VARIOUS

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Содержание

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AMERICAN AËRONAUTS

Scattered here and there in this matter-of-fact, utilitarian age of Business one finds instances of that love of daring for its own sake, with an insatiable longing for new scenes and novel sensations, which in the days of chivalry moved the mass of men to put saddle to horse and ride off Somewhere seeking Something—just as occasional trilobites, lonely and misshapen, are found in ages subsequent to the Silurian. Of such stuff are our Arctic and African explorers made; the men who run the lightning-expresses have a touch of it; it crops out in steeple-climbers, cave-explorers, beast-tamers; it makes men assault cloud-piercing and ice-mantled mountain-peaks and launch their frail canoes for voyages down earth-riving cañons and across continent sundering oceans. Sometimes action is denied, and then it strikes in and makes poets—perhaps the most daring adventurers of all. It must be difficult for the beaters of iron and the barterers in swine to understand why such useless timber is allowed to cumber the great workhouse; but then we don't know *exactly* what the trilobites were good for, and the utilitarians may find comfort in the reflection that at the present rate the obnoxious family is likely to entirely disappear with the Palæozoic.

Aëronauts have been free and accepted members of this order of modern knights-errant, from hot-headed, ill-fated Pilâtre de Rozier down to Gaston Tissandier, the man who still edits *La Nature* in the lower strata of an ocean into the treacherous upper depths of which he has risen seven miles. Your true aëronaut is not an inventor of flying-machines, not much concerned about what is known as the "problem of aërial navigation." He is content to take the wings of the morning and be carried away to the uttermost parts of the earth. Problems he leaves to the scientists: he wooes the wilderness he cannot subdue. He is an explorer of unknown regions, a beauty-worshipper at a shrine whose pearly, sun-kissed portals open to him alone. People travel thousands of miles horizontally to rest their eyes on scenes infinitely less novel, beautiful and grand than one perpendicular mile of vantage would open to them, little matter whence taken.

Having accepted the wind for his pilot, our argonaut seeks no improvement upon his aërial raft. Like the bow and arrow, it long ago reached perfection, and, though he may cherish some choice and secret recipe for varnish or be the inventor of an improved valve, he generally builds with a birdlike reliance on instinct and tradition. Gas-bag, netting, concentrating-ring, basket, valve, anchor, drag-rope and exploding cord,—what has the century of ballooning added to its essentials? how can coming centuries improve this perfection of simplicity? Aërial navigation is altogether another thing. A swallow does not rise by displacing a volume of air whose specific gravity is greater than its own, but by using the atmosphere as a fulcrum. Otherwise it must possess a bulk which its tiny wings would be powerless to impel against the opposing breeze. Mr. Grimley, the aëronaut, writing of some experiments he has recently been making at Montreal with an ingenious arrangement of revolving fans invented by two gentlemen of that city, says: "The Cowan and Paje propelling and steering apparatus worked as well as could be expected, but the air will never be navigated by balloons driven by machinery. It is opposed to common sense." Few fully appreciate the extreme mobility of the atmosphere or the intensity of the force which wind exerts on surfaces opposed to its action. A child with a palm-leaf fan can drive a balloon in equilibrium about at will in an atmosphere entirely quiet, while the same balloon, under the impulse of a lively gale, will tear itself loose from the aggregated avoirdupois of all who can lay hands upon it, and wrench great branches from the forest

giants over which it skims. Doubtless, to the disheartening influence of a practical knowledge of the real difficulties in the way of aërial navigation is due the fact that the great mass of those who have attempted it have been scientists without practice, or fools without either scientific training or experimental data.

However strongly, as devout utilitarians, we may feel it our duty to disapprove, officially, of a class so little necessary to the body politic, aëronauts are interesting talkers, being able, like Shakespeare's Moor, to speak of "most disastrous chances, of *moving* accidents by flood and field, of antres vast and deserts idle, rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven."

Among American aëronauts none possessed a larger fund of such thrilling incident or greater enthusiasm for his calling than he who recently paid that last penalty which ever hovers over its followers—the venerable John Wise. His autobiography, *Through the Air*, is a prose poem on the glories of Cloudland. The following extract from a private letter written by him in 1876, after an aëronautical career of forty years, comprising nearly five hundred ascensions, illustrates this enthusiasm and his views on the sanitary aspect of aëronautics: "I claim that the balloon is the best sanitarium within the grasp of enervated humanity. I can demonstrate its utility, by theory and by fact, for all chronic diseases and for the improvement of the mental and physical functions. Elevate a person ten or twelve thousand feet above the sea-level and his whole texture expands: a wrinkled, cadaverous person fills out as plump as a youth. Then the beauty and magnitude of the scenery within the scope of vision exalt the mental faculties, soul and body become exhilarated, the appetite is quickened and all the symptoms of convalescence ensue. Why, my dear friend, I am bound to ascribe my health and vigor at the age of over sixty-eight to my profession, and only for that do I persist in it. When I make up my mind to rust and die I will give up balloon-ascensions."

Since Mr. Wise was not of a nature to be easily reconciled to "rust and die," can we doubt that the great transit could have come to him at no kinder season than when it should seem but a brief pausing on his upward flight? Though it will never be known just how or when he met the end, we may be certain that he had walked hand in hand with Death too long to greatly dread the final embrace. May we not think of him now as feasting his spirit on the splendid visions of that Promised Land which, Moses-like, it was permitted him to see prefigured in its earthly type? Throughout his adventures, too generally known to require more than passing allusion, one sees the same passionate devotion to the grand and sublime in sight and sensation, the same calm disregard of danger, whether exploding his balloon at an altitude of thirteen thousand feet and coolly noting the "fearful moaning noise caused by the air rushing through the network and the gas escaping above," preparing to test a lifelong theory of a steady easterly current by attempting to make it the medium of crossing the Atlantic, or participating with La Mountain and others in a voyage which, begun at St. Louis at 6.30 P.M., July 1, 1859, met daybreak at Fort Wayne, extended over the length of Lake Erie, included a view of Niagara from the altitude of a mile, and finally, after skirmishing within thirty feet of the storm-tossed waves of Lake Ontario for fifty miles and ploughing a tornado-track through a dense forest, terminated in a treetop near Sackett's Harbor, Jefferson county, New York, at 2.20 P.M.—twelve hundred miles in nineteen hours and forty minutes! Puck's promise kept! the seven-league boots outdone!

Upon his son, Charles E. Wise, and his grandson, John Wise, Jr., he bestowed his skill and engrafted his enthusiasm. The latter began his aëronautical career with his teens, and though not yet out of them has made over forty ascensions. One of these excursions, made in the autumn of 1875 from Waynesburg, Greene county, Pennsylvania, sufficiently demonstrates, if any demonstration is needed, that a boy's luck and pluck are equal to anything. It had been raining the proverbial pitchforks all day, and the hydrogen oozed into the gas-bag with even more than its accustomed sluggishness. The curiosity of a country crowd was not easily damped, however, and the basket was finally attached and Master Johnny stepped on board. The aërostat sensibly refused to consider the proposition for an ascension, although urged by the successive relinquishment of barometer, lunch, water-bottle, coat,

drag-rope and grapnel. As a last resort, the entire lower third of the gas-bag, which was uninflated, was cut away, the valve-cord by accident sharing the same fate, leaving an opening about seventeen feet in diameter. Then, "the crowd having given us room, father asked me whether I felt timid about going. I told him I was determined to go if the balloon would take me. He said, 'Good-bye, Johnny:' I said, 'Good-bye,' and found myself shooting up into space on a cold, rainy October day, coatless, without ropes, anchor or valve-cord, the rags of the balloon fluttering in the breeze created by the sudden ascent; the multitude vociferously cheering me one moment and the next calling me to come back for God's sake! But I only replied by hurrahing and waving my hat, feeling perfectly *cool*, and rather enjoying the excitement of the vast crowd that was now fast disappearing below me. In seven minutes the earth vanished from my sight, and I passed from a driving rain below the clouds into a dense snowstorm above them. My feet and hands were almost numb with cold, and the prospect was about as cheerless as it well could be, when a thought passed through my brain that made me laugh outright. I had heard of people coming down in bursted balloons, but I was the first who had ever gone up in one. The idea appeared so ridiculous that it really made me feel warmer." Think of this aërial babe in the woods, with Nature's awful forces warring about him and the earth lost to view, laughing himself warm over a joke at the expense of his terrible situation! Truly, "he jests at scars that never felt a wound." Perhaps it was the balloon, but I believe it could only have been his good angel, that brought the boy safely down into a small cleared space in a forest thirty-eight minutes and forty miles from the point of departure.

Another of Master John's voyages curiously illustrates the different directions of coexistent currents. On July 4, 1878, he made an ascension from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, landing ten miles south of the city, while J.M. Johnston, of the *Lancaster Intelligencer*, who ascended in another balloon at the same moment, came down at a point equally distant in an exactly opposite direction from the city.

With the name of John Wise that of another aëronaut equally well known is associated—not alone by their joint attempt to cross the Atlantic by balloon, but also on account of the probably identical manner and locality of the death of both—Washington H. Donaldson. While the interest in the mysterious fate of Donaldson and Grimwood was yet fresh in the public mind Mr. Wise published a pamphlet giving a fanciful account of their adventures, as if related by the aëronaut. In the light of the Wise-Burr tragedy its concluding paragraph has a singular significance: "In the end I ask the world to deal charitably with me. Should my body be found, give it decent burial and write for an epitaph: 'Here lies the body of a man whose reckless ambition and fear of being accused of want of nerve have sacrificed his own life and betrayed a fellow-mortal into the snares of death, with no higher object than to serve the interests of a scheme which, to say the best of it, is but a poor thing in the progress of art and refinement.'"

Donaldson was a man in many respects remarkable, in some admirable. With scant schooling, his father gave him a thorough training as a draughtsman and engraver. Allowed to choose for himself, he embarked in the amusement business, his active and versatile temperament leading him to become in turn a rope-walker, gymnast, actor, ventriloquist and, singularly enough, electro-physician. For most of these varied callings he had a certain adaptability by reason of his splendid physique, perfect health, entire abstinence from stimulants, ready wit, good-humor, fertility in expedients and promptitude and energy in execution, as well as by the daring and ambition naturally associated with such physical and mental qualifications. A friend writes of him: "He was as ready to navigate a cockle-shell from the Battery to Long Branch as he was to run a velocipede along a hundred yards of slack wire." His drawings, particularly those illustrating aëronautical scenes and incidents, were spirited and faithful. He tried his hand at verse-making among the rest. The following brief outburst, written after all the old loves had given place to that which became the absorbing passion of his life, and printed on his letter-heads and admission-cards, sufficiently illustrates the manner and matter of his efforts in this direction:

There's pleasure in a lively trip when sailing through the air.
The word is given, "Let her go!"—to land I know not where.
The view is grand: 'tis like a dream when many miles from home:
My castle in the air I love, above the clouds to roam.

Not an ideal character certainly, but a complete one in its way, and readily recognizable as belonging to a born aëronaut. The unromantic but not unusual inability of a professional predecessor to pay his board-bill, obliging him to leave his balloon with mine host as surety, first placed in Donaldson's hands the means by which he became afterward best known. Fearless as he undoubtedly was, an ascension was undertaken with the misgivings which usually preface an initial stepping from terra firma to the inconstant air. Once aloft, however, with the widespreading splendor and endless immensity of the earth's surface unrolling beneath him, and an exquisite physical exhilaration thrilling along his nerves, Donaldson became heart and soul an aëronaut. The novel and sensational expedients with which he embellished his subsequent ascensions are well known. Becomingly dressed in tights, he delighted to sail away skyward hanging by one hand from a trapeze-bar, generally terminating a variety of feats thereon by poising himself a moment on his back, then suddenly dropping backward, catching by his feet on the side-ropes—easy and safe enough, doubtless, with his preliminary acrobatic training, but blood-curdling to the breathless spectators beneath. He left drawings for a jointed bar which, at the proper time, should apparently break in two and leave him dangling to one of the pieces. For a consideration which the citizens of Binghamton, New York, sensibly declined to give he offered to ascend to the height of a mile in a paper balloon, there set fire to it and descend in a parachute.

