for all the condensed milk factories in the world. It's only an illusion—it's clay in solution, which by-and-by will show itself in the sea, like a white apron upon the shore, until it loses itself in the eternal blue. We stand here on what is a sort of terminus of the hilly backbone of the country—eastward, it is black and rugged, moor and mountain with white scars, and ruined engine-houses of abandoned mines; then westward, and there is paradise in green stretching towards the cathedral city. Down again to Clayopolis and the throb of arterial life—clay and money, money and clay.

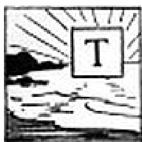
China clay has no fairy of its own, like tin. It came upon the scene too late; and fairies can't be made at will, but must grow of themselves, and take time. Fishing, agriculture, and mining have their tutelar spirits, able to work and dematerialize at will, and every desolate cave, and cairn, and moor, and pool has its gnome and fairy; but when we come across anything modern there is one thing wanting. Lightning comes from fairyland until it is put in lamps and sold per metre. China clay, unknown to the fairies and unblessed by the saints, has to make its own way in the world, on merits, like any modern youngster turned out of a Board School. And it does very well.

This is one of the few towns in which a theatrical company can pay expenses. The people are musical and dramatic, they can't help it; and though a "theatre" would be "taboo," a drama in Public Rooms is all right. Sports do very well, and you may race anything, from lame ducks to donkeys, bikes and motors, men, women, and children, but not horses. A horse-race is—well, not to be mentioned.

The game of "hurling," peculiar to the county, is not played here now, though it is kept up at St. Columb and Helston and other places, and we saw it played at Newquay in a very mild sort of way. The origin of the game is pre-historic. When a paleolithic gentleman had a nice bone which another paleolithic gentleman tried to grab, a tussle commenced, and the best man got the bone, and kept it. The evolution of the game out of a scrimmage for a bone is so natural that the best-informed antiquarians have missed it.

A hurler should be able to run like a hare, hide like a rabbit, leap like a kangaroo, and climb like a monkey. Then he should be able to box like a pugilist, wrestle like a champion, and sky a ball like an All-England cricketer. These are essentials. Then, if he escapes drowning, and comes alive out of a "scrum," he may make a good hurler. It is a fair game, and may be played by selected teams, like football, or town against country, with an unlimited number. A silvered ball is the trophy. The ball is thrown into the air, and the man catching it runs for his goal, and when the game is too hot for him he skies the ball, and another fellow starts with the whole pack after him, until he's tripped up and buried under a living heap of players; then some one steals away with the ball, wrestles with the first man who catches him, and then there's another "scrum," which gives points to Rugby. And so on, backwards and forwards, from goal to goal, until "time" is called, or someone insured against broken bones and sudden death manages to touch his goal with the ball in his hand. Carew says the game was played in his days so that players returned home "with bloody pates, bones broken and out of joint, and such bruises as serve to shorten their days, *and all in good play*, and never attorney nor coroner troubled for the matter." If this was the legitimate play, what could the other have been? The game as played on Newquay sands was quite another affair, and, if revived with "Newquay rules," might extend from Cornwall to the country. Porpoises play a game in the sea something like hurling, only instead of a ball they throw a live conger into the air, and the one who catches dodges about until made to throw it up again, and so on, until time is called. An exciting game is on record, but the sensations of the conger are unknown. A good fish story usually leaves a trifle to the imagination.

Chapter XXVIII

HE south coast differs from the north. Lord Beaconsfield came to Falmouth in his dandy days, and wrote: "It is one of the most charming places I ever saw—I mean the scenery and around." The scenery is still there, and the town is turning it to account and learning to live on it. Falmouth is very much like the lady who has seen "better days," and is reduced to put up the sign "Lodgings to Let." There was a time when the ships of the King's Navy and the Mail Packets came here, and the riches of the world were landed on its quays. Disraeli came here *en route* for the East, when Falmouth was queen in her own right, if wealth and commerce and beauty can make a queen. Then things changed and changed, and ships and commerce found other ports; but the beauty is there, and is all its own. Some people say more might be made of it in a commercial sense. There is a literary and refined air about the place which delighted the Bookworm, who found out the Libraries and Art Galleries, Polytechnic and Observatory.

Honest John Burton was the Bookworm's delight; and after picking up a first edition of Chatterton in the twopenny box, there was no keeping him away from the premises. It was a rare pick-up, and honest John wouldn't take more than twopence, not he! We rambled over the premises, and found heathen gods enough stocked away to fill a temple in Thibet. The Bookworm said there was nothing so rich and rare in the whole collection as old Burton himself, a dose of whom would banish melancholy. We took his word, for more good things were pumped into him than he could afterwards remember.

Falmouth is linked in Parliamentary matrimony with Penryn, an ancient borough so ashamed of its age that it sold its parish stocks, and other antiquities, "for a song." The boroughs are an ill-assorted pair, and the political marriage was not made in heaven.

AT FALMOUTH.

Falmouth has its scenery and climate, two inalienable possessions, costing nothing, yet sources of unsuspected wealth if only made the most of. We came across the track of the American citizen, John B. Bellamy, whom we met at Penzance. He left his card with honest John Burton, with an order to send him along any available relics of the late King Arthur. He may get some, who knows? He left behind him also the opinion, that if the "durned old place" was only on the other side of the Atlantic, the harbour might be filled up with the gold that would flow into it every season. Tired Yanks would find paradise, and pay accordingly. The garden of acclimatation speaks of the climate in the bloom and perfume and variety of plants, all of which speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

There is no place in the county so well catered for in the matter of water excursions. The river Fal is marked as one of the beauty spots of the county, and some compare it favourably even with the Dart and the Wye. It may lose or gain by comparison, but it is good enough "on its own." The best way to see the Fal is to sail from the open into the fjord-like inlet of Falmouth, and then up the valley, sinuous and well-wooded, narrowing as you go, and increasing its natural beauty every mile. The Helford river should be seen in a similar way—come in from the open with the sea and fancy, if you can, the mighty rush of waters boring its way through rocks, carving out the miniature creeks, right and left, until its earth-hunger is spent. The scenery from Helford to Gweek is bolder than that of the Fal, and some prefer it on that account. There is a lot of fishing done in the creeks, and most of the yachts we passed had nets and lines hanging over the bows or lying about the decks. The oysters have a good reputation, but there is no considerable trade done in pearls.

Rivers are scarce, though the clouds are generous. Some say there are no real rivers, and that Cornwall has only the predominant partner interest in the Tamar, and two brooks, Camel and Fowey, which you can leap over anywhere with a long pole, until you come to salt water. The Fal and Helford are really estuaries. The upper moorland reaches of the Camel and Fowey abound in delicious little spots where one can sit and listen dreamily to the stream fretting amongst boulders, and swirling in sunshine and shadow amongst ferns and wild flowering shrubs, with effects incomparably beautiful.

The Lizard end of the peninsula is a sort of receiving house for the news of the world. The secrets of many lands arrive here first, breathless and palpitating, after their long runs on the ocean cables. Marconi has his stations here; and at unlooked-for places we come across notices reminding all whom it concerns not to foul the cables. There are secrets of which we know nothing—secrets of peace and war, ruin and success, love and hate, which we would give our ears to have an inkling of, vibrating under water and in the air.

The peninsula has always been a sort of receiving office for the nation. At first, when foes came sailing along, the Cornishmen spied them and sent up a flare, and then the beacon fires flashed out the news in the dark night, so that all men might read in letters of flame. A fire lit high on St. Michael's Mount travelled with speed around the coasts of Britain. Hensbarrow, called the "Archbeacon" of the county, could tell its story in fire from the Lizard to the Tamar, and set men's

blood tingling, and hearts throbbing, as no "wire" or "cable" or printed word can do.

It was "wireless," and the British admiral keeping watch upon the French fleet at Brest informed my lords of the Admiralty of their movements by means of signals from frigate to frigate stationed across the Channel, and received at the Dodman by the sleepless watcher. Then the news travelled by semaphore from headland to headland—from Dodman to the Blackhead, to the Gribben, to Polruan, to Polperro, to Maker Heights, to the Commander-in-Chief. Very little time was lost, even in the old days, when there was anything to tell, and Cornwall was the eye, and ear, and tongue.