A little incident, not generally known, illustrates the gentler side of his nature. He had been giving one of his trapeze exhibitions at Ithaca, New York, and was induced by some Cornell students to furnish them captive ascensions from the university campus. As if specially for the occasion, there came three days of delightful May weather with a propitiously quiet atmosphere. To the natural elevation of the location were added several hundred feet of rope, affording a bird's-eye view of Cayuga Lake, the town and far-famed adjacent scenery. Two or three hundred persons were "sent up," including several university professors. Donaldson was in his element, and kept everybody laughing at his jokes and amusing experiments. He had a crowd of children constantly at his heels, and in the intervals of waiting for pay-passengers would tumble them into the basket to the number of six or eight, and send them skyward screaming with delight and pelting him with a shower of hats and caps. Did their mothers know? Probably not, or there might have been screaming of a less joyous kind. One diminutive but intrepid youth of six won for himself the proud distinction of "our old experienced aëronaut," being generally used as ballast in making up a load.

Donaldson's fondness for proving his nerve in the face of a doubting crowd led him into many difficulties, as it finally caused his death. Once, when about to make an ascension at Pittsburg with a balloon that had not been used since the previous season, his assistant, Harry Gilbert, noticed that the ropes attaching the netting to the concentrating-ring seemed rotten, and proposed to replace them with new. This Donaldson insisted would take too much time, but he was finally induced to allow eight of the sixteen to be renewed. While giving his customary trapeze performance high above the housetops the old cords began to snap, and before he could bring the balloon down every one of them had parted—a startling intimation of how his rashness might have resulted.

Among the unkilled American aëronauts undoubtedly the best known for professional skill and experience is Samuel A. King. He seems to have been a predestined air-sailor, for he made his first ascension (Philadelphia, 1851) in his twenty-third year, and during more than two hundred subsequent voyages, many of them extending over hundreds of miles, and some adding darkness and proximity to large bodies of water to the ordinary dangers, he has shown an intuitive knowledge of the construction and management of the balloon and an appreciation of aërial forces which, while

they have not robbed his experiences of thrilling incidents, have kept them singularly free from disastrous consequences. One of the most memorable of these excursions was made from Plymouth, New Hampshire, September 26, 1872, on which occasion Mr. King was accompanied by his friend and frequent fellow-voyager, Luther L. Holden, of the *Boston Journal*. The balloon used only held twenty thousand cubic feet of gas, but was inflated with hydrogen. It was liberated at 4.18 P.M., and immediately manifested a determination to accompany some dense black clouds which were hurrying in a north-easterly direction toward the heart of the mountain-region on the verge of which Plymouth lies. Over Mount Washington and across the Androscoggin Valley it flew at the rate of fifty miles an hour. At six o'clock Lake Umbagog was floating beneath our adventurers, and before they realized their danger—so deceptive are time and space when reckoned from balloons—night surprised them in the great Maine wilderness. The alternative was between a descent in a trackless forest a hundred miles from human habitation, with scant provisions and no firearms or fishing-tackle, and an all-night voyage, trusting to luck and their ballast for getting beyond the wilderness. They had taken chances together before, and they went on now. If they failed to get out of the woods, they could tear up the balloon, and, encasing the wicker-basket with the waterproof material, float down some favoring stream. On and on for hours in an unknown direction, over an unknown region, winged by the wind and ally of the storm, they went, until, in the dismal watches of the early morning, to darkness, uncertainty and the intensity of isolation a new horror was added. The murmur of plashing forest-streams, which had hitherto been the only sound greeting them from the nether gloom, now gave place to the measured roll of the surf, and this, in turn, to complete silence. They were drifting out to sea, and were already far beyond the shore! The valve was opened at once, and as the balloon slowly settled into a dense, chilly fog the occupants of the basket momentarily expected a plunge-bath. The drag-rope, however, behaved with distinguished consideration, holding them a few feet above the waves, through which it whisked at a terrific rate. The weary and anxious watchers were thus kept in suspense for nearly half an hour, when suddenly there broke through the fog ahead the welcome outlines of a forest-shore, and in a moment more the drag-rope had lifted them above the tree-tops. By five o'clock it became light enough to note the time and that they were travelling in a south-westerly direction exactly contrary to their course of the evening before. At seven o'clock the balloon was moored to a limb, and its passengers, climbing down the drag-rope, made their way to a railroad-cutting which they had noticed while aloft. It proved to be on the line of the Intercolonial Railway in the county of Rimouski, Lower Canada, three hundred miles below Quebec. They had been dancing along the southern border of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and, had they not descended from the upper current into the water, were in a fair way to have next sighted land somewhere on the coast of Labrador.

Mr. King first brought large balloons into use in this country, and has thus been able to share the pleasures and perils of most of his sailings up and down with one or more companions, generally journalists. Few of the balloons in use twenty-five years ago would hold more than twenty thousand cubic feet of gas. Of the large balloons the Buffalo became widely known on account of its size and the number of notable voyages it made. Capacity, symmetry, lightness and staying quality considered, it was probably the best balloon ever built in America. When fully inflated it contained ninety-one thousand cubic feet of gas, and would carry up a dozen passengers. It was the Buffalo which on the memorable press-excursion from Cleveland, September 4, 1874, gave the reporters such a realizing sense of the pleasantness of dry land, the greater part of the day being spent in sailing to and fro over Lake Erie, the voyage being farther extended in the darkness of night across Essex county, Ontario, Lake St. Clair and into Michigan. The writer happened to be on the Cleveland steamer with the returning party, and had occasion to notice that the amateurs were too busily engaged in writing up their notes to thoroughly enjoy Mr. King's waggish allusions to "sea-sickness."

A night-trip made from the city of Buffalo in its namesake on July 4, 1874, was noteworthy for the magnificent success attending the use of the drag-rope. The balloon took a south-easterly course

across the State of Pennsylvania, going over the Alleghany Mountains and other ridges in the southern section of the State, being kept close to the earth most of the way. The relief of weight caused by a portion of the drag-rope lying and trailing upon the tree-tops enabled the balloon to climb the side of the mountain at about the same relative elevation. Swinging clear from the crest of the ridge, the balloon would soon settle into the valley, to repeat the same manœuvre farther on. Sunrise met the party near the Maryland line, and after a delightful sail across a portion of that State, Delaware and Delaware Bay, a landing was made in Southern New Jersey, four hundred miles and thirteen hours from the starting-point. The Buffalo will also be remembered in connection with the ascension from the exposition-grounds during the Centennial Exhibition.

The failure of the costly experiments undertaken by Mr. King for the American Aëronautic Society, at Coney Island last season, simply affords another illustration of the aëronautical axiom that "Captives are uncertain." Under the most favorable circumstances, and at inland points least exposed, on perhaps not more than a dozen days in the year will the air be sufficiently quiet to make captive ascensions practicable and pleasant, and the difficulty is of course greatly enhanced at the seacoast. The society proposes to again thoroughly test the matter this season, studying the velocity of the wind near the ocean from various altitudes.

Charles H. Grimley, whose views on aërial navigation have been alluded to, is a young Englishman who, while an expert air-sailor, has gained his experience rather in the pursuit of pleasure than of money, dedicating to the latter a more terrestrial vocation. His introduction to the upper currents was in the capacity of assistant to Stephen A. Simmonds, a wealthy enthusiast of London who made ascensions for the British Aëronautical Society. Mr. Grimley has made between forty and fifty aërial excursions, on one of them covering a distance of one hundred and sixty miles in three and a half hours, and on another occasion attaining a height of nineteen thousand four hundred feet. A number of these voyages were made in Canada. Some of his descents have resulted in severe bruises. One of these unpleasantly sudden landings closed a brief trip made from Pittsburg in October, 1875, and took place on the Monongahela River five miles above that city. Mr. Grimley was accompanied by Harry Byram of the *Pittsburg Dispatch*. Two things regulate the force of impact in a balloon descent—the strength of the surface-current and the amount of ballast the aëronaut has with which to overbalance the weight in excess of equilibrium causing the descent. Both were against our adventurers. Most of their ballast had been expended in getting into the air, and while they had found almost a calm at an elevation of forty-five hundred feet, the surface-current was terrific. The balloon approached the earth at an angle of about forty-five degrees with fearful velocity, flew across Beck's Run and tore into a clump of trees growing on a rocky ledge dividing the ravine from the river. The basket was dashed from one tree-trunk to another, and, the balloon finally impaling itself on the branches of a huge oak, both its occupants were hurled halfway down the river-bank, the fall rendering them insensible. With returning consciousness came a sense of sundry bruises and cuts on their persons. A scalp-wound on Mr. Grimley's forehead had bled profusely upon both, imparting a sad and sanguinary cast to the countenances turned toward those who came to their assistance.

While preparing for an ascent from Bethel, Vermont, in September, 1877, a squall hurled the balloon over upon its side, causing a rent which extended from the mouth upward for eighteen feet, and then along a transverse seam some six feet. Mr. Grimley thus describes the result: "This gaping hole caused a loss of several thousand feet of gas, but as still enough remained to take me up, I determined to ascend, hoping that when I was out of the disturbing influence of the wind the rent would not extend. In this, however, I was disappointed, for, reaching an altitude of twelve hundred feet, a counter-current struck the balloon, causing it to sway violently and jerking the torn portion to and fro until it ripped six feet farther around the seam. The balloon continued to rise until it had attained an elevation of thirty-five hundred feet, the gas meanwhile pouring in volumes from the hole. The weight of the torn portion hanging down caused the rent to enlarge every minute, until it extended nearly halfway round, the whole interior of the balloon being plainly visible. I kept as still

as possible, as the slightest agitation of the car tended to hasten the ripping. The balloon had slowly descended nearly a thousand feet when suddenly, with a sharp crack, the rip extended upward about five feet more, until stopped by another seam. I now began to be alarmed, fearing the balloon would collapse entirely. I was over the roughest and most mountainous part of Vermont, with no place in sight suitable for a landing. The balloon was falling rapidly. I threw out everything in the car, anchor and ropes included, to check the descent, but to no purpose. I struck the rocky summit of Mount Tunbridge with a crash, instantly collapsing the balloon and throwing me out of the basket, inflicting injuries from which I did not recover for many months."

The press-excursions, originated, as hinted above, by Mr. King, and brought into such prominence by Donaldson in connection with Barnum's Hippodrome, produced a new and interesting class of aëronauts, peculiar, I believe, to this country and decade. The reporter is the true author, after all. If he have the courage and enthusiasm to plunge into the most untried and dangerous of life's paths, and the skill to transcribe his impressions in the freshest and most vivid colors, he possesses one form of the only valid plea for a man's asking the world of readers to listen to him—unhackneyed experience.

One of Mr. Holden's adventures has been described above. After Tissandier, he is doubtless the veteran journalistic aëronaut of the world. Beginning in 1861, he has made in all twenty-six voyages, some of them perilously eventful, including several night-flights of hundreds of miles. Most of his experience has been gained with Mr. King, though he accompanied Donaldson on several occasions. At the request of Professor Abby of the Signal Service, Mr. Holden took frequent barometrical and hygrometrical observations in his later excursions. He has made no ascensions for some years, his surplus time and enthusiasm being diverted to European travel. The following bit of description admirably illustrates his style: "It is a strange scene that bursts upon the vision of the balloon-passenger as he rises above the housetops and trees. There is a moment when he beholds the thousands of upturned faces, the throngs of people in the street, at the windows and on the housetops, teams moving lazily hither and thither, and amid all a confused fluttering of leaves, frightened birds, waving flags and handkerchiefs, and a general commotion quite indescribable. But in another moment the men become mere black spots on a field of green, the horses and carriages are reduced to toys and the houses to the dimensions of the blocks children use at play. While all detail is disappearing there is a seeming contraction of larger objects. Streets have drawn nearer to each other: it is but a few steps from one extremity of a town to the other, and remote places are brought within slight distances of the objects beneath his feet."