The Dodman, the highest headland in the county, is one of those places of solitude where depression will not stay. Hour after hour one may pass upon the bluff headland without seeing a human soul or hearing a human voice, and yet feel one's spirits elated in the silence. With a mere half-turn of the head one can see the whole Cornish coast, from the Lizard to the Rame, and beyond, and all the ocean traffic passing up and down. Then below, a sheer fall of four hundred feet, are the little crabbing boats, mere specks upon the blue, shoaling into green and breaking into foam upon the dark, weathered rocks. And then the wind, blow which way it will, must sweep this headland, bringing with it the scents of heather and wild flower untainted, as though in all the world there were no such things as smoke, and factories, and areas of pollution. For miles the cliffs are covered with tall bracken, green in summer, but quickly touched with brown and gold. These cliffs teem with life which we cannot see but know to be there; but feathered life is abundant and everywhere in evidence, flying in air, clustering on the rocks, or diving and swimming when fish abound. And then there come up from the shore the rhythmic sounds of spent energy—

"Hush me to sleep with the soft wave song,
Wash all the cares away, wash all the strife away,
All the old pains that to living belong."

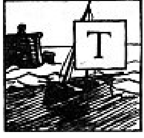
Every sense is filled with thrills, and depression is impossible. People say the country is one vast sanatorium; and I think that open-air treatment on the Dodman would be delightful. The "faculty" are welcome to the hint.

The headland is occupied only by a small shelter for the coastguardsmen, and a modern granite cross, which can be seen, soon after passing the Lizard, by persons on board ship. To those who think it, this fine monument is the symbol of the new life rampant over a buried past, for it stands on the legendary playground of the giants, who laid waste the whole district, and heaped the bones of their victims, pile upon pile, until the headland rose majestic.

A giant once dwelt here who willed his "quoits" to his relatives, who, however, never claimed them, so they became part and parcel of the lord's inheritance and may be seen to this day. Then footsteps of the Vikings are plainly visible in stone encampments, telling of another age, still violent, but of "derring-do;" and to the west we touch Arthurian romance once more, for Geraint of the Round Table lies there, interred with Christian rites in a boat of gold, which was rowed across the sea with silver oars. All this, and more, within sight and sound of the Dodman cross, bearing the following inscription: "In the firm hope of the Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and for the encouragement of those who strive to serve Him, this Cross is erected. A.D. 1896." The old order and the new rest peacefully on this headland solitude.

The finest beaches on the south are here, right and left of the Dodman, and are seldom visited save by stragglers, like ourselves, or picnic parties from a distance. The Bookworm chanced upon the fact that Cornwall had some little share in the production of Lord Byron, his grandmother being a Trevanion of Caerhays, only a short distance from here.[I] Admiral Byron, the grandfather, was known to contemporaries as "Foul-weather Jack," so storm-pursued was he, and the poet's passionate love of the sea was not a mere "sport," after all.

Chapter XXIX



HE coastguard station, with whitewashed walls gleaming and flagstaff with halyards all taut, makes a good mark along this coast, which is certainly not thickly populated now, to judge by the number of crumbling houses and villages partially deserted. The fishing coves hold their own, but the cry of "back to the land" has not been much heeded in these parts.

The man in blue uniform, with spy-glass under his arm, is always an attractive personage; he is so human, though official; so fresh and breezy, so ready to help the passing ship in danger, and do grand deeds in storm and tempest. England's watchfulness and strength is writ large upon the coastguard station, and the men are uniformly intelligent and good-mannered. A strange mixture of blood—Great Britain in epitome—may be found in one small station we halted at, namely, two Irish, one Scotch, one Novocastrian, and one Devonian—not a dash of Cornish blood at a Cornish station. A native might wink the other eye if his own flesh and blood did a bit of free trading in spirits and tobacco, and only run with his "two left legs" after a culprit related to himself. The men, as a rule, have seen the world, read a great deal, and pass their time in thinking—not very much else to do when on duty but watch and think.

If you'll be good enough to listen, the coast-guardsman will talk. The sea-gulls are very chummy with the men, know the uniform, and like to come and help them in their garden patches. Guy told a man one day that the gulls were a bit out of favour just now with Londoners because they had a weakness for sparrows, feathers and all; but the coastguard wasn't surprised at the gull, only at the sparrow. He thought that London sparrows were too artful to be picked up in that way by a simple sea bird. He told us some stories about sea-gulls. They are fond of young kittens and puppies that nobody wants and throws into the water. The fur increases the luxury of the *bonne bouche*. Then rabbits. Woe to the young thing that they tap with their powerful bills! A gull will kill a rabbit caught in a gin and feast on its eyes. Then they are famous poachers, stealing the eggs of birds nesting in the cliffs, and carrying off the newly hatched. But ravens and crows take reprisals and make the gull sorry at times. Our coastguard told us this little story:—

"There was a gull sitting on a rock below this station, and I watched the pair day by day. The male bird is very attentive, and feeds the hen, and watches over her, and takes her place on the nest when she takes an airing. A pair of ravens took an interest in the proceedings, and one day, when the male bird was away foraging, they executed a scheme for robbing the sea-gull's eggs. It was very neat in its way. The ravens flew round and round the sitting hen, screaming defiance; but the hen only sat the tighter. Then they circled closer and closer, and flapped their black wings in the hen's face. This insult was too much. The gull's blood was up, and she rose from her nest. Then the ravens separated, and whilst the gull chased number one, number two picked up an egg in its bill and flew back to quarters, where number one joined it, and the two shared the stolen egg. Some people say birds have no reason. Well, I'd like to see cunning strategy better carried out. The little Japs couldn't do better."

The silver-grey gull is in paradise in the fishing villages, and takes possession of the boats, and quays, and roofs of houses, and helps itself out of the "flaskets" filled with fish, or from the heaps lying on the stones. A bigger thief does not live and escape punishment. If anything floats on the water in the harbour, the gull swoops down upon it and it is gone; if anything is left unprotected, the gull has it. What a gull will eat, and want no liver pill, would make any other respectable bird on the wing bilious; but the gull is always bright and cheerful, and ready for another gorge, and its natural store of gastric juice would set up a chemical factory. When fish is scarce the gull goes inland and feeds upon the fields, or joins the noble army of poachers over gentlemen's preserves.

On the wing the gull is the spirit of poetry, and in storm the spirit of the tempest; the fishers look on it as a friend, because it hovers over the "schools" of fish swimming in the sea, and warns them of approaching storm. The gull is the link between the fisher and his home, flies after the boats when they go out, and heralds their return. The women look out of their windows in the early morn, and see the gull resting and waiting for the offal to be thrown away when the boats land their catches. Then they know the boats are near, and that the men will be home soon, with fish strung upon their fingers for the morning meal. The gull is the household bird by adoption, and the women don't begrudge it what it steals.

The dark rocks outside the fishing towns swarm with sea-gulls—specketty-brown gulls, grey and white gulls with ebony-tipped wings, gulls with brown and gulls with yellow beaks, gulls flying, gulls swimming, gulls sleeping, gulls on outpost duty. Without these birds the rocks would be very tame. A swarm of gulls in the air is one of the prettiest sights in nature; and then the cry of the gull is the cry of a human soul in agony, which perhaps it is.

The Legend of St. Goeland.

In the days when Lyonesse was land, a poor hermit dwelt upon a rock, whereon he had built for himself a chapel, which was but a shelter of rude stones to protect him, but it was called a "chapel" because it had been signed with the sign of the cross, and he said his prayers therein. The rock was storm-swept, and was at the head of a bay, beautiful in summer, but terrible in winter, and the bay was only a trap to poor mariners, and every rock could tell its tragedy. St. Goeland was a Breton, born in a fishing village, and when he came across there flew after him a sea-gull, which he had befriended. It was all the same to the sea-bird where it dwelt if the sea was but there, and the bird wished to be with St. Goeland.

The rock on which the saint built his chapel was known as the Gull Rock, and there was nothing living visible but solemn shags resting by night, and sea-birds on the wing at all times; no human dwelling or habitation disturbed the pious meditations of the saint, who feasted when snails were in season, and on Fridays fresh fish was always brought to him by his devoted gull. At other times the gull brought sea-birds' eggs, and laid them down outside the chapel door. Fresh sea-birds' eggs are simply delicious when boiled.

St. Goeland did not live a useless life, for outside his chapel there was a cage which he filled with dry sticks, lighting it when there was fog about, and then hoisting it aloft to warn mariners to keep clear of the treacherous bay. "St. Goeland's lantern" became known, far and wide. One day the saint picked up a bell which had been washed ashore; so he built a rude belfry and hung it, and then "St. Goeland's Bell" was heard by mariners at sea whenever there was danger of being caught upon a lee shore. When the wind veered round to danger point the old gull used to give the saint a note of warning, and the saint would rise from his soundest sleep and pull on the rope, so the sound of the bell was carried down the wind, and mariners gave the treacherous coast a wide berth. The saint never knew the good he did, but did it, not knowing. Now, what with cutting and stacking faggots for the "lantern," and ringing the bell, St. Goeland was sometimes very busy, and he and his gull grew old together. The silver-grey feathers were almost as white as the saint's silver hair. When the saint was troubled he talked to the bird, which was saddened when he said, "We have grown old together, and what will happen to the poor mariners when there is no one to light the lantern and sound the bell?"

ST. GOELAND AND THE SEAGULL.

It came to pass that a ship filled with pilgrims was making for the land, and would have come and anchored in the bay when the wind veered, and the old gull gave its note of warning; but St. Goeland was too feeble to rise, and the tears came into his eyes. The pilgrim ship was sailing joyously towards destruction, and the bell was silent! The gull cried louder; the wind rose, and the ship was on her way; soon she would be on a lee shore, and then——

St Goeland made a supreme effort, and clutched the rope. "My God!" he shrieked, and fell, and the bell sounded. But the gull heard the shriek and the bell's note mingled, and carried it against the wind; and those on board the pilgrim ship heard, and drew off the land, saying, it was "St. Goeland's warning," which it was, only they did not know that the saint passed away when the bell pealed his requiem.

From that time the sea-gull's cry is that of a human soul in agony mingled with the note of a "passing bell." All mariners, and fishers, and dwellers by the sea, know it well, and woe to the man who lays finger on a gull, except in kindness!

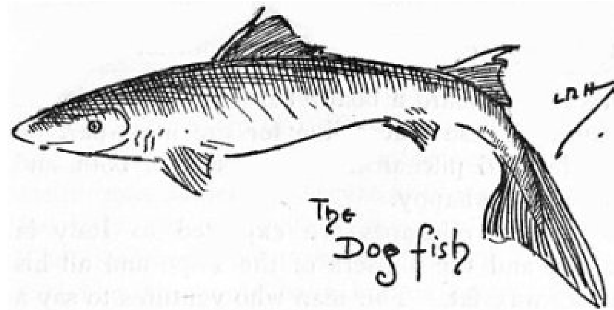
"The sea-gull," said Guy, "is an utterly unproductive animal, fit for nothing but to look at. What it destroys is incalculable, and yet some yarn like this, invented Heaven knows when, makes it almost a sacred bird."

The Bookworm had little to say, except that people were more influenced by sentiment than they knew or suspected.

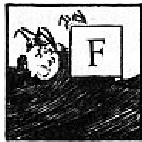
Guy pooh-poohed "sentiment," and said he'd wring a couple of gulls' necks the next morning before breakfast.

He went out with that idea, but a warning voice reached him. Then he tried to "negociate" a purchase, and a big fist brought down in the man's palm warned him that the transaction was, in diplomatic language, "delicate." Guy owned up that there was something, after all, in "sentiment."

Sea-gulls are privileged in this part of the world.



Chapter XXX



ISHING villages look charming from the sea, the houses rising one above another against the hills, with green fields and windswept trees for background; and they are very picturesque when looked upon from hilltops, with all their boats riding to their moorings, or sailing about in the offing. This is the home of the pilchard in summer and autumn, and the industry is important. When confectioned in oil, and tinned, the pilchard is "sardine." One of the most beautiful sights on the coast is the united fleets from Mevagissey, Polperro, and Looe, "drifting" on a clear, dark night, with their riding-lights twinkling. So peaceful, and not a sound reaches the shore, for deep-sea fishing is a silent occupation. Fish are supposed to be very sensitive to sounds, and it is one of the deadly sins to whistle or sing on board a boat when her nets are in the water. These places live for the most part on Wesley and pilchards. Speak well of both, and you may be happy.

Pickled pilchards are exported to Italy in casks; and the abusers of the Pope and all his works wax fat. The man who ventures to say a good word for his Holiness needs courage; but those who make faces now would feel bad without Lent and fish days in the Roman calendar. Guy argued that it showed a fine spirit to feed poor benighted Italians who crossed themselves, and pouch a hundred thousand sterling a year for the trouble. Pickled pilchards he looked on as a bond of union between the two countries. Pilchards feed bodies, the Pope souls, and the shekels come here. Long live the pilchard! Commerce is the fifth gospel, and Rashleigh puts it in a nutshell—Father Prout couldn't do better—

> "Here's to the health of the Pope! May he live to repent,
> And add just six months to the term of his Lent,
> And tell all his vassals from Rome to the Poles,
> There's nothing like *pilchards* for saving their souls."

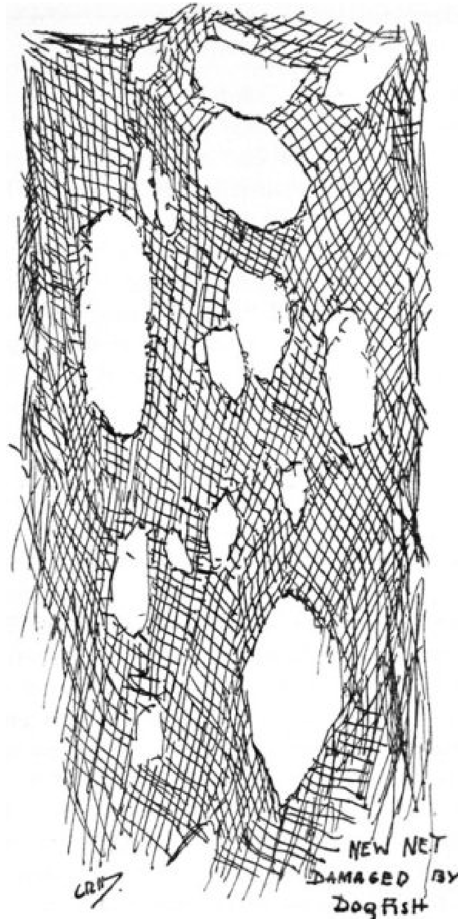
The incense of fish, fried and grilled, ascends to high heaven, or as far as it can reach in that direction, morning and evening; and when there's no incense times are hard. The sign is said to be infallible.

Pilgrims sometimes fancy that fish is cheap where it is caught, but this is one of the fallacies of the day. Soles go to Billingsgate when they die, and so do most fish of good table reputation. A visitor may sometimes secure a sole when landed, but only the millionaire class can do so often. The Bookworm tried the experiment, and Guy told him he should have known better; but he was carried away with excitement at seeing a real live sole flap its fins and gape. People standing around told him the fish was alive, but would be iced with the rest, and sent to Billingsgate. The Bookworm thought he would like to buy it, and there was a sudden lull in the business going on on the quay. The sole belonged to a man in a blue flannel shirt, and every one crowded round and stared at him, and listened attentively when he was asked to name a price. The man seemed sorry to part with the fish in this way, and then he asked a price which might have affected the price of "stocks" had it been reported. The Bookworm brought home his capture in triumph. Guy studied the question afterwards, and found that the people liked to pack fish in ice, and pay cartage, and railway charges, and commissions, and make bad debts, all for the honour of selling fish at Billingsgate at a lower price than they would sell it on the spot. "The nearer the sea the further from fish," is the working motto, but it loses its strangeness after a time.

Fisher people eat fish, but prefer flesh at the midday meal. We found the man in a blue flannel shirt sitting on a post, smoking a short clay as black as ebony, and he told us that his boy Tom wouldn't even ask a blessing on "no vish" when it was served for dinner. "I shaan't ask no blessing over no vish, nor nothing but butchers maate," says young Tom; and the man in the blue

shirt told us he thought this thankless spirit resulted from too much schooling!

A deep-sea fisher, with a boat of his own, is the most independent man in the universe, having no landlord, paying no rent, burdened with no tax on boat and gear, going and coming as he pleases. He reaps without sowing, and is "protected" within the three-mile limit by gunboats in a land of "free trade." A blue-water fisher is not ashamed of his calling, hiding himself under the title of "artist" in shrimps, or "purveyor" of lobsters, or "merchant" in mackerel, and the rest. A fisherman, honest fisherman, is not too proud to be called what he is. The art of fishing is as old as humanity, and it has been discovered that a fish diet can produce a great nation in the Far East.[J] Guy wanted to know why fishers are always called "poor," and why sentimental tears were shed over their hard lot? Fish cost nothing to feed, yet fetch about twice as much as beef and mutton for the table, and so somebody made a good thing if the fisherman was poor. If the calling was a hard one, one must go to some other part of the world to discover it; and as for danger, cases of drowning at sea here are very rare. The moan of the "Three Fishers" doesn't suit the part in this place.