Mr. Frank H. Taylor, of *Harpers Weekly*, has an aëronautical record second only to that of Mr. Holden, having been basketed on several trips each with Wise, Donaldson and King. Mr. Alfred Ford, of *The Graphic*, who with Donaldson and Lunt started on the disastrous Transatlantic voyage in the Graphic balloon, and Rev. H.B. Jeffries, of the *Pittsburg Leader*, who officiated at the balloon-wedding over Cincinnati, are also entitled to rank as veterans. The European literature of ballooning, with its accurate and brilliant descriptions by Glaisher, Tissandier, De Fonvielle and Dupuis-Delcour, has nothing more graphic and absorbing than some of the accounts dashed off in the white heat of enthusiasm by these and other American journalists. The nervousness and chaffing before the start; the thrill and wonder of the upward rush; the strange exhilaration coming with relivening confidence; the unspeakable loveliness and grandeur of the prospect; the thousand varied incidents of the too-brief journey; the short, sharp excitement of the landing; the awe and curiosity of the impromptu crowd invariably on the ground before the balloon, and reluctantly leaving it only when the last whiff of gas is rolled out of it and the last rope thrown into the wagon; the moonlight ride to the station with the gas-bag for a pillow and the brain too busy with the strangeness of the day for much talk,—all this and more, in endless diversity of circumstance and treatment, these gentlemen have embalmed for the curious millions who cannot or will not go "up in a balloon."

Will O. Bates.

ADAM AND EVE

CHAPTER XXII

The month of December was well advanced before Eve's letter had reached Reuben May. It came to him one morning when, notwithstanding the fog which reigned around, Reuben had arisen in more than usually good spirits, able to laugh at his neighbors for railing against weather which he declared was good weather and seasonable.

The moment the postman entered the shop his heart gave a great bound—for who but Eve would write to him?—and no sooner had his eyes fallen on the handwriting than his whole being rejoiced, for surely nothing but good news could be heralded by such glad feelings. With a resolute self-denial, of which on most occasions Reuben was somewhat proud, he refused himself the immediate gratification of his desires, and with a hasty glance laid the letter on one side while he entered into a needlessly long discussion with the postman, gossiped with a customer—for whose satisfaction he volunteered a minute inspection of a watch which might have very reasonably been put off until the morrow—and finally (there being nothing else by which the long-coveted pleasure could be further delayed) he took up the letter and carefully turned it first this side and then that before breaking the seal and unfolding the paper.

What would it say? That she was coming back—coming home? But when? how soon? In a month? in a week? now at once? In one flash of vision Reuben saw the furniture polished and comfortably arranged, the room smartened up and looking its best with a blazing fire and a singing kettle, and a cozy meal ready laid for two people; and then all they would have to say to one another—on his part much to hear and little to tell, for his life had jogged on at a very commonplace trot, his business neither better nor worse, but still, with the aid of the little sum his more than rigid economy had enabled him to save, they might make a fair start, free from all debt and able to pay their way.

These thoughts only occupied the time which Reuben took to undo the complicated folds by which, before the days of envelopes, correspondents endeavored to baffle the curiosity of those who sought to know more than was intended for them. But what is this? for Reuben's eyes had been so greedy to suck up the words that he had not given his mind time to grasp their meaning: "Not coming back! never—any more!"—"I like the place, the people, and, above all, my relations, so very much that I should never be happy now away from them."

He repeated the words over again and again before he seemed to have the least comprehension of what they meant: then, in a stupor of dull despondency, he read on to the end, and learnt that all his hopes were over, that his life was a blank, and that the thing he had dreaded so much as to cheat himself into the belief that it could never happen had come to pass. And yet he was still Reuben May, and lived and breathed, and hadn't much concern beyond the thought of how he should best send the things she had left to Polperro—the place she never intended to leave, the place she now could never be happy away from.

Later on, a hundred wild schemes and mad desires wrestled and fought, trying to combat with his judgment and put to flight his sense of resolution; but now, as in the first moment of death, with the vain hope of realizing his loss, the mourner sits gazing at the inanimate form before him, so Reuben, holding the letter in his hands, returned again and again to the words which had dealt death to his hopes and told him that the love he lived for no longer lived for him. For Eve had been very emphatic in enforcing this resolve, and had so strongly worded her decision that, try as he would, Reuben could find no chink by which a ray of hope might gain admittance: all was dark with the gloom of despair, and this notwithstanding that Adam had not been mentioned, and Reuben had no more certain knowledge of a rival to guide him than the jaundiced workings of a jealous heart. Many

events had concurred to bring about this blamable reticence. In the first place, the letter which Eve had commenced as a mere fulfilment of her promise had grown through a host of changing moods; for as time went on many a sweet and bitter found its way to that stream whose course did never yet run smooth; and could the pages before him have presented one tithe of these varied emotions, Reuben's sober nature would have rejoiced in the certainty that such an excess of sensitiveness needed but time and opportunity to wear itself out.

It was nearly two months now since it had been known all through the place that Adam Pascal was keeping company with his cousin Eve, and the Polperro folk, one and all, agreed that no good could surely come of a courtship carried on after such a contrary fashion; for the two were never for twenty-four hours in the same mind, and the game of love seemed to resolve itself into a war of extremes wherein anger, devotion, suspicion and jealousy raged by turns and afforded equal occasions of scandal and surprise. To add to their original difficulties, the lovers had now to contend against the circumstances of time and place, for during the winter, from most of the men being on shore and without occupation, conviviality and merriment were rife among them, and from Bell-ringing Night, which ushered in Gun-powder Plot, until Valentine's Day was passed, revels, dances or amusements of any kind which brought people together were welcomed and well attended. With the not unnatural desire to get away from her own thoughts, and to avoid as much as was possible the opportunity of being a looker-on at happiness in which she had no personal share, Joan greedily availed herself of every invitation which was given or could be got at, and, as was to be expected, Eve, young, fresh and a novice, became to a certain degree infected with the anxiety to participate in most of these amusements. Adam made no objection, and, though he did not join them with much spirit and alacrity, he neither by word nor deed threw any obstacle in their way to lessen their anticipation or spoil their pleasure, while Jerrem, head, chief and master of ceremonies, found in these occasions ample opportunity for trying Adam's jealousy and tickling Eve's vanity.

Nettled by the indifference which, from her open cordiality, Jerrem soon saw Eve felt toward him, he taxed every art of pleasing to its utmost, with the determination of not being baffled in his attempts to supplant Adam, who in Jerrem's eyes was a man upon whom Fortune had lavished her choicest favors. Born in Polperro, Zebedee's son, heir to the Lottery, captain of her now in all but name, what had Adam to desire? while he, Jerrem, belonged to no one, could claim no one, had no name and could not say where he came from. Down in the depths of a heart in which nothing that was good or bad ever lingered long Jerrem let this fester rankle, until often, when he seemed most gay and reckless, some thoughtless word or idle joke would set it smarting. The one compensation he looked upon as given to him above Adam was the power of attraction, by which he could supplant him with others and rob him of their affection; so that, though he was no more charmed by Eve's rare beauty than he was won by her coy modesty, no sooner did he see that Adam's affection was turned toward her than he coveted her love and desired to boast of it as being his own. With this object in view, he began by enlisting Eve's sympathies with his forlorn position, inferring a certain similarity in their orphaned condition which might well lead her to bestow upon him her especial interest and regard; and so well was this part played that before long Eve found herself learning unconsciously to regard Adam as severe and unyielding toward Jerrem, whose misfortune it was to be too easily influenced. Seeing her strong in her own rectitude and no less convinced of the truth of Jerrem's well-intentioned resolutions, Adam felt it next to impossible to poison Eve's ears with tales and scandals of which her innocent life led her to have no suspicion: therefore, though the sight of their slightest intercourse rankled within him, he was forced to keep silent, knowing as he did that if he so much as pointed an arrow every head was wagged at him, and if he dared to let it fly home every tongue was ready to cry shame on his treachery.

So the winter wore away, and as each day lengthened Adam found it more difficult to master his suspicions, to contend with his surroundings and to control the love which had taken complete hold and mastery of all his senses. With untiring anxiety he continued to dodge every movement of

Jerrem and Eve—all those about him noting it, laughing over it, and, while they thwarted and tricked him, making merry at his expense, until Jerrem, growing bolder under such auspicious countenance no longer hesitated to throw a very decided air of lovemaking into his hitherto innocent and friendly intercourse.

Shocked and pained by Jerrem's altered tone, Eve sought refuge in Joan's broader experience by begging that she would counsel her as to the best way of putting a stop to this ungenerous conduct.

"Awh, my dear," cried Joan, "unless you'm wantin' to see murder in the house you mustn't braithe no word of it. 'Tw'ud be worse than death to Jerrem if't should iver come to Adam's ears: why, he'd have his life if he swung gallows-high for takin' of it. So, like a good maid, keep it from un now, 'cos they'm all on the eve o' startin', and by the time they comes home agen Jerrem 'ull have forgot all about 'ee."

Eve hesitated: "I told him if ever he spoke like that to me again I'd tell Adam."

"Iss, but you won't do it, though," returned Joan, "'cos there ain't no manin' in what he says, you knaw. 'Tis only what he's told up to scores and hunderds o' other maidens afore, the rapskallion-rogued raskil! And that Adam knaws, and's had it in his mind from' fust along what game he was after. Us two knaws un for what he is, my dear—wan best loved where he's least trusted."

"It's so different to the men I've ever had to do with," said Eve.

"Iss, but you never knawed but wan afore you comed here, did 'ee?"

"I only knew one man well," returned Eve.

"Awh, then, you must bide a bit 'fore you can fathom their deepness," replied Joan; "and while you'm waitin' I wouldn't advise 'ee to take it for granted that the world's made up o' Reuben Mays—nor Adam Pascals neither;" and she ran to the door to welcome a cousin for whose approach she had been waiting, while Eve, worried and perplexed, let her thoughts revert to the old friend who seemed to have quite forgotten her; for Reuben had sent no answer to Eve's letter, and thus had afforded no opportunity for the further announcement she had intended making. His silence, interpreted by her into indifference, had hurt her more than she liked owning, even to herself; and the confession of their mutual promise, which she had intended making to Adam, was still withheld, because her vanity forbade her to speak of a man whose affection she had undoubtedly overrated.

Already there had been some talk of the furniture being sent for, and with this in view the next time she saw Sammy Tucker she asked him if he had been to Fowey lately, and if he had seen anything of Captain Triggs.

Sammy, as was his wont, blushed up to the eyes before he stammered out something about having met "un just for a minit comin' down by Place, 'cos he'd bin up there to fetch sommit he was goin' to car'y to London for Squire Trefry; but that was a brave bit agone, so, p'r'aps," added Sammy, "he's back by now, 'cos they wos a-startin' away that ebenin'."

Eve made no other remark, and Sammy turned away, not sorry to escape further interrogation, for it had so happened that the opportunity alluded to had been turned by Sammy to the best advantage, and he had contrived in the space of ten minutes to put Captain Triggs in possession of the whole facts of Adam and Eve's courtship, adding that "Folks said 'twas a burnin' shame o'he to marry she, and Joan Hocken fo'ced to stand by and look on; and her's" (indicating by his thumb it was his stepmother he meant) "ha' tooked on tar'ible bad, and bin as moody-hearted as could be ever since."

Captain Triggs nodded his head in sympathy, and then went on his way with the intuitive conviction that this bit of news, which he intended repeating to "thickee chap in London," would not be received with welcome. "However," he reflected, "'tis allays best to knaw the warst, so I shall tell un the fust time I meets un, which is safe to be afore long, 'cos o'the ole gentleman," meaning thereby an ancient silver watch through whose medium Captain Triggs and Reuben had struck up an intimacy. How Reuben blessed that watch and delighted in those ancient works which would not go, and so afforded him an opportunity for at least one visit!