THREE MINUTES WITH A DOG-FISH.
The net is cut by the spines on the dorsal fins.

Fish "charms" are comparatively rare, but fish oil is said to be good for weak vision, and the smoke from burning fish is a protection against evil spirits. The eating of skate accounts for large families, and a dogfish secures an heir male, if eaten in the month of May. Kings and queens, and all persons worried on this subject, please note.

The curative effects of sea-water drunk fasting are believed in. Some of the old people say they have never taken any other medicine. A master mariner told us that, at sea, sailors would drink sea-water instead of coming to him for a dose of "traade" out of the medicine-chest. The Bookworm said a medical journal had recently drawn attention to the subject, and recommended it to people who rose bad-tempered in the morning. Certainly the ocean wouldn't miss a few bucketfuls, and mothers-in-law and M.P.'s, studying the questions of the day, might go in strongly for the ocean cure. What a sweet-tempered world to live in then, and plenty of water for fish to swim in left!

A deep-sea fisher has a good eye for colour, and every shade and tint upon the face of the sea and heavens he knows as well as any artist. Fish colours he knows to a shade of a shade, and when the sky has a queer look, he likens it to "mackerel" tints, and every tint is an omen to him.

How many hours a day a fisherman passes looking at the sea has never been counted. There is, perhaps, some unknown fascination for eye and ear, something calling which will not be denied. We noticed an old man who seemed glued to a stump in a nice sunny corner, out of the way of the wind, and the old man took possession of it. The view from this post was seaward, of course, and when the old man wasn't gazing at the sea and clouds, he took off his sou'wester and looked inside of that. Sometimes he put something inside his sou'wester, and then took something out and popped it in his mouth. The lining of his sou'wester was his storehouse of unexhausted

tobacco-quids. This was "Uncle Tom" and "Uncle Tom's post," and the men, in passing, would hail him, "How ar'ee to-day, Uncle Tom?" to which he would reply, "Toll-loll." It wasn't much, but Guy, taking it as evidence that he could speak, laid in a stock of black, rank Irish roll tobacco, fit for chewing, and scraped an acquaintance.

Did he ever tire of looking at the sea? Not that he was aweer on. The vish was in the zay, an' th' wind was in the clouds, and what else was there in this world worth looking at? Man and boy, he had followed the sea till his hair was white, until he knew its coquetries and passions, and generation after generation before him were sailor-fishers, until "the salt was in his blood." The old man's eyes were wild-violet-blue, and a mystic light came into them when he said that at times the sea "called" to him, and "ef zo be I had my way, I'd die at zay, and be buried in salt watter, like Jan Tregose."

Guy paid court to the old sea-dog, until his sou'wester was full of fresh quids, and wormed out the story of Jan Tregose, who, it appeared, was one of the good old sort in the good old times, who could sing a song, and swear a swear, and loved a fiddle, and a maid, and brandy-toddy with the best. Now, when Jan found his timbers so shaken that he had to take to his bed, a longing came over him to die at sea, and be buried in deep water. The sea-spirit came to him in his dreams—the same spirit, tall and diaphanous, that used to come to him when a young man and tell him what was going on at home whilst he was on his voyages. The sea-spirit had not troubled him since he had remained ashore, until now, and it was a sign to him.

Jan Tregose called his sons together, and made them swear that never, whilst breath was in them, should he be laid in a coffin, or buried in the earth. Then the sea-spirit came again, and told him that when the tide turned that night she would receive him. The old man called his sons again, and they carried him on board their lugger, and sailed away in the calm night, with the stars alone for witnesses. The spare lugsail was spread over the nets, and upon it Jan lay, his long, thin white hair gently lifting in the breeze; and there was nothing heard but the sea-splash against the boat, and nothing seen but a long-necked gannet on the wing.

The boat was far enough from land when the tide turned. The sons looked, and there was a mist before their eyes, but it went "like a flash," and the old man lay stark. Then the sons knew it was the sea-spirit they had seen as mist.

The sons kept their oath, and wrapped their father in the old lugsail, and watched him disappear in thirty fathoms of water, ten miles from the Stone. And many a man has declared that he has heard Jan Tregose fiddling and singing before a storm. Those who are wise put back when they hear "Jan's tune" at sea, for there is "sartin to be a coose time."

"The salt is in the blood of these children of the sea, and has developed a strange mysticism," said the Bookworm. "Of course, I don't understand it," he added quickly, seeing Guy brace himself up and put on his cross-examining air. "It's there all the same, and the sea has voices and prophecies for them which we landsmen miss; and why not? The sea is as a human face to them, and they know when it is troubled with the spirit of passionate unrest. It may be that, like the fishes, they have a sixth sense, and can see dark shadows fluttering under cloudless skies, and hear voices from afar preluding passionate symphonies."

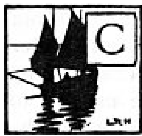
"These fellows are always looking on the sea, and no doubt spot things before we should. Wonder if they didn't; but why this high-falutin?" asked Guy.

"It may be magnetic phenomena, and these men unconsciously receive messages; but it is none the less mystical to me," said the Bookworm, unruffled.

"I see; kind of receiving officers to the Clerk of the Weather. The newspapers will come out with this sort of thing in the near future: 'Our special correspondent writes that a change may be expected soon—he feels it in the marrow of his bones;' or, 'Our infallible predicter at the Land's End heard sea-voices last night, and recommends umbrellas and mackintoshes for the next week.' Take out a patent in time and make a fortune; ideas are money just now," rejoined Guy, holding out the red flag.

The Bookworm was provokingly unconscious.

Chapter XXXI


ORNWALL has a fascination for artists, and it is said that Newlyn and St. Ives have many more reputations to make. On the south coast, where studios are few, we often saw artists of the unflinching, realistic school painting directly from Nature, their models standing patiently enough in exposed places. And such models! There are grand heads and faces among these fisher-folk, and one can get models for saints or Vikings. A collection of sketches made between Polperro and the Dodman was shown us, which would do splendidly for every character in a Passion-play. Judas was there, who would, and did, receive his pieces of silver before sitting for his "effigy" to be drawn. He looked the part to perfection. And the sketches of women were splendid also, which is not remarkable, as they possess, in these parts, much of the languorous grace of their Southern sisters, the eyes being incomparably beautiful.

The sea is the mother of life and beauty, and that is why Venus rose from the waves. The birthplace of the goddess might have been here, long ago, when the short, stiff galleys of Greek and Phœnician rowed along the coast, marvelling at its beauty, after the pulseless shores of the tideless Mediterranean. Here were the dark cliffs and the sapphire waters falling on the golden sands. And in the early morn a soft, diaphanous mist was borne onwards by the breakers, so those who saw said, loveliness rose from the foam, and they called the vision Aphrodite—the awakening of Nature into beauty. The mariners took the vision home, and Aphrodite, the life and movement of the sea, became the guardian of mariners—the morning and the evening star.

The Beach is the shy maiden, seeking always the shadow of rocks and cliffs, and running into caves to hide from the light of day, when adorning herself with sea-shells, and rainbow medusæ, and deep-tinted anemones, and all the treasures which the ardent sea casts into her lap. And the Sea is the wooer, restless and masterful, wooing ever and in every mood, and making his lovesong in sweet lullaby, and plaintive moan, and martial beat as of ten thousand drums heralding the march of grand battalions.

When you see a girl in a boat you may write her down "stranger," and if you see her handling a pair of sculls, you may be sure of it.[K] The mothers of the blue-water men have as little as possible to do with the sea, and are content to admire its greens and blues shot with flaming sky tints, and dream of "heavenly costumes" in like shades, at so much halfpenny per yard. Strong prejudices exist in places against women having anything to do with boats; but custom differs greatly on the north and south coasts as to what a woman may or may not do, when the men come ashore. That women and cats, hares and rabbits, bring "bad luck" is a very general superstition; so a woman never goes out with her husband fishing, and seldom steps into a rowboat. Where public sentiment is weak, and they can if they like, they don't like; and, in places, the art of making and mending nets is entirely lost to the women, though formerly, to make and mend nets, of all sizes, was a part of every girl's technical education; and in a fisher's family her fingers were never idle in making good the rents made by rocks and the sharp teeth of the voracious dogfish.