Each time the Mary Jane came to London, Reuben was made acquainted with the fact, and the following evening found him in the little cabin poring over the intricacies of his antique friend, whose former capabilities, when in the possession of his father, Captain Triggs was never weary of recounting.

Standing behind Reuben, Triggs would nod and chuckle at each fresh difficulty that presented itself, delighting in the proud certainty that after all the London chap "'ud find the ole gentleman had proved wan too many for he;" and when Reuben, desirous of further information, would prepare his way for the next visit by declaring he must have another try at him, Triggs, radiant but magnanimous, would answer, "Iss, iss, lad, do 'ee come agen; for 'tis aisy to see with half a eye that 'tain't wan look, nor two neither, that 'ull circumnavigate the insides o' that ole chap if 'taint to his liken to be set agoin'."

CHAPTER XXIII

It was some weeks after the receipt of Eve's letter that Reuben, having paid several fruitless visits to Kay's Wharf, walked down one afternoon to find the Mary Jane in and Captain Triggs on board. The work of the short winter's day was all but over, and Reuben accepted an invitation to bide where he was and have a bit of a yarn.

"You've bin bad, haven't 'ee?" Captain Triggs said with friendly anxiety as, seated in the little cabin, their faces were brought on a level of near inspection.

"Me—bad?" replied Reuben. "No. Why, what made you think of that?"

"'Cos you'm lookin' so gashly about the gills."

"Oh, I was always a hatchet-faced fellow," said Reuben, wondering as he spoke whether his lack of personal appearance had in any way damaged his cause with Eve, for poor Reuben was in that state when thoughts, actions, words have but one centre round which they all seem unavoidably to revolve.

"But you'm wuss than ever now. I reckon," continued Captain Triggs, "'tis through addlin' your head over them clocks and watches too close, eh?"

"Well, perhaps so," said Reuben. "I often think that if I could I should like to be more in the open air."

"Come for a voyage with me, then," said Triggs heartily. "I'll take 'ee, and give'ee a shake-down free; and yer mate and drink for the aitin'. Come, you can't have fairer than that said, now, can 'ee?"

A wild thought rushed into Reuben's mind. Should he go with him, see Eve once more, and try whether it was possible to move her to some other decision? "You're very kind, I'm sure," he began, "and I feel very much obliged for such an offer; but—"

"There! 'tis nothin' to be obliged for," interrupted Triggs, thinking it was Reuben's modesty made him hesitate. "We'm a hand short, so anywise there's a berth empty; and as for the vittals, they allays cooks a sight more than us can get the rids of. So I'm only offerin' 'ee what us can't ate ourselves."

"I think you mean what you're saying," said Reuben—"at least," he added, smiling, "I hope you do, for 'pon my word I feel as if I should like very much to go."

"Iss, sure, Come along, then. Us sha'n't start afore next week, and you'll be to Bristol and back 'fore they've had time to miss 'ee here."

"Bristol?" ejaculated Reuben. "I thought you were going to Cornwall again?"

"Not to wance, I ain't, but wouldn't 'ee rather go to Bristol? 'Tis a brave place, you know. For my part, I'd so soon see Bristol as London: 'tis pretty much o' the same lookout here as there." But while Captain Triggs had been saying these words his thoughts had made a sudden leap toward the truth, and, finding Reuben not ready with a remark, he continued: "'Tain't on no account of the young female you comed aboard here with that's makin' 'ee think o' Cornwall, is it?"

"Yes, it is," said Reuben bluntly. "I want to see her. I've had a letter from her, and it needs a little talkin' over."

"Awh! then I 'spects there's no need for me to tell 'ee that her's took up with Adam Pascal. You knaws it already?"

Reuben felt as if a pike had been driven into his heart, but his self-command stood him in good stead, and he said quite steadily, "Do you happen to know him or anything about him?"

"Awh, iss: I knaws 'en fast enuf," said Triggs, who felt by intuition that Reuben's desire was to know no good of him, "and a precious stomachy chap he is. Lord! I pities the maid who'll be his missis: whether gentle or simple, her's got her work cut out afore her."

"In what way? How do ye mean?"

"Why, he's got the temper o' the old un to stand up agen, and wherever he shows his face he must be head and chief and must lay down the law, and you must hearken to act by it or else look out for squalls."

Reuben drew his breath more freely. "And what is he?" he asked.

"Wa-all, I reckon he's her cousin, you knaw," answered Triggs, misinterpreting the question, "'cos he's ole Zebedee's awnly son, and the ole chap's got houses and lands and I dunno what all. But, there! I wouldn't change with 'em; for you knaw what they be, all alike—a drunk-in', fightin', cussin' lot. Lor's! I cudn't stand it, I cudn't, to be drunk from mornin' to night and from night to mornin'."

"And is he one of this sort?" exclaimed Reuben in horror. "Why, are her relations like that?"

"They'm all tarred with the wan brush, I reckon," replied Triggs. "If not, they cudn't keep things goin' as they do: 'tis the drink car'ies 'em through with it. Why, I knaws by the little I've a done that ways myself how 'tis. Git a good skinful o' grog in 'ee, and wan man feels he's five, and, so long as it lasts, he's got the sperrit and 'ull do the work o' five too: then when 'tis beginnin' to drop a bit, in with more liquor, and so go on till the job's over."

"And how long do they keep it up?" said Reuben.

"Wa-all, that's more than I can answer for. Let me see," said Triggs, reflectively. "There was ole Zeke Spry: he was up eighty-seben, and he used to say he'd never, that he knowed by and could help, bin to bed not to say *sober* since he'd comed to years o' discretion. But in that ways he was only wan o' many; and after he was dead 't happened just as 't ole chap had said it wud, for he used to say, 'When I'm tooked folks 'ull get up a talk that ole Zeke Spry killed hisself with drink; but don't you listen to it,' he says, "cos 'tain't nothin' o' the sort: he died for want o' breath—that's what killed he;' and I reckon he was about right, else there wudn't be nobody left to die in Polperro."

"Polperro?" said Reuben: "that's where your ship goes to?"

"No, not ezactly: I goes to Fowey, but they bain't over a step or so apart—a matter o' six miles, say."

There was a pause, which Captain Triggs broke by saying, "Iss, I thought whether it wudn't surprise 'ee to hear 'bout it bein' Adam Pascal. They'm none of 'em overmuch took with it, I reckon, for they allays counted on 'im havin' Joan Hocken: her's another cousin, and another nice handful, by all that's told up."

Reuben's spirit groaned within him. "Oh, if I'd only known of this before!" he said. "I'd have kept her by force from going, or if she would have gone I'd have gone with her. She was brought up so differently!" he continued, addressing Triggs. "A more respectable woman never lived than her mother was."

"Awh! so the Pascals all be: there's none of 'em but what's respectable and well-to-do. What I've bin tellin' of 'ee is their ways, you knaw: 'tain't nothing agen 'em."

"It's quite decided me to go down and see her, though," said Reuben. "I feel it's what her mother would have me do: she in a way asked me to act a brother's part to her when she was dying, for she didn't dream about her having anything to do with these relations whom she's got among now."

"Wa-all, 'twas a thousand pities you let her go, then," said Triggs; "and, though I'm not wantin' to hinder 'ee—for you'm so welcome to a passage down to Fowey as you be round to Bristol—still, don't it strike 'ee that if her wudn't stay here for yer axin' then, her ain't likely to budge from there for your axin' now?"

"I can but try, though," said Reuben, "and if you let me go when you're going—"

"Say no more, and the thing's settled," replied Triggs decisively. "I shall come back to London with a return cargo, which 'ull have to be delivered: another wan 'ull be tooked in, and, that aboard, off us goes."

"Then the bargain's made," said Reuben, holding out his hand; "and whenever you're ready to start you'll find me ready to go."

Captain Triggs gave the hand a hearty shake in token of his willingness to perform his share of the compact; and the matter being so far settled, Reuben made his necessary preparations, and with all the patience he could summon to his aid endeavored to wait with calmness the date of departure.

While Reuben was waiting in London activity had begun to stir again in Polperro. The season of pleasure was over: the men had grown weary of idleness and merrymaking, and most of them now anxiously awaited the fresh trip on which they were about to start. The first run after March was always an important one, and the leaders of the various crews had been at some trouble to arrange this point to the general satisfaction.

Adam's temper had been sorely tried during these discussions, but never had he so well governed it nor kept his sharp speech under such good control; the reason being that at length he had found another outlet for his wounded sensibility.

With the knowledge that the heart he most cared for applauded and sympathized with his hopes and his failures Adam could be silent and be calm. To Jerrem alone the cause of this alteration was apparent, and with all the lynx-eyed sharpness of vexed and wounded vanity he tried to thwart and irritate Adam by sneering remarks and covert suggestions that all must now give way to him: it was nothing but "follow my leader" and do and say what he chose—words which were as pitch upon tow to natures so readily inflamed, so headstrong against government and impatient of everything which savored of control. And the further misfortune of this was that Adam, though detecting Jerrem's influence in all this opposition, was unable to speak of it to Eve. It was the single point relating to the whole matter on which the two kept silent, each regarding the very mention of Jerrem's name as a firebrand which might perchance destroy the wonderful harmony which for the last week or so had reigned between them, and which to both was so sweet that neither had the courage to endanger or destroy it.

At length the day of departure had come, and as each hour brought the inevitable separation closer Eve's heart began to discover itself more openly, and she no longer disguised or hid from those around that her love, her hopes, her fears were centred upon Adam.

In vain did Jerrem try, by the most despairing looks and despondent sighs, to attract her attention and entice her to an interview. Away from Adam's side—or, Adam absent, from Joan's company—Eve would not stir, until Jerrem, driven into downright ill-humor, was forced to take refuge in sullen silence.

It had been decided that the Lottery was to start in the evening, and the day had been a busy one, but toward the end of the afternoon Adam managed to spare a little time, which was to be devoted to Eve and to saying the farewell which in reality was then to take place between them.

In order to ensure a certain amount of privacy, it had been arranged that Eve should go to an opening some halfway up Talland lane and there await Adam's approach, which he would make by scrambling up from under the cliff and so across to where she could see and come to meet him.

Accordingly, as soon as five o'clock had struck, Eve, who had been fidgeting about for some time, got up and said, "Joan, if Jerrem comes in you won't tell where I've gone, will you?"

"Well, seein' I don't knaw the where-abouts of it myself, I should be puzzled," said Joan.

"I'm goin' up Talland lane to meet Adam," faltered Eve; "and as it's to say good-bye, I—we—don't want anybody else, you see."

The tremulous tone of the last few words made Joan turn round, and, looking at Eve, she saw that the gathered tears were ready to fall from her eyes. Joan had felt a desire to be sharp in speech, but the sight of Eve's face melted her anger at once, and with a sudden change of manner she said, "Why, bless the maid! what's there to cry about? You'm a nice one, I just say, to be a sailor's wife! Lor's! don't let 'em see that you frets to see their backs, or they'll be gettin' it into their heads next that they'm somebodys and we can't live without 'em. They'll come back soon enough, and a sight too soon for a good many here, I can tell 'ee."

Eve shook her head. "But will they come back?" she said despairingly. "I feel something different to what I ever felt before—a presentiment of evil, as if something would happen. What could happen to them, Joan?"

"Lord bless 'ee! don't ax un what could happen to 'em. Why, a hunderd things: they could be wracked and drowned, or catched and killed, or tooked and hung." Then, bursting into a laugh at Eve's face of horror, she exclaimed, "Pack o' stuff, nonsense! Don't 'ee take heed o' no fancies nor rubbish o' that sort. They'll come back safe enuf, as they've allays done afore. Nothin's ever happened to 'em yet: what should make it now? T' world ain't a-comin' to an end 'cos you'm come down fra' London town. There, get along with 'ee, do!" and she pushed her gently toward the door, adding, with a sigh, "'Twould be a poor tale if Adam was never to come back now, and it the first time he ever left behind un anything he cared to see agen."

Eve soon reached her point of observation, and under shelter of the hedge she stood looking with anxious eyes in the direction from which Adam was to come. It had been a clear bright day, and the air blew fresh and cool; the sky (except to windward, where a few white fleecy masses lay scattered about) was cloudless; the sea was of a deep-indigo blue, flecked with ridges of foam, which unfurled and spread along each wave, crested its tip and rode triumphant to the shore. Inside the Peak, over the harbor, the gulls were congregated, some fluttering over the water, some riding on its surface, some flying in circles over the heights, now green and soft with the thick fresh grass of spring. Down the spine of the cliff the tangle of brier-wood and brambles, though not leafless, still showed brown, and the long trails which were lifted and bowed down as the sudden gusts of wind swept over them, looked bare and wintry.

Eve gave an involuntary shiver, and her eyes, so quick to drink in each varied aspect of the sea, now seemed to try and shut out its beauty from before her.

What should she do if the wind blew and the waves rose as she had seen them do of late, rejoicing in the sight, with Adam by her side? But with him away, she here alone—oh, her spirit sank within her; and to drive away the thoughts which came crowding into her mind she left her shelter, and, hurrying along the little path, crossed the cress-grown brook, and was soon halfway up the craggy ascent, when Adam, who had reached the top from the other side, called out, "Hallo! I didn't think to find you here. We'd best walk back a bit, or else we shall be just in the eye of the wind, and it's coming on rather fresh."

"You won't go if it blows, Adam?" and Eve's face betrayed her anxiety.

"Oh, my dear one," he said kindly, "you mustn't think of the wind's having anything to do with me. Besides, it's all in our favor, you know: it'll rock us to sleep all the sooner."

Eve tried to smile back as she looked up at him, but it was a very feeble attempt. "I don't want to feel frightened," she said, "but I can't help it."

"Can't help what?"

"Why, thinking that something may happen."

"Oh, nonsense!" he said: "there's nothing going to happen. It's because you care for me you think like that. Why, look at me: ain't I the same? Before this I never felt anything but glad to be off and get away; but this time"—and he drew a long sigh, as if to get rid of the oppression—"I seem to carry about a lump of lead inside me, and the nearer it comes to saying good-bye the heavier it grows."

This sympathy seemed to afford Eve some consolation, and when she spoke again it was to ask in a more cheerful tone how long their probable absence would be, where they were going, what time they would take in getting there; to all of which Adam answered with unnecessary exactness, for both of them felt they were talking, for talking's sake, of things about which they knew all they could know already. Yet how was it possible, in the light of open day, when at any moment they might be joined by a third person, to speak of that which lay deep down in their hearts, waiting only for a word, a caress, a tender look, to give it voice?

Adam had had a dozen cautions, entreaties, injunctions to give to Eve: he had been counting through every minute of the day the time to this hour, and now it had come and he seemed to have nothing to say—could think of nothing except how long he could possibly give to remaining.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed after more than an hour had slipped away—time wasted in irrelevant questions and answers, with long pauses between, when neither could think of anything to say, and each wondered why the other did not speak—"By Jove, Eve! I must be off: I didn't think the time had gone so quick. We mustn't start at the furthest later than eight; and if I ain't there to look after them nobody'll think it worth while to be ready."

They were back under shelter of the hedge again now, and Adam (who possessed the singular quality of not caring to do his lovemaking in public) ventured to put his arm round Eve's waist and draw her toward him. "You'll never let me go again," he said, "without bein' able to leave you my wife, Eve, will you? 'Tis that, I b'lieve, is pressing on me. I wish now more than ever that you hadn't persisted in saying no all this long winter."

"I won't say no next time," she said, while the hitherto restrained tears began to fall thick and fast.

Adam's delight was not spoken in words, and for the time he forgot all about the possibility of being overlooked: "Then, when I come back I sha'n't be kept waiting any longer?"

"No."

"And we shall be married at once?"

"Yes."

Adam strained her again to his heart. "Then, come what may," he said, "I sha'n't fear it. So long as I've got you, Eve, I don't care what happens. It's no good," he said, after another pause. "The time's up, and I must be off. Cheer up, my girl, cheer up! Look up at me, Eve, that's a sweetheart! Now, one kiss more, and after that we must go on to the gate, and then good-bye indeed."

But, the gate reached and the good-bye said, Eve still lingered. "Oh, Adam!" she cried, "stop—wait for one instant."

And Adam, well pleased to be detained, turned toward her once more.

"Good-bye, Adam: God watch over you!"

"Amen, my girl, amen! May He watch over both of us, for before Him we are one now, Eve: we've taken each other, as the book has it, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health."

"Till death do you part," said the sepulchral tones of a voice behind the hedge; and with a laugh at the start he had given them Jerrem passed by the gate and went on his way.

CHAPTER XXIV

Several weeks had now passed by since the bustle of departure was over, and, though no direct intelligence had come from the absentees, a rumor had somehow spread abroad that the expected run of goods was to be one of the largest ever made in Polperro.

The probability of this fact had been known to the leaders of the expedition before they started, and had afforded Adam another opportunity for impressing upon them the great necessity for increased caution.

Grown suspicious at the supineness which generally pervaded the revenue department, the government had decided upon a complete revolution, and during the winter months the entire force of the coast had been everywhere superseded and in many places increased. Both at Looe and Fowey the cutters had new officers and crews, and the men, inflamed with the zeal of newcomers, were most ardent to make a capture and so prove themselves worthy of the post assigned to them.

While all his comrades had affected to laugh at these movements, Adam had viewed them with anxiety—had seen the graveness of their import and the disasters likely to arise from them; and at length his arguments had so far prevailed that a little better regulation was made for the working of signals and ensuring that they should be given and attended to if required. In case of danger the rule was to burn a fire on different heights of the cliff, and small huts were even erected for that purpose; but the lighting of these fires was often delayed until the last moment: what had become everybody's business was nobody's business, and secure that, in any case, the cruisers were no more willing to fight than the smugglers were wanting to be fought, hazards were often incurred which with men whose silence could not be bought (for up to that time every crew had had its go-between) would most certainly have proved fatal.

Upon the present force no influence could as yet be got to bear, and, to prove the temper of their dispositions, no sooner was it known to them that three of the most daring of the Polperro vessels were absent than they set to watching the place with such untiring vigilance that it needed all the sharpness of those left behind to follow their movements and arrange the signals so that they might warn their friends without exciting undue suspicions among their enemies.

Night after night, in one place or another, the sheltered flicker of the flame shone forth as a warning that any attempt to land would prove dangerous, until, word being suddenly brought that the cruiser had gone off to Polruan, out went the fire, and, an answering light showing that at least one of the vessels was on the watch, when the morning dawned the Stamp and Go was in and her cargo safe under water. The Lottery, she said, had contrived to decoy the revenue-men away, hoping that by that means the two smaller vessels might stand a chance of running in, but from their having to part company and keep well away from each other, the Stamp and Go, though certain the Cleopatra was not far off, had lost sight of her.

The day passed away, the evening light had all but faded, when to the watchers the Cleopatra, with crowded sail and aided by a south-west wind, was seen trying to make the harbor, close followed by the cruiser. The news flew over the place like lightning, and but a few minutes seemed to have passed before all Polperro swarmed the cliffs, each trying to secure a vantage-point by putting forth some strong claim of interest in those on board. With trembling hearts and anxious gaze the lookers-on watched each movement of the two vessels, a dead silence prevailing among them so long as they both followed in the same course, but the instant a clever tack was made by which the pursuers were baffled, up rose the shout of many voices, and cries were heard and prayers uttered that the darkness would come quickly on and afford their friends a safe entrance.

Except to such men as steered the Cleopatra, to enter Polperro harbor amid darkness and wind was a task beyond their skill; and, knowing this, and seeing by her adversary's tactics the near possibility of defeat, the cruiser had resort to her guns, trying to cut away the Cleopatra's gear, and

by that means compel her to heave-to. But, though partly disabled, the stout little vessel bore onward, and night's friendly clouds coming to her aid, the discomfited cruiser had to withdraw within hearing of the triumphant shouts which welcomed her rival's safety.

With the exception of the Lottery all was now safe, but no fears were entertained on her account, because, from her superior size and her well-known fast-sailing qualities, the risks which had endangered the other two vessels would in no way affect her. She had merely to cruise outside and await, with all the patience her crew could command, a fitting opportunity for slipping in, escaping the revenue-men and turning on them a fresh downpour of taunts and ridicule.

In proof of this, several of the neighboring fishing-boats had from time to time seen and spoken to the Lottery; and with a view to render those at home perfectly at ease every now and again one of these trusty messengers would arrive with a few words which would be speedily circulated among those most interested. The fact of her absence, and the knowledge that at any time the attempt to land might be made, naturally kept every one on the strain; and directly night set in both Joan and Eve trembled at each movement and started at every sound.

One night, as, in case of surprise, they were setting all things in order, a sudden shuffling made Joan fly to the door. "Why, Jonathan," she exclaimed, admitting the man whom Eve had never seen since the evening after her arrival, "what's up? What brings you here, eh?"

"I've comed with summat for you," he said, casting a suspicious look at Eve.

"Well, out with it, then," said Joan, quickly adding, as she jerked her head in that direction, "us don't have no secrets from she."

"Awh, doant 'ee?" returned Jonathan in a voice which sounded the reverse of complimentary. "Wa-all, then, there's what 'tis;" and he held toward her a piece of paper folded up like a letter.

"Who's it from? where did 'ee get un?" asked Joan, while Eve exclaimed, "Oh, Joan, see is it from them?"

"I can't stay no longer," said Jonathan, preparing to retreat.

"But you must stay till we've made out what this here is," said Joan.

Jonathan shook his head. "'Tain't nothin' to do with what I'm about," he answered, determined not to be detained, "and I've got to run all the faster 'cos I've comed round this way to bring it. But Jerrem gived it to me," he whispered, "and Adam ain't to be tould nothin' of it;" and he added a few more words which made Joan release her hold of him and seem as anxious to see him gone as he was to go.

The first part of the whisper had reached Eve's ears, and the hope which had leaped into her heart had been forced back by the disappointment that Jerrem, not Adam, had sent the letter. Still, it might contain some news of their return, and she turned to Joan with a look of impatient inquiry.

"I wonder whatever 'tis about?" said Joan, claiming the right of ownership so far as the unfolding the missive went. "Some random talk or 'nother, I'll be bound," she added, with a keener knowledge of her correspondent than Eve possessed. "I'll warrant he's a nice handful aboard there 'mongst 'em all, with nothin' to do but drinkin' and dice-throwin' from mornin' to night. Awh, laws!" she said, with a sigh of discontent as the written page lay open before her, "what's the good o' sendin' a passel o' writin' like that to me? 'T might so well be double Dutch for aught I can make out o' any o' it. There! take and read it, do 'ee, Eve, and let's hear what he says—a good deal more 'bout you than me, I'll lay a wager to."

"Then I don't know why he should," said Eve.

"No, nor I neither," laughed Joan; "but, there! I ain't jealous o' he, for, as I'm Jerrem's cut-and-come-agen, his makin' up to other maidens only leaves un more relish for comin' back to the dish he can stick by."

Eve's eyes had by this time run over the carelessly-written, sprawling page of the letter, and her face flushed up crimson as she said, "I really do wish Jerrem would give over all this silly nonsense. He has no business to write in this way to me."

"To you?" exclaimed Joan, snatching back the letter to look at the outside. "Why, that ain't to you;" and she laid her finger on the direction. "Come now, 'tis true I bain't much of a scholard, but I'm blessed if I can't swear to my awn name when I sees un."

"That's only the outside," said Eve: "all the rest is to me—nothing but a parcel of silly questions, asking me how he has offended me, and why I don't treat him as I used to; as if he didn't know that he has nobody but himself to blame for the difference!"

"And ain't there nothin' else? Don't he send no word to me?" asked Joan ruefully.