Guy said it was probably the fault of the men that the women left their boats and gear alone. On rivers and lakes, where girls were encouraged, they took to boating like anything, and if there was a prettier picture than a girl sculling, or a girl eight, he'd like to see it. The men had no doubt frightened the women in the course of centuries with stories of sea-monsters and fairies, and no wonder they threw over net making and mending at the earliest moment.

The sea has its "bucca," just as the land has its piskie, and there is the same uncertainty as to the origin of the one as of the other. We picked up a story, and the Bookworm called it

The Romance of a Bucca.

It is known to all fishermen living at the Cove, and fishing with crab-pots, long lines, spilters, and drag-nets, that Bucca could bring good luck or bad luck just as he was minded, but that he never interfered with any man who owned a big boat, or went far away to sea with drift-nets for the capture of pilchard, herrings, and mackerel, in their season. Bucca did not move with the times, and got out of the way of great trawlers, and craft worked by steam and motors, churning up the sea when it was restful, and defying wind and tide; but was content to lord it over those who went in and out in little boats, and left him his share of "luck" upon the beach, when they landed. The fisherman often saw him, when the water was clear, working in and out amongst the crabs and lobsters, half-hidden with sea-weeds; and it was always counted as good luck to see Bucca at work, because he who saw was sure to have a fine catch. Sometimes he was seen, when the mists rolled up, sitting amongst the shags upon the rocks, holding court amongst them, and the noise which the birds made was taken for song, so the fishermen of the Cove called the mist "music," and they say to one another that the "music" is coming off the land, when the mist is rising and rolling away in clouds.

Bucca was not always Bucca, but a young prince who loved a maid, "tall as a lyllye refreshed by a showere," but, alas! shut up in a convent to be out of his reach. Then he grew desperate, and bribed a "wise woman" to change him into a pigeon, so that he could come and go, and the maiden took the pigeon into her cell, and hid it in her bosom. The prince won the maiden's heart, and she grew more lovely and contented, which was her undoing, for the Lady Superior thought something must be wrong when a maiden under her charge was happy; so she sent secretly to the holy monk living near by, who caught the pigeon in the cell, and loosened the spell of the "wise woman," when the prince stood confessed the maiden's lover in his human shape. The maiden clung to him, and he was bold and used bold threats, so the doors flew wide open, and they would have fled, but the holy monk cursed him with a curse, and turned him into a Bucca for a thousand years, or until such time as he should win woman's love.

THE FIGUREHEAD OF THE "CALEDONIA," MORWENSTOW.

A Bucca is not fair to see, being human but in form, with a dark face, like weather-beaten rock, and big head with tangled masses of fine seaweed for hair; but he has power to change at will into fish or bird, though not into anything with a human soul. So when the maiden looked upon the prince, she shrank from a thing so loathsome, and he rushed down the nearest cliff and into the sea, and sought companionship with fishes, until he learnt the ways of a Bucca, and could exercise dominion in his new element. He could neither drown in the sea, nor die upon land, for a thousand years, or until such time as he might win woman's love.

The prince became Bucca of a cove wherein there were but few dwellers, and the fishermen became accustomed to see him sitting amongst the seaweed, and on the rocks amongst the sea-birds, and noticed that he was always sad and lonely, so they had compassion in their hearts, and spoke him fair. Bucca rewarded them by filling their crab and lobster pots, in season, and driving the fish into their nets; and when a storm arose he'd lift their little craft over the waves, and guide them home in safety in the thickest fog. Generation after generation came and went; and

the little children heard of Bucca, and what he could do for those who spoke him fair, and of the terrible things which happened to those who mocked him because of his dark skin, and big head, and seaweed curls. People who treated him badly he punished by driving the crabs and lobsters from their pots, and the fishes from their nets, and would let them drown in storms.

One of the Cove fishers was Uncle Malachi, who, when he was old, was left with a little maid, a grandchild, to bring up; and he took her in his boat with him, teaching her all he knew. People laughed, and said it was unlucky to have a maid on board a boat; and it seemed so, for Uncle Malachi went out and returned with empty pots and nets. One day the little maid fell into the sea, but Bucca held her up until Uncle Malachi reached his gaff, and gaffed her in. From that day he never wanted luck when he took his little maid with him; and "Malachi's luck" became a saying in the Cove for a good catch.

For centuries the Bucca lived at the Cove, lording it over fishes and fishermen, and never thought to cut short the term of his punishment by winning woman's love; but when he held up the little maid in the sea until Uncle Malachi gaffed her, an idea came into his head, and his heart throbbed.

The little maid grew beautiful and her lovers were many, but she gave her love to Seth Barton, who was as dark as she was fair, and passionate as he was dark, and none of the fisher-lads dared so much as lift their eyes to Uncle Malachi's little maid when he was near. Seth was a crabber, and took over all the old man's pots and gear and boat when he was laid to rest, and he was married to the little maid, and they lived in the old house with the windows looking on the beach. In the linhay at the back Seth placed all his gear wanting mending, and Grace was deft with the "needle," having been taught by Malachi to make nets and mend them, to bait the long lines, and do all that a boy might do on the boat or on shore. Only Seth would not take Grace out with him, for there was a saying, "A woman in a boat is a devil afloat," and he was a fisher, and feared bad luck if a married woman put foot over the gunwale.

Now, when Seth Barton was at sea, Bucca would come into the linhay and make and mend the nets and gear, so that Grace had little to do. By-and-by she grew accustomed to Bucca, who came and went as he pleased; and when he pleased no one could see him, so it was no good for Grace to shut the door and say he should not come. Bucca, in fact, was often with her when she did not know it, and in her dreams she was wooed by a handsome young prince, who took her thoughts from Seth, and filled her with passionate longings, so she was never so happy as when asleep and dreaming dreams. When she awoke there was only Bucca with his seaweed hair and ugliness, so she had no idea that the lover of her dreams was Bucca, the prince of olden days, when the soul of a man beamed in his eyes. In time, the sight of the ugly Bucca grew distasteful, and she would rather mend the nets and bait the hooks than have him about with his flat fishy eyes, in which no human light beamed. And Seth, when he heard of the visions, grew jealous; and Grace held her peace, but was rude to Bucca, telling him, in scorn, that if he were but as her dream-lover, she'd follow him over sea and land.

Then Bucca knew he'd never win woman's love, and he must abide his thousand years.

One night, however, Grace dreamt a dream, in which her prince-lover pressed her lips and eyes, and whispered softly, so that she rose in sleep and followed the vision, which passed over the sea. She unmoored Seth's boat and took the oars, but Bucca was there, and lifted their weight, and drew back the waves that scarcely touched, so that the boat travelled fast, and Grace still slept. When the boat was far from land the vision changed, and the prince became a Bucca, who knelt before her, his sea-locks dripping, imploring for a woman's love to restore him to his lost estate. There was pity in her soul, and the fishes swam round and round the boat to witness the strange wooing, and wonder what would happen if their Bucca won a woman's love. The night was dark, and the stars shone, so that the sea was jewelled. Grace, under the enchantment of a spell, lifted Bucca's head and looked into his eyes, but they were poor and flat, with no light in them like the light in the eyes of men.

Then she took fear and awoke, and the spell was broken.

The men of the Cove heard a woman's scream, and rushed down to the beach, where Seth was looking for his boat. Afar off, a mere speck, they saw a woman rowing, but the boat glided over the sea impelled by invisible power, and when its keel grated on the sand, the men saw Bucca leave the stern, and disappear.

The fishers praised Bucca for bringing the boat to shore in safety; only Grace knew, and kept her secret, as a Cornish woman can, until she grew old, and then she told it to her children.

Those who have the right sort of eyes may see the Bucca, whose thousand years of doom are running out, and no woman's love has come to shorten it. But the little boats are disappearing from the Cove, and big boats go to and fro, churning up the blue water, and sounding steam whistles, and Bucca has told the sea-birds and all the fishes, the crabs and the lobsters, that when he disappears there will be none to rule over them.

The Cove maidens are not taught to row and handle boats, and you may go there and never see a woman touch a boat or mend a net, for fear that Bucca may take a fancy to them, and "slock" them out to sea. And they don't need the warning twice.