Eve, who was only too glad that poor Joan's ignorance prevented her reading the exaggerated rhodomontade of penitence and despair with which the paper was filled, ignored the first question. "He says," she said, turning to read from the page, "'As you won't give me the opportunity of speaking to you, promise me that when we meet, which will be to-morrow night—' Oh, Joan, can that be true? do you think he means really to-morrow?" then, running her eyes farther on, she continued: "Perhaps he does, for—listen, Joan—'You mustn't split on me to Adam, who's cock-a-hoop about giving you all a surprise, and there'd be the devil to pay if he found out I'd blown the gaff.'"

"Now, ain't that Jerrem all over?" exclaimed Joan angrily, anything but pleased at the neglect she had suffered—"just flyin' in the face o' everything Adam wants done. He knaws how things has got abroad afore, nobody could tell how, and yet, 'cos he's axed, he can't keep a quiet tongue in his head."

"I tell you what we'll do," said Eve—"not take a bit of notice of the letter, Joan, and just act as if we'd never had it: shall we?"

"Well, I reckon 'twould be the best way, for I shouldn't wonder but they be comin'," she added, while Eve, anxious to be rid of the letter, hastily flung it into the fire and stood watching it blaze up and die out. "Jonathan gave a hint o' somethin'," continued Joan, "though he never named no time, which, if he was trusted with, he knaws better than to tell of."

"I wonder they do trust him, though," said Eve, "seeing he's rather silly?"

"Awh! most o' his *silly* is to serve his own turn. Why, to see un elsewheres you'd say he'd stored up his wits to Polperro, and left 'em here till he gets back agen; and that's how 'tis he ferrets out the things he does, 'cos nobody minds un nor pays no heed to un; and if he does by chance come creepin' up or stand anigh, "Tis only poor foolish Jonathan,' they says."

CHAPTER XXV

The sun which came streaming in through the windows next morning seemed the herald of coming joy. Eve was the first to be awakened, and she soon aroused Joan. "It won't make no difference to them because the day's fine," she asked: "will it, Joan?"

"Not a bit: they don't care a dump what the day is, so long as the night's only dark enough; and there'll be no show o' moon this week."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" said Eve, breaking out into a snatch of an old song which had caught her fancy.

"Awh, my dear, don't 'ee begin to sing, not till breakfast is over," exclaimed Joan. "'Sing afore you bite, cry afore night.'"

"Cry with joy perhaps," laughed Eve; still, she hushed her melody and hastened her speed to get quickly dressed and her breakfast over. That done with, the house had to be fresh put in order, while Joan applied herself to the making of various pies and pastries; "For, you see," she said, "if they won't all of 'em be just ready for a jollification this time, and no mistake!"

"And I'm sure they deserve to have one," said Eve, whose ideas of merrymaking were on a much broader scale now than formerly. It was true she still always avoided the sight of a drunken man and ran away from a fight, but this was more because her feelings were outraged at these sights than because her sense of right and wrong was any longer shocked at the vices which led to them.

"I'll tell 'ee what I think I'll do," said Joan as, her culinary tasks over, she felt at liberty to indulge in some relaxation: "I'll just run in to Polly Taprail's and two or three places near, and see if the wind's blowed them any of this news."

"Yes, do," said Eve, "and I shall go along by the Warren a little way and look at the sea, and that—"

"Lord save the maid!" laughed Joan: "whatever you finds in the say to look at I can't tell. I knaw 'tis there, but I niver wants to turn my eyes that way, 'ceptin' 'tis to look at somethin' 'pon it."

"Wait till you've been in a town like I have for some time," said Eve.

"Wait? Iss, I 'spects 'twill be wait 'fore my turn comes to be in a town for long. Awh, but I should just like to go to London, though," she added: "wouldn't I just come back ginteel!" and she walked out of the door with the imaginary strut such an importance would warrant her in assuming. Eve followed, and the two walked together down Lansallos street, at the corner of which they parted —Joan to go to Mrs. Taprail's, and Eve along by the Warren toward Talland, for, although she had not told her intention to Joan, she had made up her mind to walk on to where she could get sight of Talland Bay.

She was just in that state of hope and fear when inaction becomes positive pain, and relief is only felt while in pursuit of an object which entails some degree of bodily movement. Joan had so laughed at her fears for the Lottery that to a great extent her anxiety had subsided; and everybody else seemed so certain that with Adam's caution and foresight nothing could possibly happen to them that to doubt their safety seemed to doubt his wisdom.

During this last voyage Adam had had a considerable rise in the opinions of the Polperro folk: they would not admit it too openly, but in discussions between twos and threes it was acknowledged that "Adam had took the measure o' they new revenoo-chaps from the fust, and said they was a cunnin', desateful lot, and not to be dealt with no ways;" and Eve, knowing the opposition he had had to undergo, felt a just pride that they were forced into seeing that his fears had some ground and that his advice was worth following out.

Once past the houses, she determined no longer to linger, but walk on as briskly as possible; and this was the more advisable because the day was a true April one: sharp showers of mingled hail and rain had succeeded the sun, which now again was shining out with dazzling brightness.

The sea was green and rippled over with short dancing waves, across which ran long slanting shadows of a bright violet hue, reflected from the sun and sky; but by the time Eve reached a jutting stone which served as a landmark all this was vanishing, and, turning, she saw coming up a swift creeping shadow which drew behind it a misty veil that covered up both sea and sky and blotted them from view.

"Oh my! here's another hailstorm coming," she said; and, drawing the hood of her cloak close over her face, she made all haste down the steep bit of irregular rock toward where she knew that, a little way off the path, a huge boulder would afford her shelter.

Down came the rain, and with it such a gust of wind that, stumbling up the bit of cliff on which the stone stood, Eve was almost bent double. Hullo! Somebody was here already, and, shaking back her hood to see who her companion in distress might be, she uttered a sharp scream of horror, for the man who stood before her was no other than Reuben May.

"Then you're not glad to see me, Eve?" he said, for the movement Eve had involuntarily made was to put out her hands as if to push him away.

Eve tried to speak, but the sudden fright of his unexpected presence seemed to have dried up her throat and tongue and taken away all power of utterance.

"Your old chum, Capen Triggs, asked me how I should like to take a bit of a trip with him, and I thought, as I hadn't much to keep me, I'd take his offer; and, as he's stopped at Plymouth for a day or so, I made up my mind to come so far as here and see for myself if some of what I've been told is true."

"Why, what have you been told?" said Eve, catching at anything which might spare her some of the unpleasantness of a first communication.

"Well, for one thing, that you're going to be married to your cousin."

Eve's color rose, and Reuben, thinking it might be anger, said, "Don't make any mistake, Eve: I haven't come to speak about myself. All that's past and over, and God only knows why I ever got such folly into my head;" and Reuben thought himself perfectly sincere in making this statement, for he had talked himself into the belief that this journey was undertaken from the sole desire to carry out his trust. "What I've come to do is to speak to you like a friend, and ask you to tell me what sort of people these are that you're among, and how the man gets his living that you're thinking of being married to."

Eve hesitated: then she said, "There is no need for me to answer you, Reuben, because I can see that somebody already has been talking about them to you—haven't they?"

"Yes, they have, but how do I know that what they've said is true?"

"Oh, I dare say it's true enough," she said: "people ain't likely to tell you false about a thing nobody here feels ashamed to own to."

"Not ashamed of being drunkards, law-breakers, thieves?" said Reuben sternly.

"Reuben May," exclaimed Eve, flaming up with indignation and entirely forgetting that but a little time before she had held an exactly similar opinion, "do you forget that you're speaking of my own father's blood-relations—people who're called by the same name I am?"

"No, I don't forget it, Eve; and I don't forget, neither, that if I didn't think that down here you would soon become ruined, body and soul, I'd rather cut my tongue out than it should give utterance to a word that could cause you pain. You speak of your father, but think of your mother, Eve—think if she could rise up before you could you ask her blessing on what you're going to do?"

Eve's face quivered with emotion, and Reuben, seizing his advantage, continued: "Perhaps you think I'm saying this because I'm wanting you for myself, but, as God will judge us, 'tisn't that that's making me speak, Eve;" and he held out his hand toward her. "You've known me for many a long year now—my heart's been laid more bare to you than to any living creature: do you believe what I'm saying to you?"

"Yes, Reuben, I do," she answered firmly, though the tears, no longer restrained, came streaming from her eyes; "and you must also believe what I say to you—that my cousin is a man as

honest and upright as yourself, that he wouldn't defraud any one of the value of a pin's point, nor take a thing that he didn't think himself he'd got a proper right to."

"Good God, Eve! is it possible that you can speak like this of one who gets his living by smuggling?" and a spasm of positive agony passed over Reuben's face as he tried to realize the change of thought and feeling which could induce a calm defence of such iniquity. "What's the difference whether a man robs me or he robs the king? Isn't he stealing just the same?"

"No, certainly not," said Eve, quickly. "I can't explain it all to you, but I know this—that what they bring over they buy and pay for, and certainly, therefore, have some right to."

"Have a right to?" repeated Reuben. "Well, that's good! So men have a right to smuggle, have they? and smuggling isn't stealing? Come! I should just like this cousin of yours to give me half an hour of his company to argue out that matter in."

"My cousin isn't at home," said Eve, filled with a sudden horror of what might be expected from an argument between two such tempers as Reuben and Adam possessed. "And if you've only come here to argue, whether 'tis with me or with them, Reuben, 'tis a waste of time that'll do no good to you nor any of us."

Reuben did not speak. He stood and for a few moments looked fixedly at her: then he turned away and hid his face in his hands. The sudden change from anger to sorrow came upon Eve unexpectedly: anything like a display of emotion was so foreign to Reuben that she could not help being affected by it, and after a minute's struggle with herself she laid her hand on his arm, saying gently, "Reuben, don't let me think you've come all this long way only to quarrel and say bitter things to me: let me believe 'tis as you said—because you weren't satisfied, and felt, for mother's sake, you wanted to be a friend to me still. I feel now as if I ought to have told you when I wrote that I was going to marry my cousin Adam, but I didn't do it because I thought you'd write to me, and then 'twould be easier to speak; and when you didn't take no notice I thought you meant to let me go altogether, and I can't tell you how hurt I felt. I couldn't help saying to myself over and over again (though I was so angry with you I didn't know what to do), 'I shall never have another such friend as Reuben—never.'"

Eve's words had their effect, and when Reuben turned his pale face to her again his whole mood was softened. "'Tis to be the same friend I always was that I've come, Eve," he said; "only you know me, and how I can never keep from blurting out all at once things that I ought to bring round bit by bit, so that they might do good and not give offence."

"You haven't offended me yet," she said—"at least," she added, smiling in her old way at him, "not beyond what I can look over; and so far as I can and it will ease your mind, Reuben, I'll try to tell you all you care to know about uncle and—the rest of them. I'm sure if you knew them you'd like them: you couldn't help it—more particularly Joan and Adam, if you once saw those two."

"And why can't I see them, Eve? It wouldn't seem so very strange, being your friend—for that's all I claim to be—going there to see you, would it?"

"No, I don't know that it would; only," and here she hesitated, "whatever you saw that you didn't like, Reuben, you'd only speak to me about. You wouldn't begin arguing with them, would you?"

Reuben shook his head. Then with a sudden impulse, he said, "And have you really given all your love to this man, Eve?"

"Yes," she said, not averting her eyes, although her face was covered with a quick blush.

"And whatever comes you mean to be his wife?"

"I don't mean to be anybody else's wife," she said.

"And he—he cares for you?"

"If he didn't be sure I should have never cared for him."

Reuben sighed. "Well," he said, "I'll go and see him. I'll have a talk with him, and try and find out what sort of stuff he's made of. If I could go away certain that things ain't as bad as I feared to find them, I should take back a lighter heart with me. You say he isn't home now. Is he at sea, then?"

"No, not at sea: he's close by."

"Then you expect him back soon?"

"Yes: we expect him back to-night."

"To-night? Then I think I'll change my plan. I meant to go back to Plymouth and see what Triggs is about to do, for I'm going round to London with him when he goes; but if you're expecting your cousin so soon, why shouldn't I stop here till I've seen him?"

"Oh, but he mightn't come," said Eve, who in any case had no wish that Reuben should appear until she had paved the way for his reception, and above all things desired his absence on this particular occasion.

"Well, I must take my chance of that—unless," he added, catching sight of her face, "there's any reason against my stopping?"

Eve colored. "Well," she said, "perhaps they mightn't care, as they don't know you, about your being here. You see," she added by way of excuse, "they have been away a long while now."

"Been to France, I s'pose?" said Reuben in a tone which conveyed his suspicions.

"No," replied Eve, determined not to seem ashamed of their occupation: "I think they've been to Guernsey."

"Oh, well, all the same, so far as what they went to fetch. Then they're going to *try* and land their cargo, I s'pose?"

"I don't know what they may be going to *try* and do"—and Eve endeavored to imitate the sneer with which Reuben had emphasized the word—"but I know that trying with them means doing. There's nobody about here," she added with a borrowed spice of Joan's manner, "would care to put themselves in the way of trying to hinder the Lottery."

"'Tis strange, then, that they shouldn't choose to come in open daylight, rather than be sneaking in under cover of a dark night," said Reuben aggravatingly.

"As it happens," retorted Eve, with an assumption of superior nautical knowledge, "the dark night suits them best, by reason that at high tide they can come in close to Down End. Oh, you needn't try to think you can hurt me by your sneers at them," she said, inwardly smarting under the contempt she knew Reuben felt. "I feel hurt at your wanting to say such things, but not at all at what you say. *That* can't touch me."

"No, so I see," said Reuben hopelessly. Then, after a minute's pause, he burst out with a passionate, "Oh, Eve, I feel as if I could take and jump into the sea with you, so as I might feel you'd be safe from the life I'm certain you're goin' to be dragged down to. You may think fair now of this man, because he's only showed you his fair side; but they who know him know him for what he is—bloodthirsty, violent, a drunkard, never sober, with his neck in a noose and the gallows swinging over his head. What hold will you have over one who fears neither God nor devil? Yes, but I will speak. You shall listen to the truth from me," for she had tried to interrupt him. "It isn't too late, and 'tis but fit that you know what others say of him."

Eve's anger had risen until she seemed turned into a fury, and her voice, usually low and full, now sounded hard and sharp as she cried, "If they said a hundred times worse of him I would still marry him; and if he stood on the gallows, that you say swings over his head, I'd stand by his side and say I was his wife."

"God pity you!" groaned Reuben.

"I want no pity," she said, "and so you can tell those who would throw it away on me. Say to them that you sought me out to cast taunts at me, but it was of no use, for what you thought I should be ashamed of I gloried in, and could look you and all the world in the face"—and she seemed to grow taller as she spoke—"and say I felt proud to be a smuggler's wife;" and, turning, she made a movement as if to go.

But Reuben took a step so as to impede her. "Is this to be our parting?" he said. "Can you throw away the only friend you've got left?"

"I don't call you a friend," she said.

"You'll know me for being so one day, though, and bitterly rue you didn't pay more heed to my words."

"Never!" she said proudly. "I'd trust Adam with my life: he's true as steel. Now," she added, stepping on one side, "I have no more time to stay: I must go back; so let me pass."

Mechanically Reuben moved. Stung by her words, irritated by a sense of failure, filled with the sharpest jealousy against his rival, he saw no other course open to him than to let her go her way and to go his. "Good-bye, then, Eve," he said, in a dry, cold voice.

"Good-bye," she answered.

"I don't think, after what's passed, you need expect to see me again," he ventured, with the secret hope that she would pause and say something that might lead to a fresh discussion.

"I had no notion that you'd still have a thought of coming. I should look upon a visit from you as very out of place."

"Oh, well, be sure I sha'n't force myself where I'm not wanted."

"Then you'll be wise to stay away, for you'll never be wanted where I am."

And without another glance in his direction she walked away, while Reuben stood and watched her out of sight. "That's ended," he said, setting his lips firmly together and hardening the expression of his naturally grave face. "That mad game's finished, and finished so that I think I've done with sweet-hearting for as long as I live. Well, thank God! a man may get on very fairly though the woman that he made a fool of himself for flings back his love and turns him over for somebody else." Then, as if some unseen hand had dealt him a sudden thrust, he cried out, "Why did I ever see her? Why was I made to care for her? Haven't I known the folly of it all along, and fought and strove from the first to get the better of myself? and here she comes down and sees a fellow whose eye is tickled by her looks, and he gets in a week what I've been begging and praying for years for; and they tell you that God's ways are just and that He rewards the good and punishes the evil!" and Reuben's face worked with suppressed emotion, for in spirit he stood before his Creator and upbraided Him with "Lo! these many years have I served Thee, neither transgressed I at any time Thy commandments; and yet this drunkard, this evil-liver, this law-breaker, is given that for which in my soul I have thirsted!" and the devils of envy and revenge ran by his side rejoicing, while Fate flew before and lured him on to where Opportunity stood and welcomed his approach.

The Author of "Dorothy Fox."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

POSSESSION

She is thine own at last, O faithful soul!
The love that changed not with the changing years
Hath its reward: Desire's strong prayers and tears
Fall useless since thy hand hath touched the goal.
See how she yieldeth up to thy control
Each mystery of her beauty: enter, thou,
A vanquished victor. None can disavow
Thy royal, love-bought right unto the whole
Of love's rich feast. Oh outspread golden hair,
White brow, red lips whereon thy lips are set
With rapturous thrills undreamed of, past compare!
Oh ecstasy of bliss! And yet—and yet—
What doth it profit thee that every part
Is thine except the little wayward heart?

Eliza Calvert Hall.

AN OLD ENGLISH HOME: BRAMSHILL HOUSE

A peculiar charm hangs about an Elizabethan country-house.

The castles belong to an utterly different state of things and people—to a rougher, coarser time. Their towers and walls, where the jackdaws build in the ivy; their moats, where the hoary carp bask and fatten; their drawbridges and heavy doors and loopholed windows,—these all tell of the unrest, the semi-war-like state of feudal days, when each great seigneur was a petty king in his own county, with his private as well as public feuds, and his little army of men-at-arms ready to do his bidding, to sally forth and fight for the king or to defend his own walls against some more powerful neighbor.

The great houses of the eighteenth century have a different character again, with their Italian façades and trim terraced gardens, where the wits and beauties of dull Queen Anne's time amused themselves after their somewhat rude fashion. They speak of a solid luxury in keeping with the heavy features and ponderous minds of the worthies of those days.

But the Elizabethan, or even early Jacobean, house tells us of England in her golden age. The walls of red brick, gray with lichens; the rows of wide stone-mullioned windows and hanging oriels; the delicate, fanciful chimneys rising in great clusters above the pointed gables; the broad stone steps leading up to the hospitable door; the smooth green terraces and bowling-lawns, walled in, it is true, but closed with gates of curiously-wrought ironwork meant more for ornament than for defence,—all these serve to recall the days when learning and wealth joined hands with the Maiden Queen to raise England from the depths into which she had sunk—the days of "the worthies whom Elizabeth, without distinction of rank or age, gathered round her in the ever-glorious wars of her great reign."

It was then that Burleigh and Walsingham talked statecraft; that Raleigh and Drake, Frobisher and Grenville, sailed the seas and beat the Spanish Armada; that the "sea-dogs" brought the treasures of the New World to the feet of the queen, and filled men's minds with dreams of El Dorados where gold and jewels were as common as the sand on the seashore. It was then that English literature, all but dead during the storm of the Reformation, began to revive. And then it was that a galaxy of poets arose such as the world had never seen before; that Sidney wrote his *Arcadia*, Spenser his *Faerie Queene*; that Christopher Marlowe, Beaumont and Fletcher and merrie Ben Jonson founded the English drama; and that Shakespeare, poet of poets, overshadowed them all with that stupendous genius which has filled succeeding generations with wonder and love.

Then it was that men began to think of their home as a casket in which to enshrine the gentler tastes and luxuries which peace at home and continental influences from without were fostering in England. The casket must be fitted for its treasure; and so it came to pass that throughout the length and breadth of the land those fair Elizabethan mansions sprang up.

I see one such now in my mind's eye—one that I love well, for since my earliest childhood it has filled me with awe and admiration and delight. It was built by James I. as a hunting-box for his son, Prince Henry, but ere the house was finished the young prince was dead, and all the promise of his short life gone with him. Had he lived, our English history for the next hundred years might have been a different story. Bramshill then passed into other hands—first to Lord Zouch, then to the Copes, who still own it—but in the finely-carved stone balustrade above the great western door the three plumes of the prince of Wales's feathers may still be seen, the sole memento of its royal origin. Only half the original house remains: the rest was destroyed by fire a couple of hundred years ago. Yet what still stands is verily a palace.

You enter through the heavily-nailed and barred doors, and find yourself in a vast hall panelled up to the ceiling with old oak. The immense fireplace with its brass dogs and andirons tells of the yule log that still at Christmas burns upon the hearth, and trophies of arms of all ages—from the Toledo blade that can be bent by the point into a semicircle, so perfect is the temper of its steel, to the Sikh sword that was brought home after the Indian mutiny—form fitting ornaments for the walls.

Then come many rooms, with deep-embrasured windows looking out on the terrace, each beautiful or curious in its own way—a noble dining-room hung with old grisaille tapestry, from which you may learn the life of Decius Mus if you have patience to disentangle the strange medley of impossible figures in gardens with impossible flowers, where impossible beasts roam in herds and impossible birds sing among the branches.

But the glory of the house is its first floor. The wide oak staircase leads you up first to the chapel-room, with its oriel windows overhanging the western door, its Italian cabinets, its rare china, its chairs and couches covered with crewel-work more than two hundred years old, yet with colors as fresh as on the day that Lady Zouch and her maidens set in the stitches. Then there is the great drawing-room, with its precious Italian marble chimney-piece, more brass dogs, more tapestry, more recessed windows. Then the library, full of priceless books, to which the present learned owner is constantly adding new volumes. The mere ceilings are a study in themselves, for they are covered with mouldings and traceries and hanging bosses of marvellous workmanship of the time of Inigo Jones—designed, some say, by him, for he used to stay at Eversley, hard by, with a friend and fellow-pupil of Sir Christopher Wren. Then comes the long gallery, running the whole width of the building, stored with curiosities, where we used to run races and play hide-and-seek with the children of the house in bygone days, and tremble when evening came on lest some bogie from his lurking-place should spring out upon us. The bedrooms are panelled with oak painted white, with splendid fireplaces and carved mantelpieces that reach the ceiling.

And besides all these there are enchanting little rooms reached by unexpected staircases, by secret doors in the wall, by dark passages where one hears the rustle of ghostly brocade dresses. Those are the most lovable rooms, for, once safely in them, one is at home and warm, while in the state rooms one feels, as the dear old squire who died here thirty years ago said, "like a pea in a drum."

Down from the house slopes the park, with its green glades, its heather-covered knolls, its huge oaks, its delicate silver birches—above all, its matchless Scotch firs, which James I. planted here, as he did in many places in England, to remind himself of the land of his birth. The hardy northern trees took kindly to their new home, and they have seeded themselves and spread far and wide over vast tracts of country. But nowhere south of Tweed are finer specimens to be found than in this old Hampshire park. Three great avenues of them run round a triangle half a mile across, and outside the shade of their black branches the purple heather and waving bracken form a carpet fit for elves and fairies.

From the western front of the house a double avenue of gigantic elms leads down to the river that gleams in silver lines beneath the bridge, and ends where the moors begin on the opposite hill a mile away. Up this avenue in olden days the deer were driven toward the house, to be killed at the feet of the ladies, who stepped down in hoops and furbelows and dainty shoes to the iron gates between two pepper-box towers where gorgeous peacocks now strut and sun themselves.