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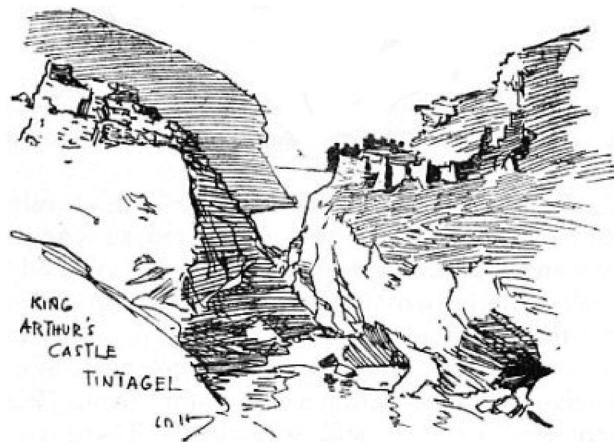
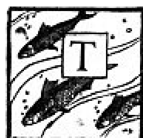


Chapter XXXII



HE "good" King Arthur left some tracks, on the north coast mostly. We heard nothing of him on the south. Tennyson followed the northern trail, and we followed Tennyson, for a while; and we started in comfort, which any one may do now the Tintagel hotel is running. The King himself was never so well accommodated on the spot. The Arthur zone is somewhat limited for mere holiday pilgrims. The Lyonesse is out of it now, so the area is about from Bude to Camelford, and back again, following the lines of desolation and tumuli. The anniversary of the King's birthday is still celebrated by the ringing of bells under the sea between Bude and Boscastle. We didn't hear them, but some people say they have.

We had a wet Sunday—a day of pitiless rain and gloom, a day to be remembered as long as human sensation of the dismal lasts. Everybody took to letter-writing and addressing post-cards. So the morning passed, and it was cheerful to hear some one say it would be all right after twelve—it was always all right then. We struggled on, and still it poured. There was some wind, but it was the rain which took possession of us; and Guy suggested that the Gulf Stream had gone wrong this time, and was pouring out of the clouds. We explored the hotel, and tried smoking and sleeping, and sleeping and smoking, until we were awake again, and began to take an interest in our fellow-pilgrims.

The Bookworm talked King Arthur in the drawing-room when only a few were present, but the news somehow spread through the house, and he soon had an audience, and everybody a Tennyson in pocket. Guy said the little beggar must have been grinding secretly in order to surprise us one day. The surprise came now to all who had been reading up Tennyson with the view of following in the footsteps of Arthur from battle-field to battle-field, from cradle to grave, and all within the borders of the Duchy, to find that Arthurs were plentiful, and that there was one at least for each kingdom in Great Britain, and one across the water. The mythical Arthur, the historical Arthur, and the Tennysonian Arthur were "reviewed."

A lady visitor in spectacles said Arthur was her ideal. One reason—she might almost say *the* one reason—for her coming into Cornwall was to visit Tintagel, his birthplace, and pay homage to his sepulchre, if she could find it.

Guy said her sentiments were exalted, and sustained one on a wet Sunday. He was sorry that he did not know as much as his learned friend the Bookworm, but he had a sort of impression that Arthur was not happy.

The lady sighed, and put all the fault upon Queen Jenefer. Arthur was her ideal, but, alas! he allowed the Queen to have too much of her own way, and should have interfered when she broke the china and threw her jewels into the river. Guy confessed himself interested in this free handling of the subject, and learnt the lady's views on the subjection of women (within limitations, of course) to the men who found them in bread-and-butter and pocket-money.

A young lady interrupted conversation by giving a recitation, and everybody pulled out Tennyson, and read marked passages to one another, and so the evening slipped away. Still it rained; but we didn't mind it now, especially as we had been informed on good authority that it always cleared after a downpour!

The Bookworm enjoyed himself most when button-holed by an antiquarian, who listened with an ear-trumpet whilst he explained that it was of no consequence whatever whether King Arthur ever existed, because he was an idea. The deaf gentleman begged leave to make a note of so original a remark; and made more notes whilst the Bookworm aired his conviction that Arthur represented a phase—a passing phase—of civilization in Britain, and that the legends which grew around his name served to show how little society was prepared for the higher standards of life, known well enough, but, alas! not followed.

The Bookworm told a little story which, he said, was not very well known, not having been unearthed by the Historical MSS. Commissioners until Tennyson had finished his great Arthurian

romances.

KING ARTHUR'S JUDGMENT.

The King sat in his hall with his knights, and every one else was there who could be there of right, and many who had no privilege wrote to the King for tickets; the stable-boys and scullions fought for places round the door, and climbed the high windows and peeped through, for the word had gone round that the King would hear a matrimonial cause. The King looked troubled when he took his seat, because he had been obliged to refuse places to so many fair ladies who promised to lace in extra tight so as to take up the least possible room. But accommodation was limited, and every refusal made him an enemy. Such is greatness; and the King was troubled.

YSEULT AND TRISTAN.

But there was more trouble to come, as he well knew, whenever he sat as President for the trial of matrimonial causes; and his prophetic soul told him that he would be outwitted in the end, because there was no King's Proctor, all ears, by his side. The case was that of Mark, King of Cornwall, whose wife Yseult, the Helen of the day, had been carried off by Tristan, second to none in love and war. All the parties were of blue blood, and the fugitives had only yielded to the law by force of arms, so the case was not wanting in interest for the upper crust.

Mark opened the proceedings by saying he wanted his wife home again, where things were sixes and sevens, and dinner served anyhow; but Yseult refused to return because Mark was bilious at times, and said bilious things much better left unsaid, and, moreover, she liked Tristan best, and would stick to him, for aye and always. There was a fluttering of fans and applause in Court, which made the President sad, so that he threatened to have it cleared on repetition. There were no counsel learned in the law practising in those days before the King, so the parties said their say and argued as they pleased; and when Tristan sidled up to Yseult and patted her on the back, saying, "Cheer up!" the whole assembly hurrahed, and the King made believe not to hear it, but turned to Jenefer, his Queen, who whispered to Lancelot, who was a sort of friend of the parties all round; but what they said was not audible to the reporters.

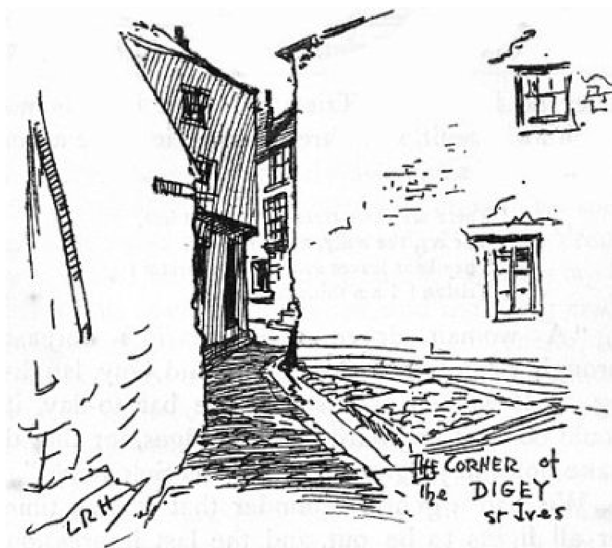
The King was troubled. There were no precedents in law for a case like this, so he made a little speech to Mark, telling him he'd be better without an unwilling wife; but Mark was bilious, and extra obstinate, and would have his wife, his whole wife, and nothing but his wife. Then King Arthur changed his note, and tried his cunning upon Tristan, who said love was above law, and he'd have his love. There was, then, nothing for the King to do but to pronounce judgment, which he did, dividing Yseult between the two; and the order which he made was that she should stay with the one when the trees were in leaf, and with the other when they were bare, and to Mark, as husband, he gave first choice.

The trial was in the autumn, and Mark was no fool, so he elected to take Yseult when trees were bare, saying to himself, "She will come now, and let me but get her home, and the trees will never be in leaf for Tristan!" But he was no match for Yseult, who threw herself into the arms of her lover, saying—

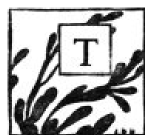
"There are three trees of constant hue,
The ivy, the holly, and the yew;
They bear leaves summer and winter;
Tristan! I am thine for ever."

"A woman drove three chariots abreast through Temple Bar that time," said Guy, laughing. "If women practised at the bar to-day, it would be a bit awkward for the judges, for they'd make holes in judgments as wise as Solomon's."

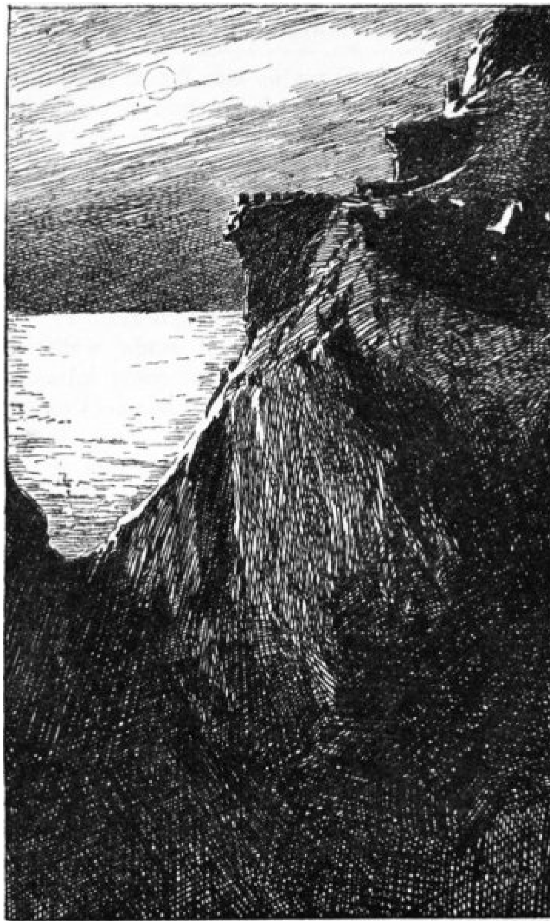
We had a gentle reminder that it was time for all lights to be out, and the last impression everybody had was that the right thing to do in Cornwall was to make a pilgrimage to Tintagel.



CHAPTER XXXIII



HAT enlightened citizen of the United States, Mr. John B. Bellamy, left his name, writ large, in the visitors' book. He was keen as ever on collecting relics of the late King, and inquired if the holy grail was yet on view at the castle? King Arthur's tables, plates, and punch-bowls not being what he wanted, he chipped some and left the rest. The hotel clerk told us that the gentleman left some opinions on things in general behind him; and the impression on the clerk's mind was that if this citizen from the States ran the show at Tintagel, things would be a "durned sight different" in two shakes of a duck's tail.



KING ARTHUR'S CASTLE, TINTAGEL.

Sea and land and sky were deliciously clear when we started for the ruins; and the atmosphere was so buoyant that we could not bear it more so when walking without flying off into space.

"I don't suppose it makes much difference to a fellow where he's born, but I'd like a more cheerful place to live in," said Guy, throwing himself on the turf, and pulling his hat over his eyes.

A stiff climb up slippery stone steps, with samphire growing perilously near, brought us to the "fortress," and what there was in stone suggested little by way of poetry or romance. Guy had made up his mind beforehand to see something quite different—Tintern Abbey, or Warwick Castle, or something. But this! As he couldn't see what he wished for, he would see nothing; so tilted his hat over his eyes to keep off the sun and hide disappointment. We left him where he lay, and rambled.

A fine bit of rock scenery, even in Cornwall, and worth looking at, is this. If there had only been a tempest, and all the elements at war, their chorus of thunders drowning the sea-birds' cries! But to-day it was sunshine and peace, and nothing to tell of war but sharp-pointed rocks and landslips and slides telling their own tale, writ large.

"This is the very place in which Arthur should have been born," said the Bookworm, when Guy, tired of his own discontent, joined us.

"I don't see any reason for it," said Guy.

"No! When Arthur first opened his eyes upon this rock, what impression do you think he received? This was a fit cradle for great things in a great mind, and this man was great."

"Never lived at all, perhaps."

"I don't care. This was a fit cradle for an allegory of war between What Is and What Should be, and Arthur is as the light shining in darkness."

"Have it your own way," said Guy; "but wouldn't some other place do just as well?"

"Quite, if the first impressions of the newly born were of eternal struggle. Arthur was born for the world, and not for a parish."

"I think we'd better clear," said Guy, sharply. "Here's the lady in specs., and the antiquarian with the trumpet, and the whole crew. They've all got their Tennysons, and I can't go over it again. If the place was only a bit like it, I wouldn't mind."

Dozmary Pool is a cheerless place at its best; it is situated in a sad-coloured region, wherein stones grow best, and everything that has life struggles for existence. This is the place that Tennyson selected for the King's death, and the mysterious disappearance of his famous sword

"Excalibur." In Arthur's time the mere was better worth calling a lake than now, but the stones and barren lands and hills and general "wishtness" of the place are pretty much the same. The locality is marked as about one thousand feet above sea-level, and in winter the place is said to be more breezy than pleasant. They have been draining the pool a bit lately, but no trace has yet been discovered of "Excalibur"—one day a syndicate may be formed to dredge the mere. An arm "clothed in white samite, mystic, beautiful," holding King Arthur's sword with jewelled hilt, and every jewel worth a king's ransom, would be worth a trifle, and make the poet's reputation as an historian. Some people are never satisfied until they can see and handle things.

Guy touched the water of the silent pool, and, finding it real, was encouraged to sit down and discuss things in a matter-of-fact sort of way. He said we could start with facts here, for here was a mere, and the water was wet. Then, there were rushes growing on the margin of the pool, and when the wind blew, no doubt they made rush music—sad, mournful music—a sort of place where a fellow who had had a good licking in battle would come and hide, and die, if he could, and no one to see him do it.

"I like this story: there's something human about it, and it was a bit rough on Sir Bedivere to be told to chuck away the only thing King Arthur had got. I feel for him. Only fancy being told to throw away the only available asset to pay funeral expenses! It was very human on the part of Sir Bedivere to want to keep Excalibur, and I don't suppose that any of Arthur's friends and next-of-kin believed him when he said he threw it into the mere. He said he did, and we'll let it go at that; and if it should be dredged up one day, why, of course, the good Sir Bedivere will leave the court without a stain upon his character."

The sun was westerning; a slight breeze ruffled the waters of the mere and the dry reeds rustled. The Bookworm said it must have been a fit place for a great temptation, and he was glad that Tennyson made it appear that Sir Bedivere was a man of honour. A chough skimmed across the water, and the Bookworm said this was a strange coincidence—we were talking about King Arthur, and the very bird which legend said his soul inhabited came upon the scene. This was only wanted to make the wild place a sanctuary.

"Nothing but legend," said Guy, quickly. "Wherever you are in this county, its nothing but legend. You walk on legend, and just breathe it all the time."

"Perhaps you never heard this one," said the Bookworm. "There's time to tell it."

"Go ahead, old man," said Guy. "Another added to the number won't count much."

King Arthur's Chough.

Well, then, you know, said the Bookworm, that King Arthur was married to one Jenefer (sometimes called Guinevere, which is the same thing), and that Merlin was present at the wedding. Everybody was having a good time, and Merlin slipped out and consulted the stars. He had a monopoly in that business, and was paid special fees by all the swagger people who wanted to know what trouble they'd be likely to get into if they but went the right way to work about it. Well, Merlin slipped out of the castle, and ran against a young gentleman singing, "The night is clear, and I am all alone," underneath the royal bridal chamber. "You'd better go and sing indoors," said Merlin, making a note of the fact that this was Launcelot, a young sprig of nobility who thought no small beer of himself in those days. He was an army man, and fond of poaching. Merlin read something in the stars that night which he told an old chough, who knew more of the black art than any other bird. This chough Merlin gave the King as a wedding present. The bird was as black as a raven in those days, and used to live so long that it was only at its prime at a hundred years.

Queen Jenefer was much written about in the chronicles of her time; and so the poets know what she did, and what she wore, and how she looked, and what she said at all the grand tournaments whereat she distributed blue ribands and prizes to knights of high degree.

The King was a busy man, so busy that in the end mischief came of it, for when garden parties and jousts and things were going on, he was wont to say to Launcelot, his aide-de-camp in chief: "Just you look after the Queen this afternoon." Now this suited Launcelot full well, for he was a born Squire of dames and a gallant man as well as a fighter of renown. Sometimes the King sighed when he saw his Queen riding away gaily by the side of Launcelot; but he was a fond husband, and it was not in his heart to say her nay when she would a-hawking go, or watch the young knights a-hurling for a silver ball.

So the habit grew as the King got busier and busier. And though Launcelot liked more and more to wait upon the Queen and learned to put up with her tempers, the Queen was not happy at home, where she had it all her own way, but would look in the mirror and pity herself, for that being plump and fair to look upon there was no Arthur at hand to pinch her cheeks and tell her so. At times she even grew weary at hearing how good Arthur was, and would exclaim in her tantrums—

> "What care I how good he be!"