Those were the days when, sorely against his own wish, Archbishop Abbot, my worthy ancestor, went a-hunting in the park on Sunday at the command of the king his master, who with the archbishop was a guest of Lord Zouch. Well for him had it been if he had resisted the royal will, for, as it befell, the arrow from his crossbow, glancing from a tree, struck one of the keepers and killed him then and there. The poor archbishop, it is said, never smiled again, and his sad, tender face in Vandyke's noble picture looks down on me from the wall as I write and bears out the truth of the story. Often and often when we children were playing in the park did we wander about, trying to settle from which tree the arrow glanced, conjuring up before our eyes the whole scene—the king's anger and the archbishop's despair at the catastrophe—and feeling the while a proud personal interest in it all. Ah, what good days those were, roaming about knee-deep in heather, catching the rare moths, chasing the squirrels that whisked up the fir stems and mocked us from their high perch, searching the hollow trees for woodpeckers' nests, eating the beech-nuts or pricking our fingers as we tried to open the husks of the Spanish chestnuts that grew by the lake! From among the bulrushes the coots sailed out at our

approach, and the tiny dabchick dived so deep that we thought, "This time she *must* be drowned," when, lo and behold! she would appear twenty yards off, a little black ball with a yellow bill, only to take breath and plunge again. Sometimes in a hard winter we would hear high in the sky the cry of a weird pack of hounds. Nearer and nearer drew that unearthly music, till we held our breath in a kind of delightful terror, and then above our heads appeared a flock of wild swans on the search for water; and down they dropped, like white cannon-balls, into the lake, sending a mass of spray into the air and shivering the smooth black surface of the water into a thousand ripples that circled away and lapped against the banks in mimic waves.

But I think my most exquisite moment of happiness was one spring day when I saw close by me a little fox-cub—a furry darling, about as big as a four-months'-old kitten, with black stripes across his fat back. He had ventured out of the fox-earths on the other side of the park palings, and did not know how to get back to his anxious mother. I tried to catch him, but that was not to be, and young Reineke soon found a way home. Nevertheless, the joy was mine, never to be forgotten, of having seen a real wild beast so near.

Even on dark and stormy days the park has its own strange charm as one walks up the gloomy avenue on the soft fir-needles glistening with rain. A murmur fills the air as of sea-waves beating on the shore: it is the wet south-west wind soughing overhead and lashing the writhing branches. One thinks of the German fairy-tales, and half expects to meet the old woman who led Hansel and Grethel captive, or to come suddenly upon her house with its ginger-bread roof and barley-sugar windows.

I remember once taking a well-known musician through those fir woods one dark afternoon as the wind was making soft music above us. He was silent, and I was disappointed, for I had fancied that the new country would delight him and excite his imagination. But when we reached home he sat down to the piano in the dark, and played on and on as if he were pouring out his whole soul in the flood of sweet melody; and when, after an hour of marvellous improvisation, he stopped and said to us, "I couldn't help it: I had to reel off all that I have been seeing and hearing this afternoon," then I was content, for I knew nothing had been thrown away on our friend, and that if he could not talk about it all he could do even better.

But if you would see Bramshill in all its pride come on some November morning to the first meet of the season.

Well do I recollect the excitement of those happy days. How long the night seemed before morning broke and I was sure it was not pouring with rain! How pleasant to run down to breakfast all neat and trim in one's habit! And then when flask and sandwiches were safely bestowed, white gloves buttoned and hat firmly secured, how eagerly I watched for half-past ten to walk out to the stables, where the horses were stamping and snorting impatiently, knowing full well by their marvellous instinct what enjoyment was before them! Then my little bay Sintram came dancing out, followed by Puff, the dear old brown mare. I was tossed into the saddle, and away we went at that peculiarly unpleasant and tiring pace, a "cover trot," which for some inscrutable reason is the right thing if you are going to a meet. Less than a trot, more than a walk, you can neither sit still nor rise in your stirrup, but must just jog along till you fairly ache. The horses pull and fight with their bits as we keep them in the soft sandy ditch up the lane to spare their precious feet. At the few cottages we pass women and children are all standing at their garden-gates to watch the "quality" go by. The ploughmen in the fields discover that the furrows nearest the road need a great deal of attention; the shepherds fold their sheep to-day close to the hedge, so as to secure front places for the show; and if we chance to run this way every man will leave his work and follow us as long as his breath lasts, and his master, who is riding, will not grumble, for if hounds are running every man, be he rich or poor, has a right to run too.

Up the sandy hill we go, and out on the wide moors, covered with soft brown heather, which stretch away with hardly a break twenty miles south and east to Aldershot Camp or Windsor Forest. On the brow of the hill grows a mighty bush of furze which always goes by the name of "Miss Bremer's furze-bush." When the dainty Swedish novelist once came to gladden Eversley Rectory with

her presence she told how she longed to see the plant before which Linnæus had fallen on his knees; and she walked up this selfsame hill and with eyes full of tears gazed on the prickly shrub with its mist of golden-colored, apricot-scented flowers. The old Hampshire proverb says, "When furze is out of flower kissing is out of fashion;" and, sure enough, there is not a month in the year in which you may not find a blossom or two among the green spines.

Now we cross a green road, the Welsh Ride, which in the autumn is covered with thousands of cattle making their way in great herds from the Welsh mountains and Devonshire pastures to the winter fairs round London. The drovers used to boast that they could bring their beasts all the way from Wales without once going off turf or through a turnpike. Now, alas! crowded cattle-trucks on the railway are fast superseding the old-fashioned, wholesome way of travelling, and we seldom have the autumnal air filled with the lowing of the herds, the barking of the attendant dogs and the shouts of the drovers on their sturdy Welsh ponies. But to-day the Welsh Ride looks gay enough, for it is dotted with little knots of horsemen in black or red coats using it as a short cut from Aldershot and Sandhurst. We turn off the moor into the shadow of the fir avenue that leads half a mile up to the park-gates. The ground, covered with a soft carpet of pine-needles and burrowed everywhere by the roots of the trees, gives off a hollow echo to the horses' clattering hoofs. The sombre avenue is alive in unwonted fashion to-day. Now we pass a group of pedestrians from the village; now a young farmer comes by on a half-broken colt which is to make its first acquaintance with the hounds; then a break with a big party from a country-house in Miss Mitford's village passes us with a gay greeting as it rattles on. A tiny nutshell of a pony-carriage full of babies comes trotting along, and its driver, poor Sheldon Williams, will make notes of the scene and put them into one of his clever hunting-pictures, little dreaming of the day when his early death will leave those babies penniless. Now a group of the redcoats we saw on the Welsh Ride overtakes us, and Sintram plunges and dances as a wild little thorough-bred comes up to our side. His master, who has already gained his Victoria Cross twice—first as a little lad in the trenches at Sevastopol, and again for desperate deeds of valor in the Indian mutiny—is to win yet further glory in 1879 at the head of the "flying column" in Zululand—Evelyn Wood, the most gallant and humane of all that gallant band.

The white park-gate is held wide open by a poor ne'er-do-weel in a shabby old red coat—John Ellis by name. How he gets his living no one knows, but if there is a meet of fox-hounds anywhere within ten miles, there he is sure to be, holding people's horses or ready at a gate for stray pennies and sixpences. There is usually such a hanger-on to every pack of hounds in England—one who travels immense distances on foot to turn up in unexpected places and get a few hard-earned shillings as his reward. We jog along under the magnificent silver firs, only to be equalled by those in the duke of Wellington's park at Strathfieldsaye, hard by; then up the lime avenue which borders the cricket-ground, where thirty years ago the most famous matches in Hampshire were played; and as we reach the iron gates leading up to the house our little knot of riders has swelled into a veritable cavalcade.

Down the drive we trot, past the stables, where the watch-dogs strain angrily at their chains and a little green monkey jibbers with rage and excitement, and in another moment we turn under the shadow of the great house up to the western door. Here all is life and bustle. Twenty or thirty carriages are drawn up by the widespreading lawn: grooms are holding horses ready for their masters, who are refreshing the inner man with cherry brandy and cold breakfast indoors. A tinkle of bells is heard as the duchess of Wellington drives herself up with her three ponies abreast, Russian fashion. Then a perfectly-appointed brougham, with a pair of magnificent cobs, stops in a corner, and a soldier-like foreigner in a red coat helps out a quiet-looking English lady wrapped up in furs. She slips them off as her groom leads up a priceless horse for her to mount, and in a moment is in the saddle, and will ride as straight as any man in the field to-day. Her husband, Count Morella, better known as the famous Carlist general Cabrera, whose strange and terrible history many years ago fascinated the gentle English heiress, now satisfies his war-like spirit by fox-hunting on the best horses that money can buy, and has settled down into a quiet English country gentleman.

The hounds have arrived before us. There they are—the beauties!—on the green grass, and we ride in among them to have a word with Tom Swetman the huntsman and good George Austin the whip, the latter of whom has given me a lead over many a fence. Gallant Tom! the bravest and gentlest of men, how little we thought that in a year or two we should never see your honest face again on earth! But you will be long remembered, though you are with us no more, and the story will be told for years to come of a day when the hounds ran into their fox on the South-western Railway. It was in a cutting fifty feet deep, with a tremendous fence at the top. Tom arrived just in time to see his hounds on the rails, with poor Reynard dead in their midst and the express train from Southampton speeding up the hill at fifty miles an hour. He crammed his horse over the great post and rails, down the almost perpendicular side of the cutting, whipped the hounds off, and, as the train rushed screaming by, rode out from under the very wheels of the engine and up the farther bank with his rescued pack.

But now our master, Mr. Garth, comes down the steps—a signal that we must no longer waste time talking with our neighbors, and like a good old friend he gives us a private programme of the way we shall draw. Stirrups are lengthened or shortened, girths tightened, restive horses led away to unobserved corners where their owners can try to mount without being seen by the assembled multitude. Sintram executes a war-dance on his hind legs, to the delight of some schoolboys in a wagonette, the terror of their fair companions and the extreme disgust of his mistress at having to practice the *haute école* before so large an audience. Ah, my poor Sintram! He danced once too often, and one fine day came to a sad end by falling backward and breaking his neck.

Tom now comes up to the master: "Shall we go, sir?"

"Yes—now, I think."

A crack of the whips and away trots Tom, followed by his splendid pack and his two whippers-in. Then comes the master, and we all crowd after them pell-mell with horses plunging and kicking, and as soon as we are fairly out in the open a kind of stampede takes place among the unruly young ones, and we see many an involuntary steeple-chase over the smooth green cricket-ground. Through the dark avenues of fir trees we canter to the temple, a little summerhouse on a promontory in the sea of wood that lies below, and we stand admiring the far blue distant view away to the Hogsback and the South Downs beyond Basingstoke as the hounds begin their work. There they are: you can see their twinkling tails as they draw the heather-covered slopes beneath us and disappear among the golden-brown bracken, while one of the whips plunges down after them and shakes a shower of amber leaves from the silver birches as he brushes past them.

Something streaks away down a green drive. A young hound gives tongue, but his note of triumph quickly changes to a yelp as the vigilant whip catches him with the tip of his long lash and roars, "War'[1] hare!" Poor little man! He has tried to run what is called a "short-tailed fox," and returns to the pack a sadder and a wiser dog. But now the tails twinkle faster than ever. A low whimper from some of the old hounds, then a burst of joyous music from the pack.

"Gone away!" yells Tom, standing up in his stirrups and tooting his horn.

Then that unmistakable screech which is supposed to mean "Tally-ho!" from a group of beaters and keepers in the distance, and there, against the park-palings, a beautiful red thing scudding along the soft ride, flat to the ground, his bushy tail flying straight behind him. Reynard himself! Now let all look out for themselves. Adieu, carriages! adieu, poor pedestrians! We are off, and shall not see you again till dinner-time. Through the park-gate we stream away, down the fir avenue, along the Welsh Ride. We have got a splendid start, and our horses fly on beside Countess Morella, who looks the perfection of a hunting lady in her plain neat habit just down to her feet.

[1] In hunting dialect the warning "'ware" or "beware" is shortened to "war'," as in the old advice, "War' horse, war' hound, war' heel!"

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.