And to her little waiting maid she would say: "By my faith, I could do with less goodness abroad and more comfort at home."

The old chough which Merlin gave the King was the wireless messenger between the King and

Queen, and carried messages to and fro. Launcelot was left behind, as usual now, when the King went on a fighting tour in Wales. He had, however, a fit of the "blues" just then, and the Queen put him on milk and soda and dry biscuit diet, so he soon got well, and trouble began. They played hide-and-seek, and found each other in the gardens, and quarrelled and made it up again, until the Queen had fond eyes for none but Launcelot; and the old chough hopped about the Court, and was kept waiting for a return message which, when he got it, wasn't worth the carrying, so light of love the words were. The old chough had a friend at Court, a dwarf, who played the fool, and skipped about like a withered leaf, and learnt a good deal more than people wot of. One day he tied a paper around the chough's leg, which opened the King's eyes when he read it; and he whispered something to the chough, which made him turn red about the beak.

The King was still in Wales, and his sword ran crimson. A council of war broke up in confusion, all through one Murdock, a bosom friend of Launcelot's, putting his spoke in all the King's plans. It was Murdock's turn to sleep on the mat outside the King's chamber, and the old chough, acting on information received, kept his eye on Murdock. The King was sweetly dreaming of home and Jenefer, his Queen, when the chough woke him.

"What's up?" asked the King.

"Come and see," croaked the chough, hopping towards the door.

Then King Arthur noticed that the old chough was crimson about the feet and legs, and great drops of blood stained the floor, and he soon found the reason, for the chough had slain Murdock in his sleep, and so saved the life of the King, as was proved by correspondence in secret cypher found in the traitor's breast-pocket. Then the King called all the Court together, and in their presence knighted the chough; and from that day the chough family have had red beaks and legs.

When King Arthur died, his soul entered into the body of Sir Chough, his old familiar and preserver, and now, whenever he visits the scenes of past shame and glory, it is in the body of a chough, and that is why the Cornish would not kill a chough in the old days, when this story was fresh in their minds.

"Now the chough is protected by Act of Parliament," said Guy.

"Ill-protected," replied the Bookworm. "What Act of Parliament is so effective as a feeling of reverence consecrated by centuries? You destroy tradition at your own peril."

"All right; the story isn't bad," said Guy. "I thought we were going to have something tasty about Queen Jenefer and Launcelot."

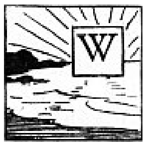
"No, the story is only concerned with showing how and why a black chough got a red beak and legs, and transmitted the distinction to the whole family of choughs. If you want the story of the whitewashing of Jenefer, you must go to Tennyson."

"I know—the Queen and the little maid that in convent did dwell. It is very nice reading, even if you don't believe it," said Guy.

The popular fancy buried King Arthur in a long mound in the Camelford district—about the bleakest and most sterile in the county. There is an ancient British fortification here, and here the old people thought a fit and proper place for the resting-place of a King for ever at war against men and the age he lived in. But no legend seems to have fastened on this spot as the centre of mystic visitation by red-legged choughs, or the shadowy repentant forms of Jenefer and Launcelot, and all those who failed to keep the oaths of chastity and the higher life. Only here and all around—a land of mountain, bog, and moor, bleak and inhospitable—is a vast burial-ground of ancient Britons in kist and tumuli, rude dwellings and entrenchments. Here King Arthur may lie and sleep as soundly as in the "Vale of Avalon," the poet's paradise for a grand soul born before its time; but when legend is so silent, history is doubtful in this land.

We reached Camelford, and at night the piskies sealed our eyes in sleep too restful even for the shadow of a dream.

Chapter XXXIV



E knew the voice. Our American friend, John B. Bellamy, was in form, and held a select audience interested in the smoke-room of the Royal at Plymouth. This is what we heard him say—

"Why, gentlemen, the people of this old country don't know a good thing when they've got it. What is it, all of it, from the Tamar to the Land's End? A nice little estate in size for a cattle ranch out West, with everything on it for making a pile. Why, gentlemen, every breath of air is worth dollars, your skies are worth dollars, your seas are worth dollars, all your old piskies and saints and giants are worth dollars—just ask John B. Bellamy to run the show.

"Why, gentlemen, we, in America, make dollars; we can't help it. Then we get tired, but must go on because we have nothing else to do. A man may make dollars in the States faster than he can give'm away. I know a man who has charity-cheques signed by an electric machine, and still his pile grows, and he says it'll pay to give away all he possibly can now, rather than let his heirs pay death duties, which will be quite a sum on his little concern; for he is a small man compared with some. These are the men who want a place like this to come to when tired of pile-raising. You may say, gentlemen, some other place your side of the pond will do just as well; but it won't. You *can't* work in this country; John B. Bellamy has tried it. Why, gentlemen, in the States you *must* work; and when the day ends, you don't know you've finished, but go to bed looking for a job; but here, there's something in the air, and you just don't want to work, and don't care if the whole durned sub-lunary universe tumbles into space. That's how I feel.

"Just put up a big board, gentlemen, and advertise 'Cornwall to Let: leases of life renewed to men with dollar-piles and tired of trying to be tired.' You'll have'm tumbling over in shiploads, for it'll suit their complaint, just like Lancashire air suits cotton. It'll just suit the Cornish complaint for them to come, now that 'fish, tin, and copper' aren't all flourishing.

"I don't want to work here. I tell you honestly, I don't want to work. When I return, I'll tell my friends that I've located the place in which I don't want to work; and all the gold bugs and pile-drivers will come round and want the receipt. I'll just tell them it's the Cornish air, and Cornish skies, and Cornish cream, and Cornish everything—the place where Old Nick built churches, just for want of something to do. That'll be a new sensation in the States for men with piles wanting an extension of time to look around before the next-of-kin pay the death duties.

"No, gentlemen, no thanks, if you please. These are the honest opinions of John B. Bellamy, citizen, U.S.A., and if you want a man to run the show, why, that address will find him."

Paddington once more.

"Evening papers—Extra Specials. Autumn Sessions. Panic on Stock Exchange. Revolutions. Anarchies!"

"Great Scott! Where on earth have we been living?" said Guy, excitedly.

"Hi! Boy! Papers! All of'm?"

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FOOTNOTES:

[A] Story-books, please copy. No rights reserved.

[B] The old lady's eloquence in her native tongue did not run greatly to swear-words, of which, according to Carew, there were only "two or three natural." "But then," saith Carew, "this want is relieved with a flood of most bitter curses and spiteful nicknames." The mouth hath its pearls; and our Dolly's was well filled, when her blood was stirred.

[C] All ranks engaged in smuggling. Mr. Philip Hawkins, M.P. for Grampound, left £600 to the King as "conscience" money. But privateering was a royal game, and men made money rapidly at the expense of the enemies of England. People used, it is said, to measure their gold in pint pots, instead of counting it.

[D] An ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference told this story.

[E] This is the only indigenous stage story in existence, and is preserved by Carew.

[F] When Sir Henry died, it was remembered that he whose soul was all Cornish, had never acted in the county.

[G] An enterprising huckster exhibited the following signboard:—

BIBLES, BELLOWS AND BOOTS. GODLY
BUKES AND GRINDING STONES, TROUSERS,
TESTAMENTS, AND TEA KITTLES, EVERYTHING
BOUGHT AND SOLD HERE EXCEPT TREACLE.
BEST PRICE GIVEN FOR WHALEBONE STAZE
By I. W. Ninnis.

[H] I believe this story was told by the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse; if not, it might have been, it's so like him.

[I] Caerhays Castle passed from the Trevanion family by purchase to that of the present owner—Mr. J. C. Williams, formerly M.P. for the Truro division. The castle was built in 1805 from the designs of Mr. Nash, architect of Buckingham Palace and Regent Street.

[J] The Japs dwell complacently on the tradition that they were once only a community of humble fishermen; and it is the custom to send with all presents a *piece of dried fish*, that their origin may be kept in perpetual remembrance.

[K] Fowey is an exception.

Transciber's Notes.

Variations in spelling and punctuation are as in the original except in obvious cases of typographical error.

Variations in hyphenation within the body of the text have been rationalised. Variations within the Catalogue have been retained.

The asterisms within the catalogue have been replaced with the inverse ⁂.

The original did not include a Table of Contents, this has been added.

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